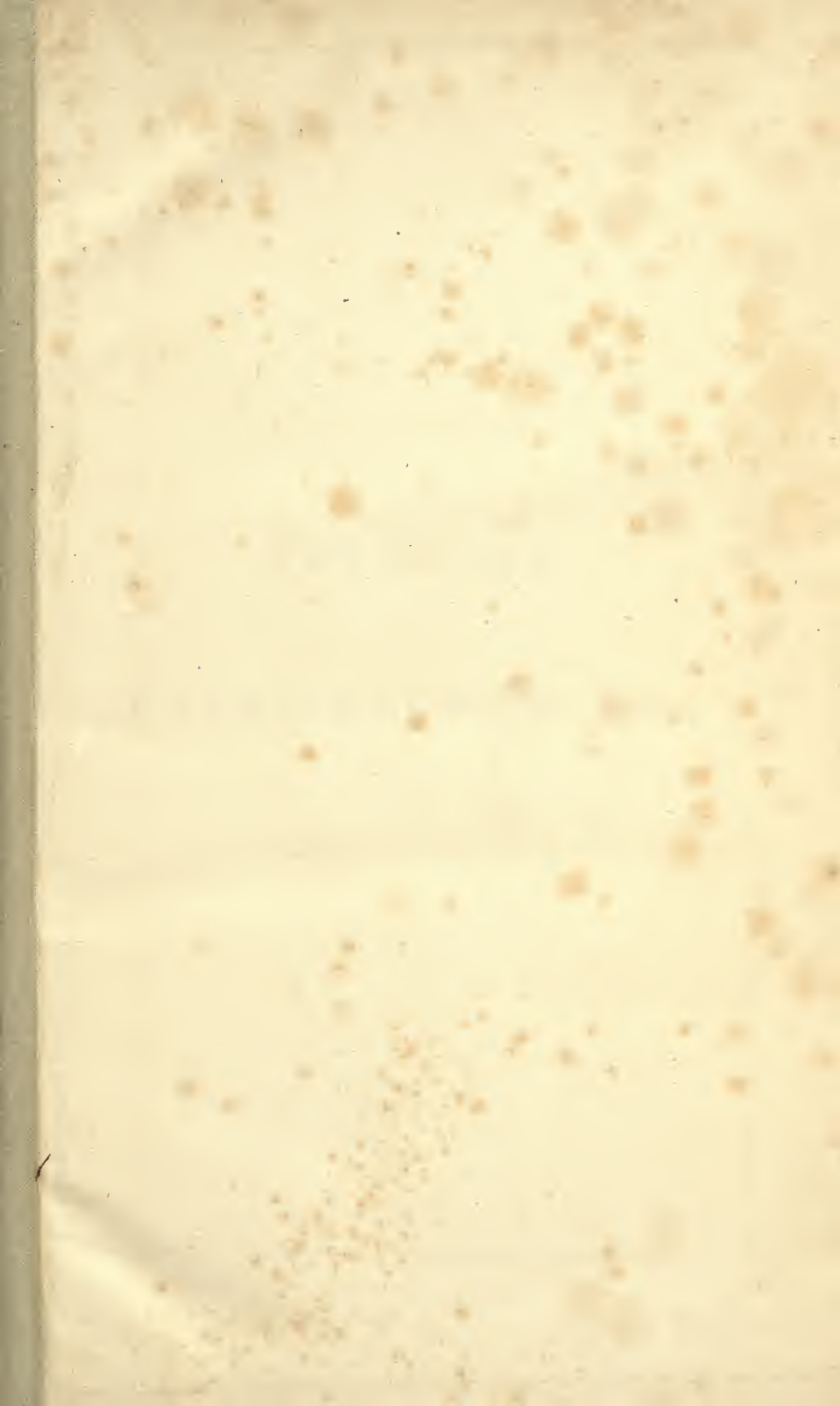


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NEW YORK.  
BRACEBRIDGE HALL.

TALES OF A TRAVELLER.  
A CHRONICLE OF THE CONQUEST  
OF GRANADA.  
THE ALHAMBRA.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

WITH A PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR.

VOL. II.

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PHILADELPHIA :  
LEA AND BLANCHARD.

1840.

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TALES  
OF  
A TRAVELLER.

BY GEOFFREY CRAYON, GENT.

AUTHOR OF "THE SKETCH BOOK," "BRACEBRIDGE HALL,"  
"KNICKERBOCKER'S NEW YORK," &c.

---

I am neither your minotaure, nor your centaure, nor your satyr, nor your hyæna,  
nor your babion, but your meer traveller, believe me.

BEN JONSON.

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# TALES OF A TRAVELLER.

## TO THE READER.

### WORTHY AND DEAR READER!

HAST thou ever been waylaid in the midst of a pleasant tour by some treacherous malady; thy heels tripped up, and thou left to count the tedious minutes as they passed, in the solitude of an inn-chamber? If thou hast, thou wilt be able to pity me. Behold me, interrupted in the course of my journeying up the fair banks of the Rhine, and laid up by indisposition in this old frontier town of Mentz. I have worn out every source of amusement. I know the sound of every clock that strikes, and bell that rings, in the place. I know to a second when to listen for the first tap of the Prussian drum, as it summons the garrison to parade; or at what hour to expect the distant sound of the Austrian military band. All these have grown wearisome to me; and even the well-known step of my doctor, as he slowly paces the corridor, with healing in the creak of his shoes, no longer affords an agreeable interruption to the monotony of my apartment.

For a time I attempted to beguile the weary hours by studying German under the tuition of my host's pretty little daughter, Katrine; but I soon found even German had not power to charm a languid ear, and that the conjugating of *ich liebe* might be powerless, however rosy the lips which uttered it.

I tried to read, but my mind would not fix itself; I turned over volume after volume, but threw them by with distaste:

"Well, then," said I at length, in despair, "if I cannot read a book, I will write one." Never was there a more lucky idea; it at once gave me occupation and amusement.

The writing of a book was considered, in old times, as an enterprise of toil and difficulty, insomuch that the most trifling lucubration was denominated a "work," and the world talked with awe and reverence of "the labours of the learned." These matters are better understood now-a-days. Thanks to the improvements in all kind of manufactures, the art of book-making has been made familiar to the meanest capacity. Every body is an author. The scribbling of a quarto is the mere pastime of the idle; the young gentleman throws off his brace of duodecimos in the intervals of the sporting season, and the young lady produces her set of volumes with the same facility that her great-grandmother worked a set of chair-bottoms.

The idea having struck me, therefore, to write a book, the reader will easily perceive that the execution of it was no difficult matter. I rummaged my portfolio, and cast about, in my recollection, for those floating materials which a man naturally collects in travelling; and here I have arranged them in this little work.

As I know this to be a story-telling and a story-reading age, and that the world is fond of being taught by apologue, I have digested the instruction I would convey into a number of tales. They may not possess the power of amusement

which the tales told by many of my contemporaries possess; but then I value myself on the sound moral which each of them contains. This may not be apparent at first, but the reader will be sure to find it out in the end. I am for curing the world by gentle alteratives, not by violent doses; indeed the patient should never be conscious that he is taking a dose. I have learnt this much from my experience under the hands of the worthy Hippocrates of Mentz.

I am not, therefore, for those bare-faced tales which carry their moral on the surface, staring one in the face; they are enough to deter the squeamish reader. On the contrary, I have often hid my moral from sight, and disguised it as much as possible by sweets and spices; so that while the simple reader is listening with open mouth to a ghost or a love story, he may have a bolus of sound morality popped down his throat, and be never the wiser for the fraud.

As the public is apt to be curious about the sources from whence an author draws his stories, doubtless that it may know how far to put faith in them, I would observe, that the Adventure of the German Student, or rather the latter part of it, is founded on an anecdote related to me as existing somewhere in French; and, indeed, I have been told, since writing it, that an ingenious tale has been founded on it by an English writer; but I have never met with either the former or the latter in print. Some of the circumstances in the Adventure of the Mysterious Picture, and in the Story of the Young Italian, are vague recollections of anecdotes related to me some years since; but from what source derived I do not know. The Adventure of the Young Painter among the banditti is taken almost entirely from an authentic narrative in manuscript.

As to the other tales contained in this work, and, indeed, to my tales generally, I can make but one observation. I am an old traveller. I have read somewhat, heard and seen more, and dreamt more than all. My brain is filled, therefore, with all kinds of odds and ends. In travelling, these heterogeneous matters have become shaken up in my mind, as the articles are apt to be in an ill-packed

travelling-trunk; so that when I attempt to draw forth a fact, I cannot determine whether I have read, heard, or dreamt it; and I am always at a loss to know how much to believe of my own stories.

These matters being premised, fall to, worthy reader, with good appetite, and above all, with good humour, to what is here set before thee. If the tales I have furnished should prove to be bad, they will at least be found short; so that no one will be wearied long on the same theme. "Variety is charming," as some poet observes. There is a certain relief in change, even though it be from bad to worse; as I have found in travelling in a stage-coach, that it is often a comfort to shift one's position and be bruised in a new place.

Ever thine,

GEOFFREY CRAYON.

*Dated from the HOTEL DE DARMSTADT,  
ci-devant HOTEL DE PARIS,  
MENTZ, otherwise called MAYENCE.*

## PART I.

### STRANGE STORIES.

BY

#### A NERVOUS GENTLEMAN.

I'll tell you more, there was a fish taken,  
A monstrous fish, with a sword by 's side, a long  
sword,

A pike in 's neck, and a gun in 's nose, a huge gun,  
And letters of mart in 's mouth from the Duke of  
Florence.

*Cleanthes.* This is a monstrous lie.

*Tony.* I do confess it.

Do you think I'd tell you truths?

FLETCHER'S WIFE FOR A MONTH.

### THE GREAT UNKNOWN.

THE following adventures were related to me by the same nervous gentleman who told me the romantic tale of the Stout Gentleman, published in Bracebridge Hall. It is very singular, that although I expressly stated that story to have been told to me, and described the very person who told it, still it has been received as an adventure that happened to myself. Now I protest I never met



with any adventure of the kind. I should not have grieved at this had it not been intimated by the author of *Waverley*, in an introduction to his novel of *Peveril of the Peak*, that he was himself the stout gentleman alluded to. I have ever since been importuned by questions and letters from gentlemen, and particularly from ladies without number, touching what I had seen of the Great Unknown.

Now all this is extremely tantalizing. It is like being congratulated on the high prize when one has drawn a blank; for I have just as great a desire as any one of the public to penetrate the mystery of that very singular personage, whose voice fills every corner of the world, without any one being able to tell from whence it comes.

My friend, the nervous gentleman, also, who is a man of very shy retired habits, complains that he has been excessively annoyed in consequence of its getting about in his neighbourhood that he is the unfortunate personage. Inso-much, that he has become a character of considerable notoriety in two or three country-towns, and has been repeatedly teased to exhibit himself at blue-stocking parties, for no other reason than that of being "the gentleman who has had a glimpse of the author of *Waverley*."

Indeed the poor man has grown ten times as nervous as ever, since he has discovered, on such good authority, who the stout gentleman was; and will never forgive himself for not having made a more resolute effort to get a full sight of him. He has anxiously endeavoured to call up a recollection of what he saw of that portly personage; and has ever since kept a curious eye on all gentlemen of more than ordinary dimensions, whom he has seen getting into stage-coaches. All in vain! The features he had caught a glimpse of seem common to the whole race of stout gentlemen, and the Great Unknown remains as great an unknown as ever.

Having premised these circumstances, I will now let the nervous gentleman proceed with his stories.

### THE HUNTING DINNER.

I WAS once at a hunting dinner, given by a worthy fox-hunting old baronet, who kept bachelor's hall in jovial style, in an ancient rook-haunted family mansion, in one of the middle counties. He had been a devoted admirer of the fair sex in his young days; but, having travelled much, studied the sex in various countries with distinguished success, and returned home profoundly instructed, as he supposed, in the ways of woman, and a perfect master of the art of pleasing, he had the mortification of being jilted by a little boarding-school girl, who was scarcely versed in the accident of love.

The baronet was completely overcome by such an incredible defeat; retired from the world in disgust; put himself under the government of his housekeeper; and took to fox-hunting like a perfect Nimrod. Whatever poets may say to the contrary, a man will grow out of love as he grows old; and a pack of fox-hounds may chase out of his heart even the memory of a boarding-school goddess. The baronet was, when I saw him, as merry and mellow an old bachelor as ever followed a hound; and the love he had once felt for one woman had spread itself over the whole sex; so that there was not a pretty face in the whole country round but came in for a share.

The dinner was prolonged till a late hour; for our host having no ladies in his household to summon us to the drawing-room, the bottle maintained its true bachelor sway, unrivalled by its potent enemy the tea-kettle. The old hall in which we dined echoed to bursts of robustious fox-hunting merriment, that made the ancient antlers shake on the walls. By degrees, however, the wine and the wassail of mine host began to operate upon bodies already a little jaded by the chase. The choice spirits which flashed up at the beginning of the dinner, sparkled for a time, then gradually went out one after another, or only emitted now and then a faint gleam from the socket. Some of the briskest talkers, who had given tongue so bravely at the first burst, fell fast asleep; and none kept on their way but certain of those long-winded prozers, who, like short-

legged hounds, worry on unnoticed at the bottom of conversation, but are sure to be in at the death. Even these at length subsided into silence; and scarcely any thing was heard but the nasal communications of two or three veteran masticators, who having been silent while awake, were indemnifying the company in their sleep.

At length the announcement of tea and coffee in the cedar-parlour roused all hands from this temporary torpor. Every one awoke marvellously renovated, and while sipping the refreshing beverage out of the baronet's old-fashioned hereditary china, began to think of departing for their several homes. But here a sudden difficulty arose. While we had been prolonging our repast, a heavy winter storm had set in, with snow, rain, and sleet, driven by such bitter blasts of wind, that they threatened to penetrate to the very bone.

"It's all in vain," said our hospitable host, "to think of putting one's head out of doors in such weather. So, gentlemen, I hold you my guests for this night at least, and will have your quarters prepared accordingly."

The unruly weather, which became more and more tempestuous, rendered the hospitable suggestion unanswerable. The only question was, whether such an unexpected accession of company to an already crowded house would not put the housekeeper to her trumps to accommodate them.

"Pshaw," cried mine host, "did you ever know of a bachelor's hall that was not elastic, and able to accommodate twice as many as it could hold?" So, out of a good-humoured pique, the housekeeper was summoned to a consultation before us all. The old lady appeared in her gala suit of faded brocade, which rustled with flurry and agitation; for, in spite of our host's bravado, she was a little perplexed. But in a bachelor's house, and with bachelor guests, these matters are readily managed. There is no lady of the house to stand upon squeamish points about lodging gentlemen in odd holes and corners, and exposing the shabby parts of the establishment. A bachelor's housekeeper is used to shifts and emergencies; so, after

much worrying to and fro, and divers consultations about the red-room, and the blue-room, and the chintz-room, and the damask-room, and the little room with the bow-window, the matter was finally arranged.

When all this was done, we were once more summoned to the standing rural amusement of eating. The time that had been consumed in dozing after dinner, and in the refreshment and consultation of the cedar-parlour, was sufficient, in the opinion of the rosy-faced butler, to engender a reasonable appetite for supper. A slight repast had, therefore, been tricked up from the residue of dinner, consisting of a cold sirloin of beef, hashed venison, a devilled leg of a turkey or so, and a few other of those light articles taken by country gentlemen to insure sound sleep and heavy snoring.

The nap after dinner had brightened up every one's wit; and a great deal of excellent humour was expended upon the perplexities of mine host and his housekeeper, by certain married gentlemen of the company, who considered themselves privileged in joking with a bachelor's establishment. From this the banter turned as to what quarters each would find, on being thus suddenly billeted in so antiquated a mansion.

"By my soul," said an Irish captain of dragoons, one of the most merry and boisterous of the party, "by my soul, but I should not be surprised if some of those good-looking gentlefolks that hang along the walls should walk about the rooms of this stormy night; or if I should find the ghost of one of those long-waisted ladies turning into my bed in mistake for her grave in the church-yard."

"Do you believe in ghosts, then?" said a thin hatchet-faced gentleman, with projecting eyes like a lobster.

I had remarked this last personage during dinner-time for one of those incessant questioners, who have a craving, unhealthy appetite in conversation. He never seemed satisfied with the whole of a story; never laughed when others laughed; but always put the joke to the question. He never could enjoy the kernel of the nut, but pestered himself to

get more out of the shell.—“Do you believe in ghosts, then?” said the inquisitive gentleman.

“Faith but I do,” replied the jovial Irishman. “I was brought up in the fear and belief of them. We had a Benshee in our own family, honey.”

“A Benshee! and what’s that?” cried the questioner.

“Why, an old lady ghost that tends upon your real Milesian families, and waits at their window to let them know when some of them are to die.”

“A mighty pleasant piece of information!” cried an elderly gentleman with a knowing look, and with a flexible nose, to which he could give a whimsical twist when he wished to be waggish.

“By my soul, but I’d have you to know it’s a piece of distinction to be waited on by a Benshee. It’s a proof that one has pure blood in one’s veins. But i’faith, now we are talking of ghosts, there never was a house or a night better fitted than the present for a ghost adventure. Pray, Sir John, haven’t you such a thing as a haunted chamber to put a guest in?”

“Perhaps,” said the baronet, smiling, “I might accommodate you even on that point.”

“Oh, I should like it of all things, my jewel. Some dark oaken room, with ugly, wo-begone portraits, that stare dismally at one; and about which the housekeeper has a power of delightful stories of love and murder. And then a dim lamp, a table with a rusty sword across it, and a spectre all in white, to draw aside one’s curtains at midnight—”

“In truth,” said an old gentleman at one end of the table, “you put me in mind of an anecdote—”

“Oh, a ghost story! a ghost story!” was vociferated round the board, every one edging his chair a little nearer.

The attention of the whole company was now turned upon the speaker. He was an old gentleman, one side of whose face was no match for the other. The eyelid drooped and hung down like an unhinged window-shutter. Indeed the whole side of his head was dilapidated, and seemed like the wing of a house shut up and haunted. I’ll warrant that side was well stuffed with ghost stories.

There was a universal demand for the tale.

“Nay,” said the old gentleman, “it’s a mere anecdote, and a very commonplace one; but such as it is you shall have it. It is a story that I once heard my uncle tell as having happened to himself. He was a man very apt to meet with strange adventures. I have heard him tell of others much more singular.”

“What kind of a man was your uncle?” said the questioning gentleman.

“Why, he was rather a dry, shrewd kind of body; a great traveller, and fond of telling his adventures.”

“Pray, how old might he have been when that happened?”

“When what happened?” cried the gentleman with the flexible nose, impatiently. “Egad, you have not given any thing a chance to happen. Come, never mind your uncle’s age; let us have his adventures.”

The inquisitive gentleman being for the moment silenced, the old gentleman with the haunted head proceeded.

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#### THE ADVENTURE OF MY UNCLE.

MANY years since, some time before the French revolution, my uncle had passed several months at Paris. The English and French were on better terms in those days than at present, and mingled cordially together in society. The English went abroad to spend money then, and the French were always ready to help them: they go abroad to save money at present, and that they can do without French assistance. Perhaps the travelling English were fewer and choicer then than at present, when the whole nation has broke loose and inundated the continent. At any rate, they circulated more readily and currently in foreign society, and my uncle, during his residence in Paris, made many very intimate acquaintances among the French noblesse.

Some time afterwards, he was making a journey in the winter time in that part of Normandy called the Pays de Caux, when, as evening was closing in, he per-

ceived the turrets of an ancient chateau rising out of the trees of its walled park; each turret, with its high conical roof of gray slate, like a candle with an extinguisher on it.

"To whom does that chateau belong, friend?" cried my uncle to a meagre but fiery postilion, who, with tremendous jack-boots and cocked hat, was floundering on before him.

"To Monseigneur the Marquis de —," said the postilion, touching his hat, partly out of respect to my uncle, and partly out of reverence to the noble name pronounced.

My uncle recollected the marquis for a particular friend in Paris, who had often expressed a wish to see him at his paternal chateau. My uncle was an old traveller, one who knew well how to turn things to account. He revolved for a few moments in his mind how agreeable it would be to his friend the marquis to be surprised in this sociable way by a pop visit; and how much more agreeable to himself to get into snug quarters in a chateau, and have a relish of the marquis's well-known kitchen, and a smack of his superior Champagne and Burgundy, rather than put up with the miserable lodgment and miserable fare of a provincial inn. In a few minutes, therefore, the meagre postilion was cracking his whip like a very devil, or like a true Frenchman, up the long straight avenue that led to the chateau.

You have no doubt all seen French chateaus, as every body travels in France now-a-days. This was one of the oldest; standing naked and alone in the midst of a desert of gravel walks and cold stone terraces; with a cold-looking formal garden, cut into angles and rhomboids; and a cold leafless park, divided geometrically by straight alleys; and two or three cold-looking noseless statues; and fountains spouting cold water enough to make one's teeth chatter. At least such was the feeling they imparted on the wintry day of my uncle's visit; though, in hot summer weather, I'll warrant there was glare enough to scorch one's eyes out.

The smacking of the postilion's whip, which grew more and more intense the nearer they approached, frightened a

flight of pigeons out of the dove-cot, and rooks out of the roofs, and finally a crew of servants out of the chateau, with the marquis at their head. He was enchanted to see my uncle, for his chateau, like the house of our worthy host, had not many more guests at the time than it could accommodate. So he kissed my uncle on each cheek, after the French fashion, and ushered him into the castle.

The marquis did the honours of his house with the urbanity of his country. In fact, he was proud of his old family chateau, for part of it was extremely old. There was a tower and chapel which had been built almost before the memory of man; but the rest was more modern, the castle having been nearly demolished during the wars of the League. The marquis dwelt upon this event with great satisfaction, and seemed really to entertain a grateful feeling towards Henry the Fourth, for having thought his paternal mansion worth battering down. He had many stories to tell of the prowess of his ancestors; and several scull-caps, helmets, and cross-bows, and divers huge boots, and buff jerkins, to show, which had been worn by the Leaguers. Above all, there was a two-handed sword, which he could hardly wield, but which he displayed, as a proof that there had been giants in his family.

In truth, he was but a small descendant from such great warriors. When you looked at their bluff visages and brawny limbs, as depicted in their portraits, and then at the little marquis, with his spindle shanks, and his sallow lantern visage, flanked with a pair of powdered ear-locks, or *ailles de pigeon*, that seemed ready to fly away with it, you could hardly believe him to be of the same race. But when you looked at the eyes that sparkled out like a beetle's from each side of his hooked nose, you saw at once that he inherited all the fiery spirit of his forefathers. In fact, a Frenchman's spirit never exhales, however his body may dwindle. It rather rarifies, and grows more inflammable, as the earthy particles diminish; and I have seen valour enough in a little fiery-hearted French dwarf to have furnished out a tolerable giant.

When once the marquis, as he was

wont, put on one of the old helmets that were stuck up in his hall, though his head no more filled it than a dry pea its peascod, yet his eyes flashed from the bottom of the iron cavern with the brilliancy of carbuncles; and when he poised the ponderous two-handed sword of his ancestors, you would have thought you saw the doughty little David wielding the sword of Goliath, which was unto him like a weaver's beam.

However, gentlemen, I am dwelling too long on this description of the marquis and his chateau, but you must excuse me; he was an old friend of my uncle; and whenever my uncle told the story, he was always fond of talking a great deal about his host. Poor little marquis! He was one of that handful of gallant courtiers who made such a devoted but hopeless stand in the cause of their sovereign, in the chateau of the Tuileries, against the irruption of the mob on the sad tenth of August. He displayed the valour of a preux French chevalier to the last; flourished feebly his little court-sword with a *ça-ça!* in face of a whole legion of *sans-culottes*: but was pinned to the wall like a butterfly, by the pike of a *poissarde*, and his heroic soul was borne up to Heaven on his *ailes de pigeon*.

But all this has nothing to do with my story. To the point then—When the hour arrived for retiring for the night, my uncle was shown to his room in a venerable old tower. It was the oldest part of the chateau, and had in ancient times been the donjon or stronghold; of course the chamber was none of the best. The marquis had put him there, however, because he knew him to be a traveller of taste, and fond of antiquities; and also because the better apartments were already occupied. Indeed, he perfectly reconciled my uncle to his quarters by mentioning the great personages who had once inhabited them, all of whom were, in some way or other, connected with the family. If you would take his word for it, John Baliol, or as he called him, Jean de Bailleul, had died of chagrin in this very chamber, on hearing of the success of his rival, Robert the Bruce, at the battle of Bannockburn. And when he added that the

Duke de Guise had slept in it, my uncle was fain to felicitate himself on being honoured with such distinguished quarters.

The night was shrewd and windy, and the chamber none of the warmest. An old long-faced, long-bodied servant, in quaint livery, who attended upon my uncle, threw down an armful of wood beside the fireplace, gave a queer look about the room, and then wished him *bon repos* with a grimace and a shrug that would have been suspicious from any other than an old French servant.

The chamber had indeed a wild crazy look, enough to strike any one who had read romances with apprehension and foreboding. The windows were high and narrow, and had once been loopholes, but had been rudely enlarged, as well as the extreme thickness of the walls would permit; and the ill-fitted casements rattled to every breeze. You would have thought, on a windy night, some of the old leaguers were tramping and clanking about the apartment in their huge boots and rattling spurs. A door which stood ajar, and, like a true French door, would stand ajar in spite of every reason and effort to the contrary, opened upon a long dark corridor, that led the Lord knows whither, and seemed just made for ghosts to air themselves in, when they turned out of their graves at midnight. The wind would spring up into a hoarse murmur through this passage, and creak the door to and fro, as if some dubious ghost were balancing in its mind whether to come in or not. In a word, it was precisely the kind of comfortless apartment that a ghost, if ghost there were in the chateau, would single out for its favourite lounge.

My uncle, however, though a man accustomed to meet with strange adventures, apprehended none at the time. He made several attempts to shut the door, but in vain. Not that he apprehended any thing, for he was too old a traveller to be daunted by a wild-looking apartment; but the night, as I have said, was cold and gusty, and the wind howled about the old turret pretty much as it does round this old mansion at this moment; and the breeze from the long dark corridor came in as damp and chilly as

if from a dungeon. My uncle, therefore, since he could not close the door, threw a quantity of wood on the fire, which soon sent up a flame in the great wide-mouthed chimney that illumined the whole chamber, and made the shadow of the tongs on the opposite wall look like a long-legged giant. My uncle now clambered on the top of the half-score of mattresses which form a French bed, and which stood in a deep recess; then tucking himself snugly in, and burying himself up to the chin in the bed-clothes, he lay looking at the fire, and listening to the wind, and thinking how knowingly he had come over his friend the marquis for a night's lodging—and so he fell asleep.

He had not taken above half of his first nap when he was awakened by the clock of the chateau, in the turret over his chamber, which struck midnight. It was just such an old clock as ghosts are fond of. It had a deep, dismal tone, and struck so slowly and tediously that my uncle thought it would never have done. He counted and counted till he was confident he counted thirteen, and then it stopped.

The fire had burnt low, and the blaze of the last fagot was almost expiring, burning in small blue flames, which now and then lengthened up into little white gleams. My uncle lay with his eyes half closed, and his nightcap drawn almost down to his nose. His fancy was already wandering, and began to mingle up the present scene with the crater of Vesuvius, the French Opera, the Coliseum at Rome, Dolly's chop-house in London, and all the farrago of noted places with which the brain of a traveller is crammed: in a word, he was just falling asleep.

Suddenly he was aroused by the sound of footsteps, that appeared to be slowly pacing along the corridor. My uncle, as I have often heard him say himself, was a man not easily frightened. So he lay quiet, supposing that this might be some other guest, or some servant on his way to bed. The footsteps, however, approached the door; the door gently opened; whether of its own accord, or whether pushed open, my uncle could not distinguish: a figure all in white glided in. It was a female, tall and

stately in person, and of a most commanding air. Her dress was of an ancient fashion, ample in volume, and sweeping the floor. She walked up to the fireplace, without regarding my uncle, who raised his nightcap with one hand, and stared earnestly at her. She remained for some time standing by the fire, which, flashing up at intervals, cast blue and white gleams of light, that enabled my uncle to remark her appearance minutely.

Her face was ghastly pale, and perhaps rendered still more so by the bluish light of the fire. It possessed beauty, but its beauty was saddened by care and anxiety. There was the look of one accustomed to trouble, but of one whom trouble could not cast down or subdue; for there was still the predominating air of proud unconquerable resolution. Such at least was the opinion formed by my uncle, and he considered himself a great physiognomist.

The figure remained, as I said, for some time by the fire, putting out first one hand, then the other; then each foot alternately, as if warming itself; for your ghosts, if ghost it really was, are apt to be cold. My uncle, furthermore, remarked that it wore high-heeled shoes, after an ancient fashion, with paste or diamond buckles, that sparkled as though they were alive. At length the figure turned gently round, casting a glassy look about the apartment, which, as it passed over my uncle, made his blood run cold, and chilled the very marrow in his bones. It then stretched its arms towards heaven, clasped its hands, and wringing them in a supplicating manner, glided slowly out of the room.

My uncle lay for some time meditating on this visitation, for (as he remarked when he told me the story) though a man of firmness, he was also a man of reflection, and did not reject a thing because it was out of the regular course of events. However, being, as I have before said, a great traveller, and accustomed to strange adventures, he drew his nightcap resolutely over his eyes, turned his back to the door, hoisted the bed-clothes high over his shoulders, and gradually fell asleep.

How long he slept he could not say, when he was awakened by the voice of some one at his bedside. He turned round, and beheld the old French servant, with his earlocks in tight buckles on each side of a long lantern-face, on which habit had deeply wrinkled an everlasting smile. He made a thousand grimaces, and asked a thousand pardons for disturbing Monsieur, but the morning was considerably advanced. While my uncle was dressing, he called vaguely to mind the visitor of the preceding night. He asked the ancient domestic what lady was in the habit of rambling about this part of the chateau at night. The old valet shrugged his shoulders as high as his head, laid one hand on his bosom, threw open the other with every finger extended, made a most whimsical grimace, which he meant to be complimentary :

“It was not for him to know any thing of *les bonnes fortunes* of Monsieur.”

My uncle saw there was nothing satisfactory to be learnt in this quarter. After breakfast, he was walking with the Marquis through the modern apartments of the chateau, sliding over the well-waxed floors of silken saloons, amidst furniture rich in gilding and brocade, until they came to a long picture-gallery, containing many portraits, some in oil and some in chalks.

Here was an ample field for the eloquence of his host, who had all the pride of a nobleman of the *ancien régime*. There was not a grand name in Normandy, and hardly one in France, which was not, in some way or other, connected with his house. My uncle stood listening with inward impatience, resting sometimes on one leg, sometimes on the other, as the little marquis descanted, with his usual fire and vivacity, on the achievements of his ancestors, whose portraits hung along the wall; from the martial deeds of the stern warriors in steel, to the gallantries and intrigues of the blue-eyed gentlemen, with fair smiling faces, powdered ear-locks, laced ruffles, and pink and blue silk coats and breeches; —not forgetting the conquests of the lovely shepherdesses with hooped petticoats and waists no thicker than an hour-glass, who appeared ruling over their sheep and

their swains, with dainty crooks decorated with fluttering ribands.

In the midst of his friend's discourse, my uncle was startled on beholding a full-length portrait, which seemed to him the very counterpart of his visitor of the preceding night.

“Methinks,” said he, pointing to it, “I have seen the original of this portrait.”

“Pardonnez-moi,” replied the marquis politely, “that can hardly be, as the lady has been dead more than a hundred years. That was the beautiful Duchess de Longueville, who figured during the minority of Louis the Fourteenth.”

“And was there any thing remarkable in her history?”

Never was question more unlucky. The little marquis immediately threw himself into the attitude of a man about to tell a long story. In fact, my uncle had pulled upon himself the whole history of the civil war of the Fronde, in which the beautiful duchess had played so distinguished a part. Turenne, Coligny, Mazarine, were called up from their graves to grace his narration; nor were the affairs of the Barricadoes, nor the chivalry of the Port Cocheres forgotten. My uncle began to wish himself a thousand leagues off from the marquis and his merciless memory, when suddenly the little man's recollections took a more interesting turn. He was relating the imprisonment of the Duke de Longueville with the Princes Condé and Conti in the chateau of Vincennes, and the ineffectual efforts of the duchess to rouse the sturdy Normans to their rescue. He had come to that part where she was invested by the royal forces in the Castle of Dieppe.

“The spirit of the duchess,” proceeded the marquis, “rose with her trials. It was astonishing to see so delicate and beautiful a being buffet so resolutely with hardships. She determined on a desperate means of escape. You may have seen the chateau in which she was mewed up; an old ragged wart of an edifice standing on the knuckle of a hill, just above the rusty little town of Dieppe. One dark unruly night she issued secretly out of a small postern-gate of the castle, which the enemy had neglected

to guard. The postern-gate is there to this very day; opening upon a narrow bridge over a deep fosse between the castle and the brow of the hill. She was followed by her female attendants, a few domestics, and some gallant cavaliers, who still remained faithful to her fortunes. Her object was to gain a small port about two leagues distant, where she had privately provided a vessel for her escape in case of emergency.

"The little band of fugitives were obliged to perform the distance on foot. When they arrived at the port the wind was high and stormy, the tide contrary, the vessel anchored far off in the road; and no means of getting on board but by a fishing shallop that lay tossing like a cockle-shell on the edge of the surf. The duchess determined to risk the attempt. The seamen endeavoured to dissuade her, but the imminence of her danger on shore, and the magnanimity of her spirit, urged her on. She had to be borne to the shallop in the arms of a mariner. Such was the violence of the winds and waves that he faltered, lost his foothold, and let his precious burthen fall into the sea.

"The duchess was nearly drowned, but partly through her own struggles, partly by the exertions of the seamen, she got to land. As soon as she had a little recovered strength, she insisted on renewing the attempt. The storm, however, had by this time become so violent as to set all efforts at defiance. To delay, was to be discovered and taken prisoner. As the only resource left, she procured horses, mounted, with her female attendants, *en croupe* behind the gallant gentlemen who accompanied her, and scoured the country to seek some temporary asylum.

"While the duchess," continued the marquis, laying his forefinger on my uncle's breast to arouse his flagging attention, "while the duchess, poor lady, was wandering amid the tempest in this disconsolate manner, she arrived at this chateau. Her approach caused some uneasiness; for the clattering of a troop of horse at dead of night up the avenue of a lonely chateau, in those unsettled times, and in a troubled part of the country, was enough to occasion alarm.

"A tall, broad-shouldered chasseur,

armed to the teeth, galloped ahead, and announced the name of the visiter. All uneasiness was dispelled. The household turned out with flambeaux to receive her; and never did torches gleam on a more weatherbeaten, travel-stained band than came tramping into the court. Such pale, care-worn faces, such be-draggled dresses, as the poor duchess and her females presented, each seated behind her cavalier: while the half-drenched, half-drowsy pages and attendants seemed ready to fall from their horses with sleep and fatigue.

"The duchess was received with a hearty welcome by my ancestor. She was ushered into the hall of the chateau, and the fires soon crackled and blazed, to cheer her and her train; and every spit and stewpan was put in requisition to prepare ample refreshments for the wayfarers.

"She had a right to our hospitalities," continued the marquis, drawing himself up with a slight degree of stateliness, "for she was related to our family. I'll tell you how it was. Her father, Henry de Bourbon, Prince of Condé——"

"But, did the Duchess pass the night in the chateau?" said my uncle rather abruptly, terrified at the idea of getting involved in one of the marquis's genealogical discussions.

"Oh, as to the duchess, she was put into the very apartment you occupied last night, which at that time was a kind of state-apartment. Her followers were quartered in the chambers opening upon the neighbouring corridor, and her favourite page slept in an adjoining closet. Up and down the corridor walked the great chasseur who had announced her arrival, and who acted as a kind of sentinel or guard. He was a dark, stern, powerful-looking fellow; and as the light of a lamp in the corridor fell upon his deeply-marked face and sinewy form, he seemed capable of defending the castle with his single arm.

"It was a rough, rude night; about this time of year—apropos!—now I think of it, last night was the anniversary of her visit. I may well remember the precise date, for it was a night not to be forgotten by our house. There is a singular tradition concerning it in our fami-



ly." Here the marquis hesitated, and a cloud seemed to gather about his bushy eyebrows. "There is a tradition—that a strange occurrence took place that night—a strange, mysterious, inexplicable occurrence—" Here he checked himself, and paused.

"Did it relate to that lady?" inquired my uncle eagerly.

"It was past the hour of midnight," resumed the marquis,—“when the whole chateau——” Here he paused again. My uncle made a movement of anxious curiosity.

"Excuse me," said the marquis, a slight blush streaking his sallow visage. "There are some circumstances connected with our family history which I do not like to relate. That was a rude period. A time of great crimes among great men: for you know high blood, when it runs wrong, will not run tamely like blood of the *canaille*—poor lady!—But I have a little family pride—that—excuse me—we will change the subject, if you please—"

My uncle's curiosity was piqued. The pompous and magnificent introduction had led him to expect something wonderful in the story to which it served as a kind of avenue. He had no idea of being cheated out of it by a sudden fit of unreasonable squeamishness. Besides, being a traveller in quest of information, he considered it his duty to inquire into every thing.

The marquis, however, evaded every question. "Well," said my uncle, a little petulantly, "whatever you may think of it, I saw that lady last night."

The marquis stepped back and gazed at him with surprise.

"She paid me a visit in my chamber."

The marquis pulled out his snuff-box with a shrug and a smile; taking this no doubt for an awkward piece of English pleasantry, which politeness required him to be charmed with.

My uncle went on gravely, however, and related the whole circumstance. The marquis heard him through with profound attention, holding his snuff-box unopened in his hand. When the story was finished, he tapped on the lid of his box deliberately, took a long, sonorous pinch of snuff—

"Bah!" said the Marquis, and walked towards the other end of the gallery.

Here the narrator paused. The company waited for some time for him to resume his narration; but he continued silent.

"Well," said the inquisitive gentleman—"and what did your uncle say then?"

"Nothing," replied the other.

"And what did the marquis say further?"

"Nothing."

"And is that all?"

"That is all," said the narrator, filling a glass of wine.

"I surmise," said the shrewd old gentleman with the waggish nose, "I surmise the ghost must have been the old housekeeper walking her rounds to see that all was right."

"Bah!" said the narrator. "My uncle was too much accustomed to strange sights not to know a ghost from a housekeeper!"

There was a murmur round the table half of merriment, half of disappointment. I was inclined to think the old gentleman had really an after-part of his story in reserve; but he sipped his wine and said nothing more; and there was an odd expression about his dilapidated countenance that left me in doubt whether he were in drollery or earnest.

"Egad," said the knowing gentleman, with the flexible nose, "the story of your uncle puts me in mind of one that used to be told of an aunt of mine, by the mother's side; though I don't know that it will bear a comparison, as the good lady was not so prone to meet with strange adventures. But at any rate you shall have it."

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#### THE ADVENTURE OF MY AUNT.

My aunt was a lady of large frame, strong mind, and great resolution: she was what might be termed a very manly woman. My uncle was a thin, puny, little man, very meek and acquiescent, and no match for my aunt. It was observed that he dwindled and dwindled gradually away, from the day of his

marriage. His wife's powerful mind was too much for him; it wore him out. My aunt, however, took all possible care of him; had half the doctors in town to prescribe for him; made him take all their prescriptions, and dosed him with physic enough to cure a whole hospital. All was in vain. My uncle grew worse and worse the more dosing and nursing he underwent, until in the end he added another to the long list of matrimonial victims who have been killed with kindness.

"And was it his ghost that appeared to her?" asked the inquisitive gentleman, who had questioned the former story-teller.

"You shall hear," replied the narrator. My aunt took on mightily for the death of her poor dear husband. Perhaps she felt some compunction at having given him so much physic, and nursed him into his grave. At any rate, she did all that a widow could do to honour his memory. She spared no expense in either the quantity or quality of her mourning weeds; she wore a miniature of him about her neck as large as a little sun-dial; and she had a full-length portrait of him always hanging in her bedchamber. All the world extolled her conduct to the skies; and it was determined that a woman who behaved so well to the memory of one husband deserved soon to get another.

It was not long after this that she went to take up her residence in an old country-seat in Derbyshire, which had long been in the care of merely a steward and housekeeper. She took most of her servants with her, intending to make it her principal abode. The house stood in a lonely, wild part of the country, among the gray Derbyshire hills, with a murderer hanging in chains on a bleak height in full view.

The servants from town were half frightened out of their wits at the idea of living in such a dismal, pagan-looking place; especially when they got together in the servants' hall in the evening, and compared notes on all the hobgoblin stories they had picked up in the course of the day. They were afraid to venture alone about the gloomy, black-looking chambers. My lady's maid, who

was troubled with nerves, declared she could never sleep alone in such a "gashly rummaging old building;" and the footman, who was a kind-hearted young fellow, did all in his power to cheer her up.

My aunt herself seemed to be struck with the lonely appearance of the house. Before she went to bed, therefore, she examined well the fastenings of the doors and windows; locked up the plate with her own hands, and carried the keys, together with a little box of money and jewels, to her own room; for she was a notable woman, and always saw to all things herself. Having put the keys under her pillow, and dismissed her maid, she sat by her toilet arranging her hair; for being, in spite of her grief for my uncle, rather a buxom widow, she was somewhat particular about her person. She sat for a little while looking at her face in the glass, first on one side, then on the other, as ladies are apt to do when they would ascertain whether they have been in good looks; for a roistering country squire of the neighbourhood, with whom she had flirted when a girl, had called that day to welcome her to the country.

All of a sudden she thought she heard something move behind her. She looked hastily round, but there was nothing to be seen. Nothing but the grimly painted portrait of her poor dear man, which had been hung against the wall.

She gave a heavy sigh to his memory, as she was accustomed to do whenever she spoke of him in company, and then went on adjusting her night-dress, and thinking of the squire. Her sigh was echoed, or answered by a long-drawn breath. She looked round again, but no one was to be seen. She ascribed these sounds to the wind oozing through the rat-holes of the old mansion, and proceeded leisurely to put her hair in papers, when all at once, she thought she perceived one of the eyes of the portrait move.

"The back of her head being toward it!" said the story-teller with the ruined head, "good!"

"Yes, sir!" replied drily the narrator; "her back being toward the portrait, but her eyes fixed on its reflection in the

glass." Well, as I was saying, she perceived one of the eyes of the portrait move. So strange a circumstance, as you may well suppose, gave her a sudden shock. To assure herself of the fact, she put one hand to her forehead as if rubbing it, peeped through her fingers, and moved the candle with the other hand. The light of the taper gleamed on the eye, and was reflected from it. She was sure it moved. Nay more, it seemed to give her a wink, as she had sometimes known her husband to do when living! It struck a momentary chill to her heart; for she was a lone woman, and felt herself fearfully situated. The chill was but transient. My aunt, who was almost as resolute a personage as your uncle, sir [turning to the old story-teller], became instantly calm and collected. She went on adjusting her dress. She even hummed an air, and did not make a single false note. She casually overturned a dressing-box; took a candle and picked up the articles one by one from the floor; pursued a rolling pincushion that was making the best of its way under the bed; then opened the door; looked for an instant into the corridor, as if in doubt whether to go; and then walked quietly out.

She hastened down stairs, ordered the servants to arm themselves with the weapons that first came to hand, placed herself at their head, and returned almost immediately.

Her hastily-levied army presented a formidable force. The steward had a rusty blunderbuss, the coachman a loaded whip, the footman a pair of horse-pistols, the cook a huge chopping-knife, and the butler a bottle in each hand. My aunt led the van with a red-hot poker, and in my opinion, she was the most formidable of the party. The waiting-maid, who dreaded to stay alone in the servants' hall, brought up the rear, smelling to a broken bottle of volatile salts, and expressing her terror of the ghostesses.

"Ghosts!" said my aunt resolutely. "I'll singe their whiskers for them!"

They entered the chamber. All was still and undisturbed as when she had left it. They approached the portrait of my uncle.

"Pull me down that picture!" cried my aunt. A heavy groan, and a sound like the chattering of teeth, issued from the portrait. The servants shrunk back; the maid uttered a faint shriek, and clung to the footman for support.

"Instantly!" added my aunt, with a stamp of the foot.

The picture was pulled down, and from a recess behind it, in which had formerly stood a clock, they hauled forth a round-shouldered, black-bearded varlet, with a knife as long as my arm, but trembling all over like an aspen leaf.

"Well, and who was he? No ghost, I suppose," said the inquisitive gentleman.

"A Knight of the Post," replied the narrator, "who had been smitten with the worth of the wealthy widow; or rather a marauding Tarquin, who had stolen into her chamber to violate her purse, and rifle her strong-box, when all the house should be asleep. In plain terms," continued he, "the vagabond was a loose idle fellow of the neighbourhood, who had once been a servant in the house, and had been employed to assist in arranging it for the reception of its mistress. He confessed that he had contrived this hiding-place for his nefarious purposes, and had borrowed an eye from the portrait by way of a reconnoitring-hole."

"And what did they do with him?—did they hang him?" resumed the questioner.

"Hang him!—how could they?" exclaimed a beetle-browed barrister, with a hawk's nose. "The offence was not capital. No robbery, no assault had been committed. No forcible entry or breaking into the premises."

"My aunt," said the narrator, "was a woman of spirit, and apt to take the law in her own hands. She had her own notions of cleanliness also. She ordered the fellow to be drawn through the horse-pond, to cleanse away all offences, and then to be well rubbed down with an oaken towel."

"And what became of him afterwards?" said the inquisitive gentleman.

"I do not exactly know. I believe he was sent on a voyage of improvement to Botany Bay."

"And your aunt," said the inquisitive gentleman; "I'll warrant she took care to make her maid sleep in the room with her after that."

"No, sir, she did better; she gave her hand shortly after to the roistering squire; for she used to observe, that it was a dismal thing for a woman to sleep alone in the country."

"She was right," observed the inquisitive gentleman, nodding sagaciously; "but I am sorry they did not hang that fellow."

It was agreed on all hands that the last narrator had brought his tale to the most satisfactory conclusion, though a country clergyman present regretted that the uncle and aunt, who figured in the different stories, had not been married together: they certainly would have been well matched.

"But I don't see, after all," said the inquisitive gentleman, "that there was any ghost in this last story."

"Oh! if it's ghosts you want, honey," cried the Irish Captain of Dragoons, "if it's ghosts you want, you shall have a whole regiment of them. And since these gentlemen have given the adventures of their uncles and aunts, faith and I'll even give you a chapter out of my own family history."

## THE BOLD DRAGOON;

OR, THE

### ADVENTURE OF MY GRANDFATHER.

My grandfather was a bold dragoon, for it's a profession, d'ye see, that has run in the family. All my forefathers have been dragoons, and died on the field of honour, except myself, and I hope my posterity may be able to say the same; however, I don't mean to be vainglorious. Well, my grandfather, as I said, was a bold dragoon, and had served in the Low Countries. In fact, he was one of that very army, which, according to my uncle Toby, swore so terribly in Flanders. He could swear a good stick himself; and moreover was the very man that introduced the doctrine Corporal Trim mentions of radical

heat and radical moisture; or, in other words, the mode of keeping out the damps of ditch-water by burnt brandy. Be that as it may, it's nothing to the purport of my story. I only tell it to show you that my grandfather was a man not easily to be humbugged. He had seen service, or, according to his own phrase, he had seen the devil—and that's saying every thing.

Well, gentlemen, my grandfather was on his way to England, for which he intended to embark from Ostend—bad luck to the place! for one where I was kept by storms and head-winds for three long days, and the devil of a jolly companion or pretty face to comfort me. Well, as I was saying, my grandfather was on his way to England, or rather to Ostend—no matter which, it's all the same. So one evening, towards night-fall, he rode jollily into Bruges—very like you all know Bruges, gentlemen; a queer old-fashioned Flemish town, once, they say, a great place for trade and money-making in old times, when the Mynheers were in their glory; but almost as large and as empty as an Irishman's pocket at the present day. Well, gentlemen, it was at the time of the annual fair. All Bruges was crowded; and the canals swarmed with Dutch boats, and the streets swarmed with Dutch merchants; and there was hardly any getting along for goods, wares, and merchandises, and peasants in big breeches, and women in half a score of petticoats.

My grandfather rode jollily along, in his easy slashing way, for he was a saucy sunshiny fellow,—staring about him at the motley crowd, and the old houses with gable-ends to the street, and storks' nests on the chimneys; winking at the yafrows who showed their faces at the windows, and joking the women right and left in the street; all of whom laughed, and took it in amazing good part; for though he did not know a word of the language, yet he had always a knack of making himself understood among the women.

Well, gentlemen, it being the time of the annual fair, all the town was crowded, every inn and tavern full, and my grandfather applied in vain from one to the

other for admittance. At length he rode up to an old rickety inn that looked ready to fall to pieces, and which all the rats would have run away from if they could have found room in any other house to put their heads. It was just such a queer building as you see in Dutch pictures, with a tall roof that reached up into the clouds, and as many garrets, one over the other, as the seven heavens of Mahomet. Nothing had saved it from tumbling down but a stork's nest on the chimney, which always brings good luck to a house in the Low Countries; and at the very time of my grandfather's arrival there were two of these long-legged birds of grace standing like ghosts on the chimney-top. Faith, but they've kept the house on its legs to this very day, for you may see it any time you pass through Bruges, as it stands there yet; only it is turned into a brewery of strong Flemish beer,—at least it was so when I came that way after the battle of Waterloo.

My grandfather eyed the house curiously as he approached. It might not have altogether struck his fancy, had he not seen in large letters over the door,

**HEER VERKOOPT MAN GOEDEN DRANK.**

My grandfather had learned enough of the language to know that the sign promised good liquor. "This is the house for me," said he, stopping short before the door.

The sudden appearance of a dashing dragoon was an event in an old inn, frequented only by the peaceful sons of traffic. A rich burgher of Antwerp, a stately ample man in a broad Flemish hat, and who was the great man, and great patron of the establishment, sat smoking a clean long pipe on one side of the door; a fat little distiller of Geneva, from Schiedam, sat smoking on the other; and the bottle-nosed host stood in the door; and the comely hostess, in crimped cap, beside him; and the hostess's daughter, a plump Flanders lass, with long gold pendants in her ears, was at a side window.

"Humph!" said the rich burgher of Antwerp, with a sulky glance at the stranger.

"Die duyvel!" said the fat little distiller of Schiedam.

The landlord saw, with the quick glance of a publican, that the new guest was not at all at all to the taste of the old ones; and, to tell the truth, he did not himself like my grandfather's saucy eye. He shook his head. "Not a garret in the house but was full."

"Not a garret!" echoed the landlady.

"Not a garret!" echoed the daughter.

The burgher of Antwerp, and the little distiller of Schiedam, continued to smoke their pipes sullenly, eyeing the enemy askance from under their broad hats, but said nothing.

My grandfather was not a man to be brow-beaten. He threw the reins on his horse's neck, cocked his head on one side, stuck one arm a-kimbo, "Faith and troth!" said he, "but I'll sleep in this house this very night." As he said this he gave a slap on his thigh, by way of emphasis—the slap went to the landlady's heart.

He followed up the vow by jumping off his horse, and making his way past the staring Mynheers into the public room. Maybe you've been in the bar-room of an old Flemish inn—faith, but a handsome chamber it was as you'd wish to see; with a brick floor, and a great fireplace, with the whole Bible history in glazed tiles; and then the mantel-piece, pitching itself head foremost out of the wall, with a whole regiment of cracked teapots and earthen jugs paraded on it; not to mention half a dozen great Delft platters, hung about the room by way of pictures; and the little bar in one corner, and the bouncing bar-maid inside of it, with a red calico cap and yellow ear-drops.

My grandfather snapped his fingers over his head, as he cast an eye round the room—"Faith this is the very house I've been looking after," said he.

There was some further show of resistance on the part of the garrison; but my grandfather was an old soldier, and an Irishman to boot, and not easily repulsed, especially after he had got into the fortress. So he blarneyed the landlord, kissed the landlord's wife, tickled the landlord's daughter, chucked the bar-maid under the chin; and it was agreed on all hands that it would be a thousand pities, and a burning shame into the bargain, to turn such a bold dragoon into

the streets. So they laid their heads together, that is to say, my grandfather and the landlady, and it was at length agreed to accommodate him with an old chamber that had been for some time shut up.

"Some say it's haunted," whispered the landlord's daughter; "but you are a bold dragoon, and I dare say don't fear ghosts."

"The divil a bit!" said my grandfather, pinching her plump cheek. "But if I should be troubled by ghosts, I've been to the Red Sea in my time, and have a pleasant way of laying them, my darling."

And then he whispered something to the girl which made her laugh, and give him a good-humoured box on the ear. In short, there was nobody knew better how to make his way among the petticoats than my grandfather.

In a little while, as was his usual way, he took complete possession of the house, swaggering all over it; into the stable to look after his horse, into the kitchen to look after his supper. He had something to say or do with every one; smoked with the Dutchmen, drank with the Germans, slapped the landlord on the shoulder, romped with his daughter and the barmaid:—never, since the days of Alley Croaker, had such a rattling blade been seen. The landlord stared at him with astonishment; the landlord's daughter hung her head and giggled whenever he came near; and as he swaggered along the corridor, with his sword trailing by his side, the maids looked after him, and whispered to one another, "What a proper man!"

At supper, my grandfather took command of the table-d'hôte as though he had been at home; helped every body, not forgetting himself; talked with every one, whether he understood their language or not; and made his way into the intimacy of the rich burgher of Antwerp, who had never been known to be sociable with any one during his life. In fact, he revolutionized the whole establishment, and gave it such a rouse that the very house reeled with it. He outsat every one at table excepting the little fat distiller of Schiedam, who sat soaking a long time before he broke forth;

but when he did, he was a very devil incarnate. He took a violent affection for my grandfather; so they sat drinking and smoking, and telling stories, and singing Dutch and Irish songs, without understanding a word each other said, until the little Hollander was fairly swamped with his own gin and water, and carried off to bed, whooping and hiccuping, and trolling the burthen of a Low Dutch love-song.

Well, gentlemen, my grandfather was shown to his quarters up a large staircase, composed of loads of hewn timber; and through long rigmarole passages, hung with blackened paintings of fish, and fruit, and game, and country frolics, and huge kitchens, and portly burgo-masters, such as you see about old-fashioned Flemish inns, till at length he arrived at his room.

An old-times chamber it was, sure enough, and crowded with all kinds of trumpery. It looked like an infirmary for decayed and superannuated furniture, where every thing diseased or disabled was sent to nurse or to be forgotten. Or rather it might be taken for a general congress of old legitimate movables, where every kind and country had a representative. No two chairs were alike. Such high backs and low backs, and leather bottoms, and worsted bottoms, and straw bottoms, and no bottoms; and cracked marble tables with curiously-carved legs, holding balls in their claws, as though they were going to play at nine-pins.

My grandfather made a bow to the motley assemblage as he entered, and, having undressed himself, placed his light in the fireplace, asking pardon of the tongs, which seemed to be making love to the shovel in the chimney-corner, and whispering soft nonsense in its ear.

The rest of the guests were by this time sound asleep, for your Mynheers are huge sleepers. The housemaids, one by one, crept up yawning to their attics, and not a female head in the inn was laid on a pillow that night without dreaming of the bold dragoon.

My grandfather, for his part, got into bed, and drew over him one of those great bags of down, under which they smother a man in the Low Countries;

and there he lay, melting between two feather-beds, like an anchovy sandwich between two slices of toast and butter. He was a warm-complexioned man, and this smothering played the very deuce with him. So, sure enough, in a little time it seemed as if a legion of imps were twitching at him, and all the blood in his veins was in a fever heat.

He lay still, however, until all the house was quiet, excepting the snoring of the Mynheers from the different chambers; who answered one another in all kinds of tones and cadences, like so many bull-frogs in a swamp. The quieter the house became, the more unquiet became my grandfather. He waxed warmer and warmer, until at length the bed became too hot to hold him.

"Maybe the maid had warmed it too much?" said the curious gentleman, inquiringly.

"I rather think the contrary," replied the Irishman—"But, be that as it may, it grew too hot for my grandfather."

"Faith, there's no standing this any longer," says he. So he jumped out of bed, and went strolling about the house.

"What for?" said the inquisitive gentleman.

"Why to cool himself, to be sure—or perhaps to find a more comfortable bed—or perhaps—But no matter what he went for—he never mentioned—and there's no use in taking up our time in conjecturing."

Well, my grandfather had been for some time absent from his room, and was returning, perfectly cool, when just as he reached the door he heard a strange noise within. He paused and listened. It seemed as if some one were trying to hum a tune in defiance of the asthma. He recollected the report of the room being haunted; but he was no believer in ghosts, so he pushed the door gently open and peeped in.

Egad, gentlemen, there was a gambol carrying on within enough to have astonished St. Anthony himself. By the light of the fire he saw a pale weazen-faced fellow in a long flannel gown and a tall white nightcap with a tassel to it, who sat by the fire with a bellows under his arm by way of bagpipe, from which he forced the asthmatical music that had

bothered my grandfather. As he played, too, he kept twitching about with a thousand queer contortions, nodding his head, and bobbing about his tasselled nightcap.

My grandfather thought this very odd and mighty presumptuous, and was about to demand what business he had to play his wind-instrument in another gentleman's quarters, when a new cause of astonishment met his eye. From the opposite side of the room a long-backed, bandy-legged chair covered with leather, and studded all over in a coxcombical fashion with little brass nails, got suddenly into motion, thrust out first a claw foot, then a crooked arm, and at length, making a leg, slid gracefully up to an easy chair of tarnished brocade, with a hole in its bottom, and led it gallantly out in a ghostly minuet about the floor.

The musician now played fiercer and fiercer, and bobbed his head and his nightcap about like mad. By degrees the dancing mania seemed to seize upon all the other pieces of furniture. The antique, long-bodied chairs paired off in couples and led down a country dance; a three-legged stool danced a hornpipe, though horribly puzzled by its super-numerary limbs; while the amorous tongs seized the shovel round the waist, and whirled it about the room in a German waltz. In short, all the movables got in motion: pirouetting, hands across, right and left, like so many devils; all except a great clothes-press, which kept courtseying and courtseying, in a corner, like a dowager, in exquisite time to the music; being rather too corpulent to dance, or, perhaps, at a loss for a partner.

My grandfather concluded the latter to be the reason; so being, like a true Irishman, devoted to the sex, and at all times ready for a frolic, he bounced into the room, called to the musician to strike up Paddy O'Rafferty, capered up to the clothes-press, and seized upon two handles to lead her out:—when—whirr! the whole revel was at an end. The chairs, tables, tongs, and shovel, slunk in an instant as quietly into their places as if nothing had happened, and the musician vanished up the chimney, leaving the bellows behind him in his hurry.

My grandfather found himself seated in the middle of the floor with the clothes-press sprawling before him, and the two handles jerked off, and in his hands.

"Then, after all, this was a mere dream!" said the inquisitive gentleman.

"The devil a bit of a dream!" replied the Irishman. "There never was a truer fact in this world. Faith, I should have liked to see any man tell my grandfather it was a dream."

Well, gentlemen, as the clothes-press was a mighty heavy body, and my grandfather likewise, particularly in rear, you may easily suppose that two such heavy bodies coming to the ground would make a bit of a noise. Faith, the old mansion shook as though it had mistaken it for an earthquake. The whole garrison was alarmed. The landlord, who slept below, hurried up with a candle to inquire the cause, but with his haste his daughter had arrived at the scene of uproar before him. The landlord was followed by the landlady, who was followed by the bouncing bar-maid, who was followed by the simpering chambermaids, all holding together, as well as they could, such garments as they had first laid hands on; but all in a terrible hurry to see what the deuce was to pay in the chamber of the bold dragoon.

My grandfather related the marvellous scene he had witnessed, and the broken handles of the prostrate clothes-press bore testimony to the fact. There was no contesting such evidence; particularly with a lad of my grandfather's complexion, who seemed able to make good every word either with sword or shillelah. So the landlord scratched his head and looked silly, as he was apt to do when puzzled. The landlady scratched—no, she did not scratch her head, but she knit her brow, and did not seem half pleased with the explanation. But the landlady's daughter corroborated it by recollecting that the last person who had dwelt in that chamber was a famous juggler who had died of St. Vitus's dance, and had no doubt infected all the furniture.

This set all things to rights, particularly when the chambermaids declared that they had all witnessed strange carryings on in that room; and as they

declared this "upon their honours," there could not remain a doubt upon the subject.

"And did your grandfather go to bed again in that room?" said the inquisitive gentleman.

"That's more than I can tell. Where he passed the rest of the night was a secret he never disclosed. In fact, though he had seen much service, he was but indifferently acquainted with geography, and apt to make blunders in his travels about inns at night which it would have puzzled him sadly to account for in the morning."

"Was he ever apt to walk in his sleep?" said the knowing old gentleman.

"Never that I heard of."

There was a little pause after this rigmarole Irish romance, when the old gentleman with the haunted head observed, that the stories hitherto related had rather a burlesque tendency. "I recollect an adventure, however," added he, "which I heard of during a residence at Paris, for the truth of which I can undertake to vouch, and which is of a very grave and singular nature."

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#### THE ADVENTURE

OF

#### THE GERMAN STUDENT.

On a stormy night, in the tempestuous times of the French revolution, a young German was returning to his lodgings, at a late hour, across the old part of Paris. The lightning gleamed, and the loud claps of thunder rattled through the lofty narrow streets—but I should first tell you something about this young German.

Gottfried Wolfgang was a young man of good family. He had studied for some time at Gottingen, but being of a visionary and enthusiastic character, he had wandered into those wild and speculative doctrines which have so often bewildered German students. His secluded life, his intense application, and the singular nature of his studies, had an effect on both mind and body. His health was impaired; his imagination diseased. He



had been indulging in fanciful speculations on spiritual essences, until, like Swedenborg, he had an ideal world of his own around him. He took up a notion, I do not know from what cause, that there was an evil influence hanging over him; an evil genius or spirit seeking to ensnare him and ensure his perdition. Such an idea working on his melancholy temperament, produced the most gloomy effects. He became haggard and desponding. His friends discovered the mental malady that was preying upon him, and determined that the best cure was a change of scene; he was sent, therefore, to finish his studies amidst the splendours and gayeties of Paris.

Wolfgang arrived at Paris at the breaking out of the revolution. The popular delirium at first caught his enthusiastic mind, and he was captivated by the political and philosophical theories of the day: but the scenes of blood which followed shocked his sensitive nature, disgusted him with society and the world, and made him more than ever a recluse. He shut himself up in a solitary apartment in the *Pays Latin*, the quarter of students. There, in a gloomy street not far from the monastic walls of the Sorbonne, he pursued his favourite speculations. Sometimes he spent hours together in the great libraries of Paris, those catacombs of departed authors, rummaging among their hoards of dusty and obsolete works in quest of food for his unhealthy appetite. He was, in a manner, a literary goul, feeding in the charnel-house of decayed literature.

Wolfgang, though solitary and recluse, was of an ardent temperament, but for a time it operated merely upon his imagination. He was too shy and ignorant of the world to make any advances to the fair, but he was a passionate admirer of female beauty, and in his lonely chamber would often lose himself in reveries on forms and faces which he had seen, and his fancy would deck out images of loveliness far surpassing the reality.

While his mind was in this excited and sublimated state, he had a dream which produced an extraordinary effect upon him. It was of a female face of tran-

scendent beauty. So strong was the impression it made, that he dreamt of it again and again. It haunted his thoughts by day, his slumbers by night; in fine, he became passionately enamoured of this shadow of a dream. This lasted so long that it became one of those fixed ideas which haunt the minds of melancholy men, and are at times mistaken for madness.

Such was Gottfried Wolfgang, and such his situation at the time I mentioned. He was returning home late one stormy night, through some of the old and gloomy streets of the *Marais*, the ancient part of Paris. The loud claps of thunder rattled among the high houses of the narrow streets. He came to the Place de Grève, the square where public executions are performed. The lightning quivered about the pinnacles of the ancient Hôtel de Ville, and shed flickering gleams over the open space in front. As Wolfgang was crossing the square, he shrunk back with horror at finding himself close by the guillotine. It was the height of the reign of terror, when this dreadful instrument of death stood ever ready, and its scaffold was continually running with the blood of the virtuous and the brave. It had that very day been actively employed in the work of carnage, and there it stood in grim array amidst a silent and sleeping city, waiting for fresh victims.

Wolfgang's heart sickened within him, and he was turning shuddering from the horrible engine, when he beheld a shadowy form, cowering as it were at the foot of the steps which led up to the scaffold. A succession of vivid flashes of lightning revealed it more distinctly. It was a female figure, dressed in black. She was seated on one of the lower steps of the scaffold, leaning forward, her face hid in her lap, and her long dishevelled tresses hanging to the ground, streaming with the rain which fell in torrents. Wolfgang paused. There was something awful in this solitary monument of woe. The female had the appearance of being above the common order. He knew the times to be full of vicissitude, and that many a fair head, which had once been pillowed on down, now wandered houseless. Perhaps this was some poor mourner

whom the dreadful axe had rendered desolate, and who sat here heart-broken on the strand of existence, from which all that was dear to her had been launched into eternity.

He approached, and addressed her in the accents of sympathy. She raised her head and gazed wildly at him. What was his astonishment at beholding, by the bright glare of the lightning, the very face which had haunted him in his dreams! It was pale and disconsolate, but ravishingly beautiful.

Trembling with violent and conflicting emotions, Wolfgang again accosted her. He spoke something of her being exposed at such an hour of the night, and to the fury of such a storm, and offered to conduct her to her friends. She pointed to the guillotine with a gesture of dreadful signification.

"I have no friend on earth!" said she.

"But you have a home," said Wolfgang.

"Yes—in the grave!"

The heart of the student melted at the words.

"If a stranger dare make an offer," said he, "without danger of being misunderstood, I would offer my humble dwelling as a shelter; myself as a devoted friend. I am friendless myself in Paris, and a stranger in the land; but if my life could be of service, it is at your disposal, and should be sacrificed before harm or indignity should come to you."

There was an honest earnestness in the young man's manner that had its effect. His foreign accent, too, was in his favour; it showed him not to be a hackneyed inhabitant of Paris. Indeed there is an eloquence in true enthusiasm that is not to be doubted. The homeless stranger confided herself implicitly to the protection of the student.

He supported her faltering steps across the Pont Neuf, and by the place where the statue of Henry the Fourth had been overthrown by the populace. The storm had abated, and the thunder rumbled at a distance. All Paris was quiet; that great volcano of human passion slumbered for a while, to gather fresh strength for the next day's eruption. The student conducted his charge though the

ancient streets of the *Pays Latin*, and by the dusky walls of the Sorbonne, to the great dingy hotel which he inhabited. The old portress who admitted them stared with surprise at the unusual sight of the melancholy Wolfgang with a female companion.

On entering his apartment, the student, for the first time, blushed at the scantiness and indifference of his dwelling. He had but one chamber—an old-fashioned saloon—heavily carved, and fantastically furnished with the remains of former magnificence, for it was one of those hotels in the quarter of the Luxembourg Palace which had once belonged to nobility. It was lumbered with books and papers, and all the usual apparatus of a student, and his bed stood in a recess at one end.

When lights were brought, and Wolfgang had a better opportunity of contemplating the stranger, he was more than ever intoxicated by her beauty. Her face was pale, but of a dazzling fairness, set off by a profusion of raven hair that hung clustering about it. Her eyes were large and brilliant, with a singular expression that approached almost to wildness. As far as her black dress permitted her shape to be seen, it was a perfect symmetry. Her whole appearance was highly striking, though she was dressed in the simplest style. The only thing approaching to an ornament which she wore, was a broad black band round her neck, clasped by diamonds.

The perplexity now commenced with the student how to dispose of the helpless being thus thrown upon his protection. He thought of abandoning his chamber to her, and seeking shelter for himself elsewhere. Still he was so fascinated by her charms, there seemed to be such a spell upon his thoughts and senses, that he could not tear himself from her presence. Her manner, too, was singular and unaccountable. She spoke no more of the guillotine. Her grief had abated. The attentions of the student had first won her confidence, and then, apparently, her heart. She was evidently an enthusiast like himself, and enthusiasts soon understand each other.

In the infatuation of the moment, Wolfgang avowed his passion for her.

He told her the story of his mysterious dream, and how she had possessed his heart before he had even seen her. She was strangely affected by his recital, and acknowledged to have felt an impulse toward him equally unaccountable. It was the time for wild theory and wild actions. Old prejudices and superstitions were done away; every thing was under the sway of the "Goddess of Reason." Among other rubbish of the old times, the forms and ceremonies of marriage began to be considered superfluous bonds for honourable minds. Social compacts were the vogue. Wolfgang was too much of a theorist not to be tainted by the liberal doctrines of the day.

"Why should we separate?" said he: "our hearts are united; in the eye of reason and honour we are as one. What need is there of sordid forms to bind high souls together?"

The stranger listened with emotion: she had evidently received illumination at the same school.

"You have no home nor family," continued he; "let me be every thing to you, or rather let us be every thing to one another. If form is necessary, form shall be observed—there is my hand. I pledge myself to you for ever."

"For ever?" said the stranger, solemnly.

"For ever!" repeated Wolfgang.

The stranger clasped the hand extended to her: "Then I am yours," murmured she, and sunk upon his bosom.

The next morning the student left his bride sleeping, and sallied forth at an early hour to seek more spacious apartments, suitable to the change in his situation. When he returned, he found the stranger lying with her head hanging over the bed, and one arm thrown over it. He spoke to her, but received no reply. He advanced to awaken her from her uneasy posture. On taking her hand, it was cold—there was no pulsation—her face was pallid and ghastly. In a word—she was a corpse.

Horrified and frantic, he alarmed the house. A scene of confusion ensued. The police was summoned. As the officer of police entered the room, he started back on beholding the corpse.

"Great heaven!" cried he, "how did this woman come here?"

"Do you know any thing about her?" said Wolfgang, eagerly.

"Do I?" exclaimed the police officer: "she was guillotined yesterday!"

He stepped forward; undid the black collar round the neck of the corpse, and the head rolled on the floor!

The student burst into a frenzy. "The fiend! the fiend has gained possession of me!" shrieked he: "I am lost for ever."

They tried to soothe him, but in vain. He was possessed with the frightful belief that an evil spirit had reanimated the dead body to ensnare him. He went distracted, and died in a mad-house.

Here the old gentleman with the haunted head finished his narrative.

"And is this really a fact?" said the inquisitive gentleman.

"A fact not to be doubted," replied the other. "I had it from the best authority. The student told it me himself. I saw him in a mad-house at Paris."

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## THE ADVENTURE

OF

### THE MYSTERIOUS PICTURE.

As one story of the kind produces another, and as all the company seemed fully engrossed by the subject, and disposed to bring their relatives and ancestors upon the scene, there is no knowing how many more strange adventures we might have heard, had not a corpulent old fox-hunter, who had slept soundly through the whole, now suddenly awakened, with a loud and long-drawn yawn. The sound broke the charm: the ghosts took to flight, as though it had been cock-crowing, and there was a universal move for bed.

"And now for the haunted chamber," said the Irish captain, taking his candle.

"Ay, who's to be the hero of the night?" said the gentleman with the ruined head.

"That we shall see in the morning," said the old gentleman with the nose: "whoever looks pale and grizzly will have seen the ghost."

“Well, gentlemen,” said the baronet, “there’s many a true thing said in jest—In fact one of you will sleep in the room to-night——”

“What—a haunted room?—a haunted room?—I claim the adventure—and I—and I—and I,” said a dozen guests talking and laughing at the same time.

“No, no,” said mine host, “there is a secret about one of my rooms on which I feel disposed to try an experiment: so, gentlemen, none of you shall know who has the haunted chamber until circumstances reveal it. I will not even know it myself, but will leave it to chance and the allotment of the housekeeper. At the same time, if it will be any satisfaction to you, I will observe, for the honour of my paternal mansion, that there’s scarcely a chamber in it but is well worthy of being haunted.”

We now separated for the night, and each went to his allotted room. Mine was in one wing of the building, and I could not but smile at the resemblance in style to those eventful apartments described in the tales of the supper-table. It was spacious and gloomy, decorated with lamp-black portraits; a bed of ancient damask, with a tester sufficiently lofty to grace a couch of state, and a number of massive pieces of old-fashioned furniture. I drew a great claw-footed arm-chair before the wide fireplace; stirred up the fire; sat looking into it, and musing upon the odd stories I had heard, until, partly overcome by the fatigue of the day’s hunting, and partly by the wine and wassail of mine host, I fell asleep in my chair.

The uneasiness of my position made my slumber troubled, and laid me at the mercy of all kinds of wild and fearful dreams. Now it was that my perfidious dinner and supper rose in rebellion against my peace. I was hag-ridden by a fat saddle of mutton; a plum-pudding weighed like lead upon my conscience; the merrythought of a capon filled me with horrible suggestions; and a devilled leg of turkey stalked in all kinds of diabolical shapes through my imagination. In short, I had a violent fit of the nightmare. Some strange indefinite evil seemed hanging over me that I could not avert; something terrible and loathsome

oppressed me that I could not shake off. I was conscious of being asleep, and strove to rouse myself, but every effort redoubled the evil; until gasping, struggling, almost strangling, I suddenly sprang bolt upright in my chair, and awoke.

The light on the mantel-piece had burnt low, and the wick was divided; there was a great winding-sheet made by the dripping wax on the side towards me. The disordered taper emitted a broad flaring flame, and threw a strong light on a painting over the fireplace which I had not hitherto observed. It consisted merely of a head, or rather a face, that appeared to be staring full upon me, and with an expression that was startling. It was without a frame, and at the first glance I could hardly persuade myself that it was not a real face thrusting itself out of the dark oaken panel. I sat in my chair gazing at it, and the more I gazed, the more it disquieted me. I had never before been affected in the same way by any painting. The emotions it caused were strange and indefinite. They were something like what I have heard ascribed to the eyes of the basilisk, or like that mysterious influence in reptiles termed fascination. I passed my hand over my eyes several times, as if seeking instinctively to brush away the illusion—in vain. They instantly reverted to the picture, and its chilling, creeping influence over my flesh and blood was redoubled. I looked round the room on other pictures, either to divert my attention or to see whether the same effect would be produced by them. Some of them were grim enough to produce the effect, if the mere grimness of the painting produced it. No such thing—my eye passed over them all with perfect indifference, but the moment it reverted to this visage over the fireplace, it was as if an electric shock darted through me. The other pictures were dim and faded, but this one protruded from a plain back-ground in the strongest relief, and with wonderful truth of colouring. The expression was that of agony—the agony of intense bodily pain; but a menace scowled upon the brow, and a few sprinklings of blood added to its ghastliness. Yet it was not all these character-

istics; it was some horror of the mind, some inscrutable antipathy awakened by this picture, which harrowed up my feelings.

I tried to persuade myself that this was chimerical; that my brain was confused by the fumes of mine host's good cheer, and in some measure by the odd stories about paintings which had been told at supper. I determined to shake off these vapours of the mind; rose from my chair; walked about the room; snapped my fingers; rallied myself; laughed aloud. It was a forced laugh, and the echo of it in the old chamber jarred upon my ear. I walked to the window, and tried to discern the landscape through the glass. It was pitch darkness, and howling storm without; and as I heard the wind moan among the trees, I caught a reflection of this accursed visage in the pane of glass, as though it were staring through the window at me. Even the reflection of it was thrilling.

How was this vile nervous fit, for such I now persuaded myself it was, to be conquered? I determined to force myself not to look at the painting, but to undress quickly and get into bed. I began to undress, but in spite of every effort I could not keep myself from stealing a glance every now and then at the picture; and a glance was now sufficient to distress me. Even when my back was turned to it, the idea of this strange face behind me, peeping over my shoulder, was insupportable. I threw off my clothes and hurried into bed, but still this visage gazed upon me. I had a full view of it from my bed, and for some time could not take my eyes from it. I had grown nervous to a dismal degree. I put out the light, and tried to force myself to sleep—all in vain. The fire gleaming up a little threw an uncertain light about the room, leaving however the region of the picture in deep shadow. What, thought I, if this be the chamber about which mine host spoke as having a mystery reigning over it? I had taken his words merely as spoken in jest; might they have a real import? I looked around.—The faintly-lighted apartment had all the qualifications requisite for a haunted chamber. It began in my infected ima-

gination to assume strange appearances—the old portraits turned paler and paler, and blacker and blacker; the streaks of light and shadow thrown among the quaint articles of furniture gave them more singular shapes and characters. There was a huge dark clothes-press of antique form, gorgeous in brass and lustrous with wax, that began to grow oppressive to me.

“Am I, then,” thought I, “indeed the hero of the haunted room? Is there really a spell laid upon me, or is this all some contrivance of mine host to raise a laugh at my expense?” The idea of being hag-ridden by my own fancy all night, and then bantered on my haggard looks the next day, was intolerable; but the very idea was sufficient to produce the effect, and to render me still more nervous. “Pish!” said I, “it can be no such thing. How could my worthy host imagine that I, or any man, would be so worried by a mere picture? It is my own diseased imagination that torments me.”

I turned in bed, and shifted from side to side to try to fall asleep; but all in vain; when one cannot get asleep by lying quiet, it is seldom that tossing about will effect the purpose. The fire gradually went out, and left the room in darkness. Still I had the idea of that inexplicable countenance gazing and keeping watch upon me through the gloom—nay, what was worse, the very darkness seemed to magnify its terrors. It was like having an unseen enemy hanging about one in the night. Instead of having one picture now to worry me, I had a hundred. I fancied it in every direction—“And there it is,” thought I, “and there! and there! with its horrible and mysterious expression still gazing and gazing on me! No—if I must suffer the strange and dismal influence, it were better face a single foe than thus be haunted by a thousand images of it.”

Whoever has been in a state of nervous agitation, must know that the longer it continues the more uncontrollable it grows. The very air of the chamber seemed at length infected by the baleful presence of this picture. I fancied it hovering over me. I almost felt the fearful visage from the wall approaching

my face—it seemed breathing upon me. “This is not to be borne,” said I at length, springing out of bed. “I can stand this no longer—I shall only tumble and toss about here all night; make a very spectre of myself, and become the hero of the haunted chamber in good earnest. Whatever be the ill consequence, I’ll quit this cursed room and seek a night’s rest elsewhere—they can but laugh at me, at all events, and they’ll be sure to have the laugh upon me if I pass a sleepless night, and show them a haggard and wo-begone visage in the morning.”

All this was half muttered to myself as I hastily slipped on my clothes, which having done, I groped my way out of the room, and down the stairs to the drawing-room. Here, after tumbling over two or three pieces of furniture, I made out to reach a sofa, and stretching myself upon it, determined to bivouac there for the night. The moment I found myself out of the neighbourhood of that strange picture, it seemed as if the charm were broken. All its influence was at an end. I felt assured that it was confined to its own dreary chamber, for I had, with a sort of instinctive caution, turned the key when I closed the door. I soon calmed down, therefore, into a state of tranquillity; from that into a drowsiness, and, finally, into a deep sleep; out of which I did not awake until the housemaid, with her besom and her matin song, came to put the room in order. She stared at finding me stretched upon the sofa, but I presume circumstances of the kind were not uncommon after hunting-dinners in her master’s bachelor establishment, for she went on with her song and her work, and took no further heed of me.

I had an unconquerable repugnance to return to my chamber; so I found my way to the butler’s quarters, made my toilet in the best way circumstances would permit, and was among the first to appear at the breakfast-table. Our breakfast was a substantial fox-hunter’s repast, and the company generally assembled at it. When ample justice had been done to the tea, coffee, cold meats, and humming ale, for all these were furnished in abundance, according to the

tastes of the different guests, the conversation began to break out with all the liveliness and freshness of morning mirth.

“But who is the hero of the haunted chamber, who has seen the ghost last night?” said the inquisitive gentleman, rolling his lobster eyes about the table.

The question set every tongue in motion; a vast deal of bantering, criticising of countenances, of mutual accusation and retort, took place. Some had drunk deep, and some were unshaven; so that there were suspicious faces enough in the assembly. I alone could not enter with ease and vivacity into the joke—I felt tongue-tied, embarrassed. A recollection of what I had seen and felt the preceding night still haunted my mind. It seemed as if the mysterious picture still held a thrall upon me. I thought also that our host’s eye was turned on me with an air of curiosity. In short, I was conscious that I was the hero of the night, and felt as if every one might read it in my looks. The joke, however, passed over, and no suspicion seemed to attach to me. I was just congratulating myself on my escape, when a servant came in saying, that the gentleman who had slept on the sofa in the drawing-room had left his watch under one of the pillows. My repeater was in his hand.

“What!” said the inquisitive gentleman, “did any gentleman sleep on the sofa?”

“Soho! soho! a hare—a hare!” cried the old gentleman with the flexible nose.

I could not avoid acknowledging the watch, and was rising in great confusion, when a boisterous old squire who sat beside me exclaimed, slapping me on the shoulder, “’Sblood, lad, thou art the man as has seen the ghost!”

The attention of the company was immediately turned to me: if my face had been pale the moment before, it now glowed almost to burning. I tried to laugh, but could only make a grimace, and found the muscles of my face twitching at sixes and sevens, and totally out of all control.

It takes but little to raise a laugh among a set of fox-hunters: there was a world of merriment and joking on the subject, and as I never relished a joke overmuch when it was at my own ex-

pense, I began to feel a little nettled. I tried to look cool and calm, and to restrain my pique; but the coolness and calmness of a man in a passion are confounded treacherous.

"Gentlemen," said I, with a slight cocking of the chin, and a bad attempt at a smile, "this is all very pleasant—ha! ha!—very pleasant—but I'd have you know, I am as little superstitious as any of you—ha! ha!—and as to any thing like timidity—you may smile, gentlemen, but I trust there's no one here means to insinuate, that—as to a room's being haunted—I repeat, gentlemen (growing a little warm at seeing a cursed grin breaking out round me), as to a room's being haunted, I have as little faith in such silly stories as any one. But, since you have put the matter home to me, I will say that I have met with something in my room strange and inexplicable to me. (A shout of laughter). Gentlemen, I am serious; I know well what I am saying; I am calm, gentlemen (striking my fist upon the table); by Heaven, I am calm. I am neither trifling, nor do I wish to be trifled with. (The laughter of the company suppressed, and with ludicrous attempts at gravity). There is a picture in the room in which I was put last night, that has had an effect upon me the most singular and incomprehensible."

"A picture?" said the old gentleman with the haunted head. "A picture!" cried the narrator with the nose. "A picture! a picture!" echoed several voices. Here there was an ungovernable peal of laughter. I could not contain myself. I started up from my seat; looked round on the company with fiery indignation; thrust both my hands into my pockets, and strode up to one of the windows as though I would have walked through it. I stopped short, looked out upon the landscape without distinguishing a feature of it, and felt my gorge rising almost to suffocation.

Mine host saw it was time to interfere. He had maintained an air of gravity through the whole of the scene; and now stepped forth, as if to shelter me from the overwhelming merriment of my companions.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I dislike to

spoil sport, but you have had your laugh, and the joke of the haunted chamber has been enjoyed. I must now take the part of my guest. I must not only vindicate him from your pleasantries, but I must reconcile him to himself, for I suspect he is a little out of humour with his own feelings; and, above all, I must crave his pardon for having made him the subject of a kind of experiment. Yes, gentlemen, there is something strange and peculiar in the chamber to which our friend was shown last night; there is a picture in my house, which possesses a singular and mysterious influence, and with which there is connected a very curious story. It is a picture to which I attach a value from a variety of circumstances; and though I have often been tempted to destroy it, from the odd and uncomfortable sensations which it produces in every one that beholds it, yet I have never been able to prevail upon myself to make the sacrifice. It is a picture I never like to look upon myself, and which is held in awe by all my servants. I have therefore banished it to a room but rarely used, and should have had it covered last night, had not the nature of our conversation, and the whimsical talk about a haunted chamber, tempted me to let it remain, by way of experiment, to see whether a stranger, totally unacquainted with its story, would be affected by it."

The words of the baronet had turned every thought into a different channel. All were anxious to hear the story of the mysterious picture; and, for myself, so strangely were my feelings interested, that I forgot to feel piqued at the experiment which my host had made upon my nerves, and joined eagerly in the general entreaty. As the morning was stormy, and denied all egress, my host was glad of any means of entertaining his company; so, drawing his arm-chair towards the fire, he began:

#### THE ADVENTURE

OF THE

#### MYSTERIOUS STRANGER.

MANY years since, when I was a young man, and had just left Oxford, I

was sent on the grand tour to finish my education. I believe my parents had tried in vain to inoculate me with wisdom; so they sent me to mingle with society, in hopes that I might take it the natural way. Such, at least, appears the reason for which nine-tenths of our youngsters are sent abroad. In the course of my tour I remained some time at Venice. The romantic character of that place delighted me; I was very much amused by the air of adventure and intrigue that prevailed in this region of masks and gondolas; and I was exceedingly smitten by a pair of languishing black eyes, that played upon my heart from under an Italian mantle; so I persuaded myself that I was lingering at Venice to study men and manners; at least I persuaded my friends so, and that answered all my purposes.

I was a little prone to be struck by peculiarities in character and conduct, and my imagination was so full of romantic associations with Italy, that I was always on the look-out for adventure. Every thing chimed in with such a humour in this old mermaid of a city. My suite of apartments was in a proud, melancholy palace on the grand canal, formerly the residence of a magnifico, and sumptuous with the traces of decayed grandeur. My gondolier was one of the shrewdest of his class, active, merry, intelligent, and, like his brethren, secret as the grave; that is to say, secret to all the world except his master. I had not had him a week before he put me behind all the curtains in Venice. I liked the silence and mystery of the place, and when I sometimes saw from my window a black gondola gliding mysteriously along in the dusk of the evening, with nothing visible but its little glimmering lantern, I would jump into my own zendeletta, and give a signal for pursuit—"But I am running away from my subject with the recollection of youthful follies," said the baronet, checking himself. "Let us come to the point."

Among my familiar resorts was a casino under the arcades on one side of the grand square of St. Mark. Here I used frequently to lounge and take my ice, on those warm summer nights, when in Italy every body lives abroad until

morning. I was seated here one evening, when a group of Italians took their seat at a table on the opposite side of the saloon. Their conversation was gay and animated, and carried on with Italian vivacity and gesticulation. I remarked among them one young man, however, who appeared to take no share, and find no enjoyment in the conversation, though he seemed to force himself to attend to it. He was tall and slender, and of extremely prepossessing appearance. His features were fine, though emaciated. He had a profusion of black glossy hair, that curled lightly about his head, and contrasted with the extreme paleness of his countenance. His brow was haggard; deep furrows seemed to have been ploughed into his visage by care, not by age, for he was evidently in the prime of youth. His eye was full of expression and fire, but wild and unsteady. He seemed to be tormented by some strange fancy or apprehension. In spite of every effort to fix his attention on the conversation of his companions, I noticed that every now and then he would turn his head slowly round, give a glance over his shoulder, and then withdraw it with a sudden jerk, as if something painful had met his eye. This was repeated at intervals of about a minute, and he appeared hardly to have recovered from one shock, before I saw him slowly preparing to encounter another.

After sitting some time in the casino, the party paid for the refreshment they had taken, and departed. The young man was the last to leave the saloon, and I remarked him glancing behind him in the same way, just as he passed out of the door. I could not resist the impulse to rise and follow him; for I was at an age when a romantic feeling of curiosity is easily awakened. The party walked slowly down the arcades, talking and laughing as they went. They crossed the Piazzetta, but paused in the middle of it to enjoy the scene. It was one of those moonlight nights, so brilliant and clear in the pure atmosphere of Italy. The moonbeams streamed on the tall tower of St. Mark, and lighted up the magnificent front and swelling domes of the cathedral. The party ex-



pressed their delight in animated terms. I kept my eye upon the young man. He alone seemed abstracted and self-occupied. I noticed the same singular, and, as it were, furtive glance over the shoulder, which had attracted my attention in the cassino. The party moved on, and I followed; they passed along the walk called the Broglio, turned the corner of the Ducal Palace, and getting into a gondola, glided swiftly away.

The countenance and conduct of this young man dwelt upon my mind. There was something in his appearance that interested me exceedingly. I met him a day or two after in a gallery of paintings. He was evidently a connoisseur, for he always singled out the most masterly productions, and the few remarks drawn from him by his companions showed an intimate acquaintance with the art. His own taste, however, ran on singular extremes. On *Salvator Rosa*, in his most savage and solitary scenes: on *Raphael*, *Titian*, and *Correggio*, in their softest delineations of female beauty: on these he would occasionally gaze with transient enthusiasm. But this seemed only a momentary forgetfulness. Still would recur that cautious glance behind, and always quickly withdrawn, as though something terrible had met his view.

I encountered him frequently afterwards at the theatre, at balls, at concerts; at the promenades in the gardens of *San Georgio*; at the grotesque exhibitions in the square of *St. Mark*; among the throng of merchants on the exchange by the *Rialto*. He seemed, in fact, to seek crowds; to hunt after bustle and amusement: yet never to take any interest in either the business or the gayety of the scene. Ever an air of painful thought, of wretched abstraction; and ever that strange and recurring movement of glancing fearfully over the shoulder. I did not know at first but this might be caused by apprehension of arrest; or, perhaps, from dread of assassination. But if so, why should he go thus continually abroad; why expose himself at all times and in all places?

I became anxious to know this stranger. I was drawn to him by that romantic sympathy which sometimes draws

young men towards each other. His melancholy threw a charm about him in my eyes, which was no doubt heightened by the touching expression of his countenance, and the manly graces of his person; for manly beauty has its effect even upon men. I had an Englishman's habitual diffidence and awkwardness of address to contend with; but I subdued it, and from frequently meeting him in the cassino, gradually edged myself into his acquaintance. I had no reserve on his part to contend with. He seemed, on the contrary, to court society; and, in fact, to seek any thing rather than be alone.

When he found that I really took an interest in him, he threw himself entirely on my friendship. He clung to me like a drowning man. He would walk with me for hours up and down the *Place of St. Mark*—or he would sit, until night was far advanced, in my apartments. He took rooms under the same roof with me; and his constant request was that I would permit him, when it did not incommode me, to sit by me in my saloon. It was not that he seemed to take a particular delight in my conversation, but rather that he craved the vicinity of a human being; and, above all, of a being that sympathized with him. "I have often heard," said he, "of the sincerity of Englishmen—thank God I have one at length for a friend!"

Yet he never seemed disposed to avail himself of my sympathy other than by mere companionship. He never sought to unbosom himself to me: there appeared to be a settled corroding anguish in his bosom that neither could be soothed "by silence nor by speaking."

A devouring melancholy preyed upon his heart, and seemed to be drying up the very blood in his veins. It was not a soft melancholy, the disease of the affections, but a parching, withering agony. I could see at times that his mouth was dry and feverish; he panted rather than breathed; his eyes were bloodshot; his cheeks pale and livid; with now and then faint streaks of red athwart them, baleful gleams of the fire that was consuming his heart. As my arm was within his, I felt him press it at times with a convulsive motion to his

side; his hands would clench themselves involuntarily, and a kind of shudder would run through his frame.

I reasoned with him about his melancholy, and sought to draw from him the cause; he shrunk from all confiding: "Do not seek to know it," said he, "you could not relieve it if you knew it; you would not even seek to relieve it. On the contrary, I should lose your sympathy, and that," said he, pressing my hand convulsively, "that I feel has become too dear to me to risk."

I endeavoured to awaken hope within him. He was young; life had a thousand pleasures in store for him; there is a healthy reaction in the youthful heart; it medicines all its own wounds—"Come, come," said I, "there is no grief so great that youth cannot outgrow it."—"No! no!" said he, clenching his teeth, and striking repeatedly, with the energy of despair, on his bosom—"it is here! here! deep-rooted; draining my heart's blood. It grows and grows, while my heart withers and withers. I have a dreadful monitor that gives me no repose—that follows me step by step—and will follow me step by step, until it pushes me into my grave!"

As he said this, he involuntarily gave one of those fearful glances over his shoulder, and shrunk back with more than usual horror. I could not resist the temptation to allude to this movement, which I supposed to be some mere malady of the nerves. The moment I mentioned it, his face became crimsoned and convulsed; he grasped me by both hands—

"For God's sake," exclaimed he, with a piercing voice, "never allude to that again. Let us avoid this subject, my friend; you cannot relieve me, indeed you cannot relieve me, but you may add to the torments I suffer. At some future day you shall know all."

I never resumed the subject; for however much my curiosity might be roused, I felt too true a compassion for his sufferings to increase them by my intrusion. I sought various ways to divert his mind, and to arouse him from the constant meditations in which he was plunged. He saw my efforts, and seconded them as far as in his power, for

there was nothing moody nor wayward in his nature. On the contrary, there was something frank, generous, unassuming in his whole deportment. All the sentiments that he uttered were noble and lofty. He claimed no indulgence, he asked no toleration. He seemed content to carry his load of misery in silence, and only sought to carry it by my side. There was a mute beseeching manner about him, as if he craved companionship as a charitable boon; and a tacit thankfulness in his looks, as if he felt grateful to me for not repulsing him.

I felt this melancholy to be infectious. It stole over my spirits; interfered with all my gay pursuits, and gradually saddened my life; yet I could not prevail upon myself to shake off a being who seemed to hang upon me for support. In truth, the generous traits of character that beamed through all this gloom had penetrated to my heart. His bounty was lavish and open-handed: his charity melting and spontaneous; not confined to mere donations, which humiliate as much as they relieve. The tone of his voice, the beam of his eye, enhanced every gift, and surprised the poor suppliant with that rarest and sweetest of charities, the charity not merely of the hand but of the heart. Indeed his liberality seemed to have something in it of self-abasement and expiation. He, in a manner, humbled himself before the mendicant. "What right have I to ease and affluence"—would he murmur to himself—"when innocence wanders in misery and rags?"

The carnival time arrived. I hoped that the gay scenes which then presented themselves might have some cheering effect. I mingled with him in the motley throng that crowded the Place of St. Mark. We frequented operas, masquerades, balls—all in vain. The evil kept growing on him. He became more and more haggard and agitated. Often, after we had returned from one of these scenes of revelry, I have entered his room and found him lying on his face on the sofa; his hands clenched in his fine hair, and his whole countenance bearing traces of the convulsions of his mind.

The carnival passed away; the time

of Lent succeeded; passion-week arrived; we attended one evening a solemn service in one of the churches, in the course of which a grand piece of vocal and instrumental music was performed, relating to the death of our Saviour.

I had remarked that he was always powerfully affected by music; on this occasion he was so in an extraordinary degree. As the pealing notes swelled through the lofty aisles, he seemed to kindle with fervour; his eyes rolled upwards, until nothing but the whites were visible; his hands were clasped together, until the fingers were deeply imprinted in the flesh. When the music expressed the dying agony, his face gradually sunk upon his knees; and at the touching words resounding through the church, "*Jesu mori,*" sobs burst from him uncontrolled—I had never seen him weep before. His had always been agony rather than sorrow. I augured well from the circumstance, and let him weep on uninterrupted. When the service was ended, we left the church. He hung on my arm as we walked homewards with something of a softer and more subdued manner, instead of that nervous agitation I had been accustomed to witness. He alluded to the service we had heard. "Music," said he, "is indeed the voice of Heaven; never before have I felt more impressed by the story of the atonement of our Saviour—Yes, my friend," said he, clasping his hands with a kind of transport, "I know that my Redeemer liveth!"

We parted for the night. His room was not far from mine, and I heard him for some time busied in it. I fell asleep, but was awakened before daylight. The young man stood by my bedside, dressed for travelling. He held a sealed packet and a large parcel in his hand, which he laid on the table.

"Farewell, my friend," said he, "I am about to set forth on a long journey; but, before I go, I leave with you these remembrances. In this packet you will find the particulars of my story. When you read them I shall be far away; do not remember me with aversion—You have been indeed a friend to me. You have poured oil into a broken heart, but you could not heal it. Farewell! let me

kiss your hand—I am unworthy to embrace you." He sunk on his knees—seized my hand in despite of my efforts to the contrary, and covered it with kisses. I was so surprised by all the scene, that I had not been able to say a word. "But we shall meet again," said I hastily, as I saw him hurrying towards the door. "Never, never in this world!" said he solemnly. He sprang once more to my bedside—seized my hand, pressed it to his heart and to his lips, and rushed out of the room.

Here the baronet paused. He seemed lost in thought, and sat looking upon the floor, and drumming with his fingers on the arm of his chair.

"And did this mysterious personage return?" said the inquisitive gentleman.

"Never!" replied the baronet, with a pensive shake of the head—"I never saw him again."

"And pray what has all this to do with the picture?" inquired the old gentleman with the nose.

"True," said the questioner—"Is it the portrait of that crack-brained Italian?"

"No," said the baronet drily, not half liking the appellation given to his hero—"but this picture was enclosed in the parcel he left with me. The sealed packet contained its explanation. There was a request on the outside that I would not open it until six months had elapsed. I kept my promise, in spite of my curiosity. I have a translation of it by me, and had meant to read it, by way of accounting for the mystery of the chamber; but I fear I have already detained the company too long."

Here there was a general wish expressed to have the manuscript read, particularly on the part of the inquisitive gentleman; so the worthy baronet drew out a fairly-written manuscript, and, wiping his spectacles, read aloud the following story:

#### THE STORY OF THE YOUNG ITALIAN.

I was born at Naples. My parents, though of noble rank, were limited in fortune, or rather, my father was ostentatious beyond his means, and expended

so much on his palace, his equipage, and his retinue, that he was continually straitened in his pecuniary circumstances. I was a younger son, and looked upon with indifference by my father, who, from a principle of family pride, wished to leave all his property to my elder brother. I showed, when quite a child, an extreme sensibility. Every thing affected me violently. While yet an infant in my mother's arms, and before I had learnt to talk, I could be wrought upon to a wonderful degree of anguish or delight by the power of music. As I grew older, my feelings remained equally acute, and I was easily transported into paroxysms of pleasure or rage. It was the amusement of my relations and of the domestics to play upon this irritable temperament. I was moved to tears, tickled to laughter, provoked to fury, for the entertainment of company, who were amused by such a tempest of mighty passion in a pigmy frame—they little thought, or perhaps little heeded, the dangerous sensibilities they were fostering. I thus became a little creature of passion before reason was developed. In a short time I grew too old to be a plaything, and then I became a torment. The tricks and passions I had been teased into became irksome, and I was disliked by my teachers for the very lessons they had taught me. My mother died; and my power as a spoiled child was at an end. There was no longer any necessity to humour or tolerate me, for there was nothing to be gained by it, as I was no favourite of my father. I therefore experienced the fate of a spoiled child in such a situation, and was neglected, or noticed only to be crossed and contradicted. Such was the early treatment of a heart, which, if I can judge of it at all, was naturally disposed to the extremes of tenderness and affection.

My father, as I have already said, never liked me—in fact, he never understood me; he looked upon me as wilful and wayward, as deficient in natural affection. It was the stateliness of his own manner, the loftiness and grandeur of his own look, that had repelled me from his arms. I had always pictured him to myself as I had seen him, clad in his senatorial robes, rustling with pomp

and pride. The magnificence of his person had daunted my young imagination. I could never approach him with the confiding affection of a child.

My father's feelings were wrapt up in my elder brother. He was to be the inheritor of the family title and the family dignity, and every thing was sacrificed to him—I, as well as every thing else. It was determined to devote me to the church, that so my humours and myself might be removed out of the way, either of tasking my father's time and trouble, or interfering with the interests of my brother. At an early age, therefore, before my mind had dawned upon the world and its delights, or known any thing of it beyond the precincts of my father's palace, I was sent to a convent, the superior of which was my uncle, and was confided entirely to his care.

My uncle was a man totally estranged from the world: he had never relished, for he had never tasted, its pleasures; and he regarded rigid self-denial as the great basis of Christian virtue. He considered every one's temperament like his own; or at least he made them conform to it. His character and habits had an influence over the fraternity of which he was superior—a more gloomy, saturnine set of beings were never assembled together. The convent, too, was calculated to awaken sad and solitary thoughts. It was situated in a gloomy gorge of those mountains away south of Vesuvius. All distant views were shut out by sterile volcanic heights. A mountain-stream raved beneath its walls, and eagles screamed about its turrets.

I had been sent to this place at so tender an age as soon to lose all distinct recollection of the scenes I had left behind. As my mind expanded, therefore, it formed its idea of the world from the convent and its vicinity, and a dreary world it appeared to me. An early tinge of melancholy was thus infused into my character; and the dismal stories of the monks, about devils and evil spirits, with which they affrighted my young imagination, gave me a tendency to superstition which I could never effectually shake off. They took the same delight to work upon my ardent feelings, that had been so mischievously executed by my father's

household. I can recollect the horrors with which they fed my heated fancy during an eruption of Vesuvius. We were distant from that volcano, with mountains between us; but its convulsive throes shook the solid foundations of nature. Earthquakes threatened to topple down our convent towers. A lurid, baleful light hung in the heavens at night, and showers of ashes, borne by the wind, fell in our narrow valley. The monks talked of the earth being honeycombed beneath us; of streams of molten lava raging through its veins; of caverns of sulphurous flames roaring in the centre, the abodes of demons and the damned; of fiery gulfs ready to yawn beneath our feet. All these tales were told to the doleful accompaniment of the mountain's thunders, whose low bellowing made the walls of our convent vibrate.

One of the monks had been a painter, but had retired from the world, and embraced this dismal life in expiation of some crime. He was a melancholy man, who pursued his art in the solitude of his cell, but made it a source of penance to him. His employment was to portray, either on canvass or in waxen models, the human face and human form, in the agonies of death, and in all the stages of dissolution and decay. The fearful mysteries of the charnel-house were unfolded in his labours. The loathsome banquet of the beetle and the worm. I turn with shuddering even from the recollection of his works: yet, at the time, my strong but ill-directed imagination seized with ardour upon his instructions in his art. Any thing was a variety from the dry studies and monotonous duties of the cloister. In a little while I became expert with my pencil, and my gloomy productions were thought worthy, of decorating some of the altars of the chapel.

In this dismal way was a creature of feeling and fancy brought up. Every thing genial and amiable in my nature was repressed, and nothing brought out but what was unprofitable and ungracious. I was ardent in my temperament; quick, mercurial, impetuous: formed to be a creature all love and adoration; but a leaden hand was laid on all my finer qualities. I was taught nothing but fear and hatred. I hated my uncle. I hated

the monks. I hated the convent in which I was immured. I hated the world; and I almost hated myself for being, as I supposed, so hating and hateful an animal.

When I had nearly attained the age of sixteen, I was suffered, on one occasion, to accompany one of the brethren on a mission to a distant part of the country. We soon left behind us the gloomy valley in which I had been pent up for so many years, and after a short journey among the mountains, emerged upon the voluptuous landscape that spreads itself about the Bay of Naples. Heavens! how transported was I, when I stretched my gaze over a vast reach of delicious sunny country, gay with groves and vineyards: with Vesuvius rearing its forked summit to my right; the blue Mediterranean to my left, with its enchanting coast, studded with shining towns and sumptuous villas; and Naples, my native Naples, gleaming far, far in the distance.

Good God! was this the lovely world from which I had been excluded? I had reached that age when the sensibilities are in all their bloom and freshness. Mine had been checked and chilled. They now burst forth with the suddenness of a retarded spring. My heart, hitherto unnaturally shrunk up, expanded into a riot of vague but delicious emotions. The beauty of nature intoxicated—bewildered me. The song of the peasants; their cheerful looks; their happy avocations; the picturesque gayety of their dresses; their rustic music; their dances; all broke upon me like witchcraft. My soul responded to the music, my heart danced in my bosom. All the men appeared amiable, all the women lovely.

I returned to the convent, that is to say, my body returned, but my heart and soul never entered there again. I could not forget this glimpse of a beautiful and a happy world—a world so suited to my natural character. I had felt so happy while in it; so different a being from what I felt myself when in the convent—that tomb of the living. I contrasted the countenances of the beings I had seen, full of fire and freshness, and enjoyment, with the pallid, leaden, lacklustre visages of the monks; the music of the dance with the droning chaunt of

the chapel. I had before found the exercises of the cloister wearisome, they now became intolerable. The dull round of duties wore away my spirit; my nerves became irritated by the fretful tinkling of the convent-bell, evermore dinging among the mountain echoes, evermore calling me from my repose at night, my pencil by day, to attend to some tedious and mechanical ceremony of devotion.

I was not of a nature to meditate long without putting my thoughts into action. My spirit had been suddenly aroused, and was now all awake within me. I watched an opportunity, fled from the convent, and made my way on foot to Naples. As I entered its gay and crowded streets, and beheld the variety and stir of life around me, the luxury of palaces, the splendour of equipages, and the pantomimic animation of the motley populace, I seemed as if awakened to a world of enchantment, and solemnly vowed that nothing should force me back to the monotony of the cloister.

I had to inquire my way to my father's palace, for I had been so young on leaving it that I knew not its situation. I found some difficulty in getting admitted to my father's presence; for the domestics scarcely knew that there was such a being as myself in existence, and my monastic dress did not operate in my favour. Even my father entertained no recollection of my person. I told him my name, threw myself at his feet, implored his forgiveness, and entreated that I might not be sent back to the convent.

He received me with the condescension of a patron, rather than the fondness of a parent; listened patiently, but coldly, to my tale of monastic grievances and disgusts, and promised to think what else could be done for me. This coldness blighted and drove back all the frank affection of my nature, that was ready to spring forth at the least warmth of parental kindness. All my early feelings towards my father revived. I again looked up to him as the stately magnificent being that had daunted my childish imagination, and felt as if I had no pretensions to his sympathies. My brother engrossed all his care and love; he inherited his nature, and carried himself towards me with a protecting rather than

a fraternal air. It wounded my pride, which was great. I could brook condescension from my father, for I looked up to him with awe, as a superior being; but I could not brook patronage from a brother, who I felt was intellectually my inferior. The servants perceived that I was an unwelcome intruder in the paternal mansion, and, menial-like, they treated me with neglect. Thus baffled at every point, my affections outraged wherever they would attach themselves, I became sullen, silent, and desponding. My feelings, driven back upon myself, entered and preyed upon my own heart. I remained for some days an unwelcome guest rather than a restored son in my father's house. I was doomed never to be properly known there. I was made, by wrong treatment, strange even to myself, and they judged of me from my strangeness.

I was startled one day at the sight of one of the monks of my convent gliding out of my father's room. He saw me, but pretended not to notice me, and this very hypocrisy made me suspect something. I had become sore and susceptible in my feelings; every thing inflicted a wound on them. In this state of mind I was treated with marked disrespect by a pampered minion, the favourite servant of my father. All the pride and passion of my nature rose in an instant, and I struck him to the earth. My father was passing by; he stopped not to inquire the reason, nor indeed could he read the long course of mental sufferings which were the real cause. He rebuked me with anger and scorn; he summoned all the haughtiness of his nature and grandeur of his look to give weight to the contumely with which he treated me. I felt that I had not deserved it. I felt that I was not appreciated. I felt that I had that within me which merited better treatment. My heart swelled against a father's injustice. I broke through my habitual awe of him—I replied to him with impatience. My hot spirit flushed in my cheek and kindled in my eye; but my sensitive heart swelled as quickly, and before I had half vented my passion, I felt it suffocated and quenched in my tears. My father was astonished and incensed at this turning of the worm, and

ordered me to my chamber. I retired in silence, choking with contending emotions.

I had not been long there when I overheard voices in an adjoining apartment. It was a consultation between my father and the monk, about the means of getting me back quietly to the convent. My resolution was taken. I had no longer a home nor a father. That very night I left the paternal roof. I got on board a vessel about making sail from the harbour, and abandoned myself to the wide world. No matter to what port she steered; any part of so beautiful a world was better than my convent. No matter where I was cast by fortune; any place would be more a home to me than the home I had left behind. The vessel was bound to Genoa. We arrived there after a voyage of a few days.

As I entered the harbour between the moles which embrace it, and beheld the amphitheatre of palaces, and churches, and splendid gardens, rising one above another, I felt at once its title to the appellation of Genoa the Superb. I landed on the mole an utter stranger, without knowing what to do, or whither to direct my steps. No matter: I was released from the thralldom of the convent and the humiliations of home. When I traversed the Strada Balbi and the Strada Nuova, those streets of palaces, and gazed at the wonders of architecture around me; when I wandered at close of day amid a gay throng of the brilliant and the beautiful, through the green alleys of the Acqua Verde, or among the colonnades and terraces of the magnificent Doria gardens; I thought it impossible to be ever otherwise than happy in Genoa.

A few days sufficed to show me my mistake. My scanty purse was exhausted, and for the first time in my life I experienced the sordid distresses of penury. I had never known the want of money, and had never adverted to the possibility of such an evil. I was ignorant of the world and all its ways; and when first the idea of destitution came over my mind, its effect was withering. I was wandering penniless through the streets which no longer delighted my eyes, when chance led my steps into

the magnificent church of the Annunziata.

A celebrated painter of the day was at that moment superintending the placing of one of his pictures over an altar. The proficiency which I had acquired in his art during my residence in the convent had made me an enthusiastic amateur. I was struck, at the first glance, with the painting. It was the face of a Madonna. So innocent, so lovely, such a divine expression of maternal tenderness! I lost, for the moment, all recollection of myself in the enthusiasm of my art. I clasped my hands together, and uttered an ejaculation of delight. The painter perceived my emotion. He was flattered and gratified by it. My air and manner pleased him, and he accosted me. I felt too much the want of friendship to repel the advances of a stranger; and there was something in this one so benevolent and winning, that in a moment he gained my confidence.

I told him my story and my situation, concealing only my name and rank. He appeared strongly interested by my recital, invited me to his house, and from that time I became his favourite pupil. He thought he perceived in me extraordinary talents for the art, and his encomiums awakened all my ardour. What a blissful period of my existence was it that I passed beneath his roof! Another being seemed created within me; or rather, all that was amiable and excellent was drawn out. I was as recluse as ever I had been at the convent, but how different was my seclusion! My time was spent in storing my mind with lofty and poetical ideas; in meditating on all that was striking and noble in history and fiction; in studying and tracing all that was sublime and beautiful in nature. I was always a visionary, imaginative being, but now my reveries and imaginings all elevated me to rapture. I looked up to my master as to a benevolent genius that had opened to me a region of enchantment. He was not a native of Genoa, but had been drawn thither by the solicitations of several of the nobility, and had resided there but a few years, for the completion of certain works he had undertaken. His health was delicate, and he had to confide much of the filling

up of his designs to the pencils of his scholars. He considered me as particularly happy in delineating the human countenance, in seizing upon characteristic, though fleeting expressions, and fixing them powerfully upon my canvass. I was employed continually, therefore, in sketching faces, and often, when some particular grace or beauty of expression was wanted in a countenance, it was intrusted to my pencil. My benefactor was fond of bringing me forward; and partly, perhaps, through my actual skill, and partly through his partial praises, I began to be noted for the expressions of my countenances.

Among the various works which he had undertaken, was an historical piece for one of the palaces of Genoa, in which were to be introduced the likenesses of several of the family. Among these was one intrusted to my pencil. It was that of a young girl, who as yet was in a convent for her education. She came out for the purpose of sitting for the picture. I first saw her in an apartment of one of the sumptuous palaces of Genoa. She stood before a casement that looked out upon the bay; a stream of vernal sunshine fell upon her, and shed a kind of glory round her, as it lit up the rich crimson chamber. She was but sixteen years of age—and oh, how lovely! The scene broke upon me like a mere vision of spring and youth and beauty. I could have fallen down and worshipped her. She was like one of those fictions of poets and painters, when they would express the *beau idéal* that haunts their minds with shapes of indescribable perfection. I was permitted to sketch her countenance in various positions, and I fondly protracted the study that was undoing me. The more I gazed on her, the more I became enamoured; there was something almost painful in my intense admiration. I was but nineteen years of age, shy, diffident, and inexperienced. I was treated with attention by her mother; for my youth and my enthusiasm in my art won favour for me; and I am inclined to think that there was something in my air and manner that inspired interest and respect. Still the kindness with which I was treated could not dispel the embarrassment into which

my own imagination threw me when in presence of this lovely being. It elevated her into something almost more than mortal. She seemed too exquisite for earthly use; too delicate and exalted for human attainment. As I sat tracing her charms on my canvass, with my eyes occasionally riveted on her features, I drank in delicious poison that made me giddy. My heart alternately gushed with tenderness, and ached with despair. Now I became more than ever sensible of the violent fires that had lain dormant at the bottom of my soul. You, who are born in a more temperate climate, and under a cooler sky, have little idea of the violence of passion in our southern bosoms.

A few days finished my task. Bianca, returned to her convent, but her image remained indelibly impressed upon my heart. It dwelt in my imagination; it became my pervading idea of beauty. It had an effect even upon my pencil. I became noted for my felicity in depicting female loveliness: it was but because I multiplied the image of Bianca. I soothed and yet fed my fancy by introducing her in all the productions of my master. I have stood, with delight, in one of the chapels of the Annunciata, and heard the crowd extol the seraphic beauty of a saint which I had painted. I have seen them bow down in adoration before the painting; they were bowing before the loveliness of Bianca.

I existed in this kind of dream, I might almost say delirium, for upwards of a year. Such is the tenacity of my imagination, that the image which was formed in it continued in all its power and freshness. Indeed, I was a solitary, meditative being, much given to revery, and apt to foster ideas which had once taken strong possession of me. I was roused from this fond, melancholy, delicious dream by the death of my worthy benefactor. I cannot describe the pangs his death occasioned me. It left me alone, and almost broken-hearted. He bequeathed to me his little property, which, from the liberality of his disposition, and his expensive style of living, was indeed but small: and he most particularly recommended me, in dying, to the protection of a nobleman who had been his patron.



The latter was a man who passed for munificent. He was a lover and an encourager of the arts, and evidently wished to be thought so. He fancied he saw in me indications of future excellence; my pencil had already attracted attention; he took me at once under his protection. Seeing that I was overwhelmed with grief, and incapable of exerting myself in the mansion of my late benefactor, he invited me to sojourn for a time at a villa which he possessed on the border of the sea, in the picturesque neighbourhood of Sestri di Ponente.

I found at the villa the count's only son, Filippo. He was nearly of my age; prepossessing in his appearance, and fascinating in his manners; he attached himself to me, and seemed to court my good opinion. I thought there was something of profession in his kindness, and of caprice in his disposition; but I had nothing else near me to attach myself to, and my heart felt the need of something to repose upon. His education had been neglected; he looked upon me as his superior in mental powers and acquirements, and tacitly acknowledged my superiority. I felt that I was his equal in birth, and that gave independence to my manners, which had its effect. The caprice and tyranny I saw sometimes exercised on others, over whom he had power, were never manifested towards me. We became intimate friends and frequent companions. Still I loved to be alone, and to indulge in the reveries of my own imagination among the scenery by which I was surrounded.

The villa commanded a wide view of the Mediterranean, and of the picturesque Ligurian coast. It stood alone in the midst of ornamented grounds, finely decorated with statues and fountains, and laid out into groves and alleys, and shady lawns. Every thing was assembled here that could gratify the taste, or agreeably occupy the mind. Soothed by the tranquillity of this elegant retreat, the turbulence of my feelings gradually subsided, and blending with the romantic spell which still reigned over my imagination, produced a soft, voluptuous melancholy.

I had not been long under the roof of the count, when our solitude was enlivened by another inhabitant. It was

the daughter of a relative of the count, who had lately died in reduced circumstances, bequeathing this only child to his protection. I had heard much of her beauty from Filippo, but my fancy had become so engrossed by one idea of beauty, as not to admit of any other. We were in the central saloon of the villa when she arrived. She was still in mourning, and approached, leaning on the count's arm. As they ascended the marble portico, I was struck by the elegance of her figure and movement, by the grace with which the *mezzaro*, the bewitching veil of Genoa, was folded about her slender form. They entered. Heavens! what was my surprise when I beheld Bianca before me! It was herself; pale with grief, but still more matured in loveliness than when I had last beheld her. The time that had elapsed had developed the graces of her person, and the sorrow she had undergone had diffused over her countenance an irresistible tenderness.

She blushed and trembled at seeing me, and tears rushed into her eyes, for she remembered in whose company she had been accustomed to behold me. For my part, I cannot express what were my emotions. By degrees I overcame the extreme shyness that had formerly paralysed me in her presence. We were drawn together by sympathy of situation. We had each lost our best friend in the world; we were each, in some measure, thrown upon the kindness of others. When I came to know her intellectually, all my ideal picturings of her were confirmed. Her newness to the world, her delightful susceptibility to every thing beautiful and agreeable in nature, reminded me of my own emotions when first I escaped from the convent. Her rectitude of thinking delighted my judgment; the sweetness of her nature wrapped itself round my heart; and then her young, and tender, and budding loveliness, sent a delicious madness to my brain.

I gazed upon her with a kind of idolatry, as something more than mortal; and I felt humiliated at the idea of my comparative unworthiness. Yet she was mortal; and one of mortality's most susceptible and loving compounds;—for she loved me!

How first I discovered the transporting truth I cannot recollect. I believe it stole upon me by degrees as a wonder past hope or belief. We were both at such a tender and loving age; in constant intercourse with each other; mingling in the same elegant pursuits;—for music, poetry, and painting, were our mutual delights; and we were almost separated from society among lovely and romantic scenery. Is it strange that two young hearts, thus brought together, should readily twine round each other?

Oh, gods! what a dream, a transient dream of unalloyed delight, then passed over my soul! Then it was that the world around me was indeed a paradise; for I had woman—lovely, delicious woman, to share it with me! How often have I rambled along the picturesque shores of Sestri, or climbed its wild mountains, with the coast gemmed with villas, and the blue sea far below me, and the slender Faro of Genoa on its romantic promontory in the distance; and as I sustained the faltering steps of Bianca, have thought there could no unhappiness enter into so beautiful a world! How often have we listened together to the nightingale, as it poured forth its rich notes among the moonlight bowers of the garden, and have wondered that poets could ever have fancied any thing melancholy in its song! Why, oh why is this budding season of life and tenderness so transient! why is this rosy cloud of love, that sheds such a glow over the morning of our days, so prone to brew up into the whirlwind and the storm!

I was the first to awaken from this blissful delirium of the affections. I had gained Bianca's heart, what was I to do with it? I had no wealth nor prospect to entitle me to her hand; was I to take advantage of her ignorance of the world, of her confiding affection, and draw her down to my own poverty? Was this requiring the hospitality of the count? was this requiring the love of Bianca?

Now first I began to feel that even successful love may have its bitterness. A corroding care gathered about my heart. I moved about the palace like a guilty being. I felt as if I had abused its hospitality, as if I were a thief within its

walls. I could no longer look with unembarrassed mien in the countenance of the count. I accused myself of perfidy to him, and I thought he read it in my looks, and began to distrust and despise me. His manner had always been ostentatious and condescending; it now appeared cold and haughty. Filippo, too, became reserved and distant; or at least I suspected him to be so. Heavens! was this the mere coinage of my brain? Was I to become suspicious of all the world? A poor, surmising wretch, watching looks and gestures; and torturing myself with misconstructions? Or, if true, was I to remain beneath a roof where I was merely tolerated, and linger there on sufferance? "This is not to be endured!" exclaimed I: "I will tear myself from this state of self-abasement—I will break through this fascination and fly—Fly!—Whither?—from the world? for where is the world when I leave Bianca behind me?"

My spirit was naturally proud, and swelled within me at the idea of being looked upon with contumely. Many times I was on the point of declaring my family and rank, and asserting my equality in the presence of Bianca, when I thought her relations assumed an air of superiority. But the feeling was transient. I considered myself discarded and condemned by my family; and had solemnly vowed never to own relationship to them until they themselves should claim it.

The struggle of my mind preyed upon my happiness and my health. It seemed as if the uncertainty of being loved would be less intolerable than thus to be assured of it, and yet not dare to enjoy the conviction. I was no longer the enraptured admirer of Bianca; I no longer hung in ecstasy on the tones of her voice, nor drank in with insatiate gaze the beauty of her countenance. Her very smiles ceased to delight me, for I felt culpable in having won them.

She could not but be sensible of the change in me, and inquired the cause with her usual frankness and simplicity. I could not evade the inquiry, for my heart was full to aching. I told her all the conflict of my soul; my devouring passion, my bitter self-upbraiding. "Yes," said I, "I am unworthy of you. I am

an offcast from my family—a wanderer—a nameless, homeless wanderer—with nothing but poverty for my portion; and yet I have dared to love you—have dared to aspire to your love!”

My agitation moved her tears, but she saw nothing in my situation so hopeless as I had depicted it. Brought up in a convent, she knew nothing of the world—its wants—its cares: and indeed what woman is a worldly casuist in matters of the heart? Nay more—she kindled into a sweet enthusiasm when she spoke of my fortunes and myself. We had dwelt together on the works of the famous masters. I had related to her their histories; the high reputation, the influence, the magnificence, to which they had attained. The companions of princes, the favourites of kings, the pride and boast of nations. All this she applied to me. Her love saw nothing in all their great productions that I was not able to achieve! and when I beheld the lovely creature glow with fervour, and her whole countenance radiant with visions of my glory, I was snatched up for the moment into the heaven of her own imagination.

I am dwelling too long upon this part of my story; yet I cannot help lingering over a period of my life, on which, with all its cares and conflicts, I look back with fondness, for as yet my soul was unstained by a crime. I do not know what might have been the result of this struggle between pride, delicacy, and passion, had I not read in a Neapolitan gazette an account of the sudden death of my brother. It was accompanied by an earnest inquiry for intelligence concerning me, and a prayer, should this meet my eye, that I would hasten to Naples to comfort an infirm and afflicted father.

I was naturally of an affectionate disposition, but my brother had never been as a brother to me. I had long considered myself as disconnected from him, and his death caused me but little emotion. The thoughts of my father, infirm and suffering, touched me however to the quick; and when I thought of him, that lofty magnificent being, now bowed down and desolate, and suing to me for comfort, all my resentment for past neglect

was subdued, and a glow of filial affection was awakened within me.

The predominant feeling, however, that overpowered all others, was transport at the sudden change in my whole fortunes. A home, a name, rank, wealth, awaited me; and love painted a still more rapturous prospect in the distance. I hastened to Bianca, and threw myself at her feet. “Oh, Bianca!” exclaimed I, “at length I can claim you for my own. I am no longer a nameless adventurer, a neglected, rejected outcast. Look—read—behold the tidings that restore me to my name and to myself!”

I will not dwell on the scene that ensued. Bianca rejoiced in the reverse of my situation, because she saw it lightened my heart of a load of care; for her own part, she had loved me for myself, and had never doubted that my own merits would command both fame and fortune.

I now felt all my native pride buoyant within me. I no longer walked with my eyes bent to the dust; hope elevated them to the skies—my soul was lit up with fresh fires and beamed from my countenance.

I wished to impart the change in my circumstances to the count; to let him know who and what I was—and to make formal proposals for the hand of Bianca; but he was absent on a distant estate. I opened my whole soul to Filippo. Now first I told him of my passion, of the doubts and fears that had distracted me, and of the tidings that had suddenly dispelled them. He overwhelmed me with congratulations, and with the warmest expressions of sympathy; I embraced him in the fulness of my heart;—I felt compunction for having suspected him of coldness, and asked him forgiveness for having ever doubted his friendship.

Nothing is so warm and enthusiastic as a sudden expansion of the heart between young men. Filippo entered into our concerns with the most eager interest. He was our confidant and counsellor. It was determined that I should hasten at once to Naples, to re-establish myself in my father's affections, and my paternal home; and the moment the reconciliation was effected, and my father's consent insured, I should return and demand Bianca of the count. Filippo

engaged to secure his father's acquiescence; indeed, he undertook to watch over our interests, and to be the channel through which we might correspond.

My parting with Bianca was tender—delicious—agonizing. It was in a little pavilion of the garden which had been one of our favourite resorts. How often and often did I return to have one more adieu; to have her look once more on me in speechless emotion; to enjoy once more the rapturous sight of those tears streaming down her lovely cheeks; to seize once more on that delicate hand, the frankly accorded pledge of love, and cover it with tears and kisses! Heavens! there is a delight even in the parting agony of two lovers, worth a thousand tame pleasures of the world. I have her at this moment before my eyes, at the window of the pavilion, putting aside the vines that clustered about the casement, her light form beaming forth in virgin light, her countenance all tears and smiles, sending a thousand and a thousand adieus after me, as, hesitating, in a delirium of fondness and agitation, I faltered my way down the avenue.

As the bark bore me out of the harbour of Genoa, how eagerly my eye stretched along the coast of Sestri till it discovered the villa gleaming from among trees at the foot of the mountain! As long as day lasted, I gazed and gazed upon it till it lessened and lessened to a mere white speck in the distance; and still my intense and fixed gaze discerned it, when all other objects of the coast had blended into indistinct confusion, or were lost in the evening gloom.

On arriving at Naples, I hastened to my paternal home. My heart yearned for the long-withheld blessing of a father's love. As I entered the proud portal of the ancestral palace, my emotions were so great, that I could not speak. No one knew me; the servants gazed at me with curiosity and surprise. A few years of intellectual elevation and developement had made a prodigious change in the poor fugitive stripling from the convent. Still that no one should know me in my rightful home was overpowering. I felt like the prodigal son returned. I was a stranger in the house of my father. I burst into

tears and wept aloud. When I made myself known, however, all was changed. I, who had once been almost repulsed from its walls, and forced to fly as an exile, was welcomed back with acclamation, with servility. One of the servants hastened to prepare my father for my reception; my eagerness to receive the paternal embrace was so great, that I could not await his return, but hurried after him. What a spectacle met my eyes as I entered the chamber! My father, whom I had left in the pride of vigorous age, whose noble and majestic bearing had so awed my young imagination, was bowed down and withered into decrepitude. A paralysis had ravaged his stately form, and left it a shaking ruin. He sat propped up in his chair, with pale relaxed visage, and glassy wandering eye. His intellect had evidently shared in the ravage of his frame. The servant was endeavouring to make him comprehend that a visiter was at hand. I tottered up to him and sunk at his feet. All his past coldness and neglect were forgotten in his present sufferings. I remembered only that he was my parent, and that I had deserted him. I clasped his knees; my voice was almost stifled with convulsive sobs. "Pardon—pardon, oh! my father!" was all that I could utter. His apprehension seemed slowly to return to him. He gazed at me for some moments with a vague, inquiring look; a convulsive tremor quivered about his lips; he feebly extended a shaking hand, laid it upon my head, and burst into an infantine flow of tears.

From that moment he would scarcely spare me from his sight. I appeared the only object that his heart responded to in the world; all else was a blank to him. He had almost lost the powers of speech, and the reasoning faculty seemed at an end. He was mute and passive, excepting that fits of child-like weeping would sometimes come over him without any immediate cause. If I left the room at any time, his eye was incessantly fixed on the door till my return, and on my entrance there was another gush of tears.

To talk with him of my concerns, in this ruined state of mind, would have been worse than useless; to have left

him for ever so short a time, would have been cruel, unnatural. Here then was a new trial for my affections. I wrote to Bianca an account of my return, and of my actual situation, painting, in colours vivid, for they were true, the torments I suffered at our being thus separated; for to the youthful lover every day of absence is an age of love lost. I enclosed the letter in one to Filippo, who was the channel of our correspondence. I received a reply from him full of friendship and sympathy; from Bianca, full of assurances of affection and constancy. Week after week, month after month elapsed, without making any change in my circumstances. The vital flame which had seemed nearly extinct when first I met my father, kept fluttering on without any apparent diminution. I watched him constantly, faithfully, I had almost said patiently. I knew that his death alone would set me free—yet I never at any moment wished it. I felt too glad to be able to make any atonement for past disobedience; and, denied as I had been all endearments of relationship in my early days, my heart yearned towards a father, who in his age and helplessness had thrown himself entirely on me for comfort.

My passion for Bianca gained daily more force from absence: by constant meditation it wore itself a deeper and deeper channel. I made no new friends nor acquaintances; sought none of the pleasures of Naples, which my rank and fortune threw open to me. Mine was a heart that confined itself to few objects, but dwelt upon them with the intenser passion. To sit by my father, administer to his wants, and to meditate on Bianca in the silence of his chamber, was my constant habit. Sometimes I amused myself with my pencil, in portraying the image that was ever present to my imagination. I transferred to canvass every look and smile of hers that dwelt in my heart. I showed them to my father, in hopes of awakening an interest in his bosom for the mere shadow of my love; but he was too far sunk in intellect to take any more than a child-like notice of them. When I received a letter from Bianca, it was a new source of solitary luxury. Her letters, it is true,

were less and less frequent, but they were always full of assurances of unabated affection. They breathed not the frank and innocent warmth with which she expressed herself in conversation, but I accounted for it from the embarrassment which inexperienced minds have often to express themselves upon paper. Filippo assured me of her unaltered constancy. They both lamented, in the strongest terms, our continued separation, though they did justice to the filial piety that kept me by my father.

Nearly two years elapsed in this protracted exile. To me they were so many ages. Ardent and impetuous by nature, I scarcely know how I should have supported so long an absence, had I not felt assured that the faith of Bianca was equal to my own. At length my father died. Life went from him almost imperceptibly. I hung over him in mute affliction, and watched the expiring spasms of nature. His last faltering accents whispered repeatedly a blessing on me. Alas! how has it been fulfilled!

When I had paid due honours to his remains, and laid them in the tomb of our ancestors, I arranged briefly my affairs, put them in a posture to be easily at my command from a distance, and embarked once more with a bounding heart to Genoa.

Our voyage was propitious, and oh! what was my rapture, when first, in the dawn of morning, I saw the shadowy summits of the Apennines rising almost like clouds above the horizon! The sweet breath of summer just moved us over the long wavering billows that were rolling us on towards Genoa. By degrees the coast of Sestri rose like a creation of enchantment from the silver bosom of the deep. I beheld the line of villages and palaces studding its borders. My eye reverted to a well-known point, and at length, from the confusion of distant objects, it singled out the villa which contained Bianca. It was a mere speck in the landscape, but glimmering from afar, the polar star of my heart.

Again I gazed at it for a livelong summer's day, but oh! how different the emotions between departure and return! It now kept growing and growing, instead of lessening and lessening on my

sight. My heart seemed to dilate with it. I looked at it through a telescope. I gradually defined one feature after another. The balconies of the central saloon where first I met Bianca beneath its roof; the terrace where we so often had passed the delightful summer evenings; the awning that shaded her chamber window; I almost fancied I saw her form beneath it. Could she but know her lover was in the bark whose white sail now gleamed on the sunny bosom of the sea! My fond impatience increased as we neared the coast; the ship seemed to lag lazily over the billows: I could almost have sprung into the sea, and swam to the desired shore.

The shadows of evening gradually shrouded the scene; but the moon arose in all her fulness and beauty, and shed the tender light, so dear to lovers, over the romantic coast of Sestri. My soul was bathed in unutterable tenderness. I anticipated the heavenly evenings I should pass in once more wandering with Bianca by the light of that blessed moon.

It was late at night before we entered the harbour. As early next morning as I could get released from the formalities of landing, I threw myself on horseback, and hastened to the villa. As I galloped round the rocky promontory on which stands the Faro, and saw the coast of Sestri opening upon me, a thousand anxieties and doubts suddenly sprang up in my bosom. There is something fearful in returning to those we love, while yet uncertain what ills or changes absence may have effected. The turbulence of my agitation shook my very frame. I spurred my horse to redoubled speed; he was covered with foam when we both arrived panting at the gateway that opened to the grounds around the villa. I left my horse at a cottage, and walked through the grounds, that I might regain tranquillity for the approaching interview. I chid myself for having suffered mere doubts and surmises thus suddenly to overcome me; but I was always prone to be carried away by gusts of the feelings.

On entering the garden, every thing bore the same look as when I had left it; and this unchanged aspect of things re-

assured me. There were the alleys in which I had so often walked with Bianca, as we listened to the song of the nightingale; the same shades under which we had so often sat during the noontide heat. There were the same flowers of which she was fond, and which appeared still to be under the ministry of her hand. Every thing looked and breathed of Bianca; hope and joy flushed in my bosom at every step. I passed a little arbour, in which we had often sat and read together—a book and a glove lay on the bench—it was Bianca's glove; it was a volume of the *Metastasio* I had given her. The glove lay in my favourite passage. I clasped them to my heart with rapture. "All is safe!" exclaimed I; "she loves me, she is still my own!"

I bounded lightly along the avenue, down which I had faltered so slowly at my departure. I beheld her favourite pavilion, which had witnessed our parting scene. The window was open, with the same vine clambering about it, precisely as when she waved and wept me an adieu. O how transporting was the contrast in my situation! As I passed near the pavilion, I heard the tones of a female voice: they thrilled through me with an appeal to my heart not to be mistaken. Before I could think, I *felt* they were Bianca's. For an instant I paused, overpowered with agitation. I feared to break so suddenly upon her. I softly ascended the steps of the pavilion. The door was open. I saw Bianca seated at a table; her back was towards me; she was warbling a soft melancholy air, and was occupied in drawing. A glance sufficed to show me that she was copying one of my own paintings. I gazed on her for a moment in a delicious tumult of emotions. She paused in her singing: a heavy sigh, almost a sob followed. I could no longer contain myself. "Bianca!" exclaimed I, in a half-smothered voice. She started at the sound, brushed back the ringlets that hung clustering about her face, darted a glance at me, uttered a piercing shriek, and would have fallen to the earth, had I not caught her in my arms.

"Bianca! my own Bianca!" exclaimed I, folding her to my bosom; my voice stifled in sobs of convulsive joy. She

lay in my arms without sense or motion. Alarmed at the effects of my precipitation, I scarce knew what to do. I tried by a thousand endearing words to call her back to consciousness. She slowly recovered, and half-opening her eyes, "Where am I?" murmured she, faintly. "Here!" exclaimed I, pressing her to my bosom, "Here—close to the heart that adores you—in the arms of your faithful Ottavio!" "Oh no! no! no!" shrieked she, starting into sudden life and terror—"away! away! leave me! leave me!"

She tore herself from my arms; rushed to a corner of the saloon, and covered her face with her hands, as if the very sight of me were baleful. I was thunder-struck. I could not believe my senses. I followed her, trembling, confounded. I endeavoured to take her hand; but she shrunk from my very touch with horror.

"Good heavens, Bianca!" exclaimed I, "what is the meaning of this? Is this my reception after so long an absence? Is this the love you professed for me?"

At the mention of love, a shuddering ran through her. She turned to me a face wild with anguish: "No more of that—no more of that!" gasped she: "talk not to me of love—I—I—am married!"

I reeled as if I had received a mortal blow—a sickness struck to my very heart. I caught at a window-frame for support. For a moment or two every thing was chaos around me. When I recovered, I beheld Bianca lying on a sofa, her face buried in the pillow, and sobbing convulsively. Indignation for her fickleness for a moment overpowered every other feeling.

"Faithless—perjured!" cried I, striding across the room. But another glance at that beautiful being in distress checked all my wrath. Anger could not dwell together with her idea in my soul.

"Oh! Bianca," exclaimed I, in anguish, "could I have dreamt of this? Could I have suspected you would have been false to me?"

She raised her face all streaming with tears, all disordered with emotion, and gave me one appealing look. "False to you!—They told me you were dead!"

"What," said I, "in spite of our constant correspondence?"

She gazed wildly at me: "Correspondence! what correspondence?"

"Have you not repeatedly received and replied to my letters?"

She clasped her hands with solemnity and fervour. "As I hope for mercy—never!"

A horrible surmise shot through my brain. "Who told you I was dead?"

"It was reported that the ship in which you embarked for Naples perished at sea."

"But who told you the report?"

She paused for an instant, and trembled:—"Filippo."

"May the God of heaven curse him!" cried I, extending my clenched fists aloft.

"O do not curse him, do not curse him!" exclaimed she; "he is—he is—my husband!"

This was all that was wanting to unfold the perfidy that had been practised upon me. My blood boiled like liquid fire in my veins. I gasped with rage too great for utterance—I remained for a time bewildered by the whirl of horrible thoughts that rushed through my mind. The poor victim of deception before me thought it was with her I was incensed. She faintly murmured forth her exculpation. I will not dwell upon it. I saw in it more than she meant to reveal. I saw with a glance how both of us had been betrayed.

"'Tis well," muttered I to myself in smothered accents of concentrated fury. "He shall render an account of all this."

Bianca overheard me. New terror flashed in her countenance. "For mercy's sake, do not meet him!—Say nothing of what has passed—for my sake say nothing to him—I only shall be the sufferer!"

A new suspicion darted across my mind—"What!" exclaimed I, "do you then *fear* him? is he *unkind* to you? Tell me," reiterated I, grasping her hand, and looking her eagerly in the face, "tell me—*dares* he to use you harshly?"

"No! no! no!" cried she, faltering and embarrassed—but the glance at her face had told me volumes. I saw in her pallid and wasted features, in the prompt terror and subdued agony of her eye, a

whole history of a mind broken down by tyranny. Great God! and was this beautiful flower snatched from me to be thus trampled upon? The idea roused me to madness. I clenched my teeth and my hands; I foamed at the mouth; every passion seemed to have resolved itself into the fury that like a lava boiled within my heart. Bianca shrunk from me in speechless affright. As I strode by the window, my eye darted down the alley. Fatal moment! I beheld Filippo at a distance! my brain was in delirium—I sprang from the pavilion, and was before him with the quickness of lightning. He saw me as I came rushing upon him—he turned pale, looked wildly to right and left, as if he would have fled, and trembling drew his sword.

“Wretch!” cried I, “well may you draw your weapon!”

I spake not another word—I snatched forth a stiletto, put by the sword which trembled in his hand, and buried my poniard in his bosom. He fell with the blow, but my rage was unsated. I sprung upon him with the bloodthirsty feeling of a tiger; redoubled my blows; mangled him in my frenzy, grasped him by the throat, until, with reiterated wounds and strangling convulsions, he expired in my grasp. I remained glaring on the countenance, horrible in death, that seemed to stare back with its protruded eyes upon me. Piercing shrieks roused me from my delirium. I looked round, and beheld Bianca flying distractedly towards us. My brain whirled—I waited not to meet her; but fled from the scene of horror. I fled forth from the garden like another Cain,—a hell within my bosom, and a curse upon my head. I fled without knowing whither, almost without knowing why. My only idea was to get farther and farther from the horrors I had left behind; as if I could throw space between myself and my conscience. I fled to the Apennines, and wandered for days and days among their savage heights. How I existed, I cannot tell—what rocks and precipices I braved, and how I braved them, I know not. I kept on and on, trying to out-travel the curse that clung to me. Alas! the shrieks of Bianca rung for ever in my ears. The horrible countenance of my victim

was for ever before my eyes. The blood of Filippo cried to me from the ground. Rocks, trees, and torrents, all resounded with my crime. Then it was I felt how much more insupportable is the anguish of remorse than every other mental pang. Oh! could I but have cast off this crime that festered in my heart—could I but have regained the innocence that reigned in my breast as I entered the garden at Sestri—could I but have restored my victim to life, I felt as if I could look on with transport, even though Bianca were in his arms.

By degrees this frenzied fever of remorse settled into a permanent malady of the mind—into one of the most horrible that ever poor wretch was cursed with. Wherever I went, the countenance of him I had slain appeared to follow me. Whenever I turned my head, I beheld it behind me, hideous with the contortions of the dying moment. I have tried in every way to escape from this horrible phantom, but in vain. I know not whether it be an illusion of the mind, the consequence of my dismal education at the convent, or whether a phantom really sent by Heaven to punish me, but there it ever is—at all times—in all places. Nor has time nor habit had any effect in familiarizing me with its terrors. I have travelled from place to place—plunged into amusements—tried dissipation and distraction of every kind—all—all in vain. I once had recourse to my pencil, as a desperate experiment. I painted an exact resemblance of this phantom face. I placed it before me, in hopes that by constantly contemplating the copy, I might diminish the effect of the original. But I only doubled instead of diminishing the misery. Such is the curse that has clung to my footsteps—that has made my life a burthen, but the thought of death terrible. God knows what I have suffered—what days and days, and nights and nights of sleepless torment—what a never-dying worm has preyed upon my heart—what an unquenchable fire has burned within my brain! He knows the wrongs that wrought upon my poor weak nature; that converted the tenderest of affections into the deadliest of fury. He knows best whether a frail erring creature has



expiated by long-enduring torture and measureless remorse the crime of a moment of madness. Often, often have I prostrated myself in the dust, and implored that he would give me a sign of his forgiveness, and let me die——

Thus far had I written some time since. I had meant to leave this record of misery and crime with you, to be read when I should be no more.

My prayer to Heaven has at length been heard. You were witness to my emotions last evening at the church, when the vaulted temple resounded with the words of atonement and redemption. I heard a voice speaking to me from the midst of the music; I heard it rising above the pealing of the organ and the voices of the choir—it spoke to me in tones of celestial melody—it promised mercy and forgiveness, but demanded from me full expiation. I go to make it. To-morrow I shall be on my way to Genoa, to surrender myself to justice. You who have pitied my sufferings, who have poured the balm of sympathy into my wounds, do not shrink from my memory with abhorrence now that you know my story. Recollect, that when you read of my crime I shall have atoned for it with my blood!

When the baronet had finished, there was a universal desire expressed to see the painting of this frightful visage. After much entreaty the baronet consented, on condition that they should only visit it one by one. He called his housekeeper, and gave her charge to conduct the gentlemen, singly, to the chamber. They all returned varying in their stories. Some affected in one way, some in another; some more, some less; but all agreeing that there was a certain something about the painting that had a very odd effect upon the feelings.

I stood in a deep bow-window with the baronet, and could not help expressing my wonder. "After all," said I, "there are certain mysteries in our nature, certain inscrutable impulses and influences, which warrant one in being superstitious. Who can account for so many persons of different characters being thus strangely affected by a mere painting?"

"And especially when not one of them

has seen it!" said the baronet, with a smile.

"How!" exclaimed I, "not seen it?"  
 "Not one of them!" replied he, laying his finger on his lips, in sign of secrecy. "I saw that some of them were in a bantering vein, and I did not choose that the memento of the poor Italian should be made a jest of. So I gave the housekeeper a hint to show them all to a different chamber!"

Thus end the stories of the Nervous Gentleman.

## PART II.

### BUCKTHORNE AND HIS FRIENDS.

This world is the best that we live in,  
 To lend, or to spend, or to give in;  
 But to beg, or to borrow, or get a man's own,  
 'Tis the very worst world, sir, that ever was known.  
*Lines from an Inn Window.*

## LITERARY LIFE.

AMONG other subjects of a traveller's curiosity, I had at one time a great craving after anecdotes of literary life; and being at London, one of the most noted places for the production of books, I was excessively anxious to know something of the animals which produced them. Chance fortunately threw me in the way of a literary man by the name of Buckthorne, an eccentric personage, who had lived much in the metropolis, and could give me the natural history of every odd animal to be met with in that wilderness of men. He readily imparted to me some useful hints upon the subject of my inquiry.

"The literary world," said he, "is made up of little confederacies, each looking upon its own members as the lights of the universe; and considering all others as mere transient meteors, doomed soon to fall and be forgotten, while its own luminaries are to shine steadily on to immortality."

"And pray," said I, "how is a man to get a peep into those confederacies

you speak of? I presume an intercourse with authors is a kind of intellectual exchange, where one must bring his commodities to barter, and always give a *quid pro quo*."

"Pooh, pooh! how you mistake," said Buckthorne, smiling; "you must never think to become popular among wits by shining. They go into society to shine themselves, not to admire the brilliancy of others. I once thought as you do, and never went into literary society without studying my part beforehand; the consequence was, that I soon got the name of an intolerable proser, and should, in a little while, have been completely excommunicated, had I not changed my plan of operations. No, sir, there is no character that succeeds so well among wits as that of a good listener; or if ever you are eloquent, let it be when tête-à-tête with an author, and then in praise of his own works, or, what is nearly as acceptable, in disparagement of the works of his contemporaries. If ever he speaks favourably of the productions of a particular friend, dissent boldly from him; pronounce his friend to be a blockhead; never fear his being vexed; much as people speak of the irritability of authors, I never found one to take offence at such contradictions. No, no, sir, authors are particularly candid in admitting the faults of their friends.

"Indeed, I would advise you to be extremely sparing of remarks on all modern works, except to make sarcastic observations on the most distinguished writers of the day."

"Faith," said I, "I'll praise none that have not been dead for at least half a century."

"Even then," observed Mr. Buckthorne, "I would advise you to be rather cautious; for you must know that many old writers have been enlisted under the banners of different sects, and their merits have become as completely topics of party discussion as the merits of living statesmen and politicians. Nay, there have been whole periods of literature absolutely taboo'd, to use a South Sea phrase. It is, for example, as much as a man's critical reputation is worth in some circles, to say a word in praise of any of the writers of the reign of Charles

the Second, or even of Queen Anne, they being all declared Frenchmen in disguise."

"And pray," said I, "when am I then to know that I am on safe grounds, being totally unacquainted with the literary landmarks, and the boundary-line of fashionable taste?"

"Oh!" replied he, "there is fortunately one tract of literature which forms a kind of neutral ground, on which all the literati meet amicably, and run riot in the excess of their good humour; and this is in the reigns of Elizabeth and James. Here you may praise away at random. Here it is 'cut and come again;' and the more obscure the author, and the more quaint and crabbed his style, the more your admiration will smack of the real relish of the connoisseur; whose taste, like that of an epicure, is always for game that has an antiquated flavour.

"But," continued he, "as you seem anxious to know something of literary society, I will take an opportunity to introduce you to some coterie, where the talents of the day are assembled. I cannot promise you, however, that they will all be of the first order. Somehow or other, our great geniuses are not gregarious; they do not go in flocks, but fly singly in general society. They prefer mingling, like common men, with the multitude, and are apt to carry nothing of the author about them but the reputation. It is only the inferior orders that herd together, acquire strength and importance by their confederacies, and bear all the distinctive characteristics of their species."

#### A LITERARY DINNER.

A FEW days after this conversation with Mr. Buckthorne, he called upon me, and took me with him to a regular literary dinner. It was given by a great bookseller, or rather a company of booksellers, whose firm surpassed in length that of Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego.

I was surprised to find between twenty and thirty guests assembled, most of whom I had never seen before. Mr.

Buckthorne explained this to me, by informing me that this was a business dinner, or kind of field-day, which the house gave about twice a year to its authors. It is true they did occasionally give snug dinners to three or four literary men at a time; but then these were generally select authors, favourites of the public, such as had arrived at their sixth or seventh editions. "There are," said he, "certain geographical boundaries in the land of literature, and you may judge tolerably well of an author's popularity by the wine his bookseller gives him. An author crosses the port line about the third edition, and gets into clarets; and when he has reached the sixth or seventh, he may revel in champagne and burgundy."

"And pray," said I, "how far may these gentlemen have reached that I see around me; are any of these claret drinkers?"

"Not exactly, not exactly. You find at these great dinners the common steady run of authors, one or two edition men; or if any others are invited, they are aware that it is a kind of republican meeting. You understand me—a meeting of the republic of letters; and that they must expect nothing but plain substantial fare."

These hints enabled me to comprehend more fully the arrangement of the table. The two ends were occupied by two partners of the house; and the host seemed to have adopted Addison's idea as to the literary precedence of his guests. A popular poet had the post of honour; opposite to whom was a hot-pressed traveller in quarto with plates. A grave-looking antiquarian, who had produced several solid works, that were much quoted and little read, was treated with great respect, and seated next to a neat dressy gentleman in black, who had written a thin, genteel, hot-pressed octavo on political economy, that was getting into fashion. Several three volume duodecimo men, of fair currency, were placed about the centre of the table; while the lower end was taken up with small poets, translators, and authors who had not as yet risen into much notoriety.

The conversation during dinner was

by fits and starts; breaking out here and there in various parts of the table in small flashes, and ending in smoke. The poet, who had the confidence of a man on good terms with the world, and independent of his bookseller, was very gay and brilliant, and said many clever things which set the partner next him in a roar, and delighted all the company. The other partner, however, maintained his sedateness, and kept carving on, with the air of a thorough man of business, intent upon the occupation of the moment. His gravity was explained to me by my friend Buckthorne. He informed me that the concerns of the house were admirably distributed among the partners. "Thus, for instance," said he, "the grave gentleman is the carving partner, who attends to the joints; and the other is the laughing partner, who attends to the jokes."

The general conversation was chiefly carried on at the upper end of the table, as the authors there seemed to possess the greatest courage of the tongue. As to the crew at the lower end, if they did not make much figure in talking, they did in eating. Never was there a more determined, inveterate, thoroughly-sustained attack on the trencher than by this phalanx of masticators. When the cloth was removed, and the wine began to circulate, they grew very merry and jocose among themselves. Their jokes, however, if by chance any of them reached the upper end of the table, seldom produced much effect. Even the laughing partner did not seem to think it necessary to honour them with a smile; which my neighbour Buckthorne accounted for, by informing me that there was a certain degree of popularity to be obtained before a bookseller could afford to laugh at an author's jokes.

Among this crew of questionable gentlemen thus seated below the salt, my eye singled out one in particular. He was rather shabbily dressed; though he had evidently made the most of a rusty black coat, and wore his shirt-frill plaited and puffed out voluminously at the bosom. His face was dusky, but florid, perhaps a little too florid, particularly about the nose; though the rosy hue gave the greater lustre to a twinkling black eye. He had a little the look of a boon com-

panion, with that dash of the poor devil in it which gives an inexpressibly mellow tone to a man's humour. I had seldom seen a face of richer promise; but never was promise so ill kept. He said nothing, ate and drank with the keen appetite of a garreter, and scarcely stopped to laugh, even at the good jokes from the upper end of the table. I inquired who he was. Buckthorne looked at him attentively; "Gad," said he, "I have seen that face before, but where I cannot recollect. He cannot be an author of any note. I suppose some writer of sermons, or grinder of foreign travels."

After dinner we retired to another room to take tea and coffee, where we were reinforced by a cloud of inferior guests,—authors of small volumes in boards, and pamphlets stitched in blue paper. These had not as yet arrived to the importance of a dinner invitation, but were invited occasionally to pass the evening "in a friendly way." They were very respectful to the partners, and, indeed, seemed to stand a little in awe of them; but they paid devoted court to the lady of the house, and were extravagantly fond of the children. Some few, who did not feel confidence enough to make such advances, stood shyly off in corners, talking to one another; or turned over the portfolios of prints which they had not seen above five thousand times, or moused over the music on the forte-piano.

The poet and the thin octavo gentleman were the persons most current and at their ease in the drawing-room; being men evidently of circulation in the west end. They got on each side of the lady of the house, and paid her a thousand compliments and civilities, at some of which I thought she would have expired with delight. Every thing they said and did had the odour of fashionable life. I looked round in vain for the poor-devil author in the rusty black coat; he had disappeared immediately after leaving the table, having a dread, no doubt, of the glaring light of a drawing-room. Finding nothing further to interest my attention, I took my departure soon after coffee had been served, leaving the poet, and the thin, genteel, hot-pressed, octavo gentleman, masters of the field.

## THE CLUB OF QUEER FELLOWS.

I THINK it was the very next evening that, in coming out of Covent Garden Theatre with my eccentric friend Buckthorne, he proposed to give me another peep at life and character. Finding me willing for any research of the kind, he took me through a variety of the narrow courts and lanes about Covent Garden, until we stopped before a tavern from which we heard the bursts of merriment of a jovial party. There would be a loud peal of laughter, then an interval, then another peal, as if a prime wag were telling a story. After a little while there was a song, and at the close of each stanza a hearty roar, and a vehement thumping on the table.

"This is the place," whispered Buckthorne; "it is the club of queer fellows, a great resort of the small wits, third-rate actors, and newspaper critics of the theatres. Any one can go in on paying a sixpence at the bar for the use of the club."

We entered, therefore, without ceremony, and took our seats at a lone table in a dusky corner of the room. The club was assembled round a table, on which stood beverages of various kinds, according to the tastes of the individuals. The members were a set of queer fellows indeed; but what was my surprise on recognising in the prime wit of the meeting the poor-devil author whom I had remarked at the booksellers' dinner for his promising face and his complete taciturnity! Matters, however, were entirely changed with him. There he was a mere cypher; here he was lord of the ascendant, the choice spirit, the dominant genius. He sat at the head of the table with his hat on, and an eye beaming even more luminously than his nose. He had a quip and a fillip for every one, and a good thing on every occasion. Nothing could be said or done without eliciting a spark from him; and I solemnly declare I have heard much worse wit even from noblemen. His jokes, it must be confessed, were rather wet, but they suited the circle over which he presided. The company were in that maudlin mood, when a little wit goes a great way. Every time he opened his lips

there was sure to be a roar; and even sometimes before he had time to speak.

We were fortunate enough to enter in time for a glee composed by him expressly for the club, and which he sang with two boon companions, who would have been worthy subjects for Hogarth's pencil. As they were each provided with a written copy, I was enabled to procure the reading of it:

Merrily, merrily push round the glass,  
And merrily troll the glee;  
For he who won't drink till he wink is an ass:  
So, neighbour, I drink to thee.

Merrily, merrily fuddle thy nose,  
Until it right rosy shall be;  
For a jolly red nose, I speak under the rose,  
Is a sign of good company.

We waited until the party broke up, and no one but the wit remained. He sat at the table with his legs stretched under it, and wide apart; his hands in his breeches pockets; his head drooped upon his breast; and gazing with lacklustre countenance on an empty tankard. His gayety was gone, his fire completely quenched.

My companion approached, and startled him from his fit of brown study, introducing himself on the strength of their having dined together at the booksellers'.

"By the way," said he, "it seems to me I have seen you before; your face is surely that of an old acquaintance, though for the life of me, I cannot tell where I have known you."

"Very likely," replied he with a smile: "many of my old friends have forgotten me. Though, to tell the truth, my memory in this instance is as bad as your own. If, however, it will assist your recollection in any way, my name is Thomas Dribble, at your service."

"What! Tom Dribble, who was at old Birchell's school in Warwickshire?"

"The same," said the other coolly.

"Why, then, we are old schoolmates, though it's no wonder that you don't recollect me. I was your junior by several years; don't you recollect little Jack Buckthorne?"

Here there ensued a scene of school-fellow recognition, and a world of talk about old school times and school pranks. Mr. Dribble ended by observing with a

heavy sigh, "that times were sadly changed since those days."

"Faith, Mr. Dribble," said I, "you seem quite a different man here from what you were at dinner. I had no idea that you had so much stuff in you. There you were all silence, but here you absolutely keep the table in a roar."

"Ah! my dear sir," replied he, with a shake of the head, and a shrug of the shoulder, "I'm a mere glow-worm. I never shine by daylight. Besides, it's a hard thing for a poor devil of an author to shine at the table of a rich bookseller. Who do you think would laugh at any thing I could say, when I had some of the current wits of the day about me? But here, though a poor devil, I am among still poorer devils than myself; men who look up to me as a man of letters, and a bel-esprit, and all my jokes pass as sterling gold from the mint."

"You surely do yourself injustice, sir," said I; "I have certainly heard more good things from you this evening, than from any of those beau-esprits by whom you appear to have been so daunted."

"Ah, sir! but they have luck on their side: they are in the fashion—there's nothing like being in fashion. A man that has once got his character up for a wit is always sure of a laugh, say what he may. He may utter as much nonsense as he pleases, and all will pass current. No one stops to question the coin of a rich man; but a poor devil cannot pass off either a joke or a guinea, without its being examined on both sides. Wit and coin are always doubted with a threadbare coat."

"For my part," continued he, giving his hat a twitch a little more on one side, "for my part, I hate your fine dinners; there's nothing, sir, like the freedom of a chop-house. I'd rather, any time, have my steak and tankard among my own set, than drink claret and eat venison with your cursed civil, elegant company, who never laugh at a good joke from a poor devil for fear of its being vulgar. A good joke grows in a wet soil; it flourishes in low places, but withers on your d—d high, dry grounds. I once kept high company, sir, until I nearly ruined myself; I grew so dull, and vapid, and genteel. Nothing saved me but being

arrested by my landlady, and thrown into prison; where a course of catch clubs, eight-penny ale, and poor-devil company, manured my mind, and brought it back to itself again."

As it was growing late, we parted for the evening, though I felt anxious to know more of this practical philosopher. I was glad, therefore, when Buckthorne proposed to have another meeting, to talk over old school-times, and inquired his schoolmate's address. The latter seemed at first a little shy of naming his lodgings; but suddenly, assuming an air of hardihood—"Green-arbour Court, sir," exclaimed he—"Number —, in Green-arbour Court. You must know the place. Classic ground, sir, classic ground! It was there Goldsmith wrote his Vicar of Wakefield—I always like to live in literary haunts."

I was amused with this whimsical apology for shabby quarters. On our way homeward, Buckthorne assured me that this Dribble had been the prime wit and great wag of the school in their boyish days, and one of those unlucky urchins denominated bright geniuses. As he perceived me curious respecting his old schoolmate, he promised to take me with him in his proposed visit to Green-arbour Court.

A few mornings afterward he called upon me, and we set forth on our expedition. He led me through a variety of singular alleys, and courts, and blind passages; for he appeared to be perfectly versed in all the intricate geography of the metropolis. At length we came out upon Fleet-market, and traversing it, turned up a narrow street to the bottom of a long steep flight of stone steps, called Breakneck Stairs. These, he told me, led up to Green-arbour Court, and that down them poor Goldsmith might many a time have risked his neck. When we entered the court, I could not but smile to think in what out-of-the-way corners genius produces her bantlings! And the Muses, those capricious dames, who, forsooth, so often refuse to visit palaces, and deny a single smile to votaries in splendid studies, and gilded drawing-rooms,—what holes and burrows will they frequent, to lavish their favours on some ragged disciple!

This Green-arbour Court I found to be a small square, of tall and miserable houses, the very intestines of which seemed turned inside out, to judge from the old garments and frippery that fluttered from every window. It appeared to be a region of washerwomen, and lines were stretched about the little square, on which clothes were dangling to dry.

Just as we entered the square, a scuffle took place between two viragos about a disputed right to a wash-tub, and immediately the whole community was in a hubbub. Heads in mob-caps popped out of every window, and such a clamour of tongues ensued, that I was fain to stop my ears. Every amazon took part with one or other of the disputants, and brandished her arms, dripping with soapsuds, and fired away from her window as from the embrasure of a fortress, while the swarms of children nestled and cradled in every procreant chamber of this hive, waking with the noise, set up their shrill pipes to swell the general concert.

Poor Goldsmith! what a time must he have had of it, with his quiet disposition and nervous habits, penned up in this den of noise and vulgarity! How strange, that while every sight and sound was sufficient to embitter the heart, and fill it with misanthropy, his pen should be dropping the honey of Hybla! Yet it is more than probable that he drew many of his inimitable pictures of low life from the scenes which surrounded him in this abode. The circumstance of Mrs. Tibbs being obliged to wash her husband's two shirts in a neighbour's house, who refused to lend her wash-tub, may have been no sport of fancy, but a fact passing under his own eye. His landlady may have sat for the picture, and Beau Tibbs's scanty wardrobe have been a *fac simile* of his own.

It was with some difficulty that we found our way to Dribble's lodgings. They were up two pair of stairs, in a room that looked upon the court, and when we entered, he was seated on the edge of his bed, writing at a broken table. He received us, however, with a free, open, poor-devil air, that was irresistible. It is true he did at first appear

slightly confused ; buttoned up his waistcoat a little higher, and tucked in a stray frill of linen. But he recollected himself in an instant ; gave a half swagger, half leer, as he stepped forth to receive us ; drew a three-legged stool for Mr. Buckthorne ; pointed me to a lumbering old damask chair, that looked like a dethroned monarch in exile ; and bade us welcome to his garret.

We soon got engaged in conversation. Buckthorne and he had much to say about early school scenes ; and as nothing opens a man's heart more than recollections of the kind, we soon drew from him a brief outline of his literary career.

#### THE POOR-DEVIL AUTHOR.

I BEGAN life unluckily by being the wag and bright fellow at school ; and I had the further misfortune of becoming the great genius of my native village. My father was a country attorney, and intended that I should succeed him in business ; but I had too much genius to study, and he was too fond of my genius to force it into the traces : so I fell into bad company, and took to bad habits. Do not mistake me. I mean that I fell into the company of village literati, and village blues, and took to writing village poetry.

It was quite the fashion in the village to be literary. There was a little knot of choice spirits of us, who assembled frequently together, formed ourselves into a Literary, Scientific, and Philosophical Society, and fancied ourselves the most learned Philos in existence. Every one had a great character assigned him, suggested by some casual habit or affectation. One heavy fellow drank an enormous quantity of tea, rolled in his arm-chair, talked sententiously, pronounced dogmatically, and was considered a second Dr. Johnson ; another, who happened to be a curate, uttered coarse jokes, wrote doggerel rhymes, and was the Swift of our association. Thus we had also our Popes, and Goldsmiths, and Addisons ; and a blue-stocking lady, whose drawing-room we frequented, who

corresponded about nothing with all the world, and wrote letters with the stiffness and formality of a printed book, was cried up as another Mrs. Montagu. I was, by common consent, the juvenile prodigy, the poetical youth, the great genius, the pride and hope of the village, through whom it was to become one day as celebrated as Stratford-on-Avon.

My father died, and left me his blessing and his business. His blessing brought no money into my pocket ; and as to his business, it soon deserted me ; for I was busy writing poetry, and could not attend to law ; and my clients, though they had great respect for my talents, had no faith in a poetical attorney.

I lost my business, therefore, spent my money, and finished my poem. It was the Pleasures of Melancholy, and was cried up to the skies by the whole circle. The Pleasures of Imagination, the Pleasures of Hope, and the Pleasures of Memory, though each had placed its author in the first rank of poets, were blank prose in comparison. Our Mrs. Montagu would cry over it from beginning to end. It was pronounced by all the members of the Literary, Scientific, and Philosophical Society, the greatest poem of the age, and all anticipated the noise it would make in the great world. There was not a doubt but the London booksellers would be mad after it, and the only fear of my friends was, that I would make a sacrifice by selling it too cheap. Every time they talked the matter over, they increased the price. They reckoned up the great sums given for the poems of certain popular writers, and determined that mine was worth more than all put together, and ought to be paid for accordingly. For my part, I was modest in my expectations, and determined that I would be satisfied with a thousand guineas. So I put my poem in my pocket, and set off for London.

My journey was joyous. My heart was light as my purse, and my head full of anticipations of fame and fortune. With what swelling pride did I cast my eyes upon old London from the heights of Highgate ! I was like a general, looking down upon a place he expects to conquer. The great metropolis lay stretched before me, buried under a home-

made cloud of murky smoke, that wrapped it from the brightness of a sunny day, and formed for it a kind of artificial bad weather. At the outskirts of the city, away to the west, the smoke gradually decreased until all was clear and sunny, and the view stretched uninterrupted to the blue line of the Kentish hills.

My eye turned fondly to where the mighty cupola of St. Paul swelled dimly through this misty chaos, and I pictured to myself the solemn realm of learning that lies about its base. How soon should the Pleasures of Melancholy throw this world of booksellers and printers into a bustle of business and delight! How soon should I hear my name repeated by printers' devils throughout Paternoster Row, and Angel Court, and Ave-Maria Lane, until Amen Corner should echo back the sound!

Arrived in town, I repaired at once to the most fashionable publisher. Every new author patronises him of course. In fact, it had been determined in the village circle that he should be the fortunate man. I cannot tell you how vaingloriously I walked the streets. My head was in the clouds. I felt the airs of heaven playing about it, and fancied it already encircled by a halo of literary glory. As I passed by the windows of bookshops, I anticipated the time when my work would be shining among the hot-pressed wonders of the day; and my face, scratched on copper, or cut on wood, figuring in fellowship with those of Scott, and Byron, and Moore.

When I applied at the publisher's house, there was something of the loftiness of my air, and the dinginess of my dress, that struck the clerks with reverence. They doubtless took me for some person of consequence: probably a digger of Greek roots, or a penetrator of pyramids. A proud man in a dirty shirt is always an imposing character in the world of letters: one must feel intellectually secure before he can venture to dress shabbily; none but a great genius, or a great scholar, dares to be dirty: so I was ushered at once to the sanctum sanctorum of this high priest of Minerva.

The publishing of books is a very different affair now-a-days from what it

was in the time of Bernard Lintot. I found the publisher a fashionably dressed man, in an elegant drawing-room, furnished with sofas and portraits of celebrated authors, and cases of splendidly bound books. He was writing letters at an elegant table. This was transacting business in style. The place seemed suited to the magnificent publications that issued from it. I rejoiced at the choice I had made of a publisher, for I always liked to encourage men of taste and spirit.

I stepped up to the table with the lofty poetical part that I had been accustomed to maintain in our village circle; though I threw in it something of a patronising air, such as one feels when about to make a man's fortune. The publisher paused with his pen in his hand, and seemed waiting in mute suspense to know what was to be announced by so singular an apparition.

I put him at his ease in a moment, for I felt that I had but to come, see, and conquer. I made known my name, and the name of my poem; produced my precious roll of blotted manuscript; laid it on the table with an emphasis; and told him at once, to save time, and come directly to the point, the price was one thousand guineas.

I had given him no time to speak, nor did he seem so inclined. He continued looking at me for a moment with an air of whimsical perplexity; scanned me from head to foot; looked down at the manuscript, then up again at me, then pointed to a chair; and whistling softly to himself, went on writing his letter.

I sat for some time waiting his reply, supposing he was making up his mind; but he only paused occasionally to take a fresh dip of ink, to stroke his chin, or the tip of his nose, and then resumed his writing. It was evident his mind was intently occupied upon some other subject; but I had no idea that any other subject should be attended to, and my poem lie unnoticed on the table. I had supposed that every thing would make way for the Pleasures of Melancholy.

My gorge at length rose within me. I took up my manuscript, thrust it into my pocket, and walked out of the room: making some noise as I went out, to let



my departure be heard. The publisher, however, was too much buried in minor concerns to notice it. I was suffered to walk down stairs without being called back. I sallied forth into the street, but no clerk was sent after me; nor did the publisher call after me from the drawing-room window. I have been told since, that he considered me either a madman or a fool. I leave you to judge how much he was in the wrong in his opinion.

When I turned the corner, my crest fell. I cooled down in my pride and my expectations, and reduced my terms with the next bookseller to whom I applied. I had no better success; nor with a third, nor with a fourth. I then desired the booksellers to make an offer themselves; but the deuce an offer would they make. They told me poetry was a mere drug; every body wrote poetry; the market was overstocked with it. And then they said, the title of my poem was not taking; that pleasures of all kinds were worn threadbare, nothing but horrors did now-a-days, and even those were almost worn out. Tales of Pirates, Robbers, and Bloody Turks, might answer tolerably well; but then they must come from some established well-known name, or the public would not look at them.

At last I offered to leave my poem with a bookseller, to read it, and judge for himself. "Why, really, my dear Mr. —a—a—I forget your name," said he, casting an eye at my rusty coat and shabby gaiters, "really, sir, we are so pressed with business just now, and have so many manuscripts on hand to read, that we have not time to look at any new productions; but if you can call again in a week or two, or say the middle of next month, we may be able to look over your writings, and give you an answer. Don't forget, the month after next; good morning, sir; happy to see you at any time you are passing this way." So saying, he bowed me out in the civilest way imaginable. In short, sir, instead of an eager competition to secure my poem, I could not even get it read! In the mean time I was harassed by letters from my friends, wanting to know when the work was to appear;

who was to be my publisher; but, above all things, warning me not to let it go too cheap.

There was but one alternative left. I determined to publish the poem myself; and to have my triumph over the booksellers, when it should become the fashion of the day. I accordingly published the Pleasures of Melancholy, and ruined myself. Excepting the copies sent to the reviews, and to my friends in the country, not one, I believe, ever left the bookseller's warehouse. The printer's bill drained my purse, and the only notice that was taken of my work, was contained in the advertisements paid for by myself.

I could have borne all this, and have attributed it, as usual, to the mismanagement of the publisher, or the want of taste in the public, and could have made the usual appeal to posterity; but my village friends would not let me rest in quiet. They were picturing me to themselves feasting with the great, communing with the literary, and in the high career of fortune and renown. Every little while, some one would call on me with a letter of introduction from the village circle, recommending him to my attentions, and requesting that I would make him known in society; with a hint, that an introduction to a celebrated literary nobleman would be extremely agreeable. I determined, therefore, to change my lodgings, drop my correspondence, and disappear altogether from the view of my village admirers. Besides, I was anxious to make one more poetic attempt. I was by no means disheartened by the failure of my first. My poem was evidently too didactic. The public was wise enough. It no longer read for instruction. "They want horrors, do they?" said I: "I' faith! then they shall have enough of them." So I looked out for some quiet, retired place, where I might be out of reach of my friends, and have leisure to cook up some delectable dish of poetical "hell-broth."

I had some difficulty in finding a place to my mind, when chance threw me in the way of Canonbury Castle. It is an ancient brick tower, hard by "merry Islington;" the remains of a hunting-

seat of Queen Elizabeth, where she took the pleasure of the country when the neighbourhood was all woodland. What gave it particular interest in my eyes was the circumstance that it had been the residence of a poet. It was here Goldsmith resided when he wrote his *Deserted Village*. I was shown the very apartment. It was a relic of the original style of the castle, with paneled wainscots and Gothic windows. I was pleased with its air of antiquity, and with its having been the residence of poor Goldy.

"Goldsmith was a pretty poet," said I to myself, "a very pretty poet, though rather of the old school. He did not think and feel so strongly as is the fashion now-a-days; but had he lived in these times of hot hearts and hot heads, he would no doubt have written quite differently."

In a few days I was quietly established in my new quarters; my books all arranged; my writing-desk placed by a window looking out into the fields; and I felt as snug as *Robinson Crusoe*, when he had finished his bower. For several days I enjoyed all the novelty of change and the charms which grace new lodgings, before one has found out their defects. I rambled about the fields where I fancied Goldsmith had rambled. I explored merry *Islington*; ate my solitary dinner at the *Black Bull*, which, according to tradition, was a country-seat of *Sir Walter Raleigh*; and would sit and sip my wine, and muse on old times, in a quaint old room, where many a council had been held.

All this did very well for a few days. I was stimulated by novelty; inspired by the associations awakened in my mind by these curious haunts; and began to think I felt the spirit of composition stirring within me. But Sunday came, and with it the whole city world, swarming about *Canonbury Castle*. I could not open my window but I was stunned with shouts and noises from the cricket ground; the late quiet road beneath my window was alive with the tread of feet and clack of tongues; and, to complete my misery, I found that my quiet retreat was absolutely a "show house," the tower and its contents

being shown to strangers at sixpence a head.

There was a perpetual tramping up stairs of citizens and their families, to look about the country from the top of the tower, and to take a peep at the city through the telescope, to try if they could discern their own chimneys. And then, in the midst of a vein of thought, or a moment of inspiration, I was interrupted, and all my ideas put to flight, by my intolerable landlady's tapping at the door, and asking me if I would "just please to let a lady and gentleman come in, to take a look at Mr. Goldsmith's room." If you know any thing of what an author's study is, and what an author is himself, you must know that there was no standing this. I put a positive interdict on my room's being exhibited; but then it was shown when I was absent, and my papers put in confusion; and, on returning home one day, I absolutely found a cursed tradesman and his daughters gaping over my manuscripts, and my landlady in a panic at my appearance. I tried to make out a little longer, by taking the key in my pocket; but it would not do. I overheard mine hostess one day telling some of her customers on the stairs, that the room was occupied by an author, who was always in a tantrum if interrupted; and I immediately perceived, by a slight noise at the door, that they were peeping at me through the key-hole. By the head of *Apollo*, but this was quite too much! With all my eagerness for fame, and my ambition of the stare of the million, I had no idea of being exhibited by retail, at sixpence a head, and that through a key-hole. So I bade adieu to *Canonbury Castle*, merry *Islington*, and the haunts of poor Goldsmith, without having advanced a single line in my labours.

My next quarters were at a small, white-washed cottage, which stands not far from *Hampstead*, just on the brow of a hill; looking over *Chalk Farm* and *Camden Town*, remarkable for the rival houses of *Mother Red Cap* and *Mother Black Cap*; and so across *Crackscull Common* to the distant city.

The cottage was in no wise remarkable in itself; but I regarded it with re-

verence, for it had been the asylum of a persecuted author. Hither poor Steele had retreated, and lain perdu, when persecuted by creditors and bailiffs—those immemorial plagues of authors and free-spirited gentlemen; and here he had written many numbers of the *Spectator*. It was from hence, too, that he had despatched those little notes to his lady, so full of affection and whimsicality, in which the fond husband, the careless gentleman, and the shifting spendthrift, were so oddly blended. I thought, as I first eyed the window of his apartment, that I could sit within it and write volumes.

No such thing! It was hay-making season, and, as ill-luck would have it, immediately opposite the cottage was a little alehouse, with the sign of the Load of Hay. Whether it was there in Steele's time, I cannot say; but it set all attempts at conception or inspiration at defiance. It was the resort of all the Irish hay-makers who mow the broad fields in the neighbourhood; and of drovers and teamsters who travel that road. Here they would gather in the endless summer twilight, or by the light of the harvest moon, and sit round a table at the door; and tittle, and laugh, and quarrel, and fight, and sing drowsy songs, and dawdle away the hours, until the deep solemn notes of St. Paul's clock would warn the varlets home.

In the daytime I was still less able to write. It was broad summer. The haymakers were at work in the fields, and the perfume of the new-mown hay brought with it the recollection of my native fields. So, instead of remaining in my room to write, I went wandering about Primrose Hill, and Hampstead Heights, and Shepherd's Fields, and all those Arcadian scenes so celebrated by London bards. I cannot tell you how many delicious hours I have passed, lying on the cocks of new-mown hay, on the pleasant slopes of some of those hills, inhaling the fragrance of the fields, while the summer-fly buzzed about me, or the grasshopper leaped into my bosom; and how I have gazed with half-shut eye upon the smoky mass of London, and listened to the distant sound of its population, and pitied the poor sons

of earth, toiling in its bowels, like Gnomes in the "dark gold mine."

People may say what they please about cockney pastorals, but, after all, there is a vast deal of rural beauty about the western vicinity of London; and any one that has looked down upon the valley of West End, with its soft bosom of green pasturage lying open to the south, and dotted with cattle; the steeple of Hampstead rising among rich groves on the brow of the hill; and the learned height of Harrow in the distance; will confess that never has he seen a more absolutely rural landscape in the vicinity of a great metropolis.

Still, however, I found myself not a whit the better off for my frequent change of lodgings; and I began to discover, that in literature, as in trade, the old proverb holds good, "a rolling stone gathers no moss."

The tranquil beauty of the country played the very vengeance with me. I could not mount my fancy into the termagant vein. I could not conceive, amidst the smiling landscape, a scene of blood and murder; and the smug citizens in breeches and gaiters put all ideas of heroes and bandits out of my brain. I could think of nothing but dulcet subjects, "the Pleasures of Spring"—"the Pleasures of Solitude"—"the Pleasures of Tranquillity"—"the Pleasures of Sentiment"—nothing but pleasures; and I had the painful experience of "the Pleasures of Melancholy" too strongly in my recollection to be beguiled by them.

Chance at length befriended me. I had frequently, in my ramblings, loitered about Hampstead Hill, which is a kind of Parnassus of the metropolis. At such times I occasionally took my dinner at Jack Straw's Castle. It is a country inn so named: the very spot where that notorious rebel and his followers held their council of war. It is a favourite resort of citizens when rurally inclined, as it commands fine fresh air, and a good view of the city. I sat one day in the public room of this inn, ruminating over a beefsteak and a pint of port, when my imagination kindled up with ancient and heroic images. I had long wanted a theme and a hero; both suddenly broke upon my mind: I determined to write

a poem on the history of Jack Straw. I was so full of my subject, that I was fearful of being anticipated. I wondered that none of the poets of the day, in their researches after ruffian heroes, had ever thought of Jack Straw. I went to work pell-mell, blotted several sheets of paper with choice floating thoughts, and battles, and descriptions, to be ready at a moment's warning. In a few days' time I sketched out the skeleton of my poem, and nothing was wanting but to give it flesh and blood. I used to take my manuscript, and stroll about Caen-Wood, and read aloud; and would dine at the Castle, by way of keeping up the vein of thought.

I was there one day, at rather a late hour, in the public room. There was no other company but one man, who sat enjoying his pint of port at a window, and noticing the passers-by. He was dressed in a green shooting-coat. His countenance was strongly marked: he had a hooked nose; a romantic eye, excepting that it had something of a squint; and altogether, as I thought, a poetical style of head. I was quite taken with the man, for you must know I am a little of a physiognomist; I set him down for either a poet or a philosopher.

As I like to make new acquaintances, considering every man a volume of human nature, I soon fell into conversation with the stranger, who, I was pleased to find, was by no means difficult of access. After I had dined, I rejoined him at the window, and we became so sociable that I proposed a bottle of wine together, to which he most cheerfully assented.

I was too full of my poem to keep long quiet on the subject, and began to talk about the origin of the tavern, and the history of Jack Straw. I found my new acquaintance to be perfectly at home on the topic, and to jump exactly with my humour in every respect. I became elevated by the wine and the conversation. In the fulness of an author's feelings, I told him of my projected poem, and repeated some passages, and he was in raptures. He was evidently of a strong poetical turn.

"Sir," said he, filling my glass at the same time, "our poets don't look at home. I don't see why we need go out

of old England for robbers and rebels to write about. I like your Jack Straw, sir,—he's a home-made hero. I like him, sir—I like him exceedingly. He's English to the back-bone—damme—Give me honest old England after all! Them's my sentiments, sir."

"I honour your sentiment," cried I, zealously; "it is exactly my own. An English ruffian is as good a ruffian for poetry as any in Italy, or Germany, or the Archipelago; but it is hard to make our poets think so."

"More shame for them!" replied the man in green. "What a plague would they have? What have we to do with their Archipelagos of Italy and Germany? Haven't we heaths and commons and highways on our own little island—ay, and stout fellows to pad the hoof over them too? Stick to home, I say—them's my sentiments. Come, sir, my service to you—I agree with you perfectly."

"Poets, in old times, had right notions on this subject," continued I; "witness the fine old ballads about Robin Hood, Allan a'Dale, and other staunch blades of yore."

"Right, sir, right," interrupted he; "Robin Hood! he was the lad to cry Stand! to a man, and never to flinch."

"Ah, sir," said I, "they had famous bands of robbers in the good old times; those were glorious poetical days. The merry crew of Sherwood Forest, who led such a roving picturesque life 'under the greenwood tree.' I have often wished to visit their haunts, and tread the scenes of the exploits of Friar Tuck, and Clymn of the Clough, and Sir William of Cloudeslie."

"Nay, sir," said the gentleman in green, "we have had several very pretty gangs since their day. Those gallant dogs that kept about the great heaths in the neighbourhood of London, about Bagshot, and Hounslow and Blackheath, for instance. Come, sir, my service to you. You don't drink."

"I suppose," said I, emptying my glass, "I suppose you have heard of the famous Turpin, who was born in this very village of Hampstead, and who used to lurk with his gang in Epping Forest, about a hundred years since?"

"Have I?" cried he, "to be sure I have! A hearty old blade that. Sound as pitch. Old Turpentine! as we used to call him. A famous fine fellow, sir."

"Well, sir," continued I, "I have visited Waltham Abbey and Chingford Church merely from the stories I heard when a boy of his exploits there, and I have searched Epping Forest for the cavern where he used to conceal himself. You must know," added I, "that I am a sort of amateur of highwaymen. They were dashing, daring fellows: the best apologies that we had for the knights-errant of yore. Ah, sir! the country has been sinking gradually into tameness and commonplace. We are losing the old English spirit. The bold knights of the post have all dwindled down into lurking footpads and sneaking pickpockets; there's no such thing as a dashing, gentleman-like robbery committed now-a-days on the King's highway: a man may roll from one end of England to the other in a drowsy coach, or jingling post-chaise; without any other adventure than that of being occasionally overturned, sleeping in damp sheets, or having an ill-cooked dinner. We hear no more of public coaches being stopped and robbed by a well-mounted gang of resolute fellows, with pistols in their hands, and crapes over their faces. What a pretty poetical incident was it, for example, in domestic life, for a family carriage, on its way to a country-seat, to be attacked about dark; the old gentleman eased of his purse and watch, the ladies of their necklaces and ear-rings, by a politely-spoken highwayman on a blood mare, who afterwards leaped the hedge and galloped across the country; to the admiration of Miss Caroline, the daughter, who would write a long and romantic account of the adventure to her friend, Miss Juliana, in town. Ah, sir! we meet with nothing of such incidents now-a-days."

"That, sir," said my companion, taking advantage of a pause, when I stopped to recover breath, and to take a glass of wine which he had just poured out, "that, sir, craving your pardon, is not owing to any want of old English pluck. It is the effect of this cursed system of banking. People do not travel

with bags of gold as they did formerly. They have post-notes, and drafts on bankers. To rob a coach is like catching a crow, where you have nothing but carrion flesh and feathers for your pains. But a coach in old times, sir, was as rich as a Spanish galloon. It turned out the yellow boys bravely. And a private carriage was a cool hundred or two at least."

I cannot express how much I was delighted with the sallies of my new acquaintance. He told me that he often frequented the Castle, and would be glad to know more of me; and I promised myself many a pleasant afternoon with him, when I should read him my poem as it proceeded, and benefit by his remarks; for it was evident that he had the true poetical feeling.

"Come, sir," said he, pushing the bottle, "damme, I like you! you're a man after my own heart. I'm cursed slow in making new acquaintances. One must be on the reserve, you know. But when I meet with a man of your kidney, damme, my heart jumps at once to him. Them's my sentiments, sir. Come, sir, here's Jack Straw's health! I presume one can drink it now-a-days without treason!"

"With all my heart," said I, gaily, "and Dick Turpin's into the bargain!"

"Ah, sir," said the man in green, "those are the kind of men for poetry. The Newgate Calendar, sir! the Newgate Calendar is your only reading! There's the place to look for bold deeds and dashing fellows."

We were so much pleased with each other that we sat until a late hour. I insisted on paying the bill, for both my purse and my heart were full, and I agreed that he should pay the score at our next meeting. As the coaches had all gone that run between Hampstead and London, we had to return on foot. He was so delighted with the idea of my poem, that he could talk of nothing else. He made me repeat such passages as I could remember; and though I did it in a very mangled manner, having a wretched memory, yet he was in raptures.

Every now and then he would break out with some scrap, which he would

misquote most terribly, would rub his hands and exclaim, "By Jupiter, that's fine, that's noble! Damme, sir, if I can conceive how you hit upon such ideas!"

I must confess I did not always relish his misquotations, which sometimes made absolute nonsense of the passages; but what author stands upon trifles when he is praised?"

Never had I spent a more delightful evening. I did not perceive how the time flew. I could not bear to separate, but continued walking on, arm in arm, with him, past my lodgings, through Camden Town, and across Crackscull Common, talking the whole way about my poem.

When we were half way across the common, he interrupted me in the midst of a quotation, by telling me that this had been a famous place for footpads, and was still occasionally infested by them; and that a man had recently been shot there in attempting to defend himself. "The more fool he!" cried I; "a man is an idiot to risk life, or even limb, to save a paltry purse of money. It's quite a different case from that of a duel, where one's honour is concerned. For my part," added I, "I should never think of making resistance against one of those desperadoes."

"Say you so?" cried my friend in green, turning suddenly upon me, and putting a pistol to my breast; "why, then, have at you, my lad!—come—disburse! empty! unsack!"

In a word, I found that the Muse had played me another of her tricks, and had betrayed me into the hands of a footpad. There was no time to parley; he made me turn my pockets inside out; and, hearing the sound of distant footsteps, he made one fell swoop upon purse, watch, and all; gave me a thwack over my unlucky pate that laid me sprawling on the ground, and scampered away with his booty.

I saw no more of my friend in green until a year or two afterwards; when I caught a sight of his poetical countenance among a crew of scapegraces heavily ironed, who were on the way for transportation. He recognised me at once, tipped me an impudent wink,

and asked me how I came on with the history of Jack Straw's Castle.

The catastrophe at Crackscull Common put an end to my summer's campaign. I was cured of my poetical enthusiasm for rebels, robbers, and highwaymen. I was put out of conceit of my subject, and, what was worse, I was lightened of my purse, in which was almost every farthing I had in the world. So I abandoned Sir Richard Steele's cottage in despair, and crept into less celebrated, though no less poetical and airy lodgings, in a garret in town.

I now determined to cultivate the society of the literary, and to enrol myself in the fraternity of authorship. It is by the constant collision of mind, thought I, that authors strike out the sparks of genius, and kindle up with glorious conceptions. Poetry is evidently a contagious complaint. I will keep company with poets; who knows but I may catch it as others have done?

I found no difficulty of making a circle of literary acquaintances, not having the sin of success lying at my door: indeed the failure of my poem was a kind of recommendation to their favour. It is true my new friends were not of the most brilliant names in literature; but then if you would take their words for it, they were like the prophets of old, men of whom the world was not worthy; and who were to live in future ages, when the ephemeral favourites of the day should be forgotten.

I soon discovered, however, that the more I mingled in literary society, the less I felt capable of writing; that poetry was not so catching as I imagined; and that in familiar life there was often nothing less poetical than a poet. Besides, I wanted *esprit de corps* to turn these literary fellowships to any account. I could not bring myself to enlist in any particular sect. I saw something to like in them all, but found that would never do, for that the tacit condition on which a man enters into one of these sects is, that he abuses all the rest.

I perceived that there were little knots of authors who lived with, and for, and by one another. They considered themselves the salt of the earth. They fostered and kept up a conventional vein of

thinking and talking, and joking on all subjects; and they cried each other up to the skies. Each sect had its particular creed; and set up certain authors as divinities, and fell down and worshipped them; and considered every one who did not worship them, or who worshipped any other, as a heretic and an infidel.

In quoting the writers of the day, I generally found them extolling names of which I had scarcely heard, and talking slightly of others who were the favourites of the public. If I mentioned any recent work from the pen of a first-rate author, they had not read it; they had not time to read all that was spawned from the press; he wrote too much to write well;—and then they would break out into raptures about some Mr. Timson, or Tomson, or Jackson, whose works were neglected at the present day, but who was to be the wonder and delight of posterity. Alas! what heavy debts is this neglectful world daily accumulating on the shoulders of poor posterity!

But, above all, it was edifying to hear with what contempt they would talk of the great. Ye gods! how immeasurably the great are despised by the small fry of literature! It is true, an exception was now and then made of some nobleman, with whom, perhaps, they had casually shaken hands at an election, or hobbled or nobbed at a public dinner, and who was pronounced a “devilish good fellow,” and “no humbug;” but, in general, it was enough for a man to have a title, to be the object of their sovereign disdain: you have no idea how poetically and philosophically they would talk of nobility.

For my part this affected me but little; for though I had no bitterness against the great, and did not think the worse of a man for having innocently been born to a title, yet I did not feel myself at present called upon to resent the indignities poured upon them by the little. But the hostility to the great writers of the day went sore against the grain with me. I could not enter into such feuds, nor participate in such animosities. I had not become author sufficiently to hate other authors. I could still find pleasure in the novelties of the press, and could find it in my heart to praise a contemporary, even though he were successful. Indeed

I was miscellaneous in my taste, and could not confine it to any age or growth of writers. I could turn with delight from the glowing pages of Byron to the cool and polished raillery of Pope; and, after wandering among the sacred groves of *Paradise Lost*, I could give myself up to voluptuous abandonment in the enchanted bowers of *Lalla Rookh*.

“I would have my authors,” said I, as various as my wines, and, in relishing the strong and the racy, would never decry the sparkling and exhilarating. Port and sherry are excellent stand-by’s, and so is madeira; but claret and burgundy may be drunk now and then without disparagement to one’s palate; and champagne is a beverage by no means to be despised.”

Such was the tirade I uttered one day, when a little flushed with ale, at a literary club. I uttered it, too, with something of a flourish, for I thought my simile a clever one. Unluckily, my auditors were men who drank beer and hated Pope; so my figure about wines went for nothing, and my critical toleration was looked upon as downright heterodoxy. In a word, I soon became like a freethinker in religion, an outlaw from every sect, and fair game for all. Such are the melancholy consequences of not hating in literature.

I see you are growing weary, so I will be brief with the residue of my literary career. I will not detain you with a detail of my various attempts to get astride of Pegasus; of the poems I have written which were never printed, the plays I have presented which were never performed, and the tracts I have published which were never purchased. It seemed as if booksellers, managers, and the very public, had entered into a conspiracy to starve me. Still I could not prevail upon myself to give up the trial, nor abandon those dreams of renown in which I had indulged. How should I be able to look the literary circle of my native village in the face, if I were so completely to falsify their predictions? For some time longer, therefore, I continued to write for fame, and was, of course, the most miserable dog in existence, besides being in continual risk of starvation. I accumulated loads of literary treasure on my shelves—loads

which were to be treasures to posterity ; but, alas ! they put not a penny into my purse. What was all this wealth to my present necessities ? I could not patch my elbows with an ode ; nor satisfy my hunger with blank verse. " Shall a man fill his belly with the east wind ? " says the proverb. He may as well do so as with poetry.

I have many a time strolled sorrowfully along with a sad heart and an empty stomach, about five o'clock, and looked wistfully down the areas in the west end of the town, and seen through the kitchen windows the fires gleaming, and the joints of meat turning on the spits and dripping with gravy, and the cook-maids beating up puddings, or trussing turkeys, and felt for the moment that if I could but have the run of one of those kitchens, Apollo and the Muses might have the hungry heights of Parnassus for me. Oh, sir ! talk of meditations among the tombs—they are nothing so melancholy as the meditations of a poor devil without penny in pouch, along a line of kitchen-windows towards dinner-time.

At length, when almost reduced to famine and despair, the idea all at once entered my head, that perhaps I was not so clever a fellow as the village and myself had supposed. It was the salvation of me. The moment the idea popped into my brain it brought conviction and comfort with it. I awoke as from a dream—I gave up immortal fame to those who could live on air ; took to writing for mere bread ; and have ever since had a very tolerable life of it. There is no man of letters so much at his ease, sir, as he who has no character to gain or lose. I had to train myself to it a little, and to clip my wings short at first, or they would have carried me up into poetry in spite of myself. So I determined to begin by the opposite extreme, and abandoning the higher regions of the craft, I came plump down to the lowest, and turned creeper.

" Creeper ! and pray what is that ? " said I.

" Oh, sir, I see you are ignorant of the language of the craft : a creeper is one who furnishes the newspapers with paragraphs at so much a line ; one who goes about in quest of misfortunes ; at-

tends the Bow Street Office, the Courts of Justice, and every other den of mischief and iniquity. We are paid at the rate of a penny a line, and as we can sell the same paragraph to almost every paper, we sometimes pick up a very decent day's work. Now and then the Muse is unkind, or the day uncommonly quiet, and then we rather starve ; and sometimes the unconscionable editors will clip our paragraphs when they are a little too rhetorical, and snip off two-pence or three-pence at a go. I have many a time had my pot of porter nipped off of my dinner in this way, and have had to dine with dry lips. However, I cannot complain. I rose gradually in the lower ranks of the craft, and am now, I think, in the most comfortable region of literature."

" And pray," said I, " what may you be at present ? "

" At present," said he, " I am a regular job-writer, and turn my hand to any thing. I work up the writings of others at so much a sheet ; turn off translations ; write second-rate articles to fill up reviews and magazines ; compile travels and voyages, and furnish theatrical criticisms for the newspapers. All this authorship, you perceive, is anonymous ; it gives me no reputation except among the trade ; where I am considered an author of all work, and am always sure of employ. That's the only reputation I want. I sleep soundly, without dread of duns or critics, and leave immortal fame to those that choose to fret and fight about it. Take my word for it, the only happy author in this world is he who is below the care of reputation."

#### NOTORIETY.

WHEN we had emerged from the literary nest of honest Dribble, and had passed safely through the dangers of Break neck Stairs, and the labyrinths of Fleet-market, Buckthorne indulged in many comments upon the peep into literary life which he had furnished me.

I expressed my surprise at finding it so different a world from what I had ima-



gined. "It is always so," said he, "with strangers. The land of literature is a fairy land to those who view it from a distance, but, like all other landscapes, the charm fades on a nearer approach, and the thorns and briars become visible. The republic of letters is the most factious and discordant of all republics, ancient or modern."

"Yet," said I, smiling, "you would not have me take honest Dribble's experience as a view of the land. He is but a mousing owl; a mere groundling. We should have quite a different strain from one of those fortunate authors whom we see sporting about the empyreal heights of fashion, like swallows in the blue sky of a summer's day."

"Perhaps we might," replied he, "but I doubt it. I doubt whether, if any one, even of the most successful, were to tell his actual feelings, you would not find the truth of friend Dribble's philosophy with respect to reputation. One you would find carrying a gay face to the world, while some vulture critic was preying upon his very liver. Another, who was simple enough to mistake fashion for fame, you would find watching countenances, and cultivating invitations, more ambitious to figure in the *beau monde* than the world of letters, and apt to be rendered wretched by the neglect of an illiterate peer, or a dissipated duchess. Those who were rising to fame, you would find tormented with anxiety to get higher; and those who had gained the summit, in constant apprehension of a decline.

"Even those who are indifferent to the buzz of notoriety, and the farce of fashion, are not much better off, being incessantly harassed by intrusions on their leisure, and interruptions of their pursuits; for, whatever may be his feelings, when once an author is launched into notoriety, he must go the rounds until the idle curiosity of the day is satisfied, and he is thrown aside to make way for some new caprice. Upon the whole, I do not know but he is most fortunate who engages in the whirl through ambition, however tormenting; as it is doubly irksome to be obliged to join in the game without being interested in the stake.

"There is a constant demand in the

fashionable world for novelty; every nine days must have its wonder, no matter of what kind. At one time it is an author: at another a fire-eater; at another a composer, an Indian juggler, or an Indian chief; a man from the North Pole or the Pyramids: each figures through his brief term of notoriety, and then makes way for the succeeding wonder. You must know that we have oddity-fanciers among our ladies of rank, who collect about them all kinds of remarkable beings; fiddlers, statesmen, singers, warriors, artists, philosophers, actors, and poets; every kind of personage, in short, who is noted for something peculiar: so that their routs are like fancy balls, where every one comes 'in character.'

"I have had infinite amusement at these parties in noticing how industriously every one was playing a part, and acting out of his natural line. There is not a more complete game at cross-purposes than the intercourse of the literary and the great. The fine gentleman is always anxious to be thought a wit, and the wit a fine gentleman.

"I have noticed a lord endeavouring to look wise and to talk learnedly with a man of letters, who was aiming at a fashionable air, and the tone of a man who had lived about town. The peer quoted a score or two of learned authors, with whom he would fain be thought intimate, while the author talked of Sir John this, and Sir Harry that, and extolled the burgundy he had drunk at Lord Such-a-one's. Each seemed to forget that he could only be interesting to the other in his proper character. Had the peer been merely a man of erudition, the author would never have listened to his prosing; and had the author known all the nobility in the Court Calendar, it would have given him no interest in the eyes of the peer.

"In the same way I have seen a fine lady, remarkable for beauty, weary a philosopher with flimsy metaphysics, while the philosopher put on an awkward air of gallantry, played with her fan, and prattled about the opera. I have heard a sentimental poet talk very stupidly with a statesman about the national debt; and on joining a knot of scientific

old gentlemen conversing in a corner, expecting to hear the discussion of some valuable discovery, I found they were only amusing themselves with a fat story."

### A PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHER.

THE anecdotes I had heard of Buckthorne's early schoolmate, together with a variety of peculiarities which I had remarked in himself, gave me a strong curiosity to know something of his own history. I am a traveller of the good old school, and am fond of the custom laid down in books, according to which, whenever travellers met, they sat down forthwith and gave a history of themselves and their adventures. This Buckthorne, too, was a man much to my taste; he had seen the world, and mingled with society, yet retained the strong eccentricities of a man who had lived much alone. There was a careless dash of good-humour about him which pleased me exceedingly; and at times an odd tinge of melancholy mingled with his humour, and gave it an additional zest. He was apt to run into long speculations upon society and manners, and to indulge in whimsical views of human nature, yet there was nothing ill-tempered in his satire. It ran more upon the follies than the vices of mankind; and even the follies of his fellow-man were treated with the leniency of one who felt himself to be but frail. He had evidently been a little chilled and buffeted by fortune, without being soured thereby: as some fruits become mellow and more generous in their flavour from having been bruised and frostbitten.

I have always had a great relish for the conversation of practical philosophers of this stamp, who have profited by the "sweet uses" of adversity without imbibing its bitterness; who have learnt to estimate the world rightly, yet good-humouredly; and who, while they perceive the truth of the saying, that "all is vanity," are yet able to do so without vexation of spirit.

Such a man was Buckthorne. In general a laughing philosopher; and if at

any time a shade of sadness stole across his brow, it was but transient; like a summer cloud, which soon goes by, and freshens and revives the fields over which it passes.

I was walking with him one day in Kensington Gardens—for he was a knowing epicure in all the cheap pleasures and rural haunts within reach of the metropolis. It was a delightful warm morning in spring; and he was in the happy mood of a pastoral citizen, when just turned loose into grass and sunshine. He had been watching a lark which, rising from a bed of daisies and yellow-cups, had sung his way up to a bright snowy cloud floating in the deep blue sky.

"Of all birds," said he, "I should like to be a lark. He revels in the brightest time of the day, in the happiest season of the year, among fresh meadows and opening flowers; and when he has sated himself with the sweetness of earth, he wings his flight up to heaven as if he would drink in the melody of the morning stars. Hark to that note! How it comes thrilling down upon the ear! What a stream of music, note falling over note in delicious cadence! Who would trouble his head about operas and concerts when he could walk in the fields and hear such music for nothing? These are the enjoyments which set riches at scorn, and make even a poor man independent;

I care not, Fortune, what you do deny:—

You cannot rob me of free nature's grace:  
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,

Through which Aurora shows her bright'ning face;

You cannot bar my constant feet to trace  
The woods and lawns by living streams at eve—

"Sir, there are homilies in nature's works worth all the wisdom of the schools, if we could but read them rightly, and one of the pleasantest lessons I ever received in a time of trouble, was from hearing the notes of a lark."

I profited by this communicative vein to intimate to Buckthorne a wish to know something of the events of his life, which I fancied must have been an eventful one.

He smiled when I expressed my desire. "I have no great story," said he, "to relate. A mere tissue of errors and follies. But, such as it is, you shall

have one epoch of it, by which you may judge of the rest." And so, without any further prelude, he gave me the following anecdotes of his early adventures.

—

BUCKTHORNE;

OR THE

YOUNG MAN OF GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

I WAS born to very little property, but to great expectations—which is, perhaps, one of the most unlucky fortunes that a man can be born to. My father was a country gentleman, the last of a very ancient and honourable but decayed family, and resided in an old hunting-lodge in Warwickshire. He was a keen sportsman, and lived to the extent of his moderate income, so that I had little to expect from that quarter; but then I had a rich uncle by the mother's side, a penurious, accumulating curmudgeon, who it was confidently expected would make me his heir, because he was an old bachelor, because I was named after him, and because he hated all the world except myself.

He was, in fact, an inveterate hater, a miser even in misanthropy, and hoarded up a grudge as he did a guinea. Thus, though my mother was an only sister, he had never forgiven her marriage with my father, against whom he had a cold, still, immovable pique, which had lain at the bottom of his heart, like a stone in a well, ever since they had been schoolboys together. My mother, however, considered me as the intermediate being that was to bring every thing again into harmony, for she looked on me as a prodigy—God bless her! my heart overflows whenever I recall her tenderness. She was the most excellent, the most indulgent of mothers. I was her only child: it was a pity she had no more, for she had fondness of heart enough to have spoiled a dozen!

I was sent at an early age to a public school, sorely against my mother's wishes; but my father insisted that it was the only way to make boys hardy. The school was kept by a conscientious prig of the ancient system, who did his

duty by the boys intrusted to his care: that is to say, we were flogged soundly when we did not get our lessons. We were put into classes, and thus flogged on in droves along the highways of knowledge, in much the same manner as cattle are driven to market; where those that are heavy in gait, or short in leg, have to suffer for the superior alertness or longer limbs of their companions.

For my part, I confess it with shame, I was an incorrigible laggard. I have always had the poetical feeling, that is to say, I have always been an idle fellow, and prone to play the vagabond. I used to get away from my books and school whenever I could, and ramble about the fields. I was surrounded by seductions for such a temperament. The schoolhouse was an old-fashioned white-washed mansion, of wood and plaster, standing on the skirts of a beautiful village: close by it was the venerable church, with a tall Gothic spire; before it spread a lovely green valley, with a little stream glistening along through willow groves; while a line of blue hills that bounded the landscape gave rise to many a summer-day dream as to the fairy land that lay beyond.

In spite of all the scourgings I suffered at that school to make me love my book, I cannot but look back on the place with fondness. Indeed, I considered this frequent flagellation as the common lot of humanity, and the regular mode in which scholars were made.

My kind mother used to lament over my details of the sore trials I underwent in the cause of learning; but my father turned a deaf ear to her expostulations. He had been flogged through school himself, and swore there was no other way of making a man of parts; though, let me speak it with all due reverence, my father was but an indifferent illustration of his theory, for he was considered a grievous blockhead.

My poetical temperament evinced itself at a very early period. The village church was attended every Sunday by a neighbouring squire, the lord of the manor, whose park stretched quite to the village, and whose spacious country-seat seemed to take the church under its protection. Indeed, you would have

thought the church had been consecrated to him instead of to the Deity. The parish-clerk bowed low before him, and the vergers humbled themselves unto the dust in his presence. He always entered a little late, and with some stir; striking his cane emphatically on the ground, swaying his hat in his hand, and looking loftily to the right and left as he walked slowly up the aisle; and the parson, who always ate his Sunday dinner with him, never commenced service until he appeared. He sat with his family in a large pew, gorgeously lined, humbling himself devoutly on velvet cushions, and reading lessons of meekness and lowliness of spirit out of splendid gold and morocco prayer-books. Whenever the parson spoke of the difficulty of a rich man's entering the kingdom of Heaven, the eyes of the congregation would turn towards the "grand pew," and I thought the squire seemed pleased with the application.

The pomp of this pew, and the aristocratical air of the family, struck my imagination wonderfully; and I fell desperately in love with a little daughter of the squire's, about twelve years of age. This freak of fancy made me more truant from my studies than ever. I used to stroll about the squire's park, and would lurk near the house, to catch glimpses of this little damsel at the windows, or playing about the lawn, or walking out with her governess.

I had not enterprise nor impudence enough to venture from my concealment. Indeed I felt like an arrant poacher, until I read one or two of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, when I pictured myself as some sylvan deity, and she a coy wood-nymph of whom I was in pursuit. There is something extremely delicious in these early awakenings of the tender passion. I can feel even at this moment the throbbing of my boyish bosom, whenever by chance I caught a glimpse of her white frock fluttering among the shrubbery. I carried about in my bosom a volume of Waller, which I had purloined from my mother's library; and I applied to my little fair one all the compliments lavished upon Sacharissa.

At length I danced with her at a school-ball. I was so awkward a booby,

that I dared scarcely speak to her; I was filled with awe and embarrassment in her presence; but I was so inspired, that my poetical temperament for the first time broke out in verse, and I fabricated some glowing lines, in which I be-rhymed the little lady under the favourite name of Sacharissa. I slipped the verses, trembling and blushing, into her hand the next Sunday as she came out of church. The little prude handed them to her mamma; the mamma handed them to the squire; the squire, who had no soul for poetry, sent them in dudgeon to the schoolmaster; and the schoolmaster, with a barbarity worthy of the dark ages, gave me a sound and peculiarly humiliating flogging for thus trespassing upon Parnassus. This was a sad outset for a votary of the muse; it ought to have cured me of my passion for poetry; but it only confirmed it, for I felt the spirit of a martyr rising within me. What was as well, perhaps, it cured me of my passion for the young lady; for I felt so indignant at the ignominious horsing I had incurred in celebrating her charms, that I could not hold up my head in church. Fortunately for my wounded sensibility, the Midsummer holidays came on, and I returned home. My mother, as usual, inquired into all my school concerns, my little pleasures, and cares, and sorrows; for boyhood has its share of the one as well as of the other. I told her all, and she was indignant at the treatment I had experienced. She fired up at the arrogance of the squire, and the prudery of the daughter; and as to the schoolmaster, she wondered where was the use of having schoolmasters, and why boys could not remain at home, and be educated by tutors, under the eye of their mothers. She asked to see the verses I had written, and she was delighted with them; for, to confess the truth, she had a pretty taste in poetry. She even showed them to the parson's wife, who protested they were charming; and the parson's three daughters insisted on each having a copy of them.

All this was exceedingly balsamic, and I was still more consoled and encouraged, when the young ladies, who were the blue-stockings of the neighbourhood, and

had read Dr. Johnson's Lives quite through, assured my mother that great geniuses never studied, but were always idle; upon which I began to surmise that I was myself something out of the common run. My father, however, was of a very different opinion; for when my mother, in the pride of her heart, showed him my copy of verses, he threw them out of the window, asking her "if she meant to make a ballad-monger of the boy?" But he was a careless, common-thinking man, and I cannot say that I ever loved him much; my mother absorbed all my filial affection.

I used occasionally, during holidays, to be sent on short visits to the uncle, who was to make me his heir; they thought it would keep me in his mind, and render him fond of me. He was a withered, anxious-looking old fellow, and lived in a desolate old country-seat, which he suffered to go to ruin from absolute niggardliness. He kept but one manservant, who had lived, or rather starved, with him for years. No woman was allowed to sleep in the house. A daughter of the old servant lived by the gate, in what had been a porter's lodge, and was permitted to come into the house about an hour each day, to make the beds, and cook a morsel of provisions. The park that surrounded the house was all run wild: the trees were grown out of shape; the fish-ponds stagnant; the urns and statues fallen from their pedestals, and buried among the rank grass. The hares and pheasants were so little molested, except by poachers, that they bred in great abundance, and sported about the rough lawns and weedy avenues. To guard the premises and frighten off robbers, of whom he was somewhat apprehensive, and visitors, of whom he was in almost equal awe, my uncle kept two or three bloodhounds, who were always prowling round the house, and were the dread of the neighbouring peasantry. They were gaunt and half starved, seemed ready to devour one from mere hunger, and were an effectual check on any stranger's approach to this wizard castle.

Such was my uncle's house, which I used to visit now and then during the holidays. I was, as I before said, the

old man's favourite; that is to say, he did not hate me so much as he did the rest of the world. I had been apprised of his character, and cautioned to cultivate his good-will; but I was too young and careless to be a courtier, and, indeed, have never been sufficiently studious of my interests to let them govern my feelings. However, we jogged on very well together, and as my visits cost him almost nothing, they did not seem to be very unwelcome. I brought with me my fishing-rod, and half supplied the table from the fish-ponds.

Our meals were solitary and unsocial. My uncle rarely spoke; he pointed to whatever he wanted, and the servant perfectly understood him. Indeed, his man John, or Iron John, as he was called in the neighbourhood, was a counterpart of his master. He was a tall, bony old fellow, with a dry wig, that seemed made of cow's tail, and a face as tough as though it had been made of cow's hide. He was generally clad in a long, patched livery coat, taken out of the wardrobe of the house, and which bagged loosely about him, having evidently belonged to some corpulent predecessor, in the more plenteous days of the mansion. From long habits of taciturnity the hinges of his jaws seemed to have grown absolutely rusty, and it cost him as much effort to set them ajar, and to let out a tolerable sentence, as it would have done to set open the iron gates of the park, and let out the old family carriage, that was dropping to pieces in the coach-house.

I cannot say, however, but that I was for some time amused with my uncle's peculiarities. Even the very desolateness of the establishment had something in it that hit my fancy. When the weather was fine, I used to amuse myself in a solitary way, by rambling about the park, and coursing like a colt across its lawns. The hares and pheasants seemed to stare with surprise to see a human being walking these forbidden grounds by daylight. Sometimes I amused myself by jerking stones, or shooting at birds with a bow and arrows, for to have used a gun would have been treason. Now and then my path was crossed by a little red-headed, ragged-tailed urchin,

the son of the woman at the lodge, who ran wild about the premises. I tried to draw him into familiarity, and to make a companion of him; but he seemed to have imbibed the strange unsocial character of every thing around him, and always kept aloof; so I considered him as another Orson, and amused myself with shooting at him with my bow and arrows, and he would hold up his breeches with one hand, and scamper away like a deer.

There was something in all this loneliness and wildness strangely pleasing to me. The great stables, empty and weather-broken, with the names of favourite horses over the vacant stalls; the windows bricked and boarded up; the broken roofs, garrisoned by rooks and jackdaws, all had a singularly forlorn appearance. One would have concluded the house to be totally uninhabited, were it not for a little thread of blue smoke, which now and then curled up like a corkscrew, from the centre of one of the wide chimneys, where my uncle's starveling meal was cooking.

My uncle's room was in a remote corner of the building, strongly secured, and generally locked. I was never admitted into this stronghold, where the old man would remain for the greater part of the time, drawn up, like a veteran spider, in the citadel of his web. The rest of the mansion, however, was open to me, and I wandered about it unconstrained. The damp and rain which beat in through the broken windows, crumbled the paper from the walls, mouldered the pictures, and gradually destroyed the furniture. I loved to roam about the wide waste chambers in bad weather, and listen to the howling of the wind, and the banging about of the doors and window-shutters. I pleased myself with the idea how completely, when I came to the estate, I would renovate all things, and make the old building ring with merriment, till it was astonished at its own jocundity.

The chamber which I occupied on these visits, was the same that had been my mother's when a girl. There was still the toilet-table of her own adorning, the landscapes of her own drawing. She had never seen it since her marriage, but

would often ask me, if every thing was still the same. All was just the same, for I loved that chamber on her account, and had taken pains to put every thing in order, and to mend all the flaws in the windows with my own hands. I anticipated the time when I should once more welcome her to the house of her fathers, and restore her to this little nestling-place of her childhood.

At length my evil genius, or what, perhaps, is the same thing, the Muse, inspired me with the notion of rhyiming again. My uncle, who never went to church, used on Sundays to read chapters out of the Bible; and Iron John, the woman from the lodge, and myself, were his congregation. It seemed to be all one to him what he read, so long as it was something from the Bible. Sometimes, therefore, it would be the Song of Solomon; and this withered anatomy would read about being "stayed with flagons, and comforted with apples, for he was sick of love." Sometimes he would hobble, with spectacles on nose, through whole chapters of hard Hebrew names in Deuteronomy, at which the poor woman would sigh and groan, as if wonderfully moved. His favourite book, however, was "The Pilgrim's Progress;" and when he came to that part which treats of Doubting Castle and Giant Despair, I thought invariably of him and his desolate old country-seat. So much did the idea amuse me, that I took to scribbling about it under the trees in the park; and in a few days had made some progress in a poem, in which I had given a description of the place, under the name of Doubting Castle, and personified my uncle as Giant Despair.

I lost my poem somewhere about the house, and I soon suspected that my uncle had found it, as he harshly intimated to me that I could return home, and that I need not come and see him again till he should send for me.

Just about this time my mother died. I cannot dwell upon the circumstance. My heart, careless and wayward as it is, gushes with the recollection. Her death was an event that perhaps gave a turn to all my after fortunes. With her died all that made home attractive. I had no longer any body whom I was ambitious

to please, or fearful to offend. My father was a good kind of a man in his way, but he had bad maxims in education, and we differed in material points. It makes a vast difference in opinion about the utility of the rod, which end happens to fall to one's share. I never could be brought into my father's way of thinking on the subject.

I now, therefore, began to grow very impatient of remaining at school, to be flogged for things that I did not like. I longed for variety, especially now that I had not my uncle's house to resort to, by way of diversifying the dulness of school, with the dreariness of his country-seat.

I was now almost seventeen, tall for my age, and full of idle fancies. I had a roving, inextinguishable desire to see different kinds of life, and different orders of society; and this vagrant humour had been fostered in me by Tom Dribble, the prime wag and great genius of the school, who had all the rambling propensities of a poet.

I used to sit at my desk in the school, on a fine summer's day, and instead of studying the book which lay open before me, my eye was gazing through the window on the green fields and blue hills. How I envied the happy groups seated on the tops of stage-coaches, chatting, and joking, and laughing, as they were whirled by the schoolhouse on their way to the metropolis! Even the wagners, trudging along beside their ponderous teams, and traversing the kingdom from one end to the other, were objects of envy to me: I fancied to myself what adventures they must experience, and what odd scenes of life they must witness. All this was, doubtless, the poetical temperament working within me, and tempting me forth into a world of its own creation, which I mistook for the world of real life.

While my mother lived, this strong propensity to rove was counteracted by the stronger attractions of home, and by the powerful ties of affection which drew me near to her side; but now that she was gone, the attractions had ceased; the ties were severed. I had no longer an anchorage-ground for my heart, but was at the mercy of every vagrant im-

pulse. Nothing but the narrow allowance on which my father kept me, and the consequent penury of my purse, prevented me from mounting the top of a stage-coach, and launching myself adrift on the great ocean of life.

Just about this time the village was agitated for a day or two, by the passing through of several caravans, containing wild beasts, and other spectacles, for a great fair annually held at a neighbouring town.

I had never seen a fair of any consequence, and my curiosity was powerfully awakened by this bustle of preparation. I gazed with respect and wonder at the vagrant personages who accompanied these caravans. I loitered about the village inn, listening with curiosity and delight to the slang talk and cant jokes of the showmen and their followers; and I felt an eager desire to witness this fair, which my fancy decked out as something wonderfully fine.

A holiday afternoon presented, when I could be absent from noon until evening. A wagon was going from the village to the fair: I could not resist the temptation, nor the eloquence of Tom Dribble, who was a truant to the very heart's core. We hired seats, and set off full of boyish expectation. I promised myself that I would but take a peep at the land of promise, and hasten back again before my absence should be noticed.

Heavens! how happy I was on arriving at the fair! How I was enchanted with the world of fun and pageantry around me! The humours of Punch, the feats of the equestrians, the magical tricks of the conjurors! But what principally caught my attention was an itinerant theatre, where a tragedy, pantomime, and farce, were all acted in the course of half an hour; and more of the dramatic personæ murdered, than at either Drury Lane or Covent Garden in the course of a whole evening. I have since seen many a play performed by the best actors in the world, but never have I derived half the delight from any that I did from this first representation.

There was a ferocious tyrant in a scullcap like an inverted porringer, and a dress of red baize, magnificently em-

broidered with gilt leather; with his face so bewhiskered, and his eyebrows so knit and expanded with burnt cork, that he made my heart quake within me, as he stamped about the little stage. I was enraptured too with the surpassing beauty of a distressed damsel in faded pink silk, and dirty white muslin, whom he held in cruel captivity by way of gaining her affections, and who wept, and wrung her hands, and flourished a ragged white handkerchief, from the top of an impregnable tower of the size of a bandbox.

Even after I had come out from the play, I could not tear myself from the vicinity of the theatre, but lingered, gazing and wondering, and laughing at the *dramatis personæ* as they performed their antics, or danced upon a stage in front of the booth, to decoy a new set of spectators.

I was so bewildered by the scene, and so lost in the crowd of sensations that kept swarming upon me, that I was like one entranced. I lost my companion, Tom Dribble, in a tumult and scuffle that took place near one of the shows; but I was too much occupied in mind to think long about him. I strolled about until dark, when the fair was lighted up, and a new scene of magic opened upon me. The illumination of the tents and booths, the brilliant effect of the stages decorated with lamps, with dramatic groups flaunting about them in gaudy dresses, contrasted splendidly with the surrounding darkness; while the uproar of drums, trumpets, fiddles, hautboys, and cymbals, mingled with the harangues of the showmen, the squeaking of Punch, and the shouts and laughter of the crowd, all united to complete my giddy distraction.

Time flew without my perceiving it. When I came to myself and thought of the school, I hastened to return. I inquired for the wagon in which I had come: it had been gone for hours! I asked the time: it was almost midnight! A sudden quaking seized me. How was I to get back to school? I was too weary to make the journey on foot, and I knew not where to apply for conveyance. Even if I should find one, could I venture to disturb the schoolhouse long after midnight—to arouse that sleeping

lion the usher in the very midst of his night's rest?—the idea was too dreadful for a delinquent schoolboy. All the horrors of return rushed upon me. My absence must long before this have been remarked;—and absent for a whole night!—a deed of darkness not easily to be expiated. The rod of the pedagogue budded forth into tenfold terrors before my affrighted fancy. I pictured to myself punishment and humiliation in every variety of form, and my heart sickened at the picture. Alas! how often are the petty ills of boyhood as painful to our tender natures, as are the sterner evils of manhood to our robuster minds!

I wandered about among the booths, and I might have derived a lesson from my actual feelings, how much the charms of this world depend upon ourselves; for I no longer saw any thing gay or delightful in the revelry around me. At length I lay down, wearied and perplexed, behind one of the large tents, and, covering myself with the margin of the tent cloth to keep off the night chill, I soon fell asleep.

I had not slept long, when I was awakened by the noise of merriment within an adjoining booth. It was the itinerant theatre, rudely constructed of boards and canvass. I peeped through an aperture, and saw the whole *dramatis personæ*, tragedy, comedy, and pantomime, all refreshing themselves after the final dismissal of their auditors. They were merry and gamesome, and made the flimsy theatre ring with their laughter. I was astonished to see the tragedy tyrant in red baize and fierce whiskers, who had made my heart quake as he strutted about the boards, now transformed into a fat, good-humoured fellow; the beaming porringer laid aside from his brow, and his jolly face washed from all the terrors of burnt cork. I was delighted, too, to see the distressed damsel, in faded silk and dirty muslin, who had trembled under his tyranny, and afflicted me so much by her sorrows, now seated familiarly on his knee, and quaffing from the same tankard. Harlequin lay asleep on one of the benches; and monks, satyrs, and vestal virgins, were grouped together, laughing outrageously at a broad story, told by an unhappy count,



who had been barbarously murdered in the tragedy.

This was, indeed, novelty to me. It was a peep into another planet. I gazed and listened with intense curiosity and enjoyment. They had a thousand odd stories and jokes about the events of the day, and burlesque descriptions and mimickings of the spectators who had been admiring them. Their conversation was full of allusions to their adventures at different places where they had exhibited; the characters they had met with in different villages; and the ludicrous difficulties in which they had occasionally been involved. All past cares and troubles were now turned, by these thoughtless beings, into matter of merriment, and made to contribute to the gayety of the moment. They had been moving from fair to fair about the kingdom, and were the next morning to set out on their way to London. My resolution was taken. I stole from my nest; and crept through a hedge into a neighbouring field, where I went to work to make a tatterdemalion of myself. I tore my clothes; soiled them with dirt; begrimed my face and hands, and crawling near one of the booths, purloined an old hat, and left my new one in its place. It was an honest theft, and I hope may not hereafter rise up in judgment against me.

I now ventured to the scene of merry-making, and presenting myself before the dramatic corps, offered myself as a volunteer. I felt terribly agitated and abashed, for never before "stood I in such a presence." I had addressed myself to the manager of the company. He was a fat man, dressed in dirty white, with a red sash fringed with tinsel swathed round his body; his face was smeared with paint, and a majestic plume towered from an old spangled black bonnet. He was the Jupiter Tonans of this Olympus, and was surrounded by the inferior gods and goddesses of his court. He sat on the end of a bench, by a table, with one arm a-kimbo, and the other extended to the handle of a tankard, which he had slowly set down from his lips, as he surveyed me from head to foot. It was a moment of awful scrutiny; and I fancied the groups around all watching as in silent suspense, and waiting for the imperial nod.

He questioned me as to who I was; what were my qualifications; and what terms I expected. I passed myself off for a discharged servant from a gentleman's family; and as, happily, one does not require a special recommendation to get admitted into bad company, the questions on that head were easily satisfied. As to my accomplishments I could spout a little poetry, and knew several scenes of plays, which I had learnt at school exhibitions. I could dance—— That was enough. No further questions were asked me as to accomplishments; it was the very thing they wanted; and as I asked no wages but merely meat and drink, and safe conduct about the world, a bargain was struck in a moment.

Behold me, therefore, transformed on a sudden from a gentleman student to a dancing buffoon: for such, in fact, was the character in which I made my debut. I was one of those who formed the groups in the dramas, and was principally employed on the stage in front of the booth to attract company. I was equipped as a satyr, in a dress of drab frieze that fitted to my shape, with a great laughing mask, ornamented with huge ears and short horns. I was pleased with the disguise, because it kept me from the danger of being discovered, whilst we were in that part of the country; and as I had merely to dance and make antics, the character was favourable to a debutant—being almost on a par with Simon Snug's part of the lion, which required nothing but roaring.

I cannot tell you how happy I was at this sudden change in my situation. I felt no degradation, for I had seen too little of society to be thoughtful about the difference of rank; and a boy of sixteen is seldom aristocratical. I had given up no friend, for there seemed to be no one in the world that cared for me now that my poor mother was dead; I had given up no pleasure, for my pleasure was to ramble about and indulge the flow of a poetical imagination, and I now enjoyed it in perfection. There is no life so truly poetical as that of a dancing buffoon.

It may be said that all this argued grovelling inclinations. I do not think so. Not that I mean to vindicate myself

in any great degree: I know too well what a whimsical compound I am. But in this instance I was seduced by no love of low company, nor disposition to indulge in low vices. I have always despised the brutally vulgar, and I have always had a disgust at vice, whether in high or low life. I was governed merely by a sudden and thoughtless impulse. I had no idea of resorting to this profession as a mode of life, or of attaching myself to these people, as my future class of society. I thought merely of a temporary gratification to my curiosity, and an indulgence of my humours. I had already a strong relish for the peculiarities of character and the varieties of situation, and I have always been fond of the comedy of life, and desirous of seeing it through all its shifting scenes.

In mingling, therefore, among mountebanks and buffoons, I was protected by the very vivacity of imagination which had led me among them; I moved about, enveloped, as it were, in a protecting delusion, which my fancy spread around me. I assimilated to these people only as they struck me poetically; their whimsical ways and a certain picturesqueness in their mode of life entertained me; but I was neither amused nor corrupted by their vices. In short, I mingled among them, as Prince Hal did among his graceless associates, merely to gratify my humour.

I did not investigate my motives in this manner at the time, for I was too careless and thoughtless to reason about the matter; but I do so now, when I look back with trembling to think of the ordeal to which I unthinkingly exposed myself, and the manner in which I passed through it. Nothing, I am convinced, but the poetical temperament, that hurried me into the scrape, brought me out of it without my becoming an arrant vagabond.

Full of the enjoyment of the moment, giddy with the wildness of animal spirits, so rapturous in a boy, I capered, I danced, I played a thousand fantastic tricks about the stage, in the villages in which we exhibited; and I was universally pronounced the most agreeable monster that had ever been seen in those parts. My disappearance from school had awakened

my father's anxiety; for I one day heard a description of myself cried before the very booth in which I was exhibiting, with the offer of a reward for any intelligence of me. I had no great scruple about letting my father suffer a little uneasiness on my account; it would punish him for past indifference, and would make him value me the more when he found me again.

I have wondered that some of my comrades did not recognise me in the stray sheep that was cried; but they were all, no doubt, occupied by their own concerns. They were all labouring seriously in their antic vocation; for folly was a mere trade with most of them, and they often grinned and capered with heavy hearts. With me, on the contrary, it was all real. I acted *con amore*, and rattled and laughed from the irrepressible gayety of my spirits. It is true that, now and then, I started and looked grave on receiving a sudden thwack from the wooden sword of Harlequin in the course of my gambols, as it brought to mind the birch of my schoolmaster. But I soon got accustomed to it, and bore all the cuffing, and kicking, and tumbling about, which form the practical wit of your itinerant pantomime, with a good-humour that made me a prodigious favourite.

The country campaign of the troop was soon at an end, and we set off for the metropolis, to perform at the fairs which are held in its vicinity. The greater part of our theatrical property was sent on direct, to be in a state of preparation for the opening of the fairs; while a detachment of the company travelled slowly on, foraging among the villages. I was amused with the desultory, hap-hazard kind of life we led; here to-day, and gone to-morrow. Sometimes revelling in ale-houses, sometimes feasting under hedges in the green fields. When audiences were crowded, and business profitable, we fared well; and when otherwise, we fared scantily, consoled ourselves, and made up with anticipations of the next day's success.

At length the increasing frequency of coaches hurrying past us, covered with passengers; the increasing number of carriages, carts, wagons, gigs, droves

of cattle and flocks of sheep, all thronging the road; the snug country boxes with trim flower-gardens twelve feet square, and their trees twelve feet high, all powdered with dust; and the innumerable seminaries for young ladies and gentlemen situated along the road for the benefit of country air and rural retirement; all these insignia announced that the mighty London was at hand. The hurry, and the crowd, and the bustle, and the noise, and the dust, increased as we proceeded, until I saw the great cloud of smoke hanging in the air, like a canopy of state, over this queen of cities.

In this way then, did I enter the metropolis, a strolling vagabond, on the top of a caravan, with a crew of vagabonds about me; but I was as happy as a prince; for, like Prince Hal, I felt myself superior to my situation, and knew that I could at any time cast it off, and emerge into my proper sphere.

How my eyes sparkled as we passed Hyde Park Corner, and I saw splendid equipages rolling by; with powdered footmen behind, in rich liveries, with fine nose-gays, and gold-headed canes; and with lovely women within, so sumptuously dressed, and so surpassingly fair! I was always extremely sensible to female beauty, and here I saw it in all its power of fascination; for whatever may be said of "beauty unadorned," there is something almost awful in female loveliness decked out in jewelled state. The swan-like neck encircled with diamonds; the raven locks clustered with pearls; the ruby glowing on the snowy bosom, are objects which I could never contemplate without emotion; and a dazzling white arm clasped with bracelets, and taper transparent fingers, laden with sparkling rings, are to me irresistible.

My very eyes ached as I gazed at the high and courtly beauty that passed before me. It surpassed all that my imagination had conceived of the sex. I shrunk, for a moment, into shame at the company in which I was placed, and repined at the vast distance that seemed to intervene between me and these magnificent beings.

I forbear to give a detail of the happy life I led about the skirts of the metropolis, playing at the various fairs held there

during the latter part of spring, and the beginning of summer. This continued change from place to place, and scene to scene, fed my imagination with novelties, and kept my spirits in a perpetual state of excitement. As I was tall of my age, I aspired, at one time, to play heroes in tragedy; but, after two or three trials, I was pronounced by the manager totally unfit for the line; and our first tragic actress, who was a large woman, and held a small hero in abhorrence, confirmed his decision.

The fact is, I had attempted to give point to language which had no point, and nature to scenes which had no nature. They said I did not fill out my characters; and they were right. The characters had all been prepared for a different sort of a man. Our tragedy hero was a round, robustious fellow, with an amazing voice; who stamped and slapped his breast until his wig shook again; and who roared and bellowed out his bombast until every phrase swelled upon the ear like the sound of a kettledrum. I might as well have attempted to fill out his clothes as his characters. When we had a dialogue together, I was nothing before him, with my slender voice and discriminating manner. I might as well have attempted to parry a cudgel with a small-sword. If he found me in any way gaining ground upon him, he would take refuge in his mighty voice, and throw his tones like peals of thunder at me, until they were drowned in the still louder thunders of applause from the audience.

To tell the truth, I suspect that I was not shown fair play, and that there was management at the bottom; for, without vanity, I think I was a better actor than he. As I had not embarked in the vagabond line through ambition, I did not repine at lack of preferment; but I was grieved to find that a vagrant life was not without its cares and anxieties; and that jealousies, intrigues, and mad ambition, were to be found even among vagabonds.

Indeed, as I became more familiar with my situation, and the delusions of fancy gradually faded away, I began to find that my associates were not the happy careless creatures I had at first imagined them. They were jealous of

each other's talents; they quarrelled about parts, the same as the actors on the grand theatres; they quarrelled about dresses; and there was one robe of yellow silk, trimmed with red, and a head-dress of three rumpled ostrich feathers, which were continually setting the ladies of the company by the ears. Even those who had attained the highest honours were not more happy than the rest; for Mr. Flimsey himself, our first tragedian, and apparently a jovial, good-humoured fellow, confessed to me one day, in the fulness of his heart, that he was a miserable man. He had a brother-in-law, a relative by marriage, though not by blood, who was manager of a theatre in a small country town. And this same brother ("a little more than kin, but less than kind") looked down upon him, and treated him with contumely, because, forsooth, he was but a strolling player. I tried to console him with the thoughts of the vast applause he daily received, but it was all in vain. He declared that it gave him no delight, and that he should never be a happy man, until the name of Flimsey rivalled the name of Crimp.

How little do those before the scenes know of what passes behind! how little can they judge, from the countenances of actors, of what is passing in their hearts! I have known two lovers quarrel like cats behind the scenes, who were, the moment after, to fly into each other's embraces. And I have dreaded, when our Belvidera was to take her farewell kiss of her Jaffier, lest she should bite a piece out of his cheek. Our tragedian was a rough joker off the stage; our prime clown the most peevish mortal living. The latter used to go about snapping and snarling, with a broad laugh painted on his countenance; and I can assure you that whatever may be said of the gravity of a monkey, or the melancholy of a gibed cat, there is not a more melancholy creature in existence than a mountebank off duty.

The only thing in which all parties agreed, was to backbite the manager, and cabal against his regulations. This, however, I have since discovered to be a common trait of human nature, and to take place in all communities. It would seem to be the main business of man to

repine at government. In all situations of life into which I have looked, I have found mankind divided into two grand parties: those who ride, and those who are ridden. The great struggle of life seems to be which shall keep in the saddle. This, it appears to me, is the fundamental principle of politics, whether in great or little life. However, I do not mean to moralize—but one cannot always sink the philosopher.

Well then, to return to myself, it was determined, as I said, that I was not fit for tragedy, and, unluckily, as my study was bad, having a very poor memory, I was pronounced unfit for comedy also; besides, the line of young gentlemen was already engrossed by an actor with whom I could not pretend to enter into competition, he having filled it for almost half a century. I came down again, therefore, to pantomime. In consequence, however, of the good offices of the manager's lady, who had taken a liking to me, I was promoted from the part of the satyr to that of the lover; and with my face patched and painted, a huge cravat of paper, a steeple-crowned hat, and dangling long-skirted sky-blue coat, was metamorphosed into the lover of Columbine. My part did not call for much of the tender and sentimental. I had merely to pursue the fugitive fair one; to have a door now and then slammed in my face; to run my head occasionally against a post; to tumble and roll about with Pantaloon and the clown; and to endure the hearty thwacks of Harlequin's wooden sword.

As ill luck would have it, my poetical temperament began to ferment within me, and to work out new troubles. The inflammatory air of a great metropolis, added to the rural scenes in which the fairs were held, such as Greenwich Park, Epping Forest, and the lovely valley of West End, had a powerful effect upon me. While in Greenwich Park I was witness to the old holiday games of running down hill, and kissing in the ring; and then the firmament of blooming faces and blue eyes that would be turned towards me, as I was playing antics on the stage; all these set my young blood and my poetical vein in full flow. In short, I played the character to the life,

and became desperately enamoured of Columbine. She was a trim, well-made, tempting girl, with a roguish dimpling face, and fine chestnut hair clustering all about it. The moment I got fairly smitten there was an end to all playing. I was such a creature of fancy and feeling, that I could not put on a pretended, when I was powerfully affected by a real emotion. I could not sport with a fiction that came so near to the fact. I became too natural in my acting to succeed. And then, what a situation for a lover! I was a mere stripling, and she played with my passion; for girls soon grow more adroit and knowing in these matters than your awkward youngsters. What agonies had I to suffer! Every time that she danced in front of the booth, and made such liberal displays of her charms, I was in torment. To complete my misery, I had a real rival in Harlequin, an active, vigorous, knowing varlet, of six-and-twenty. What had a raw, inexperienced youngster like me to hope from such a competition?

I had still, however, some advantages in my favour. In spite of my change of life, I retained that indescribable something which always distinguishes the gentleman; that something which dwells in a man's air and deportment, and not in his clothes; and which it is as difficult for a gentleman to put off, as for a vulgar fellow to put on. The company generally felt it, and used to call me Little Gentleman Jack. The girl felt it too, and, in spite of her predilection for my powerful rival, she liked to flirt with me. This only aggravated my troubles, by increasing my passion, and awakening the jealousy of her party-coloured lover.

Alas! think what I suffered at being obliged to keep up an ineffectual chase after my Columbine through whole pantomimes; to see her carried off in the vigorous arms of the happy Harlequin; and to be obliged, instead of snatching her from him, to tumble sprawling with Pantaloon and the clown, and bear the infernal and degrading thwacks of my rival's weapon of lath, which, may Heaven confound him! (excuse my passion) the villain laid on with a malicious good-will: nay, I could absolutely hear

him chuckle and laugh beneath his accursed mask—I beg pardon for growing a little warm in my narrative—I wish to be cool, but these recollections will sometimes agitate me. I have heard and read of many desperate and deplorable situations of lovers, but none, I think, in which true love was ever exposed to so severe and peculiar a trial.

This could not last long; flesh and blood, at least such flesh and blood as mine, could not bear it. I had repeated heart-burnings and quarrels with my rival, in which he treated me with the mortifying forbearance of a man towards a child. Had he quarrelled outright with me, I could have stomached it, at least I should have known what part to take; but to be humoured and treated as a child in the presence of my mistress, when I felt all the bantam spirit of a little man swelling within me—Gods! it was insufferable!

At length, we were exhibiting one day at West End fair, which was at that time a very fashionable resort, and often beleaguered with gay equipages from town. Among the spectators that filled the front row of our little canvass theatre one afternoon, when I had to figure in a pantomime, were a number of young ladies from a boarding-school, with their governess. Guess my confusion, when, in the midst of my antics, I beheld among the number my quondam flame; her whom I had be-rhymed at school, her for whose charms I had smarted so severely, the cruel Sacharissa! What was worse, I fancied she recollected me, and was repeating the story of my humiliating flagellation, for I saw her whispering to her companions and her governess. I lost all consciousness of the part I was acting, and of the place where I was. I felt shrunk to nothing, and could have crept into a rat-hole—unluckily, none was open to receive me. Before I could recover from my confusion, I was tumbled over by Pantaloon and the clown, and I felt the sword of Harlequin making vigorous assaults in a manner most degrading to my dignity.

Heaven and earth! was I again to suffer martyrdom in this ignominious manner, in the knowledge and even before the very eyes of this most beautiful,

but most disdainful of fair ones? All my long-smothered wrath broke out at once; the dormant feelings of the gentleman arose within me. Stung to the quick by intolerable mortification, I sprang on my feet in an instant; leaped upon Harlequin like a young tiger; tore off his mask; buffeted him in the face; and soon shed more blood on the stage, than had been spilt upon it during a whole tragic campaign of battles and murders.

As soon as Harlequin recovered from his surprise, he returned my assault with interest. I was nothing in his hands. I was game, to be sure, for I was a gentleman; but he had the clownish advantage of bone and muscle. I felt as if I could have fought even unto the death; and I was likely to do so, for he was, according to the boxing phrase, "putting my head into chancery," when the gentle Columbine flew to my assistance. God bless the women! they are always on the side of the weak and the oppressed!

The battle now became general; the dramatis personæ ranged on either side. The manager interposed in vain; in vain were his spangled black bonnet and towering white feathers seen whisking about, and nodding, and bobbing in the thickest of the fight. Warriors, ladies, priests, satyrs, kings, queens, gods, and goddesses, all joined pell-mell in the fray: never, since the conflict under the walls of Troy, had there been such a chance-medley warfare of combatants, human and divine. The audience applauded, the ladies shrieked, and fled from the theatre; and a scene of discord ensued that baffles all description.

Nothing but the interference of the peace-officers restored some degree of order. The havoc, however, that had been made among dresses and decorations, put an end to all further acting for that day. The battle over, the next thing was to inquire why it was begun; a common question among politicians after a bloody and unprofitable war, and one not always easy to be answered. It was soon traced to me, and my unaccountable transport of passion, which they could only attribute to my having *run a muck*. The manager was judge and jury, and plaintiff into the bargain;

and in such cases justice is always speedily administered. He came out of the fight as sublime a wreck as the Santissima Trinidad. His gallant plumes, which once towered aloft, were drooping about his ears; his robe of state hung in ribands from his back, and but ill concealed the ravages he had suffered in the rear. He had received kicks and cuffs from all sides during the tumult; for every one took the opportunity of slyly gratifying some lurking grudge on his fat carcass. He was a discreet man, and did not choose to declare war with all his company; so he swore all those kicks and cuffs had been given by me, and I let him enjoy the opinion. Some wounds he bore, however, which were the incontestable traces of a woman's warfare: his sleek rosy cheek was scored by trickling furrows, which were ascribed to the nails of my intrepid and devoted Columbine. The ire of the monarch was not to be appeased; he had suffered in his person, and he had suffered in his purse; his dignity, too, had been insulted, and that went for something; for dignity is always more irascible the more petty the potentate. He wreaked his wrath upon the beginners of the affray, and Columbine and myself were discharged, at once, from the company.

Figure me, then, to yourself, a strippling of little more than sixteen, a gentleman by birth, a vagabond by trade, turned adrift upon the world, making the best of my way through the crowd of West End fair; my mountebank dress fluttering in rags about me; the weeping Columbine hanging upon my arm, in splendid but tattered finery; the tears coursing one by one down her face, carrying off the red paint in torrents, and literally "preying upon her damask cheek."

The crowd made way for us as we passed, and hooted in our rear. I felt the ridicule of my situation, but had too much gallantry to desert this fair one, who had sacrificed every thing for me. Having wandered through the fair, we emerged, like another Adam and Eve, into unknown regions, and "had the world before us, where to choose." Never was a more disconsolate pair

seen in the soft valley of West End. The luckless Columbine cast back many a lingering look at the fair, which seemed to put on a more than usual splendour: its tents, and booths, and party-coloured groups, all brightening in the sunshine, and gleaming among the trees; and its gay flags and streamers fluttering in the light summer airs. With a heavy sigh she would lean on my arm and proceed. I had no hope nor consolation to give her; but she had linked herself to my fortunes, and she was too much of a woman to desert me.

Pensive and silent, then, we traversed the beautiful fields which lie behind Hampstead, and wandered on, until the fiddle, and the hautboy, and the shout, and the laugh, were swallowed up in the deep sound of the big bass drum, and even that died away into a distant rumble. We passed along the pleasant, sequestered walk of Nightingale Lane. For a pair of lovers, what scene could be more propitious?—But such a pair of lovers! Not a nightingale sang to soothe us: the very gypsies, who were encamped there during the fair, made no offer to tell the fortunes of such an ill-omened couple, whose fortunes, I suppose, they thought too legibly written to need an interpreter; and the gipsy children crawled into their cabins, and peeped out fearfully at us as we went by. For a moment I paused, and was almost tempted to turn gipsy; but the poetical feeling, for the present, was fully satisfied, and I passed on. Thus we travelled and travelled, like a prince and princess in a Nursery Tale, until we had traversed a part of Hampstead Heath, and arrived in the vicinity of Jack Straw's Castle. Here, wearied and dispirited, we seated ourselves on the margin of the hill, hard by the very mile-stone where Whittington of yore heard the Bow-bells ring out the presage of his future greatness. Alas! no bell rung an invitation to us, as we looked disconsolately upon the distant city. Old London seemed to wrap itself unsociably in its mantle of brown smoke, and to offer no encouragement to such a couple of tatterdemalions.

For once, at least, the usual course of the pantomime was reversed, Harlequin

was jilted, and the lover had carried off Columbine in good earnest. But what was I to do with her? I could not take her in my hand, return to my father, throw myself on my knees, and crave his forgiveness and his blessing, according to dramatic usage. The very dogs would have chased such a draggled-tailed beauty from the grounds.

In the midst of my doleful dumps, some one tapped me on the shoulder, and, looking up, I saw a couple of rough sturdy fellows standing behind me. Not knowing what to expect, I jumped on my legs, and was preparing again to make battle; but I was tripped up and secured in a twinkling.

"Come, come, young master," said one of the fellows, in a gruff but good-humoured tone, "don't let's have any of your tantrums; one would have thought you had had swing enough for this bout. Come; it's high time to leave off harlequinading, and go home to your father."

In fact, I had fallen into the hands of remorseless men. The cruel Sacharissa had proclaimed who I was, and that a reward had been offered throughout the country for any tidings of me; and they had seen a description of me which had been inserted in the public papers. Those harpies, therefore, for the mere sake of filthy lucre, were resolved to deliver me over into the hands of my father, and the clutches of my pedagogue.

It was in vain that I swore I would not leave my faithful and afflicted Columbine. It was in vain that I tore myself from their grasp, and flew to her; and vowed to protect her; and wiped the tears from her cheek, and with them a whole blush that might have vied with the carnation for brilliancy. My persecutors were inflexible: they even seemed to exult in our distress; and to enjoy this theatrical display of dirt, and finery, and tribulation. I was carried off in despair, leaving my Columbine destitute in the wide world; but many a look of agony did I cast back at her as she stood gazing piteously after me from the brink of Hampstead Hill; so forlorn, so fine, so ragged, so bedraggled, yet so beautiful.

Thus ended my first peep into the world. I returned home, rich in good-

for-nothing experience, and dreading the reward I was to receive for my improvement. My reception, however, was quite different from what I had expected. My father had a spice of the devil in him, and did not seem to like me the worse for my freak, which he termed "sowing my wild oats." He happened to have some of his sporting friends to dine the very day of my return; they made me tell some of my adventures, and laughed heartily at them.

One old fellow, with an outrageously red nose, took to me hugely. I heard him whisper to my father that I was a lad of mettle, and might make something clever; to which my father replied, that I had good points, but was an ill-broken whelp, and required a great deal of the whip. Perhaps this very conversation raised me a little in his esteem, for I found the red-nosed old gentleman was a veteran fox-hunter of the neighbourhood, for whose opinion my father had vast deference. Indeed, I believe he would have pardoned any thing in me more readily than poetry, which he called a cursed, sneaking, puling, housekeeping employment, the bane of all fine manhood. He swore it was unworthy of a youngster of my expectations, who was one day to have so great an estate, and would be able to keep horses and hounds, and hire poets to write songs for him into the bargain.

I had now satisfied, for a time, my roving propensity. I had exhausted the poetical feeling. I had been heartily buffeted out of my love for theatrical display. I felt humiliated by my exposure, and was willing to hide my head any where for a season, so that I might be out of the way of the ridicule of the world; for I found folks not altogether so indulgent abroad as they were at my father's table. I could not stay at home; the house was intolerably doleful, now that my mother was no longer there to cherish me. Every thing around spoke mournfully of her. The little flower-garden in which she delighted was all in disorder and overrun with weeds. I attempted for a day or two to arrange it, but my heart grew heavier and heavier as I laboured. Every little broken-down flower, that I had seen her rear so ten-

derly, seemed to plead in mute eloquence to my feelings. There was a favourite honeysuckle which I had seen her often training with assiduity, and had heard her say it would be the pride of her garden. I found it grovelling along the ground, tangled and wild, and twining round every worthless weed; and it struck me as an emblem of myself, a mere scatterling, running to waste and uselessness. I could work no longer in the garden.

My father sent me to pay a visit to my uncle, by way of keeping the old gentleman in mind of me. I was received, as usual, without any expression of discontent, which we always considered equivalent to a hearty welcome. Whether he had ever heard of my strolling freak or not I could not discover, he and his man were both so taciturn. I spent a day or two roaming about the dreary mansion and neglected park, and felt at one time, I believe, a touch of poetry, for I was tempted to drown myself in a fish-pond; I rebuked the evil spirit, however, and it left me. I found the same red-headed boy running wild about the park, but I felt in no humour to hunt him at present. On the contrary, I tried to coax him to me, and to make friends with him; but the young savage was untameable.

When I returned from my uncle's, I remained at home for some time, for my father was disposed, he said, to make a man of me. He took me out hunting with him, and I became a great favourite of the red-nosed squire, because I rode at every thing, never refused the boldest leap, and was always sure to be in at the death. I used often, however, to offend my father at hunting dinners, by taking the wrong side in politics. My father was amazingly ignorant, so ignorant, in fact, as not to know that he knew nothing. He was staunch, however, to church and king, and full of old-fashioned prejudices. Now I had picked up a little knowledge in politics and religion, during my rambles with the strollers, and found myself capable of setting him right as to many of his antiquated notions. I felt it my duty to do so; we were apt, therefore, to differ occasionally in the political discussions



which sometimes arose at those hunting dinners.

I was at that age when a man knows least, and is most vain of his knowledge, and when he is extremely tenacious in defending his opinion upon subjects about which he knows nothing. My father was a hard man for any one to argue with, for he never knew when he was refuted. I sometimes posed him a little, but then he had one argument that always settled the question; he would threaten to knock me down. I believe he at last grew tired of me, because I both outtalked and outrode him. The red-nosed squire, too, got out of conceit of me, because, in the heat of the chase, I rode over him one day as he and his horse lay sprawling in the dirt: so I found myself getting into disgrace with all the world, and would have got heartily out of humour with myself, had I not been kept in tolerable self-conceit by the parson's three daughters.

They were the same who had admired my poetry on a former occasion, when it had brought me into disgrace at school; and I had ever since retained an exalted idea of their judgment. Indeed, they were young ladies not merely of taste, but science. Their education had been superintended by their mother, who was a blue-stocking. They knew enough of botany to tell the technical names of all the flowers in the garden, and all their secret concerns into the bargain. They knew music too, not mere commonplace music, but Rossini and Mozart, and they sang Moore's Irish Melodies to perfection. They had pretty little work-tables, covered with all kind of objects of taste; specimens of lava, and painted eggs, and work-boxes, painted and varnished by themselves. They excelled in knotting and netting, and painted in water-colours; and made feather fans, and fire-screens, and worked in silks and worsteds; and talked French and Italian, and knew Shakspeare by heart. They even knew something of geology and mineralogy; and went about the neighbourhood knocking stones to pieces, to the great admiration and perplexity of the country folk.

I am a little too minute, perhaps, in detailing their accomplishments, but I wish to let you see that these were not

commonplace young ladies, but had pretensions quite above the ordinary run. It was some consolation to me, therefore, to find favour in such eyes. Indeed, they had always marked me out for a genius, and considered my late vagrant freak as fresh proof of the fact. They observed that Shakspeare himself had been a mere Pickle in his youth; that he had stolen deer, as every one knew, and kept loose company, and consorted with actors: so I comforted myself marvellously with the idea of having so decided a Shakspearean trait in my character.

The youngest of the three, however, was my grand consolation. She was a pale, sentimental girl, with long "hyacinthine" ringlets hanging about her face. She wrote poetry herself, and we kept up a poetical correspondence. She had a taste for the drama too, and I taught her how to act several of the scenes in *Romeo and Juliet*. I used to rehearse the garden scene under her lattice, which looked out from among woodbine and honeysuckles into the churchyard. I began to think her amazingly pretty as well as clever, and I believe I should have finished by falling in love with her, had not her father discovered our theatrical studies. He was a studious, abstracted man, generally too much absorbed in his learned and religious labours to notice the little foibles of his daughters, and, perhaps, blinded by a father's fondness; but he unexpectedly put his head out of his study-window one day in the midst of a scene, and put a stop to our rehearsals. He had a vast deal of that prosaic good sense which I for ever found a stumbling-block in my poetical path. My rambling freak had not struck the good man as poetically as it had his daughters. He drew his comparison from a different manual. He looked upon me as a prodigal son, and doubted whether I should ever arrive at the happy catastrophe of the fatted calf.

I fancy some intimation was given to my father of this new breaking-out of my poetical temperament, for he suddenly intimated that it was high time I should prepare for the University. I dreaded a return to the school from whence I had eloped: the ridicule of my fellow-scholars, and the glances from the

squire's pew, would have been worse than death to me. I was fortunately spared the humiliation. My father sent me to board with a country clergyman, who had three or four other boys under his care. I went to him joyfully, for I had often heard my mother mention him with esteem. In fact, he had been an admirer of hers in his younger days, though too humble in his fortune and modest in pretensions to aspire to her hand; but he had ever retained a tender regard for her. He was a good man; a worthy specimen of that valuable body of our country clergy who silently and unostentatiously do a vast deal of good; who are, as it were, woven into the whole system of rural life, and operate upon it with the steady yet unobtrusive influence of temperate piety and learned good sense. He lived in a small village not far from Warwick, one of those little communities where the scanty flock is, in a manner, folded into the bosom of the pastor. The venerable church, in its grass-grown cemetery, was one of those rural temples which are scattered about our country as if to sanctify the land.

I have the worthy pastor before my mind's eye at this moment, with his mild benevolent countenance, rendered still more venerable by his silver hairs. I have him before me as I saw him on my arrival, seated in the embowered porch of his small parsonage, with a flower-garden before it, and his pupils gathered round him like his children. I shall never forget his reception of me, for I believe he thought of my poor mother at the time, and his heart yearned towards her child. His eye glistened when he received me at the door, and he took me into his arms as the adopted child of his affections. Never had I been so fortunately placed. He was one of those excellent members of our church, who help out their narrow salaries by instructing a few gentlemen's sons. I am convinced those little seminaries are among the best nurseries of talent and virtue in the land. Both heart and mind are cultivated and improved. The preceptor is the companion and the friend of his pupils. His sacred character gives him dignity in their eyes, and his solemn functions produce that elevation of mind

and sobriety of conduct necessary to those who are to teach youth to think and act worthily.

I speak from my own random observation and experience, but I think I speak correctly. At any rate, I can trace much of what is good in my own heterogeneous compound to the short time I was under the instruction of that good man. He entered into the cares and occupations and amusements of his pupils; and won his way into our confidence, and studied our hearts and minds more intently than we did our books.

He soon sounded the depth of my character. I had become, as I have already hinted, a little liberal in my notions, and apt to philosophize on both politics and religion; having seen something of men and things, and learnt, from my fellow-philosophers, the strollers, to despise all vulgar prejudices. He did not attempt to cast down my vain-glory, nor to question my right view of things; he merely instilled into my mind a little information on these topics; though in a quiet, unobtrusive way, that never ruffled a feather of my self-conceit. I was astonished to find what a change a little knowledge makes in one's mode of viewing matters; and how very different a subject is when one thinks, or when one only talks about it. I conceived a vast deference for my teacher, and was ambitious of his good opinion. In my zeal to make a favourable impression, I presented him with a whole ream of my poetry. He read it attentively, smiled, and pressed my hand when he returned it to me, but said nothing. The next day he set me at mathematics.

Somehow or other the process of teaching seemed robbed by him of all its austerity. I was not conscious that he thwarted an inclination or opposed a wish; but I felt that, for the time, my inclinations were entirely changed. I became fond of study, and zealous to improve myself. I made tolerable advances in studies, which I had before considered as unattainable, and I wondered at my own proficiency. I thought, too, I astonished my preceptor; for I often caught his eyes fixed upon me with a peculiar expression. I suspect, since, that he was pensively tracing in my counte-

nance the early lineaments of my mother.

Education was not apportioned by him into tasks, and enjoined as a labour, to be abandoned with joy the moment the hour of study was expired. We had, it is true, our allotted hours of occupation, to give us habits of method, and of the distribution of time; but they were made pleasant to us, and our feelings were enlisted in the cause. When they were over, education still went on. It pervaded all our relaxations and amusements. There was a steady march of improvement. Much of his instruction was given during pleasant rambles, or when seated on the margin of the Avon; and information received in that way, often makes a deeper impression than when acquired by poring over books. I have many of the pure and eloquent precepts that flowed from his lips associated in my mind with lovely scenes in nature, which make the recollection of them indescribably delightful.

I do not pretend to say that any miracle was effected with me. After all said and done, I was but a weak disciple. My poetical temperament still wrought within me and wrestled hard with wisdom, and, I fear, maintained the mastery. I found mathematics an intolerable task in fine weather. I would be prone to forget my problems, to watch the birds hopping about the windows, or the bees humming about the honey-suckles; and whenever I could steal away, I would wander about the grassy borders of the Avon, and excuse this truant propensity to myself with the idea that I was treading classic ground, over which Shakspeare had wandered. What luxurious idleness have I indulged, as I lay under the trees and watched the silver waves rippling through the arches of the broken bridge, and laving the rocky bases of old Warwick Castle; and how often have I thought of sweet Shakspeare, and in my boyish enthusiasm have kissed the waves which had washed his native village!

My good preceptor would often accompany me in these desultory rambles. He sought to get hold of this vagrant mood of mind and turn it to some account. He endeavoured to teach me to

mingle thought with mere sensation; to moralize on the scenes around; and to make the beauties of nature administer to the understanding and the heart. He endeavoured to direct my imagination to high and noble objects, and to fill it with lofty images. In a word, he did all he could to make the best of a poetical temperament, and to counteract the mischief which had been done to me by great expectations.

Had I been earlier put under the care of the good pastor, or remained with him a longer time, I really believe he would have made something of me. He had already brought a great deal of what had been flogged into me into tolerable order, and had weeded out much of the unprofitable wisdom which had sprung up in my vagabondizing. I already began to find that with all my genius a little study would be no disadvantage to me; and, in spite of my vagrant freaks, I began to doubt of my being a second Shakspeare.

Just as I was making these precious discoveries, the good parson died. It was a melancholy day throughout the neighbourhood. He had his little flock of scholars, his children, as he used to call us, gathered around him in his dying moments; and he gave us the parting advice of a father, now that he had to leave us, and we were to be separated from each other, and scattered about the world. He took me by the hand, and talked with me earnestly and affectionately, and called to mind my mother, and used her name to enforce his dying exhortations, for I rather think he considered me the most erring and heedless of his flock. He held my hand in his, long after he had done speaking, and kept his eye fixed on me tenderly and almost piteously: his lips moved as if he were silently praying for me; and he died away, still holding me by the hand.

There was not a dry eye in the church when the funeral service was read from the pulpit from which he had so often preached. When the body was committed to the earth, our little band gathered round it, and watched the coffin as it was lowered into the grave. The parishioners looked at us with sympathy; for we were mourners not merely

in dress but in heart. We lingered about the grave, and clung to one another for a time weeping and speechless, and then parted, like a band of brothers parting from the paternal hearth, never to assemble there again.

How had the gentle spirit of that good man sweetened our natures, and linked our young hearts together by the kindest ties! I have always had a throb of pleasure at meeting with an old schoolmate, even though one of my truant associates; but whenever, in the course of my life, I have encountered one of that little flock with which I was folded on the banks of the Avon, it has been with a gush of affection, and a glow of virtue, that for the moment have made me a better man.

I was now sent to Oxford, and was wonderfully impressed on first entering it as a student. Learning here puts on all its majesty. It is lodged in palaces; it is sanctified by the sacred ceremonies of religion; it has a pomp and circumstance which powerfully affect the imagination. Such, at least, it had in my eyes, thoughtless as I was. My previous studies with the worthy pastor, had prepared me to regard it with deference and awe. He had been educated here, and always spoke of the University with filial fondness and classic veneration. When I beheld the clustering spires and pinnacles of this most august of cities rising from the plain, I hailed them in my enthusiasm as the points of a diadem, which the nation had placed upon the brows of science.

For a time old Oxford was full of enjoyment for me. There was a charm about its monastic buildings; its great Gothic quadrangles; its solemn halls, and shadowy cloisters. I delighted, in the evenings, to get in places surrounded by the colleges, where all modern buildings were screened from the sight; and to see the professors and the students sweeping along in the dusk in their antiquated caps and gowns. I seemed for a time to be transported among the people and edifices of the old times. I was a frequent attendant, also, of the evening service in the New College Hall; to hear the fine organ, and the choir swelling an anthem in that solemn building, where

painting, music, and architecture, are in such admirable unison.

A favourite haunt, too, was the beautiful walk bordered by lofty elms along the river, behind the gray walls of Magdalen College, which goes by the name of Addison's Walk, from being his favourite walk, when an Oxford student. I became also a loungee in the Bodleian Library, and a great dipper into books, though I cannot say that I studied them; in fact, being no longer under direction or control, I was gradually relapsing into mere indulgence of the fancy. Still this would have been pleasant and harmless enough, and I might have awakened from mere literary dreaming to something better. The chances were in my favour, for the riotous times of the University were past. The days of hard drinking were at an end. The old feuds of "Town and Gown," like the civil wars of the White and Red Rose, had died away; and student and citizen slept in whole skins, without risk of being summoned in the night to bloody brawl. It had become the fashion to study at the University, and the odds were always in favour of my following the fashion. Unluckily, however, I fell in company with a special knot of young fellows, of lively parts and ready wit, who had lived occasionally upon town, and become initiated into the *Fancy*. They voted study to be the toil of dull minds, by which they slowly crept up the hill, while genius arrived at it at a bound. I felt ashamed to play the owl among such gay birds; so I threw by my books, and became a man of spirit.

As my father made me a tolerable allowance, notwithstanding the narrowness of his income, having an eye always to my great expectations, I was enabled to appear to advantage among my companions. I cultivated all kinds of sports and exercises. I was one of the most expert oarsmen that rowed on the Isis. I boxed, fenced, angled, shot, and hunted; and my rooms in college were always decorated with whips of all kinds, spurs, fowling-pieces, fishing-rods, foils, and boxing-gloves. A pair of leather breeches would seem to be throwing one leg out of the half-open drawers, and empty bottles lumbered the bottom of every closet.

My father came to see me at college when I was in the height of my career. He asked me how I came on with my studies, and what kind of hunting there was in the neighbourhood. He examined my various sporting apparatus with a curious eye; wanted to know if any of the professors were fox-hunters, and whether they were generally good shots, for he suspected their studying so much must be hurtful to the sight. We had a day's shooting together. I delighted him with my skill, and astonished him by my learned disquisitions on horseflesh, and on Manton's guns; so, upon the whole, he departed highly satisfied with my improvement at college.

I do not know how it is, but I cannot be idle long without getting in love. I had not been a very long time a man of spirit, therefore, before I became deeply enamoured of a shopkeeper's daughter in the High Street, who, in fact, was the admiration of many of the students. I wrote several sonnets in praise of her, and spent half of my pocket-money at the shop, in buying articles which I did not want, that I might have an opportunity of speaking to her. Her father, a severe-looking old gentleman, with bright silver buckles, and a crisp-curved wig, kept a strict guard on her, as the fathers generally do upon their daughters in Oxford, and well they may. I tried to get into his good graces, and to be social with him, but all in vain. I said several good things in his shop, but he never laughed: he had no relish for wit and humour. He was one of those dry old gentlemen who keep youngsters at bay. He had already brought up two or three daughters, and was experienced in the ways of students. He was as knowing and wary as a gray old badger that has often been hunted. To see him on Sunday, so stiff and starched in his demeanour, so precise in his dress, with his daughter under his arm, was enough to deter all graceless youngsters from approaching.

I managed, however, in spite of his vigilance, to have several conversations with the daughter, as I cheapened articles in the shop. I made terrible long bargains, and examined the articles over and over before I purchased. In the mean

time, I would convey a sonnet or an acrostic under cover of a piece of cambric, or slipped into a pair of stockings; I would whisper soft nonsense into her ear as I haggled about the price; and would squeeze her hand tenderly as I received my half-pence of change in a bit of whity-brown paper. Let this serve as a hint to all haberdashers who have pretty daughters for shop-girls, and young students for customers. I do not know whether my words and looks were very eloquent, but my poetry was irresistible; for, to tell the truth, the girl had some literary taste, and was seldom without a book from the circulating library.

By the divine power of poetry, therefore, which is so potent with the lovely sex, did I subdue the heart of this fair little haberdasher. We carried on a sentimental correspondence for a time across the counter, and I supplied her with rhyme by the stocking-full. At length I prevailed on her to grant an assignation. But how was this to be effected? Her father kept her always under his eye; she never walked out alone; and the house was locked up the moment that the shop was shut. All these difficulties served but to give zest to the adventure. I proposed that the assignation should be in her own chamber, into which I would climb at night. The plan was irresistible—A cruel father, a secret lover, and a clandestine meeting! All the little girl's studies from the circulating library seemed about to be realized.

But what had I in view in making this assignation? Indeed, I know not. I had no evil intentions, nor can I say that I had any good ones. I liked the girl, and wanted to have an opportunity of seeing more of her; and the assignation was made, as I have done many things else, heedlessly and without forethought. I asked myself a few questions of the kind, after all my arrangements were made, but the answers were very unsatisfactory. "Am I to ruin this poor thoughtless girl?" said I to myself. "No!" was the prompt and indignant answer. "Am I to run away with her?"—"Whither, and to what purpose?"—"Well, then, am I to marry her?"—"Poh! a man of my expectations marry a shopkeeper's daughter."

ter!" "What then am I to do with her?" "Hum—why—let me get into the chamber first, and then consider—" and so the self-examination ended.

Well, sir, "come what come might," I stole under cover of the darkness to the dwelling of my *dulcinea*. All was quiet. At the concerted signal her window was gently opened. It was just above the projecting bow-window of her father's shop, which assisted me in mounting. The house was low, and I was enabled to scale the fortress with tolerable ease. I clambered with a beating heart; I reached the casement; I hoisted my body half into the chamber; and was welcomed, not by the embraces of my expecting fair one, but by the grasp of the crabbed-looking old father in the crisp-curl'd wig.

I extricated myself from his clutches, and endeavoured to make my retreat; but I was confounded by his cries of thieves! and robbers! I was bothered too by his Sunday cane, which was amazingly busy about my head as I descended, and against which my hat was but a poor protection. Never before had I an idea of the activity of an old man's arm, and the hardness of the knob of an ivory-headed cane. In my hurry and confusion I missed my footing, and fell sprawling on the pavement. I was immediately surrounded by myrmidons, who, I doubt not, were on the watch for me. Indeed, I was in no situation to escape, for I had sprained my ankle in the fall, and could not stand. I was seized as a housebreaker; and to exonerate myself of a greater crime, I had to accuse myself of a less. I made known who I was, and why I came there. Alas! the varlets knew it already, and were only amusing themselves at my expense. My perfidious muse had been playing me one of her slippery tricks. The old curmudgeon of a father had found my sonnets and acrostics hid away in holes and corners of his shop: he had no taste for poetry like his daughter, and had instituted a rigorous though silent observation. He had moused upon our letters, detected our plans, and prepared every thing for my reception. Thus was I ever doomed to be led into scrapes by the muse. Let no man henceforth carry on a secret amour in poetry!

The old man's ire was in some measure appeased by the pummeling of my head and the anguish of my sprain; so he did not put me to death on the spot. He was even humane enough to furnish a shutter, on which I was carried back to college like a wounded warrior. The porter was roused to admit me. The college gate was thrown open for my entry. The affair was blazed about the next morning, and became the joke of the college from the buttery to the hall.

I had leisure to repent during several weeks' confinement by my sprain, which I passed in translating Boethius' *Consolations of Philosophy*. I received a most tender and ill-spelled letter from my mistress, who had been sent to a relation in Coventry. She protested her innocence of my misfortunes, and vowed to be true to me "till death." I took no notice of the letter, for I was cured, for the present, both of love and poetry. Women, however, are more constant in their attachments than men, whatever philosophers may say to the contrary. I am assured that she actually remained faithful to her vow for several months; but she had to deal with a cruel father, whose heart was as hard as the knob of his cane. He was not to be touched by tears or poetry, but absolutely compelled her to marry a reputable young tradesman, who made her a happy woman in spite of herself, and of all the rules of romance: and, what is more, the mother of several children. They are at this very day a thriving couple, and keep a snug corner shop, just opposite the figure of Peeping Tom, at Coventry.

I will not fatigue you by any more details of my studies at Oxford; though they were not always as severe as these, nor did I always pay as dear for my lessons. To be brief, then, I lived on in my usual miscellaneous manner, gradually getting knowledge of good and evil, until I had attained my twenty-first year. I had scarcely come of age when I heard of the sudden death of my father. The shock was severe, for though he had never treated me with much kindness, still he was my father, and at his death I felt alone in the world.

I returned home, and found myself the solitary master of the paternal mansion.

A crowd of gloomy feelings came thronging upon me. It was a place that always sobered me, and brought me to reflection; now especially, it looked so deserted and melancholy. I entered the little breakfast-room. There were my father's whip and spurs hanging by the fireplace; the Stud-Book, Sporting Magazine, and Racing Calendar, his only reading. His favourite spaniel lay on the hearth-rug. The poor animal, who had never before noticed me, now came fondling about me, licked my hand, then looked round the room, whined, wagged his tail slightly, and gazed wistfully in my face. I felt the full force of the appeal. "Poor Dash," said I, "we are both alone in the world, with nobody to care for us, and will take care of one another." The dog never quitted me afterwards.

I could not go into my mother's room—my heart swelled when I passed within sight of the door. Her portrait hung in the parlour, just over the place she used to sit. As I cast my eyes on it, I thought it looked at me with tenderness, and I burst into tears. I was a careless dog, it is true, hardened a little, perhaps, by living in public schools, and buffeting about among strangers, who cared nothing for me; but the recollection of a mother's tenderness was overcoming.

I was not of an age or a temperament to be long depressed. There was a reaction in my system that always brought me up again after every pressure; and, indeed, my spirits were most buoyant after a temporary prostration. I settled the concerns of the estate as soon as possible; realized my property, which was not very considerable, but which appeared a vast deal to me, having a poetical eye, that magnified every thing; and finding myself at the end of a few months, free of all further business or restraint, I determined to go to London and enjoy myself. Why should not I?—I was young, animated, joyous; had plenty of funds for present pleasures, and my uncle's estate in the perspective. Let those mope at college, and pore over books, thought I, who have their way to make in the world; it would be ridiculous drudgery in a youth of my expectations!

Away to London, therefore, I rattled in a tandem, determined to take the town

gaily. I passed through several of the villages where I had played the Jack Pudding a few years before; and I visited the scenes of many of my adventures and follies, merely from that feeling of melancholy pleasure which we have in stepping again the footprints of foregone existence, even when they have passed among weeds and briars. I made a circuit in the latter part of my journey, so as to take in West End and Hampstead, the scenes of my last dramatic exploit, and of the battle royal of the booth. As I drove along the ridge of Hampstead Hill, by Jack Straw's Castle, I paused at the spot where Columbine and I had sat down so disconsolately in our ragged finery, and had looked dubiously on London. I almost expected to see her again, standing on the hill's brink, "like Niobe, all tears;"—mournful as Babylon in ruins!

"Poor Columbine!" said I, with a heavy sigh, "thou wert a gallant, generous girl—a true woman; faithful to the distressed, and ready to sacrifice thyself in the cause of worthless man!"

I tried to whistle off the recollection of her, for there was always something of self-reproach with it. I drove gaily along the road, enjoying the stare of hostlers and stable-boys, as I managed my horses knowingly down the steep street of Hampstead; when, just at the skirts of the village, one of the traces of my leader came loose. I pulled up, and as the animal was restive, and my servant a bungler, I called for assistance to the robustus master of a snug alehouse, who stood at his door with a tankard in his hand. He came readily to assist me, followed by his wife, with her bosom half open, a child in her arms, and two more at her heels. I stared for a moment, as if doubting my eyes. I could not be mistaken; in the fat, beer-blown landlord of the alehouse, I recognised my old rival Harlequin, and in his slattern spouse, the once trim and dimpling Columbine.

The change of my looks from youth to manhood, and the change in my circumstances, prevented them from recognising me. They could not suspect in the dashing young buck, fashionably dressed and driving his own equipage, the painted beau, with old peaked hat,

and long, flimsy, sky-blue coat. My heart yearned with kindness towards Columbine, and I was glad to see her establishment a thriving one. As soon as the harness was adjusted, I tossed a small purse of gold into her ample bosom; and then, pretending to give my horses a hearty cut of the whip, I made the lash curl with a whistling about the sleek sides of ancient Harlequin. The horses dashed off like lightning, and I was whirled out of sight before either of the parties could get over their surprise at my liberal donations. I have always considered this as one of the greatest proofs of my poetical genius; it was distributing poetical justice in perfection.

I now entered London *en cavalier*, and became a blood upon town. I took fashionable lodgings in the West End; employed the first tailor; frequented the regular lounges; gambled a little; lost my money good-humouredly, and gained a number of fashionable, good-for-nothing acquaintances. I gained some reputation also for a man of science, having become an expert boxer in the course of my studies at Oxford. I was distinguished, therefore, among the gentlemen of the Fancy; became hand and glove with certain boxing noblemen, and was the admiration of the Fives Court. A gentleman's science, however, is apt to get him into sad scrapes; he is too prone to play the knight-errant, and to pick up quarrels which less scientific gentlemen would quietly avoid. I undertook one day to punish the insolence of a porter. He was a Hercules of a fellow, but then I was so secure in my science! I gained the victory of course. The porter pocketed his humiliation, bound up his broken head, and went about his business as unconcerned as though nothing had happened; while I went to bed with my victory, and did not dare to show my battered face for a fortnight: by which I discovered that a gentleman may have the worst of the battle even when victorious.

I am naturally a philosopher, and no one can moralize better after a misfortune has taken place: so I lay on my bed and moralized on this sorry ambition, which levels the gentleman with the clown. I know it is the opinion of many

sages, who have thought deeply on these matters, that the noble science of boxing keeps up the bull-dog courage of the nation; and far be it from me to decry the advantage of becoming a nation of bull-dogs; but I now saw clearly that it was calculated to keep up the breed of English ruffians. "What is the Fives Court," said I to myself, as I turned uncomfortably in bed, "but a college of scoundrelism, where every bully ruffian in the land may gain a fellowship? What is the slang language of 'The Fancy' but a jargon by which fools and knaves commune and understand each other, and enjoy a kind of superiority over the uninitiated? What is a boxing-match but an arena, where the noble and the illustrious are jostled into familiarity with the infamous and the vulgar? What, in fact, is the Fancy itself, but a chain of easy communication, extending from the peer down to the pickpocket, through the medium of which a man of rank may find he has shaken hands, at three removes, with the murderer on the gibbet?"

"Enough!" ejaculated I, thoroughly convinced through the force of my philosophy, and the pain of my bruises—"I'll have nothing more to do with The Fancy." So when I had recovered from my victory, I turned my attention to softer themes, and became a devoted admirer of the ladies. Had I had more industry and ambition in my nature, I might have worked my way to the very height of fashion, as I saw many laborious gentlemen doing around me. But it is a toilsome, an anxious, and an unhappy life: there are few beings so sleepless and miserable as your cultivators of fashionable smiles. I was quite content with that kind of society which forms the frontiers of fashion, and may be easily taken possession of. I found it a light, easy, productive soil. I had but to go about and sow visiting-cards, and I reaped a whole harvest of invitations. Indeed, my figure and address were by no means against me. It was whispered, too, among the young ladies, that I was prodigiously clever, and wrote poetry; and the old ladies had ascertained that I was a young gentleman of good family, handsome fortune, and "great expectations."



I now was carried away by the hurry of gay life, so intoxicating to a young man, and which a man of poetical temperament enjoys so highly on his first tasting of it: that rapid variety of sensations; that whirl of brilliant objects; that succession of pungent pleasures! I had no time for thought. I only felt. I never attempted to write poetry; my poetry seemed all to go off by transpiration. I lived poetry; it was all a poetical dream to me. A mere sensualist knows nothing of the delights of a splendid metropolis. He lives in a round of animal gratifications and heartless habits. But to a young man of poetical feelings, it is an ideal world, a scene of enchantment and delusion; his imagination is in perpetual excitement, and gives a spiritual zest to every pleasure.

A season of town-life, however, somewhat sobered me of my intoxication; or, rather, I was rendered more serious by one of my old complaints—I fell in love. It was with a very pretty, though a very haughty fair one, who had come to London under the care of an old maiden aunt to enjoy the pleasures of a winter in town, and to get married. There was not a doubt of her commanding a choice of lovers; for she had long been the belle of a little cathedral city, and one of the poets of the place had absolutely celebrated her beauty in a copy of Latin verses. The most extravagant anticipations were formed by her friends of the sensation she would produce. It was feared by some that she might be precipitate in her choice, and take up with some inferior title. The aunt was determined nothing should gain her under a lord.

Alas! with all her charms, the young lady lacked the one thing needful—she had no money. So she waited in vain for duke, marquis, or earl, to throw himself at her feet. As the season waned, so did the lady's expectations; when, just towards the close, I made my advances.

I was most favourably received by both the young lady and her aunt. It is true, I had no title; but then such great expectations! A marked preference was immediately shown me over two rivals, the younger son of a needy baronet, and

a captain of dragoons on half-pay. I did not absolutely take the field in form, for I was determined not to be precipitate; but I drove my equipage frequently through the street in which she lived, and was always sure to see her at the window, generally with a book in her hand. I resumed my knack at rhyming, and sent her a long copy of verses; anonymously, to be sure, but she knew my handwriting. Both aunt and niece, however, displayed the most delightful ignorance on the subject. The young lady showed them to me; wondered whom they could be written by; and declared there was nothing in this world she loved so much as poetry; while the maiden aunt would put her pinching spectacles on her nose, and read them, with blunders in sense and sound, that were excruciating to an author's ears; protesting there was nothing equal to them in the whole *Elegant Extracts*.

The fashionable season closed without my adventuring to make a declaration, though I certainly had encouragement. I was not perfectly sure that I had effected a lodgment in the young lady's heart, and, to tell the truth, the aunt overdid her part, and was a little too extravagant in her liking of me. I knew that maiden aunts were not apt to be captivated by the mere personal merits of their nieces' admirers; and I wanted to ascertain how much of all this favour I owed to driving an equipage, and having great expectations.

I had received many hints how charming their native place was during the summer months; what pleasant society they had; and what beautiful drives about the neighbourhood. They had not, therefore, returned home long, before I made my appearance in dashing style, driving down the principal street. The very next morning I was seen at prayers, seated in the same pew with the reigning belle. Questions were whispered about the aisles, after service, "Who is he?" and "What is he?" And the replies were as usual, "A young gentleman of good family and fortune, and great expectations."

I was much struck with the peculiarities of this reverend little place. A cathedral, with its dependencies and re-

gulations, presents a picture of other times, and of a different order of things. It is a rich relic of a more poetical age. There still linger about it the silence and solemnity of the cloister. In the present instance especially, where the cathedral was large, and the town was small, its influence was the more apparent. The solemn pomp of the service, performed twice a day, with the grand intonations of the organ, and the voices of the choir swelling through the magnificent pile, diffused, as it were, a perpetual sabbath over the place. This routine of solemn ceremony continually going on, independent, as it were, of the world; this daily offering of melody and praise, ascending like incense from the altar, had a powerful effect upon my imagination.

The aunt introduced me to her coterie, formed of families connected with the cathedral, and others of moderate fortune, but high respectability, who had nestled themselves under the wings of the cathedral to enjoy good society at moderate expense. It was a highly aristocratical little circle; scrupulous in its intercourse with others, and jealously cautious about admitting any thing common or unclean.

It seemed as if the courtesies of the old school had taken refuge here. There were continual interchanges of civilities, and of small presents of fruits and delicacies, and of complimentary crow-quill billets; for in a quiet, well-bred community like this, living entirely at ease, little duties, and little amusements, and little civilities, fill up the day. I have seen, in the midst of a warm day, a corpulent, powdered footman, issuing from the iron gateway of a stately mansion, and traversing the little place with an air of mighty import, bearing a small tart on a large silver salver.

Their evening amusements were sober and primitive. They assembled at a moderate hour; the young ladies played music, and the old ladies whist; and at an early hour they dispersed. There was no parade on these social occasions. Two or three old sedan chairs were in constant activity, though the greater part made their exit in clogs and pattens, with a footman or waiting-maid carrying a lantern in advance; and long before

midnight the clank of pattens and gleam of lanterns about the quiet little place told that the evening party had dissolved.

Still I did not feel myself altogether so much at my ease as I had anticipated, considering the smallness of the place. I found it very different from other country places, and that it was not so easy to make a dash there. Sinner that I was! the very dignity and decorum of the little community was rebuking to me. I feared my past idleness and folly would rise in judgment against me. I stood in awe of the dignitaries of the cathedral, whom I saw mingling familiarly in society. I became nervous on this point. The creak of a prebendary's shoes, sounding from one end of a quiet street to the other, was appalling to me; and the sight of a shovel-hat was sufficient at any time to check me in the midst of my boldest poetical soarings.

And then the good aunt could not be quiet, but would cry me up for a genius, and extol my poetry to every one. So long as she confined this to the ladies it did well enough, because they were able to feel and appreciate poetry of the new romantic school. Nothing would content the good lady, however, but she must read my verses to a prebendary, who had long been the undoubted critic of the place. He was a thin, delicate old gentleman, of mild, polished manners, steeped to the lips in classic lore, and not easily put in a heat by any hot-blooded poetry of the day. He listened to my most fervid thoughts and fervid words without a glow; shook his head with a smile, and condemned them as not being according to Horace, as not being legitimate poetry.

Several old ladies, who had heretofore been my admirers, shook their heads at hearing this; they could not think of praising any poetry that was not according to Horace; and as to any thing illegitimate, it was not to be countenanced in good society. Thanks to my stars, however, I had youth and novelty on my side: so the young ladies persisted in admiring my poetry in despite of Horace and illegitimacy.

I consoled myself with the good opinion of the young ladies, whom I had always found to be the best judges of poetry.

As to these old scholars, said I, they are apt to be chilled by being steeped in the cold fountains of the classics. Still I felt that I was losing ground, and that it was necessary to bring matters to a point. Just at this time there was a public ball, attended by the best society of the place, and by the gentry of the neighbourhood: I took great pains with my toilet on the occasion, and I had never looked better. I had determined that night to make my grand assault on the heart of the young lady, to battle it with all my forces, and the next morning to demand a surrender in due form.

I entered the ball-room amidst a buzz and flutter, which generally took place among the young ladies on my appearance. I was in fine spirits; for, to tell the truth, I had exhilarated myself by a cheerful glass of wine on the occasion. I talked, and rattled, and said a thousand silly things, slap-dash, with all the confidence of a man sure of his auditors,—and every thing had its effect.

In the midst of my triumph I observed a little knot gathering together in the upper part of the room. By degrees it increased. A tittering broke out there, and glances were cast round at me, and then there would be fresh tittering. Some of the young ladies would hurry away to distant parts of the room, and whisper to their friends. Wherever they went, there was still this tittering and glancing at me. I did not know what to make of all this. I looked at myself from head to foot, and peeped at my back in a glass, to see if any thing was odd about my person; any awkward exposure, any whimsical tag hanging out:—no—every thing was right—I was a perfect picture. I determined that it must be some choice saying of mine that was banded about in this knot of merry beauties, and I determined to enjoy one of my good things in the rebound. I stepped gently, therefore, up the room, smiling at every one as I passed, who, I must say, all smiled and tittered in return. I approached the group, smirking and perking my chin, like a man who is full of pleasant feeling, and sure of being well received. The cluster of little belles opened as I advanced.

Heavens and earth! whom should I

perceive in the midst of them but my early and tormenting flame, the everlasting Sacharissa! She was grown, it is true, into the full beauty of womanhood; but showed, by the provoking merriment of her countenance, that she perfectly recollected me, and the ridiculous flagellations of which she had twice been the cause.

I saw at once the exterminating cloud of ridicule that was bursting over me. My crest fell. The flame of love went suddenly out of my bosom, or was extinguished by overwhelming shame. How I got down the room I know not: I fancied every one tittering at me. Just as I reached the door, I caught a glance of my mistress and her aunt listening to the whispers of Sacharissa, the old lady raising her hands and eyes, and the face of the young one lighted up, as I imagined, with scorn ineffable. I paused to see no more, but made two steps from the top of the stairs to the bottom. The next morning, before sunrise, I beat a retreat, and did not feel the blushes cool from my tingling cheeks, until I had lost sight of the old towers of the cathedral.

I now returned to town thoughtful and crestfallen. My money was nearly spent, for I had lived freely and without calculation. The dream of love was over, and the reign of pleasure at an end. I determined to retrench while I had yet a trifle left: so selling my equipage and horses for half their value, I quietly put the money in my pocket, and turned pedestrian. I had not a doubt that, with my great expectations, I could at any time raise funds, either on usury or by borrowing; but I was principled against both one and the other, and resolved, by strict economy, to make my slender purse hold out until my uncle should give up the ghost, or rather the estate. I stayed at home, therefore, and read, and would have written, but I had already suffered too much from my poetical productions, which had generally involved me in some ridiculous scrape. I gradually acquired a rusty look, and had a straitened money-borrowing air, upon which the world began to shy me. I have never felt disposed to quarrel with the world for its conduct; it has always used me well. When I have been flush

and gay, and disposed for society, it has caressed me; and when I have been pinched and reduced, and wished to be alone, why it has left me alone; and what more could a man desire? Take my word for it, this world is a more obliging world than people generally represent it.

Well, sir, in the midst of my retrenchment, my retirement, and my studiousness, I received news that my uncle was dangerously ill. I hastened on the wings of an heir's affections to receive his dying breath and his last testament. I found him attended by his faithful valet, old Iron John; by the woman who occasionally worked about the house, and by the foxy-headed boy, young Orson, whom I had occasionally hunted about the park. Iron John gasped a kind of asthmatical salutation as I entered the room, and received me with something almost like a smile of welcome. The woman sat blubbing at the foot of the bed; and the foxy-headed Orson, who had now grown up to be a lubberly lout, stood gazing in stupid vacancy at a distance.

My uncle lay stretched upon his back. The chamber was without fire, or any of the comforts of a sick room. The cobwebs flaunted from the ceiling. The tester was covered with dust, and the curtains were tattered. From underneath the bed peeped out one end of his strong-box. Against the wainscot were suspended rusty blunderbusses, horse-pistols, and a cut-and-thrust sword, with which he had fortified his room to defend his life and treasure. He had employed no physician during his illness; and from the scanty relics lying on the table, seemed almost to have denied to himself the assistance of a cook.

When I entered the room, he was lying motionless; his eyes fixed and his mouth open: at the first look I thought him a corpse. The noise of my entrance made him turn his head. At the sight of me a ghastly smile came over his face, and his glazing eye gleamed with satisfaction. It was the only smile he had ever given me, and it went to my heart. "Poor old man!" thought I, "why would you force me to leave you thus desolate, when I see that my presence has the power to cheer you?"

"Nephew," said he, after several efforts, and in a low gasping voice—"I am glad you are come. I shall now die with satisfaction. Look," said he, raising his withered hand, and pointing—"Look in that box on the table: you will find that I have not forgotten you."

I pressed his hand to my heart, and the tears stood in my eyes. I sat down by his bedside and watched him, but he never spoke again. My presence, however, gave him evident satisfaction; for every now and then, as he looked at me, a vague smile would come over his visage, and he would feebly point to the sealed box on the table. As the day wore away, his life appeared to wear away with it. Towards sunset his hand sunk on the bed, and lay motionless, his eyes grew glazed, his mouth remained open, and thus he gradually died.

I could not but feel shocked at this absolute extinction of my kindred. I dropped a tear of real sorrow over this strange old man, who had thus reserved the smile of kindness to his death-bed; like an evening sun after a gloomy day, just shining out to set in darkness. Leaving the corpse in charge of the domestics, I retired for the night.

It was a rough night. The winds seemed as if singing my uncle's requiem about the mansion, and the bloodhounds howled without, as if they knew of the death of their old master. Iron John almost grudged me the tallow candle to burn in my apartment, and light up its dreariness, so accustomed had he been to starveling economy. I could not sleep. The recollection of my uncle's dying scene, and the dreary sounds about the house affected my mind. These, however, were succeeded by plans for the future, and I lay awake the greater part of the night, indulging the poetical anticipation how soon I should make these old walls ring with cheerful life, and restore the hospitality of my mother's ancestors.

My uncle's funeral was decent but private. I knew there was nobody that respected his memory, and I was determined that none should be summoned to sneer over his funeral, and make merry at his grave. He was buried in the church of the neighbouring village,

though it was not the burying-place of his race; but he had expressly enjoined that he should not be buried with his family; he had quarrelled with most of them when living, and he carried his resentments even into the grave.

I defrayed the expenses of his funeral out of my own purse, that I might have done with the undertakers at once, and clear the ill-omened birds from the premises. I invited the parson of the parish, and the lawyer from the village, to attend at the house the next morning, and hear the reading of the will. I treated them to an excellent breakfast, a profusion that had not been seen at the house for many a year. As soon as the breakfast things were removed, I summoned Iron John, the woman, and the boy, for I was particular in having every one present and proceeding regularly. The box was placed on the table—all was silence—I broke the seal—raised the lid, and beheld—not the will—but my accursed poem of *Doubting Castle* and *Giant Despair*!

Could any mortal have conceived that this old withered man, so taciturn and apparently so lost to feeling, could have treasured up for years the thoughtless pleasantry of a boy, to punish him with such cruel ingenuity? I now could account for his dying smile, the only one he had ever given me. He had been a grave man all his life; it was strange that he should die in the enjoyment of a joke, and it was hard that that joke should be at my expense.

The lawyer and the parson seemed at a loss to comprehend the matter. "Here must be some mistake," said the lawyer; "there is no will here."

"Oh!" said Iron John, creaking forth his rusty jaws, "if it is a will you are looking for, I believe I can find one."

He retired with the same singular smile with which he had greeted me on my arrival, and which I now apprehended boded me no good. In a little while he returned with a will perfect at all points, properly signed and sealed, and witnessed and worded with horrible correctness; in which the deceased left large legacies to Iron John and his daughter, and the residue of his fortune to the foxy-headed boy; who, to my utter astonishment, was his son by this very woman; he having

married her privately, and, as I verily believe, for no other purpose than to have an heir, and so balk my father and his issue of the inheritance. There was one little proviso, in which he mentioned, that, having discovered his nephew to have a pretty turn for poetry, he presumed he had no occasion for wealth; he recommended him, however, to the patronage of the heir, and requested that he might have a garret, rent-free, in *Doubting Castle*.

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#### GRAVE REFLECTIONS

OF

#### A DISAPPOINTED MAN.

MR. BUCKTHORNE had paused at the death of his uncle, and the downfall of his great expectations, which formed, as he said, an epoch in his history; and it was not until some little time afterwards, and in a very sober mood, that he resumed his party-coloured narrative.

After leaving the remains of my defunct uncle, said he, when the gate closed between me and what was once to have been mine, I felt thrust out naked into the world, and completely abandoned to fortune. What was to become of me? I had been brought up to nothing but expectations, and they had all been disappointed. I had no relations to look to for counsel or assistance. The world seemed all to have died away from me. Wave after wave of relationship had ebbed off, and I was left a mere hulk upon the strand. I am not apt to be greatly cast down, but at this time I felt sadly disheartened. I could not realize my situation, nor form a conjecture how I was to get forward. I was now to endeavour to make money. The idea was new and strange to me. It was like being asked to discover the philosopher's stone. I had never thought about money otherwise than to put my hand into my pocket and find it; or if there were none there, to wait until a new supply came from home. I had considered life as a mere space of time to be filled up with enjoyments: but to have it portioned out into long hours and days of toil, merely

that I might gain bread to give me strength to toil on—to labour but for the purpose of perpetuating a life of labour, was new and appalling to me. This may appear a very simple matter to some; but it will be understood by every unlucky wight in my predicament, who has had the misfortune of being born to great expectations.

I passed several days in rambling about the scenes of my boyhood; partly because I absolutely did not know what to do with myself, and partly because I did not know that I should ever see them again. I clung to them as one clings to a wreck, though he knows he must eventually cast himself loose and swim for his life. I sat down on a little hill within sight of my paternal home, but I did not venture to approach it, for I felt compunction at the thoughtlessness with which I had dissipated my patrimony: yet was I to blame, when I had the rich possessions of my curmudgeon of an uncle in expectation?

The new possessor of the place was making great alterations. The house was almost rebuilt. The trees which stood about it were cut down: my mother's flower-garden was thrown into a lawn—all was undergoing a change. I turned my back upon it with a sigh, and rambled to another part of the country.

How thoughtful a little adversity makes one! As I came within sight of the schoolhouse where I had so often been flogged in the cause of wisdom, you would hardly have recognised the truant boy, who, but a few years since, had eloped so heedlessly from its walls. I leaned over the paling of the play-ground, and watched the scholars at their games, and looked to see if there might not be some urchin among them like what I was once, full of gay dreams about life and the world. The play-ground seemed smaller than when I used to sport about it. The house and park, too, of the neighbouring squire, the father of the cruel Sacharissa, had shrunk in size and diminished in magnificence. The distant hills no longer appeared so far off, and, alas! no longer awakened ideas of a fairy land beyond.

As I was rambling pensively through a neighbouring meadow, in which I had

many a time gathered primroses, I met the very pedagogue who had been the tyrant and dread of my boyhood. I had sometimes vowed to myself, when suffering under his rod, that I would have my revenge if I ever met him when I had grown to be a man. The time had come; but I had no disposition to keep my vow. The few years which had matured me into a vigorous man had shrunk him into decrepitude. He appeared to have had a paralytic stroke. I looked at him, and wondered that this poor helpless mortal could have been an object of terror to me; that I should have watched with anxiety the glance of that failing eye, or dreaded the power of that trembling hand. He tottered feebly along the path, and had some difficulty in getting over a stile. I ran and assisted him. He looked at me with surprise, but did not recognise me, and made a low bow of humility and thanks. I had no disposition to make myself known, for I felt that I had nothing to boast of. The pains he had taken, and the pains he had inflicted, had been equally useless. His repeated predictions were fully verified, and I felt that little Jack Buckthorne, the idle boy, had grown to be a very good-for-nothing man.

This is all very comfortless detail; but as I have told you of my follies, it is meet that I show you how for once I was schooled for them. The most thoughtless of mortals will some time or other have his day of gloom, when he will be compelled to reflect.

I felt on this occasion as if I had a kind of penance to perform, and I made a pilgrimage in expiation of my past levity. Having passed a night at Leamington, I set off by a private path, which leads up a hill through a grove and across quiet fields, till I came to the small village, or rather hamlet, of Lenington. I sought the village church. It is an old low edifice of gray stone, on the brow of a small hill, looking over fertile fields, towards where the proud towers of Warwick Castle lift themselves against the distant horizon.

A part of the churchyard is shaded by large trees. Under one of them my mother lay buried. You have no doubt thought me a light, heartless being. I

thought myself so; but there are moments of adversity which let us into some feelings of our nature to which we might otherwise remain perpetual strangers.

I sought my mother's grave: the weeds were already matted over it, and the tombstone was half hid among nettles. I cleared them away, and they stung my hands; but I was heedless of the pain, for my heart ached too severely. I sat down on the grave, and read over and over again the epitaph on the stone.

It was simple,—but it was true. I had written it myself. I had tried to write a poetical epitaph, but in vain; my feelings refused to utter themselves in rhyme. My heart had gradually been filling during my lonely wanderings; it was now charged to the brim, and overflowed. I sunk upon the grave, and buried my face in the tall grass, and wept like a child. Yes, I wept in manhood upon the grave, as I had in infancy upon the bosom of my mother. Alas! how little do we appreciate a mother's tenderness while living! how heedless are we in youth of all her anxieties and kindness! But when she is dead and gone; when the cares and coldness of the world come withering to our hearts; when we find how hard it is to find true sympathy;—how few love us for ourselves; how few will befriend us in our misfortune—then it is that we think of the mother we have lost. It is true I had always loved my mother, even in my most heedless days; but I felt how inconsiderate and ineffectual had been my love. My heart melted as I retraced the days of infancy, when I was led by a mother's hand, and rocked to sleep in a mother's arms, and was without care or sorrow. "O my mother!" exclaimed I, burying my face again in the grass of the grave; "O that I were once more by your side; sleeping, never to wake again on the cares and troubles of this world."

I am not naturally of a morbid temperament, and the violence of my emotion gradually exhausted itself. It was a hearty, honest, natural discharge of grief which had been slowly accumulating, and gave me wonderful relief. I rose from the grave as if I had been offering up a sacrifice, and I felt as if that sacrifice had been accepted.

I sat down again on the grass, and plucked, one by one, the weeds from her grave: the tears trickled more slowly down my cheeks, and ceased to be bitter. It was a comfort to think that she had died before sorrow and poverty came upon her child, and that all his great expectations were blasted.

I leaned my cheek upon my hand, and looked upon the landscape. Its quiet beauty soothed me. The whistle of a peasant from an adjoining field came cheerily to my ear. I seemed to respire hope and comfort with the free air that whispered through the leaves, and played lightly with my hair, and dried the tears upon my cheek. A lark, rising from the field before me, and leaving as it were a stream of song behind him as he rose, lifted my fancy with him. He hovered in the air just above the place where the towers of Warwick Castle marked the horizon, and seemed as if fluttering with delight at his own melody. "Surely," thought I, "if there were such a thing as transmigration of souls, this might be taken for some poet let loose from earth, but still revelling in song, and carolling about fair fields and lordly towers."

At this moment the long-forgotten feeling of poetry rose within me. A thought sprang at once into my mind.—"I will become an author!" said I. "I have hitherto indulged in poetry as a pleasure, and it has brought me nothing but pain; let me try what it will do when I cultivate it with devotion as a pursuit."

The resolution thus suddenly aroused within me heaved a load from off my heart. I felt a confidence in it from the very place where it was formed. It seemed as though my mother's spirit whispered it to me from her grave. "I will henceforth," said I, "endeavour to be all that she fondly imagined me. I will endeavour to act as if she were witness of my actions; I will endeavour to acquit myself in such a manner that, when I revisit her grave, there may at least be no compunctious bitterness in my tears."

I bowed down and kissed the turf in solemn attestation of my vow. I plucked some primroses that were growing there, and laid them next my heart. I left the

churchyard with my spirits once more lifted up, and set out a third time for London in the character of an author.—

Here my companion made a pause, and I waited in anxious suspense, hoping to have a whole volume of literary life unfolded to me. He seemed, however, to have sunk into a fit of pensive musing, and when, after some time, I gently roused him by a question or two as to his literary career,

“No,” said he, smiling, “over that part of my story I wish to leave a cloud. Let the mysteries of the craft rest sacred for me. Let those who have never ventured into the republic of letters still look upon it as a fairy land. Let them suppose the author the very being they picture him from his works—I am not the man to mar their illusion. I am not the man to hint, while one is admiring the silken web of Persia, that it has been spun from the entrails of a miserable worm.”

“Well,” said I, “if you will tell me nothing of your literary history, let me know at least if you have had any further intelligence from Doubting Castle.”

“Willingly,” replied he, “though I have but little to communicate.”

### THE BOOBY SQUIRE.

A LONG time elapsed, said Buckthorne, without my receiving any accounts of my cousin and his estate. Indeed, I felt so much soreness on the subject, that I wished if possible to shut it from my thoughts. At length chance took me to that part of the country, and I could not refrain from making some inquiries.

I learnt that my cousin had grown up ignorant, self-willed, and clownish. His ignorance and clownishness had prevented his mingling with the neighbouring gentry: in spite of his great fortune, he had been unsuccessful in an attempt to gain the hand of the daughter of the parson, and had at length shrunk into the limits of such society as a mere man of wealth can gather in a country neighbourhood.

He kept horses and hounds, and a roaring table, at which were collected

the loose livers of the country round, and the shabby gentlemen of a village in the vicinity. When he could get no other company, he would smoke and drink with his own servants, who in turn fleeced and despised him. Still, with all his apparent prodigality, he had a leaven of the old man in him which showed that he was his true-born son. He lived far within his income, was vulgar in his expenses, and penurious in many points wherein a gentleman would be extravagant. His house-servants were obliged occasionally to work on his estate, and part of the pleasure-grounds were ploughed up and devoted to husbandry.

His table, though plentiful, was coarse; his liquors strong and bad; and more ale and whisky were expended in his establishment than generous wine. He was loud and arrogant at his own table, and exacted a rich man's homage from his vulgar and obsequious guests.

As to Iron John, his old grandfather, he had grown impatient of the tight hand his own grandson kept over him, and quarrelled with him soon after he came to the estate. The old man had retired to the neighbouring village, where he lived on the legacy of his late master, in a small cottage, and was as seldom seen out of it as a rat out of his hole in daylight.

The cub, like Caliban, seemed to have an instinctive attachment to his mother. She resided with him, but, from long habit, she acted more as a servant than as mistress of the mansion; for she toiled in all the domestic drudgery, and was oftener in the kitchen than in the parlour. Such was the information which I collected of my rival cousin, who had so unexpectedly elbowed me out of all my expectations.

I now felt an irresistible hankering to pay a visit to this scene of my boyhood, and to get a peep at the odd kind of life that was passing within the mansion of my maternal ancestors. I determined to do so in disguise. My booby cousin had never seen enough of me to be very familiar with my countenance, and a few years make great difference between youth and manhood. I understood he was a breeder of cattle, and proud of his stock; I dressed myself therefore as a



substantial farmer, and with the assistance of a red scratch that came low down on my forehead, made a complete change in my physiognomy.

It was past three o'clock when I arrived at the gate of the park, and was admitted by an old woman, who was washing in a dilapidated building which had once been a porter's lodge. I advanced up the remains of a noble avenue, many of the trees of which had been cut down and sold for timber. The grounds were in scarcely better keeping than during my uncle's lifetime. The grass was overgrown with weeds, and the trees wanted pruning and clearing of dead branches. Cattle were grazing about the lawns, and ducks and geese swimming in the fish-ponds. The road to the house bore very few traces of carriage wheels, as my cousin received few visitors but such as came on foot or horseback, and never used a carriage himself. Once indeed, as I was told, he had the old family carriage drawn out from among the dust and cobwebs of the coach-house, and refurbished up, and had driven, with his mother, to the village church, to take formal possession of the family pew; but there was such hooting and laughing after them, as they passed through the village, and such giggling and bantering about the church-door, that the pageant had never made a re-appearance.

As I approached the house, a legion of whelps sallied out, barking at me, accompanied by the low howling, rather than barking, of two old worn-out blood-hounds, which I recognised for the ancient life-guards of my uncle. The house had still a neglected random appearance, though much altered for the better since my last visit. Several of the windows were broken and patched up with boards, and others had been bricked up to save taxes. I observed smoke, however, rising from the chimneys, a phenomenon rarely witnessed in the ancient establishment. On passing that part of the house where the dining-room was situated, I heard the sound of boisterous merriment, where three or four voices were talking at once, and oaths and laughter were horribly mingled.

The uproar of the dogs had brought a servant to the door, a tall hard-fisted

country clown, with a livery-coat put over the under garments of a ploughman. I requested to see the master of the house, but was told he was at dinner with some "gemmen" of the neighbourhood. I made known my business, and sent in to know if I might talk with the master about his cattle, for I felt a great desire to have a peep at him in his orgies.

Word was returned that he was engaged with company, and could not attend to business, but that if I would step in and take a drink of something, I was heartily welcome. I accordingly entered the hall, where whips and hats of all kinds and shapes were lying on an oaken table; two or three clownish servants were lounging about; every thing had a look of confusion and carelessness.

The apartments through which I passed had the same air of departed gentility and slutish housekeeping. The once rich curtains were faded and dusty, the furniture greased and tarnished. On entering the dining-room I found a number of odd, vulgar-looking, rustic gentlemen seated round a table, on which were bottles, decanters, tankards, pipes, and tobacco. Several dogs were lying about the room, or sitting and watching their masters, and one was gnawing a bone under a side-table. The master of the feast sat at the head of the board. He was greatly altered. He had grown thickset and rather gummy, with a fiery foxy head of hair. There was a singular mixture of foolishness, arrogance, and conceit, in his countenance. He was dressed in a vulgarly fine style, with leather breeches, a red waistcoat, and green coat, and was evidently, like his guests, a little flushed with drinking. The whole company stared at me with a whimsical muzzy look, like men whose senses were a little obfuscated by beer rather than wine.

My cousin (God forgive me! the appellation sticks in my throat), my cousin invited me with awkward civility, or, as he intended it, condescension, to sit to the table and drink. We talked, as usual, about the weather, the crops, politics, and hard times. My cousin was a loud politician, and evidently accustomed to talk without contradiction at his own

table. He was amazingly loyal, and talked of standing by the throne to the last guinea, "as every gentleman of fortune should do." The village exciseman, who was half asleep, could just ejaculate "very true" to every thing he said. The conversation turned upon cattle; he boasted of his breed, his mode of crossing it, and of the general management of his estate. This unluckily drew on a history of the place and of the family. He spoke of my late uncle with the greatest irreverence, which I could easily forgive. He mentioned my name, and my blood began to boil. He described my frequent visits to my uncle, when I was a lad; and I found the varlet, even at that time, imp as he was, had known that he was to inherit the estate. He described the scene of my uncle's death, and the opening of the will, with a degree of coarse humour that I had not expected from him; and, vexed as I was, I could not help joining in the laugh, for I have always relished a joke, even though made at my own expense. He went on to speak of my various pursuits, my strolling freak, and that somewhat nettled me; at length he talked of my parents. He ridiculed my father; I stomached even that, though with great difficulty. He mentioned my mother with a sneer, and in an instant he lay sprawling at my feet.

Here a tumult succeeded: the table was nearly overturned; bottles, glasses, and tankards, rolled crashing and clattering about the floor. The company seized hold of both of us, to keep us from doing any further mischief. I struggled to get loose, for I was boiling with fury. My cousin defied me to strip and fight him on the lawn. I agreed, for I felt the strength of a giant in me, and I longed to pommel him soundly.

Away then we were borne. A ring was formed. I had a second assigned me in true boxing style. My cousin, as he advanced to fight, said something about his generosity in showing me such fair play, when I had made such an unprovoked attack upon him at his own table. "Stop there," cried I, in a rage. "Unprovoked! know that I am John Buckthorne, and you have insulted the memory of my mother."

The lout was suddenly struck by what I said: he drew back, and thought for a moment.

"Nay, damn it," said he, "that's too much—that's clean another thing—I've a mother myself—and no one shall speak ill of her, bad as she is."

He paused again; nature seemed to have a rough struggle in his rude bosom.

"Damn it, cousin," cried he, "I'm sorry for what I said. Thou'st served me right in knocking me down, and I like thee the better for it. Here's my hand: come and live with me, and damn me but the best room in the house, and the best horse in the stable, shall be at thy service."

I declare to you I was strongly moved at this instance of nature breaking her way through such a lump of flesh. I forgave the fellow in a moment his two heinous crimes, of having been born in wedlock, and inheriting my estate. I shook the hand he offered me, to convince him that I bore him no ill will; and then making my way through the gaping crowd of toad-eaters, bade adieu to my uncle's domains for ever. This is the last I have seen or heard of my cousin, or of the domestic concerns of Doubting Castle.

#### THE STROLLING MANAGER.

As I was walking one morning with Buckthorne near one of the principal theatres, he directed my attention to a group of those equivocal beings that may often be seen hovering about the stage-doors of theatres. They were marvelously ill-favoured in their attire, their coats buttoned up to their chins; yet they wore their hats smartly on one side, and had a certain knowing, dirty-gentlemanlike air, which is common to the subalterns of the drama. Buckthorne knew them well by early experience.

"These," said he, "are the ghosts of departed kings and heroes; fellows who sway sceptres and truncheons; command kingdoms and armies; and after giving away realms and treasures over night, have scarce a shilling to pay for

a breakfast in the morning. Yet they have the true vagabond abhorrence of all useful and industrious employment; and they have their pleasures too; one of which is to lounge in this way in the sunshine, at the stage-door, during rehearsals, and make hackneyed theatrical jokes on all passers-by. Nothing is more traditional and legitimate than the stage. Old scenery, old clothes, old sentiments, old ranting, and old jokes, are handed down from generation to generation; and will probably continue to be so until time shall be no more. Every hanger-on of a theatre becomes a wag by inheritance, and flourishes about at tap-rooms and sixpenny clubs with the property jokes of the green-room."

While amusing ourselves with reconnoitring this group, we noticed one in particular who appeared to be the oracle. He was a weatherbeaten veteran, a little bronzed by time and beer, who had no doubt grown gray in the parts of robbers, cardinals, Roman senators, and walking noblemen.

"There is something in the set of that hat, and the turn of that physiognomy, that is extremely familiar to me," said Buckthorne. He looked a little closer. "I cannot be mistaken," added he, "that must be my old brother of the truncheon, Flimsey, the tragic hero of the Strolling Company."

It was he in fact. The poor fellow showed evident signs that times went hard with him, he was so finely and shabbily dressed. His coat was somewhat threadbare, and of the Lord Townley cut; single-breasted, and scarcely capable of meeting in front of his body, which, from long intimacy, had acquired the symmetry and robustness of a beer barrel. He wore a pair of dingy-white stockinet pantaloons, which had much ado to reach his waistcoat; a great quantity of dirty cravat; and a pair of old russet-coloured tragedy boots.

When his companions had dispersed, Buckthorne drew him aside, and made himself known to him. The tragic veteran could scarcely recognise him, or believe that he was really his quondam associate, "little gentleman Jack." Buckthorne invited him to a neighbouring coffee-house to talk over old times;

and in the course of a little while we were put in possession of his history in brief.

He had continued to act the heroes in the strolling company for some time after Buckthorne had left it, or rather had been driven from it so abruptly. At length the manager died, and the troop was thrown into confusion. Every one aspired to the crown, every one was for taking the lead; and the manager's widow, although a tragedy queen, and a brimstone to boot, pronounced it utterly impossible for a woman to keep any control over such a set of tempestuous rascallions.

"Upon this hint, I spake," said Flimsey. I stepped forward, and offered my services in the most effectual way. They were accepted. In a week's time I married the widow, and succeeded to the throne. "The funeral baked meats did coldly furnish forth the marriage table," as Hamlet says. But the ghost of my predecessor never haunted me; and I inherited crowns, sceptres, bowls, daggers, and all the stage-trappings and trumpery, not omitting the widow, without the least molestation.

I now led a flourishing life of it; for our company was pretty strong and attractive, and as my wife and I took the heavy parts of tragedy, it was a great saving to the treasury. We carried off the palm from all the rival shows at country fairs; and I assure you we have even drawn full houses, and been applauded by the critics at Bartlemy Fair itself, though we had Astley's troop, the Irish giant, and "the death of Nelson" in wax-work, to contend against.

I soon began to experience, however, the cares of command. I discovered that there were cabals breaking out in the company, headed by the clown, who you may recollect was a terribly peevish, fractious fellow, and always in ill-humour. I had a great mind to turn him off at once, but I could not do without him, for there was not a droller scoundrel on the stage. His very shape was comic, for he had but to turn his back upon the audience, and all the ladies were ready to die with laughing. He felt his importance, and took advantage of it. He would keep the audience in a

continual roar, and then come behind the scenes, and fret and fume, and play the very devil. I excused a great deal in him, however, knowing that comic actors are a little prone to this infirmity of temper.

I had another trouble of a nearer and dearer nature to struggle with, which was the affection of my wife. As ill-luck would have it, she took it into her head to be very fond of me, and became intolerably jealous. I could not keep a pretty girl in the company, and hardly dared embrace an ugly one, even when my part required it. I have known her reduce a fine lady to tatters, "to very rags," as Hamlet says, in an instant, and destroy one of the very best dresses in the wardrobe, merely because she saw me kiss her at the side scenes; though I give you my honour it was done merely by way of rehearsal.

This was doubly annoying, because I have a natural liking to pretty faces, and wish to have them about me; and because they are indispensable to the success of a company at a fair, where one has to vie with so many rival theatres. But when once a jealous wife gets a freak in her head, there's no use in talking of interest or any thing else. Egad, sir, I have more than once trembled when, during a fit of her tantrums, she was playing high tragedy, and flourishing her tin dagger on the stage, lest she should give way to her humour, and stab some fancied rival in good earnest.

I went on better, however, than could be expected, considering the weakness of my flesh, and the violence of my rib. I had not a much worse time of it than old Jupiter, whose spouse was continually ferreting out some new intrigue, and making the heavens almost too hot to hold him.

At length, as luck would have it, we were performing at a country fair, when I understood the theatre of a neighbouring town to be vacant. I had always been desirous to be enrolled in a settled company, and the height of my desire was to get on a par with a brother-in-law, who was manager of a regular theatre, and who had looked down upon me. Here was an opportunity not to be neglected. I concluded an agreement

with the proprietors, and in a few days opened the theatre with great eclat.

Behold me now at the summit of my ambition, "the high top-gallant of my joy," as Romeo says. No longer a chieftain of a wandering tribe, but a monarch of a legitimate throne, and entitled to call even the great potentates of Covent Garden and Drury Lane cousins. You, no doubt, think my happiness complete. Alas, sir! I was one of the most uncomfortable dogs living. No one knows, who has not tried, the miseries of a manager; but above all of a country manager. No one can conceive the contentions and quarrels within doors, the oppressions and vexations from without. I was pestered with the bloods and loungers of a country town, who infested my green-room, and played the mischief among my actresses. But there was no shaking them off. It would have been ruin to affront them; for though troublesome friends, they would have been dangerous enemies. Then there were the village critics and village amateurs, who were continually tormenting me with advice, and getting into a passion if I would not take it; especially the village doctor and the village attorney, who had both been to London occasionally, and knew what acting should be.

I had also to manage as arrant a crew of scapegraces as ever were collected together within the walls of a theatre. I had been obliged to combine my original troop with some of the former troop of the theatre, who were favourites of the public. Here was a mixture that produced perpetual ferment. They were all the time either fighting or frolicking with each other, and I scarcely know which mood was least troublesome. If they quarrelled, every thing went wrong; and if they were friends, they were continually playing off some prank upon each other, or upon me; for I had unhappily acquired among them the character of an easy good-natured fellow—the worst character that a manager can possess.

Their waggery at times drove me almost crazy; for there is nothing so vexatious as the hackneyed tricks and hoaxes and pleasantries of a veteran band of theatrical vagabonds. I relished them well enough, it is true, while

I was merely one of the company, but as manager I found them detestable. They were incessantly bringing some disgrace upon the theatre by their tavern frolics, and their pranks about the country town. All my lectures about the importance of keeping up the dignity of the profession and the respectability of the company were in vain. The villains could not sympathize with the delicate feelings of a man in station. They even trifled with the seriousness of stage business. I have had the whole piece interrupted, and a crowded audience of at least twenty-five pounds kept waiting, because the actors had hid away the breeches of Rosalind; and have known Hamlet to stalk solemnly on to deliver his soliloquy, with a dishclout pinned to his skirts. Such are the baleful consequences of a manager's getting a character for good-nature.

I was intolerably annoyed, too, by the great actors who came down starring, as it is called, from London. Of all baneful influences, keep me from that of a London star. A first-rate actress going the rounds of the country theatres is as bad as a blazing comet whisking about the heavens, and shaking fire and plagues and discords from its tail.

The moment one of these "heavenly bodies" appeared in my horizon, I was sure to be in hot water. My theatre was overrun by provincial dandies, copper-washed counterfeits of Bond Street loungers, who are always proud to be in the train of an actress from town, and anxious to be thought on exceeding good terms with her. It was really a relief to me when some random young nobleman would come in pursuit of the bait, and awe all this small fry at a distance. I have always felt myself more at ease with a nobleman than with the dandy of a country town.

And then the injuries I suffered in my personal dignity and my managerial authority from the visits of these great London actors! 'Sblood, sir, I was no longer master of myself on my throne. I was hectorated and lectured in my own green-room, and made an absolute nincompoop on my own stage. There is no tyrant so absolute and capricious as a London star at a country theatre. I

dreaded the sight of all of them, and yet if I did not engage them, I was sure of having the public clamorous against me. They drew full houses, and appeared to be making my fortune; but they swallowed up all the profits by their insatiable demands. They were absolute tape-worms to my little theatre; the more it took in the poorer it grew. They were sure to leave me with an exhausted public, empty benches, and a score or two of affronts to settle among the town's folk, in consequence of misunderstandings about the taking of places.

But the worse thing I had to undergo in my managerial career was patronage. Oh, sir! of all things deliver me from the patronage of the great people of a country town. It was my ruin. You must know that this town, though small, was filled with feuds, and parties, and great folks; being a busy little trading and manufacturing town. The mischief was that their greatness was of a kind not to be settled by reference to the court calendar, or college of heraldry; it was therefore the most quarrelsome kind of greatness in existence. You smile, sir, but let me tell you there are no feuds more furious than the frontier feuds which take place in these "debatable lands" of gentility. The most violent dispute that I ever knew in high life was one which occurred at a country town, on a question of precedence between the ladies of a manufacturer of pins and a manufacturer of needles.

At the town where I was situated there were perpetual altercations of the kind. The head manufacturer's lady, for instance, was at daggers-drawings with the head shopkeeper's, and both were too rich and had too many friends to be treated lightly. The doctor's and lawyer's ladies held their heads still higher; but they in their turn were kept in check by the wife of a country banker, who kept her own carriage: while a masculine widow of cracked character and secondhand fashion, who lived in a large house, and claimed to be in some way related to nobility, looked down upon them all. To be sure, her manners were not over elegant, nor her fortune over large; but then, sir, her blood—oh, her blood carried it all hollow: there was no

withstanding a woman with such blood in her veins.

After all, her claims to high connexion were questioned, and she had frequent battles for precedence at balls and assemblies with some of the sturdy dames of the neighbourhood, who stood upon their wealth and their virtue; but then she had two dashing daughters, who dressed as fine as dragons, had as high blood as their mother, and seconded her in every thing: so they carried their point with high heads, and every body hated, abused, and stood in awe of the Fantadlins.

Such was the state of the fashionable world in this self-important little town. Unluckily, I was not as well acquainted with its politics as I should have been. I had found myself a stranger and in great perplexities during my first season; I determined, therefore, to put myself under the patronage of some powerful name, and thus to take the field with the prejudices of the public in my favour. I cast round my thoughts for the purpose, and in an evil hour they fell upon Mrs. Fantadlin. No one seemed to me to have a more absolute sway in the world of fashion. I had always noticed that her party slammed the box-door the loudest at the theatre; that her daughters entered like a tempest with a flutter of red shawls and feathers; had most beaux attending on them; talked and laughed during the performance, and used quizzing-glasses incessantly. The first evening of my theatre's re-opening, therefore, was announced in staring capitals on the play-bills, as under the patronage of "The Honourable Mrs. Fantadlin."

Sir, the whole community flew to arms! Presume to patronise the theatre! Insufferable! And then for me to dare to term her "The Honourable!" What claim had she to the title, forsooth! The fashionable world had long groaned under the tyranny of the Fantadlins, and were glad to make a common cause against this new instance of assumption. All minor feuds were forgotten. The doctor's lady and the lawyer's lady met together, and the manufacturer's lady and the shopkeeper's lady kissed each other: and all, headed by the banker's lady, voted the theatre a bore, and determined to encourage nothing but the

Indian Jugglers and Mr. Walker's Eidouranian.

Such was the rock on which I split. I never got over the patronage of the Fantadlin family. My house was deserted; my actors grew discontented because they were ill paid; my door became a hammering place for every bailiff in the country; and my wife became more and more shrewish and tormenting the more I wanted comfort.

I tried for a time the usual consolation of a harassed and henpecked man: I took to the bottle, and tried to tittle away my cares, but in vain. I don't mean to decry the bottle; it is no doubt an excellent remedy in many cases, but it did not answer in mine. It cracked my voice, coppered my nose, but neither improved my wife nor my affairs. My establishment became a scene of confusion and speculation. I was considered a ruined man, and of course fair game for every one to pluck at, as every one plunders a sinking ship. Day after day some of the troop deserted, and, like deserting soldiers, carried off their arms and accoutrements with them. In this manner my wardrobe took legs and walked away, my finery strolled all over the country, my swords and daggers glittered in every barn, until, at last, my tailor made "one fell swoop," and carried off three dress coats, half a dozen doublets, and nineteen pair of flesh-coloured pantaloons. This was the "be all and the end all" of my fortune. I no longer hesitated what to do. Egad, thought I, since stealing is the order of the day, I'll steal too: so I secretly gathered together the jewels of my wardrobe, packed up a hero's dress in a handkerchief, slung it on the end of a tragedy sword, and quietly stole off at dead of night, "the bell then beating one," leaving my queen and kingdom to the mercy of my rebellious subjects, and my merciless foes the bumbailiffs.

Such, sir, was the "end of all my greatness." I was heartily cured of all passion for governing, and returned once more into the ranks. I had for some time the usual run of an actor's life: I played in various country theatres, at fairs, and in barns; sometimes hard pushed, sometimes flush, until, on one occasion, I came within an ace of making my for-

tune, and becoming one of the wonders of the age.

I was playing the part of Richard the Third in a country barn, and in my best style; for, to tell the truth, I was a little in liquor, and the critics of the company always observed that I played with most effect when I had a glass too much. There was a thunder of applause when I came to that part where Richard cries for "a horse! a horse!" My cracked voice had always a wonderful effect here; it was like two voices run into one; you would have thought two men had been calling for a horse, or that Richard had called for two horses. And when I flung the taunt at Richmond, "Richard is hoarse with calling thee to arms," I thought the barn would have come down about my ears with the raptures of the audience.

The very next morning a person waited upon me at my lodgings. I saw at once he was a gentleman by his dress; for he had a large brooch in his bosom, thick rings on his fingers, and used a quizzing-glass. And a gentleman he proved to be; for I soon ascertained that he was a kept author, or kind of literary tailor to one of the great London theatres; one who worked under the manager's directions, and cut up and cut down plays, and patched and pieced, and new-faced, and turned them inside out: in short, he was one of the readiest and greatest writers of the day.

He was now on a foraging excursion in quest of something that might be got up for a prodigy. The theatre, it seems, was in desperate condition—nothing but a miracle could save it. He had seen me act Richard the night before, and had pitched upon me for that miracle. I had a remarkable bluster in my style and swagger in my gait. I certainly differed from all other heroes of the barn: so the thought struck the agent to bring me out as a theatrical wonder, as the restorer of natural and legitimate acting, as the only one who could understand and act Shakspeare rightly.

When he opened his plan I shrunk from it with becoming modesty, for, well as I thought of myself, I doubted my competency to such an undertaking.

I hinted at my imperfect knowledge of

Shakspeare, having played his characters only after mutilated copies, interlarded with a great deal of my own talk by way of helping memory or heightening the effect.

"So much the better," cried the gentleman with rings on his fingers; "so much the better. New readings, sir!—new readings! Don't study a line—let us have Shakspeare after your own fashion."

"But then my voice was cracked; it could not fill a London theatre."

"So much the better! so much the better! The public is tired of intonation the *ore rotundo* has had its day. No, sir, your cracked voice is the very thing—spit and splutter, and snap and snarl, and 'play the very dog' about the stage, and you'll be the making of us."

"But then,"—I could not help blushing to the end of my very nose as I said it, but I was determined to be candid;—"but then," added I, "there is one awkward circumstance; I have an unlucky habit—my misfortunes, and the exposures to which one is subjected in country barns, have obliged me now and then—to—take a drop of something comfortable—and so—and so——"

"What! you drink?" cried the agent eagerly.

I bowed my head in blushing acknowledgment.

"So much the better! so much the better! The irregularities of genius! A sober fellow is commonplace. The public like an actor that drinks. Give me your hand, sir. You're the very man to make a dash with."

I still hung back with lingering diffidence, declaring myself unworthy of such praise.

"'Sblood, man," cried he, "no praise at all. You don't imagine I think you a wonder; I only want the public to think so. Nothing is so easy as to gull the public, if you only set up a prodigy. Common talent any body can measure by common rule; but a prodigy sets all rule and measurement at defiance."

These words opened my eyes in an instant; we now came to a proper understanding; less flattering, it is true, to my vanity, but much more satisfactory to my judgment.

It was agreed that I should make my appearance before a London audience, as a dramatic sun just bursting from behind the clouds: one that was to banish all the lesser lights and false fires of the stage. Every precaution was to be taken to possess the public mind at every avenue. The pit was to be packed with sturdy clappers; the newspapers secured by vehement puffers; every theatrical resort to be haunted by hireling talkers. In a word, every engine of theatrical humbug was to be put in action. Whenever I differed from former actors, it was to be maintained that I was right and they were wrong. If I ranted, it was to be pure passion; if I were vulgar, it was to be pronounced a familiar touch of nature; if I made any queer blunder, it was to be a new reading. If my voice cracked, or I got out in my part, I was only to bounce, and grin, and snarl at the audience, and make any horrible grimace that came into my head, and my admirers were to call it "a great point," and to fall back and shout and yell with rapture.

"In short," said the gentleman with the quizzing-glass, "strike out boldly and bravely: no matter how or what you do, so that it be but odd and strange. If you do but escape pelting the first night, your fortune and the fortune of the theatre is made."

I set off for London, therefore, in company with the kept author, full of new plans and new hopes. I was to be the restorer of Shakspeare and Nature, and the legitimate drama; my very swagger was to be heroic, and my cracked voice the standard of elocution. Alas, sir, my usual luck attended me: before I arrived at the metropolis a rival wonder had appeared; a woman who could dance the slack-rope, and run up a cord from the stage to the gallery with fireworks all round her. She was seized on by the manager with avidity. She was the saving of the great national theatre for the season. Nothing was talked of but Madame Saqui's fireworks and flesh-coloured pantaloons; and Nature, Shakspeare, the legitimate drama, and poor Pilgarlick were completely left in the lurch.

When Madame Saqui's performance grew stale, other wonders succeeded:

horses, and harlequinades, and mummery of all kinds; until another dramatic prodigy was brought forward to play the very game for which I had been intended. I called upon the kept author for an explanation, but he was deeply engaged in writing a melo-drama or a pantomime, and was extremely testy on being interrupted in his studies. However, as the theatre was in some measure pledged to provide for me, the manager acted, according to the usual phrase, "like a man of honour," and I received an appointment in the corps. It had been a turn of a die whether I should be Alexander the Great or Alexander the coppersmith—the latter carried it. I could not be put at the head of the drama, so I was put at the tail of it. In other words, I was enrolled among the number of what are called *useful men*; those who enact soldiers, senators, and Banquo's shadowy line. I was perfectly satisfied with my lot; for I have always been a bit of a philosopher. If my situation was not splendid, it at least was secure; and in fact I have seen half a dozen prodigies appear, dazzle, burst like bubbles and pass away, and yet here I am, snug, unenvied and unmolested, at the foot of the profession.

No, no, you may smile; but let me tell you, we useful men are the only comfortable actors on the stage. We are safe from hisses, and below the hope of applause. We fear not the success of rivals, nor dread the critic's pen. So long as we get the words of our parts, and they are not often many, it is all we care for. We have our own merriment, our own friends, and our own admirers—for every actor has his own friends and admirers, from the highest to the lowest. The first-rate actor dines with the noble amateur, and entertains a fashionable table with scraps and songs, and theatrical slipslop. The second-rate actors have their second-rate friends and admirers, with whom they likewise spout tragedy and talk slipslop—and so down even to us; who have our friends and admirers among spruce clerks and aspiring apprentices—who treat us to a dinner now and then, and enjoy at tenth hand the same scraps and songs and slipslop that have been served up by our



more fortunate brethren at the tables of the great.

I now, for the first time in my theatrical life, experience what true pleasure is. I have known enough of notoriety to pity the poor devils who are called favourites of the public. I would rather be a kitten in the arms of a spoiled child, to be one moment patted and pampered, and the next moment thumped over the head with the spoon. I smile to see our leading actors fretting themselves with envy and jealousy about a trumpery renown, questionable in its quality, and uncertain in its duration. I laugh, too, though of course in my sleeve, at the bustle and importance, and trouble and perplexities of our manager, who is harassing himself to death in the hopeless effort to please every body.

I have found among my fellow-subalterns two or three quondam managers, who like myself have wielded the sceptres of country theatres, and we have many a sly joke together at the expense of the manager and the public. Sometimes too, we meet, like deposed and exiled kings, talk over the events of our respective reigns, moralize over a tankard of ale, and laugh at the humbug of the great and little world; which, I take it, is the essence of practical philosophy.

Thus end the anecdotes of Buckthorne and his friends. It grieves me much that I could not procure from him further particulars of his history, and especially of that part of it which passed in town. He had evidently seen much of literary life; and, as he had never risen to eminence in letters, and yet was free from the gall of disappointment, I had hoped to gain some candid intelligence concerning his contemporaries. The testimony of such an honest chronicler would have been particularly valuable at the present time; when, owing to the extreme fecundity of the press, and the thousand anecdotes, criticisms, and biographical sketches that are daily poured forth concerning public characters, it is extremely difficult to get at any truth concerning them.

He was always, however, excessively reserved and fastidious on this point, at

which I very much wondered, authors in general appearing to think each other fair game, and being ready to serve each other up for the amusement of the public.

A few mornings after our hearing the history of the ex-manager, I was surprised by a visit from Buckthorne before I was out of bed. He was dressed for travelling.

“Give me joy! give me joy!” said he, rubbing his hands with the utmost glee, “my great expectations are realized!”

I gazed at him with a look of wonder and inquiry.

“My booby cousin is dead!” cried he; “may he rest in peace! he nearly broke his neck in a fall from his horse in a fox-chase. By good luck, he lived long enough to make his will. He has made me his heir, partly out of an odd feeling of retributive justice, and partly because, as he says, none of his own family or friends know how to enjoy such an estate. I’m off to the country to take possession. I’ve done with authorship. That for the critics!” said he, snapping his fingers. “Come down to Doubting Castle, when I get settled, and, egad, I’ll give you a rouse.” So saying, he shook me heartily by the hand, and bounded off in high spirits.

A long time elapsed before I heard from him again. Indeed, it was but lately that I received a letter, written in the happiest of moods. He was getting the estate into fine order; every thing went to his wishes, and, what was more, he was married to Sacharissa, who it seems had always entertained an ardent though secret attachment for him, which he had fortunately discovered just after coming to his estate.

“I find,” said he, “you are a little given to the sin of authorship, which I renounce: if the anecdotes I have given you of my story are of any interest, you may make use of them; but come down to Doubting Castle, and see how we live, and I’ll give you my whole London life over a social glass; and a rattling history it shall be about authors and reviewers.”

If ever I visit Doubting Castle and get the history he promises, the public shall be sure to hear of it.

## PART III.

## THE ITALIAN BANDITTI.

## THE INN AT TERRACINA.

CRACK! crack! crack! crack! crack!

"Here comes the estafette from Naples," said mine host of the inn at Terracina; "bring out the relay."

The estafette came galloping up the road according to custom, brandishing over his head a short-handled whip, with a long, knotted lash, every smack of which made a report like a pistol. He was a tight, square-set young fellow, in the usual uniform: a smart blue coat, ornamented with facings and gold lace, but so short behind as to reach scarcely below his waistband, and cocked up not unlike the tail of a wren; a cocked hat, edged with gold lace; a pair of stiff riding boots; but, instead of the usual leathern breeches, he had a fragment of a pair of drawers, that scarcely furnished an apology for Modesty to hide behind.

The estafette galloped up to the door, and jumped from his horse.

"A glass of rosolio, a fresh horse, and a pair of breeches, and quickly, *per l'amor di Dio*. I am behind my time, and must be off!"

"San Gennaro!" replied the host; "why, where hast thou left thy garment?"

"Among the robbers between this and Fondi."

"What, rob an estafette! I never heard of such folly. What could they hope to get from thee?"

"My leather breeches!" replied the estafette. "They were bran new, and shone like gold, and hit the fancy of the captain."

"Well, these fellows grow worse and worse. To meddle with an estafette! and that merely for the sake of a pair of leather breeches!"

The robbing of a government messenger seemed to strike the host with more astonishment than any other enormity that had taken place on the road; and,

indeed, it was the first time so wanton an outrage had been committed; the robbers generally taking care not to meddle with any thing belonging to government.

The estafette was by this time equipped, for he had not lost an instant in making his preparations while talking. The relay was ready; the rosolio tossed off; he grasped the reins and the stirrup.

"Were there many robbers in the band?" said a handsome, dark young man, stepping forward from the door of the inn.

"As formidable a band as ever I saw," said the estafette, springing into the saddle.

"Are they cruel to travellers?" said a beautiful young Venitian lady, who had been hanging on the gentleman's arm.

"Cruel, signora!" echoed the estafette, giving a glance at the lady as he put spurs to his horse. "Corpo di Bacco! They stiletto all the men; and, as to the women—" Crack! crack! crack! crack! crack!—The last words were drowned in the smacking of the whip, and away galloped the estafette along the road to the Pontine marshes.

"Holy Virgin!" ejaculated the fair Venitian; "what will become of us!"

The inn of which we are speaking stands just outside of the walls of Terracina, under a vast precipitous height of rocks, crowned with the ruins of the castle of Theodoric the Goth. The situation of Terracina is remarkable. It is a little, ancient, lazy Italian town, on the frontiers of the Roman territory. There seems to be an idle pause in every thing about the place. The Mediterranean spreads before it—that sea without flux or reflux. The port is without a sail, excepting that once in a while a solitary felucca may be seen disgorging its holy cargo of baccala, the meagre provision for the quaresima or Lent. The inhabitants are apparently a listless, heedless race, as people of soft sunny climates are apt to be; but under this passive, indolent exterior, are said to lurk dangerous qualities. They are supposed by many to be little better than the banditti of the neighbouring mountains, and indeed to hold a secret

correspondence with them. The solitary watch-towers, erected here and there along the coast, speak of pirates and corsairs that hover about these shores; while the low huts, as stations for soldiers, which dot the distant road, as it winds up through an olive grove, intimate that in the ascent there is danger for the traveller, and facility for the bandit. Indeed, it is between this town and Fondi that the road to Naples is most infested by banditti. It has several winding and solitary places, where the robbers are enabled to see the traveller from a distance, from the brows of hills or impending precipices, and to lie in wait for him at lonely and difficult passes.

The Italian robbers are a desperate class of men that have almost formed themselves into an order of society. They wear a kind of uniform, or rather costume, which openly designates their profession. This is probably done to diminish its skulking, lawless character, and to give it something of a military air in the eyes of the common people; or, perhaps, to catch by outward show and finery the fancies of the young men of the villages, and thus to gain recruits. Their dresses are often very rich and picturesque. They wear jackets and breeches of bright colours, sometimes gaily embroidered; their breasts are covered with medals and relics; their hats are broad-brimmed, with conical crowns, decorated with feathers, or variously-coloured ribands; their hair is sometimes gathered in silk nets; they wear a kind of sandal of cloth or leather, bound round the legs with thongs, and extremely flexible, to enable them to scramble with ease and celerity among the mountain precipices; a broad belt of cloth, or a sash of silk net, is stuck full of pistols and stiletos; a carbine is slung at the back; while about them is generally thrown, in a negligent manner, a great dingy mantle, which serves as a protection in storms, or a bed in their bivouacs among the mountains.

They range over a great extent of wild country, along the chain of Apennines, bordering on different states; they know all the difficult passes, the short cuts for retreat, and the impracticable

forests of the mountain summits, where no force dare follow them. They are secure of the good-will of the inhabitants of those regions, a poor and semi-barbarous race, whom they never disturb and often enrich. Indeed they are considered as a sort of illegitimate heroes among the mountain villages, and in certain frontier towns, where they dispose of their plunder. Thus countenanced, and sheltered, and secure in the fastnesses of their mountains, the robbers have set the weak police of the Italian states at defiance. It is in vain that their names and descriptions are posted on the doors of country churches, and rewards offered for them alive or dead; the villagers are either too much awed by the terrible instances of vengeance inflicted by the brigands, or have too good an understanding with them to be their betrayers. It is true they are now and then hunted and shot down like beasts of prey by the *gens-d'armes*, their heads put in iron cages, and stuck upon posts by the roadside, or their limbs hung up to blacken in the trees near the places where they have committed their atrocities; but these ghastly spectacles only serve to make some dreary pass of the road still more dreary, and to dismay the traveller, without deterring the bandit.

At the time that the estafette made his sudden appearance, almost *in cuerpo*, as has been mentioned, the audacity of the robbers had risen to an unparalleled height. They had laid villas under contribution, they had sent messages into country towns, to tradesmen and rich burghers, demanding supplies of money, of clothing, or even of luxuries, with menaces of vengeance in case of refusal. They had their spies and emissaries in every town, village, and inn, along the principal roads, to give them notice of the movements and quality of travellers. They had plundered carriages, carried people of rank and fortune into the mountains, and obliged them to write for heavy ransoms, and had committed outrages on females who had fallen into their hands.

Such was briefly the state of the robbers, or rather such was the amount of the rumours prevalent concerning them, when the scene took place at the inn at

Terracina. The dark handsome young man, and the Venitian lady, incidentally mentioned, had arrived early that afternoon in a private carriage drawn by mules, and attended by a single servant. They had been recently married, were spending the honeymoon in travelling through these delicious countries, and were on their way to visit a rich aunt of the bride at Naples.

The lady was young, and tender, and timid. The stories she had heard along the road had filled her with apprehension, not more for herself than for her husband; for though she had been married almost a month, she still loved him almost to idolatry. When she reached Terracina, the rumours of the road had increased to an alarming magnitude; and the sight of two robbers' skulls, grinning in iron cages, on each side of the old gateway of the town, brought her to a pause. Her husband had tried in vain to reassure her, they had lingered all the afternoon at the inn, until it was too late to think of starting that evening, and the parting words of the estafette completed her affright.

"Let us return to Rome," said she, putting her arm within her husband's, and drawing towards him as if for protection,—“Let us return to Rome, and give up this visit to Naples.”

"And give up the visit to your aunt, too?" said the husband.

"Nay,—what is my aunt in comparison with your safety?" said she, looking up tenderly in his face.

There was something in her tone and manner that showed she really was thinking more of her husband's safety at that moment, than of her own; and being so recently married, and a match of pure affection too, it is very possible that she was: at least her husband thought so. Indeed, any one who has heard the sweet musical tone of a Venitian voice, and the melting tenderness of a Venitian phrase, and felt the soft witchery of a Venitian eye, would not wonder at the husband's believing whatever they professed. He clasped the white hand that had been laid within his, put his arm around her slender waist, and drawing her fondly to his bosom, "This night, at least," said he, "we will pass at Terracina."

Crack! crack! crack! crack! crack! Another apparition of the road attracted the attention of mine host and his guests. From the direction of the Pontine marshes a carriage, drawn by half a dozen horses, came driving at a furious rate; the positions smacking their whips like mad, as is the case when conscious of the greatness or of the munificence of their fare. It was a landaulet, with a servant mounted on the dickey. The compact, highly-finished, yet proudly simple construction of the carriage; the quantity of neat, well-arranged trunks and conveniences; the loads of box-coats on the dickey; the fresh, burly, bluff-looking face of the master at the window; and the ruddy, round-headed servant, in close-cropped hair, short coat, drab breeches, and long gaiters, all proclaimed at once that this was the equipage of an Englishman.

"Horses to Fondi," said the Englishman, as the landlord came bowing to the carriage-door.

"Would not his Eccellenza alight and take some refreshment?"

"No—he did not mean to eat until he got to Fondi."

"But the horses will be some time in getting ready."

"Ah! that's always the way; nothing but delay in this cursed country."

"If his Excellenza would only walk into the house——"

"No, no, no!—I tell you no!—I want nothing but horses, and as quick as possible. John, see that the horses are got ready, and don't let us be kept here an hour or two: Tell him if we're delayed over the time, I'll lodge a complaint with the postmaster."

John touched his hat, and set off to obey his master's orders with the taciturn obedience of an English servant.

In the mean time, the Englishman got out of the carriage, and walked up and down before the inn with his hands in his pockets, taking no notice of the crowd of idlers who were gazing at him and his equipage. He was tall, stout, and well made; dressed with neatness and precision; wore a travelling cap of the colour of gingerbread; and had rather an unhappy expression about the corners of his mouth; partly from not having yet

made his dinner, and partly from not having been able to get on at a greater rate than seven miles an hour. Not that he had any other cause for haste than an Englishman's usual hurry to get to the end of a journey; or, to use the regular phrase, "to get on." Perhaps too he was a little sore from having been fleeced at every stage.

After some time, the servant returned from the stable with a look of some perplexity.

"Are the horses ready, John?"

"No, sir—I never saw such a place. There's no getting any thing done. I think your honour had better step into the house and get something to eat; it will be a long while before we get to Fundy."

"D—n the house—it's a mere trick—I'll not eat any thing, just to spite them," said the Englishman, still more crusty at the prospect of being so long without his dinner.

"They say your honour's very wrong," said John, "to set off at this late hour. The road's full of highwaymen."

"Mere tales to get custom."

"The estafette which passed us was stopped by a whole gang," said John, increasing his emphasis with each additional piece of information.

"I don't believe a word of it."

"They robbed him of his breeches," said John, giving, at the same time, a hitch to his own waistband.

"All humbug!"

Here the dark handsome young man stepped forward, and addressing the Englishman very politely, in broken English, invited him to partake of a repast he was about to make.

"Thank'ee," said the Englishman, thrusting his hands deeper into his pockets, and casting a slight side glance of suspicion at the young man, as if he thought, from his civility, he must have a design upon his purse.

"We shall be most happy, if you will do us that favour," said the lady in her soft Venitian dialect. There was a sweetness in her accents that was most persuasive. The Englishman cast a look upon her countenance; her beauty was still more eloquent. His features instantly relaxed. He made a polite bow.

"With great pleasure, Signora," said he.

In short, the eagerness to "get on" was suddenly slackened; the determination to famish himself as far as Fondi, by way of punishing the landlord, was abandoned; John chose an apartment in the inn for his master's reception; and preparations were made to remain there until morning.

The carriage was unpacked of such of its contents as were indispensable for the night. There was the usual parade of trunks and writing-desks, and portfolios, and dressing-boxes, and those other oppressive conveniences which burthen a comfortable man. The observant loiterers about the inn-door, wrapped up in great dirt-coloured cloaks, with only a hawk's eye uncovered, made many remarks to each other on this quantity of luggage, that seemed enough for an army. The domestics of the inn talked with wonder of the splendid dressing-case, with its gold and silver furniture, that was spread out on the toilet-table, and the bag of gold that chinked as it was taken out of the trunk. The strange *milor's* wealth, and the treasures he carried about him, were the talk, that evening, over all Terracina.

The Englishman took some time to make his ablutions and arrange his dress for table; and, after considerable labour and effort in putting himself at his ease, made his appearance, with stiff white cravat, his clothes free from the least speck of dust, and adjusted with precision. He made a civil bow on entering, in the unprofessing English way, which the fair Venitian, accustomed to the complimentary salutations of the continent, considered extremely cold.

The supper, as it was termed by the Italian, or dinner, as the Englishman called it, was now served: heaven and earth, and the waters under the earth, had been moved to furnish it; for there were birds of the air, and beasts of the field, and fish of the sea. The Englishman's servant, too, had turned the kitchen topsy-turvy in his zeal to cook his master a beefsteak; and made his appearance, loaded with ketchup, and soy, and Cayenne pepper, and Harvey sauce, and a bottle of port wine, from that ware-

house the carriage, in which his master seemed desirous of carrying England about the world with him. Indeed the repast was one of those Italian farragoes which require a little qualifying. The tureen of soup was a black sea, with livers, and limbs, and fragments of all kinds of birds and beasts floating like wrecks about it. A meagre winged animal, which my host called a delicate chicken, had evidently died of a consumption. The macaroni was smoked. The beefsteak was tough buffalo's flesh. There was what appeared to be a dish of stewed eels, of which the Englishman ate with great relish; but had nearly refunded them when told that they were vipers, caught among the rocks of Terracina, and esteemed a great delicacy.

There is nothing, however, that conquers a traveller's spleen sooner than eating, whatever may be the cookery; and nothings brings him into good humour with his company sooner than eating together; the Englishman, therefore, had not half finished his repast and his bottle, before he began to think the Venitian a very tolerable fellow for a foreigner, and his wife almost handsome enough to be an Englishwoman.

In the course of the repast, the usual topics of travellers were discussed, and among others, the reports of robbers, which harassed the mind of the fair Venitian. The landlord and waiter dipped into the conversation with that familiarity permitted on the continent, and served up so many bloody tales as they served up the dishes that they almost frightened away the poor lady's appetite.

The Englishman, who had a national antipathy to every thing that is technically called "humbug," listened to them all with a certain screw of the mouth, expressive of incredulity. There was the well-known story of the school of Terracina, captured by the robbers; and one of the students coolly massacred, in order to bring the parents to terms for the ransom of the rest. And another, of a gentleman of Rome, who received his son's ear in a letter, with information, that his son would be remitted to him in this way, by instalments, until he paid the required ransom.

The fair Venitian shuddered as he heard these tales; and the landlord, like a true narrator of the terrible, doubled the dose when he saw how it operated. He was just proceeding to relate the misfortunes of a great English lord and his family, when the Englishman, tired of his volubility, interrupted him, and pronounced these accounts to be mere travellers' tales, or the exaggerations of ignorant peasants and designing inn-keepers. The landlord was indignant at the doubt levelled at his stories, and the inuendo levelled at his cloth; he cited, in corroboration, half a dozen tales still more terrible.

"I don't believe a word of them," said the Englishman.

"But the robbers have been tried and executed."

"All a farce!"

"But their heads are stuck up along the road!"

"Old skulls, accumulated during a century."

The landlord muttered to himself as he went out at the door, "San Gennaro! quanto sono singolari questi Inglesi!"

A fresh hubbub outside of the inn announced the arrival of more travellers; and, from the variety of voices, or rather of clamours, the clattering of hoofs, the rattling of wheels, and the general uproar both within and without, the arrival seemed to be numerous.

It was, in fact, the procaccio and its convoy; a kind of caravan which sets out on certain days for the transportation of merchandise, with an escort of soldiery to protect it from the robbers. Travellers avail themselves of its protection, and a long file of carriages generally accompany it.

A considerable time elapsed before either landlord or waiter returned; being hurried hither or thither by that tempest of noise and bustle, which takes place in an Italian inn on the arrival of any considerable accession of custom. When mine host re-appeared, there was a smile of triumph on his countenance.

"Perhaps," said he, as he cleared the table, "perhaps the signor has not heard of what has happened?"

"What?" said the Englishman, drily.

"Why, the procaccio has brought

accounts of fresh exploits of the robbers."

"Pish!"

"There's more news of the English Milor and his family," said the host, exultingly.

"An English lord? what English lord?"

"Milor Popkin."

"Lord Popkins? I never heard of such a title!"

"O sicuro! a great nobleman, who passed through here lately with mi ladi and her daughters. A magnifico, one of the grand counsellors of London, an almanno!"

"Almanno——almanno?——tut—he means alderman."

"Sicuro—Aldermano Popkin, and the Principessa Popkin, and the Signorine Popkin!" said mine host, triumphantly.

He now put himself into an attitude, and would have launched into a full detail, had he not been thwarted by the Englishman, who seemed determined neither to credit nor indulge him in his stories, but drily motioned for him to clear away the table.

An Italian tongue, however, is not easily checked: that of mine host continued to wag with increasing volubility, as he conveyed the relics of the repast out of the room; and the last that could be distinguished of his voice, as it died away along the corridor, was the iteration of the favourite word, Popkin—Popkin—pop—pop—pop.

The arrival of the procaccio had, indeed, filled the house with stories, as it had with guests. The Englishman and his companions walked after supper up and down the large hall, or common room of the inn, which ran through the centre of the building. It was spacious and somewhat dirty, with tables placed in various parts, at which groups of travellers were seated; while others strolled about, waiting, in famished impatience, for their evening's meal.

It was a heterogeneous assemblage of people of all ranks and countries, who had arrived in all kind of vehicles. Though distinct knots of travellers, yet the travelling together, under one common escort, had jumbled them into a

certain degree of companionship on the road: besides, on the continent travellers are always familiar, and nothing is more motley than the groups which gather casually together in sociable conversation in the public rooms of inns.

The formidable number, and formidable guard of the procaccio, had prevented any molestation from banditti; but every party of travellers had its tale of wonder, and one carriage vied with another in its budget of assertions and surmises. Fierce, whiskered faces had been seen peering over the rocks; carbines and stiletos gleaming from among the bushes; suspicious-looking fellows, with flapped hats and scowling eyes, had occasionally reconnoitred a straggling carriage, but had disappeared on seeing the guard.

The fair Venitian listened to all these stories with that avidity with which we always pamper any feeling of alarm; even the Englishman began to feel interested in the common topic, and desirous of getting more correct information than mere flying reports. Conquering, therefore, that shyness which is prone to keep an Englishman solitary in crowds, he approached one of the talking groups, the oracle of which was a tall, thin Italian, with long aquiline nose, a high forehead, and lively prominent eye, beaming from under a green velvet travelling-cap, with gold tassel. He was of Rome, a surgeon by profession, a poet by choice, and something of an improvisatore.

In the present instance, however, he was talking in plain prose, but holding forth with the fluency of one who talks well, and likes to exert his talent. A question or two from the Englishman drew copious replies; for an Englishman sociable among strangers is regarded as a phenomenon on the continent, and always treated with attention for the rarity's sake. The improvisatore gave much the same account of the banditti that I have already furnished.

"But why does not the police exert itself, and root them out?" demanded the Englishman.

"Because the police is too weak, and the banditti are too strong," replied the other. "To root them out would be a

more difficult task than you imagine. They are connected and mostly identified with the mountain peasantry and the people of the villages. The numerous bands have an understanding with each other, and with the country round. A gendarme cannot stir without their being aware of it. They have their scouts every where, who lurk about towns, villages, and inns, mingle in every crowd, and pervade every place of resort. I should not be surprised if some one should be supervising us at this moment."

—The fair Venitian looked round fearfully, and turned pale.

Here the improvisatore was interrupted by a lively Neapolitan lawyer.

"By the way," said he, "I recollect a little adventure of a learned doctor, a friend of mine, which happened in this very neighbourhood; not far from the ruins of Theodoric's Castle, which are on the top of those great rocky heights above the town."

A wish was, of course, expressed to hear the adventure of the doctor by all excepting the improvisatore, who, being fond of talking and of hearing himself talk, and accustomed, moreover, to harangue without interruption, looked rather annoyed at being checked when in full career. The Neapolitan, however, took no notice of his chagrin, but related the following anecdote.

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THE ADVENTURE  
OF  
THE LITTLE ANTIQUARY.

My friend, the doctor, was a thorough antiquary; a little rusty, musty old fellow, always groping among ruins. He relished a building as you Englishmen relish a cheese,—the more mouldy and crumbling it was, the more it suited his taste. A shell of an old nameless temple, or the cracked walls of a broken-down amphitheatre, would throw him into raptures; and he took more delight in these crusts and cheese-parings of antiquity, than in the best-conditioned modern palaces.

He was a curious collector of coins also, and had just gained an accession of wealth that almost turned his brain. He had picked up, for instance, several Roman Consulars, half a Roman As, two punic, which had doubtless belonged to the soldiers of Hannibal, having been found on the very spot where they had encamped among the Apennines. He had, moreover, one Samnite, struck after the Social War, and a Philistis, a queen that never existed; but above all, he valued himself upon a coin, indescribable to any but the initiated in these matters, bearing a cross on one side, and a Pegasus on the other, and which, by some antiquarian logic, the little man adduced as an historical document, illustrating the progress of Christianity.

All these precious coins he carried about him in a leathern purse, buried deep in a pocket of his little black breeches.

The last maggot he had taken into his brain, was to hunt after the ancient cities of the Pelasgi, which are said to exist to this day among the mountains of the Abruzzi; but about which a singular degree of obscurity prevails.\* He had made

\* Among the many fond speculations of antiquaries is that of the existence of traces of the ancient Pelasgian cities in the Apennines; and many a wistful eye is cast by the traveller, versed in antiquarian lore, at the richly-wooded mountains of the Abruzzi, as a forbidden fairy land of research. These spots, so beautiful yet so inaccessible, from the rudeness of their inhabitants and the hordes of banditti which infest them, are a region of fable to the learned. Sometimes a wealthy virtuoso, whose purse and whose consequence could command a military escort, has penetrated to some individual point among the mountains; and sometimes a wandering artist or student, under protection of poverty or insignificance, has brought away some vague account, only calculated to give a keener edge to curiosity and conjecture.

By those who maintain the existence of the Pelasgian cities, it is affirmed, that the formation of the different kingdoms in the Peloponnesus gradually caused the expulsion of the Pelasgi from thence: but that their great migration may be dated from the finishing the wall round Acropolis, and that at this period they came into Italy. To these, in the spirit of theory, they would ascribe the introduction of the elegant arts into the country. It is evident, however, that, as barbarians flying before the first dawn of civilization, they could bring little with them superior to the inventions of the aborigines, and nothing that would have survived to the antiquarian through such a lapse of ages. It would appear more probable, that these cities, improperly termed Pelasgian, were coeval with many that have been discovered,—the romantic Aricia, built by Hippolytus before the siege of Troy, and



many discoveries concerning them, and had recorded a great many valuable notes and memorandums on the subject, in a voluminous book, which he always carried about with him; either for the purpose of frequent reference, or through fear lest the precious document should fall into the hands of brother antiquaries. He had, therefore, a large pocket in the skirt of his coat, where he bore about this inestimable tome, banging against his rear as he walked.

Thus heavily laden with the spoils of antiquity, the good little man, during a sojourn at Terracina, mounted one day the rocky cliffs which overhang the town, to visit the castle of Theodoric. He was groping about the ruins towards the hour of sunset, buried in his reflections, his wits no doubt wool-gathering among the Goths and Romans, when he heard footsteps behind him.

He turned, and beheld five or six young fellows, of rough, saucy demeanour, clad in a singular manner, half peasant, half huntsman, with carbines in their hands. Their whole appearance and carriage left him no doubt into what company he had fallen.

The doctor was a feeble little man, poor in look, and poorer in purse, he had but little gold or silver to be robbed of; but then he had his curious ancient coin in his breeches-pocket. He had, moreover, certain other valuables, such as an old silver watch, thick as a turnip, with figures on it large enough for a clock; and a set of seals at the end of a steel chain, that dangled half way down to his knees. All these were of precious esteem, being family relics. He had also a seal-ring, a veritable antique intaglio, that covered half his knuckles. It was a Venus, which the old man almost worshipped with the zeal of a voluptuary. But what he most valued was his inesti-

the poetic Tibur, Æsculate and Proenes, built by Telegonus after the dispersion of the Greeks. These, lying contiguous to inhabited and cultivated spots, have been discovered. There are others, too, on the ruins of which the later and more civilized Grecian colonists have engrafted themselves, and which have become known by their merits or their medals. But that there are many still undiscovered, imbedded in the Abruzzi, it is the delight of the antiquarians to fancy. Strange that such a virgin soil for research, such an unknown realm of knowledge, should at this day remain in the very centre of hackneyed Italy!

mable collection of hints relative to the Pelasgian cities, which he would gladly have given all the money in his pocket to have had safe at the bottom of his trunk in Terracina.

However, he plucked up a stout heart, at least as stout a heart as he could, seeing that he was but a puny little man at the best of times. So he wished the hunters a "buon giorno." They returned his salutation, giving the old gentleman a sociable slap on the back that made his heart leap into his throat.

They fell into conversation, and walked for some time together among the heights; the doctor wishing them all the while at the bottom of the crater of Vesuvius. At length they came to a small osteria on the mountain, where they proposed to enter and have a cup of wine together: the doctor consented, though he would as soon have been invited to drink hemlock.

One of the gang remained sentinel at the door; the others swaggered into the house, stood their guns in the corner of the room, and each drawing a pistol or stiletto out of his belt, laid it upon the table. They now drew benches round the board, called lustily for wine, and, hailing the doctor as though he had been a boon companion of long standing, insisted upon his sitting down and making merry.

The worthy man complied with forced grimace, but with fear and trembling; sitting uneasily on the edge of his chair; eyeing ruefully the black-muzzled pistols, and cold, naked stiletos; and supping down heartburn with every drop of liquor. His new comrades, however, pushed the bottle bravely, and plied him vigorously. They sang, they laughed; told excellent stories of their robberies and combats, mingled with many ruffian jokes; and the little doctor was fain to laugh at their cut-throat pleasantries, though his heart was dying away at the very bottom of his bosom.

By their own account, they were young men from the villages, who had recently taken up this line of life out of the wild caprice of youth. They talked of their murderous exploits as a sportsman talks of his amusements: to shoot down a traveller seemed of little more consequence

to them than to shoot a hare. They spoke with rapture of the glorious roving life they led, free as birds; here to-day, gone to-morrow; ranging the forests, climbing the rocks, scouring the valleys; the world their own wherever they could lay hold of it; full purses—merry companions—pretty women. The little antiquary got fuddled with their talk and their wine, for they did not spare bumpers. He half forgot his fears, his seal-ring, and his family-watch; even the treatise on the Pelasgian cities, which was warming under him, for a time faded from his memory in the glowing picture that they drew. He declares that he no longer wonders at the prevalence of this robber mania among the mountains; for he felt at the time, that, had he been a young man, and a strong man, and had there been no danger of the galleys in the background, he should have been half tempted himself to turn bandit.

At length the hour of separating arrived. The doctor was suddenly called to himself and his fears by seeing the robbers resume their weapons. He now quaked for his valuables, and, above all, for his antiquarian treatise. He endeavoured, however, to look cool and unconcerned; and drew from out his deep pocket a long, lank, leathern purse, far gone in consumption, at the bottom of which a few coin chinked with the trembling of his hand.

The chief of the party observed his movement, and laying his hand upon the antiquary's shoulder, "Harkee! Signor Dottore!" said he, "we have drunk together as friends and comrades; let us part as such. We understand you. We know who and what you are, for we know who every body is that sleeps at Terracina, or that puts foot upon the road. You are a rich man, but you carry all your wealth in your head: we cannot get at it, and we should not know what to do with it if we could. I see you are uneasy about your ring; but don't worry yourself, it is not worth taking; you think it an antique, but it's a counterfeit—a mere sham."

Here the ire of the antiquary arose: the doctor forgot himself in his zeal for the character of his ring. Heaven and earth! his Venus a sham! Had they

pronounced the wife of his bosom "no better than she should be," he could not have been more indignant. He fired up in vindication of his intaglio.

"Nay, nay," continued the robber, "we have no time to dispute about it; value it as you please. Come, you're a brave little old signor—one more cup of wine and we'll pay the reckoning. No compliments—You shall not pay a grain—You are our guest—I insist upon it. So—now make the best of your way back to Terracina; it's growing late. Buon viaggio! And harkee! take care how you wander among these mountains,—you may not always fall into such good company."

They shouldered their guns; sprang gaily up the rocks; and the little doctor hobbled back to Terracina, rejoicing that the robbers had left his watch, his coins, and his treatise, unmolested; but still indignant that they should have pronounced his Venus an impostor.

The improvisatore had shown many symptoms of impatience during this recital. He saw his theme in danger of being taken out of his hands, which, to an able talker, is always a grievance, but to an improvisatore is an absolute calamity: and then for it to be taken away by a Neapolitan, was still more vexatious; the inhabitants of the different Italian states having an implacable jealousy of each other in all things, great and small. He took advantage of the first pause of the Neapolitan to catch hold again of the thread of the conversation.

"As I observed before," said he, "the prowlings of the banditti are so extensive, they are so much in league with one another, and so interwoven with various ranks of society—"

"For that matter," said the Neapolitan, "I have heard that your government has had some understanding with those gentry; or, at least, has winked at their misdeeds."

"My government!" said the Roman, impatiently.

"Ay, they say that Cardinal Gonsalvi—"

"Hush!" said the Roman, holding up his finger, and rolling his large eyes about the room.

"Nay I only repeat what I heard commonly rumoured in Rome," replied the Neapolitan, sturdily. "It was openly said, that the cardinal had been up to the mountains, and had an interview with some of the chiefs. And I have been told, moreover, that while honest people have been kicking their heels in the cardinal's antechamber, waiting by the hour for admittance, one of these stiletto-looking fellows has elbowed his way through the crowd, and entered without ceremony into the cardinal's presence."

"I know," observed the improvisatore, "that there have been such reports, and it is not impossible that government may have made use of these men at particular periods; such as at the time of your late abortive revolution, when your carbonari were so busy with their machinations all over the country. The information which such men could collect who were familiar, not merely with the recesses and secret places of the mountains, but also with the dark and dangerous recesses of society; who knew every suspicious character, and all his movements and all his lurkings; in a word, who knew all that was plotting in the world of mischief;—the utility of such men as instruments in the hands of government was too obvious to be overlooked; and Cardinal Gonsalvi, as a politic statesman, may, perhaps, have made use of them. Besides, he knew that, with all their atrocities, the robbers were always respectful towards the church, and devout in their religion."

"Religion! religion!" echoed the Englishman.

"Yes, religion," repeated the Roman. "They have each their patron saint. They will cross themselves and say their prayers, whenever, in their mountain haunts, they hear the matin or the avermaria bells sounding from the valleys: and will often descend from their retreats, and run imminent risks to visit some favourite shrine. I recollect an instance in point."

"I was one evening in the village of Frascati, which stands on the beautiful brow of a hill rising from the Campagna, just below the Abruzzi mountains. The people, as is usual in fine evenings in our Italian towns and villages, were recreating

themselves in the open air, and chatting in groups in the public square. While I was conversing with a knot of friends, I noticed a tall fellow, wrapped in a great mantle, passing across the square, but skulking along in the dusk, as if anxious to avoid observation. The people drew back as he passed. It was whispered to me that he was a notorious bandit."

"But why was he not immediately seized?" said the Englishman.

"Because it was nobody's business; because nobody wished to incur the vengeance of his comrades; because there were not sufficient gendarmes near to insure security against the number of desperadoes he might have at hand; because the gendarmes might not have received particular instructions with respect to him, and might not feel disposed to engage in a hazardous conflict without compulsion. In short, I might give you a thousand reasons rising out of the state of our government and manners, not one of which after all might appear satisfactory."

The Englishman shrugged his shoulders with an air of contempt.

"I have been told," added the Roman, rather quickly, "that even in your metropolis of London, notorious thieves, well known to the police as such, walk the streets at noonday in search of their prey, and are not molested, unless caught in the very act of robbery."

The Englishman gave another shrug, but with a different expression.

"Well, sir, I fixed my eye on this daring wolf, thus prowling through the fold, and saw him enter a church. I was curious to witness his devotion. You know our spacious magnificent churches. The one in which he entered was vast, and shrouded in the dusk of evening. At the extremity of the long aisles a couple of tapers feebly glimmered on the grand altar. In one of the side chapels was a votive candle placed before the image of a saint. Before this image the robber had prostrated himself. His mantle partly falling off from his shoulders as he knelt, revealed a form of Herculean strength; a stiletto and pistol glittered in his belt; and the light falling on his countenance, showed features not unhandsome, but strongly and fiercely

characterized. As he prayed, he became vehemently agitated; his lips quivered; sighs and murmurs, almost groans, burst from him; he beat his breast with violence; then clasped his hands and wrung them convulsively, as he extended them towards the image. Never had I seen such a terrific picture of remorse. I felt fearful of being discovered watching him, and withdrew. Shortly afterwards I saw him issue from the church wrapped in his mantle. He re-crossed the square, and no doubt returned to the mountains with a disburthened conscience, ready to incur a fresh arrear of crime."

Here the Neapolitan was about to get hold of the conversation, and had just precluded with the ominous remark, "That puts me in mind of a circumstance," when the improvisatore, too adroit to suffer himself to be again superseded, went on, pretending not to hear the interruption.

"Among the many circumstances connected with the banditti, which serve to render the traveller uneasy and insecure, is the understanding which they sometimes have with innkeepers. Many an isolated inn among the lonely parts of the Roman territories, and especially about the mountains, are of a dangerous and perfidious character. They are places where the banditti gather information, and where the unwary traveller, remote from hearing or assistance, is betrayed to the midnight dagger. The robberies committed at such inns are often accompanied by the most atrocious murders; for it is only by the complete extermination of their victims that the assassins can escape detection. I recollect an adventure," added he, "which occurred at one of these solitary mountain inns, which, as you all seem in a mood for robber anecdotes, may not be uninteresting."

Having secured the attention and awakened the curiosity of the bystanders, he paused for a moment, rolled up his large eyes as improvisatori are apt to do when they would recollect an impromptu, and then related with great dramatic effect the following story, which had, doubtless, been well prepared and digested beforehand.

### THE BELATED TRAVELLERS.

It was late one evening that a carriage, drawn by mules, slowly toiled its way up one of the passes of the Apennines. It was through one of the wildest defiles, where a hamlet occurred only at distant intervals, perched on the summit of some rocky height, or the white towers of a convent peeped out from among the thick mountain foliage. The carriage was of ancient and ponderous construction. Its faded embellishments spoke of former splendour, but its crazy springs and axletrees creaked out the tale of present decline. Within was seated a tall, thin old gentleman, in a kind of military travelling dress, and a foraging cap trimmed with fur, though the gray locks which stole from under it hinted that his fighting days were over. Beside him was a pale beautiful girl of eighteen, dressed in something of a northern or Polish costume. One servant was seated in front, a rusty, crusty-looking fellow, with a scar across his face, an orange-tawny *schnur-bart*, or pair of mustachios, bristling from under his nose, and altogether the air of an old soldier.

It was, in fact, the equipage of a Polish nobleman; a wreck of one of those princely families which had lived with almost oriental magnificence, but had been broken down and impoverished by the disasters of Poland. The count, like many other generous spirits, had been found guilty of the crime of patriotism, and was, in a manner, an exile from his country. He had resided for some time in the first cities of Italy, for the education of his daughter, in whom all his cares and pleasures were now centred. He had taken her into society, where her beauty and her accomplishments had gained her many admirers; and had she not been the daughter of a poor broken-down Polish nobleman, it is more than probable that many would have contended for her hand. Suddenly, however, her health had become delicate and drooping; her gayety fled with the roses of her cheek, and she sunk into silence and debility. The old count saw the change with the solicitude of a parent. "We must try a change of air and scene," said he; and in a few days the

old family carriage was rumbling among the Apennines.

Their only attendant was the veteran Caspar, who had been born in the family, and grown rusty in its service. He had followed his master in all his fortunes; had fought by his side; had stood over him when fallen in battle; and had received, in his defence, the sabre-cut which had added such grimness to his countenance. He was now his valet, his steward, his butler, his factotum. The only being that rivalled his master in his affections was his youthful mistress. She had grown up under his eye, he had led her by the hand when she was a child, and he now looked upon her with the fondness of a parent. Nay, he even took the freedom of a parent in giving his blunt opinion on all matters which he thought were for her good; and felt a parent's vanity in seeing her gazed at and admired.

The evening was thickening; they had been for some time passing through narrow gorges of the mountains, along the edge of a tumbling stream. The scenery was lonely and savage. The rocks often beetled over the road, with flocks of white goats browsing on their brinks, and gazing down upon the travellers. They had between two and three leagues yet to go before they could reach any village; yet the muleteer, Pietro, a tipling old fellow, who had refreshed himself at the last halting-place with a more than ordinary quantity of wine, sat singing and talking alternately to his mules, and suffering them to lag on at a snail's pace, in spite of the frequent entreaties of the count, and maledictions of Caspar.

The clouds began to roll in heavy masses among the mountains, shrouding their summits from the view. The air of these heights, too, was damp and chilly. The count's solicitude on his daughter's account overcame his usual patience. He leaned from the carriage, and called to old Pietro in an angry tone.

"Forward!" said he. "It will be midnight before we arrive at our inn."

"Yonder it is, signore," said the muleteer.

"Where?" demanded the count.

"Yonder," said Pietro, pointing to a

desolate pile of building about a quarter of a league distant.

"That the place?—why, it looks more like a ruin than an inn. I thought we were to put up for the night at a comfortable village."

Here Pietro uttered a string of piteous exclamations and ejaculations, such as are ever at the tip of the tongue of a delinquent muleteer. "Such roads! and such mountains! and then his poor animals were wayworn, and leg-weary; they would fall lame; they would never be able to reach the village. And then what could his Eccellenza wish for better than the inn; a perfect castello—a palazza—and such people!—and such a larder!—and such beds!—His Eccellenza might fare as sumptuously, and sleep as soundly there as a prince!"

The count was easily persuaded, for he was anxious to get his daughter out of the night air; so in a little while the old carriage rattled and jingled into the great gateway of the inn.

The building did certainly in some measure answer to the muleteer's description. It was large enough for either castle or palace; built in a strong, but simple and almost rude style; with a great quantity of waste room. It had, in fact, been, in former times, a hunting-seat of one of the Italian princes. There was space enough within its walls and in its out-buildings to have accommodated a little army. A scanty household seemed now to people this dreary mansion. The faces that presented themselves on the arrival of the travellers were begrimed with dirt, and scowling in their expression. They all knew old Pietro, however, and gave him a welcome as he entered, singing and talking, and almost whooping, into the gateway.

The hostess of the inn waited herself on the count and his daughter, to show them the apartments. They were conducted through a long gloomy corridor, and then through a suite of chambers opening into each other, with lofty ceilings, and great beams extending across them. Every thing, however, had a wretched squalid look. The walls were damp and bare, excepting that here and there hung some great painting, large

enough for a chapel, and blackened out of all distinctness.

They chose two bed-rooms, one within another; the inner one for the daughter. The bedsteads were massive and misshapen; but on examining the beds so vaunted by old Pietro, they found them stuffed with fibres of hemp knotted in great lumps. The count shrugged his shoulders, but there was no choice left.

The chilliness of the apartments crept to their bones; and they were glad to return to a common chamber or kind of hall, where there was a fire burning in a huge cavern, miscalled a chimney. A quantity of green wood had just been thrown on, which puffed out volumes of smoke. The room corresponded to the rest of the mansion. The floor was paved and dirty. A great oaken table stood in the centre, immovable from its size and weight.

The only thing that contradicted this prevalent air of indigence was the dress of the hostess. She was a slattern of course; yet her garments, though dirty and negligent, were of costly materials. She wore several rings of great value on her fingers, and jewels in her ears, and round her neck was a string of large pearls, to which was attached a sparkling crucifix. She had the remains of beauty; yet there was something in the expression of her countenance that inspired the young lady with singular aversion. She was officious and obsequious in her attentions; and both the count and his daughter felt relieved, when she consigned them to the care of a dark, sullen-looking servant-maid, and went off to superintend the supper.

Caspar was indignant at the muleteer for having either through negligence or design, subjected his master and mistress to such quarters; and vowed by his mustachios to have revenge on the old varlet the moment they were safe out from among the mountains. He kept up a continual quarrel with the sulky servant-maid, which only served to increase the sinister expression with which she regarded the travellers, from under her strong dark eyebrows.

As to the count, he was a good-humoured passive traveller. Perhaps real misfortune had subdued his spirit, and

rendered him tolerant of many of those petty evils which make prosperous men miserable. He drew a large, broken arm-chair to the fireside for his daughter, and another for himself, and seizing an enormous pair of tongs, endeavoured to rearrange the wood so as to produce a blaze. His efforts, however, were only repaid by thicker puffs of smoke, which almost overcame the good gentleman's patience. He would draw back, cast a look upon his delicate daughter, then upon the cheerless, squalid apartment, and shrugging his shoulders, would give a fresh stir to the fire.

Of all the miseries of a comfortless inn, however, there is none greater than sulky attendance: the good count for some time bore the smoke in silence, rather than address himself to the scowling servant-maid. At length he was compelled to beg for drier firewood. The woman retired muttering. On re-entering the room hastily, with an armful of fagots, her foot slipped; she fell, and striking her head against the corner of a chair, cut her temple severely. The blow stunned her for a time, and the wound bled profusely. When she recovered, she found the count's daughter administering to her wound, and binding it up with her own handkerchief. It was such an attention as any woman of ordinary feeling would have yielded; but perhaps there was something in the appearance of the lovely being who bent over her, or in the tones of her voice, that touched the heart of the woman, unused to be ministered to by such hands. Certain it is, she was strongly affected. She caught the delicate hand of the Polonaise, and pressed it fervently to her lips:

"May San Francesco watch over you, signora!" exclaimed she.

A new arrival broke the stillness of the inn. It was a Spanish princess with a numerous retinue. The court-yard was in an uproar; the house in a bustle. The landlady hurried to attend such distinguished guests; and the poor count and his daughter, and their supper, were for the moment forgotten. The veteran Caspar muttered Polish maledictions enough to agonize an Italian ear; but it was impossible to convince the hostess of the superiority of his old master and

young mistress to the whole nobility of Spain.

The noise of the arrival had attracted the daughter to the window just as the new-comers had alighted. A young cavalier sprang out of the carriage, and handed out the princess. The latter was a little shrivelled old lady, with a face of parchment, and a sparkling black eye; she was richly and gaily dressed, and walked with the assistance of a gold-headed cane as high as herself. The young man was tall and elegantly formed. The count's daughter shrunk back at sight of him, though the deep frame of the window screened her from observation. She gave a heavy sigh as she closed the casement. What that sigh meant I cannot say. Perhaps it was at the contrast between the splendid equipage of the princess, and the crazy, rheumatic-looking old vehicle of her father, which stood hard by. Whatever might be the reason, the young lady closed the casement with a sigh. She returned to her chair,—a slight shivering passed over her delicate frame: she leaned her elbow on the arm of the chair, rested her pale cheek in the palm of her hand, and looked mournfully into the fire.

The count thought she appeared paler than usual.

"Does any thing ail thee, my child?" said he.

"Nothing, dear father!" replied she, laying her hand within his, and looking up smiling in his face; but as she said so, a treacherous tear rose suddenly to her eye, and she turned away her head.

"The air of the window has chilled thee," said the count, fondly, "but a good night's rest will make all well again."

The supper-table was at length laid, and the supper about to be served, when the hostess appeared, with her usual obsequiousness, apologizing for showing in the new-comers; but the night air was cold, and there was no other chamber in the inn with a fire in it. She had scarcely made the apology when the princess entered, leaning on the arm of the elegant young man.

The count immediately recognised her for a lady whom he had met frequently in society both at Rome and Naples; and at whose conversaciones, in fact, he had

constantly been invited. The cavalier, too, was her nephew and heir, who had been greatly admired in the gay circle both for his merits and prospects, and who had once been on a visit at the same time with his daughter and himself at the villa of a nobleman near Naples. Report had recently affianced him to a rich Spanish heiress.

The meeting was agreeable to both the count and the princess. The former was a gentleman of the old school, courteous in the extreme; the princess had been a belle in her youth, and a woman of fashion all her life, and liked to be attended to.

The young man approached the daughter, and began something of a complimentary observation; but his manner was embarrassed, and his compliment ended in an indistinct murmur; while the daughter bowed without looking up, moved her lips without articulating a word, and sunk again into her chair, where she sat gazing into the fire, with a thousand varying expressions passing over her countenance.

This singular greeting of the young people was not perceived by the old ones, who were occupied at the time with their own courteous salutations. It was arranged that they should sup together; and as the princess travelled with her own cook, a very tolerable supper soon smoked upon the board. This, too, was assisted by choice wines, and liquours, and delicate confitures brought from one of her carriages; for she was a veteran epicure, and curious in her relish for the good things of this world. She was, in fact, a vivacious little old lady, who mingled the woman of dissipation with the devotee. She was actually on her way to Loretto to expiate a long life of gallantries and peccadilloes by a rich offering at the holy shrine. She was, to be sure, rather a luxuriant penitent, and a contrast to the primitive pilgrims, with scrip and staff, and cockle-shell; but then it would be unreasonable to expect such self-denial from people of fashion; and there was not a doubt of the ample efficacy of the rich crucifixes, and golden vessels, and jewelled ornaments, which she was bearing to the treasury of the blessed Virgin.

The princess and the count chatted much during supper about the scenes and society in which they had mingled, and did not notice that they had all the conversation to themselves: the young people were silent and constrained. The daughter ate nothing in spite of the politeness of the princess, who continually pressed her to taste of one or other of the delicacies. The count shook his head.

"She is not well this evening," said he. "I thought she would have fainted just now as she was looking out of the window at your carriage on its arrival."

A crimson glow flushed to the very temples of the daughter, but she leaned over her plate, and her tresses cast a shade over her countenance.

When supper was over, they drew their chairs about the great fireplace. The flame and smoke had subsided, and a heap of glowing embers diffused a grateful warmth. A guitar, which had been brought from the count's carriage, leaned against the wall; the princess perceived it: "Can we not have a little music before parting for the night?" demanded she.

The count was proud of his daughter's accomplishment, and joined in the request. The young man made an effort of politeness, and taking up the guitar, presented it, though in an embarrassed manner, to the fair musician. She would have declined it, but was too much confused to do so; indeed she was so nervous and agitated, that she dared not trust her voice to make an excuse. She touched the instrument with a faltering hand, and, after preludeing a little, accompanied herself in several Polish airs. Her father's eyes glistened as he sat gazing on her. Even the crusty Caspar lingered in the room, partly through a fondness for the music of his native country, but chiefly through his pride in the musician. Indeed, the melody of the voice, and the delicacy of the touch, were enough to have charmed more fastidious ears. The little princess nodded her head and tapped her hand to the music, though exceedingly out of time; while the nephew sat buried in profound contemplation of a black picture on the opposite wall.

"And now," said the count, patting her cheek fondly, "one more favour.

Let the princess hear that little Spanish air you were so fond of. You can't think," added he, "what a proficiency she has made in your language; though she has been a sad girl, and neglected it of late."

The colour flushed the pale cheek of the daughter. She hesitated, murmured something; but with a sudden effort collected herself, struck the guitar boldly, and began. It was a Spanish romance, with something of love and melancholy in it. She gave the first stanza with great expression, for the tremulous, melting tones of her voice went to the heart; but her articulation failed, her lip quivered, the song died away, and she burst into tears.

The count folded her tenderly in his arms. "Thou art not well, my child," said he, "and I am tasking thee cruelly. Retire to thy chamber, and God bless thee!" She bowed to the company without raising her eyes, and glided out of the room.

The count shook his head as the door closed. "Something is the matter with that child," said he, "which I cannot divine. She has lost all health and spirits lately. She was always a tender flower, and I had much pains to rear her. Excuse a father's foolishness," continued he, "but I have seen much trouble in my family; and this poor girl is all that is now left to me; and she used to be so lively—"

"Maybe she's in love!" said the little princess, with a shrewd nod of the head.

"Impossible!" replied the good count artlessly. "She has never mentioned a word of such a thing to me."

How little did the worthy gentleman dream of the thousand cares, and griefs, and mighty love concerns which agitate a virgin heart, and which a timid girl scarcely breathes unto herself!

The nephew of the princess rose abruptly and walked about the room.

When she found herself alone in her chamber, the feelings of the young lady, so long restrained, broke forth with violence. She opened the casement, that the cool air might blow upon her throbbing temples. Perhaps there was some little pride or pique mingled with her emotions; though her gentle nature did



not seem calculated to harbour any such angry inmate.

"He saw me weep!" said she, with a sudden mantling of the cheek, and a swelling of the throat,—“but no matter!—no matter!”

And so saying, she threw her white arms across the window-frame, buried her face in them, and abandoned herself to an agony of tears. She remained lost in a revery, until the sound of her father's and Caspar's voices in the adjoining room gave token that the party had retired for the night. The lights gleaming from window to window, showed that they were conducting the princess to her apartments, which were in the opposite wing of the inn; and she distinctly saw the figure of the nephew as he passed one of the casements.

She heaved a deep heart-drawn sigh, and was about to close the lattice, when her attention was caught by words spoken below her window by two persons who had just turned an angle of the building.

"But what will become of the poor young lady?" said a voice which she recognised for that of the servant-woman.

"Pooh! she must take her chance," was the reply from old Pietro.

"But cannot she be spared?" asked the other entreatingly; "she's so kind-hearted!"

"Cospetto! what has got into thee?" replied the other petulantly: "would you mar the whole business for the sake of a silly girl?" By this time they had got so far from the window that the Polonaise could hear nothing further.

There was something in this fragment of conversation that was calculated to alarm. Did it relate to herself?—and if so, what was this impending danger from which it was entreated that she might be spared? She was several times on the point of tapping at her father's door, to tell him what she had heard; but she might have been mistaken; she might have heard indistinctly; the conversation might have alluded to some one else; at any rate, it was too indefinite to lead to any conclusion. While in this state of irresolution, she was startled by a low knocking against the wainscot in a remote part of her gloomy chamber. On holding up the light, she beheld a

small door there, which she had not before remarked. It was bolted on the inside. She advanced, and demanded who knocked, and was answered in the voice of the female domestic. On opening the door, the woman stood before it pale and agitated. She entered softly, laying her finger on her lips in sign of caution and secrecy.

"Fly!" said she: "leave this house instantly, or you are lost!"

The young lady, trembling with alarm, demanded an explanation.

"I have no time," replied the woman, "I dare not—I shall be missed if I linger here—but fly instantly, or you are lost."

"And leave my father?"

"Where is he?"

"In the adjoining chamber."

"Call him, then, but lose no time."

The young lady knocked at her father's door. He was not yet retired to bed. She hurried into his room, and told him of the fearful warning she had received. The count returned with her into her chamber, followed by Caspar. His questions soon drew the truth out of the embarrassed answers of the woman. The inn was beset by robbers. They were to be introduced after midnight, when the attendants of the princess and the rest of the travellers were sleeping, and would be an easy prey.

"But we can barricado the inn, we can defend ourselves," said the count.

"What! when the people of the inn are in league with the banditti?"

"How then are we to escape? Can we not order out the carriage and depart?"

"San Francesco! for what? To give the alarm that the plot is discovered? That would make the robbers desperate, and bring them on you at once. They have had notice of the rich booty in the inn, and will not easily let it escape them."

"But how else are we to get off?"

"There is a horse behind the inn," said the woman, "from which the man has just dismounted who has been to summon the aid of part of the band who were at a distance."

"One horse; and there are three of us!" said the count.

“And the Spanish princess!” cried the daughter anxiously—“How can she be extricated from the danger?”

“Diavolo! what is she to me?” said the woman in sudden passion. “It is *you* I come to save, and you will betray me, and we shall all be lost! Hark!” continued she, “I am called—I shall be discovered—one word more. This door leads by a staircase to the court-yard. Under the shed in the rear of the yard, is a small door leading out to the fields. You will find a horse there; mount it; make a circuit under the shadow of a ridge of rocks that you will see; proceed cautiously and quietly until you cross a brook, and find yourself on the road just where there are three white crosses nailed against a tree; then put your horse to his speed, and make the best of your way to the village—but recollect, my life is in your hands—say nothing of what you have heard or seen, whatever may happen at this inn.”

The woman hurried away. A short and agitated consultation took place between the count, his daughter, and the veteran Caspar. The young lady seemed to have lost all apprehension for herself in her solicitude for the safety of the princess. “To fly in selfish silence, and leave her to be massacred!”—A shuddering seized her at the very thought. The gallantry of the count, too, revolted at the idea. He could not consent to turn his back upon a party of helpless travellers, and leave them in ignorance of the danger which hung over them.

“But what is to become of the young lady,” said Caspar, “if the alarm is given, and the inn thrown in a tumult? What may happen to her in a chance-medley affray?”

Here the feelings of the father were roused: he looked upon his lovely, helpless child, and trembled at the chance of her falling into the hands of ruffians.

The daughter, however, thought nothing of herself. “The princess! the princess!—only let the princess know her danger.” She was willing to share it with her.

At length Caspar interfered with the zeal of a faithful old servant. No time was to be lost—the first thing was to

get the young lady out of danger. “Mount the horse,” said he to the count, “take her behind you, and fly! Make for the village, rouse the inhabitants, and send assistance. Leave me here to give the alarm to the princess and her people. I am an old soldier, and I think we shall be able to stand siege until you send us aid.”

The daughter would again have insisted on staying with the princess—

“For what?” said old Caspar bluntly, “You could do no good—You would be in the way—We should have to take care of you instead of ourselves.”

There was no answering these objections: the count seized his pistols, and taking his daughter under his arm, moved towards the staircase. The young lady paused, stepped back, and said, faltering with agitation—“There is a young cavalier with the princess—her nephew—perhaps he may—”

“I understand you, Mademoiselle,” replied old Caspar with a significant nod; “not a hair of his head shall suffer harm if I can help it!”

The young lady blushed deeper than ever: she had not anticipated being so thoroughly understood by the blunt old servant.

“That is not what I mean,” said she, hesitating. She would have added something, or made some explanation; but the moments were precious, and her father hurried her away.

They found their way through the court-yard to the small postern-gate, where the horse stood, fastened to a ring in the wall. The count mounted, took his daughter behind him, and they proceeded as quietly as possible in the direction which the woman had pointed out. Many a fearful and anxious look did the daughter cast back upon the gloomy pile of building: the lights which had feebly twinkled through the dusty casements were one by one disappearing, a sign that the house was gradually sinking to repose; and she trembled with impatience, lest succour should not arrive until that repose had been fatally interrupted.

They passed silently and safely along the skirts of the rocks, protected from observation by their overhanging sha-

dows. They crossed the brook, and reached the place where three white crosses nailed against a tree told of some murder that had been committed there. Just as they had reached this ill-omened spot they beheld several men in the gloom coming down a craggy defile among the rocks.

"Who goes there!" exclaimed a voice.

The count put spurs to his horse, but one of the men sprang forward and seized the bridle. The horse became restive, started back, and reared, and had not the young lady clung to her father, she would have been thrown off. The count leaned forward, put a pistol to the very head of the ruffian, and fired. The latter fell dead. The horse sprang forward. Two or three shots were fired which whistled by the fugitives, but only served to augment their speed. They reached the village in safety.

The whole place was soon aroused; but such was the awe in which the banditti were held, that the inhabitants shrunk at the idea of encountering them. A desperate band had for some time infested that pass through the mountains, and the inn had long been suspected of being one of those horrible places where the unsuspecting wayfarer is entrapped and silently disposed of. The rich ornaments worn by the slattern hostess of the inn had excited heavy suspicions. Several instances had occurred of small parties of travellers disappearing mysteriously on that road, who, it was supposed at first, had been carried off by the robbers for the sake of ransom, but who had never been heard of more. Such were the tales buzzed in the ears of the count by the villagers as he endeavoured to rouse them to the rescue of the princess and her train from their perilous situation. The daughter seconded the exertions of her father with all the eloquence of prayers, and tears, and beauty. Every moment that elapsed increased her anxiety until it became agonizing. Fortunately, there was a body of gendarmes resting at the village. A number of the young villagers volunteered to accompany them, and the little army was put in motion. The count having deposited his daughter in a place

of safety, was too much of the old soldier not to hasten to the scene of danger. It would be difficult to paint the anxious agitation of the young lady while awaiting the result.

The party arrived at the inn just in time. The robbers, finding their plans discovered, and the travellers prepared for their reception, had become open and furious in their attack. The princess's party had barricaded themselves in one suite of apartments, and repulsed the robbers from the doors and windows. Caspar had shown the generalship of a veteran, and the nephew of the princess the dashing valour of a young soldier. Their ammunition, however, was nearly exhausted, and they would have found it difficult to hold out much longer, when a discharge from the musketry of the gendarmes gave them the joyful tidings of succour.

A fierce fight ensued, for part of the robbers were surprised in the inn, and had to stand siege in their turn; while their comrades made desperate attempts to relieve them from under cover of the neighbouring rocks and thickets.

I cannot pretend to give a minute account of the fight, as I have heard it related in a variety of ways. Suffice it to say, the robbers were defeated; several of them killed, and several taken prisoners; which last, together with the people of the inn, were either executed or sent to the galleys.

I picked up these particulars in the course of a journey which I made some time after the event had taken place. I passed by the very inn. It was then dismantled, excepting one wing, in which a body of gendarmes was stationed. They pointed out to me the shot-holes in the window-frames, the walls, and the panels of the doors. There were a number of withered limbs dangling from the branches of a neighbouring tree, and blackening in the air, which I was told were the limbs of the robbers who had been slain, and the culprits who had been executed. The whole place had a dismal, wild, forlorn look.

"Were any of the princess's party killed?" inquired the Englishman.

"As far as I can recollect, there were two or three."

"Not the nephew, I trust?" said the fair Venitian.

"Oh no; he hastened with the count to relieve the anxiety of the daughter by the assurances of victory. The young lady had been sustained throughout the interval of suspense by the very intensity of her feelings. The moment she saw her father returning in safety, accompanied by the nephew of the princess, she uttered a cry of rapture and fainted. Happily, however, she soon recovered, and what is more, was married shortly after to the young cavalier; and the whole party accompanied the old princess in her pilgrimage to Loretto, where her votive offerings may still be seen in the treasury of the Santa Casa."

It would be tedious to follow the devils course of the conversation as it wound through a maze of stories of the kind, until it was taken up by two other travellers who had come under convoy of the procaccio—Mr. Hobbs and Mr. Dobbs, a linen-draper and a green-grocer, just returning from a hasty tour in Greece and the Holy Land. They were full of the story of Alderman Popkins. They were astonished that the robbers should dare to molest a man of his importance on 'Change, he being an eminent dry-salter of Throgmorton Street, and a magistrate to boot.

In fact, the story of the Popkins family was but too true. It was attested by too many present to be for a moment doubted; and from the contradictory and concordant testimony of half a score, all eager to relate it, and all talking at the same time, the Englishman was enabled to gather the following particulars.

#### THE ADVENTURE

OF

#### THE POPKINS FAMILY.

It was but a few days before, that the carriage of Alderman Popkins had driven up to the inn of Terracina. Those who

have seen an English family carriage on the continent must have remarked the sensation it produces. It is an epitome of England; a little morsel of the old island rolling about the world. Every thing about it compact, snug, finished, and fitting. The wheels turning on patent axles without rattling; the body, hanging so well on its springs, yielding to every motion, yet protecting from every shock; the ruddy faces gaping from the windows—sometimes of a portly old citizen, sometimes of a voluminous dowager, and sometimes of a fine fresh hoyden just from boarding-school. And then the dickeys loaded with well-dressed servants, beef-fed and bluff; looking down from their heights with contempt on all the world around; profoundly ignorant of the country and the people, and devoutly certain that every thing not English must be wrong.

Such was the carriage of Alderman Popkins as it made its appearance at Terracina. The courier who had preceded it to order horses, and who was a Neapolitan, had given a magnificent account of the riches and greatness of his master; blundering with an Italian's splendour of imagination about the alderman's titles and dignities. The host had added his usual share of exaggeration; so that by the time the alderman drove up to the door, he was a *milor—magnifico—principe*—the Lord knows what!

The alderman was advised to take an escort to Fondi and Itri, but he refused. It was as much as a man's life was worth, he said, to stop him on the king's highway: he would complain of it to the ambassador at Naples; he would make a national affair of it. The Principessa Popkins, a fresh, motherly dame, seemed perfectly secure in the protection of her husband, so omnipotent a man in the city. The Signorine Popkins, two fine bouncing girls, looked to their brother Tom, who had taken lessons in boxing; and as to the dandy himself, he swore no scaramouch of an Italian robber would dare to meddle with an Englishman. The landlord shrugged his shoulders, and turned out the palms of his hands with a true Italian grimace, and the carriage of Milor Popkins rolled on.

They passed through several very suspicious places without any molestation. The Miss Popkins, who were very romantic, and had learnt to draw in water-colours, were enchanted with the savage scenery around; it was so like what they had read in Mrs. Radcliffe's romances; they should like of all things to make sketches. At length the carriage arrived at a place where the road wound up a long hill. Mrs. Popkins had sunk into a sleep; the young ladies were lost in the "Loves of the Angels;" and the dandy was hectoring the postillions from the coach-box. The alderman got out, as he said, to stretch his legs up the hill. It was a long, winding ascent, and obliged him every now and then to stop and blow and wipe his forehead, with many a pish! and phew! being rather pury and short of wind. As the carriage, however, was far behind him, and moved slowly under the weight of so many well-stuffed trunks and well-stuffed travellers, he had plenty of time to walk at leisure.

On a jutting point of rock that overhung the road, nearly at the summit of the hill, just where the route began again to descend, he saw a solitary man seated, who appeared to be tending goats. Alderman Popkins was one of your shrewd travellers who always like to be picking up small information along the road; so he thought he'd just scramble up to the honest man, and have a little talk with him by way of learning the news, and getting a lesson in Italian. As he drew near to the peasant, he did not half like his looks. He was partly reclining on the rocks, wrapped in the usual long mantle, which, with his slouched hat, only left a part of a swarthy visage, with a keen black eye, a beetle brow, and a fierce moustache to be seen. He had whistled several times to his dog, which was roving about the side of the hill. As the alderman approached, he rose and greeted him. When standing erect, he seemed almost gigantic, at least in the eyes of Alderman Popkins, who, however, being a short man, might be deceived.

The latter would gladly now have been back in the carriage, or even on 'Change in London; for he was by no

means well pleased with his company. However, he determined to put the best face on matters, and was beginning a conversation about the state of the weather, the baddishness of the crops, and the price of goats in that part of the country, when he heard a violent screaming. He ran to the edge of the rock, and looking over, beheld his carriage surrounded by robbers. One held down the fat footman, another had the dandy by his starched cravat, with a pistol to his head; one was rummaging a port-manteau, another rummaging the principessa's pockets; while the two Miss Popkins were screaming from each window of the carriage, and their waiting-maid squalling from the dickey.

Alderman Popkins felt all the ire of the parent and the magistrate roused within him. He grasped his cane, and was on the point of scrambling down the rocks, either to assault the robbers, or to read the riot act, when he was suddenly seized by the arm. It was by his friend the goatherd, whose cloak, falling open, discovered a belt stuck full of pistols and stiletos. In short, he found himself in the clutches of the captain of the band, who had stationed himself on the rock to look out for travellers, and to give notice to his men.

A sad ransacking took place. Trunks were turned inside out, and all the finery and frippery of the Popkins family scattered about the road. Such a chaos of Venice beads and Roman mosaics, and Paris bonnets of the young ladies, mingled with the alderman's nightcaps and lambs' wool stockings, and the dandy's hair-brushes, stays, and starched cravats.

The gentlemen were eased of their purses and their watches, the ladies of their jewels; and the whole party were on the point of being carried up into the mountain, when, fortunately, the appearance of soldiery at a distance obliged the robbers to make off with the spoils they had secured, and leave the Popkins family to gather together the remnants of their effects, and to make the best of their way to Fondi.

When safe arrived, the alderman made a terrible blustering at the inn; threatened to complain to the ambassador at Naples, and was ready to shake

his cane at the whole country. The dandy had many stories to tell of his scuffles with the brigands, who overpowered him merely by numbers. As to the Miss Popkins, they were quite delighted with the adventure, and were occupied the whole evening in writing it in their journals. They declared the captain of the band to be a most romantic-looking man, they dared to say some unfortunate lover, or exiled nobleman; and several of the band to be very handsome young men—"quite picturesque!"

"In verity," said mine host of Terracina, "they say the captain of the band is *un galantuomo*."

"A gallant man!" said the Englishman indignantly: "I'd have your gallant man hanged like a dog!"

"To dare to meddle with Englishmen!" said Mr. Hobbs.

"And such a family as the Popkines!" said Mr. Dobbs.

"They ought to come upon the county for damages!" said Mr. Hobbs.

"Our ambassador should make a complaint to the government of Naples," said Mr. Dobbs.

"They should be obliged to drive these rascals out of the country," said Hobbs.

"If they did not, we should declare war against them," said Dobbs.

"Pish!—humbug!" muttered the Englishman to himself, and walked away.

The Englishman had been a little wearied by this story, and by the ultra zeal of his countrymen, and was glad when a summons to their supper relieved him from the crowd of travellers. He walked out with his Venitian friends and a young Frenchman of an interesting demeanour, who had become sociable with them in the course of the conversation. They directed their steps toward the sea, which was lit up by the rising moon.

As they strolled along the beach, they came to where a party of soldiers were stationed in a circle. They were guarding a number of galley-slaves, who were permitted to refresh themselves in the evening breeze, and sport and roll upon the sand.

The Frenchman paused, and pointed to the group of wretches at their sports. "It is difficult," said he, "to conceive a more frightful mass of crime than is here collected. Many of these have probably been robbers, such as you have heard described. Such is, too often, the career of crime in this country. The parricide, the fratricide, the infanticide, the miscreant of every kind, first flies from justice and turns mountain bandit; and then, when wearied of a life of danger, becomes traitor to his brother desperadoes; betrays them to punishment, and thus buys a commutation of his own sentence from death to the galleys; happy in the privilege of wallowing on the shore an hour a day, in this mere state of animal enjoyment."

The fair Venitian shuddered as she cast a look at the horde of wretches at their evening amusement. "They seemed," she said, "like so many serpents writhing together." And yet the idea that some of them had been robbers, those formidable beings that haunted her imagination, made her still cast another fearful glance, as we contemplate some terrible beast of prey, with a degree of awe and horror, even though caged and chained.

The conversation reverted to the tales of banditti which they had heard at the inn. The Englishman condemned some of them as fabrications, others as exaggerations. As to the story of the improvisatore, he pronounced it a mere piece of romance, originating in the heated brain of the narrator.

"And yet," said the Frenchman, "there is so much romance about the real life of those beings, and about the singular country they infest, that it is hard to tell what to reject on the ground of improbability. I have had an adventure happen to myself which gave me an opportunity of getting some insight into their manners and habits, which I found altogether out of the common run of existence."

There was an air of mingled frankness and modesty about the Frenchman which had gained the good-will of the whole party, not even excepting the Englishman. They all eagerly inquired after the particulars of the circumstance he

alluded to, and as they strolled slowly up and down the sea-shore, he related the following adventure.

### THE PAINTER'S ADVENTURE.

I AM an historical painter by profession, and resided for some time in the family of a foreign prince at his villa, about fifteen miles from Rome, among some of the most interesting scenery of Italy. It is situated on the heights of ancient Tusculum. In its neighbourhood are the ruins of the villas of Cicero, Sylla, Lucullus, Rufinus, and other illustrious Romans, who sought refuge here occasionally from their toils, in the bosom of a soft and luxurious repose. From the midst of delightful bowers, refreshed by the pure mountain-breeze, the eye looks over a romantic landscape full of poetical and historical associations. The Albanian mountains; Tivoli, once the favourite residence of Horace and Mæcenas; the vast, deserted, melancholy Campagna, with the Tiber winding through it, and St. Peter's dome swelling in the midst, the monument, as it were, over the grave of ancient Rome.

I assisted the prince in researches which he was making among the classic ruins of his vicinity: his exertions were highly successful. Many wrecks of admirable statues and fragments of exquisite sculpture were dug up; monuments of the taste and magnificence that reigned in the ancient Tusculan abodes. He had studded his villa and its grounds with statues, relievos, vases, and sarcophagi, thus retrieved from the bosom of the earth.

The mode of life pursued at the villa was delightfully serene, diversified by interesting occupations and elegant leisure. Every one passed the day according to his pleasure or pursuits; and we all assembled in a cheerful dinner-party at sunset.

It was on the fourth of November, a beautiful serene day, that we had assembled in the saloon at the sound of the first dinner-bell. The family were surprised at the absence of the prince's confessor. They waited for him in vain,

and at length placed themselves at table. They at first attributed his absence to his having prolonged his customary walk; and the early part of the dinner passed without any uneasiness. When the desert was served, however, without his making his appearance, they began to feel anxious. They feared he might have been taken ill in some alley of the woods, or that he might have fallen into the hands of robbers. Not far from the villa, with the interval of a small valley, rose the mountains of the Abruzzi, the stronghold of banditti. Indeed, the neighbourhood had for some time past been infested by them; and Barbone, a notorious bandit chief, had often been met prowling about the solitudes of Tusculum. The daring enterprises of these ruffians were well known: the objects of their cupidity or vengeance were insecure even in palaces. As yet they had respected the possessions of the prince; but the idea of such dangerous spirits hovering about the neighbourhood was sufficient to occasion alarm.

The fears of the company increased as evening closed in. The prince ordered out forest guards and domestics with flambeaux to search for the confessor. They had not departed long when a slight noise was heard in the corridor of the ground-floor. The family were dining on the first floor, and the remaining domestics were occupied in attendance. There was no one on the ground-floor at this moment but the housekeeper, the laundress, and three field-labourers who were resting themselves, and conversing with the women.

I heard the noise from below, and presuming it to be occasioned by the return of the absentee, I left the table and hastened down stairs, eager to gain intelligence that might relieve the anxiety of the prince and princess. I had scarcely reached the last step, when I beheld before me a man dressed as a bandit; a carbine in his hand, and a stiletto and pistols in his belt. His countenance had a mingled expression of ferocity and trepidation: he sprang upon me, and exclaimed exultingly, "Ecco il principe!"

I saw at once into what hands I had fallen, but endeavoured to summon up coolness and presence of mind. A glance

towards the lower end of the corridor showed me several ruffians, clothed and armed in the same manner with the one who had seized me. They were guarding the two females, and the field-labourers. The robber, who held me firmly by the collar, demanded repeatedly whether or not I were the prince: his object evidently was to carry off the prince, and extort an immense ransom. He was enraged at receiving none but vague replies, for I felt the importance of misleading him.

A sudden thought struck me how I might extricate myself from his clutches. I was unarmed, it is true, but I was vigorous. His companions were at a distance. By a sudden exertion I might wrest myself from him, and spring up the staircase, whither he would not dare to follow me singly. The idea was put in practice as soon as conceived. The ruffian's throat was bare; with my right hand I seized him by it, with my left hand I grasped the arm which held the carbine. The suddenness of my attack took him completely unawares, and the strangling nature of my grasp paralysed him. He choked and faltered. I felt his hand relaxing its hold, and was on the point of jerking myself away, and darting up the staircase, before he could recover himself, when I was suddenly seized by some one from behind.

I had to let go my grasp. The bandit, once released, fell upon me with fury, and gave me several blows with the butt-end of his carbine, one of which wounded me severely in the forehead and covered me with blood. He took advantage of my being stunned to rifle me of my watch, and whatever valuables I had about my person.

When I recovered from the effect of the blow, I heard the voice of the chief of the banditti, who exclaimed—"Quello è il principe; siamo contenti; andiamo!" (It is the prince; enough; let us be off.) The band immediately closed round me and dragged me out of the palace, bearing off the three labourers likewise.

I had no hat on, and the blood flowed from my wound; I managed to stanch it, however, with my pocket-handkerchief, which I bound round my forehead. The captain of the band conducted me in tri-

umph, supposing me to be the prince. We had gone some distance before he learnt his mistake from one of the labourers. His rage was terrible. It was too late to return to the villa and endeavour to retrieve his error, for by this time the alarm must have been given, and every one in arms. He darted at me a ferocious look—swore I had deceived him, and caused him to miss his fortune—and told me to prepare for death. The rest of the robbers were equally furious. I saw their hands upon their poniards, and I knew that death was seldom an empty threat with these ruffians. The labourers saw the peril into which their information had betrayed me, and eagerly assured the captain that I was a man for whom the prince would pay a great ransom. This produced a pause. For my part, I cannot say that I had been much dismayed by their menaces. I mean not to make any boast of courage; but I have been so schooled to hardship during the late revolutions, and have beheld death around me in so many perilous and disastrous scenes, that I have become in some measure callous to its terrors. The frequent hazard of life makes a man at length as reckless of it as a gambler of his money. To their threat of death, I replied, "that the sooner it was executed the better." This reply seemed to astonish the captain; and the prospect of ransom held out by the labourers had, no doubt, a still greater effect on him. He considered for a moment, assumed a calmer manner, and made a sign to his companions, who had remained waiting for my death-warrant, "Forward!" said he, "we will see about this matter by and by!"

We descended rapidly towards the road of La Molara, which leads to Rocca Priori. In the midst of this road is a solitary inn. The captain ordered the troop to halt at the distance of a pistol-shot from it, and enjoined profound silence. He approached the threshold alone, with noiseless steps. He examined the outside of the door very narrowly, and then returning precipitately, made a sign for the troop to continue its march in silence. It has since been ascertained, that this was one of those infamous inns which



are the secret resorts of banditti. The innkeeper had an understanding with the captain, as he most probably had with the chiefs of the different bands. When any of the patrols and gendarmes were quartered at his house, the brigands were warned of it by a preconcerted signal on the door; when there was no such signal, they might enter with safety, and be sure of welcome.

After pursuing our road a little further we struck off towards the woody mountains which envelope Rocca Priori. Our march was long and painful; with many circuits and windings: at length we clambered a steep ascent, covered with a thick forest; and when we had reached the centre, I was told to seat myself on the ground. No sooner had I done so than, at a sign from their chief, the robbers surrounded me, and spreading their great cloaks from one to the other, formed a kind of pavilion of mantles, to which their bodies might be said to serve as columns. The captain then struck a light, and a flambeau was lit immediately. The mantles were extended to prevent the light of the flambeau from being seen through the forest. Anxious as was my situation, I could not look round upon this screen of dusky drapery, relieved by the bright colours of the robber's garments, the gleaming of their weapons, and the variety of strong-marked countenances, lit up by the flambeau, without admiring the picturesque effect of the scene. It was quite theatrical.

The captain now held an inkhorn, and giving me pen and paper, ordered me to write what he should dictate. I obeyed. It was a demand, couched in the style of robber eloquence, "that the prince should send three thousand dollars for my ransom; or that my death should be the consequence of a refusal."

I knew enough of the desperate character of these beings to feel assured this was not an idle menace. Their only mode of insuring attention to their demands is to make the infliction of the penalty inevitable. I saw at once, however, that the demand was preposterous, and made in improper language.

I told the captain so, and assured him that so extravagant a sum would never be granted. "That I was neither a

friend nor relative of the prince, but a mere artist, employed to execute certain paintings. That I had nothing to offer as a ransom but the price of my labours: if this were not sufficient, my life was at their disposal; it was a thing on which I set but little value."

I was the more hardy in my reply, because I saw that coolness and hardihood had an effect upon the robbers. It is true, as I finished speaking, the captain laid his hand upon his stiletto; but he restrained himself, and snatching the letter, folded it, and ordered me in a peremptory tone to address it to the prince. He then despatched one of the labourers with it to Tusculum, who promised to return with all possible speed.

The robbers now prepared themselves for sleep, and I was told that I might do the same. They spread their great cloaks on the ground, and lay down around me. One was stationed at a little distance to keep watch, and was relieved every two hours. The strangeness and wildness of this mountain bivouac among the lawless beings, whose hands seemed ever ready to grasp the stiletto, and with whom life was so trivial and insecure, was enough to banish repose. The coldness of the earth and of the dew, however, had a still greater effect than mental causes in disturbing my rest. The airs wafted to these mountains from the distant Mediterranean, diffused a great chilliness as the night advanced. An expedient suggested itself. I called one of my fellow-prisoners, the labourers, and made him lie down beside me. Whenever one of my limbs became chilled, I approached it to the robust limb of my neighbour, and borrowed some of his warmth. In this way I was able to obtain a little sleep.

Day at length dawned, and I was roused from my slumber by the voice of the chieftain. He desired me to rise and follow him. I obeyed. On considering his physiognomy attentively, it appeared a little softened. He even assisted me in scrambling up the steep forest, among rocks and brambles. Habit had made him a vigorous mountaineer; but I found it excessively toilsome to climb these rugged heights. We arrived at length at the summit of the mountain.

Here it was that I felt all the enthusiasm of my art suddenly awakened; and I forgot in an instant all my perils and fatigues at this magnificent view of sunrise in the midst of the mountains of the Abruzzi. It was on these heights that Hannibal first pitched his camp, and pointed out Rome to his followers. The eye embraces a vast extent of country. The minor height of Tusculum, with its villas and its sacred ruins, lies below; the Sabine hills and the Albanian mountains stretch on either hand; and beyond Tusculum and Frascati spreads out the immense Campagna, with its lines of tombs, and here and there a broken aqueduct stretching across it, and the towers and domes of the eternal city in the midst.

Fancy this scene lit up by the glories of a rising sun, and bursting upon my sight as I looked forth from among the majestic forests of the Abruzzi. Fancy, too, the savage foreground, made still more savage by groups of banditti, armed and dressed in their wild picturesque manner, and you will not wonder that the enthusiasm of a painter for a moment overpowered all his other feelings.

The banditti were astonished at my admiration of a scene which familiarity had made so common in their eyes. I took advantage of their halting at this spot, drew forth a quire of drawing-paper, and began to sketch the features of the landscape. The height on which I was seated was wild and solitary, separated from the ridge of Tusculum by a valley nearly three miles wide, though the distance appeared less from the purity of the atmosphere. This height was one of the favourite retreats of the banditti, commanding a look-out over the country; while at the same time it was covered with forests, and distant from the populous haunts of men.

While I was sketching, my attention was called off for a moment by the cries of birds, and the bleatings of sheep. I looked round, but could see nothing of the animals which uttered them. They were repeated, and appeared to come from the summits of the trees. On looking more narrowly, I perceived six of the robbers perched in the tops of oaks,

which grew on the breezy crest of the mountain, and commanded an uninterrupted prospect. From hence they were keeping a look-out, like so many vultures; casting their eyes into the depths of the valley below us; communicating with each other by signs, or holding discourse in sounds which might be mistaken by the wayfarer for the cries of hawks and crows, or the bleating of the mountain flocks. After they had reconnoitred the neighbourhood, and finished their singular discourse, they descended from their airy perch, and returned to their prisoners. The captain posted three of them at three naked sides of the mountain, while he remained to guard us with what appeared his most trusty companion.

I had my book of sketches in my hand; he requested to see it, and after having run his eye over it, expressed himself convinced of the truth of my assertion that I was a painter. I thought I saw a gleam of good feeling dawning in him, and determined to avail myself of it. I knew that the worst of men have their good points and their accessible sides, if one would but study them carefully. Indeed there is a singular mixture in the character of the Italian robber. With reckless ferocity he often mingles traits of kindness and good-humour. He is not always radically bad; but driven to his course of life by some unpremeditated crime, the effect of those sudden bursts of passion to which the Italian temperament is prone. This has compelled him to take to the mountains, or, as it is technically termed among them, "andare in campagna." He has become a robber by profession; but like a soldier, when not in action, he can lay aside his weapon and his fierceness, and become like other men.

I took occasion, from the observations of the captain on my sketchings, to fall into conversation with him. I found him sociable and communicative. By degrees I became completely at my ease with him. I had fancied I perceived about him a degree of self-love, which I determined to make use of. I assumed an air of careless frankness, and told him, that, as an artist, I pretended to the power of judging of the physiognomy;

that I thought I perceived something in his features and demeanour which announced him worthy of higher fortunes; that he was not formed to exercise the profession to which he had abandoned himself; that he had talents and qualities fitted for a nobler sphere of action; that he had but to change his course of life, and, in a legitimate career, the same courage and endowments which now made him an object of terror, would assure him the applause and admiration of society.

I had not mistaken my man: my discourse both touched and excited him. He seized my hand, pressed it, and replied with strong emotion—"You have guessed the truth: you have judged of me rightly." He remained for a moment silent; then, with a kind of effort, he resumed—"I will tell you some particulars of my life, and you will perceive that it was the oppression of others, rather than my own crimes, which drove me to the mountains. I sought to serve my fellow-men, and they have persecuted me from among them." We seated ourselves on the grass, and the robber gave me the following anecdotes of his history.

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THE STORY

OF

THE BANDIT CHIEFTAIN.

I AM a native of the village of Prossedi. My father was easy enough in circumstances, and we lived peaceably and independently, cultivating our fields. All went on well with us until a new chief of the Sbirri was sent to our village to take command of the police. He was an arbitrary fellow, prying into every thing, and practising all sorts of vexations and oppressions in the discharge of his office. I was at that time eighteen years of age, and had a natural love of justice and good neighbourhood. I had also a little education, and knew something of history, so as to be able to judge a little of men and their actions. All this inspired me with hatred for this paltry despot. My own family, also, became the object of his suspicion or

dislike, and felt more than once the arbitrary abuse of his power. These things worked together in my mind, and I gasped after vengeance. My character was always ardent and energetic, and, acted upon by the love of justice, determined me, by one blow, to rid the country of the tyrant.

Full of my project, I rose one morning before peep of day, and concealing a stiletto under my waistcoat—here you see it!—(and he drew forth a long keen poniard) I lay in wait for him in the outskirts of the village. I knew all his haunts, and his habit of making his rounds and prowling about like a wolf in the gray of the morning. At length I met him, and attacked him with fury. He was armed, but I took him unawares, and was full of youth and vigour. I gave him repeated blows to make sure work, and laid him lifeless at my feet.

When I was satisfied that I had done for him, I returned with all haste to the village, but had the ill luck to meet two of the Sbirri as I entered it. They accosted me, and asked if I had seen their chief. I assumed an air of tranquillity, and told them I had not. They continued on their way, and within a few hours brought back the dead body to Prossedi. Their suspicions of me being already awakened, I was arrested and thrown into prison. Here I lay several weeks, when the Prince, who was Seigneur of Prossedi, directed judicial proceedings against me. I was brought to trial, and a witness was produced, who pretended to have seen me flying with precipitation not far from the bleeding body; and so I was condemned to the galleys for thirty years.

"Curse on such laws!" vociferated the bandit, foaming with rage: "Curse on such a government! and ten thousand curses on the Prince who caused me to be adjudged so rigorously, while so many other Roman princes harbour and protect assassins a thousand times more culpable! What had I done but what was inspired by a love of justice and my country? Why was my act more culpable than that of Brutus, when he sacrificed Cæsar to the cause of liberty and justice?"

There was something at once both

lofty and ludicrous in the rhapsody of this robber chief, thus associating himself with one of the great names of antiquity. It showed, however, that he had at least the merit of knowing the remarkable facts in the history of his country. He became more calm, and resumed his narrative.

I was conducted to Civita Vecchia in fetters. My heart was burning with rage. I had been married scarce six months to a woman whom I passionately loved, and who was pregnant. My family was in despair. For a long time I made unsuccessful efforts to break my chain. At length I found a morsel of iron, which I hid carefully, and endeavoured, with a pointed flint, to fashion it into a kind of file. I occupied myself in this work during the night-time, and when it was finished, I made out, after a long time, to sever one of the rings of my chain. My flight was successful.

I wandered for several weeks in the mountains which surround Prossedi, and found means to inform my wife of the place where I was concealed. She came often to see me. I had determined to put myself at the head of an armed band. She endeavoured, for a long time, to dissuade me, but finding my resolution fixed, she at length united in my project of vengeance, and brought me, herself, my poniard. By her means I communicated with several brave fellows of the neighbouring villages, whom I knew to be ready to take to the mountains, and only panting for an opportunity to exercise their daring spirits. We soon formed a combination, procured arms, and we have had ample opportunities of revenging ourselves for the wrongs and injuries which most of us have suffered. Every thing has succeeded with us until now; and had it not been for our blunder in mistaking you for the prince, our fortunes would have been made.

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Here the robber concluded his story. He had talked himself into complete companionship, and assured me he no longer bore me any grudge for the error of which I had been the innocent cause. He even professed a kindness for me, and wished me to remain some time with them. He promised to give me a sight

of certain grottoes which they occupied beyond Villettri, and whither they resorted during the intervals of their expeditions. He assured me that they led a jovial life there; had plenty of good cheer; slept on beds of moss; and were waited upon by young and beautiful females, whom I might take for models.

I confess I felt my curiosity roused by his description of the grottoes and their inhabitants; they realized those scenes in robber story which I had always looked upon as mere creations of the fancy. I should gladly have accepted his invitation, and paid a visit to these caverns, could I have felt more secure in my company.

I began to find my situation less painful. I had evidently propitiated the goodwill of the chieftain, and hoped that he might release me for a moderate ransom. A new alarm, however, awaited me. While the captain was looking out with impatience for the return of the messenger who had been sent to the prince, the sentinel who had been posted on the side of the mountain facing the plain of La Molarà came running towards us with precipitation. "We are betrayed!" exclaimed he. "The police of Frascati are after us. A party of carabinieri have just stopped at the inn below the mountain." Then, laying his hand on his stiletto, he swore, with a terrible oath, that if they made the least movement towards the mountain, my life and the lives of my fellow-prisoners should answer for it.

The chieftain resumed all his ferocity of demeanour, and approved of what his companion said; but when the latter had returned to his post, he turned to me with a softened air: "I must act as chief," said he, "and humour my dangerous subalterns. It is a law with us to kill our prisoners, rather than suffer them to be rescued; but do not be alarmed. In case we are surprised, keep by me. Fly with us, and I will consider myself responsible for your life."

There was nothing very consolatory in this arrangement, which would have placed me between two dangers. I scarcely knew, in case of flight, from which I should have most to apprehend, the carbines of the pursuers, or the stilet-

toes of the pursued. I remained silent, however, and endeavoured to maintain a look of tranquillity.

For an hour was I kept in this state of peril and anxiety. The robbers, crouching among their leafy coverts, kept an eagle watch upon the carabinieri below, as they loitered about the inn; sometimes lolling about the portal; sometimes disappearing for several minutes; then sallying out, examining their weapons, pointing in different directions, and apparently asking questions about the neighbourhood. Not a movement, a gesture, was lost upon the keen eyes of the brigands. The carabinieri having finished their refreshment, seized their arms, continued along the valley towards the great road, and gradually left the mountain behind them. "I felt almost certain," said the chief, "that they could not be sent after us. They know too well how prisoners have fared in our hands on similar occasions. Our laws in this respect are inflexible, and are necessary for our safety. If we once flinched from them, there would no longer be any such thing as a ransom to be procured."

There were no signs yet of the messenger's return. I was preparing to resume my sketching, when the captain drew a quire of paper from his knapsack. "Come," said he, laughing, "you are a painter,—take my likeness. The leaves of your portfolio are small,—draw it on this." I gladly consented, for it was a study that seldom presents itself to a painter. I recollected that Salvator Rosa in his youth had voluntarily sojourned for a time among the banditti of Calabria, and had filled his mind with the savage scenery and savage associates by which he was surrounded. I seized my pencil with enthusiasm at the thought. I found the captain the most docile of subjects, and, after various shiftings of position, I placed him in an attitude to my mind.

Picture to yourself a stern muscular figure, in fanciful bandit costume; with pistols and poniards in belt; his brawny neck bare; a handkerchief loosely thrown round it, and the two ends in front strung with rings of all kinds, the spoils of travellers; relics and medals hanging on his breast; his hat decorated with vari-

ous coloured ribands; his vest and short breeches of bright colours and finely embroidered; his legs in buskins or leggings. Fancy him on a mountain height, among wild rocks and rugged oaks, leaning on his carbine, as if meditating some exploit; while far below are beheld villages and villas, the scenes of his maraudings, with the wide Campagna dimly extending in the distance.

The robber was pleased with the sketch, and seemed to admire himself upon paper. I had scarcely finished, when the labourer arrived who had been sent for my ransom. He had reached Tusculum two hours after midnight. He brought me a letter from the prince, who was in bed at the time of his arrival. As I had predicted, he treated the demand as extravagant, but offered five hundred dollars for my ransom. Having no money by him at the moment, he had sent a note for the amount, payable to whomsoever should conduct me safe and sound to Rome. I presented the note of hand to the chieftain: he received it with a shrug. "Of what use are notes of hand to us?" said he. "Who can we send with you to Rome to receive it? We are all marked men; known and described at every gate and military post, and village church-door. No; we must have gold and silver; let the sum be paid in cash, and you shall be restored to liberty."

The captain again placed a sheet of paper before me, to communicate his determination to the prince. When I had finished the letter, and took the sheet from the quire, I found on the opposite side of it the portrait which I had just been tracing. I was about to tear it off, and give it to the chief.

"Hold!" said he, "let it go to Rome: let them see what kind of a looking fellow I am. Perhaps the prince and his friends may form as good an opinion of me from my face as you have done."

This was said sportively, yet it was evident there was vanity lurking at the bottom. Even this wary, distrustful chief of banditti forgot for a moment his usual foresight and precaution, in the common wish to be admired. He never reflected what use might be made of this portrait in his pursuit and conviction.

The letter was folded and directed, and the messenger departed again for Tusculum. It was now eleven o'clock in the morning, and as yet we had eaten nothing. In spite of all my anxiety, I began to feel a craving appetite. I was glad therefore to hear the captain talk something about eating. He observed that for three days and nights they had been lurking about among rocks and woods, meditating their expedition to Tusculum, during which time all their provisions had been exhausted. He should now take measures to procure a supply. Leaving me therefore in charge of his comrade, in whom he appeared to have implicit confidence, he departed, assuring me that in less than two hours we should make a good dinner. Where it was to come from was an enigma to me, though it was evident these beings had their secret friends and agents throughout the country.

Indeed, the inhabitants of these mountains, and of the valleys which they embosom, are a rude, half-civilized set. The towns and villages among the forests of the Abruzzi, shut up from the rest of the world, are almost like savage dens. It is wonderful that such rude abodes, so little known and visited, should be embosomed in the midst of one of the most travelled and civilized countries of Europe. Among these regions the robber prowls unmolested; not a mountaineer hesitates to give him secret harbour and assistance. The shepherds, however, who tend their flocks among the mountains, are the favourite emissaries of the robbers, when they would send messages down to the valleys either for ransom or supplies.

The shepherds of the Abruzzi are as wild as the scenes they frequent. They are clad in a rude garb of black or brown sheepskin; they have high conical hats, and coarse sandals of cloth bound round their legs with thongs similar to those worn by the robbers. They carry long staves, on which as they lean, they form picturesque objects in the lonely landscape, and they are followed by their ever-constant companion, the dog. They are a curious questioning set, glad at any time to relieve the monotony of their solitude by the conversation of the pass-

ers-by; and the dog will lend an attentive ear, and put on as sagacious and inquisitive a look as his master.

But I am wandering from my story. I was now left alone with one of the robbers, the confidential companion of the chief. He was the youngest and most vigorous of the band; and though his countenance had something of that dissolute fierceness which seems natural to this desperate, lawless mode of life, yet there were traces of manly beauty about it. As an artist I could not but admire it. I had remarked in him an air of abstraction and revery, and at times a movement of inward suffering and impatience. He now sat on the ground, his elbows on his knees, his head resting between his clenched fists, and his eyes fixed on the earth with an expression of sad and bitter rumination. I had grown familiar with him from repeated conversations, and had found him superior in mind to the rest of the band. I was anxious to seize any opportunity of sounding the feelings of these singular beings. I fancied I read in the countenance of this one traces of self-condemnation and remorse; and the ease with which I had drawn forth the confidence of the chieftain encouraged me to hope the same with his follower.

After a little preliminary conversation, I ventured to ask him if he did not feel regret at having abandoned his family, and taken to this dangerous profession. "I feel," replied he, "but one regret, and that will end only with my life."

As he said this, he pressed his clenched fists upon his bosom, drew his breath through his set teeth, and added, with a deep emotion, "I have something within here that stifles me; it is like a burning iron consuming my very heart. I could tell you a miserable story—but not now—another time."

He relapsed into his former position, and sat with his head between his hands, muttering to himself in broken ejaculations, and what appeared at times to be curses and maledictions. I saw he was not in a mood to be disturbed, so I left him to himself. In a little while the exhaustion of his feelings, and probably the fatigues he had undergone in this expedition, began to produce drowsiness. He

struggled with it for a time, but the warmth and stillness of mid-day made it irresistible, and he at length stretched himself upon the herbage and fell fast asleep.

I now beheld a chance of escape within my reach. My guard lay before me at my mercy. His vigorous limbs relaxed by sleep—his bosom open for the blow—his carbine slipped from his nerveless grasp, and lying by his side—his stiletto half out of the pocket in which it was usually carried. Two only of his comrades were in sight, and those at a considerable distance on the edge of the mountain, their backs turned to us, and their attention occupied in keeping a look-out upon the plain. Through a strip of intervening forest, and at the foot of a steep descent, I beheld the village of Rocca Priori. To have secured the carbine of the sleeping brigand; to have seized upon his poniard, and have plunged it in his heart, would have been the work of an instant. Should he die without noise, I might dart through the forest, and down to Rocca Priori before my flight might be discovered. In case of alarm, I should have a fair start of the robbers, and a chance of getting beyond the reach of their shot.

Here then was an opportunity for both escape and vengeance; perilous indeed, but powerfully tempting. Had my situation been more critical I could not have resisted it. I reflected, however, for a moment. The attempt, if successful, would be followed by the sacrifice of my two fellow-prisoners, who were sleeping profoundly, and could not be awakened in time to escape. The labourer who had gone after the ransom might also fall a victim to the rage of the robbers, without the money which he brought being saved. Besides, the conduct of the chief towards me made me feel confident of speedy deliverance. These reflections overcame the first powerful impulse, and I calmed the turbulent agitation which it had awakened.

I again took out my materials for drawing, and amused myself with sketching the magnificent prospect. It was now about noon, and every thing had sunk into repose, like the bandit that lay sleeping before me. The noontide still-

ness that reigned over the mountains, the vast landscape below, gleaming with distant towns, and dotted with various habitations and signs of life, yet all so silent, had a powerful effect upon my mind. The intermediate valleys, too, which lie among the mountains, have a peculiar air of solitude. Few sounds are heard at mid-day to break the quiet of the scene. Sometimes the whistle of a solitary muleteer, lagging with his lazy animal along the road which winds through the centre of the valley; sometimes the faint piping of a shepherd's reed from the side of the mountain, or sometimes the bell of an ass slowly pacing along, followed by a monk with bare feet, and bare, shining head, and carrying provisions to his convent.

I had continued to sketch for some time among my sleeping companions, when at length I saw the captain of the band approaching, followed by a peasant leading a mule, on which was a well-filled sack. I at first apprehended that this was some new prey fallen into the hands of the robbers; but the contented look of the peasant soon relieved me, and I was rejoiced to hear that it was our promised repast. The brigands now came running from the three sides of the mountain, having the quick scent of vultures. Every one busied himself in unloading the mule, and relieving the sack of its contents.

The first thing that made its appearance was an enormous ham, of a colour and plumpness that would have inspired the pencil of Teniers; it was followed by a large cheese, a bag of boiled chestnuts, a little barrel of wine, and a quantity of good household bread. Every thing was arranged on the grass with a degree of symmetry; and the captain, presenting me his knife, requested me to help myself. We all seated ourselves round the viands, and nothing was heard for a time but the sound of vigorous mastication, or the gurgling of the barrel of wine as it revolved briskly about the circle. My long fasting, and the mountain air and exercise, had given me a keen appetite; and never did repast appear to me more excellent or picturesque.

From time to time one of the band was despatched to keep a look-out upon

the plain. No enemy was at hand, and the dinner was undisturbed. The peasant received nearly three times the value of his provisions, and set off down the mountain highly satisfied with his bargain. I felt invigorated by the hearty meal I had made, and notwithstanding the wound I had received the evening before was painful, yet I could not but feel extremely interested and gratified by the singular scenes continually presented to me. Every thing was picturesque about these wild beings and their haunts. Their bivouacs; their groups on guard; their indolent noontide repose on the mountain-brow; their rude repast on the herbage among rocks and trees; every thing presented a study for a painter: but it was towards the approach of evening that I felt the highest enthusiasm awakened.

The setting sun, declining beyond the vast Campagna, shed its rich yellow beams on the woody summit of the Abruzzi. Several mountains crowned with snow shone brilliantly in the distance, contrasting their brightness with others, which, thrown into shade, assumed deep tints of purple and violet. As the evening advanced, the landscape darkened into a sterner character. The immense solitude around; the wild mountains broken into rocks and precipices, intermingled with vast oaks, corks, and chestnuts; and the groups of banditti in the foreground, reminded me of the savage scenes of *Salvator Rosa*.

To beguile the time, the captain proposed to his comrades to spread before me their jewels and cameos, as I must doubtless be a judge of such articles, and able to form an estimate of their value. He set the example, the others followed it; and in a few moments I saw the grass before me sparkling with jewels and gems that would have delighted the eyes of an antiquary or a fine lady.

Among them were several precious jewels, and antique intaglios and cameos of great value; the spoils, doubtless of travellers of distinction. I found that they were in the habit of selling their booty in the frontier towns; but as these in general were thinly and poorly peopled, and little frequented by travellers, they could offer no market for such valuable

articles of taste and luxury. I suggested to them the certainty of their readily obtaining great prices for these gems among the rich strangers with whom Rome was thronged.

The impression made upon their greedy minds was immediately apparent. One of the band, a young man, and the least known, requested permission of the captain to depart the following day, in disguise, for Rome, for the purpose of traffic; promising, on the faith of a bandit (a sacred pledge among them), to return in two days to any place he might appoint. The captain consented, and a curious scene took place: the robbers crowded round him eagerly, confiding to him such of their jewels as they wished to dispose of, and giving him instructions what to demand. There was much bargaining and exchanging and selling of trinkets among them; and I beheld my watch, which had a chain and valuable seals, purchased by the young robber-merchant of the ruffian who had plundered me, for sixty dollars. I now conceived a faint hope, that if it went to Rome, I might somehow or other regain possession of it.\*

In the mean time day declined, and no messenger returned from Tusculum. The idea of passing another night in the woods was extremely disheartening, for I began to be satisfied with what I had seen of robber-life. The chieftain now ordered his men to follow him, that he might station them at their posts; adding, that if the messenger did not return before night, they must shift their quarters to some other place.

I was again left alone with the young bandit who had before guarded me: he had the same gloomy air and haggard eye, with now and then a bitter sardonic smile. I was determined to probe his ulcerated heart, and reminded him of a kind of promise he had given me to tell me the cause of his suffering. It seemed to me as if these troubled spirits were glad of any opportunity to disburthen themselves, and of having some fresh,

\* The hopes of the artist were not disappointed—the robber was stopped at one of the gates of Rome. Something in his looks or deportment had excited suspicion. He was searched, and the valuable trinkets found on him sufficiently evinced his character. On applying to the police, the artist's watch was returned to him.



undiseased mind, with which they could communicate. I had hardly made the request, when he seated himself by my side, and gave me his story in, as nearly as I can recollect, the following words.

### STORY OF THE YOUNG ROBBER.

I WAS born in the little town of Frosinone, which lies at the skirts of the Abruzzi. My father had made a little property in trade, and gave me some education, as he intended me for the church; but I had kept gay company too much to relish the cowl, so I grew up a loiterer about the place. I was a heedless fellow, a little quarrelsome on occasion, but good-humoured in the main; so I made my way very well for a time, until I fell in love. There lived in our town a surveyor or landbailiff of the prince, who had a young daughter, a beautiful girl of sixteen: she was looked upon as something better than the common run of our townfolk, and was kept almost entirely at home. I saw her occasionally, and became madly in love with her—she looked so fresh and tender, and so different from the sunburnt females to whom I had been accustomed.

As my father kept me in money, I always dressed well, and took all opportunities of showing myself off to advantage in the eyes of the little beauty. I used to see her at church; and as I could play a little upon the guitar, I gave a tune sometimes under her window of an evening; and I tried to have interviews with her in her father's vineyard, not far from the town, where she sometimes walked. She was evidently pleased with me, but she was young and shy; and her father kept a strict eye upon her, and took alarm at my attentions, for he had a bad opinion of me, and looked for a better match for his daughter. I became furious at the difficulties thrown in my way, having been accustomed always to easy success among the women, being considered one of the smartest young fellows of the place.

Her father brought home a suitor for her, a rich farmer, from a neighbouring town. The wedding-day was appointed,

and preparations were making. I got sight of her at her window, and I thought she looked sadly at me. I determined the match should not take place, cost what it might. I met her intended bridegroom in the market-place, and could not restrain the expression of my rage. A few hot words passed between us, when I drew my stiletto and stabbed him to the heart. I fled to a neighbouring church for refuge, and with a little money I obtained absolution, but I did not dare to venture from my asylum.

At that time our captain was forming his troop. He had known me from boyhood; and, hearing of my situation, came to me in secret, and made such offers, that I agreed to enrol myself among his followers. Indeed, I had more than once thought of taking to this mode of life, having known several brave fellows of the mountains, who used to spend their money freely among us youngsters of the town. I accordingly left my asylum late one night, repaired to the appointed place of meeting, took the oaths prescribed, and became one of the troop. We were for some time in a distant part of the mountains, and our wild adventurous kind of life hit my fancy wonderfully, and diverted my thoughts. At length they returned with all their violence to the recollection of Rosetta: the solitude in which I often found myself gave me time to brood over her image; and, as I have kept watch at night over our sleeping camp in the mountains, my feelings have been roused almost to a fever.

At length we shifted our ground, and determined to make a descent upon the road between Terracina and Naples. In the course of our expedition we passed a day or two in the woody mountains which rise above Frosinone. I cannot tell you how I felt when I looked down upon the place, and distinguished the residence of Rosetta. I determined to have an interview with her;—but to what purpose? I could not expect that she would quit her home, and accompany me in my hazardous life among the mountains. She had been brought up too tenderly for that; and when I looked upon the women who were associated with some of our troop, I could not have borne the

thoughts of her being their companion. All return to my former life was likewise hopeless, for a price was set upon my head. Still I determined to see her; the very hazard and fruitlessness of the thing made me furious to accomplish it.

About three weeks since, I persuaded our captain to draw down to the vicinity of Frosinone, suggesting the chance of entrapping some of its principal inhabitants, and compelling them to a ransom. We were in ambush towards evening, not far from the vineyard of Rosetta's father. I stole quietly from my companions, and drew near to reconnoitre the place of her frequent walks. How my heart beat when among the vines I beheld the gleaming of a white dress! I knew it must be Rosetta's; it being rare for any female of the place to dress in white. I advanced secretly and without noise, until, putting aside the vines, I stood suddenly before her. She uttered a piercing shriek, but I seized her in my arms, put my hand upon her mouth, and conjured her to be silent. I poured out all the frenzy of my passion; offered to renounce my mode of life; to put my fate in her hands; to fly with her where we might live in safety together. All that I could say or do would not pacify her. Instead of love, horror and affright seemed to have taken possession of her breast. She struggled partly from my grasp, and filled the air with her cries.

In an instant the captain and the rest of my companions were around us. I would have given any thing at that moment had she been safe out of our hands, and in her father's house. It was too late. The captain pronounced her a prize, and ordered that she should be borne to the mountains. I represented to him that she was my prize; that I had a previous claim to her; and I mentioned my former attachment. He sneered bitterly in reply; observed that brigands had no business with village intrigues, and that, according to the laws of the troop, all spoils of the kind were determined by lot. Love and jealousy were raging in my heart, but I had to choose between obedience and death. I surrendered her to the captain, and we made for the mountains.

She was overcome by affright, and

her steps were so feeble and faltering that it was necessary to support her. I could not endure the idea that my comrades should touch her, and assuming a forced tranquillity, begged that she might be confided to me, as one to whom she was more accustomed. The captain regarded me, for a moment, with a searching look, but I bore it without flinching, and he consented. I took her in my arms; she was almost senseless. Her head rested on my shoulder; I felt her breath on my face, and it seemed to fan the flame which devoured. Oh God! to have this glowing treasure in my arms, and yet to think it was not mine!

We arrived at the foot of the mountain. I ascended it with difficulty, particularly where the woods were thick, but I would not relinquish my delicious burthen. I reflected with rage, however, that I must soon do so. The thoughts that so delicate a creature must be abandoned to my rude companions maddened me. I felt tempted, the stiletto in my hand, to cut my way through them all, and bear her off in triumph. I scarcely conceived the idea before I saw its rashness; but my brain was fevered with the thought that any but myself should enjoy her charms. I endeavoured to outstrip my companions by the quickness of my movements, and to get a little distance ahead, in case any favourable opportunity of escape should present. Vain effort! The voice of the captain suddenly ordered a halt. I trembled, but had to obey. The poor girl partly opened a languid eye, but was without strength or motion. I laid her upon the grass. The captain darted on me a terrible look of suspicion, and ordered me to scour the woods with my companions in search of some shepherd, who might be sent to her father's to demand a ransom.

I saw at once the peril. To resist with violence was certain death—but to leave her alone, in the power of the captain! I spoke out then with a fervour inspired by my passion and my despair. I reminded the captain that I was the first to seize her; that she was my prize; and that my previous attachment to her ought to make her sacred among my companions. I insisted, therefore, that he should pledge me his word to respect

her, otherwise I should refuse obedience to his orders. His only reply was to cock his carbine, and at the signal my comrades did the same. They laughed with cruelty at my impotent rage. What could I do? I felt the madness of resistance. I was menaced on all hands, and my companions obliged me to follow them. She remained alone with the chief—yes, alone—and almost lifeless!

Here the robber paused in his recital, overpowered by his emotions. Great drops of sweat stood on his forehead; he panted rather than breathed; his brawny bosom rose and fell like the waves of a troubled sea. When he had become a little calm, he continued his recital.

I was not long in finding a shepherd, said he. I ran with the rapidity of a deer, eager, if possible, to get back before what I dreaded might take place. I had left my companions far behind, and I rejoined them before they had reached one half the distance I had made. I hurried them back to the place where we had left the captain. As we approached, I beheld him seated by the side of Rosetta. His triumphant look, and the desolate condition of the unfortunate girl, left me no doubt of her fate. I know not how I restrained my fury.

It was with extreme difficulty, and by guiding her hand, that she was made to trace a few characters, requesting her father to send three hundred dollars as her ransom. The letter was despatched by the shepherd. When he was gone, the chief turned sternly to me. "You have set an example," said he, "of mutiny and self-will, which, if indulged, would be ruinous to the troop. Had I treated you as our laws require, this bullet would have been driven through your brain. But you are an old friend; I have borne patiently with your fury and your folly. I have even protected you from a foolish passion that would have unmanned you. As to this girl, the laws of our association must have their course." So saying, he gave his commands: lots were drawn, and the helpless girl was abandoned to the troop.

Here the robber paused again, panting with fury, and it was some moments before he could resume his story.

Hell, said he, was raging in my heart. I beheld the impossibility of avenging myself; and I felt that, according to the articles in which we stood bound to one another, the captain was in the right. I rushed with frenzy from the place; I threw myself upon the earth; tore up the grass with my hands; and beat my head and gnashed my teeth in agony and rage. When at length I returned, I beheld the wretched victim, pale, dishevelled, her dress torn and disordered. An emotion of pity, for a moment, subdued my fiercer feelings. I bore her to the foot of a tree, and leaned her gently against it. I took my gourd, which was filled with wine, applying it to her lips, endeavoured to make her swallow a little. To what a condition was she reduced! she, whom I had once seen the pride of Frosinone; who but a short time before I had beheld sporting in her father's vineyard, so fresh, and beautiful, and happy! Her teeth were clenched; her eyes fixed on the ground; her form without motion, and in a state of absolute insensibility. I hung over her in an agony of recollection at all that she had been, and of anguish at what I now beheld her. I darted round a look of horror at my companions, who seemed like so many fiends exulting in the downfall of an angel; and I felt a horror at myself for being their accomplice.

The captain, always suspicious, saw, with his usual penetration, what was passing within me, and ordered me to go upon the ridge of the woods, to keep a look-out over the neighbourhood, and await the return of the shepherd. I obeyed, of course, stifling the fury that raged within me, though I felt, for the moment, that he was my most deadly foe.

On my way, however, a ray of reflection came across my mind. I perceived that the captain was but following, with strictness, the terrible laws to which we had sworn fidelity. That the passion by which I had been blinded might, with justice, have been fatal to me, but for his forbearance; that he had penetrated my soul, and had taken precautions, by sending me out of the way, to prevent my committing any excess in my anger. From that instant I felt that I was capable of pardoning him.

Occupied with these thoughts, I arrived at the foot of the mountain. The country was solitary and secure, and in a short time I beheld the shepherd at a distance crossing the plain. I hastened to meet him. He had obtained nothing. He had found the father plunged in the deepest distress. He had read the letter with violent emotion, and then, calming himself with a sudden exertion, he replied, coldly: "My daughter has been dishonoured by those wretches; let her be returned without ransom, or let her die!"

I shuddered at this reply. I knew that, according to the laws of our troop, her death was inevitable. Our oaths required it. I felt, nevertheless, that not having been able to have her to myself, I could become her executioner!

The robber again paused with agitation. I sat musing upon his last frightful words which proved to what excess the passions may be carried, when escaped from all moral restraint. There was a horrible verity in this story that reminded me of some of the tragic fictions of Dante.

We now come to a fatal moment, resumed the bandit. After the report of the shepherd, I returned with him, and the chieftain received from his lips the refusal of the father. At a signal which we all understood, we followed him to some distance from the victim. He there pronounced her sentence of death. Every one stood ready to execute his order, but I interfered. I observed that there was something due to pity as well as to justice. That I was as ready as any one to approve the implacable law, which was to serve as a warning to all those who hesitated to pay the ransoms demanded for our prisoners; but that though the sacrifice was proper, it ought to be made without cruelty. "The night is approaching," continued I; "she will soon be wrapped in sleep; let her then be despatched. All I now claim on the score of former fondness for her is, let me strike the blow. I will do it as surely, but more tenderly than another." Several raised their voices against my proposition, but the captain imposed silence on them. He told me I might conduct her into a thicket at some distance, and he relied upon my promise.

I hastened to seize upon my prey. There was a forlorn kind of triumph at having at length become her exclusive possessor. I bore her off into the thickness of the forest. She remained in the same state of insensibility or stupor. I was thankful that she did not recollect me, for had she once murmured my name, I should have been overcome. She slept at length in the arms of him who was to poniard her. Many were the conflicts I underwent before I could bring myself to strike the blow. But my heart had become sore by the recent conflicts it had undergone, and I dreaded lest, by procrastination, some other should become her executioner. When her repose had continued for some time, I separated myself gently from her, that I might not disturb her sleep, and seizing suddenly my poniard, plunged it into her bosom. A painful and concentrated murmur, but without any convulsive movement, accompanied her last sigh. So perished this unfortunate!

He ceased to speak. I sat, horror-struck, covering my face with my hands, seeking, as it were, to hide from myself the frightful images he had presented to my mind. I was roused from this silence by the voice of the captain: "You sleep," said he, "and it is time to be off. Come, we must abandon this height, as night is setting in, and the messenger is not returned. I will post some one on the mountain-edge to conduct him to the place where we shall pass the night."

This was no agreeable news to me. I was sick at heart with the dismal story I had heard. I was harassed and fatigued, and the sight of the banditti began to grow insupportable to me.

The captain assembled his comrades. We rapidly descended the forest, which we had mounted with so much difficulty in the morning, and soon arrived in what appeared to be a frequented road. The robbers proceeded with great caution, carrying their guns cocked, and looking on every side with wary and suspicious eyes. They were apprehensive of encountering the civic patrol. We left Rocca Priori behind us. There was a fountain near by, and as I was excessively thirsty, I begged permission to

stop and drink. The captain himself went and brought me water in his hat. We pursued our route, when, at the extremity of an alley which crossed the road, I perceived a female on horseback, dressed in white. She was alone. - I recollected the fate of the poor girl in the story, and trembled for her safety.

One of the brigands saw her at the same instant, and plunging into the bushes, he ran precipitately in the direction towards her. Stopping on the border of the alley, he put one knee to the ground, presented his carbine ready to menace her, or to shoot her horse if she attempted to fly, and in this way awaited her approach. I kept my eyes fixed on her with intense anxiety. I felt tempted to shout and warn her of her danger, though my own destruction would have been the consequence. It was awful to see this tiger crouching ready for a bound, and the poor innocent victim wandering unconsciously near him. Nothing but a mere chance could save her. To my joy the chance turned in her favour. She seemed almost accidentally to take an opposite path, which led outside of the wood, where the robber dared not venture. To this casual deviation she owed her safety.

I could not imagine why the captain of the band had ventured to such a distance from the height on which he had placed the sentinel to watch the return of the messenger. He seemed himself anxious at the risk to which he exposed himself. His movements were rapid and uneasy; I could scarce keep pace with him. At length, after three hours of what might be termed a forced march, we mounted the extremity of the same woods, the summit of which we had occupied during the day; and I learnt with satisfaction that we had reached our quarters for the night. "You must be fatigued," said the chieftain; "but it was necessary to survey the environs, so as not to be surprised during the night. Had we met with the famous civic guard of Rocca Priori, you would have seen fine sport." Such was the indefatigable precaution and forethought of this robber chief, who really gave continual evidence of military talent.

The night was magnificent. The

moon, rising above the horizon in a cloudless sky, faintly lit up the grand features of the mountain; while lights twinkling here and there, like terrestrial stars, in the wide dusky expanse of the landscape, betrayed the lonely cabins of the shepherds. Exhausted by fatigue, and by the many agitations I had experienced, I prepared to sleep, soothed by the hope of approaching deliverance. The captain ordered his companions to collect some dry moss; he arranged with his own hands a kind of mattress and pillow of it, and gave me his ample mantle as a covering. I could not but feel both surprised and gratified by such unexpected attentions on the part of this benevolent cut-throat; for there is nothing more striking than to find the ordinary charities, which are matters of course in common life, flourishing by the side of such stern and sterile crime. It is like finding the tender flowers and fresh herbage of the valley growing among the rocks and cinders of the volcano.

Before I fell asleep I had some further discourse with the captain, who seemed to feel great confidence in me. He referred to our previous conversation of the morning; told me he was weary of his hazardous profession; that he had acquired sufficient property, and was anxious to return to the world, and lead a peaceful life in the bosom of his family. He wished to know whether it was not in my power to procure for him a passport to the United States of America. I applauded his good intentions, and promised to do every thing in my power to promote its success. We then parted for the night. I stretched myself upon my couch of moss, which, after my fatigues, felt like a bed of down; and, sheltered by the robber-mantle from all humidity, I slept soundly, without waking, until the signal to arise.

It was nearly six o'clock, and the day was just dawning. As the place where we had passed the night was too much exposed, we moved up into the thickness of the woods. A fire was kindled. While there was any flame, the mantles were again extended round it; but when nothing remained but glowing cinders, they were lowered, and the robbers seated themselves in a circle.

The scene before me reminded me of some of those described by Homer. There wanted only the victim on the coals, and the sacred knife to cut off the succulent parts, and distribute them around. My companions might have rivalled the grim warriors of Greece. In place of the noble repasts, however, of Achilles and Agamemnon, I beheld displayed on the grass the remains of the ham which had sustained so vigorous an attack on the preceding evening, accompanied by the relics of the bread, cheese, and wine. We had scarcely commenced our frugal breakfast, when I heard again an imitation of the bleating of sheep, similar to what I had heard the day before. The captain answered it in the same tone. Two men were soon after seen descending from the woody height, where we had passed the preceding evening. On nearer approach, they proved to be the sentinel and the messenger. The captain rose, and went to meet them. He made a signal for his comrades to join him. They had a short conference, and then returning to me with eagerness, "Your ransom is paid," said he; "you are free!"

Though I had anticipated deliverance, I cannot tell you what a rush of delight these tidings gave me. I cared not to finish my repast, but prepared to depart. The captain took me by the hand, requested permission to write to me, and begged me not to forget the passport. I replied, that I hoped to be of effectual service to him, and that I relied on his honour to return the prince's note for five hundred dollars, now that the cash was paid. He regarded me for a moment with surprise, then seeming to recollect himself, "*E giusto*," said he, "*eccolo—addio!*"\* He delivered me the note, pressed my hand once more, and we separated. The labourers were permitted to follow me, and we resumed with joy our road toward Tusculum.

The Frenchman ceased to speak. The party continued, for a few moments, to pace the shore in silence. The story had made a deep impression, particularly on the Venitian lady. At that part which

related to the young girl of Frosinone, she was violently affected. Sobs broke from her; she clung closer to her husband, and as she looked up to him as for protection, the moonbeams shining on her beautifully fair countenance, showed it paler than usual, while tears glittered in her fine dark eyes.

"*Coraggio, mia vita!*" said he, as he gently and fondly tapped the white hand that lay upon his arm.

The party now returned to the inn, and separated for the night. The fair Venitian, though of the sweetest temperament, was half out of humour with the Englishman, for a certain slowness of faith which he had evinced throughout the whole evening. She could not understand this dislike to "humbug," as he termed it, which held a kind of sway over him, and seemed to control his opinions and his very actions.

"I'll warrant," said she to her husband, as they retired for the night, "I'll warrant, with all his affected indifference, this Englishman's heart would quake at the very sight of a bandit."

Her husband gently, and good-humouredly, checked her.

"I have no patience with these Englishmen," said she, as she got into bed—"they are so cold and insensible!"

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THE ADVENTURE  
OF  
THE ENGLISHMAN.

IN the morning all was bustle in the inn at Terracina. The procaccio had departed at daybreak on its route towards Rome, but the Englishman was yet to start, and the departure of an English equipage is always enough to keep an inn in a bustle. On this occasion there was more than usual stir, for the Englishman, having much property about him, and having been convinced of the real danger of the road, had applied to the police, and obtained, by dint of liberal pay, an escort of eight dragoons and twelve foot-soldiers, as far as Fondi. Perhaps, too, there might have been a little ostentation at bottom, though, to say

\* It is just—there it is—adieu!

the truth, he had nothing of it in his manner. He moved about, taciturn and reserved as usual, among the gaping crowd; gave laconic orders to John, as he packed away the thousand and one indispensable conveniences of the night; double-loaded his pistols with great *sang froid*, and deposited them in the pockets of the carriage, taking no notice of a pair of keen eyes gazing on him from among the herd of loitering idlers.

The fair Venitian now came up with a request, made in her dulcet tones, that he would permit their carriage to proceed under protection of his escort. The Englishman, who was busy loading another pair of pistols for his servant, and held the ramrod between his teeth, nodded assent, as a matter of course, but without lifting up his eyes. The fair Venitian was a little piqued at what she supposed indifference:—"O Dio!" ejaculated she softly as she retired, "Quanto sono insensibili questi Inglesi!"

At length, off they set in gallant style. The eight dragoons prancing in front, the twelve foot-soldiers marching in rear, and the carriage moving slowly in the centre, to enable the infantry to keep pace with them. They had proceeded but a few hundred yards, when it was discovered that some indispensable article had been left behind. In fact, the Englishman's purse was missing, and John was despatched to the inn to search for it. This occasioned a little delay, and the carriage of the Venitians drove slowly on. John came back out of breath and out of humour. The purse was not to be found. His master was irritated; he recollected the very place where it lay; he had not a doubt that the Italian servant had pocketed it. John was again sent back. He returned once more without the purse, but with the landlord and the whole household at his heels. A thousand ejaculations and protestations, accompanied by all sorts of grimaces and contortions—"No purse had been seen—his Eccellenza must be mistaken."

"No—his Eccellenza was not mistaken—the purse lay on the marble table, under the mirror, a green purse, half full of gold and silver." Again a thousand grimaces and contortions, and vows by

San Gennaro, that no purse of the kind had been seen.

The Englishman became furious.—"The waiter had pocketed it—the landlord was a knave—the inn a den of thieves—it was a vile country—he had been cheated and plundered from one end of it to the other—but he'd have satisfaction—he'd drive right off to the police."

He was on the point of ordering the postilions to turn back, when, on rising, he displaced the cushion of the carriage, and the purse of money fell chinking to the floor.

All the blood in his body seemed to rush into his face—"Curse the purse," said he, as he snatched it up. He dashed a handful of money on the ground before the pale cringing waiter—"There—be off!" cried he, "John, order the postilions to drive on."

Above half an hour had been exhausted in this altercation. The Venitian carriage had loitered along; its passengers looking out from time to time, and expecting the escort every moment to follow. They had gradually turned an angle of the road that shut them out of sight. The little army was again in motion, and made a very picturesque appearance as it wound along at the bottom of the rocks; the morning sunshine beaming upon the weapons of the soldiery.

The Englishman lolled back in his carriage, vexed with himself at what had passed, and consequently out of humour with all the world. As this, however, is no uncommon case with gentlemen who travel for pleasure, it is hardly worthy of remark. They had wound up from the coast among the hills, and came to a part of the road that admitted of some prospect ahead.

"I see nothing of the lady's carriage, sir," said John, leaning down from the coach-box.

"Pish!" said the Englishman, testily—"don't plague me about the lady's carriage; must I be continually pestered with the concerns of strangers?" John said not another word, for he understood his master's mood.

The road grew more wild and lonely; they were slowly proceeding on a foot-

pace up a hill; the dragoons were some distance ahead, and had just reached the summit of the hill, when they uttered an exclamation, or rather shout, and galloped forward. The Englishman was roused from his sulky reverie. He stretched his head from the carriage, which had attained the brow of the hill. Before him extended a long hollow defile, commanded on one side by rugged precipitous heights, covered with bushes and scanty forest. At some distance he beheld the carriage of the Venitians overturned. A numerous gang of desperadoes were rifling it; the young man and his servant were overpowered, and partly stripped; and the lady was in the hands of two of the ruffians. The Englishman seized his pistols, sprang from the carriage, and called upon John to follow him.

In the mean time, as the dragoons came forward, the robbers, who were busy with the carriage, quitted their spoil, formed themselves in the middle of the road, and taking a deliberate aim, fired. One of the dragoons fell, another was wounded, and the whole were for a moment checked and thrown into confusion. The robbers loaded again in an instant. The dragoons discharged their carbines, but without apparent effect. They received another volley, which, though none fell, threw them again into confusion. The robbers were loading a second time, when they saw the foot-soldiers at hand. "*Scampa via!*" was the word: they abandoned their prey, and retreated up the rocks, the soldiers after them. They fought from cliff to cliff, and bush to bush, the robbers turning every now and then to fire upon their pursuers; the soldiers scrambling after them, and discharging their muskets whenever they could get a chance. Sometimes a soldier or a robber was shot down, and came tumbling among the cliffs. The dragoons kept firing from below, whenever a robber came in sight.

The Englishman had hastened to the scene of action, and the balls discharged at the dragoons had whistled past him as he advanced. One object, however, engrossed his attention. It was the beautiful Venitian lady in the hands of two of the robbers, who, during the confusion

of the fight, carried her shrieking up the mountain. He saw her dress gleaming among the bushes, and he sprang up the rocks to intercept the robbers, as they bore off their prey. The ruggedness of the steep, and the entanglements of the bushes, delayed and impeded him. He lost sight of the lady, but was still guided by her cries, which grew fainter and fainter. They were off to the left, while the reports of muskets showed that the battle was raging to the right. At length he came upon what appeared to be a rugged footpath, faintly worn in a gully of the rocks, and beheld the ruffians at some distance hurrying the lady up the defile. One of them hearing his approach, let go his prey, advanced towards him, and levelling the carbine which had been slung on his back, fired. The ball whizzed through the Englishman's hat, and carried with it some of his hair. He returned the fire with one of his pistols, and the robber fell. The other brigand now dropped the lady, and drawing a long pistol from his belt, fired on his adversary with deliberate aim. The ball passed between his left arm and his side, slightly wounding the arm. The Englishman advanced, and discharged his remaining pistol, which wounded the robber, but not severely.

The brigand drew a stiletto and rushed upon his adversary, who eluded the blow, receiving merely a slight wound, and defending himself with his pistol, which had a spring-bayonet. They closed with one another, and a desperate struggle ensued. The robber was a square-built, thick-set man, powerful, muscular, and active. The Englishman, though of larger frame and greater strength, was less active and less accustomed to athletic exercises and feats of hardihood, but he showed himself practised and skilled in the art of defence. They were on a craggy height, and the Englishman perceived that his antagonist was striving to press him to the edge. A side-glance showed him also the robber whom he had first wounded, scrambling up to the assistance of his comrade, stiletto in hand. He had in fact attained the summit of the cliff, he was within a few steps, and the Englishman felt that his case was desperate, when he heard sud-



denly the report of a pistol, and the ruffian fell. The shot came from John, who had arrived just in time to save his master.

The remaining robber, exhausted by loss of blood and the violence of the contest, showed signs of faltering. The Englishman pursued his advantage, pressed on him, and as his strength relaxed, dashed him headlong from the precipice. He looked after him, and saw him lying motionless among the rocks below.

The Englishman now sought the fair Venitian. He found her senseless on the ground. With his servant's assistance he bore her down to the road, where her husband was raving like one distracted. He had sought her in vain, and had given her over for lost; and when he beheld her thus brought back in safety, his joy was equally wild and ungovernable. He would have caught her insensible form to his bosom had not the Englishman restrained him. The latter now really aroused, displayed a true tenderness and manly gallantry, which one would not have expected from his habitual phlegm. His kindness, however, was practical, not wasted in words. He despatched John to the carriage for restoratives of all kinds, and, totally thoughtless of himself, was anxious only about his lovely charge. The occasional discharge of firearms along the height, showed that a retreating fight was still kept up by the robbers. The lady gave signs of reviving animation. The Englishman, eager to get her from this place of danger, conveyed her to his own carriage, and, committing her to the care of her husband, ordered the dragoons to escort them to Fondi. The Venitian would have insisted on the Englishman's getting into the carriage; but the latter refused. He poured forth a torrent of thanks and benedictions; but the Englishman beckoned to the postillions to drive on.

John now dressed his master's wounds, which were found not to be serious, though he was faint with loss of blood. The Venitian carriage had been righted, and the baggage replaced; and, getting into it, they set out on their way towards Fondi, leaving the foot-soldiers still engaged in ferreting out the banditti.

Before arriving at Fondi, the fair Venitian had completely recovered from her swoon. She made the usual question—

“Where was she?”

“In the Englishman's carriage.”

“How had she escaped from the robbers?”

“The Englishman had rescued her.”

Her transports were unbounded; and mingled with them were enthusiastic ejaculations of gratitude to her deliverer. A thousand times did she reproach herself for having accused him of coldness and insensibility. The moment she saw him she rushed into his arms with the vivacity of her nation, and hung about his neck in a speechless transport of gratitude. Never was man more embarrassed by the embraces of a fine woman.

“Tut!—tut!” said the Englishman.

“You are wounded!” shrieked the fair Venitian, as she saw blood upon his clothes.

“Pooh! nothing at all!”

“My deliverer!—my angel!” exclaimed she, clasping him again round the neck, and sobbing on his bosom.

“Pish!” said the Englishman with a good-humoured tone, but looking somewhat foolish, “this is all humbug.”

The fair Venitian, however, has never since accused the English of insensibility.

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#### PART IV.

### THE MONEY DIGGERS.

FOUND AMONG THE PAPERS OF THE LATE  
DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER.

Now I remember those old women's words  
Who in my youth would tell me winter's tales;  
And speak of sprites and ghosts that glide by night  
About the place where treasure hath been hid.

MARLOW'S *Jew of Malta*.

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#### HELL-GATE.

ABOUT six miles from the renowned city of the Manhattoes, in that sound or arm of the sea which passes between the main land and Nassau, or Long Island,

there is a narrow strait, where the current is violently compressed between shouldering promontories, and horribly perplexed by rocks and shoals. Being, at the best of times, a very violent, impetuous current, it takes these impediments in mighty dudgeon; boiling in whirlpools; brawling and fretting in ripples; raging and roaring in rapids and breakers; and, in short, indulging in all kinds of wrong-headed paroxysms. At such times, wo to any unlucky vessel that ventures within its clutches!

This termagant humour, however, prevails only at certain times of tide. At low water, for instance, it is as pacific a stream as you would wish to see; but as the tide rises, it begins to fret; at half-tide it roars with might and main, like a bully bellowing for more drink; but when the tide is full, it relapses into quiet, and, for a time, sleeps as soundly as an alderman after dinner. In fact, it may be compared to a quarrelsome toper, who is a peaceable fellow enough when he has no liquor at all, or when he has a skin full, but who, when half-seas-over, plays the very devil.

This mighty, blustering, bullying, hard-drinking little strait, was a place of great danger and perplexity to the Dutch navigators of ancient days; hectoring their tub-built barks in the most unruly style; whirling them about in a manner to make any but a Dutchman giddy, and not unfrequently stranding them upon rocks and reefs, as it did the famous squadron of Oloffte the Dreamer, when seeking a place to found the city of the Manhattoes. Whereupon, out of sheer spleen they denominated it *Helle-gat*, and solemnly gave it over to the devil. This appellation has since been aptly rendered into English by the name of Hell-gate, and into nonsense by the name of *Hurl-gate*, according to certain foreign intruders, who neither understood Dutch nor English—may St. Nicholas confound them!

This strait of Hell-gate was a place of great awe and perilous enterprise to me in my boyhood; having been much of a navigator on those small seas, and having more than once run the risk of shipwreck and drowning in the course of certain holiday-voyages, to which, in common with other Dutch urchins, I was rather

prone. Indeed, partly from the name, and partly from various strange circumstances connected with it, this place had far more terrors in the eyes of my truant companions and myself, than had Scylla and Charybdis for the navigators of yore.

In the midst of this strait, and hard by a group of rocks called the Hen and Chickens, there lay the wreck of a vessel which had been entangled in the whirlpools, and stranded during a storm. There was a wild story told to us of this being the wreck of a pirate, and some tale of bloody murder which I cannot now recollect, but which made us regard it with great awe, and keep far from it in our cruisings. Indeed, the desolate look of the forlorn hulk, and the fearful place where it lay rotting, were enough to awaken strange notions. A row of timber-heads, blackened by time, just peered above the surface at high water; but at low tide a considerable part of the hull was bare, and its great ribs, or timbers, partly stripped of their planks, and dripping with seaweeds, looked like the huge skeleton of some sea-monster. There was also the stump of a mast, with a few ropes and blocks swinging about, and whistling in the wind, while the sea-gull wheeled and screamed around the melancholy carcass. I have a faint recollection of some hobgoblin tale of sailors' ghosts being seen about this wreck at night, with bare skulls, and blue lights in their sockets instead of eyes, but I have forgotten all the particulars.

In fact, the whole of this neighbourhood was, like the Straits of Pelorus of yore, a region of fable and romance to me. From the strait to the Manhattoes the borders of the Sound are greatly diversified, being broken and indented by rocky nooks overhung with trees, which give them a wild and romantic look. In the time of my boyhood, they abounded with traditions about pirates, ghosts, smugglers, and buried money; which had a wonderful effect upon the young minds of my companions and myself.

As I grew to more mature years, I made diligent research after the truth of these strange traditions; for I have

always been a curious investigator of the valuable but obscure branches of the history of my native province. I found infinite difficulty, however, in arriving at any precise information. In seeking to dig up one fact, it is incredible the number of fables that I unearthed. I will say nothing of the Devil's Stepping-stones, by which the arch-fiend made his retreat from Connecticut to Long Island, across the Sound; seeing the subject is likely to be learnedly treated by a worthy friend and contemporary historian, whom I have furnished with particulars thereof.\* Neither will I say any thing of the black man in a three-cornered hat, seated in the stern of a jolly-boat, who used to be seen about Hell-gate in stormy weather, and who went by the name of the pirate's *spuke*, (i. e. pirate's ghost), and whom, it is said, old Governor Stuyvesant once shot with a silver bullet; because I never could meet with any person of staunch credibility who professed to have seen this spectrum, unless it were the widow of Manus Conklen, the blacksmith, of Frogsneck; but then, poor woman, she was a little purblind, and might have been mistaken; though they say she saw farther than other folks in the dark.

All this, however, was but little satisfactory in regard to the tales of pirates and their buried money, about which I was most curious: and the following is all that I could for a long time collect that had any thing like an air of authenticity.

#### KIDD THE PIRATE.

In old times, just after the territory of the New Netherlands had been wrested from the hands of their High Mightinesses, the Lords States-General of Holland, by King Charles the Second, and while it was as yet in an unquiet state, the province was a great resort of random adventurers, loose livers, and all

\* For a very interesting and authentic account of the devil and his stepping-stones, see the valuable Memoir read before the New York Historical Society, since the death of Mr. Knickerbocker, by his friend, an eminent jurist of the place.

that class of hap-hazard fellows who live by their wits, and dislike the old-fashioned restraint of law and Gospel. Among these, the foremost were the bucaniers. These were rovers of the deep, who, perhaps, in time of war, had been educated in those schools of piracy, the privateers; but having once tasted the sweets of plunder, had ever retained a hankering after it. There is but a slight step from the privateersman to the pirate: both fight for the love of plunder; only that the latter is the bravest, as he dares both the enemy and the gallows.

But in whatever school they had been taught, the bucaniers who kept about the English colonies were daring fellows, and made sad work in times of peace among the Spanish settlements and Spanish merchantmen. The easy access to the harbour of the Manhattoes, the number of hiding-places about its waters, and the laxity of its scarcely organized government, made it a great rendezvous of the pirates: where they might dispose of their booty, and concert new depredations. As they brought home with them wealthy lading of all kinds, the luxuries of the tropics, and the sumptuous spoils of the Spanish provinces, and disposed of them with the proverbial carelessness of freebooters, they were welcome visitors to the thrifty traders of the Manhattoes. Crews of these desperadoes, therefore, the runagates of every country and every clime, might be seen swaggering in open day about the streets of the little burgh, elbowing its quiet mynheers, trafficking away their rich outlandish plunder at half or quarter price to the wary merchant; and then squandering their prize-money in taverns, drinking, gambling, singing, swearing, shouting, and astounding the neighbourhood with midnight brawl and ruffian revelry.

At length these excesses rose to such a height as to become a scandal to the provinces, and to call loudly for the interposition of government. Measures were accordingly taken to put a stop to the widely-extended evil, and to ferret this vermin brood out of the colonies.

Among the agents employed to execute this purpose was the notorious Captain Kidd. He had long been an

equivocal character; one of those nondescript animals of the ocean that are neither fish, flesh, nor fowl. He was somewhat of a trader, something more of a smuggler, with a considerable dash of the piccaroon. He had traded for many years among the pirates, in a little rakish, musquitto-built vessel, that could run into all kinds of waters. He knew all their haunts and lurking-places; was always hooking about on mysterious voyages, and as busy as a Mother Carey's chicken in a storm.

This nondescript personage was pitched upon by government as the very man to hunt the pirates by sea, upon the good old maxim of "setting a rogue to catch a rogue;" or as others are sometimes used to catch their cousins-german, the fish.

Kidd accordingly sailed for New York, in 1695, in a gallant vessel called the *Adventure Galley*, well armed and duly commissioned. On arriving at his old haunts, however, he shipped his crew on new terms; enlisted a number of his old comrades; lads of the knife and the pistol; and then set sail for the East. Instead of cruising against pirates, he turned pirate himself; steered to the Madeiras, to Bonavista, and Madagascar, and cruised about the entrance of the Red Sea. Here, among other maritime robberies, he captured a rich *Quedah* merchantman, manned by Moors, though commanded by an Englishman. Kidd would fain have passed this off for a worthy exploit, as being a kind of crusade against the infidels; but government had long since lost all relish for such Christian triumphs.

After roaming the seas, trafficking his prizes, and changing from ship to ship, Kidd had the hardihood to return to Boston, laden with booty, with a crew of swaggering companions at his heels.

Times, however, were changed. The bucaniers could no longer show a whistler in the colonies with impunity. The new governor, Lord Bellamont, had signaled himself by his zeal in extirpating these offenders; and was doubly exasperated against Kidd, having been instrumental in appointing him to the trust which he had betrayed. No sooner, therefore, did he show himself in Boston,

than the alarm was given of his re-appearance, and measures were taken to arrest this cut-purse of the ocean. The daring character which Kidd had acquired, however, and the desperate fellows who followed like bulldogs at his heels, caused a little delay in his arrest. He took advantage of this, it is said, to bury the greater part of his treasures, and then carried a high head about the streets of Boston. He even attempted to defend himself when arrested, but was secured and thrown into prison, with his followers. Such was the formidable character of this pirate and his crew, that it was thought advisable to despatch a frigate to bring them to England. Great exertions were made to screen him from justice, but in vain; he and his comrades were tried, condemned, and hanged at Execution Dock in London. Kidd died hard, for the rope with which he was first tied up broke with his weight, and he tumbled to the ground. He was tied up a second time, and more effectually; from hence came, doubtless, the story of Kidd's having a charmed life, and that he had to be twice hanged.

Such is the main outline of Kidd's history; but it has given birth to an innumerable progeny of traditions. The report of his having buried great treasures of gold and jewels before his arrest, set the brains of all the good people along the coast in a ferment. There were rumours on rumours of great sums of money found here and there, sometimes in one part of the country, sometimes in another; of coins with Moorish inscriptions, doubtless the spoils of his eastern prizes, but which the common people looked upon with superstitious awe, regarding the Moorish letters as diabolical or magical characters.

Some reported the treasure to have been buried in solitary, unsettled places about Plymouth and Cape Cod; but by degrees various other parts, not only on the eastern coast, but along the shores of the Sound, and even of Manhatta and Long Island, were gilded by these rumours. In fact, the rigorous measures of Lord Bellamont had spread sudden consternation among the bucaniers in every part of the provinces: they had secreted their money and jewels in lonely out-of-the-way

places, about the wild shores of the rivers and sea-coast, and dispersed themselves over the face of the country. The hand of justice prevented many of them from ever returning to regain their buried treasures, which remained, and remain probably to this day, objects of enterprise for the money-digger.

This is the cause of those frequent reports of trees and rocks bearing mysterious marks, supposed to indicate the spots where treasures lay hidden; and many have been the ransackings after the pirates' booty. In all the stories which once abounded of these enterprises, the devil played a conspicuous part. Either he was conciliated by ceremonies and invocations, or some solemn compact was made with him. Still, he was ever prone to play the money-diggers some slippery trick. Some would dig so far as to come to an iron chest, when some baffling circumstance was sure to take place. Either the earth would fall in and fill up the pit, or some direful noise or apparition would frighten the party from the place: sometimes the devil himself would appear, and bear off the prize when within their very grasp; and if they revisited the place the next day, not a trace would be found of their labours of the preceding night.

All these rumours, however, were extremely vague, and for a long time tantalized without gratifying my curiosity. There is nothing in this world so hard to get at as truth, and there is nothing in this world but truth that I care for. I sought among all my favourite sources of authentic information, the oldest inhabitants, and particularly the old Dutch wives of the province; but though I flatter myself that I am better versed than most men in the curious history of my native province, yet for a long time my inquiries were unattended with any substantial result.

At length it happened that, one calm day in the latter part of summer, I was relaxing myself from the toils of severe study, by a day's amusement in fishing in those waters which had been the favourite resort of my boyhood. I was in company with several worthy burghers of my native city, among whom were

more than one illustrious member of the corporation, whose names, did I dare to mention them, would do honour to my humble page. Our sport was indifferent. The fish did not bite freely, and we frequently changed our fishing-ground without bettering our luck. We were at length anchored close under a ledge of rocky coast, on the eastern side of the island of Manhattan. It was a still warm day. The stream whirled and dimpled by us without a wave or even a ripple; and every thing was so calm and quiet, that it was almost startling when the kingfisher would pitch himself from the branch of some dry tree, and after suspending himself for a moment in the air to take his aim, would souse into the smooth water after his prey. While we were lolling in our boat, half drowsy with the warm stillness of the day, and the dulness of our sport, one of our party, a worthy alderman, was overtaken by a slumber, and, as he dozed, suffered the sinker of his dropline to lie upon the bottom of the river. On waking, he found he had caught something of importance from the weight. On drawing it to the surface, we were much surprised to find it a long pistol of very curious and outlandish fashion, which, from its rusted condition, and its stock being worm-eaten and covered with barnacles, appeared to have lain a long time under water. The unexpected appearance of this document of warfare, occasioned much speculation among my pacific companions. One supposed it to have fallen there during the revolutionary war; another, from the peculiarity of its fashion, attributed it to the voyagers in the earliest days of the settlement; perchance to the renowned Adrian Block, who explored the Sound, and discovered Block Island, since so noted for its cheese. But a third, after regarding it for some time, pronounced it to be of veritable Spanish workmanship.

"I'll warrant," said he, "if this pistol could talk, it would tell strange stories of hard fights among the Spanish Dons. I've no doubt but it is a relic of the bucaniers of old times—who knows but it belonged to Kidd himself?"

"Ah! that Kidd was a resolute fellow," cried an old iron-faced Cape Cod whaler.

“There’s a fine old song about him, all to the tune of—

My name is Captain Kidd,  
As I sailed, as I sailed—

And then it tells all about how he gained the devil’s good graces by burying the Bible :

I had the Bible in my hand,  
As I sailed, as I sailed,  
And I buried it in the sand  
As I sailed.—

Odsfish, if I thought this pistol had belonged to Kidd, I should set great store by it, for curiosity’s sake. By the way, I recollect a story about a fellow who once dug up Kidd’s buried money, which was written by a neighbour of mine, and which I learnt by heart. As the fish don’t bite just now, I’ll tell it to you by way of passing away the time.” And so saying, he gave us the following narration.

#### THE DEVIL AND TOM WALKER.

A FEW miles from Boston in Massachusetts, there is a deep inlet, winding several miles into the interior of the country from Charles Bay, and terminating in a thickly-wooded swamp or morass. On one side of this inlet is a beautiful dark grove ; on the opposite side the land rises abruptly from the water’s edge into a high ridge, on which grow a few scattered oaks of great age and immense size. Under one of these gigantic trees, according to old stories, there was a great amount of treasure buried by Kidd the pirate. The inlet allowed a facility to bring the money in a boat secretly and at night to the very foot of the hill ; the elevation of the place permitted a good look-out to be kept that no one was at hand ; while the remarkable trees formed good landmarks by which the place might easily be found again. The old stories add, moreover, that the devil presided at the hiding of the money, and took it under his guardianship ; but this it is well known he always does with buried treasure, particularly when it has been ill-gotten. Be that as it may, Kidd

never returned to recover his wealth ; being shortly after seized at Boston, sent out to England, and there hanged for a pirate.

About the year 1727, just at the time that earthquakes were prevalent in New England, and shook many tall sinners down upon their knees, there lived near this place a meagre miserly fellow, of the name of Tom Walker. He had a wife as miserly as himself : they were so miserly that they even conspired to cheat each other. Whatever the woman could lay hands on, she hid away ; a hen could not cackle but she was on the alert to secure the new-laid egg. Her husband was continually prying about to detect her secret hoards, and many and fierce were the conflicts that took place about what ought to have been common property. They lived in a forlorn-looking house that stood alone, and had an air of starvation. A few straggling savin-trees, emblems of sterility, grew near it ; no smoke ever curled from its chimney ; no traveller stopped at its door. A miserable horse, whose ribs were as articulate as the bars of a gridiron, stalked about a field, where a thin carpet of moss, scarcely covering the ragged beds of pudding-stone, tantalized and balked his hunger ; and sometimes he would lean his head over the fence, look piteously at the passer-by, and seem to petition deliverance from this land of famine.

The house and its inmates had altogether a bad name. Tom’s wife was a tall termagant, fierce of temper, loud of tongue, and strong of arm. Her voice was often heard in wordy warfare with her husband ; and his face sometimes showed signs that their conflicts were not confined to words. No one ventured, however, to interfere between them. The lonely wayfarer shrunk within himself at the horrid clamour and clapper-clawing ; eyed the den of discord askance ; and hurried on his way rejoicing, if a bachelor, in his celibacy.

One day that Tom Walker had been to a distant part of the neighbourhood, he took what he considered a short cut homewards, through the swamp. Like most short cuts, it was an ill-chosen route. The swamp was thickly grown

with great gloomy pines and hemlocks, some of them ninety feet high, which made it dark at noonday, and a retreat for all the owls of the neighbourhood. It was full of pits and quagmires, partly covered with weeds and mosses, where the green surface often betrayed the traveller into a gulf of black, smothering mud; there were also dark and stagnant pools, the abodes of the tadpole, the bullfrog, and the water-snake; where the trunks of pines and hemlocks lay half-drowned, half rotting, looking like alligators sleeping in the mire.

Tom had long been picking his way cautiously through this treacherous forest; stepping from tuft to tuft of rushes and roots, which afforded precarious footholds among deep sloughs; or pacing carefully, like a cat, along the prostrate trunks of trees; startled now and then by the sudden screaming of the bittern, or the quacking of a wild duck, rising on the wing from some solitary pool. At length he arrived at a piece of firm ground, which ran out like a peninsula into the deep bosom of the swamp. It had been one of the strongholds of the Indians during their wars with the first colonists. Here they had thrown up a kind of fort, which they had looked upon as almost impregnable, and had used as a place of refuge for their squaws and children. Nothing remained of the old Indian fort but a few embankments, gradually sinking to the level of the surrounding earth, and already overgrown in part by oaks and other forest trees, the foliage of which formed a contrast to the dark pines and hemlocks of the swamp.

It was late in the dusk of evening when Tom Walker reached the old fort, and he paused therefore a while to rest himself. Any one but he would have felt unwilling to linger in this lonely, melancholy place, for the common people had a bad opinion of it, from the stories handed down from the time of the Indian wars; when it was asserted that the savages held incantations here, and made sacrifices to the evil spirit.

Tom Walker, however, was not a man to be troubled with any fears of the kind. He reposed himself for some time on the trunk of a fallen hemlock, listening to

the boding cry of the tree-toad, and delving with his walking-staff into a mound of black mould at his feet. As he turned up the soil unconsciously, his staff struck against something hard. He raked it out of the vegetable mould, and lo! a cloven scull, with an Indian tomahawk buried deep in it, lay before him. The rust on the weapon showed the time that had elapsed since this deathblow had been given. It was a dreary memento of the fierce struggle that had taken place in this last foothold of the Indian warriors.

"Humph!" said Tom Walker, as he gave it a kick to shake the dirt from it.

"Let that scull alone!" said a gruff voice. Tom lifted up his eyes, and beheld a great black man seated directly opposite him, on the stump of a tree. He was exceedingly surprised, having neither heard nor seen any one approach; and he was still more perplexed on observing, as well as the gathering gloom would permit, that the stranger was neither negro nor Indian. It is true he was dressed in a rude half Indian garb, and had a red belt or sash swathed round his body; but his face was neither black nor copper-colour, but swarthy and dingy, and begrimed with soot, as if he had been accustomed to toil among fires and forges. He had a shock of coarse black hair, that stood out from his head in all directions, and bore an axe on his shoulder.

He scowled for a moment at Tom with a pair of great red eyes.

"What are you doing on my grounds?" said the black man, with a hoarse growling voice.

"Your grounds!" said Tom with a sneer. "No more your grounds than mine; they belong to Deacon Peabody."

"Deacon Peabody be d—d," said the stranger, "as I flatter myself he will be, if he does not look more to his own sins and less to those of his neighbours. Look yonder, and see how Deacon Peabody is faring."

Tom looked in the direction that the stranger pointed, and beheld one of the great trees, fair and flourishing without, but rotten at the core, and saw that it had been nearly hewn through, so that the first high wind was likely to blow it

down. On the bark of the tree was scored the name of Deacon Peabody,—an eminent man, who had waxed wealthy by driving shrewd bargains with the Indians. He now looked round, and found most of the tall trees marked with the name of some great man in the colony, and all more or less scored by the axe. The one on which he had been seated, and which had evidently just been hewn down, bore the name of Crowninshield; and he recollected a mighty rich man of that name, who made a vulgar display of wealth, which it was whispered he had acquired by bucaniering.

“He’s just ready for burning!” said the black man, with a growl of triumph. “You see I am likely to have a good stock of firewood for winter.”

“But what right have you,” said Tom, “to cut down Deacon Peabody’s timber?”

“The right of a prior claim,” said the other. “This woodland belonged to me long before one of your white-faced race put foot upon the soil.”

“And pray who are you, if I may be so bold?” said Tom.

“Oh, I go by various names. I am the wild huntsman in some countries: the black miner in others. In this neighbourhood I am known by the name of the black woodman. I am he to whom the red men consecrated this spot, and in honour of whom they now and then roasted a white man, by way of sweet-smelling sacrifice. Since the red men have been exterminated by you white savages, I amuse myself by presiding at the persecutions of quakers and anabaptists. I am the great patron and prompter of slave-dealers and the grand master of the Salem witches.”

“The upshot of all which is, that, if I mistake not,” said Tom, sturdily, “you are he commonly called Old Scratch.”

“The same, at your service!” replied the black man, with a half-civil nod.

Such was the opening of this interview, according to the old story; though it has almost too familiar an air to be credited. One would think that to meet with such a singular personage, in this wild, lonely place, would have shaken any man’s nerves; but Tom was a hard-

minded fellow, not easily daunted, and he had lived so long with a termagant wife, that he did not even fear the devil.

It is said that after this commencement they had a long and earnest conversation together, as Tom returned homeward. The black man told him of great sums of money which had been buried by Kidd the pirate, under the oak trees on the high ridge, not far from the morass. All these were under his command, and protected by his power, so that none could find them but such as propitiated his favour. These he offered to place within Tom Walker’s reach, having conceived an especial kindness for him; but they were to be had only on certain conditions. What these conditions were may easily be surmised, though Tom never disclosed them publicly. They must have been very hard, for he required time to think of them, and he was not a man to stick at trifles where money was in view. When they had reached the edge of the swamp, the stranger paused—“What proof have I that all you have been telling me is true?” said Tom. “There is my signature,” said the black man, pressing his finger on Tom’s forehead. So saying, he turned off among the thickets of the swamp, and seemed, as Tom said, to go down, down, down, into the earth, until nothing but his head and shoulders could be seen, and so on, until he totally disappeared.

When Tom reached home, he found the black print of a finger, burnt, as it were, into his forehead, which nothing could obliterate.

The first news his wife had to tell him was the sudden death of Absalom Crowninshield, the rich bucanier. It was announced in the papers with the usual flourish, that “A great man had fallen in Israel.”

Tom recollected the tree which his black friend had just hewn down, and which was ready for burning. “Let the freebooter roast,” said Tom, “who cares!” He now felt convinced that all he had heard and seen was no illusion.

He was not prone to let his wife into his confidence, but as this was an uneasy secret, he willingly shared it with her. All her avarice was awakened at the



mention of hidden gold, and she urged her husband to comply with the black man's terms, and secure what would make them wealthy for life. However Tom might have felt disposed to sell himself to the devil, he was determined not to do so to oblige his wife; so he flatly refused, out of the mere spirit of contradiction. Many and bitter were the quarrels they had on the subject, but the more she talked, the more resolute was Tom not to be damned to please her.

At length she determined to drive the bargain on her own account, and if she succeeded, to keep all the gain to herself. Being of the same fearless temper as her husband, she set off for the old Indian fort towards the close of a summer's day. She was many hours absent. When she came back, she was reserved and sullen in her replies. She spoke something of a black man, whom she had met about twilight, hewing at the root of a tall tree. He was sulky, however, and would not come to terms: she was to go again with a propitiatory offering, but what it was she forbore to say.

The next evening she set off again for the swamp, with her apron heavily laden. Tom waited and waited for her, but in vain; midnight came, but she did not make her appearance: morning, noon, night returned, but she did not come. Tom now grew uneasy for her safety, especially as he found she had carried off in her apron the silver teapot and spoons, and every portable article of value. Another night elapsed, another morning came; but no wife. In a word, she was never heard of more.

What was her real fate nobody knows, in consequence of so many pretending to know. It is one of those facts which have become confounded with a variety of historians. Some asserted that she lost her way among the tangled mazes of the swamp, and sunk into some pit or slough; others, more uncharitable, hinted that she had eloped with the household booty, and made off to some other province; while others surmised that the tempter had decoyed her into a dismal quagmire, on the top of which her hat was found lying. In confirmation of this, it was said a great black

man, with an axe on his shoulder, was seen late that very evening coming out of the swamp, carrying a bundle tied in a check apron, with an air of surly triumph.

The most current and probable story, however, observes that Tom Walker grew so anxious about the fate of his wife and his property, that he set out at length to seek them both at the Indian fort. During a long summer's afternoon he searched about the gloomy place, but no wife was to be seen. He called her name repeatedly, but she was nowhere to be heard. The bittern alone responded to his voice, as he flew screaming by; or the bullfrog croaked dolefully from a neighbouring pool. At length, it is said, just in the brown hour of twilight, when the owls began to hoot, and the bats to flit about, his attention was attracted by the clamour of carrion-crows that were hovering about a cypress tree. He looked up and beheld a bundle tied in a check apron, and hanging in the branches of the tree, with a great vulture perched hard by, as if keeping watch upon it. He leaped with joy; for he recognised his wife's apron, and supposed it to contain the household valuables.

"Let us get hold of the property," said he counselling to himself, "and we will endeavour to do without the woman."

As he scrambled up the tree, the vulture spread its wide wings, and sailed off screaming into the deep shadows of the forest. Tom seized the check apron, but woful sight! found nothing but a heart and liver tied up in it!

Such, according to the most authentic old story, was all that was to be found of Tom's wife. She had probably attempted to deal with the black man as she had been accustomed to deal with her husband; but though a female scold is generally considered a match for the devil, yet in this instance she appears to have had the worst of it. She must have died game, however; for it is said that Tom noticed many prints of cloven feet deeply stamped about the tree, and found handfuls of hair, that looked as if they had been plucked from the coarse black shock of the woodman. Tom knew his wife's prowess by expe-

rience. He shrugged his shoulders, as he looked at the signs of a fierce clapper-clawing. "Egad," said he to himself, "Old Scratch must have had a tough time of it!"

Tom consoled himself for the loss of his property with the loss of his wife, for he was a man of fortitude. He even felt something like gratitude towards the black woodman, who, he considered, had done him a kindness. He sought, therefore, to cultivate a further acquaintance with him, but for some time without success; the old black-legs played shy, for whatever people may think, he is not always to be had for calling for: he knows how to play his cards when pretty sure of his game.

At length it is said, when delay had whetted Tom's eagerness to the quick, and prepared him to agree to any thing rather than not gain the promised treasure, he met the black man one evening in his usual woodman's dress, with his axe on his shoulder, sauntering along the edge of the swamp, and humming a tune. He affected to receive Tom's advances with great indifference, made brief replies, and went on humming his tune.

By degrees, however, Tom brought him to business, and they began to haggle about the terms on which the former was to have the pirate's treasure. There was one condition which need not be mentioned, being generally understood in all cases where the devil grants favours; but there were others about which, though of less importance, he was inflexibly obstinate. He insisted that the money found through his means should be employed in his service. He proposed, therefore, that Tom should employ it in the black traffic; that is to say, that he should fit out a slave-ship. This, however, Tom resolutely refused: he was bad enough in all conscience; but the devil himself could not tempt him to turn slave-dealer.

Finding Tom so squeamish on this point, he did not insist upon it, but proposed instead, that he should turn usurer; the devil being extremely anxious for the increase of usurers, looking upon them as his peculiar people.

To this no objections were made, for it was just to Tom's taste.

"You shall open a broker's shop in Boston next month," said the black man.

"I'll do it to-morrow, if you wish," said Tom Walker.

"You shall lend money at two per cent. a month."

"Egad, I'll charge four!" replied Tom Walker.

"You shall extort bonds, foreclose mortgages, drive the merchant to bankruptcy—"

"I'll drive him to the d—l," cried Tom Walker.

"You are the usurer for my money!" said the black-legs with delight. "When will you want the rhino?"

"This very night."

"Done!" said the devil.

"Done!" said Tom Walker. So they shook hands, and struck a bargain.

A few days' time saw Tom Walker seated behind his desk in a counting-house in Boston. His reputation for a ready-moneyed man, who would lend money out for a good consideration, soon spread abroad. Every body remembers the time of Governor Belcher, when money was particularly scarce. It was a time of paper credit. The country had been deluged with government bills; the famous Land Bank had been established; there had been a rage for speculating; the people had run mad with schemes for new settlements; for building cities in the wilderness; land-jobbers went about with maps and grants, and townships, and El Dorados, lying nobody knew where, but which every body was ready to purchase. In a word, the great speculating fever which breaks out every now and then in the country had raged to an alarming degree, and every body was dreaming of making sudden fortunes from nothing. As usual, the fever had subsided; the dream had gone off, and the imaginary fortunes with it; the patients were left in doleful plight, and the whole country resounded with the consequent cry of "hard times."

At this propitious time of public distress did Tom Walker set up as a usurer in Boston. His door was soon thronged by customers. The needy and the adventurous; the gambling speculator; the dreaming land-jobber; the thriftless tradesman; the merchant with cracked

credit; in short, every one driven to raise money by desperate means and desperate sacrifices, hurried to Tom Walker.

Thus Tom was the universal friend of the needy; and he acted like a "friend in need;" that is to say, he always exacted good pay and good security. In proportion to the distress of the applicant was the hardness of his terms. He accumulated bonds and mortgages; gradually squeezed his customers closer and closer; and sent them at length dry as a sponge from his door.

In this way he made money hand over hand; became a rich and mighty man, and exalted his cocked hat upon 'Change. He built himself, as usual, a vast house out of ostentation, but left the greater part of it unfinished and unfurnished out of parsimony. He even set up a carriage in the fulness of his vainglory, though he nearly starved the horses which drew it; and as the ungreased wheels groaned and screeched on the axletrees, you would have thought you heard the souls of the poor debtors he was squeezing.

As Tom waxed old, however, he grew thoughtful. Having secured the good things of this world, he began to feel anxious about those of the next. He thought with regret upon the bargain he had made with his black friend, and set his wits to work to cheat him out of the conditions. He became, therefore, all of a sudden a violent church-goer. He prayed loudly and strenuously, as if heaven were to be taken by force of lungs. Indeed, one might always tell when he had sinned most during the week by the clamour of his Sunday devotion. The quiet Christians who had been most modestly and steadfastly travelling Zionward, were struck with self-reproach at seeing themselves so suddenly outstripped in their career by this new-made convert. Tom was as rigid in religious as in money matters; he was a stern supervisor and censurer of his neighbours, and seemed to think every sin entered up to their account became a credit on his own side of the page. He even talked of the expediency of reviving the persecution of Quakers and Anabaptists. In a word, Tom's zeal became as notorious as his riches.

Still, in spite of all this strenuous attention to forms, Tom had a lurking dread

that the devil, after all, would have his due. That he might not be taken unawares, therefore, it is said he always carried a small Bible in his coat-pocket. He had also a great folio Bible on his counting-house desk, and would frequently be found reading it when people called on business. On such occasions he would lay his green spectacles in the book to mark the place, while he turned round to drive some usurious bargain.

Some say that Tom grew a little crack-brained in his old days, and that, fancying his end approaching, he had his horse new-shod, saddled, and bridled, and buried with his feet uppermost; because he supposed that, at the last day, the world would be turned upside down, in which case he would find his horse standing ready for mounting, and he was determined, at the worst, to give his old friend a run for it. This, however, is probably a mere old wives' fable.

If he really did take such a precaution, it was totally superfluous; at least so says the authentic old legend, which closes his story in the following manner.

On one-hot afternoon in the dog-days just as a terrible black thunder-gust was coming up, Tom sat in his counting-house, in his white linen cap, and India silk morning-gown. He was on the point of foreclosing a mortgage, by which he would complete the ruin of an unlucky land speculator, for whom he had professed the greatest friendship.

The poor land-jobber begged him to grant a few months' indulgence. Tom had grown testy and irritated, and refused another day.

"My family will be ruined, and brought upon the parish," said the land-jobber.

"Charity begins at home," replied Tom. "I must take care of myself in these hard times."

"You have made so much money out of me," said the speculator.

Tom lost his patience and his piety.

"The d—l take me," said he, "if I have made a farthing."

Just then there were three loud knocks at the street-door. He stepped out to see who was there. A black man was holding a black horse, which neighed and stamped with impatience.

“Tom, you’re come for!” said the black fellow, gruffly. Tom shrank back, but too late. He had left his little Bible at the bottom of his coat-pocket, and his big Bible on the desk, buried under the mortgage he was about to foreclose; never was sinner taken more unawares; the black man whisked him like a child into the saddle, gave the horse a lash, and away he galloped, with Tom on his back, in the midst of the thunder-storm. The clerks stuck their pens behind their ears, and stared after him from the windows. Away went Tom Walker, dashing down the streets, his white cap bobbing up and down, his morning-gown fluttering in the wind, and his steed striking fire out of the pavement at every bound. When the clerks turned to look for the black man, he had disappeared.

Tom Walker never returned to foreclose the mortgage. A countryman, who lived on the border of the swamp, reported, that in the height of the thunder-gust he had heard a great clattering of hoofs, and a howling along the road, and that when he ran to the window, he just caught sight of a figure such as I have described, on a horse that galloped like mad across the fields, over the hills, and down into the black hemlock swamp, towards the old Indian fort; and that shortly after, a thunderbolt fell in that direction, which seemed to set the whole forest in a blaze.

The good people of Boston shook their heads and shrugged their shoulders; but had been so much accustomed to witches and goblins, and tricks of the devil in all kinds of shapes from the first settlement of the colony, that they were not so much horror struck as might have been expected. Trustees were appointed to take charge of Tom’s effects. There was nothing, however, to administer upon. On searching his coffers, all his bonds and mortgages were found reduced to cinders. In place of gold and silver, his iron chest was filled with chips and shavings; two skeletons lay in his stable instead of his half-starved horses; and the very next day his great house took fire, and was burnt to the ground.

Such was the end of Tom Walker and his ill-gotten wealth. Let all griping money-brokers lay this story to heart.

The truth of it is not to be doubted. The very hole under the oak-trees, from whence he dug Kidd’s money, is to be seen to this day; and the neighbouring swamp and old Indian fort are often haunted in stormy nights by a figure on horseback, in morning-gown and white cap, which is, doubtless, the troubled spirit of the usurer. In fact the story had resolved itself into a proverb, and is the origin of that popular saying, so prevalent throughout New England, of “The Devil and Tom Walker.”

Such, as nearly as I can recollect, was the purport of the tale told by the Cape Cod whaler. There were divers trivial particulars which I have omitted, and which whiled away the morning very pleasantly, until, the time of tide favourable to fishing being passed, it was proposed that we should go to land and refresh ourselves under the trees, till the noontide heat should have abated.

We accordingly landed on a delectable part of the Island of Manhattan, in that shady and embowered tract formerly under the dominion of the ancient family of the Hardenbrooks. It was a spot well known to me in the course of the aquatic expeditions of my boyhood. Not far from where we landed there was an old Dutch family vault, constructed on the side of a bank, which had been an object of great awe and fable among my schoolboy associates. We had peeped into it during one of our coasting voyages, and had been startled by the sight of mouldering coffins, and musty bones within; but what had given it the most fearful interest in our eyes, was its being in some way connected with the pirate wreck which lay rotting among the rocks of Hell-gate. There were stories, also, of smuggling connected with it; particularly relating to a time when this retired spot was owned by a noted burgher, called Ready-money Provost, a man of whom it was whispered, that he had many and mysterious dealings with parts beyond seas. All these things, however, had been jumbled together in our minds, in that vague way in which such themes are mingled up in the tales of boyhood.

While I was pondering upon these

matters, my companions had spread a repast from the contents of our well-stored pannier, under a broad chestnut on the green-sward, which swept down to the water's edge. Here we solaced ourselves on the cool grassy carpet during the warm sunny hours of mid-day. While lolling on the grass, indulging in that kind of musing reverie of which I am fond, I summoned up the dusky recollections of my boyhood respecting this place, and repeated them, like the imperfectly-remembered traces of a dream, for the amusement of my companions. When I had finished, a worthy old burgher, John Josse Vandermoere, the same who once related to me adventures of Dolph Heyliger, broke silence, and observed, that he recollected a story of money-digging, which occurred in this very neighbourhood, and might account for some of the traditions which I had heard in my boyhood. As we knew him to be one of the most authentic narrators in the province, we begged him to let us have the particulars, and accordingly, while we solaced ourselves with a clean long pipe of Blase Moore's best tobacco, the authentic John Josse Vandermoere related the following tale.

—

WOLFERT WEBBER ;

OR,

GOLDEN DREAMS.

IN the year of grace, one thousand seven hundred and—blank—for I do not remember the precise date ; however, it was somewhere in the early part of the last century, there lived in the ancient city of the Manhattoes a worthy burgher, Wolfert Webber by name. He was descended from old Cobus Webber of the Brille in Holland, one of the original settlers, famous for introducing the cultivation of cabbages, and who came over to the province during the protectorship of Oloffie Van Kortlandt, otherwise called the Dreamer.

The field in which Cobus Webber first planted himself and his cabbages had remained ever since in the family, who

continued in the same line of husbandry, with that praiseworthy perseverance for which our Dutch burghers are noted. The whole family genius, during several generations, was devoted to the study and development of this once noble vegetable, and to this concentration of intellect may, doubtless, be ascribed the prodigious size and renown to which the Webber cabbages attained.

The Webber dynasty continued in uninterrupted succession ; and never did a line give more unquestionable proofs of legitimacy. The eldest son succeeded to the looks as well as the territory of his sire ; and had the portraits of this line of tranquil potentates been taken, they would have presented a row of heads marvellously resembling, in shape and magnitude, the vegetables over which they reigned.

The seat of government continued unchanged in the family mansion, a Dutch-built house, with a front, or rather gable-end, of yellow brick, tapering to a point, with the customary iron weathercock at the top. Every thing about the building bore the air of long-settled ease and security. Flights of martins peopled the little coops nailed against its walls, and swallows built their nests under the eaves : and every one knows that these house-loving birds bring good luck to the dwelling where they take up their abode. In a bright sunny morning, in early summer, it was delectable to hear their cheerful notes as they sported about in the pure sweet air, chirping forth, as it were, the greatness and prosperity of the Webbers.

Thus quietly and comfortably did this excellent family vegetate under the shade of a mighty buttonwood tree, which, by little and little, grew so great, as entirely to overshadow their palace. The city gradually spread its suburbs round their domain. Houses sprang up to interrupt their prospects ; the rural lanes in the vicinity began to grow into the bustle and populousness of streets ; in short, with all the habits of rustic life, they began to find themselves the inhabitants of a city. Still, however, they maintained their hereditary character and hereditary possessions, with all the tenacity of petty German princes in the midst

of the empire. Wolfert was the last of the line, and succeeded to the patriarchal bench at the door, under the family-tree, and swayed the sceptre of his fathers, a kind of rural potentate in the midst of a metropolis.

To share the cares and sweets of sovereignty, he had taken unto himself a helpmate, one of that excellent kind called stirring women; that is to say, she was one of those notable little housewives who are always busy when there is nothing to do. Her activity, however, took one particular direction; her whole life seemed devoted to intense knitting: whether at home or abroad, walking or sitting, her needles were continually in motion; and it is even affirmed that, by her unwearied industry, she very nearly supplied her household with stockings throughout the year. This worthy couple were blessed with one daughter, who was brought up with great tenderness and care; uncommon pains had been taken with her education, so that she could stitch in every variety of way, make all kinds of pickles and preserves, and mark her own name on a sampler. The influence of her taste was seen, also, in the family-garden, where the ornamental began to mingle with the useful; whole rows of fiery marigolds and splendid hollyhocks bordered the cabbage-beds, and gigantic sunflowers lolled their broad jolly faces over the fences, seeming to ogle most affectionately the passers-by.

Thus reigned and vegetated Wolfert Webber over his paternal acres, peaceful and contentedly. Not but that, like all other sovereigns, he had his occasional cares and vexations. The growth of his native city sometimes caused him annoyance. His little territory gradually became hemmed in by streets and houses, which intercepted air and sunshine. He was now and then subjected to the irruptions of the border population that infest the skirts of a metropolis; who would sometimes make midnight forays into his dominions, and carry off captive whole platoons of his noblest subjects. Vagrant swine would make a descent, too, now and then, when the gate was left open, and lay all waste before them; and mischievous urchins would often decapitate

the illustrious sunflowers, the glory of the garden, as they lolled their heads so fondly over the walls. Still all these were petty grievances, which might now and then ruffle the surface of his mind, as a summer breeze will ruffle the surface of a millpond, but they could not disturb the deep-seated quiet of his soul. He would but seize a trusty staff that stood behind the door, issue suddenly out, and anoint the back of the aggressor, whether pig or urchin, and then return within doors, marvellously refreshed and tranquillized.

The chief cause of anxiety to honest Wolfert, however, was the growing prosperity of the city. The expenses of living doubled and trebled; but he could not double and treble the magnitude of his cabbages; and the number of competitors prevented the increase of price. Thus, therefore, while every one around him grew richer, Wolfert grew poorer; and he could not, for the life of him, perceive how the evil was to be remedied.

This growing care, which increased from day to day, had its gradual effect upon our worthy burgher; insomuch, that it at length implanted two or three wrinkles in his brow, things unknown before in the family of the Webbers; and it seemed to pinch up the corners of his cocked hat into an expression of anxiety totally opposite to the tranquil, broad-brimmed, low-crowned beavers of his illustrious progenitors.

Perhaps even this would not have materially disturbed the serenity of his mind, had he had only himself and his wife to care for; but there was his daughter gradually growing to maturity; and all the world knows that when daughters begin to ripen, no fruit nor flower requires so much looking after. I have no talent at describing female charms, else fain would I depict the progress of this little Dutch beauty. How her blue eyes grew deeper and deeper, and her cherry lips redder and redder; and how she ripened and ripened, and rounded and rounded, in the opening breath of sixteen summers; until in her seventeenth spring she seemed ready to burst out of her bodice like a half-blown rosebud.

Ah, well-a-day! could I but show her

as she was then tricked out on a Sunday morning in the hereditary finery of the old Dutch clothes-press, of which her mother had confided to her the key. The wedding-dress of her grandmother modernised for use, with sundry ornaments, handed down as heir-looms in the family; her pale-brown hair, smoothed with buttermilk in flat waving lines, on each side of her fair forehead; the chain of yellow virgin gold that encircled her neck; the little cross that just rested at the entrance of a soft valley of happiness, as if it would sanctify the place; the—but, pooh—it is not for an old man like me to be prosing about female beauty. Suffice it to say, Amy had attained her seventeenth year. Long since had her sampler exhibited hearts in couples, desperately transfixed with arrows, and true-lover's-knots, worked in deep blue silk; and it was evident she began to languish for some more interesting occupation than the rearing of sunflowers, or pickling of cucumbers.

At this critical period of female existence, when the heart within a damsel's bosom, like its emblem, the miniature which hangs without, is apt to be engrossed by a single image, a new visiter began to make his appearance under the roof of Wolfert Webber. This was Dirk Waldron, the only son of a poor widow; but who could boast of more fathers than any lad in the province; for his mother had had four husbands, and this only child; so that, though born in her last wedlock, he might fairly claim to be the tardy fruit of a long course of cultivation. This son of four fathers united the merits and the vigour of all his sires. If he had not had a great family before him, he seemed likely to have a great one after him; for you had only to look at the fresh bucksome youth, to see that he was formed to be the founder of a mighty race.

This youngster gradually became an intimate visiter of the family. He talked little, but he sat long. He filled the father's pipe when it was empty; gathered up the mother's knitting-needle or ball of worsted, when it fell to the ground; stroked the sleek coat of the tortoise-shell cat; and replenished the teapot for the daughter, from the bright

copper kettle that sang before the fire. All these quiet little offices may seem of trifling import; but when true love is translated into Low Dutch, it is in this way that it eloquently expresses itself. They were not lost upon the Webber family. The winning youngster found marvellous favour in the eyes of the mother; the tortoise-shell cat, albeit the most staid and demure of her kind, gave indubitable signs of approbation of his visits; the tea-kettle seemed to sing out a cheery note of welcome at his approach; and if the shy glances of the daughter might be rightly read, as she sat bridling, and dimpling, and sewing by her mother's side, she was not a whit behind Dame Webber, or grimalkin, or the tea-kettle in good-will.

Wolfert alone saw nothing of what was going on; profoundly wrapped up in meditation on the growth of the city, and his cabbages, he sat looking in the fire and puffing his pipe in silence. One night, however, as the gentle Amy, according to custom, lighted her lover to the outer door, and he, according to custom, took his parting salute, the smack resounded so vigorously through the long, silent entry, as to startle even the dull ear of Wolfert. He was slowly roused to a new source of anxiety. It had never entered into his head, that this mere child, who, as it seemed, but the other day, had been climbing about his knees, and playing with dolls and baby-houses, could, all at once, be thinking of lovers and matrimony. He rubbed his eyes; examined into the fact; and really found, that while he had been dreaming of other matters, she had actually grown to be a woman, and what was worse, had fallen in love. Here arose new cares for poor Wolfert. He was a kind father; but he was a prudent man. The young man was a lively, stirring lad; but then he had neither money nor land. Wolfert's ideas all ran in one channel; and he saw no alternative, in case of a marriage, but to portion off the young couple with a corner of his cabbage-garden, the whole of which was barely sufficient for the support of his family.

Like a prudent father, therefore, he determined to nip this passion in the bud, and forbade the youngster the house;

though sorely did it go against his fatherly heart, and many a silent tear did it cause in the bright eye of his daughter. She showed herself, however, a pattern of filial piety and obedience. She never pouted and sulked; she never flew in the face of parental authority; she never fell into a passion, or fell into hysterics, as many romantic, novel-read young ladies would do. Not she, indeed! She was none such heroic rebellious trumpery, I'll warrant you. On the contrary, she acquiesced like an obedient daughter; shut the street door in her lover's face; and if ever she did grant him an interview, it was either out of the kitchen window, or over the garden fence.

Wolfert was deeply cogitating these matters in his mind, and his brow wrinkled with unusual care, as he wended his way on Saturday afternoon to a rural inn, about two miles from the city. It was a favourite resort of the Dutch part of the community, from being always held by a Dutch line of landlords, and retaining an air and relish of the good old times. It was a Dutch-built house, that had probably been a country-seat of some opulent burgher in the early time of the settlement. It stood near a point of land called Corlear's Hook, which stretches out into the Sound, and against which the tide, at its flux and reflux, sets with extraordinary rapidity. The venerable and somewhat crazy mansion was distinguished from afar by a grove of elms and sycamores, that seemed to wave a hospitable invitation, while a few weeping willows, with their dank, drooping foliage, resembling falling waters, gave an idea of coolness that rendered it an attractive spot during the heats of summer. Here therefore, as I said, resorted many of the inhabitants of the Manhattoes, where, while some played at shuffleboard, and quoits, and ninepins, others smoked a deliberate pipe, and talked over public affairs.

It was on a blustering autumnal afternoon that Wolfert made his visit to the inn. The grove of elms and willows was stripped of its leaves, which whirled in rustling eddies about the fields. The ninepin alley was deserted, for the premature chillness of the day had driven

the company within doors. As it was Saturday afternoon, the habitual club was in session, composed, principally, of regular Dutch burghers, though mingled occasionally with persons of various character and country, as is natural in a place of such motley population.

Beside the fireplace, in a huge leather-bottomed armchair, sat the dictator of this little world, the venerable Remm, or, as it was pronounced, Ramm Rapelye. He was a man of Walloon race, and illustrious for the antiquity of his line, his great grandmother having been the first white child born in the province. But he was still more illustrious for his wealth and dignity: he had long filled the noble office of alderman, and was a man to whom the governor himself took off his hat. He had maintained possession of the leather-bottomed chair from time immemorial; and had gradually waxed in bulk as he sat in this seat of government; until, in the course of years, he filled its whole magnitude. His word was decisive with his subjects; for he was so rich a man that he was never expected to support any opinion by argument. The landlord waited on him with peculiar officiousness; not that he paid better than his neighbours, but then the coin of a rich man seems always to be so much more acceptable. The landlord had ever a pleasant word and a joke to insinuate in the ear of the august Ramm. It is true, Ramm never laughed; and, indeed, ever maintained a mastiff-like gravity, and even surliness of aspect; yet he now and then rewarded mine host with a token of approbation; which, though nothing more nor less than a kind of grunt, still delighted the landlord more than a broad laugh from a poorer man.

"This will be a rough night for the money-diggers," said mine host, as a gust of wind howled round the house and rattled at the windows.

"What! are they at their work again?" said an English half-pay captain with one eye, who was a very frequent attendant at the inn.

"Ay, are they," said the landlord, "and well may they be. They've had luck of late. They say a great pot of money has been dug up in the field just behind Stuyvesant's orchard. Folks



think it must have been buried there in old times, by Peter Stuyvesant, the Dutch governor."

"Fudge!" said the one-eyed man of war, as he added a small portion of water to a bottom of brandy.

"Well, you may believe or not, as you please," said mine host, somewhat nettled; "but every body knows that the old governor buried a great deal of his money at the time of the Dutch troubles, when the English red-coats seized on the province. They say too, the old gentleman walks; ay, and in the very same dress that he wears in the picture that hangs up in the family-house."

"Fudge!" said the half-pay officer.

"Fudge, if you please! But didn't Corny Van Zandt see him at midnight, stalking about in the meadow with his wooden leg, and a drawn sword in his hand, that flashed like fire? And what can he be walking for, but because people have been troubling the place where he buried his money in old times?"

Here the landlord was interrupted by several guttural sounds from Ramm Rapelye, betokening that he was labouring with the unusual production of an idea. As he was too great a man to be slighted by a prudent publican, mine host respectfully paused until he should deliver himself. The corpulent frame of this mighty burgher now gave all the symptoms of a volcanic mountain on the point of an eruption. First there was a certain heaving of the abdomen, not unlike an earthquake; then was emitted a cloud of tobacco-smoke from that crater, his mouth; then there was a kind of rattle in the throat, as if the idea were working its way up through a region of phlegm; then there were several disjointed members of a sentence thrown out, ending in a cough: at length his voice forced its way in the slow but absolute tone of a man who feels the weight of his purse, if not of his ideas; every portion of his speech being marked by a testy puff of tobacco-smoke.

"Who talks of old Peter Stuyvesant's walking?"—Puff—"Have people no respect for persons?"—Puff—puff—"Peter Stuyvesant knew better what to do with his money than to bury it"—Puff—"I know the Stuyvesant family"—Puff—

"Every one of them"—Puff—"Not a more respectable family in the province"—Puff—"Old standers"—Puff—"Warm householders"—Puff—"None of your upstarts"—Puff—puff—puff—"Don't talk to me of Peter Stuyvesant walking."—Puff—puff—puff—puff.

Here the redoubtable Ramm contracted his brow, clasped up his mouth till it wrinkled at each corner, and redoubled his smoking with such vehemence, that the cloudy volumes soon wreathed round his head as the smoke envelopes the awful summit of Mount Etna.

A general silence followed the sudden rebuke of this very rich man. The subject, however, was too interesting to be readily abandoned. The conversation soon broke forth again from the lips of Peechy Prauw Van Hook, the chronicler of the club, one of those prosy, narrative old men who seem to be troubled with an incontinence of words as they grow old.

Peechy could at any time tell as many stories in an evening as his hearers could digest in a month. He now resumed the conversation by affirming, that to his knowledge money had at different times been dug up in various parts of the island. The lucky persons who had discovered them had always dreamt of them three times beforehand; and, what was worthy of remark, those treasures had never been found but by some descendant of the good old Dutch families, which clearly proved that they had been buried by Dutchmen in the olden time.

"Fiddlestick with your Dutchmen!" cried the half-pay officer. "The Dutch had nothing to do with them. They were all buried by Kidd the pirate, and his crew."

Here a key-note was touched which roused the whole company. The name of Captain Kidd was like a talisman in those times, and was associated with a thousand marvellous stories. The half-pay officer took the lead, and in his narrations fathered upon Kidd all the plunderings and exploits of Morgan, Blackbeard, and the whole list of bloody bucaniers.

The officer was a man of great weight among the peaceable members of the club, by reason of his warlike character and gunpowder tales. All his golden

stories of Kidd, however, and of the booty he had buried, were obstinately rivalled by the tales of Peechy Praw; who, rather than suffer his Dutch progenitors to be eclipsed by a foreign freebooter, enriched every field and shore in the neighbourhood with the hidden wealth of Peter Stuyvesant and his contemporaries.

Not a word of this conversation was lost upon Wolfert Webber. He returned pensively home, full of magnificent ideas. The soil of his native island seemed to be turned into gold-dust, and every field to teem with treasure. His head almost reeled at the thought, how often he must have heedlessly rambled over places where countless sums lay scarcely covered by the turf beneath his feet. His mind was in an uproar with this whirl of new ideas. As he came in sight of the venerable mansion of his forefathers, and the little realm where the Webbers had so long and so contentedly flourished, his gorge rose at the narrowness of his destiny.

“Unlucky Wolfert!” exclaimed he. “Others can go to bed and dream themselves into whole mines of wealth; they have but to seize a spade in the morning, and turn up doubloons like potatoes; but thou must dream of hardship and rise to poverty—must dig thy fields from year’s end to year’s end, and yet raise nothing but cabbages!”

Wolfert Webber went to bed with a heavy heart, and it was long before the golden visions that disturbed his brain permitted him to sink into repose. The same visions, however, extended into his sleeping thoughts, and assumed a more definite form. He dreamt that he had discovered an immense treasure in the centre of his garden. At every stroke of the spade he laid bare a golden ingot; diamond crosses sparkled out of the dust; bags of money turned up their bellies, corpulent with pieces-of-eight, or venerable doubloons; and chests, wedged close with moidores, ducats, and pistareens, yawned before his ravished eyes, and vomited forth their glittering contents.

Wolfert awoke a poorer man than ever. He had no heart to go about his daily concerns, which appeared so paltry and profitless, but sat all day long in the

chimney-corner, picturing to himself ingots and heaps of gold in the fire.

The next night his dream was repeated. He was again in his garden, digging, and laying open stores of hidden wealth. There was something very singular in this repetition. He passed another day of revery; and though it was cleaning-day, and the house, as usual in Dutch households, completely topsy-turvy, yet he sat unmoved amidst the general uproar.

The third night he went to bed with a palpitating heart. He put on his red nightcap wrong side outwards, for good luck. It was deep midnight before his anxious mind could settle into sleep. Again the golden dream was repeated, and again he saw his garden teeming with ingots and money-bags.

Wolfert rose the next morning in complete bewilderment. A dream, three times repeated, was never known to lie, and if so, his fortune was made. In his agitation, he put on his waistcoat with the hind part before, and this was a corroboration of good luck. He no longer doubted that a huge store of money lay buried somewhere in his cabbage-field, coyly waiting to be sought for; and he repined at having so long been scratching about the surface of the soil instead of digging to the centre. He took his seat at the breakfast-table, full of these speculations; asked his daughter to put a lump of gold into his tea; and on handing his wife a plate of slapjacks, begged her to help herself to a doubloon.

His grand care now was, how to secure this immense treasure without its being known. Instead of working regularly in his grounds in the daytime, he now stole from his bed at night, and with spade and pickaxe, went to work to rip up and dig about his paternal acres from one end to the other. In a little time, the whole garden, which had presented such a goodly and regular appearance, with its phalanx of cabbages, like a vegetable army in battle array, was reduced to a scene of devastation; while the relentless Wolfert, with nightcap on head, and lantern and spade in hand, stalked through the slaughtered ranks, the destroying angel of his own vegetable world.

Every morning bore testimony to the ravages of the preceding night, in cabbages of all ages and conditions, from the tender sprout to the full-grown head, piteously rooted from their quiet beds, like worthless weeds, and left to wither in the sunshine. It was in vain Wolfert's wife remonstrated; it was in vain his darling daughter wept over the destruction of some favourite marigold. "Thou shalt have gold of another guess sort," he would cry, chucking her under the chin. "Thou shalt have a string of crooked ducats for thy wedding necklace, my child!"

His family began really to fear that the poor man's wits were diseased. He muttered in his sleep at night about mines of wealth; about pearls, and diamonds, and bars of gold. In the daytime he was moody and abstracted, and walked about as if in a trance. Dame Webber held frequent councils with all the old women of the neighbourhood. Scarce an hour in the day but a knot of them might be seen, wagging their white caps together round her door, while the poor woman made some piteous recital. The daughter, too, was fain to seek for more frequent consolation from the stolen interviews of her favoured swain, Dirk Waldron. The delectable little Dutch songs with which she used to dulcify the house grew less and less frequent; and she would forget her sewing, and look wistfully in her father's face, as he sat pondering by the fireside. Wolfert caught her eye one day fixed on him thus anxiously, and for a moment was roused from his golden reveries. "Cheer up, my girl," said he, exultingly; "why dost thou droop? Thou shalt hold up thy head one day with the Brincherhoffs and the Schermerhorns, the Van Hornes, and the Van Dams—by St. Nicholas, but the patron himself shall be glad to get thee for his son!"

Amy shook her head at this vain-glorious boast, and was more than ever in doubt of the soundness of the good man's intellect.

In the mean time, Wolfert went on digging and digging; but the field was extensive, and as his dream had indicated no precise spot, he had to dig at random. The winter set in before one-

tenth of the scene of promise had been explored. The ground became frozen hard, and the nights too cold for the labours of the spade. No sooner, however, did the returning warmth of spring loosen the soil, and the small frogs begin to pipe in the meadows, but Wolfert resumed his labours with renovated zeal. Still, however, the hours of industry were reversed. Instead of working cheerily all day, planting and setting out his vegetables, he remained thoughtfully idle, until the shades of night summoned him to his secret labours. In this way he continued to dig, from night to night, and week to week, and month to month, but not a stiver did he find. On the contrary, the more he digged, the poorer he grew. The rich soil of his garden was digged away, and the sand and gravel from beneath were thrown to the surface, until the whole field presented an aspect of sandy barrenness.

In the mean time the seasons gradually rolled on. The little frogs which had piped in the meadows in early spring, croaked as bullfrogs during the summer heats, and then sunk into silence. The peach-tree budded, blossomed, and bore its fruit. The swallows and martens came, twittered about the roof, built their nest, reared their young, held their congress along the eaves, and then winged their flight in search of another spring. The caterpillar spun its winding-sheet, dangled in it from the great buttonwood tree before the house, turned into a moth, fluttered with the last sunshine of summer, and disappeared; and, finally, the leaves of the buttonwood tree turned yellow, then brown, then rustled one by one to the ground, and, whirling about in little eddies of wind and dust, whispered that winter was at hand.

Wolfert gradually woke from his dream of wealth as the year declined. He had reared no crop for the supply of his household during the sterility of winter. The season was long and severe, and, for the first time, the family was really straitened in its comforts. By degrees a revulsion of thought took place in Wolfert's mind, common to those whose golden dreams have been disturbed by pinching realities. The idea gradually

stole upon him that he should come to want. He already considered himself one of the most unfortunate men in the province, having lost such an incalculable amount of undiscovered treasure; and now, when thousands of pounds had eluded his search, to be perplexed for shillings and pence was cruel in the extreme.

Haggard care gathered about his brow; he went about with a money-seeking air; his eyes bent downwards into the dust, and carrying his hands in his pockets, as men are apt to do when they have nothing else to put into them. He could not even pass the city almshouse without giving it a rueful glance, as if destined to be his future abode. The strangeness of his conduct and of his looks occasioned much speculation and remark. For a long time he was suspected of being crazy, and then every body pitied him; at length it began to be suspected that he was poor, and then every body avoided him.

The rich old burghers of his acquaintance met him outside of the door when he called; entertained him hospitably on the threshold; pressed him warmly by the hand at parting; shook their heads as he walked away, with the kind-hearted expression of "Poor Wolfert!" and turned a corner nimbly, if by chance they saw him approaching as they walked the streets. Even the barber and cobbler of the neighbourhood, and a tattered tailor in an alley hard by, three of the poorest and merriest rogues in the world, eyed him with that abundant sympathy which usually attends a lack of means; and there is not a doubt but their pockets would have been at his command, only that they happened to be empty.

Thus every body deserted the Webber mansion, as if poverty were contagious, like the plague; every body but honest Dirk Waldron, who still kept up his stolen visits to the daughter, and, indeed, seemed to wax more affectionate as the fortunes of his mistress were in the wane.

Many months had elapsed since Wolfert had frequented his old resort, the rural inn. He was taking a long lonely walk one Saturday afternoon, musing

over his wants and disappointments, when his feet took, instinctively, their wonted direction, and on awaking out of a reverie, he found himself before the door of the inn. For some moments he hesitated whether to enter, but his heart yearned for companionship; and where can a ruined man find better companionship than at a tavern, where there is neither sober example nor sober advice to put him out of countenance?

Wolfert found several of the old frequenters of the inn at their usual post, and seated in their usual places; but one was missing, the great Ramm Rapelye, who for many years had filled the leather-bottomed chair of state. His place was supplied by a stranger, who seemed, however, completely at home in the chair and the tavern. He was rather under size, but deep-chested, square, and muscular. His broad shoulders, double joints, and bow-knees, gave tokens of prodigious strength. His face was dark and weatherbeaten; a deep scar, as if from the slash of a cutlass, had almost divided his nose, and made a gash in his upper lip, through which his teeth shone like a bulldog's. A mop of iron-gray hair gave a grizzly finish to his hard-favoured visage. His dress was of an amphibious character. He wore an old hat edged with tarnished lace, and cocked in martial style on one side of his head; a rusty blue military coat with brass buttons, and a wide pair of short petticoat trousers, or rather breeches, for they were gathered up at the knees. He ordered every body about him with an authoritative air; talked in a brattling voice, that sounded like the crackling of thorns under a pot; d—d the landlord and servants with perfect impunity; and was waited upon with greater obsequiousness than had ever been shown to the mighty Ramm himself.

Wolfert's curiosity was awakened to know who and what was this stranger, who had thus usurped absolute sway in this ancient domain. Peechy Prauw took him aside into a remote corner of the hall, and there, in an under voice, and with great caution, imparted to him all that he knew on the subject. The inn had been aroused, several months before, on a dark stormy night, by

repeated long shouts, that seemed like the howlings of a wolf. They came from the water-side; and at length were distinguished to be hailing the house in the seafaring manner—House a-hoy! The landlord turned out with his head-waiter, tapster, ostler, and errand-boy, that is to say, with his old negro, Cuff. On approaching the place from whence the voice proceeded, they found this amphibious-looking personage at the water's edge, quite alone, and seated on a great oaken sea-chest. How he came there, whether he had been set on shore from some boat, or had floated to land on his chest, nobody could tell, for he did not seem disposed to answer questions; and there was something in his looks and manners that put a stop to all questioning. Suffice it to say, he took possession of a corner room of the inn, to which his chest was removed with great difficulty. Here he had remained ever since, keeping about the inn and its vicinity; sometimes, it is true, he disappeared for one, two, or three days at a time, going and returning without giving any notice or account of his movements. He always appeared to have plenty of money, though often of very strange, outlandish coinage; and he regularly paid his bill every evening before turning in. He had fitted up his room to his own fancy, having slung a hammock from the ceiling instead of a bed, and decorated the walls with rusty pistols and cutlasses of foreign workmanship. A great part of his time was passed in this room, seated by the window, which commanded a wide view of the Sound, a short old-fashioned pipe in his mouth, a glass of rum toddy at his elbow, and a pocket-telescope in his hand, with which he reconnoitered every boat that moved upon the water. Large square-rigged vessels seemed to excite but little attention; but the moment he descried any thing with a shoulder-of-mutton sail, or that a barge, yawl, or jolly-boat hove in sight, up went the telescope, and he examined it with the most scrupulous attention.

All this might have passed without much notice, for in those times the province was so much the resort of adventurers of all characters and climes, that

any oddity in dress or behaviour attracted but small attention. In a little while, however, this strange sea-monster, thus strangely cast upon dry land, began to encroach upon the long-established customs and customers of the place, and to interfere, in a dictatorial manner, in the affairs of the ninepin alley and the bar-room, until in the end he usurped an absolute command over the whole inn. It was all in vain to attempt to withstand his authority. He was not exactly quarrelsome, but boisterous and peremptory, like one accustomed to tyrannise on a quarter-deck; and there was a dare-devil air about every thing he said and did, that inspired a wariness in all bystanders. Even the half-pay officer, so long the hero of the club, was soon silenced by him; and the quiet burghers stared with wonder at seeing their inflammable man of war so readily and quietly extinguished. And then the tales that he would tell were enough to make a peaceable man's hair stand on end. There was not a sea-fight, or marauding or free-booting adventure that had happened within the last twenty years, but he seemed perfectly versed in it. He delighted to talk of the exploits of the bucaniers in the West Indies and on the Spanish Main. How his eyes would glisten as he described the waylaying of treasure-ships, the desperate fights, yard-arm and yard-arm, broadside and broadside; the boarding and capturing of huge Spanish galleons! With what chuckling relish would he describe the descent upon some rich Spanish colony; the rifling of a church; the sacking of a convent! You would have thought you heard some gormandizer dilating upon the roasting of a savoury goose at Michaelmas, as he described the roasting of some Spanish Don to make him discover his treasure—a detail given with a minuteness that made every rich old burgher present turn uncomfortably in his chair. All this would be told with infinite glee, as if he considered it an excellent joke; and then he would give such a tyrannical leer in the face of his next neighbour, that the poor man would be fain to laugh out of sheer faint-heartedness. If any one, however, pretended to contradict him in any of his stories, he was on fire in an in-

stant. His very cocked hat assumed a momentary fierceness, and seemed to resent the contradiction. "How the devil should you know as well as I?—I tell you it was as I say;" and he would at the same time let slip a broadside of thundering oaths and tremendous sea-phrases, such as had never been heard before within these peaceful walls.

Indeed, the worthy burghers began to surmise that he knew more of these stories than mere hearsay. Day after day their conjectures concerning him grew more and more wild and fearful. The strangeness of his arrival, the strangeness of his manners, the mystery that surrounded him, all made him something incomprehensible in their eyes. He was a kind of monster of the deep to them—he was a merman—he was Behemoth—he was Leviathan—in short, they knew not what he was.

The domineering spirit of this boisterous sea-urchin at length grew quite intolerable. He was no respecter of persons; he contradicted the richest burghers without hesitation; he took possession of the sacred elbow-chair, which, time out of mind, had been the seat of sovereignty of the illustrious Ramm Rapelye,—nay, he even went so far, in one of his rough jocular moods, as to slap that mighty burgher on the back, drink his toddy, and wink in his face,—a thing scarcely to be believed. From this time Ramm Rapelye appeared no more at the inn; and his example was followed by several of the most eminent customers, who were too rich to tolerate being bullied out of their opinions, or being obliged to laugh at another man's jokes. The landlord was almost in despair; but he knew not how to get rid of the sea-monster and his sea-chest, who seemed both to have grown like fixtures or excrescences on his establishment.

Such was the account whispered cautiously in Wolfert's ear by the narrator, Peechy Prauw, as he held him by the button in a corner of the hall; casting a wary glance now and then towards the door of the bar-room, lest he should be overheard by the terrible hero of his tale.

Wolfert took his seat in a remote part of the room in silence, impressed with profound awe of this unknown, so versed

in freebooting history. It was to him a wonderful instance of the revolutions of mighty empires, to find the venerable Ramm Rapelye thus ousted from the throne, and a rugged tarpawling dictating from his elbow-chair, hectoring the patriarchs, and filling this tranquil little realm with brawl and bravado.

The stranger was, on this evening, in a more than usually communicative mood, and was narrating a number of astounding stories of plunderings and burnings on the high seas. He dwelt upon them with peculiar relish; heightening the frightful particulars in proportion to their effect on his peaceful auditors. He gave a long swaggering detail of the capture of a Spanish merchantman. She was lying becalmed during a long summer's day, just off from an island which was one of the lurking-places of the pirates. They had reconnoitred her with their spyglasses from the shore, and ascertained her character and force. At night a picked crew of daring fellows set off for her in a whale-boat. They approached with muffled oars, as she lay rocking idly with the undulations of the sea, and her sails flapping against the masts. They were close under her stern before the guard on deck was aware of their approach. The alarm was given; the pirates threw hand-grenades on deck, and sprang up the mainchairs sword in hand. The crew flew to arms, but in great confusion; some were shot down, others took refuge in the tops, others were driven overboard and drowned, while others fought hand to hand from the maindeck to the quarter-deck, disputing gallantly every inch of ground. There were three Spanish gentlemen on board with their ladies, who made the most desperate resistance. They defended the companionway, cut down several of their assailants, and fought like very devils, for they were maddened by the shrieks of the ladies from the cabin. One of the Dons was old, and soon despatched. The other two kept their ground vigorously, even though the captain of the pirates was among the assailants. Just then there was a shout of victory from the maindeck—"The ship is ours!" cried the pirates. One of the Dons immediately dropped his sword and surren-

dered; the other, who was a hot-headed youngster, and just married, gave the captain a slash in the face that laid all open.

The captain just made out to articulate the words "no quarter!"

"And what did they do with the prisoners?" said Peechy Praw, eagerly.

"Threw them all overboard!" was the answer.

A dead pause followed this reply.

Peechy Praw shrunk quietly back, like a man who had unwarily stolen upon the lair of a sleeping lion. The honest burghers cast fearful glances at the deep scar slashed across the visage of the stranger, and moved their chairs a little farther off. The seaman, however, smoked on, without moving a muscle, as though he either did not perceive, or did not regard, the unfavourable effect he had produced on his hearers.

The half-pay officer was the first to break the silence, for he was continually tempted to make ineffectual head against this tyrant of the seas, and to regain his lost consequence in the eyes of his ancient companions. He now tried to match the gunpowder tales of the stranger, by others equally tremendous. "Kidd, as usual, was his hero, concerning whom he seemed to have picked up many of the floating traditions of the province. The seaman had always evinced a settled pique against the one-eyed warrior. On this occasion he listened with peculiar impatience. He sat with one arm a-kimbo, the other elbow on a table, the hand holding on to the small pipe he was pettishly puffing; his legs crossed; drumming with one foot on the ground, and casting every now and then the side-glance of a basilisk at the prosing captain. At length the latter spoke of Kidd's having ascended the Hudson with some of his crew, to land his plunder in secrecy. "Kidd up the Hudson!" burst forth the seaman with a tremendous oath—"Kidd never was up the Hudson!"

"I tell you he was," said the other. "Ay, and they say he buried a quantity of treasure on the little flat that runs out into the river, called the Devil's Dans Kammer."

"The Devil's Dans Kammer in your teeth!" cried the seaman. "I tell you

Kidd never was up the Hudson. What a plague do you know of Kidd and his haunts?"

"What do I know?" echoed the half-pay officer. "Why, I was in London at the time of his trial; ay, and I had the pleasure of seeing him hanged at Execution Dock."

"Then, sir, let me tell you that you saw as pretty a fellow hanged as ever trod shoe-leather. Ay," putting his face nearer to that of the officer, "and there was many a landlubber looked on that might much better have swung in his stead."

The half-pay officer was silenced: but the indignation thus pent up in his bosom glowed with intense vehemence in his single eye, which kindled like a coal.

Peechy Praw, who never could remain silent, observed that the gentleman certainly was in the right. Kidd never did bury money up the Hudson, nor indeed in any of those parts, though many affirmed such to be the fact. It was Braddish and others of the bucaniers who had buried money; some said in Turtle Bay; others on Long Island; others in the neighbourhood of Hell-gate. Indeed, added he, I recollect an adventure of Sam, the negro fisherman, many years ago, which some think had something to do with the bucaniers. As we are all friends here, and as it will go no farther, I'll tell it to you. "Upon a dark night, many years ago, as Black Sam was returning from fishing in Hell-gate—"

Here the story was nipped in the bud by a sudden movement from the unknown, who, laying his iron fist on the table, knuckles downward, with a quiet force that indented the very boards, and looking grimly over his shoulder, with the grin of an angry bear—

"Hark'ee, neighbour!" said he, with a significant nodding of the head, "you'd better let the bucaniers and their money alone—they're not for old men and old women to meddle with. They fought hard for their money; they gave body and soul for it; and wherever it lies buried, depend upon it he must have a tug with the devil who gets it!"

This sudden explosion was succeeded by a blank silence throughout the room; Peechy Praw shrunk within himself,

and even the one-eyed officer turned pale. Wolfert, who from a dark corner in the room had listened with intense eagerness to all his talk about buried treasure, looked with mingled awe and reverence at this bold bucanier, for such he really suspected him to be. There was a chinking of gold and a sparkling of jewels in all his stories about the Spanish Main that gave a value to every period; and Wolfert would have given any thing for the rummaging of the ponderous sea-chest, which his imagination crammed full of golden chalices, crucifixes, and jolly round bags of doubloons.

The dead stillness that had fallen upon the company was at length interrupted by the stranger, who pulled out a prodigious watch, of curious and ancient workmanship, and which in Wolfert's eyes, had a decidedly Spanish look. On touching a spring, it struck ten o'clock; upon which the sailor called for his reckoning, and having paid it out of a handful of outlandish coin, he drank off the remainder of his beverage, and, without taking leave of any one, rolled out of the room, muttering to himself, as he stumped up stairs to his chamber.

It was some time before the company could recover from the silence into which they had been thrown. The very footsteps of the stranger, which were heard now and then as he traversed his chamber, inspired awe. Still the conversation in which they had been engaged was too interesting not to be resumed. A heavy thundergust had gathered up unnoticed while they were lost in talk, and the torrents of rain that fell forbade all thoughts of setting off for home until the storm should subside. They drew nearer together, therefore, and entreated the worthy Pecchy Prauw to continue the tale which had been so discourteously interrupted. He readily complied, whispering, however, in a tone scarcely above his breath, and drowned occasionally by the rolling of the thunder; and he would pause every now and then, and listen with evident awe, as he heard the heavy footsteps of the stranger pacing overhead. The following is the purport of his story.

## THE ADVENTURE

OF

## THE BLACK FISHERMAN.

EVERY body knows Black Sam, the old negro fisherman, or, as he is commonly called, Mud Sam, who has fished about the Sound for the last half century. It is now many years since Sam, who was then as active a young negro as any in the province, and worked on the farm of Killian Suydam, on Long Island, having finished his day's work at an early hour, was fishing, one still summer evening, just about the neighbourhood of Hell-gate.

He was in a light skiff, and being well acquainted with the currents and eddies, he had shifted his station according to the shifting of the tide, from the Hen and Chickens to the Hog's Back, from the Hog's Back to the Pot, and from the Pot to the Frying-pan; but in the eagerness of his sport he did not see that the tide was rapidly ebbing, until the roaring of the whirlpools and eddies warned him of his danger; and he had some difficulty in shooting his skiff from among the rocks and breakers, and getting to the point of Blackwell's Island. Here he cast anchor for some time, waiting the turn of the tide to enable him to return homewards. As the night set in, it grew blustering and gusty. Dark clouds came bundling up in the west, and now and then a growl of thunder, or a flash of lightning, told that a summer storm was at hand. Sam pulled over, therefore, under the lee of Manhattan Island, and coasting along, came to a snug nook, just under a steep beetling rock, where he fastened his skiff to the root of a tree that shot out from a cleft in the rock, and spread its broad branches, like a canopy, over the water. The gust came scouring along; the wind threw up the river in white surges; the rain rattled among the leaves; the thunder bellowed worse than that which is now bellowing; the lightning seemed to lick up the surges of the stream; but Sam, snugly sheltered under rock and tree, lay crouched in his skiff, rocking upon the billows until he fell asleep.



When he awoke, all was quiet. The gust had passed away, and only now and then a faint gleam of lightning in the east showed which way it had gone. The night was dark and moonless; and from the state of the tide Sam concluded it was near midnight. He was on the point of making loose his skiff to return homewards, when he saw a light gleaming along the water from a distance, which seemed rapidly approaching. As it drew near, he perceived it came from a lantern in the bow of a boat, which was gliding along under shadow of the land. It pulled up in a small cove, close to where he was. A man jumped on shore, and searching about with the lantern, exclaimed, "This is the place—here's the iron ring." The boat was then made fast, and the man returning on board, assisted his comrades in conveying something heavy on shore. As the light gleamed among them, Sam saw that they were five desperate-looking fellows, in red woollen caps, with a leader in a three-cornered hat, and that some of them were armed with dirks, or long knives, and pistols. They talked low to one another, and occasionally in some outlandish tongue which he could not understand.

On landing they made their way among the bushes, taking turns to relieve each other in lugging their burthen up the rocky bank. Sam's curiosity was now fully aroused; so, leaving his skiff, he clambered silently up a ridge that overlooked their path. They had stopped to rest for a moment; and the leader was looking about among the bushes with his lantern. "Have you brought the spades?" said one. "They are here," replied another, who had them on his shoulder.

"We must dig deep, where there will be no risk of discovery," said a third.

A cold chill ran through Sam's veins. He fancied he saw before him a gang of murderers about to bury their victim. His knees smote together. In his agitation he shook the branch of a tree with which he was supporting himself, as he looked over the edge of the cliff.

"What's that?" cried one of the gang. "Some one stirs among the bushes!"

The lantern was held up in the direction of the noise. One of the red-caps cocked a pistol and pointed it towards the very place where Sam was standing. He stood motionless—breathless—expecting the next moment to be his last. Fortunately, his dingy complexion was in his favour, and made no glare among the leaves.

"'Tis no one," said the man with the lantern. "What a plague! you would not fire off your pistol and alarm the country?"

The pistol was uncocked, the burthen was resumed, and the party slowly toiled along the bank. Sam watched them as they went, the light sending back fitful gleams through the dripping bushes; and it was not till they were fairly out of sight that he ventured to draw breath freely. He now thought of getting back to his boat, and making his escape out of the reach of such dangerous neighbours; but curiosity was all powerful. He hesitated, and lingered and listened. By and by he heard the strokes of spades. "They are digging the grave!" said he to himself, and the cold sweat started upon his forehead. Every stroke of a spade, as it sounded through the silent groves, went to his heart. It was evident there was as little noise made as possible; every thing had an air of terrible mystery and secrecy. Sam had a great relish for the horrible—a tale of murder was a treat for him, and he was a constant attendant at executions. He could not resist an impulse, in spite of every danger, to steal nearer to the scene of mystery, and overlook the midnight fellows at their work. He crawled along cautiously, therefore, inch by inch, stepping with the utmost care among the dry leaves lest their rustling should betray him. He came at length to where a steep rock intervened between him and the gang; for he saw the light of the lantern shining up against the branches of the trees on the other side. Sam slowly and silently clambered up the surface of the rock, and raising his head above its naked edge, beheld the villains immediately below him, and so near that though he dreaded discovery he dared not withdraw, lest the least movement should be heard. In this way he remained, with his round black

face peering above the edge of the rock, like the sun just emerging above the edge of the horizon, or the round-cheeked moon on the dial of a clock.

The red-caps had nearly finished their work; the grave was filled up and they were carefully replacing the turf. This done, they scattered dry leaves over the place; "And now," said the leader, "I defy the devil himself to find it out!"

"The murderers!" exclaimed Sam, involuntarily. The whole gang started, and looking up, beheld the round black head of Sam just above them; his white eyes strained half out of their orbits, his white teeth chattering, and his whole visage shining with cold perspiration.

"We're discovered!" cried one.

"Down with him," cried another.

Sam heard the cocking of a pistol, but did not pause for the report. He scrambled over rock and stone, through bush and briar; rolled down banks like a hedgehog; scrambled up others like a catamount. In every direction he heard some one or other of the gang hemming him in. At length he reached the rocky ridge along the river: one of the red-caps was hard behind him. A steep rock like a wall rose directly in his way; it seemed to cut off all retreat, when, fortunately, he espied the strong cord-like branch of a grape-vine reaching half way down it. He sprang at it with the force of a desperate man; seized it with both hands; and, being young and agile, succeeded in swinging himself to the summit of the cliff. Here he stood in full relief against the sky, when the red-cap cocked his pistol and fired. The ball whistled by Sam's head. With the lucky thought of a man in emergency, he uttered a yell, fell to the ground, and detached at the same time a fragment of the rock, which tumbled with a loud splash into the river.

"I've done his business," said the red-cap to one or two of his comrades, as they arrived panting: "he'll tell no tales, except to the fishes in the river."

His pursuers now turned off to meet their companions. Sam, sliding silently down the surface of the rock, let himself quietly into his skiff; cast loose the fastening, and abandoned himself to the rapid current, which in that place runs like a mill-stream, and soon swept him

off from the neighbourhood. It was not, however, until he had drifted a great distance that he ventured to ply his oars; when he made his skiff dart like an arrow through the strait of Hell-gate, never heeding the danger of Pot, Frying-pan, or Hog's Back itself; nor did he feel himself thoroughly secure until safely nestled in bed in the cockloft of the ancient farm-house of the Staydams.

Here the worthy Peechy Prauw paused to take breath, and to take a sip of the gossip tankard that stood at his elbow. His auditors remained with open mouths and outstretched necks, gaping like a nest of swallows for an additional mouthful.

"And is that all?" exclaimed the half-pay officer."

"That's all that belongs to the story," said Peechy Prauw.

"And did Sam never find out what was buried by the red-caps?" said Wolfert, eagerly, whose mind was haunted by nothing but ingots and doubloons.

"Not that I know of," said Peechy; "he had no time to spare from his work, and, to tell the truth, he did not like to run the risk of another race among the rocks. Besides, how should he recollect the spot where the grave had been digged, every thing would look so different by daylight? And then, where was the use of looking for a dead body, when there was no chance of hanging the murderers?"

"Ay, but are you sure it was a dead body they buried?" said Wolfert.

"To be sure," cried Peechy Prauw, exultingly. "Does it not haunt in the neighbourhood to this very day?"

"Haunts!" exclaimed several of the party, opening their eyes still wider, and edging their chairs still closer.

"Ay, haunts," repeated Peechy: "have none of you heard of Father Redcap, who haunts the old burnt farm-house in the woods, on the border of the Sound, near Hell-gate?"

"Oh! to be sure, I've heard tell of something of the kind: but then I took it for some old wives' fable."

"Old wives' fable or not," said Peechy Prauw, "that farm-house stands hard by the very spot. It's been unoccupied time out of mind, and stands in a lonely part

of the coast; but those who fish in the neighbourhood have often heard strange noises there; and lights have been seen about the wood at night; and an old fellow in a red cap has been seen at the windows more than once, which people take to be the ghost of the body that was buried there. Once upon a time three soldiers took shelter in the building for the night, and rummaged it from top to bottom, when they found old Father Redcap astride of a cider-barrel in the cellar, with a jug in one hand and a goblet in the other. He offered them a drink out of his goblet; but just as one of the soldiers was putting it to his mouth—whew!—a flash of fire blazed through the cellar, blinded every mother's son of them for several minutes, and when they recovered their eyesight, jug, goblet, and Redcap, had vanished, and nothing but the empty cider-barrel remained!"

Here the half-pay officer, who was growing very muzzy and sleepy, and nodding over his liquor, with half-extinguished eye, suddenly gleamed up like an expiring rushlight.

"That's all fudge!" said he, as Peechy finished his last story.

"Well, I don't vouch for the truth of it myself," said Peechy Praw, "though all the world knows that there's something strange about that house and grounds; but as to the story of Mud Sam, I believe it just as well as if it had happened to myself."

The deep interest taken in this conversation by the company had made them unconscious of the uproar that prevailed abroad among the elements, when suddenly they were all electrified by a tremendous clap of thunder; a lumbering crash followed instantaneously, shaking the building to its very foundation—all started from their seats, imagining it the shock of an earthquake, or that old Father Redcap was coming among them in all his terrors. They listened for a moment, but only heard the rain pelting against the windows, and the wind howling among the trees. The explosion was soon explained by the apparition of an old negro's bald head thrust in at the door, his white

goggle eyes contrasting with his jetty poll, which was wet with rain, and shone like a bottle. In a jargon but half intelligible, he announced that the kitchen chimney had been struck with lightning.

A sullen pause of the storm, which now rose and sunk in gusts, produced a momentary stillness. In this interval, the report of a musket was heard, and a long shout, almost like a yell, resounded from the shore. Every one crowded to the window. Another musket-shot was heard, and another long shout, that mingled wildly with a rising blast of wind. It seemed as if the cry came up from the bosom of the waters; for though incessant flashes of lightning spread a light about the shore, no one was to be seen.

Suddenly the window of the room overhead was opened, and a loud halloo uttered by the mysterious stranger. Several hailings passed from one party to the other, but in a language which none of the company in the bar-room could understand; and presently they heard the window closed, and a great noise overhead, as if all the furniture were pulled and hauled about the room. The negro servant was summoned, and shortly after was seen assisting the veteran to lug the ponderous sea-chest down stairs.

The landlord was in amazement—"What!—you are not going on the water in such a storm?"

"Storm!" said the other scornfully; "do you call such a sputter of weather a storm?"

"You'll get drenched to the skin—you'll catch your death!" said Peechy Praw, affectionately.

"Thunder and lightning!" exclaimed the merman; "don't preach about weather to a man that has cruised in whirlwinds and tornadoes!"

The obsequious Peechy was again struck dumb. The voice from the water was heard once more, in a tone of impatience. The bystanders stared with redoubled awe at this man of storms, who seemed to have come up out of the deep, and to be summoned back to it again. As, with the assistance of the negro, he slowly bore his

ponderous sea-chest towards the shore, they eyed it with a superstitious feeling, half doubting whether he were not really about to embark upon it, and launch forth upon the wild waves. They followed him at a distance with a lantern.

"Douse the light!" roared the hoarse voice from the water—"no one wants lights here!"

"Thunder and lightning!" exclaimed the veteran, turning short upon them; "back to the house with you."

Wolfert and his companions shrunk back in dismay. Still their curiosity would not allow them entirely to withdraw. A long sheet of lightning now flickered across the waves, and discovered a boat, filled with men, just under a rocky point, rising and sinking with the heaving surges, and swashing the water at every heave. It was with difficulty held to the rocks by a boat-hook, for the current rushed furiously round the point. The veteran hoisted one end of the lumbering sea-chest on the gunwale of the boat; he seized the handle at the other end to lift it in, when the motion propelled the boat from the shore; the chest slipped off from the gunwale, and sinking into the waves, pulled the veteran headlong after it. A loud shriek was uttered by all on shore, and a volley of execrations, by those on board—but boat and man were hurried away by the rushing swiftness of the tide. A pitchy darkness succeeded; Wolfert Webber, indeed, fancied that he distinguished a cry for help, and that he beheld the drowning man beckoning for assistance; but when the lightning again gleamed along the water, all was void; neither man nor boat were to be seen; nothing but the dashing and weltering of the waves as they hurried past.

The company returned to the tavern to await the subsiding of the storm. They resumed their seats, and gazed on each other with dismay. The whole transaction had not occupied five minutes, and not a dozen words had been spoken. When they looked at the oaken chair, they could scarcely realize the fact, that the strange being, who had so lately tenanted it, full of life and Herculean vigour, should already be a corpse. There was the very glass he had just

drunk from; there lay the ashes from the pipe which he had smoked, as it were, with his last breath. As the worthy burghers pondered on these things, they felt a terrible conviction of the uncertainty of existence, and each felt as if the ground on which he stood was rendered less stable by this awful example.

As, however, the most of the company were possessed of that valuable philosophy which enables a man to bear up with fortitude against the misfortunes of his neighbours, they soon managed to console themselves for the tragic end of the veteran. The landlord was particularly happy that the poor dear man had paid his reckoning before he went: and made a kind of farewell speech on the occasion. "He came," said he, "in a storm, and he went in a storm—he came in the night, and he went in the night—he came nobody knows from whence, and he has gone nobody knows where. For aught I know, he has gone to sea once more on his chest, and may land to bother some people on the other side of the world! Though it's a thousand pities," added he, "if he has gone to Davy Jones's locker, that he had not left his own locker behind him."

"His locker! St. Nicholas preserve us!" cried Peechy Praw—"I'd not have had that sea-chest in the house for any money; I'll warrant he'd come racketing after it at nights, and making a haunted house of the inn; and as to his going to sea in his chest, I recollect what happened to Skipper Onderdonk's ship, on his voyage from Amsterdam. The boatswain died during a storm, so they wrapped him up in a sheet, and put him in his own sea-chest, and threw him overboard; but they neglected, in their hurry-scurry, to say prayers over him; and the storm raged and roared louder than ever, and they saw the dead man seated in his chest, with his shroud for a sail, coming hard after the ship, and the sea breaking before him in great sprays, like fire; and there they kept scudding day after day, and night after night, expecting every moment to go to wreck; and every night they saw the dead boatswain, in his sea-chest, trying to get up with them, and they heard his

whistle above the blasts of wind, and he seemed to send great seas, mountain high, after them, that would have swamped the ship if they had not put up the deadlights; and so it went on till they lost sight of him in the fogs off Newfoundland, and supposed he had veered ship, and stood for Dead Man's Isle. So much for burying a man at sea, without saying prayers over him."

The thundergust which had hitherto detained the company was at an end. The cuckoo-clock in the hall told midnight; every one pressed to depart, for seldom was such a late hour of the night trespassed on by these quiet burghers. As they sallied forth, they found the heavens once more serene. The storm which had lately obscured them had rolled away, and lay piled up in fleecy masses on the horizon, lighted up by the bright crescent of the moon, which looked like a little silver lamp hung up in a palace of clouds.

The dismal occurrence of the night, and the dismal narrations they had made, had left a superstitious feeling in every mind. They cast a fearful glance at the spot where the bucanier had disappeared, almost expecting to see him sailing on his chest in the cool moonshine. The trembling rays glittered along the waters, but all was placid; and the current dimpled over the spot where he had gone down. The party huddled together in a little crowd as they repaired homewards, particularly when they passed a lonely field, where a man had been murdered; and even the sexton who had to complete his journey alone, though accustomed, one would think, to ghosts and goblins, yet went a long way round, rather than pass by his own churchyard.

Wolfert Webber had now carried home a fresh stock of stories and notions to ruminate upon. These accounts of pots of money and Spanish treasures, buried here and there and every where about the rocks and bays of these wild shores, made him almost dizzy. "Blessed St. Nicholas!" ejaculated he, half aloud, "is it not possible to come upon one of these golden hoards, and to make one's self rich in a twinkling? How hard that I must go on, delving and delving, day in

and day out, merely to make a morsel of bread, when one lucky stroke of a spade might enable me to ride in my carriage for the rest of my life!"

As he turned over in his thoughts all that had been told of the singular adventure of the negro fisherman, his imagination gave a totally different complexion to the tale. He saw in the gang of redcaps nothing but a crew of pirates burying their spoils, and his cupidity was once more awakened by the possibility of at length getting on the traces of some of this lurking wealth. Indeed, his infected fancy tinged every thing with gold. He felt like the greedy inhabitant of Bagdad, when his eyes had been greased with the magic ointment of the dervise, that gave him to see all the treasures of the earth. Caskets of buried jewels, chests of ingots, and barrels of outlandish coins, seemed to court him from their concealments, and supplicate him to relieve them from their untimely graves.

On making private inquiries about the grounds said to be haunted by Father Redcap, he was more and more confirmed in his surmise. He learned that the place had several times been visited by experienced money-diggers, who had heard Black Sam's story, though none of them had met with success. On the contrary, they had always been dogged with ill luck of some kind or other, in consequence, as Wolfert concluded, of not going to work at the proper time, and with the proper ceremonials. The last attempt had been made by Cobus Quackenbos, who dug for a whole night, and met with incredible difficulty; for, as fast as he threw one shovelful of earth out of the hole, two were thrown in by invisible hands. He succeeded so far, however, as to uncover an iron chest, when there was a terrible roaring, ramping, and raging of uncouth figures about the hole, and at length a shower of blows dealt by invisible cudgels, that fairly belaboured him off of the forbidden ground. This Cobus Quackenbos had declared on his deathbed, so that there could not be any doubt of it. He was a man that had devoted many years of his life to money-digging, and it was thought would have ultimately succeeded, had he not

died recently of a brain-fever in the almshouse.

Wolfert Webber was now in a worry of trepidation and impatience, fearful lest some rival adventurer should get a scent of the buried gold. He determined privately to seek out the black fisherman, and get him to serve as guide to the place where he had witnessed the mysterious scene of interment. Sam was easily found, for he was one of those old habitual beings that live about a neighbourhood until they wear themselves a place in the public mind, and become, in a manner, public characters. There was not an unlucky urchin about town that did not know Mud Sam, the fisherman, and think that he had a right to play his tricks upon the old negro. Sam had led an amphibious life, for more than half a century, about the shores of the bay and the fishing-grounds of the Sound. He passed the greater part of his time on and in the water, particularly about Hell-gate; and might have been taken, in bad weather, for one of the hobgoblins that used to haunt that strait. There would he be seen at all times, and in all weathers; sometimes in his skiff anchored among the eddies, or prowling like a shark about some wreck, where the fish are supposed to be most abundant. Sometimes seated on a rock, from hour to hour, looking, in the mist and drizzle, like a solitary heron watching for its prey. He was well acquainted with every hole and corner of the Sound, from the Wallabout to Hell-gate, and from Hell-gate even unto the Devil's Stepping-stones; and it was even affirmed that he knew all the fish in the river by their Christian names.

Wolfert found him at his cabin, which was not much larger than a tolerable dog-house. It was rudely constructed of fragments of wrecks and drift-wood, and built on the rocky shore, at the foot of the old fort, just about what at present forms the point of the Battery. A "most ancient and fish-like smell" pervaded the place. Oars, paddles, and fishing-rods were leaning against the wall of the fort; a net was spread on the sands to dry; a skiff was drawn up on the beach; and at the door of his cabin was Mud Sam himself, indulging

in the true negro luxury of sleeping in the sunshine.

Many years had passed away since the time of Sam's youthful adventure, and the snows of many a winter had grizzled the knotty wool upon his head. He perfectly recollected the circumstances, however, for he had often been called upon to relate them, though, in his version of the story, he differed in many points from Peechy Praw; as is not unfrequently the case with authentic historians. As to the subsequent researches of money-diggers, Sam knew nothing about them, they were matters quite out of his line; neither did the cautious Wolfert care to disturb his thoughts on that point. His only wish was to secure the old fisherman as a pilot to the spot, and this was readily effected. The long time that had intervened since his nocturnal adventure, had effaced all Sam's awe of the place, and the promise of a trifling reward roused him at once from his sleep and his sunshine.

The tide was adverse to making the expedition by water, and Wolfert was too impatient to get to the land of promise to wait for its turning; they set off therefore by land. A walk of four or five miles brought them to the edge of a wood, which at that time covered the greater part of the eastern side of the island. It was just beyond the pleasant region of Bloemen-dael. Here they struck into a long lane, straggling among trees and bushes, very much overgrown with weeds and mullein stalks, as if but seldom used, and so completely overshadowed, as to enjoy but a kind of twilight. Wild vines entangled the trees, and flaunted in their faces; brambles and briers caught their clothes as they passed; the garter-snake glided across their path; the spotted toad hopped and waddled before them; and the restless catbird mewed at them from every thicket. Had Wolfert Webber been deeply read in romantic legend, he might have fancied himself entering upon forbidden, enchanted ground; or that these were some of the guardians set to keep a watch upon buried treasure. As it was, the loneliness of the place, and the wild stories connected with it, had their effect upon his mind.

On reaching the lower end of the lane, they found themselves near the shore of the Sound, in a kind of amphitheatre surrounded by forest-trees. The area had once been a grass-plot, but was now shagged with briars and rank weeds. At one end, and just on the river bank, was a ruined building, little better than a heap of rubbish, with a stack of chimneys rising, like a solitary tower, out of the centre; the current of the Sound rushed along just below it, with wildly grown trees drooping their branches into its waves.

Wolfert had not a doubt that this was the haunted house of Father Redcap, and called to mind the story of Peechy Prauw. The evening was approaching, and the light, falling dubiously among these woody places, gave a melancholy tone to the scene, well calculated to foster any lurking feeling of awe or superstition. The nighthawk, wheeling about in the highest regions of the air, emitted his peevish, boding cry. The woodpecker gave a lonely tap now and then on some hollow tree, and the fire-bird\* streamed by them with his deep-red plumage. They now came to an enclosure that had once been a garden. It extended along the foot of a rocky ridge, but it was little better than a wilderness of weeds, with here and there a matted rosebush, or a peach or plum tree, grown wild and ragged, and covered with moss. At the lower end of the garden they passed a kind of vault in the side of a bank, facing the water. It had the look of a root-house. The door, though decayed, was still strong, and appeared to have been recently patched up. Wolfert pushed it open. It gave a harsh grating upon its hinges, and striking against something like a box, a rattling sound ensued, and a scull rolled on the floor. Wolfert drew back shuddering, but was reassured, on being informed by the negro that this was a family-vault belonging to one of the old Dutch families that owned this estate; an assertion which was corroborated by the sight of coffins of various sizes piled within. Sam had been familiar with all these scenes when a boy, and now knew that

he could not be far from the place of which they were in quest.

They now made their way to the water's edge, scrambling along ledges of rocks that overhung the waves, and obliged often to hold by shrubs and grape-vines to avoid slipping into the deep and hurried stream. At length they came to a small cove, or rather indent of the shore. It was protected by steep rocks, and overshadowed by a thick copse of oaks and chestnuts, so as to be sheltered and almost concealed. The beach shelved gradually within the cove, but the current swept, deep and black and rapid, along its jutting points.

The negro paused; raised his remnant of a hat, and scratched his grizzled poll for a moment, as he regarded this nook: then suddenly clapping his hands, he stepped exultingly forward, and pointed to a large iron ring, stapled firmly in the rock, just where a broad shelf of stone furnished a commodious landing-place. It was the very spot where the red-caps had landed. Years had changed the more perishable features of the scene; but rock and iron yield slowly to the influence of time. On looking more closely, Wolfert remarked three crosses cut in the rock just above the ring; which had no doubt some mysterious signification.

Old Sam now readily recognised the overhanging rock under which his skiff had been sheltered during the thunder-gust. To follow up the course which the midnight gang had taken, however, was a harder task. His mind had been so much taken up on that eventful occasion by the persons of the drama, as to pay but little attention to the scenes; and these places look so different by night and day. After wandering about for some time, however, they came to an opening among the trees, which Sam thought resembled the place. There was a ledge of rock of moderate height, like a wall, on one side, which he thought might be the very ridge from whence he had overlooked the diggers. Wolfert examined it narrowly, and at length discovered three crosses, similar to those above the iron ring, cut deeply into the face of the rock, but nearly obliterated by the moss that had grown over them. His heart leaped with joy, for he doubted

\* Orchard oreole.

not they were the private marks of the bucaniers. All now that remained was to ascertain the precise spot where the treasure lay buried, for otherwise he might dig at random in the neighbourhood of the crosses, without coming upon the spoils, and he had already had enough of such profitless labour. Here, however, the old negro was perfectly at a loss, and indeed perplexed by a variety of opinions; for his recollections were all confused. Sometimes he declared it must have been at the foot of a mulberry tree hard by; then it was just beside a great white stone; then it must have been under a small green knoll, a short distance from the ledge of rock; until at length Wolfert became as bewildered as himself.

The shadows of evening were now spreading themselves over the woods, and rock and tree began to mingle together. It was evidently too late to attempt any thing further at present; and indeed Wolfert had come unprovided with implements to prosecute his researches. Satisfied, therefore, with having ascertained the place, he took note of all its landmarks that he might recognise it again, and set out on his return homewards; resolved to prosecute this golden enterprise without delay.

The leading anxiety, which had hitherto absorbed every feeling, being now in some measure appeased, fancy began to wander, and to conjure up a thousand shapes and chimeras as he returned through this haunted region. Pirates hanging in chains seemed to swing from every tree, and he almost expected to see some Spanish Don, with his throat cut from ear to ear, rising slowly out of the ground, and shaking the ghost of a money-bag.

Their way back lay through the desolate garden, and Wolfert's nerves had arrived at so sensitive a state, that the flitting of a bird, the rustling of a leaf, or the falling of a nut, was enough to startle them. As they entered the confines of the garden, they caught sight of a figure at a distance, advancing slowly up one of the walks, and bending under the weight of a burthen. They paused, and regarded him attentively. He wore what appeared to be a woollen cap, and,

still more alarming, of a most sanguinary red. The figure moved slowly on, ascended the bank, and stopped at the very door of the sepulchral vault. Just before entering it, he looked around. What was the affright of Wolfert, when he recognized the grisly visage of the drowned bucanier! He uttered an ejaculation of horror. The figure slowly raised his iron fist, and shook it with a terrible menace.

Wolfert did not pause to see any more, but hurried off as fast as his legs could carry him, nor was Sam slow in following at his heels, having all his ancient terrors revived. Away then did they scramble, through bush and brake, horribly frightened at every bramble that tugged at their skirts; nor did they pause to breathe, until they had blundered their way through this perilous wood, and had fairly reached the high road to the city.

Several days elapsed before Wolfert could summon courage enough to prosecute the enterprise, so much had he been dismayed by the apparition, whether living or dead, of the grisly bucanier. In the mean time, what a conflict of mind did he suffer! He neglected all his concerns; was moody and restless all day; lost his appetite; wandered in his thoughts and words, and committed a thousand blunders. His rest was broken; and when he fell asleep, the nightmare, in shape of a huge money-bag, sat squatted upon his breast. He babbled about incalculable sums; fancied himself engaged in money-digging; threw the bedclothes right and left, in the idea that he was shovelling away the dirt; groped under the bed in quest of the treasure, and lugged forth, as he supposed, an inestimable pot of gold.

Dame Webber and her daughter were in despair at what they conceived a returning touch of insanity. There are two family oracles, one or other of which Dutch housewives consult in all cases of great doubt and perplexity—the dominie and the doctor. In the present instance, they repaired to the doctor. There was at that time a little, dark, mouldy man of medicine, famous among the old wives of the Manhattoes for his skill, not only in the healing art, but in all matters of strange and mysterious nature. His



name was Dr. Knipperhausen, but he was more commonly known by the appellation of the High German doctor.\* To him did the poor woman repair for counsel and assistance touching the mental vagaries of Wolfert Webber.

They found the doctor seated in his little study, clad in his dark camlet robe of knowledge, with his black velvet cap, after the manner of Boerhaave, Van Helmont, and other medical sages; a pair of green spectacles set in black horn upon his clubbed nose; and poring over a German folio that reflected back the darkness of his physiognomy.

The doctor listened to their statement of the symptoms of Wolfert's malady with profound attention; but when they came to mention his raving about buried money, the little man pricked up his ears. Alas, poor women! they little knew the aid they had called in.

Dr. Knipperhausen had been half his life engaged in seeking the short cuts to fortune, in quest of which so many a long lifetime is wasted. He had passed some years of his youth among the Harz mountains of Germany, and had derived much valuable instruction from the miners, touching the mode of seeking treasure buried in the earth. He had prosecuted his studies also under a travelling sage, who united the mysteries of medicine with magic and legerdemain. His mind, therefore, had become stored with all kinds of mystic lore; he had dabbled a little in astrology, alchemy, divination; knew how to detect stolen money, and to tell where springs of water lay hidden; in a word, by the dark nature of his knowledge, he had acquired the name of the High German doctor, which is pretty nearly equivalent to that of necromancer.

The doctor had often heard the rumours of treasure being buried in various parts of the island, and had long been anxious to get in the traces of it. No sooner were Wolfert's waking and sleeping vagaries confided to him, than he beheld in them the confirmed symptoms of a case of money-digging, and lost no time in probing it to the bottom. Wolfert had long been sorely oppressed in

mind by the golden secret, and as a family physician is a kind of father confessor, he was glad of an opportunity of unburthening himself. So far from curing, the doctor caught the malady from his patient. The circumstances unfolded to him awakened all his cupidity; he had not a doubt of money being buried somewhere in the neighbourhood of the mysterious crosses, and offered to join Wolfert in the search. He informed him that much secrecy and caution must be observed in enterprises of the kind; that money is only to be digged for at night, with certain forms and ceremonies, the burning of drugs, the repeating of mystic words, and above all, that the seekers must be provided with a divining-rod, which had the wonderful property of pointing to the very spot on the surface of the earth under which treasure lay hidden. As the doctor had given much of his mind to these matters, he charged himself with all the necessary preparations, and as the quarter of the moon was propitious, he undertook to have the divining-rod ready by a certain night.\*

\* The following note was found appended to this passage, in the handwriting of Mr. Knickerbocker:

There has been much written against the divining-rod by those light minds who are ever ready to scoff at the mysteries of nature; but I fully join with Dr. Knipperhausen in giving it my faith. I shall not insist upon its efficacy in discovering the concealment of stolen goods, the boundary-stones of fields, the traces of robbers and murderers, or even the existence of subterraneous springs and streams of water; albeit I think these properties not to be readily discredited; but of its potency in discovering veins of precious metal, and hidden sums of money and jewels, I have not the least doubt. Some said that the rod turned only in the hands of persons who had been born in particular months of the year; hence astrologers had recourse to planetary influence when they would procure a talisman. Others declared that the properties of the rod were either an effect of chance, or the fraud of the holder, or the work of the devil. Thus saith the reverend Father Gaspard Sebett in his treatise on magic: "Propter hæc et similia argumenta auctar e ego promiserò vim conversivam virgulæ bifurcatæ nequaquam naturalem esse, sed vel casu vel fraude virgulam tractantis vel ope diaboli, etc." Georgius Agricola also was of opinion that it was a mere delusion of the devil to inveigle the avaricious and unwary into his clutches; and in his treatise, "De Re Metallica," lays particular stress on the mysterious words pronounced by those persons who employed the divining-rod during his time. But I make not a doubt that the divining-rod is one of those secrets of natural magic, the mystery of which is to be explained by the sympathies existing between physical things operated upon by the planets, and rendered efficacious by the strong faith of the individual. Let the divining-

\* The same, no doubt, of whom mention is made in the history of Dolph Heyliger.

Wolfert's heart leaped with joy at having met with so learned and able a coadjutor. Every thing went on secretly but swimmingly. The doctor had many consultations with his patient, and the good woman of the household lauded the comforting effect of his visits. In the mean time, the wonderful divining-rod, that great key to nature's secrets, was duly prepared. The doctor had thumbed over all his books of knowledge for the occasion; and the black fisherman was engaged to take him in his skiff to the scene of enterprise; to work with spade and pickaxe in unearthing the treasure; and to freight his bark with the weighty spoils they were certain of finding.

At length the appointed night arrived for this perilous undertaking. Before Wolfert left his home, he counselled his wife and daughter to go to bed, and feel no alarm if he should not return during the night. Like reasonable women, on being told not to feel alarm, they fell immediately into a panic. They saw at once by his manner that something unusual was in agitation; all their fears about the unsettled state of his mind were revived with tenfold force; they hung about him, entreating him not to expose himself to the night air, but all in vain. When once Wolfert was mounted on his hobby, it was no easy matter to get him out of the saddle. It was a clear starlight night, when he issued out of the portal of the Webber palace. He wore a large flapped hat, tied under the chin with a handkerchief of his daughter's to secure him from the night damp; while Dame Webber threw her long red cloak about his shoulders, and fastened it round his neck.

The doctor had been no less carefully armed and accoutred by his housekeeper, the vigilant Frau Ilsy, and sallied forth in his camlet robe by way of surcoat; his black velvet cap under his cocked hat; a thick clasped book under his arm; a basket of drugs and dried herbs in one

hand, and in the other the miraculous rod of divination.

The great church clock struck ten as Wolfert and the doctor passed by the churchyard, and the watchman bawled, in a hoarse voice, a long and doleful "All's well!" A deep sleep had already fallen upon this primitive little burgh. Nothing disturbed this awful silence, excepting now and then the bark of some profligate, night-walking dog, or the serenade of some romantic cat.

It is true Wolfert fancied more than once that he heard the sound of a stealthy footfall at a distance behind them; but it might have been merely the sound of their own steps echoing along the quiet street. He thought also, at one time, that he saw a tall figure skulking after them, stopping when they stopped, and moving on as they proceeded; but the dim and uncertain lamplight threw such vague gleams and shadows, that this might all have been mere fancy.

They found the old fisherman waiting for them, smoking his pipe in the stern of his skiff, which was moored just in front of his little cabin. A pickaxe and spade were lying in the bottom of the boat, with a dark lantern, and a stone bottle of good Dutch courage, in which honest Sam, no doubt, put even more faith than Dr. Knipperhausen in his drugs.

Thus, then, did these three worthies embark in their cockle-shell of a skiff upon this nocturnal expedition, with a wisdom and valour equalled only by the three wise men of Gotham, who adventured to sea in a bowl. The tide was rising, and running rapidly up the Sound. The current bore them along almost without the aid of an oar. The profile of the town lay all in shadow. Here and there a light feebly glimmered from some sick chamber, or from the cabin-window of some vessel at anchor in the stream. Not a cloud obscured the deep starry firmament, the lights of which wavered on the surface of the placid river; and a shooting meteor, streaking its pale course in the very direction they were taking, was interpreted by the doctor into a most propitious omen.

In a little while they glided by the point of Corlear's Hook, with the rural

rod be properly gathered at the proper time of the moon, cut into the proper form, used with the necessary ceremonies, and with a perfect faith in its efficacy, and I can confidently recommend it to my fellow-citizens as an infallible means of discovering the various places on the island of the Manhattoes, where treasure hath been buried in the olden time,  
D. K.

inn, which had been the scene of such night adventures. The family had retired to rest, and the house was dark and still. Wolfert felt a chill pass over him as they passed the point where the bucanier had disappeared. He pointed it out to Dr. Knipperhausen. While regarding it, they thought they saw a boat actually lurking at the very place; but the shore cast such a shadow over the border of the water, that they could discern nothing distinctly. They had not proceeded far, when they heard the low sound of distant oars, as if cautiously pulled. Sam plied his oars with redoubled vigour, and knowing all the eddies and currents of the stream, soon left their followers, if such they were, far astern. In a little while they stretched across Turtle Bay and Kip's Bay, then shrouded themselves in the deep shadows of the Manhattan shore, and glided swiftly along, secure from observation. At length the negro shot his skiff into a little cove, darkly embowered by trees, and made it fast to the well-known iron ring.

They now landed, and lighting the lantern, gathered their various implements, and proceeded slowly through the bushes. Every sound startled them, even that of their own footsteps among the dry leaves; and the hooting of a screech owl from the shattered chimney of the neighbouring ruin made their blood run cold.

In spite of all Wolfert's caution in taking note of the landmarks, it was some time before they could find the open place among the trees, where the treasure was supposed to be buried. At length they came to the ledge of rock, and on examining its surface by the aid of the lantern, Wolfert recognised the three mystic crosses. Their hearts beat quick, for the momentous trial was at hand that was to determine their hopes.

The lantern was now held by Wolfert Webber, while the doctor produced the divining-rod. It was a forked twig, one end of which was grasped firmly in each hand; while the centre, forming the stem, pointed perpendicularly upwards. The doctor moved this wand about, within a certain distance of the earth, from place to place, but for some time

without any effect; while Wolfert kept the light of the lantern turned full upon it, and watched it with the most breathless interest. At length the rod began slowly to turn. The doctor grasped it with greater earnestness, his hands trembling with the agitation of his mind. The wand continued to turn gradually, until at length the stem had reversed its position, and pointed perpendicularly downward, and remained pointing to one spot as fixedly as the needle to the pole.

"This is the spot!" said the doctor in an almost inaudible tone.

Wolfert's heart was in his throat.

"Shall I dig?" said the negro, grasping the spade.

"Potstausends, no!" replied the little doctor hastily. He now ordered his companions to keep close by him, and to maintain the most inflexible silence; that certain precautions must be taken, and ceremonies used, to prevent the evil spirits which kept about buried treasure from doing them any harm.

He then drew a circle about the place, enough to include the whole party. He next gathered dry twigs and leaves, and made a fire, upon which he threw certain drugs and dried herbs, which he had brought in his basket. A thick smoke arose, diffusing its potent odour, savouring marvellously of brimstone and assa-fœtida, which, however grateful it might be to the olfactory nerves of spirits, nearly strangled poor Wolfert, and produced a fit of coughing and wheezing that made the whole grove resound. Dr. Knipperhausen then unclasped the volume which he had brought under his arm, which was printed in red and black characters in German text. While Wolfert held the lantern, the doctor, by the aid of his spectacles, read off several forms of conjuration in Latin and German. He then ordered Sam to seize the pickaxe and proceed to work. The close-bound soil gave obstinate signs of not having been disturbed for many a year. After having picked his way through the surface, Sam came to a bed of sand and gravel, which he threw briskly to right and left with the spade.

"Hark!" said Wolfert, who fancied he heard a trampling among the dry leaves, and a rustling through the bushes.

Sam paused for a moment, and they listened—no footstep was near. The bat flitted by them in silence; a bird, roused from its roost by the light which glared up among the trees, flew circling about the flame. In the profound stillness of the woodland they could distinguish the current rippling along the rocky shore, and the distant murmuring and roaring of Hell-gate.

The negro continued his labours, and had already dug a considerable hole. The doctor stood on the edge, reading formulæ, every now and then, from his black-letter volume, or throwing more drugs and herbs upon the fire, while Wolfert bent anxiously over the pit, watching every stroke of the spade. Any one witnessing the scene, thus lighted up by fire, lantern, and the reflection of Wolfert's red mantle, might have mistaken the little doctor for some foul magician, busied in his incantations, and the grizzly-headed negro for some swart goblin obedient to his commands.

At length the spade of the old fisherman struck upon something that sounded hollow; the sound vibrated to Wolfert's heart. He struck his spade again—

"'Tis a chest," said Sam.

"Full of gold, I'll warrant it!" cried Wolfert, clasping his hands with rapture.

Scarcely had he uttered the words when a sound from above caught his ear. He cast up his eyes, and lo! by the expiring light of the fire, he beheld, just over the disk of the rock, what appeared to be the grim visage of the drowned bucanier, grinning hideously upon him.

Wolfert gave a loud cry, and let fall the lantern. His panic communicated itself to his companions. The negro leaped out of the hole; the doctor dropped his book and basket, and began to pray in German. All was horror and confusion. The fire was scattered about, the lantern extinguished. In their hurry-scurry, they ran against and confounded one another. They fancied a legion of hobgoblins let loose upon them, and that they saw, by the fitful gleams of the scattered embers, strange figures in red caps, gibbering and ramping around them. The doctor ran one way, the negro another, and Wolfert made for the water-

side. As he plunged, struggling onwards through bush and brake, he heard the tread of some one in pursuit. He scrambled frantically forward. The footsteps gained upon him. He felt himself grasped by his cloak, when suddenly his pursuer was attacked in turn. A fierce fight and struggle ensued. A pistol was discharged that lit up rock and bush for a second, and showed two figures grappling together—all was then darker than ever. The contest continued; the combatants clenched each other, and panted and groaned, and rolled among the rocks. There was snarling and growling as of a cur, mingled with curses, in which Wolfert fancied he could recognise the voice of the bucanier. He would fain have fled, but he was on the brink of a precipice, and could go no farther. Again the parties were on their feet; again there was a tugging and struggling, as if strength alone could decide the combat, until one was precipitated from the brow of the cliff, and sent headlong into the deep stream that whirled below. Wolfert heard the plunge, and a kind of strangling, bubbling murmur; but the darkness of the night hid every thing from him, and the swiftness of the current swept every thing instantly out of hearing.

One of the combatants was disposed of, but whether friend or foe Wolfert could not tell, or whether they might not both be foes. He heard the survivor approach, and terror revived. He saw, where the profile of the rocks rose against the horizon, a human form advancing. He could not be mistaken—it must be the bucanier. Whither should he fly? a precipice was on one side, a murderer on the other. The enemy approached—he was close at hand. Wolfert attempted to let himself down the face of the cliff. His cloak caught in a thorn that grew on the edge: he was jerked from off his feet, and held dangling in the air, half choked by the string with which his careful wife had fastened the garment round his neck. Wolfert thought his last moment was arrived; already he had committed his soul to St. Nicholas, when the string broke, and he tumbled down the bank, bumping from rock to rock, and bush to bush, and leaving the red cloak

fluttering, like a bloody banner, in the air.

It was a long while before Wolfert came to himself. When he opened his eyes, the ruddy streaks of morning were already shooting up the sky. He found himself lying in the bottom of a boat, grievously battered. He attempted to sit up, but was too sore and stiff to move. A voice requested him, in friendly accents, to lie still. He turned his eyes towards the speaker—it was Dirk Waldron. He had dogged the party at the earnest request of Dame Webber and her daughter, who, with the laudable curiosity of their sex, had pried into the secret consultations of Wolfert and the doctor. Dirk had been completely distanced in following the light skiff of the fisherman, and had just come in time to rescue the poor money-digger from his pursuer.

Thus ended this perilous enterprise. The doctor and Black Sam severally found their way back to the Manhattoes, each having some dreadful tale of peril to relate. As to poor Wolfert, instead of returning in triumph, laden with bags of gold, he was borne home on a shutter, followed by a rabble rout of curious urchins.

His wife and daughter saw the dismal pageant from a distance, and alarmed the neighbourhood with their cries; they thought the poor man had suddenly settled the great debt of nature in one of his wayward moods. Finding him, however, still living, they had him speedily to bed, and a jury of old matrons of the neighbourhood assembled to determine how he should be doctored.

The whole town was in a buzz with the story of the money-diggers. Many repaired to the scene of the previous night's adventures; but though they found the very place of digging, they discovered nothing that compensated them for their trouble. Some say they found the fragments of an oaken chest, and an iron potlid, which savoured strongly of hidden money, and that in the old family vault there were traces of bales and boxes, but this is all very dubious.

In fact, the secret of all this story has never to this day been discovered. Whether any treasure were ever actually

buried at that place; whether, if so, it were carried off at night by those who had buried it; or whether it still remains there under the guardianship of gnomes and spirits, until it shall be properly sought for, is all matter of conjecture. For my part, I incline to the latter opinion, and make no doubt that great sums lie buried, both there and in many other parts of this island and its neighbourhood, ever since the times of the bucaniers and the Dutch colonists; and I would earnestly recommend the search after them to such of my fellow-citizens as are not engaged in any other speculations. There were many conjectures formed, also, as to who and what was the strange man of the seas who had domineered over the little fraternity at Corlear's Hook for a time, disappeared so strangely, and re-appeared so fearfully.

Some supposed him a smuggler, stationed at that place to assist his comrades in landing their goods among the rocky coves of the island. Others, that he was one of the ancient comrades, either of Kidd or Bradish, returned to convey treasures formerly hidden in the vicinity. The only circumstance that throws any thing like a vague light on this mysterious matter, is a report which prevailed of a strange foreign-built shallop, with much the look of a picaroon, having been seen hovering about the Sound for several days without landing or reporting herself, though boats were seen going to and from her at night; and that she was seen standing out of the mouth of the harbour, in the gray of the dawn, after the catastrophe of the money-diggers.

I must not omit to mention another report, also, which I confess is rather apocryphal, of the bucanier, who was supposed to have been drowned, being seen before daybreak with a lantern in his hand, seated astride his great sea-chest, and sailing through Hell-gate, which just then began to roar and bellow with redoubled fury.

While all the gossip world was thus filled with talk and rumour, poor Wolfert lay sick and sorrowful in his bed, bruised in body, and sorely beaten down in mind. His wife and daughter did all

they could to bind up his wounds, both corporal and spiritual. The good old dame never stirred from his bed-side, where she sat knitting from morning till night; while his daughter busied herself about him with the fondest care. Nor did they lack assistance from abroad. Whatever may be said of the desertion of friends in distress, they had no complaint of the kind to make; not an old wife of the neighbourhood but abandoned her work to crowd to the mansion of Wolfert Webber, inquire after his health, and the particulars of his story. Not one came, moreover, without her little pipkin of pennyroyal, sage-balm, or other herb-tea, delighted at an opportunity of signalizing her kindness and her doctorship. What drenchings did not the poor Wolfert undergo! and all in vain. It was a moving sight to behold him wasting away day by day; growing thinner and thinner, and ghastlier and ghastlier; and staring with rueful visage from under an old patchwork counterpane, upon the jury of matrons kindly assembled to sigh and groan, and look unhappy around him.

Dirk Waldron was the only being that seemed to shed a ray of sunshine into this house of mourning. He came in with cheery look and manly spirit, and tried to reanimate the expiring heart of the poor money-digger; but it was all in vain. Wolfert was completely done over. If any thing was wanting to complete his despair, it was a notice served upon him, in the midst of his distress, that the corporation were about to run a new street through the very centre of his cabbage-garden. He now saw nothing before him but poverty and ruin—his last reliance, the garden of his forefathers, was to be laid waste—and what then was to become of his poor wife and child? His eyes filled with tears as they followed the dutiful Amy out of the room one morning. Dirk Waldron was seated beside him; Wolfert grasped his hand, pointed after his daughter, and for the first time since his illness, broke the silence he had maintained.

“I am going,” said he, shaking his head feebly; “and when I am gone—my poor daughter—”

“Leave her to me, father!” said Dirk, manfully; “I’ll take care of her!”

Wolfert looked up in the face of the cheery, strapping youngster, and saw there was none better able to take care of a woman.

“Enough,” said he, “she is yours!—and now fetch me a lawyer—let me make my will and die.”

The lawyer was brought, a dapper, bustling, round-headed little man—Roorbach (or Rollebuck, as it was pronounced) by name. At the sight of him the women broke into loud lamentations, for they looked upon the signing of a will as the signing of a death-warrant. Wolfert made a feeble motion for them to be silent. Poor Amy buried her face and her grief in the bed-curtain; Dame Webber resumed her knitting to hide her distress, which betrayed itself, however, in a pellucid tear which trickled silently down, and hung at the end of her peaked nose; while the cat, the only unconcerned member of the family, played with the good dame’s ball of worsted, as it rolled about the floor.

Wolfert lay on his back, his nightcap drawn over his forehead, his eyes closed, his whole visage the picture of death. He begged the lawyer to be brief, for he felt his end approaching, and that he had no time to lose. The lawyer nibbed his pen, spread out his paper, and prepared to write.

“I give and bequeath,” said Wolfert, faintly, “my small farm—”

“What! all?” exclaimed the lawyer.

Wolfert half opened his eyes and looked upon the lawyer.

“Yes—all,” said he.

“What! all that great patch of land with cabbages and sunflowers, which the corporation is just going to run a main street through?”

“The same,” said Wolfert, with a heavy sigh, and sinking back upon his pillow.

“I wish him joy that inherits it!” said the little lawyer, chuckling and rubbing his hands involuntarily.

“What do you mean?” said Wolfert, again opening his eyes.

“That he’ll be one of the richest men in the place!” cried little Rollebuck.

The expiring Wolfert seemed to step back from the threshold of existence; his eyes again lighted up; he raised

himself in his bed, shoved back his worsted red nightcap, and stared broadly at the lawyer.

"You don't say so!" exclaimed he.

"Faith, but I do!" rejoined the other.

"Why, when that great field, and that huge meadow, come to be laid out in streets, and cut up into snug building-lots—why, whoever owns it need not pull off his hat to the patrol!"

"Say you so?" cried Wolfert, half thrusting one leg out of bed; "why, then, I think I'll not make my will yet!"

To the surprise of every body, the dying man actually recovered. The vital spark, which had glimmered faintly in the socket, received fresh fuel from the oil of gladness which the little lawyer poured into his soul. It once more burnt up into a flame. Give physic to the heart, ye who would revive the body of a spirit-broken man! In a few days Wolfert left his room; in a few days more his table was covered with deeds, plans of streets, and building-lots. Little Rolleback was constantly with him, his right-hand man and adviser, and instead of making his will, assisted in the more agreeable task of making his fortune.

In fact, Wolfert Webber was one of those many worthy Dutch burghers of the Manhattoes, whose fortunes have been made in a manner in spite of themselves; who have tenaciously held on to their hereditary acres, raising turnips and cabbages about the skirts of the city, hardly able to make both ends meet, until the corporation has cruelly driven streets through their abodes, and they have suddenly awakened out of their lethargy, and to their astonishment found themselves rich men!

Before many months had elapsed, a great bustling street passed through the very centre of the Webber garden, just where Wolfert had dreamed of finding a

treasure. His golden dream was accomplished. He did indeed find an unlooked-for source of wealth; for when his paternal lands were distributed into building-lots, and rented out to safe tenants, instead of producing a paltry crop of cabbages, they returned him an abundant crop of rents; insomuch that on quarter-day it was a goodly sight to see his tenants knocking at his door from morning till night, each with a little round-bellied bag of money, the golden produce of the soil.

The ancient mansion of his forefathers was still kept up; but instead of being a little yellow-fronted Dutch house in a garden, it now stood boldly in the midst of a street, the grand house of the neighbourhood; for Wolfert enlarged it with a wing on each side, and a cupola or tea-room on top, where he might climb up and smoke his pipe in hot weather; and in the course of time the whole mansion was overrun by the chubby-faced progeny of Amy Webber and Dirk Waldron.

As Wolfert waxed old, and rich, and corpulent, he also set up a great ginger-bread-coloured carriage, drawn by a pair of black Flanders mares, with tails that swept the ground; and to commemorate the origin of his greatness, he had for his crest a full-blown cabbage painted on the panels with the pithy motto *Alles Kopf*, that is to say, *ALL HEAD*, meaning thereby, that he had risen by sheer head-work.

To fill the measure of his greatness, in the fulness of time the renowned Ramm Rapelye slept with his fathers, and Wolfert Webber succeeded to the leather-bottomed arm-chair, in the inn-parlour at Corlear's Hook, where he long reigned, greatly honoured and respected, insomuch that he was never known to tell a story without its being believed, nor to utter a joke without its being laughed at.





A  
CHRONICLE  
OF THE  
CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

BY FRAY ANTONIO AGAPIDA.

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THE

# CONQUEST OF GRANADA.

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## INTRODUCTION.

ALTHOUGH the following chronicle bears the name of the venerable Fray Antonio Agapida, it is more properly a superstructure reared upon the fragments which remain of his work. It may be asked, who is this same Agapida, who is cited with such deference, yet whose name is not to be found in any of the catalogues of Spanish authors? The question is hard to answer: he appears to have been one of the many indefatigable writers, who have filled the libraries of the convents and cathedrals of Spain with their tomes, without ever dreaming of bringing their labours to the press. He evidently was deeply and accurately informed of the particulars of the wars between his countrymen and the Moors, a tract of history but too much overgrown with the weeds of fable. His glowing zeal, also, in the cause of the Catholic faith, entitles him to be held up as a model of the good old orthodox chroniclers, who recorded, with such pious exultation, the united triumphs of the cross and the sword. It is deeply to be regretted, therefore, that his manuscripts, deposited in the libraries of various convents, have been dispersed during the late convulsions in Spain, so that nothing is now to be met of them but disjointed fragments. These, however, are too precious to be suffered to fall into oblivion, as they contain many curious facts not to be found in any other historian. In the following work, therefore, the manuscripts of the worthy Fray Antonio will be adopted, whenever they

exist entire, but will be filled up, extended, illustrated, and corroborated, by citations from various authors, both Spanish and Arabian, who have treated of the subject. The manuscripts themselves are carefully preserved in the library of the Escorial.

Before entering upon the history, it may be as well to notice the opinions of certain of the most learned and devout historiographers of former times relative to this war. Marinus Siculus, historian to Charles the Fifth, pronounces it a war to avenge the ancient injuries received by the Christians from the Moors, to recover the kingdom of Granada, and to extend the name and honour of the Christian religion.\*

Estevan de Garibay, one of the most distinguished among the Spanish historians, regards the war as a special act of divine clemency towards the Moors; to the end that those barbarians and infidels, who had dragged out so many centuries under the diabolical oppression of the absurd sect of Mahomet, should at length be reduced to the Christian faith.†

Padre Mariana, also, a venerable Jesuit, and the most renowned historian of Spain, considers the past domination of the Moors as a scourge inflicted on the Spanish nation for its iniquities; but the triumphant war with Granada as the reward of Heaven, for its great act of propitiation in establishing the glorious

\* Lucio Marino Siculo, *Cosas Memorables de España*, lib. xx.

† Garibay, *Compend. Hist. España*, lib. xviii. c. 22.

tribunal of the Inquisition! "No sooner," says the worthy father, "was this holy office opened in Spain, than there instantly shone forth a resplendent light. Then it was, that, through divine favour, the nation increased in power, and became competent to overthrow and trample down the domination of the Moors."\*

Having thus cited high and venerable authority for considering this war in the light of one of those pious enterprises denominated crusades, we trust we have said enough to engage the Christian reader to follow us into the field, and to stand by us to the very issue of the contest.

#### CHAPTER I.

Of the kingdom of Granada, and the tribute which it paid to the Castilian crown.

THE history of those desperate and bloody wars, observes Fray Antonio Agapida, which have filled the world with rumour and astonishment, and have determined the fate of mighty empires, has ever been considered as a theme worthy of the pen of the philosopher and the study of the sage. What then must be the history of a holy war, or rather, a pious crusade, waged by the most catholic of sovereigns, for the restoration of the light of the true faith to one of the most beautiful but benighted regions of the globe? Listen, then, while from the solitude of my cell I narrate the events of the conquest of Granada, where Christian knight and turbaned infidel disputed, hand to hand, every inch of the fair land of Andalusia, until the crescent, that symbol of heathenish abomination, was cast into the dust, and the blessed cross, the tree of our redemption, erected in its stead.

Upwards of eight hundred years were past and gone since the Arabian invaders sealed the perdition of Spain, by the defeat of Don Roderick, the last of her Gothic kings. From the period of that disastrous event, kingdom after kingdom had been gradually recovered by the Christian princes, until the single, but powerful territory of Granada alone

remained under the domination of the Moors.

This renowned kingdom was situate in the southern part of Spain, bordering on the Mediterranean Sea, and defended on the land side by lofty and rugged mountains, locking up within their embraces deep, rich, and verdant valleys, where the sterility of the surrounding heights was repaid by prodigal fertility.

The city of Granada lay in the centre of the kingdom, sheltered as it were in the lap of the Sierra Nevada, or chain of snowy mountains. It covered two lofty hills, and a deep valley that divides them, through which flows the river Darro. One of these hills was crowned by the royal palace and fortress of the Alhambra, capable of containing forty thousand men within its walls and towers. There is a Moorish tradition, that the king who built this mighty pile was skilled in the occult sciences, and furnished himself with gold and silver for the purpose by means of alchymy.\* Certainly never was there an edifice accomplished in a superior style of barbaric magnificence; and the stranger who, even at the present day, wanders among its silent and deserted courts and ruined halls, gazes with astonishment at its gilded and fretted domes and luxurious decorations, still retaining their brilliancy and beauty, in defiance of the ravages of time.

Opposite to the hill on which stood the Alhambra was its rival hill, on the summit of which was a spacious plain, covered with houses, and crowded with inhabitants. It was commanded by a fortress called the Alcazaba. The declivities and skirts of these hills were covered with houses to the number of seventy thousand, separated by narrow streets and small squares, according to the custom of Moorish cities. The houses had interior courts and gardens, refreshed by fountains and running streams, and set out with oranges, citrons, and pomegranates; so that, as the edifices of the city rose above each other on the sides of the hill, they presented a mingled appearance of city and grove, delightful to the eye. The whole was surrounded by high walls, three

\* Mariana, Hist. España, lib. xxv. c. 1.

\* Zurita, lib. xx. c. 42.

leagues in circuit, with twelve gates, and fortified by a thousand and thirty towers. The elevation of the city, and the neighbourhood of the Sierra Nevada, crowned with perpetual snows, tempered the fervid rays of summer; and thus, while other cities were panting with the sultry and stifling heat of the dogdays, the most salubrious breezes played through the marble halls of Granada.

The glory of the city, however, was its vega, or plain, which spread out to a circumference of thirty-seven leagues, surrounded by lofty mountains. It was a vast garden of delight, refreshed by numerous fountains, and by the silver windings of the Xenil. The labour and ingenuity of the Moors had diverted the waters of this river into thousands of rills and streams, and diffused them over the whole surface of the plain. Indeed, they had wrought up this happy region to a degree of wonderful prosperity, and took a pride in decorating it, as if it had been a favourite mistress. The hills were clothed with orchards and vineyards, the valleys embroidered with gardens, and the wide plains covered with waving grain. Here were seen in profusion, the orange, the citron, the fig, and pomegranate, with large plantations of mulberry trees, from which was produced the finest of silk. The vine clambered from tree to tree, the grapes hung in rich clusters about the peasant's cottage, and the groves were rejoiced by the perpetual song of the nightingale. In a word, so beautiful was the earth, so pure the air, and so serene the sky of this delicious region, that the Moors imagined the paradise of their prophet to be situate in that part of heaven which overhung the kingdom of Granada.\*

This rich and populous territory had been left in quiet possession of the infidels, on condition of an annual tribute to the sovereign of Castile and Leon of two thousand doblas or pistoles of gold, and sixteen hundred Christian captives, or, in default of captives, an equal number of Moors to be surrendered as slaves; all to be delivered in the city of Cordova.†

\* Juan Botero Benes, *Relaciones Universales del Mundo*.

† Garibay, *Compend. lib. iv. c. 25*.

At the era at which this chronicle commences, Ferdinand and Isabella, of glorious and happy memory, reigned over the united kingdoms of Castile, Leon and Arragon, and Muley Aben Hassan sat on the throne of Granada.

This Muley Aben Hassan had succeeded to his father Ismael in 1465, while Henry IV., brother and immediate predecessor of Queen Isabella, was king of Castile and Leon. He was of the illustrious lineage of Mohammed Aben Alamar, the first Moorish king of Granada, and was the most potent of his line. He had, in fact, augmented in power in consequence of the fall of other Moorish kingdoms, which had been conquered by the Christians. Many cities and strong places of the kingdoms which lay contiguous to Granada had refused to submit to Christian vassalage, and had sheltered themselves under the protection of Muley Aben Hassan. His territories had thus increased in wealth, extent, and population, beyond all former example; and contained fourteen cities, and ninety-seven fortified towns, besides numerous unwallied towns and villages, defended by formidable castles. The spirit of Muley Aben Hassan swelled with his possessions.

The tribute of money and captives had been regularly paid by his father Ismael, and Muley Aben Hassan had, on one occasion, attended personally in Cordova at the payment. He had witnessed the taunts and sneers of the haughty Castilians; and so indignant was the proud son of Afric at what he considered a degradation of his race, that his blood boiled, whenever he recollected the humiliating scene.

When he came to the throne he ceased all payment of the tribute, and it was sufficient to put him in a transport of rage only to mention it. "He was a fierce and warlike infidel," says the catholic Fray Antonio Agapida; "his bitterness against the holy Christian faith had been signalized in battle during the lifetime of his father, and the same diabolical spirit of hostility was apparent in his ceasing to pay this most righteous tribute."

## CHAPTER II.

How the Catholic sovereigns sent to demand arrears of tribute from the Moor, and how the Moor replied.

IN the year 1478, a Spanish cavalier, of powerful frame and haughty demeanour, arrived at the gates of Granada as ambassador from the Catholic monarchs, to demand the arrear of tribute. His name was Don Juan de Vera, a zealous and devout knight, full of ardour for the faith and loyalty for the crown. He was gallantly mounted, armed at all points, and followed by a moderate but well-appointed retinue.

The Moorish inhabitants looked jealously at this small but proud array of Spanish chivalry, as it paraded, with that stateliness possessed only by Spanish cavaliers, through the renowned gate of Elvira. They were struck with the stern and lofty demeanour of Don Juan de Vera, and his sinewy frame, which showed him formed for hardy deeds of arms; and they supposed he had come in search of distinction, by defying the Moorish knights in open tourney, or in the famous tilt with reeds for which they were so renowned. For it was still the custom of the knights of either nation to mingle in these courteous and chivalrous contests, during the intervals of war. When they learned, however, that he was come to demand the tribute so abhorrent to the ears of the fiery monarch, they observed, that it required a warrior of his apparent nerve to execute such an embassy.

Muley Aben Hassan received the cavalier in state, seated on a magnificent divan, and surrounded by the officers of his court, in the hall of ambassadors, one of the most sumptuous apartments of the Alhambra. When De Vera had delivered his message, a haughty and bitter smile curled the lip of the fierce monarch. "Tell your sovereigns," said he, "that the kings of Granada, who used to pay tribute in money to the Castilian crown, are dead. Our mint at present coins nothing but blades of cimeters and heads of lances."\*

The defiance couched in this proud reply was heard with stern and lofty

\* Garibay, Compend. lib. xl. c. 29. Conde, Hist. de los Arabes, p. iv. c. 34.

courtesy by Don Juan de Vera; for he was a bold soldier, and a devout hater of the infidels, and he saw iron war in the words of the Moorish monarch. He retired from the audience-chamber with stately and ceremonious gravity, being master of all points of etiquette. As he passed through the Court of Lions, and paused to regard its celebrated fountain, he fell into a discourse with the Moorish courtiers on certain mysteries of the Christian faith. The arguments advanced by these infidels, says Fray Antonio Agapida, awakened the pious indignation of this most Christian knight and discreet ambassador, but still he restrained himself within the limits of lofty gravity, leaning on the pommel of his sword, and looking down with ineffable scorn upon the weak casuists around him. The quick and subtle Arabian wittlings redoubled their light attacks upon that stately Spaniard, and thought they had completely foiled him in the contest; but the stern Juan de Vera had an argument in reserve, for which they were but little prepared; for, on one of them, of the race of the Abencerrages, daring to question, with a sneer, the immaculate conception of the blessed Virgin, the Catholic knight could no longer restrain his ire. Elevating his voice of a sudden, he told the infidel he lied, and raising his arm at the same time, he smote him on the head with his sheathed sword.

In an instant the Court of Lions glistened with the flash of arms, and its fountains would have been dyed with blood, had not Muley Aben Hassan overheard the tumult, and forbade all appeal to force, pronouncing the person of the ambassador sacred, while within his territories. The Abencerrage treasured up the remembrance of the insult until an hour of vengeance should arrive, and the ambassador prayed our blessed Lady to grant him an opportunity of proving her immaculate conception on the head of this turbaned infidel.\*

Notwithstanding this occurrence, Don

\* The curate of Los Palacios also records this anecdote, but mentions it as happening on a subsequent occasion, when Don Juan de Vera was sent to negotiate for certain Christian captives. There appears every reason, however, to consider Fray Antonio Agapida correct in the period to which he refers it.

Juan de Vera was treated with great distinction by Muley Aben Hassan ; but nothing could make him unbend from his stern and stately reserve. Before his departure, a cimeta was sent to him by the king ; the blade of the finest Damascus steel, the hilt of agate, enriched with precious stones, and the guard of gold. De Vera drew it, and smiled grimly as he noticed the admirable temper of the blade. "His majesty has given me a trenchant weapon," said he : "I trust a time will come, when I may show him that I know how to use his royal present." The reply was considered as a compliment, of course ; the bystanders little knew the bitter hostility that lay couched beneath.

Don Juan de Vera and his companions, during his brief sojourn at Granada, scanned the force and situation of the Moor with the eyes of practised warriors. They saw, that he was well prepared for hostilities. His walls and towers were of vast strength, in complete repair, and mounted with lombards and other heavy ordnance. His magazines were well stored with all the munitions of war : he had a mighty host of foot-soldiers, together with squadrons of cavalry, ready to scour the country, and carry on either defensive or predatory warfare. The Christian warriors noted these things without dismay ; their hearts rather glowed with emulation at the thoughts of encountering so worthy a foe. As they slowly pranced through the streets of Granada on their departure, they looked round with eagerness on its stately palaces and sumptuous mosques ; on its alcayceria or bazar, crowded with silks and cloth of silver and gold, with jewels and precious stones, and other rich merchandise, the luxuries of every clime ; and they longed for the time, when all this wealth should be the spoil of the soldiers of the faith, and when each tramp of their steeds might be fetlock-deep in the blood and carnage of the infidels.

Don Juan de Vera and his little band pursued their way slowly through the country to the Christian frontier. Every town was strongly fortified. The vega was studded with towers of refuge for the peasantry ; every pass of the mountain had its castle of defence, every lofty height

its watch-tower. As the Christian cavaliers passed under the walls of the fortresses, lances and cimeta flashed from their battlements, and the turbaned sentinels seemed to dart from their dark eyes glances of hatred and defiance. It was evident, that a war with this kingdom must be one of doughty peril and valiant enterprise ; a war of posts, where every step must be gained by toil and bloodshed, and maintained with the utmost difficulty. The warrior spirit of the cavaliers kindled with the thought, and they were impatient for hostilities ; "not," says Antonio Agapida, "from any thirst for rapine and revenge, but from that pure and holy indignation, which every Spanish knight entertained at beholding this beautiful dominion of his ancestors defiled by the footsteps of infidel usurpers. It was impossible," he adds, "to contemplate this delicious country, and not long to see it restored to the dominion of the true faith, and the sway of the Christian monarchs."

### CHAPTER III.

How the Moor determined to strike the first blow in the war.

THE defiance, thus hurled at the Castilian sovereigns by the fiery Moorish king, would at once have been answered by the thunder of their artillery, but they were embroiled at that time in a war with Portugal, and in contests with their own factious nobles. The truce, therefore, which had existed for many years between the nations, was suffered to continue ; the wary Ferdinand reserving the refusal to pay tribute as a fair ground for war, whenever the favourable moment to wage it should arrive.

In the course of three years the war with Portugal terminated, and the factions of the Spanish nobles were for the most part quelled. The Castilian sovereigns now turned their thoughts to what, from the time of the union of their crowns, had been the great object of their ambition, the conquest of Granada, and the complete extirpation of the Moorish power from Spain. Ferdinand, whose pious zeal was quickened by motives of temporal policy, looked with a craving eye at the rich territory of the Moor, studded

with innumerable towns and cities. He determined to carry on the war with cautious and persevering patience, taking town after town, and fortress after fortress, and gradually plucking away all the supports, before he attempted the Moorish capital. "I will pick out the seeds one by one of this pomegranate," said the wary Ferdinand.\*

Muley Aben Hassan was aware of the hostile intentions of the Catholic monarch, but felt confident in his means of resisting them. He had amassed great wealth during a tranquil reign; he had strengthened the defences of his kingdom, and had drawn large bodies of auxiliary troops from Barbary, besides making arrangements with the African princes to assist him with supplies in case of emergency. His subjects were fierce of spirit, stout of heart, and valiant of hand. Inured to the exercise of war, they could fight skilfully on foot, but above all were dexterous horsemen, whether heavily armed and fully appointed, or lightly mounted *á la gineta*, with simply lance and target. They were patient of fatigue, hunger, thirst, and nakedness; prompt for war at the first summons of their king, and tenacious in defence of their towns and possessions.

Thus amply provided for war, Muley Aben Hassan determined to be beforehand with the politic Ferdinand, and to be the first to strike a blow. In the truce which existed between them there was a singular clause, permitting either party to make sudden inroads and assaults upon towns and fortresses, provided they were done furtively and by stratagem, without display of banners, or sound of trumpet, or regular encampment, and that they did not last above three days.† This gave rise to frequent enterprises of a hardy and adventurous character, in which castles and strong holds were taken by surprise, and carried sword in hand. A long time had elapsed, however, without any outrage of the kind on the part of the Moors, and the Christian towns on the frontier had all, in consequence, fallen into a state of the most negligent security.

Muley Aben Hassan cast his eyes round to select his object of attack, when information was brought him that the fortress of Zahara was but feebly garrisoned and scantily supplied, and that its alcaide was careless of his charge. This important post was on the frontier, between Ronda and Medina Sidonia, and was built on the crest of a rocky mountain, with a strong castle perched above it, upon a cliff so high that it was said to be above the flight of birds or drift of clouds. The streets, and many of the houses, were mere excavations, wrought out of the living rock. The town had but one gate, opening to the west, and defended by towers and bulwarks. The only ascent to this cragged fortress was by roads cut in the rock, and so rugged as in many places to resemble broken stairs. Such was the situation of the mountain fortress of Zahara, which seemed to set all attack at defiance, insomuch that it had become so proverbial throughout Spain, that a woman of forbidding and inaccessible virtue was called a Zaharena. But the strongest fortress and sternest virtue have their weak points, and require unremitting vigilance to guard them; let warrior and dame take warning from the fate of Zahara.

#### CHAPTER IV.

Expedition of Muley Aben Hassan against the fortress of Zahara.

It was in the year of our Lord one thousand four hundred and eighty-one, and but a night or two after the festival of the most blessed Nativity, that Muley Aben Hassan made his famous attack upon Zahara. The inhabitants of the place were sunk in profound sleep; the very sentinel had deserted his post, and sought shelter from a tempest, which had raged for three nights in succession; for it appeared but little probable, that an enemy would be abroad during such an uproar of the elements. But evil spirits work best during a storm, observes the worthy Antonio Agapida; and Muley Aben Hassan found such a season most suitable for his diabolical purposes. In the midst of the night an uproar arose within the walls of Zahara, more awful than the raging of the storm. A fearful

\* Granada is the Spanish term for pomegranate.  
 † Zurita, *Annales de Arragon*, l. xx. c. 41. Mariana, *Hist. de España*, l. xxv. c. 1.



alarm-cry, "The Moor! the Moor!" resounded through the streets, mingled with the clash of arms, the shriek of anguish, and the shout of victory. Muley Aben Hassan, at the head of a powerful force, had hurried from Granada, and passed unobserved through the mountains in the obscurity of the tempest. When the storm pelted the sentinel from his post, and howled round tower and battlement, the Moors had planted their scaling-ladders, and mounted securely into both town and castle. The garrison was unsuspecting of danger until battle and massacre burst forth within its very walls. It seemed to the affrighted inhabitants, as if the fiends of the air had come upon the wings of the wind, and possessed themselves of tower and turret. The war-cry resounded on every side, shout answering shout, above, below, on the battlements of the castle, in the streets of the town; the foe was in all parts, wrapped in obscurity, but acting in concert by the aid of preconcerted signals. Starting from sleep, the soldiers were intercepted and cut down as they rushed from their quarters, or if they escaped, they knew not where to assemble or where to strike. Wherever lights appeared, the flashing cimeter was at its deadly work, and all who attempted resistance fell beneath its edge.

In a little while the struggle was at an end. Those who were not slain took refuge in the secret places of their houses, or gave themselves up as captives. The clash of arms ceased, and the storm continued its howling, mingled with the occasional shout of the Moorish soldiery, roaming in search of plunder. While the inhabitants were trembling for their fate, a trumpet resounded through the streets, summoning them all to assemble, unarmed, in the public square. Here they were surrounded by soldiery, and strictly guarded until daybreak. When the day dawned, it was piteous to behold this once prosperous community, which had lain down to rest in peaceful security, now crowded together, without distinction of age, or rank, or sex, and almost without raiment during the severity of a wintry storm. The fierce Muley Aben Hassan turned a deaf ear to all their prayers and remonstrances, and

ordered them to be conducted captives to Granada. Leaving a strong garrison in both town and castle, with orders to put them in a complete state of defence, he returned flushed with victory to his capital, entering it at the head of his troops, laden with spoil, and bearing in triumph the banners and pennons taken at Zahara.

While preparations were making for jousts and other festivities in honour of this victory over the Christians, the captives of Zahara arrived; a wretched train of men, women, and children, worn out with fatigue and haggard with despair, and driven like cattle into the city gates by a detachment of Moorish soldiery.

Deep were the grief and indignation of the people of Granada at this cruel scene. Old men, who had experienced the calamities of warfare, anticipated coming troubles. Mothers clasped their infants to their breasts, as they beheld the hapless females of Zahara, with their children expiring in their arms. On every side the accents of pity for the sufferers were mingled with execrations of the barbarity of the king. The preparations for festivity were neglected, and the viands, which were to have feasted the conquerors, were distributed among the captives.

The nobles and alfaquis, however, repaired to the Alhambra to congratulate the king: for whatever storm may rage in the lower regions of society, rarely do any clouds, but clouds of incense, rise to the awful eminence of the throne. In this instance, however, a voice rose from the midst of the obsequious crowd, that burst like thunder upon the ears of Aben Hassan. "Wo! wo! wo! to Granada!" exclaimed the voice, "its hour of desolation approaches! The ruins of Zahara will fall upon our heads: my spirit tells me, that the end of our empire is at hand!" All shrunk back aghast, and left the denouncer of wo standing alone in the centre of the hall. He was an ancient and hoary man, in the rude attire of a dervise. Age had withered his form without quenching the fire of his spirit, which glared in baleful lustre from his eyes. He was, say the Arabian historians, one of those holy men termed *santons*, who pass their lives in hermitages, in fasting, meditation, and prayer,

until they attain to the purity of saints, and the foresight of prophets. "He was," says the indignant Fray Antonio Agapida, "a son of Belial, one of those fanatic infidels possessed of the devil, who are sometimes permitted to predict the truth to their followers, but with the proviso, that their predictions shall be of no avail."

The voice of the santon resounded through the lofty hall of the Alhambra, and struck silence and awe into the crowd of courtly sycophants. Muley Aben Hassan alone was unmoved. He eyed the hoary anchoret with scorn as he stood dauntless before him, and treated his predictions as the raving of a maniac. The santon rushed from the royal presence, and descending into the city, hurried through its streets and squares with frantic gesticulations. His voice was heard in every part in awful denunciation. "The peace is broken, the exterminating war is commenced. Wo! wo! wo! to Granada! its fall is at hand! desolation shall dwell in its palaces, its strong men shall fall beneath the sword, its children and maidens shall be led into captivity! Zahara is but a type of Granada!"

Terror seized upon the populace; for they considered these ravings as the inspirations of prophecy. They hid themselves in their dwellings, as in a time of general mourning; or, if they went abroad, it was to gather together in knots in the streets and squares, to alarm each other with dismal forebodings, and to curse the rashness and cruelty of the fierce Aben Hassan.

The Moorish monarch heeded not their murmurs. Knowing that his exploit must draw upon him the vengeance of the Christians, he now threw off all reserve, and made attempts to surprise Castellar and Olvera, though without success. He sent alfaquis also to the Barbary powers, informing them that the sword was drawn, and inviting them to aid in maintaining the kingdom of Granada, and the religion of Mahomet, against the violence of unbelievers.

## CHAPTER V.

Expedition of the Marquis of Cadiz against Alhama.

GREAT was the indignation of King Ferdinand, when he heard of the storming of Zahara, more especially as it anticipated his intention of giving the first blow in this eventful war. He valued himself upon his deep and prudent policy; and there is nothing which politic monarchs can less forgive, than thus being forestalled by an adversary. He immediately issued orders to all the adelantados and alcaydes of the frontiers to maintain the utmost vigilance at their several posts, and to prepare to carry fire and sword into the territories of the Moors; while he despatched friars of different orders, to stir up the chivalry of Christendom to take part in this holy crusade against the infidels.

Among the many valiant cavaliers who rallied round the throne of Ferdinand and Isabella, one of the most eminent in rank and renowned in arms was Don Roderigo Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz. As he was the distinguished champion of this holy war, and commanded in most of its enterprises and battles, it is meet that some particular account should be given of him. He was born in 1443, of the valiant lineage of the Ponces, and from his earliest youth had rendered himself illustrious in the field. He was of the middle stature, with a muscular and powerful frame, capable of great exertion and fatigue. His hair and beard were red and curled, his countenance was open and magnanimous, of a ruddy complexion, and slightly marked with the smallpox. He was temperate, chaste, valorous, vigilant; a just and generous master to his vassals; frank and noble in his deportment towards his equals; loving and faithful to his friends; fierce and terrible, yet magnanimous, to his enemies. He was considered the mirror of chivalry of his times, and compared by contemporary historians to the immortal Cid.

The Marquis of Cadiz had vast possessions in the most fertile parts of Andalusia, including many towns and castles; and could lead forth an army into the field from his own vassals and dependents. On receiving the orders of the

king, he burned to signalize himself by some sudden incursion into the kingdom of Granada, that should give a brilliant commencement to the war, and console the sovereigns for the insult they had received on the capture of Zahara. As his estates lay near the Moorish frontiers, and were subject to sudden inroads, he had always in his pay numbers of adalides, or scouts and guides, many of them converted Moors. These he sent out in all directions, to watch the movements of the enemy, and to procure all kinds of information important to the security of the frontier. One of these spies come to him one day in his town of Marchena, and informed him, that the Moorish town of Alhama was slightly garrisoned and negligently guarded, and might be taken by surprise. This was a large, wealthy, and populous place, within a few leagues of Granada. It was situate on a rocky height, nearly surrounded by a river, and defended by a fortress, to which there was no access but by a steep and cragged ascent. The strength of its situation, and its being embosomed in the centre of the kingdom, had produced the careless security which now invited attack.

To ascertain fully the state of the fortress, the marquis secretly despatched thither a veteran soldier who was highly in his confidence. His name was Ortega de Prado; a man of great activity, shrewdness, and valour, and captain of escaladores, or those employed to scale the walls of fortresses in time of attack. Ortega approached Alhama one moonless night, and paced along its walls with noiseless step, laying his ear occasionally to the ground or to the wall. Every time he distinguished the measured tread of a sentinel, and now and then the challenge of the night-watch going its rounds. Finding the town thus guarded, he clambered to the castle. There all was silent: as he ranged its lofty battlements, between him and the sky, he saw no sentinel on duty. He noticed certain places where the wall might be ascended by scaling-ladders; and having marked the hour of relieving guard, and made all necessary observations, he retired without being discovered.

Ortega returned to Marchena, and as-

sured the Marquis of Cadiz of the practicability of scaling the castle of Alhama, and taking it by surprise. The marquis had a secret conference with Don Pedro Henriquez, adelantado of Andalusia, Don Diego de Merlo, commander of Seville, and Sancho de Avila, alcaide of Carmona, who all agreed to aid him with their forces. On an appointed day the several commanders assembled at Marchena with their troops and retainers. None but the leaders knew the object or destination of the enterprise, but it was enough to rouse the Andalusian spirit to know that a foray was intended into the country of their old enemies the Moors. Secrecy and celerity were necessary for success. They set out promptly, with three thousand genetes or light cavalry, and four thousand infantry. They chose a route but little travelled, by the way of Antequera, passing with great labour through rugged and solitary defiles of the sierra or chain of mountains of Alzerifa, and left all their baggage on the banks of the river Yeguas, to be brought after them. Their march was principally in the night: all day they remained quiet; no noise was suffered in their camp, and no fires were made, lest the smoke should betray them. On the third day they resumed their march as the evening darkened, and forcing themselves forward at as quick a pace as the rugged and dangerous mountain roads would permit, they descended towards midnight into a small deep valley, only half a league from Alhama. Here they made a halt, fatigued by this forced march during a long dark evening towards the end of February.

The Marquis of Cadiz now explained to the troops the object of the expedition. He told them, it was for the glory of the most holy faith, and to avenge the wrongs of their countrymen of Zahara; and that the rich town of Alhama, full of wealthy spoil, was the place to be attacked. The troops were roused to new ardour by these words, and desired to be led forthwith to the assault. They arrived close to Alhama about two hours before day-break. Here the army remained in ambush, while three hundred men were despatched to scale the walls and take possession of the castle. They were

picked men, many of them alcaides and officers, men who preferred death to dishonour. This gallant band was guided by the escalador, Ortega de Prado, at the head of thirty men with scaling-ladders. They clambered the ascent to the castle in silence, and arrived under the dark shadow of its towers without being discovered. Not a light was to be seen, not a sound to be heard; the whole place was wrapped in profound repose.

Fixing their ladders, they ascended cautiously and with noiseless steps. Ortega was the first that mounted upon the battlements, followed by one Martin Galindo, a youthful squire, full of spirit and eager for distinction. Moving stealthily along the parapet to the portal of the citadel, they came upon the sentinel by surprise. Ortega seized him by the throat, brandished a dagger before his eyes, and ordered him to point the way to the guard-room. The infidel obeyed, and was instantly despatched, to prevent his giving any alarm. The guard-room was a scene rather of massacre than combat. Some of the soldiery were killed while sleeping, others were cut down almost without resistance, bewildered by so unexpected an assault: all were despatched, for the scaling party was too small to make prisoners or to spare. The alarm spread throughout the castle: but by this time the three hundred picked men had mounted the battlements. The garrison, startled from sleep, found the enemy already masters of the towers. Some of the Moors were cut down at once, others fought desperately from room to room, and the whole castle resounded with the clash of arms, the cries of the combatants, and the groans of the wounded. The army in ambush, finding by the uproar that the castle was surprised, now rushed from their concealment, and approached the walls with loud shouts and sound of kettledrums and trumpets, to increase the confusion and dismay of the garrison. A violent conflict took place in the court of the castle, where several of the scaling party sought to throw open the gates to admit their countrymen. Here fell two valiant alcaides, Nicholas de Roja and Sancho de Avila, but they fell honourably, upon a heap of slain. At length Ortega de

Prado succeeded in throwing open a postern, through which the Marquis of Cadiz, the adelantado of Andalusia, and Don Diego de Merlo entered with a host of followers, and the citadel remained in full possession of the Christians.

As the Spanish cavaliers were ranging from room to room, the Marquis of Cadiz, entering an apartment of superior richness to the rest, beheld, by the light of a silver lamp, a beautiful Moorish female, the wife of the alcaide of the castle, whose husband was absent, attending a wedding-feast at Velez Malaga. She would have fled at the sight of a Christian warrior in her apartment, but, entangled in the covering of the bed, she fell at the feet of the marquis, imploring mercy. The Christian cavalier, who had a soul full of honour and courtesy towards the sex, raised her from the earth, and endeavoured to allay her fears; but they were increased at the sight of her female attendants, pursued into the room by the Spanish soldiery. The marquis reproached his soldiers with their unmanly conduct, and reminded them, that they made war upon men, not on defenceless women. Having soothed the terrors of the females by the promise of honourable protection, he appointed a trusty guard to watch over the security of their apartment.

The castle was now taken, but the town below it was in arms. It was broad day, and the people, recovered from their panic, were enabled to see and estimate the force of the enemy. The inhabitants were chiefly merchants and trades-people; but the Moors all possessed a knowledge of the use of weapons, and were of brave and warlike spirit. They confided in the strength of their walls, and the certainty of speedy relief from Granada, which was but about eight leagues distant. Manning the battlements and towers, they discharged showers of stones and arrows, whenever the part of the Christian army without the walls attempted to approach. They barricaded the entrances of their streets also, which opened towards the castle, stationing men expert at the cross-bow and arquebuse. These kept up a constant fire upon the gate of the castle, so that no one could sally forth without

being instantly wounded or killed. Two valiant cavaliers, who attempted to lead forth a party in defiance of this fatal tempest, were shot dead at the very portal.

The Christians now found themselves in a situation of great peril. Reinforcements must soon arrive to the enemy from Granada. Unless, therefore, they gained possession of the town in the course of the day, they were likely to be surrounded and beleaguered, and with scarcely any provisions in the castle. Some observed, that, even if they took the town, they should not be able to keep possession of it. They proposed, therefore, to make booty of every thing valuable, to sack the castle, set it on fire, and make good their retreat to Seville.

The Marquis of Cadiz was of different counsel. "God has given the citadel into Christian hands," said he, "he will no doubt strengthen them to maintain it. We have gained the place with difficulty and bloodshed; it would be a stain upon our honour to abandon it through fear of imaginary dangers." The *adelantado* and Don Diego de Merlo joined in his opinion; but, without their earnest and united remonstrances, the place would have been abandoned; so exhausted were the troops by forced marches and hard fighting, and so apprehensive of the approach of the Moors of Granada.

The strength and spirits of the party within the castle were in some degree restored by the provisions which they found. The Christian army beneath the town, being also refreshed by a morning repast, advanced vigorously to the attack of the walls. They planted their scaling-ladders, and swarming up, fought fiercely with the Moorish soldiery upon the ramparts.

In the mean time, the Marquis of Cadiz, seeing that the gate of the castle which opened towards the city was completely commanded by the artillery of the enemy, ordered a large breach to be made in the wall, through which he might lead his troops to the attack, animating them in this perilous moment by assuring them, that the place should be given up to plunder, and its inhabitants made captives.

The breach being made, the marquis

put himself at the head of his troops, and entered sword in hand. A simultaneous attack was made by the Christians in every part, by the ramparts, by the gate, by the roofs and walls which connected the castle with the town. The Moors fought valiantly in their streets, from their windows, and from the tops of their houses. They were not equal to the Christians in bodily strength; for they were for the most part peaceful men, of industrious callings, and enervated by the frequent use of the warm bath; but they were superior in number, and unconquerable in spirit; old and young, strong and weak, fought with the same desperation. The Moors fought for property, for liberty, for life. They fought at their thresholds and their hearths, with the shrieks of their wives and children ringing in their ears, and they fought in hope, that each moment would bring aid from Granada. They regarded neither their own wounds nor the deaths of their companions, but continued fighting until they fell; and seemed as if, when they could no longer contend, they would block up the thresholds of their beloved homes with their mangled bodies. The Christians fought for glory, for revenge, for the holy faith, and for the spoil of these wealthy infidels. Success would place a rich town at their mercy, failure would deliver them into the hands of the tyrant of Granada.

The contest raged from morning until night, when the Moors began to yield. Retreating to a large mosque near the walls, they kept up so galling a fire from it with lances, cross-bows, and arquebuses, that for some the Christians dared not approach. Covering themselves at length, with bucklers and mantelets,\* to protect them from the deadly shower, they made their way to the mosque, and set fire to the doors. When the smoke and flames rolled in upon them, the Moors gave all up as lost. Many rushed forth desperately upon the enemy, but were immediately slain; the rest surrendered.

The struggle was now at an end; the town remained at the mercy of the

\* Mantelet is a movable parapet, made of thick planks, to protect troops when advancing to sap or assault a walled place.

Christians; and the inhabitants, both male and female, became slaves of those who made them prisoners. Some few escaped by a mine or subterranean way which led to the river, and concealed themselves, their wives and children, in caves and secret places; but in three or four days were compelled to surrender themselves through hunger.

The town was given up to plunder, and the booty was immense. There were found prodigious quantities of gold, and silver, and jewels, and rich silks, and costly stuffs of all kinds, together with horses and beeves, and abundance of grain, and oil, and honey, and all other productions of this fruitful kingdom; for in Alhama were collected the royal rents and tributes of the surrounding country: it was the richest town in the Moorish territory, and from its great strength and its peculiar situation was called the key to Granada.

Great waste and devastation were committed by the Spanish soldiery; for, thinking it would be impossible to keep possession of the place, they began to demolish whatever they could not take away. Immense jars of oil were destroyed, costly furniture shattered to pieces, and magazines of grain broken open, and their contents scattered to the winds. Many Christian captives, who had been taken at Zahara, were found buried in a Moorish dungeon, and were triumphantly restored to light and liberty; and a renegade Spaniard, who had often served as guide to the Moors in their incursions into the Christian territories, was hanged on the highest part of the battlements, for the edification of the army.

#### CHAPTER VI.

How the people of Granada were affected on hearing of the capture of Alhama, and how the Moorish king sallied forth to regain it.

A MOORISH horseman had spurred across the vega, nor did he rein his painting steed until he alighted at the gate of the Alhambra. He brought tidings to Muley Aben Hassan of the attack upon Alhama. "The Christians," said he, "are in the land. They came upon us, we know not whence or how; and scaled the walls of the castle in the night. There has been dreadful

fighting and carnage on its towers and courts; and when I spurred my steed from the gate of Alhama, the castle was in possession of the unbelievers."

Muley Aben Hassan felt for a moment as if swift retribution had come upon him for the woes he had inflicted upon Zahara. Still he flattered himself, that this had only been some transient inroad of a party of marauders, intent upon plunder; and that a little succour thrown into the town would be sufficient to expel them from the castle, and drive them from the land. He ordered out, therefore, a thousand of his chosen cavalry, and sent them in all speed to the assistance of Alhama. They arrived before its walls the morning after its capture. The Christian standards floated upon the towers, and a body of cavalry poured forth from its gates, and came wheeling down into the plain to receive them.

The Moorish horsemen turned the reins of their steeds, and galloped back for Granada. They entered its gates in tumultuous confusion, spreading terror and lamentation by their tidings. "Alhama is fallen! Alhama is fallen!" exclaimed they; "the Christians garrison its walls; the key of Granada is in the hands of the enemy!"

When the people heard these words, they remembered the denunciation of the santon: his prediction seemed still to resound in every ear, and its fulfilment to be at hand. Nothing was heard throughout the city but sighs and wailings. "Wo is me, Alhama!" was in every mouth, and this ejaculation of deep sorrow and doleful foreboding came to be the burden of a plaintive ballad, which remains to the present day.\*

Many aged men, who had taken refuge in Granada from other Moorish dominions which had fallen into the power of the Christians, now groaned in despair at the thought, that war was to follow them into this last retreat, to lay waste this pleasant land, and to bring trouble and sorrow upon their declining years. The women were more loud and vehement in their grief, for they beheld the

\* The mournful little Spanish romance of *Ay de mi, Alhama!* is supposed to be of Moorish origin, and to embody the grief of the people of Granada on this occasion.

evils impending over their children, and what can restrain the agony of a mother's heart? Many of them made their way through the halls of the Alhambra, into the presence of the king, weeping, and wailing, and tearing their hair. "Accursed be the day," cried they, "when the flame of war was kindled by thee in our land! May the holy prophet bear witness before Allah, that we and our children are innocent of this act! Upon thy head, and upon the heads of thy posterity, to the end of the world, rest the sin of the desolation of Zahara."\*

Muley Aben Hassan remained unmoved amidst all this storm: his heart was hardened, observes Fray Antonio Agapida, like that of Pharaoh, to the end that, through his blind violence and rage, he might produce the deliverance of the land from its heathen bondage. In fact, he was a bold and fearless warrior, and trusted soon to make this blow recoil upon the head of the enemy. He had ascertained, that the captors of Alhama were but a handful; they were in the centre of his dominions, within a short distance of his capital. They were deficient in munitions of war, and provisions for sustaining a siege. By a rapid movement he might surround them with a powerful army, cut off all aid from their countrymen, and entrap them in the fortress they had taken.

To think was to act, with Muley Aben Hassan; but he was prone to act with too much precipitation. He immediately set forth in person, with three thousand horse and fifty thousand foot, and, in his eagerness to arrive at the scene of action, would not wait to provide artillery and the various engines required in a siege. "The multitude of my forces," said he, confidently, "will be sufficient to overwhelm the enemy."

The Marquis of Cadiz, who thus held possession of Alhama, had a chosen friend and faithful companion in arms, among the most distinguished of the Christian chivalry. This was Don Alonso de Cordova, senior and lord of the house of Aguilar, and brother of Gonsalvo de Cordova, afterwards renowned as the grand captain of Spain.

As yet Alonso de Aguilar was the glory of his name and race; for his brother was but young in arms. He was one of the most hardy, valiant, and enterprising Spanish knights, and foremost in all service of a perilous and adventurous nature. He had not been at hand to accompany his friend Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz, in his inroad into the Moorish territory; but he hastily assembled a number of retainers, horse and foot, and pressed forward to join the enterprise. Arriving at the river Feguas, he found the baggage of the army still upon its banks, and took charge of it to carry it to Alhama. The Marquis of Cadiz heard of the approach of his friend, whose march was slow, in consequence of being encumbered by the baggage. He was within but a few leagues of Alhama, when scouts came hurrying into the place with intelligence that the Moorish king was at hand with a powerful army. The Marquis of Cadiz was filled with alarm, lest De Aguilar should fall into the hands of the enemy. Forgetting his own danger, and thinking only of that of his friend, he despatched a well-mounted messenger to ride full speed and warn him not to approach.

The first determination of Alonso de Aguilar, when he heard that the Moorish king was at hand, was to take a strong position in the mountains, and await his coming. The madness of an attempt with his handful of men to oppose an immense army was represented to him with such force, as to induce him to abandon the idea. He then thought of throwing himself into Alhama, to share the fortunes of his friend. But it was now too late. The Moor would infallibly intercept him, and he should only give the marquis the additional distress of beholding him captured beneath his walls. It was even urged upon him, that he had no time for delay, if he would consult his own safety, which could only be insured by an immediate retreat into the Christian territory. This last opinion was confirmed by the return of scouts, who brought information, that Muley Aben Hassan had received notice of his movements, and was rapidly advancing in quest of him. It was with infinite reluctance that Don Alonso de Aguilar

\* Garibay, lib. xl. c. 29.

yielded to these united and powerful reasons. Proudly and sullenly he drew off his forces, laden with the baggage of the army, and made an unwilling retreat towards Antequera. Muley Aben Hassan pursued him for some distance through the mountains, but soon gave up the chase, and turned with his forces upon Alhama.

As the army approached the town, they beheld the fields strewn with the dead bodies of their countrymen, who had fallen in defence of the place, and had been cast forth and left unburied by the Christians. There they lay, mangled and exposed to every indignity, while droves of half-famished dogs were preying upon them, and fighting and howling over their hideous repast.\* Furious at the sight, the Moors, in the first transports of their rage, attacked these ravenous animals, and their next measure was to vent their fury upon the Christians. They rushed like madmen to the walls, applied scaling-ladders in all parts, without waiting for the necessary mantlets and other protections, thinking, by attacking suddenly and at various points, to distract the enemy, and overcome them by the force of numbers.

The Marquis of Cadiz with his confederate commanders distributed themselves along the walls, to direct and animate their men in the defence. The Moors, in their blind fury, often assailed the most difficult and dangerous places. Darts, stones, and all kinds of missiles were hurled down upon their unprotected heads. As fast as they mounted they were cut down, or dashed from the battlements, their ladders overturned, and all who were on them precipitated headlong below.

Muley Aben Hassen stormed with passion at the sight: he sent detachment after detachment to scale the walls; but in vain: they were like waves rushing upon a rock only to dash themselves to pieces. The Moors lay in heaps beneath the walls, and among them many of the bravest cavaliers of Granada. The Christians, also, sallied frequently from the gates, and made great havoc in the irregular multitude of assailants. On

one of these occasions the party was commanded by Don Juan de Vera, the same pious and high-handed knight who had borne the embassy to Muley Aben Hassen demanding tribute. As this doughty cavalier, after a career of carnage, was slowly retreating to the gate, he heard a voice calling after him in furious accents. "Turn back! turn back!" cried the voice: "thou who canst insult in hall, prove that thou canst combat in the field." Don Juan de Vera turned, and beheld the same Abencerrage whom he had struck with his sword in the Alhambra, for scoffing at the immaculate conception of the blessed Virgin. All his holy zeal and pious indignation rekindled at the sight: he put lance in rest, and spurred his steed, to finish this doctrinal dispute. Don Juan was a potent and irresistible arguer with his weapon; and he was aided, says Fray Antonio Agapida, by the peculiar virtue of his cause. At the very first encounter, his lance entered the mouth of the Moor, and hurled him to the earth, never more to utter word or breath. Thus, continues the worthy friar, did this scoffing infidel receive a well-merited punishment through the very organ with which he had offended, and thus was the immaculate conception miraculously vindicated from his foul aspersions.

The vigorous and successful defence of the Christians now made Muley Aben Hassan sensible of his error, in hurrying from Granada without the proper engines for a siege. Destitute of all means to batter the fortifications, the town remained uninjured, defying the mighty army which raged in vain before it. Incensed at being thus foiled, Muley Aben Hassan gave orders to undermine the walls. The Moors advanced with shouts to the attempt. They were received with a deadly fire from the ramparts, which drove them from their works. Repeatedly were they repulsed, and repeatedly did they return to the charge. The Christians not merely galled them from the battlements, but issued forth and cut them down in the excavations they were attempting to form. The contest lasted a whole day, and by evening two thousand Moors were either killed or wounded.

\* Pulgar. Crónica.



Muley Aben Hassan now abandoned all hope of carrying the place by assault ; and attempted to distress it into terms, by turning the channel of the river which runs by its walls. On this stream the inhabitants depended for their supply of water, the place being destitute of fountains and cisterns, from which circumstance it is called *Alhama la seca*, or "the dry."

A desperate conflict ensued on the banks of the river ; the Moors endeavouring to plant palisades in its bed, to divert the stream, and the Christians striving to prevent them. The Spanish commanders exposed themselves to the utmost danger to animate their men, who were repeatedly driven back into the town. The Marquis of Cadiz was often up to his knees in the stream, fighting hand to hand with the Moors. The water ran red with blood, and was encumbered with dead bodies. At length the overwhelming numbers of the Moors gave them the advantage, and they succeeded in diverting the greater part of the water. The Christians had to struggle severely to supply themselves from the feeble rill which remained. They sallied to the river by a subterraneous passage ; but the Moorish cross-bowmen stationed themselves on the opposite bank, keeping up a heavy fire upon the Christians, whenever they attempted to fill their vessels from the scanty and turbid stream. One party of the Christians had therefore to fight, while another drew water. At all hours of day and night this deadly strife was maintained, until it seemed as if every drop of water were purchased with a drop of blood.

In the mean time the sufferings in the town became intense. None but the soldiery and their horses were allowed the precious beverage so dearly earned, and even that in quantities that only tantalized their wants. The wounded, who could not sally to procure it, were almost destitute ; while the unhappy prisoners, shut up in the mosques, were reduced to frightful extremities. Many perished raving mad, fancying themselves swimming in boundless seas, yet unable to assuage their thirst. Many of the soldiers lay parched and panting

along the battlements, no longer able to draw a bowstring or hurl a stone, while above five thousand Moors, stationed upon a rocky height which overlooked part of the town, kept up a galling fire into it with slings and cross-bows ; so that the Marquis of Cadiz was obliged to heighten the battlements by using the doors from the private dwellings.

The Christian cavaliers, exposed to this extreme peril, and in imminent danger of falling into the hands of the enemy, despatched fleet messengers to Seville and Cordova, entreating the chivalry of Andalusia to hasten to their aid. They sent likewise to implore assistance from the king and queen, who at that time held their court in Medina del Campo. In the midst of their distress, a tank, or cistern of water, was fortunately discovered in the city, which gave temporary relief to their sufferings.

#### CHAPTER VII.

How the Duke of Medina Sidonia and the chivalry of Andalusia hastened to the relief of Alhama.

THE perilous situation of the Christian cavaliers, pent up and beleaguered within the walls of Alhama, spread terror among their friends, and anxiety throughout all Andalusia. Nothing, however, could equal the anguish of the Marchioness of Cadiz, the wife of the gallant Rodrigo Ponce de Leon. In her deep distress she looked round for some powerful noble, who had the means of rousing the country to the assistance of her husband. No one appeared more competent for the purpose than Don Juan de Guzman, the Duke of Medina Sidonia. He was one of the most wealthy and puissant grandees of Spain ; his possessions extended over some of the most fertile parts of Andalusia, embracing towns and seaports, and numerous villages. Here he reigned in feudal state like a petty sovereign, and could at any time bring into the field an immense force of vassals and retainers. The Duke of Medina Sidonia, and the Marquis of Cadiz, however, were at this time deadly foes. An hereditary feud existed between them, that had often arisen to bloodshed and war ; for as yet

the fierce contests between the proud and puissant Spanish nobles had not been completely quelled by the power of the crown, and in this respect they exerted a right of sovereignty, in leading their vassals against each other in open field.

The Duke of Medina Sidonia would have appeared to many the very last person to whom to apply for aid of the Marquis of Cadiz; but the marchioness judged of him by the standard of her own high and generous mind. She knew him to be a gallant and courteous knight, and had already experienced the magnanimity of his spirit, having been relieved by him when besieged by the Moors in her husband's fortress of Arcos. To the duke, therefore, she applied in this moment of sudden calamity, imploring him to furnish succour to her husband. The event showed how well noble spirits understand each other. No sooner did the duke receive this appeal from the wife of his enemy, than he generously forgot all feeling of animosity, and determined to go in person to his succour. He immediately despatched a courteous letter to the marchioness, assuring her, that, in consideration of the request of so honourable and estimable a lady, and to rescue from peril so valiant a cavalier as her husband, whose loss would be great, not only to Spain, but to all Christendom, he would forego the recollection of all past grievances, and hasten to his relief with all the forces he could raise.

The duke wrote at the same time to the alcaides of his towns and fortresses, ordering them to join him forthwith at Seville, with all the force they could spare from their garrisons. He called on all the chivalry of Andalusia to make common cause in the rescue of those Christian cavaliers, and he offered large pay to all volunteers who would resort to him with horses, armour, and provisions. Thus all who could be incited by honour, religion, patriotism, or thirst of gain, were induced to hasten to his standard; and he took the field with an army of five thousand horse and fifty thousand foot.\* Many cavaliers of dis-

tinguished name accompanied him in this generous enterprise. Amongst these was the redoubtable Alonso de Aguilar, the chosen friend of the Marquis of Cadiz, and with him his younger brother, Gonsalvo Fernandez de Cordova, afterwards renowned as the grand captain; Don Rodrigo Givon, also, master of the order of Calatrava; together with Martin Alonso de Montemayor, and the Marquis de Villena, esteemed the best lance in Spain. It was a gallant and splendid army, comprising the power of Spanish chivalry, and poured forth in brilliant array from the gates of Seville, bearing the great standard of that ancient and renowned city.

Ferdinand and Isabella were at Medina del Campo when tidings came of the capture of Alhama. The king was at mass when he received the news, and ordered *Te Deum* to be chanted for this signal triumph of the holy faith. When the first flush of triumph had subsided, and the king learned the imminent peril of the valorous Ponce de Leon and his companions, and the great danger there was that this stronghold might again be wrested from their grasp, he resolved to hurry in person to the scene of action. So pressing appeared to him the emergency, that he barely gave himself time to take a hasty repast while horses were providing, and then departed at furious speed for Andalusia, leaving a request for the queen to follow him.\* He was attended by Don Beltran de la Cueva, Duke of Albuquerque; Don Inigo Lopez de Mendoza, Count of Tendilla; and Don Pedro Manriquez, Count of Trevino, with a few more cavaliers of prowess and distinction. He travelled by forced journeys, frequently changing his jaded horses, being eager to arrive in time to take command of the Andalusian chivalry. When he came within five leagues of Cordova, the Duke of Albuquerque remonstrated with him upon entering with such incautious haste into the enemy's country. He represented to him, that there were troops enough assembled to succour Alhama, and that it was not for him to adventure his royal person in doing what could be done by his subjects,

\* Crónica de los Duques de Medina Sidonia, por Pedro de Medina. MS.

\* Illescas, Hist. Pontifical.

especially as he had such valiant and experienced captains to act for him. "Besides, sire," added the duke, "your majesty should bethink you, that the troops about to take the field are mere men of Andalusia; whereas your illustrious predecessors never made an inroad into the territory of the Moors, without being accompanied by a powerful force of the staunch and iron warriors of Old Castile."

"Duke," replied the king, "your counsel might have been good had I not have departed from Medina with the avowed determination of succouring these cavaliers in person. I am now near the end of my journey, and it would be beneath my dignity to change my intention, before even I had met with an impediment. I shall take the troops of this country who are assembled, without waiting for those of Castile, and, with the aid of God, shall prosecute my journey."\*

As King Ferdinand approached Cordova, the principal inhabitants came forth to receive him. Learning, however, that the Duke of Medina Sidonia was already on the march, and pressing forward into the territory of the Moors, the king was all on fire to overtake him, and to lead in person the succour to Alhama. Without entering Cordova, therefore, he exchanged his weary horses for those of the inhabitants who had come to meet him, and pressed forward for the army. He despatched fleet couriers in advance, requesting the Duke of Medina Sidonia to await his coming, that he might take command of the forces.

Neither the duke nor his companions in arms, however, felt inclined to pause in their generous expedition, and gratify the inclination of the king. They sent back missives, representing that they were far within the enemy's frontiers, and it was dangerous either to pause or to turn back. They had likewise received pressing entreaties from the besieged to hasten their speed, setting forth their great sufferings, and their hourly peril of being overwhelmed by the enemy.

The king was at Ponton del Maestre when he received these missives. So in-

flamed was he with zeal for the success of this enterprise, that he would have penetrated into the kingdom of Granada with the handful of cavaliers who accompanied him; but they represented the rashness of such a journey, through the mountainous defiles of a hostile country thickly beset with towns and castles. With some difficulty, therefore, he was dissuaded from his inclination, and prevailed upon to await tidings from the army, in the frontier city of Antequera.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

Sequel of the events at Alhama.

WHILE all Andalusia was thus in arms, and pouring its chivalry through the mountain passes of the Moorish frontier, the garrison of Alhama was reduced to great extremity, and in danger of sinking under its sufferings before the promised succour could arrive. The intolerable thirst that prevailed in consequence of the scarcity of water, the incessant watch that had to be maintained over the vast force of enemies without, and the great number of prisoners within, and the wounds which almost every soldier had received in the incessant skirmishes and assaults, had worn grievously both flesh and spirit. The noble Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz, still animated the soldiery, however by word and example, sharing every hardship, and being foremost in every danger; exemplifying, that a good commander is the vital spirit of an army.

When Muley Aben Hassan heard of the vast force that was approaching under the command of the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and that Ferdinand was coming in person with additional troops, he perceived that no time was to be lost: Alhama must be carried by one powerful attack, or abandoned entirely to the Christians.

A number of Moorish cavaliers, some of the bravest youth of Granada, knowing the wishes of the king, proposed to undertake a desperate enterprise, which, if successful, must put Alhama in his power. Early one morning, when it was scarcely the gray of the dawn, about the time of changing the watch, these cavaliers approached the town, at a place considered

\* Pulgar, Crónica, p. iii, c. 3.

inaccessible from the steepness of the rocks on which the wall was founded; which it was supposed elevated the battlements beyond the reach of the longest scaling-ladders. The Moorish knights, aided by a number of the strongest and most active escaladors, mounted these rocks, and applied the ladders without being discovered; for, to divert attention from them, Muley Aben Hassan made a false attack upon the town in another quarter.

The scaling party mounted with difficulty, and in small numbers; the sentinel was killed at his post, and seventy of the Moors made their way into the streets before an alarm was given. The guards rushed to the walls, to stop the hostile throng that was still pouring in. A sharp conflict, hand to hand, and man to man, took place on the battlements, and many on both sides fell. The Moors, whether wounded or slain, were thrown headlong without the walls, the scaling-ladders were overturned, and those who were mounting were dashed upon the rocks, and from thence tumbled upon the plain. Thus in a little while the ramparts were cleared by Christian prowess, led on by that valiant knight Don Alonso Ponce the uncle, and that brave esquire Pedro Pineda, nephew of the Marquis of Cadiz.

The walls being cleared, these two kindred cavaliers now hastened with their forces in pursuit of the seventy Moors, who had gained an entrance into the town. The main part of the garrison being engaged at a distance, resisting the feigned attack of the Moorish king, this fierce band of infidels had ranged the streets almost without opposition, and were making their way to the gates, to throw them open to the army.\* They were chosen men from among the Moorish forces, several of them gallant knights of the proudest families of Granada. Their footsteps through the city were in a manner printed in blood, and they were tracked by the bodies of those they had killed and wounded. They had attained the gate; most of the guard had fallen beneath their cimeters; a moment more and Alhama would have been thrown open to the enemy.

\* Zurita, lib. xx, cap. 43.

Just at this juncture, Don Alonso Ponce and Pedro de Pineda reached the spot with their forces. The Moors had the enemy in front and rear: they placed themselves back to back, with their banner in the centre. In this way they fought with desperate and deadly determination, making a rampart around them with the slain. More Christian troops arrived, and hemmed them in, but still they fought, without asking for quarter. As their numbers decreased, they serried their circle still closer, defending their banner from assault, and the last Moor died at his post, grasping the standard of the Prophet. This standard was displayed from the walls, and the turbaned heads of the Moors were thrown down to the besiegers.\*

Muley Aben Hassan tore his beard with rage at the failure of this attempt, and at the death of so many of his chosen cavaliers. He saw that all further effort was in vain. His scouts brought word, that they had seen from the heights the long columns and flaunting banners of the Christian army approaching through the mountains. To linger would be to place himself between two bodies of the enemy. Breaking up his camp, therefore, in all haste, he gave up the siege of Alhama, and hastened back to Granada; and the last clash of his cymbals scarce died upon the ear from the distant hills, before the standard of the Duke of Medina Sidonia was seen emerging in another direction from the defiles of the mountains.

When the Christians in Alhama beheld their enemies retreating on one side, and their friends advancing on the other, they uttered shouts of joy and hymns of thanksgiving; for it was as a sudden relief from present death. Harassed by several weeks of incessant vigil and fighting, suffering from scarcity of provisions and almost continual thirst, they resembled skeletons rather than living men. It was a noble and gracious sight, to behold the meeting of those two ancient foes, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and the Marquis of Cadiz. When the

\* Pedro Pineda received the honour of knighthood from the hand of King Ferdinand for his valour on this occasion. (Alonso Ponce was already a knight.) See Zuñiga, Annals of Seville, lib. xii. an. 1482.

marquis beheld his magnanimous deliverer approaching, he melted into tears: all past animosities only gave the greater poignancy to present feelings of gratitude and admiration: they clasped each other in their arms, and, from that time forward, were true and cordial friends.

While this generous scene took place between the commanders, a sordid contest arose among their troops. The soldiers, who had come to the rescue, claimed a portion of the spoils of Alhama; and so violent was the dispute, that both parties seized their arms. The Duke of Medina Sidonia interfered and settled the question with his characteristic magnanimity. He declared, that the spoil belonged to those who had captured the city. "We have taken the field," said he, "only for honour, for religion, and for the rescue of our countrymen and fellow Christians; and the success of our enterprise is a sufficient and glorious reward. If we desire booty, there are sufficient Moorish cities yet to be taken to enrich us all." The soldiers were convinced by the frank and chivalrous reasoning of the duke; they replied to his speech by acclamations, and the transient broil was happily appeased.

The Marchioness of Cadiz, with the forethought of a loving wife, had despatched her major-domo with the army, with a large supply of provisions. Tables were immediately spread beneath the tents, where the marquis gave a banquet to the duke and the cavaliers who had accompanied him, and nothing but hilarity prevailed in this late scene of suffering and death.

A garrison of fresh troops was left in Alhama, and the veterans, who had so valiantly captured and maintained it, returned to their homes burdened with precious booty. The marquis and duke, with their confederate cavaliers, repaired to Antequera, where they were received with great distinction by the king, who honoured the Marquis of Cadiz with signal marks of favour. The duke then accompanied his late enemy, but now most zealous and grateful friend, the Marquis of Cadiz, to his town of Marchena, where he received the reward of his generous conduct in the thanks and blessings of the marchioness. The mar-

quis gave a sumptuous entertainment in honour of his guest; for a day and night his palace was thrown open, and was the scene of continual revel and festivity. When the duke departed for his estates at St. Lucar, the marquis attended him for some distance on his journey, and when they separated, it was as the parting scene of brothers. Such was the noble spectacle exhibited to the chivalry of Spain by these two illustrious rivals. Each reaped universal renown from the part he had performed in the campaign: the marquis, from having surprised and captured one of the most important and formidable fortresses of the kingdom of Granada, and the duke from having subdued his deadliest foe by a great act of magnanimity.

#### CHAPTER IX.

Events at Granada, and rise of the Moorish king Boabdil el Chico.

THE Moorish king Aben Hassan returned, baffled and disappointed, from before the walls of Alhama, and was received with groans and smothered execrations by the people of Granada. The prediction of the santon was in every mouth, and appeared to be rapidly fulfilling; for the enemy was already strongly fortified in Alhama, in the very heart of the kingdom. The disaffection, which broke out in murmurs among the common people, fermented more secretly and dangerously among the nobles. Muley Aben Hassan was of a fierce and cruel nature; his reign had been marked with tyranny and bloodshed, and many chiefs of the family of the Abencerrages, the noblest lineage among the Moors, had fallen victims to his policy or vengeance. A deep plot was now formed to put an end to his oppressions, and dispossess him of the throne. The situation of the royal household favoured the conspiracy.

Muley Aben Hassan, though cruel, was uxorious; that is to say, he had many wives, and was prone to be managed by them by turns. He had two queens, in particular, whom he had chosen from affection. One, named Ayxa, was a Moorish female; she was likewise termed in Arabic La Horra, or "the chaste," from the spotless purity of her character.

While yet in the prime of her beauty, she bore a son to Aben Hassan, the expected heir to his throne. The name of this prince was Mahomet Abdalla, or, as he has more generally been termed among historians, Boabdil. At his birth the astrologers, according to custom, cast his horoscope: they were seized with fear and trembling when they beheld the fatal portents revealed to their science. "Alla achbar! God is great!" exclaimed they: "he alone controls the fate of empires: it is written in the heavens, that this prince shall sit upon the throne of Granada, but that the downfall of the kingdom shall be accomplished during his reign." From this time the prince was ever regarded with aversion by his father, and the series of persecutions which he suffered, and the dark prediction which hung over him from his infancy, procured him the surname of El Zogoybi, or "the unfortunate." He is more commonly known by the appellation of El Chico, "the younger," to distinguish him from an usurping uncle.

The other favourite queen of Aben Hassan was named Fatima, to which the Moors added the appellation of La Zoroya, or "the light of the dawn," from her effulgent beauty. She was a Christian by birth, the daughter of the commander Sancho Ximenes de Solis, and had been taken captive in her tender youth.\*

The king, who was well stricken in years at the time, became enamoured of the blooming Christian maid. He made her his sultana; and, like most old men who marry in their dotage, resigned himself to her management. Zoroya became the mother of two princes; and her anxiety for their advancement seemed to extinguish every other natural feeling in her breast. She was as ambitious as she was beautiful, and her ruling desire became, to see one of her sons seated upon the throne of Granada.

For this purpose she made use of all her arts, and of the complete ascendancy she had over the mind of her cruel husband, to undermine his other children in his affections, and to fill him with jealousies of their designs. Muley Aben

Hassan was so wrought upon by her machinations, that he publicly put several of his sons to death at the celebrated fountain of lions, in the court of the Alhambra; a place signalized in Moorish history as the scene of many sanguinary deeds.

The next measure of Zoroya was against her rival sultana, the virtuous Ayxa. She was past the bloom of her beauty, and had ceased to be attractive in the eyes of her husband. He was easily persuaded to repudiate her, and to confine her and her son in the tower of Comares, one of the principal towers of the Alhambra. As Boabdil increased in years, Zoroya beheld in him a formidable obstacle to the pretensions of her sons; for he was universally considered heir-apparent to the throne. The jealousies, suspicions, and alarms of his tiger-hearted father were again excited; he was reminded, too, of the prediction, that fixed the ruin of the kingdom during the reign of this prince. Muley Aben Hassan impiously set the stars at defiance. "The sword of the executioner," said he, "shall prove the falsehood of these lying horoscopes, and shall silence the ambition of Boabdil, as it has the presumption of his brothers."

The sultana Ayxa was secretly apprised of the cruel design of the old monarch. She was a woman of talents and courage, and by means of her female attendants concerted a plan for the escape of her son. A faithful servant was instructed to wait below the Alhambra, in the dead of the night, on the banks of the river Darro, with a fleet Arabian courser. The sultana, when the castle was in a state of deep repose, tied together the shawls and scarfs of herself and her female attendants, and lowered the youthful prince from the tower of Comares.\* He made his way in safety down the steep rocky hill to the banks of the Darro, and, throwing himself on the Arabian courser, was thus spirited off to the city of Guadix in the Alpuxarres. Here he lay for some time concealed, until, gaining adherents, he fortified himself in the place, and set the machinations of his tyrant father at defiance. Such

\* Crónica del Gran Cardenal, c. 71.

\* Salazar, Crónica del Gran Cardenal, c. 71.

was the state of affairs in the royal household of Granada, when Muley Aben Hassan returned foiled from his expedition against Alhama. The faction which had been secretly formed among the nobles, determined to depose the old king Aben Hassan, and to elevate his son Boabdil to the throne. They concerted their measures with the latter, and an opportunity soon presented to put them in practice. Muley Aben Hassan had a royal country palace, called Alexares, in the vicinity of Granada, to which he resorted occasionally, to recreate his mind during this time of perplexity. He had been passing one day among its bowers, when, on returning to the capital, he found the gates closed against him, and his son Mohammed Abdalla, otherwise called Boabdil, proclaimed king. "Alla achbar! God is great!" exclaimed old Muley Aben Hassan: "it is in vain to contend against what is written in the book of fate. It was predestined that my son should sit upon the throne. Alla forfend the rest of the prediction!" The old monarch knew the inflammable nature of the Moors, and that it was useless to attempt to check any sudden blaze of popular passion. "A little while," said he, "and this rash flame will burn itself out; and the people, when cool, will listen to reason." So he turned his steed from the gate, and repaired to the city of Baza, where he was received with great demonstrations of loyalty. He was not a man to give up his throne without a struggle. A large part of the kingdom still remained faithful to him; he trusted that the conspiracy in the capital was but transient and partial, and that by suddenly making his appearance in its streets, at the head of a moderate force, he should awe the people again into allegiance. He took his measures with that combination of dexterity and daring which formed his character, and arrived one night under the walls of Granada with five hundred chosen followers. Scaling the walls of the Alhambra, he threw himself, with sanguinary fury, into its silent courts. The sleeping inmates were roused from their repose only to fall by the exterminating cimeter. The rage of Aben Hassan spared neither age, nor rank, nor

sex; the halls resounded with shrieks and yells, and the fountains ran red with blood. The alcaide, Aben Comixer, retreated to a strong tower, with a few of the garrison and inhabitants. The furious Aben Hassan did not lose time in pursuing him: he was anxious to secure the city, and to wreak his vengeance on its rebellious inhabitants. Descending with his bloody band into the streets, he cut down the defenceless inhabitants, as, startled from their sleep, they rushed forth, to learn the cause of the alarm. The city was soon completely roused; the people flew to arms; lights blazed in every street, revealing the scanty numbers of this band that had been dealing such fatal vengeance in the dark. Muley Aben Hassan had been mistaken in his conjectures. The great mass of the people, incensed by his tyranny, were zealous in favour of his son. A violent but transient conflict took place in the streets and squares; many of the followers of Aben Hassan were slain, the rest driven out of the city, and the old monarch, with the remnant of his band, retreated to his loyal city of Malaga.

Such was the commencement of those great internal feuds and divisions, which hastened the downfall of Granada. The Moors became separated into two hostile factions, headed by the father and the son, and several bloody encounters took place between them; yet they never failed to act with all their separate force against the Christians, as a common enemy, whenever an opportunity occurred.

#### CHAPTER X.

##### Royal expedition against Loxa.

KING FERDINAND held a council of war at Cordova, where it was deliberated what was to be done with Alhama. Most of the council advised that it should be demolished, inasmuch as, being in the centre of the Moorish kingdom, it would be at all times liable to attack, and could only be maintained by a powerful garrison, and at vast expense. Queen Isabella arrived at Cordova in the midst of these deliberations, and listened to them with surprise and impatience. "What!" said

she, "shall we destroy the first fruits of our victories? shall we abandon the first place we have wrested from the Moors? Never let us suffer such an idea to occupy our minds. It would give new courage to the enemy; arguing fear or feebleness in our councils. You talk of the toil and expense of maintaining Alhama. Did we doubt, on undertaking this war, that it was to be a war of infinite cost, labour, and bloodshed? and shall we shrink from the cost the moment a victory is obtained, and the question is merely, to guard or abandon its glorious trophy? Let us hear no more about the destruction of Alhama; let us maintain its walls sacred, as a stronghold, granted us by Heaven, in the centre of this hostile land; and let our only consideration be, how to extend our conquest, and capture the surrounding cities." The language of the queen infused a more lofty and chivalrous spirit into the royal council. Preparations were immediately made to maintain Alhama at all risk and expense; and King Ferdinand appointed as alcaide Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero, senior of the house of Palma, supported by Diego Lopez de Ayola, Pero Ruiz de Alarzon, and Alonso Ortis, captains of four hundred lances and a body of one thousand foot, supplied with provisions for three months. Ferdinand resolved also to lay siege to Loxa, a city of great strength, at no great distance from Alhama. For this purpose he called upon all the cities and towns of Andalusia and Estremadura, and the domains of the orders of Santiago, Calatrava, and Alcantara, and of the priory of St. Juan, and the kingdom of Toledo, and beyond, to the cities of Salamanca, Toro, and Valladolid, to furnish, according to their repartimientos or allotments, a certain quantity of bread, wine, and cattle, to be delivered at the royal camp before Loxa, one-half at the end of June, and one-half in July. These lands, also, together with Biscay and Guipuscoa, were ordered to send reinforcements of horse and foot, each town furnishing its quota; and great diligence was used in providing lombards, powder, and other warlike munitions.

The Moors were no less active in

their preparations; and sent missives into Africa, entreating supplies, and calling upon the Barbary princes to aid them in this war of the faith. To intercept all succour, the Castilian sovereigns stationed an armada of ships and galleys in the Straits of Gibraltar, under the command of Martin Diaz de Mena and Carlos de Valera, with orders to scour the Barbary coast, and sweep every Moorish sail from the sea.

While these preparations were making, Ferdinand made an incursion, at the head of his army, into the kingdom of Granada, and laid waste the vega; destroying its hamlets and villages, ravaging its fields of grain, and driving away the cattle.

It was about the end of June, that King Ferdinand departed from Cordova, to sit down before the walls of Loxa. So confident was he of success, that he left a great part of the army at Ecija, and advanced with but five thousand cavalry and eight thousand infantry. The Marquis of Cadiz, a warrior as wise as he was valiant, remonstrated against employing so small a force; and, indeed, was opposed to the measure altogether, as being undertaken precipitately, and without sufficient preparation. King Ferdinand, however, was influenced by the counsel of Don Diego de Merlo, and was eager to strike a brilliant and decided blow. A vainglorious confidence prevailed about this time among the Spanish cavaliers: they overrated their own prowess; or rather, they undervalued and despised their enemy. Many of them believed that the Moors would scarcely remain in their city, when they saw the Christian troops advancing to assail it. The Spanish chivalry marched, therefore, gallantly and fearlessly, and almost carelessly, over the border, scantily supplied with the things needful for a besieging army in the heart of an enemy's country. In the same negligent and confident spirit they took up their station before Loxa. The country around was broken and hilly, so that it was extremely difficult to form a combined camp. The river Xenil, which runs by the town, was compressed between high banks, and so deep as to be fordable with extreme difficulty, and the



Moors had possession of the bridge. The king pitched his tents in a plantation of olives, on the banks of the river; the troops were distributed in different encampments on the heights, but separated from each other by deep rocky ravines, so as to be incapable of yielding each other prompt assistance, and there was no room for the operation of the cavalry. The artillery, also, was so injudiciously placed as to be almost entirely useless. Alonso of Aragón, Duke of Villahermosa, and illegitimate brother to the king, was present at the siege, and disapproved of the whole arrangement. He was one of the most able generals of his time, and especially renowned for his skill in battering fortified places. He recommended, that the whole disposition of the camp should be changed, and that several bridges should be thrown across the river. His advice was adopted, but slowly and negligently followed; so that it was rendered of no avail. Among other oversights, in this hasty and negligent expedition, the army had no supply of baked bread, and, in the hurry of encampment, there was no time to erect furnaces. Cakes were therefore hastily made, and baked on the coals, and for two days the troops were supplied in this irregular way.

King Ferdinand felt too late the insecurity of his position, and endeavoured to provide a temporary remedy. There was a height near the city, called by the Moors Santo Albohacen, which was in front of the bridge. He ordered several of his most valiant cavaliers to take possession of this height, and to hold it, as a check upon the enemy and a protection to the camp. The cavaliers chosen for this distinguished and perilous post were the Marquis of Cadiz, the Marquis of Villena, Don Roderigo Tellez Giron, master of Calatrava, his brother the Count of Ureña, and Don Alonso de Aguilar. These valiant warriors, and tried companions in arms, led their troops with alacrity to the height, which soon glittered with the array of arms, and was graced by several of the most redoubtable penons of warlike Spain.

Loxa was commanded at this time by an old Moorish alcaide, whose daughter was the favourite wife of Boabdil el

Chico. The name of this Moor was Ibrahim Ali Atar; but he was generally known among the Spaniards as Alatar. He had grown gray in border warfare, was an implacable enemy of the Christians, and his name had long been the terror of the frontier. He was in the ninetyeth year of his age, yet indomitable in spirit, fiery in his passion, sinewy and powerful in frame, deeply versed in warlike stratagem, and accounted the best lance in all Mauritania. He had three thousand horsemen under his command, veteran troops, with whom he had often scoured the borders, and he daily expected the old Moorish king with reinforcements.

Old Ali Atar had watched, from his fortress, every movement of the Christian army, and had exulted in all the errors of its commanders. When he beheld the flower of Spanish chivalry glittering about the height of Albohacen, his eye flushed with exultation. "By the aid of Allah," said he, "I will give these pranking cavaliers a rouse."

Ali Atar privately, and by night, sent forth a large body of his chosen troops to lie in ambush near one of the skirts of Albohacen. On the fourth day of the siege, he sallied across the bridge, and made a feigned attack upon the height. The cavaliers rushed impetuously forth to meet him, leaving their encampments almost unprotected. Ali Atar wheeled and fled, and was hastily pursued. When the Christian cavaliers had been drawn a considerable distance from their encampments, they heard a vast shout behind them, and, looking round, beheld their encampments assailed by the Moorish force, which had been placed in ambush, and had ascended a different side of the hill.

The cavaliers desisted from the pursuit, and hastened to prevent the plunder of their tents. Ali Atar in his turn wheeled and pursued them; and they were attacked in front and rear on the summit of the hill. The contest lasted for an hour; the height of Albohacen was red with blood; many brave cavaliers fell, expiring among heaps of the enemy. The fierce Ali Atar fought with the fury of a demon, until the arrival of more Christian forces compelled him to retreat into the city. The severest loss

to the Christians in this skirmish was that of Roderigo Tellez Giron, master of Calatrava : as he was raising his arm to make a blow, an arrow pierced him, just beneath the shoulder, at the open part of the corslet. He fell instantly from his horse, but was caught by Pedro Gasca, cavalier of Avila, who conveyed him to his tent, where he died. The king and queen and the whole kingdom mourned his death ; for he was in the freshness of his youth, being but twenty-four years of age, and had proved himself a gallant and highminded cavalier. A melancholy group collected about his corse, on the bloody height of Albahacen : the knights of Calatrava mourned him as a commander ; the cavaliers, who were encamped on the height, lamented him as their companion in arms in a service of perils, while the Count of Ureña grieved over him with the tender affection of a brother.

King Ferdinand now perceived the wisdom of the opinion of the Marquis of Cadiz, and that his force was quite insufficient for the enterprise. To continue his camp in its present unfortunate position would cost him the lives of his bravest cavaliers, if not a total defeat, in case of reinforcements to the enemy. He called a council of war late in the evening of Saturday ; and it was determined to withdraw the army, early the next morning, to Rio Frio, a short distance from the city, and there wait for additional troops from Cordova. The next morning early, the cavaliers on the height of Albahacen began to strike their tents. No sooner did Ali Atar behold this, than he sallied forth to attack them. Many of the Christian troops, who had not heard of the intention to change the camp, seeing the tents struck, and the Moors salying forth, supposed that the enemy had been reinforced in the night, and the army was on the point of retreating. Without stopping to ascertain the truth, or to receive orders, they fled in dismay, spreading confusion through the camp ; nor did they halt until they had reached the Rock of the Lovers, about seven leagues from Loxa.\*

The king and his commanders saw the imminent peril of the moment, and

made face to the Moors, each commander guarding his quarter, and repelling all assaults, while the tents were struck, and the artillery and ammunition conveyed away. The king, with a handful of cavaliers, galloped to a rising ground, exposed to the fire of the enemy, calling upon the flying troops, and endeavouring in vain to rally them. Setting upon the Moors, he and his cavaliers charged them so vigorously, that they put a squadron to flight, slaying many with their swords and lances, and driving others into the river, where they were drowned. The Moors, however, were soon reinforced, and returned in great numbers. The king was in danger of being surrounded : the Moors assailed him furiously ; and twice he owed his safety to the valour of Don Juan de Ribera, senior of Montemayor.

The Marquis of Cadiz beheld from a distance the peril of his sovereign. Summoning about seventy horsemen to follow him, he galloped to the spot, threw himself between the king and the enemy, and, hurling his lance, transpierced one of the most daring of the Moors. For some time he remained with no other weapon than his sword ; his horse was wounded by an arrow, and many of his followers were slain ; but he succeeded in beating off the Moors, and rescuing the king from imminent jeopardy, whom he then prevailed upon to retire to less dangerous ground.

The marquis continued throughout the day to expose himself to the repeated assaults of the enemy. He was ever found in the place of greatest danger, and through his bravery a great part of the army and the camp was preserved from destruction.\* It was a perilous day for the commanders ; for in a retreat of the kind, it is the noblest cavaliers who most expose themselves to save their people. The Duke of Medina Celi was struck to the ground, but rescued by his troops. The Count of Tendilla, whose tents were nearest to the city, received several wounds ; and various other cavaliers of the most distinguished note were exposed to fearful hazard. The whole day was passed in bloody skirmishings,

\* Pulgar, Crónica.

\* *Curz de los Palacios*, c. 58.

in which the hidalgos and cavaliers of the royal household distinguished themselves by their bravery. At length, the encampments being all broken up, and most of the artillery and baggage removed, the bloody height of Albohacen was abandoned, and the neighbourhood of Loxa evacuated. Several tents, a quantity of provisions, and a few pieces of artillery, were left upon the spot, from the want of horses or mules to carry them off.

Ali Atar hung upon the rear of the retiring army, and harassed it until it reached Rio Frio. From thence Ferdinand returned to Cordova, deeply mortified, though greatly benefited, by the severe lesson he had received, which served to render him more cautious in his campaigns, and more diffident of fortune. He sent letters to all parts excusing his retreat, imputing it to the small number of his forces, and the circumstance, that many of them were quotas sent from various cities, and not in royal pay. In the mean time, to console his troops for their disappointment, and to keep up their spirits, he led them upon another inroad, to lay waste the vega of Granada.

#### CHAPTER XI.

How Muley Aben Hassan made a foray into the lands of Medina Sidonia, and how he was received.

OLD Muley Aben Hassan had mustered an army, and marched to the relief of Loxa; but arrived too late. The last squadron of Ferdinand had already passed over the border. "They have come and gone," said he, "like a summer cloud, and all their vaunting has been mere empty thunder." He turned, to make another attempt upon Alhama, the garrison of which was in the utmost consternation at the retreat of Ferdinand, and would have deserted the place, had it not been for the courage and perseverance of the alcaide, Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero. That brave and loyal commander cheered up the spirits of the men, and kept the old Moorish king at bay, until the approach of Ferdinand, on his second incursion into the vega, obliged him to make an unwilling retreat to Malaga.

Muley Aben Hassan felt, that it would be in vain, with his inferior force, to oppose the powerful army of the Christian monarch; but to remain idle, and see his territories laid waste, would ruin him in the estimation of his people. "If we cannot parry," said he, "we can strike: if we cannot keep our own lands from being ravaged, we can ravage the lands of the enemy." He inquired, and learned that most of the chivalry of Andalusia, in their eagerness for a foray, had marched off with the king, and left their own country almost defenceless. The territories of the Duke of Medina Sidonia were particularly unguarded. Here were vast plains of pasturage, covered with flocks and herds; the very country for a hasty inroad. The old monarch had a bitter grudge against the duke, for having foiled him at Alhama. "I'll give this cavalier a lesson," said he, exultingly, "that will cure him of his love of campaigning." So he prepared in all haste for a foray into the country about Medina Sidonia.

Muley Aben Hassan sallied out of Malaga with fifteen hundred horse and six thousand foot, and took the way by the sea-coast, marching through Esteponia and entering the Christian country between Gibraltar and Castellar. The only person that was likely to molest him on this route was one Pedro de Vargas, a shrewd, hardy, and vigilant soldier, alcaide of Gibraltar, and who lay ensconced in his old warrior-rock as in a citadel. Muley Aben Hassan knew the watchful and daring character of the man; but had ascertained, that his garrison was too small to enable him to make a sally, or at least to assure him any success. Still he pursued his march with great silence and caution; sent parties in advance, to explore every pass where a foe might lie in ambush, cast many an anxious eye towards the old rock of Gibraltar, as its cloud-capt summit was seen towering in the distance on his left; nor did he feel entirely at ease, until he had passed through the broken and mountainous country of Castellar, and descended into the plains. Here he encamped, on the banks of the Celemin. From hence he sent four hundred corredors, or fleet horsemen,

armed with lances, who were to station themselves near Algezirás, and to keep a strict watch, across the bay, upon the opposite fortress of Gibraltar. If the alcaide attempted to sally forth, they were to waylay and attack him, being almost four times his supposed force, and were to send swift tidings to the camp.

In the mean time, two hundred commanders were despatched to scour that vast plain called the Campiña de Tarifa, abounding with flocks and herds, and two hundred more were to ravage the lands about Medina Sidonia. Muley Aben Hassan remained with the main body of the army as a rallying point on the banks of the Celemin. The foraging parties scoured the country to such an effect, that they came driving vast flocks and herds before them, enough to supply the place of all that had been swept from the vega of Granada. The troops which had kept watch upon the rock of Gibraltar returned, with word, that they had not seen a Christian helmet stirring. The old king congratulated himself upon the secrecy and promptness with which he had conducted his foray, and upon having baffled the vigilance of Pedro de Vargas.

Muley Aben Hassan had not been so secret as he imagined. The watchful Pedro de Vargas had received notice of his movements. His garrison was barely sufficient for the defence of the place, and he feared to take the field, and leave his fortress unguarded. Luckily, at this juncture, there arrived in the harbour of Gibraltar a squadron of the armed galleys stationed in the strait, and commanded by Carlos de Valera. The alcaide immediately prevailed upon him to guard the place during his absence, and sallied forth at midnight with seventy horse. He made for the town of Castellar, which is strongly posted on a steep height, knowing that the Moorish king would have to return by this place. He ordered alarm-fires to be lighted upon the mountains, to give notice that the Moors were on the ravage, that the peasants might drive the flocks and herds to places of refuge; and he sent couriers at full speed in every direction, summoning the fighting men of the neighbourhood to meet him at Castellar. Muley Aben Hassan

saw, by the fires blazing about the mountains, that the country was rising.

He struck his tents, and pushed forward as rapidly as possible for the border; but he was encumbered with booty, and with the vast cavalgada swept from the pastures of the Campiña of Tarifa. His scouts brought him word, that there were troops in the field; but he made light of the intelligence, knowing, that they could only be those of the alcaide of Gibraltar, and that he had not more than a hundred horsemen in his garrison. He threw in advance two hundred and fifty of his bravest troops, and with them the alcaides of Marabilla and Casares. Behind this vanguard was a great cavalgada of cattle, and in the rear marched the king, with the main force of his army. It was near the middle of a sultry summer day, that they approached Castellar. De Vargas was on the watch; and beheld, by an immense cloud of dust, that they were descending one of the heights of that wild and broken country. The vanguard and rearguard were above half a league asunder, with the cavalgada between them, and a long and a close forest hid them from each other. De Vargas saw, that they could render but little assistance to each other, in case of a sudden attack, and might be easily thrown into confusion. He chose fifty of his bravest horsemen, and, making a circuit, took his post secretly in a narrow glen, opening into a defile between two rocky heights, through which the Moors had to pass. It was his intention to suffer the vanguard and the cavalgada to pass, and to fall upon the rear.

While thus lying perdué, six Moorish scouts, well mounted and well armed, entered the glen, examining every place that might conceal an enemy. Some of the Christians advised, that they should slay these six men, and retreat to Gibraltar. "No," said De Vargas; "I have come out for higher game than these, and I hope, by the aid of God and Santiago, to do good work this day. I know these Moors well, and doubt not but that they may readily be thrown into confusion."

By this time the six scouts approached so near, that they were on the point of discovering the Christian ambush. De

Vargas gave the word, and ten horsemen rushed forth upon them. In an instant, four of the Moors rolled in the dust; the other two put spurs to their steeds, and fled towards their army, pursued by the ten Christians. About eighty of the Moorish vanguard came galloping to the relief of their companions: the Christians turned, and fled towards their ambush. De Vargas kept his men concealed, until the fugitives and their pursuers came clattering pell-mell into the glen: at a signal trumpet, his men sallied forth, with great heat, and in close array. The Moors almost rushed upon their weapons before they perceived them. Forty of the infidels were overthrown; the rest turned their backs. "Forward!" cried De Vargas: "let us give the vanguard a brush before it can be joined by the rear." So saying, he pursued the flying Moors down the hill, and came with such force and fury upon the advance guard, as to overthrow many of them at the first encounter. As he wheeled off with his men, the Moors discharged their lances, upon which he returned to the charge, and made great slaughter. The Moors fought valiantly for a short time, until the alcajdes of Marabilla and Casares were slain, when they gave way, and fled for the rearguard. In their flight they passed through the cavalgada of cattle, threw the whole in confusion, and raised such a cloud of dust, that the Christians could no longer distinguish objects. Fearing the king and the main body might be at hand, and finding that De Vargas was severely wounded, they contented themselves with despoiling the slain, and taking above twenty-eight horses, and then returned to Castellar.

When the routed Moors came flying back on the rearguard, Muley Aben Hassan feared that the people of Xeres were in arms. Several of his followers advised him to abandon the cavalgada, and retreat by another road. "No," said the old king; "he is no true soldier, who gives up his booty without fighting." Putting spurs to his horse, he galloped forward through the centre of the cavalgada, driving the cattle to the right and left. When he reached the field of battle, he found it strewn with the bodies of upwards of one hundred Moors, among

which were those of the two alcajdes. Enraged at the sight, he summoned all his crossbow-men and cavalry, pushed on to the very gates of Castellar, and set fire to two houses close to the walls. Pedro de Vargas was unable from his wound to sally forth in person; but he ordered out his troops, and there was brisk skirmishing under the walls, until the king drew off, and returned to the scene of the recent encounter. Here he had the bodies of the principal warriors laid across mules, to be interred honourably at Malaga. The rest of the slain were hurried in the field of battle. Gathering together the scattered cavalgada, he paraded it slowly, in an immense line, past the walls of Castellar, by way of taunting his foe.

With all his fierceness, old Muley Aben Hassan had a gleam of warlike courtesy, and admired the hardy and soldier-like character of Pedro de Vargas. He summoned two Christian captives, and demanded what were the revenues of the alcajde of Gibraltar. They told him, that, among other things, he was entitled to one out of every drove of cattle that passed his boundaries. "Allah forbid!" cried the old monarch, "that so brave a cavalier should be defrauded of his right." He immediately chose twelve of the finest cattle from the twelve droves which formed the cavalgada. These he gave in charge to an alfaqui, to deliver them to Pedro de Vargas. "Tell him," said he, "that I crave his pardon, for not having sent these cattle sooner, but I have this moment learned the nature of his rights, and I hasten to satisfy them with the punctuality due to so worthy a cavalier. Tell him at the same time, that I had no idea the alcajde of Gibraltar was so active and vigilant in collecting his tolls."

The brave alcajde relished the stern soldier-like pleasantries of the old Moorish monarch, and replied in the same tone. "Tell his majesty," said he, "that I kiss his hands for the honour he has done me, and regret that my scanty force has not permitted me to give him a more signal reception on his coming into these parts. Had three hundred horsemen, whom I have been promised from Xeres, arrived in time, I might have served up an enter-

tainment more befitting such a monarch. I trust, however, they will arrive in the course of the night, in which case his majesty may be sure of a royal regale at the dawning."

He then ordered, that a rich silken vest and scarlet mantle should be given to the alfaqui, and dismissed him with great courtesy.

Muley Aben Hassan shook his head when he received the reply of De Vargas. "Allah preserve us," said he, "from any visitation of those hard riders of Xeres! A handful of troops, acquainted with the wild passes of these mountains, may destroy an army encumbered as ours is with booty."

It was some relief to the king, however, to learn, that the hardy alcaide of Gibraltar was too severely wounded to take the field in person. He immediately beat a retreat with all speed; hurrying with such precipitation, that the cavalgada was frequently broken and scattered among the rugged defiles of the mountains, and above five thousand of the cattle turned back, and were regained by the Christians. Muley Aben Hassan proceeded triumphantly with the residue to Malaga, glorying in the spoils of the Duke of Medina Sidonia.

King Ferdinand was mortified at finding his incursion into the vega of Granada counterbalanced by this incursion into his own dominions, and saw, that there were two sides to the game of war, as to all other games. The only one who reaped real glory in this series of inroads and skirmishings was Pedro de Vargas, the stout alcaide of Gibraltar.\*

#### CHAPTER XII.

Foray of the Spanish cavaliers among the mountains of Malaga.

THE foray of old Muley Aben Hassan had touched the pride of the Andalusian chivalry, and they determined on retaliation. For this purpose, a number of the most distinguished cavaliers assembled at Antequera, in the month of March, 1483. The leaders of the enterprise were the gallant Marquis of Cadiz, Don Pedro Henriquez, adelantado of Andalusia, Don Juan de Silva, Count of Cifu-

\* Alonso de Palencia, l. xxviii. c. 5.

entes, and bearer of the royal standard, who commanded in Seville, Don Alonso de Cardenas, master of the religious and military order of Santiago, and Don Alonso de Aguilar. Several other cavaliers of note hastened to take part in the enterprise, and in a little time, about twenty-seven hundred horse and several companies of foot were assembled within the old warlike city of Antequera, comprising the very flower of Andalusian chivalry. A council of war was held by the chiefs, to determine in what quarter they should strike a blow. The rival Moorish kings were waging civil war with each other in the vicinity of Granada, and the whole country lay open to inroad. Various plans were proposed by the different cavaliers. The Marquis of Cadiz was desirous of scaling the walls of Zahara, and regaining possession of that important fortress. The Master of Santiago, however, suggested a wider range, and a still more important object. He had received information from his adalides, who were apostate Moors, that an incursion might be made with safety into a mountainous region near Malaga, called the Axarquia. Here were valleys of pasture-land, well stocked with flocks and herds; and there were numerous villages and hamlets, which would be an easy prey. The city of Malaga was too weakly garrisoned, and had too few cavalry, to send forth any force in opposition. And he added, that they might extend their ravages to its very gates, and peradventure carry that wealthy place by sudden assault. The adventurous spirits of the cavaliers were inflamed by this suggestion: in their sanguine confidence, they already beheld Malaga in their power, and they were eager for the enterprise. The Marquis of Cadiz endeavoured to interpose a little cool caution: he likewise had apostate adalides, the most intelligent and experienced on the borders. Among these, he placed especial reliance on one, named Luis Amar, who knew all the mountains and valleys of the country. He had received from him a particular account of these mountains of the Axarquia.\* Their

\* Pulgar, in his chronicle, reverses the case and makes the Marquis of Cadiz recommend the expedition to the Axarquia; but Fray Antonio Aga-

savage and broken nature was a sufficient defence for the fierce people that inhabited them, who, manning their rocks, and their tremendous passes, which were often nothing more than the deep, dry bed of torrents, might set whole armies at defiance. Even if vanquished, they afforded no spoil to the victor; their houses were little better than bare walls, and they would drive off their scanty flocks and herds to the fortresses of the mountains. The sober counsel of the Marquis was overruled. The cavaliers, accustomed to mountain warfare, considered themselves and their horses equal to any wild and rugged expedition, and were flushed with the idea of a brilliant assault upon Malaga. Leaving all heavy baggage at Antequera, and all such as had horses too weak for this mountain scramble, they set forth, full of spirit and confidence. Don Alonso de Aguilar and the adelantado of Andalusia led the squadron of advance; the Count of Cifuentes followed, with certain of the chivalry of Seville; then came the battalion of the most valiant Roderigo Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz: he was accompanied by several of his brothers and nephews, and many cavaliers who sought distinction under his banner; and as this family band paraded in martial state through the streets of Antequera, they attracted universal attention and applause. The rear-guard was led by Don Alonso Cardenas, master of Santiago; and was composed of the knights of his order, and the cavaliers of Ecija, with certain men-at-arms of the Holy Brotherhood, whom the king had placed under his command. The army was attended by a great train of mules, laden with provisions for a few days' supply, until they should be able to forage among the Moorish villages. Never did a more gallant and self-confident little army tread the earth. It was composed of men full of health and vigour, to whom war was a pastime and delight. They had spared no expense in their equipments; for never was the pomp of war carried to a higher pitch than among the proud chivalry of Spain.

pida is supported in his statement by that most veracious and contemporary chronicler, Andres Bernaldes, curate of Los Palacios.

Cased in armour, richly inlaid and embossed, decked with rich surcoats and waving plumes, and superbly mounted on Andalusian steeds, they pranced out of Antequera, with banners flying, and their various devices and armorial bearings ostentatiously displayed; and, in the confidence of their hopes, promised the inhabitants to enrich them with the spoils of Malaga. In the rear of this warlike pageant followed a peaceful band, intent upon profiting by the anticipated victories. They were not the customary wretches that hover about armies, to plunder and strip the dead; but goodly and substantial traders, from Seville, Cordova, and other cities of traffic. They rode sleek mules, and were clad in fair raiment, with long leathern purses at their girdles, well filled with pistoles and other golden coin. They had heard of the spoils wasted by the soldiery at the capture of Alhama, and were provided with moneys to buy up the jewels and precious stones, the vessels of gold and silver, and the rich silks and cloths, that should form the plunder of Malaga. The proud cavaliers eyed these sons of traffic with great disdain, but permitted them to follow, for the convenience of the troops, who might otherwise be overburdened with booty.

It had been intended to conduct this expedition with great celerity and secrecy; but the noise of their preparations had already reached the city of Malaga. The garrison, it is true, was weak, but the commander was himself a host. This was Muley Abdallah, commonly called El Zagal, or "the valiant." He was younger brother of Muley Aben Hassan, and general of the few forces which remained faithful to the old monarch. He possessed equal fierceness of spirit with his brother, and surpassed him in craft and vigilance. His very name was a war-cry among his soldiery, who had the most extravagant opinion of his prowess.

El Zagal suspected that Malaga was the object of this noisy expedition. He consulted with old Bexir, a veteran Moor, who governed the city. "If this army of marauders were to reach Malaga," said he, "we should hardly be able to keep them without its walls. I will

throw myself with a small force into the mountains, rouse the peasantry, take possession of the passes, and endeavour to give these Spanish cavaliers sufficient entertainment upon the road."

It was on a Wednesday, that the pranking army of high-mettled warriors issued from the ancient gates of Antequera. They marched all day and night, making their way secretly, as they supposed, through the passes of the mountains. As the tract of country they intended to maraud was far in the Moorish territories, near the coast of the Mediterranean, they did not arrive there till late in the following day. In passing through these stern and lofty mountains, their path was often along the bottom of a barranca, or deep rocky valley, with a scanty stream dashing along it, among the loose rocks and stones which it had broken and rolled down in the time of its autumnal violence. Sometimes their road was a mere rambla, or dry bed of a torrent, cut deep into the mountains, and filled with their shattered fragments. These barrancas and ramblas were overhung by immense cliffs and precipices, forming the lurking-places of ambuscades during the wars between the Moors and Spaniards, as in after times they have become the favourite haunts of robbers, to waylay the unfortunate traveller.

As the sun went down, the cavaliers came to a lofty part of the mountains, commanding, to their right, a distant glimpse of a part of the fair vega of Malaga, with the blue Mediterranean beyond, and they hailed it with exultation as a glimpse of the promised land. As the night closed in, they reached the chain of little valleys and hamlets, locked up among these rocky heights, and known among the Moors by the name of the Axarquia. Here their vaunting hopes were destined to meet with the first disappointment. The inhabitants had heard of their approach; they had conveyed away their cattle and effects; and, with their wives and children, had taken refuge in the towers and fortresses of the mountains. Enraged at their disappointment, the troops set fire to the deserted houses, and pressed forward, hoping for better fortune as they advanced, Don Alonso de Aguilar, and the other cava-

liers in the vanguard, spread out their forces, to lay waste the country; capturing a few lingering herds of cattle, with the Moorish peasants who were driving them to some place of safety. While this marauding party carried fire and sword in the advance, and lit up the mountain cliffs with the flames of the hamlets, the Master of Santiago, who brought up the rearguard, maintained strict order, keeping his knights together in martial array, ready for attack or defence should an enemy appear. The men-at-arms of the Holy Brotherhood attempted to roam in quest of booty; but he called them back, and rebuked them severely.

At length they came to a part of the mountain completely broken up by barrancas and ramblas of vast depth, and shagged with rocks and precipices. It was impossible to maintain the order of march; the horses had no room for action, and were scarcely manageable, having to scramble from rock to rock, and up and down frightful declivities, where there was scarce footing for a mountain-goat. Passing by a burning village, the light of the flames revealed their perplexed situation. The Moors who had taken refuge in a watchtower on an impending height, shouted with exultation, when they looked down upon these glistening cavaliers, struggling and stumbling among the rocks. Sallying forth from their tower, they took possession of the cliffs which overhung the ravine, and hurled darts and stones upon the enemy. It was with the utmost grief of heart, that the good Master of Santiago beheld his brave men falling like helpless victims around him, without the means of resistance or revenge. The confusion of his followers was increased by the shouts of the Moors, multiplied by the echoes of every crag and cliff, as if they were surrounded by innumerable foes. Being entirely ignorant of the country, in their struggles to extricate themselves they plunged into other glens and defiles, where they were still more exposed to danger. In this extremity, the Master of Santiago despatched messengers in search of succour. The Marquis of Cadiz, like a loyal companion in arms, hastened to his aid with his



cavalry. His approach checked the assaults of the enemy; and the master was at length enabled to extricate his troops from the defile. In the mean time, Don Alonso de Aguilar and his companions, in their eager advance, had likewise got entangled in deep glens, and dry beds of torrents, where they had been severely galled by the insulting attacks of a handful of Moorish peasants, posted on the impending precipices. The proud spirit of De Aguilar was incensed at having the game of war thus turned upon him, and his gallant forces domineered over by mountain boors, whom he had thought to drive, like their own cattle, to Antequera. Hearing, however, that the Marquis of Cadiz and the Master of Santiago were engaged with the enemy, he disregarded his own danger, and calling together his troops, returned to assist them, or rather, to partake of their perils. Being once more assembled together, the cavaliers held a hasty council, amidst the hurling of stones and whistling of arrows; and their resolves were quickened by the sight, from time to time, of some gallant companion in arms laid low. They determined, that there was no spoil in this part of the country to repay the extraordinary peril; and that it was better to abandon the herds they had already taken, which only embarrassed their march, and to retreat with all speed to less dangerous ground.

The adalides or guides were ordered to lead the way out of this place of carnage. These, thinking to conduct them by the most secure route, led them by a steep and rocky pass, difficult to the foot-soldiers, but almost impracticable to the cavalry. It was overhung with precipices, whence showers of stones and arrows were poured upon them, accompanied by savage yells, which appalled the stoutest heart. In some places they could pass but one at a time, and were often transpierced, horse and rider, by the Moorish darts; the progress of their comrades impeded by their dying struggles. The surrounding precipices were lit up by a thousand alarm-fires, and every crag and cliff had its flames, by the light of which they beheld their foes bounding from rock to rock, and looking

more like fiends than mortal men. Either through terror and confusion, or through real ignorance of the country, their guides, instead of conducting them out of the mountains, led them deeper into their fatal recesses. The morning dawned upon them in a narrow rambla, its bottom filled with broken rocks, where once had raved along the mountain torrent, while above them beetled huge arid cliffs, over the brows of which they beheld the turbaned heads of their fierce and exulting foes. What a different appearance did the unfortunate cavaliers present, from the gallant band that marched so vauntingly out of Antequera! Covered with dust and blood and wounds, and haggard with fatigue and horror, they looked like victims rather than warriors. Many of their banners were lost, and not a trumpet was heard, to rally their sinking spirits. The men turned with imploring eyes to their commanders, while the hearts of the cavaliers were ready to burst with rage and grief, at the merciless havoc made among their faithful followers.

All day they made ineffectual attempts to extricate themselves from the mountains. Columns of smoke rose from the heights where, in the preceding night, had blazed the alarm-fires. The mountaineers assembled from every direction; they swarmed at every pass, getting in the advance of the Christians, and garrisoning the cliffs like so many towers and battlements.

Night closed again upon the Christians, when they were shut up in a narrow valley, traversed by a deep stream, and surrounded by precipices that seemed to reach the skies, and on which the alarm fires blazed and flared. Suddenly a new cry was heard resounding along the valley. "El Zagal! El Zagal!" echoed from cliff to cliff. "What cry is that?" said the Master of Santiago. "It is the war-cry of El Zagal, the Moorish general," said an old Castilian soldier: "he must be coming in person with the troops of Malaga."

The worthy master turned to his knights: "Let us die," said he, "making a road with our hearts, since we cannot with our swords. Let us scale the mountain, and sell our lives dearly,

instead of staying here to be tamely butchered."

So saying, he turned his steed against the mountain, and spurred him up its flinty side. Horse and foot followed his example; eager, if they could not escape, to have at least a dying blow at the enemy. As they struggled up the height, a tremendous storm of darts and stones was showered upon them by the Moors. Sometimes a fragment of rock came bounding and thundering down, ploughing its way through the centre of their host. The foot-soldiers, faint with weariness and hunger, or crippled by wounds, held by the tails and manes of the horses, to aid them in their ascent, while the horses, losing their footing among the loose stones, or receiving some sudden wound, tumbled down the steep declivity, steed, rider, and soldier rolling from crag to crag, until they were dashed to pieces in the valley. In this desperate struggle, the alférez, or standard-bearer of the master, with his standard, was lost, as were many of his relations and his dearest friends. At length he succeeded in attaining the crest of the mountain, but it was only to be plunged in new difficulties. A wilderness of rocks and rugged dells lay before him, beset by cruel foes. Having neither banner nor trumpet, by which to rally his troops, they wandered apart, each intent upon saving himself from the precipices of the mountains and the darts of the enemy. When the pious Master of Santiago beheld the scattered fragments of his late gallant force, he could not restrain his grief. "O God!" exclaimed he, "great is thine anger this day against thy servants! Thou hast converted the cowardice of these infidels into desperate valour, and hast made peasants and boors victorious over armed men of battle!"

He would fain have kept with his foot-soldiers, and, gathering them together, have made head against the enemy; but those around him entreated him to think only of his personal safety. To remain was to perish without striking a blow; to escape was to preserve a life that might be devoted to vengeance on the Moors. The master reluctantly yielded to their advice. "O Lord of Hosts!" exclaimed he again, "from thy wrath do I fly, not

from these infidels: they are but instruments in thy hands to chastise us for our sins!" So saying, he sent the guides in advance, and, putting spurs to his horse, dashed through a defile of the mountains, before the Moors could intercept him. The moment the master put his horse to speed, his troops scattered in all directions. Some endeavoured to follow his traces, but were confounded among the intricacies of the mountain. They fled hither and thither; many perishing among the precipices, others being slain by the Moors, and others taken prisoners.

The gallant Marquis of Cadiz, guided by his trusty adalide, Luis Amar, had ascended a different part of the mountain. He was followed by his friend, Don Alonso de Aguilar, the adelantado, and the Count of Cifuentes; but, in the darkness and confusion, the bands of these commanders became separated from each other. When the marquis attained the summit, he looked around for his companions in arms; but they were no longer following him, and there was no trumpet to summon them. It was a consolation to the marquis, however, that his brothers and several of his relations, with a number of his retainers, were still with him. He called his brothers by name, and their replies gave comfort to his heart.

His guide now led the way into another valley, where he would be less exposed to danger. When he had reached the bottom of it, the marquis paused to collect his scattered followers, and to give time for his fellow-commanders to rejoin him. Here he was suddenly assailed by the troops of El Zagal, aided by the mountaineers from the cliffs. The Christians, exhausted and terrified, lost all presence of mind; most of them fled, and were either slain or taken captive. The marquis and his valiant brothers, with a few tried friends, made a stout resistance. His horse was killed under him; his brothers, Don Diego and Don Lope, with his two nephews, Don Lorenzo and Don Manuel, were, one by one, swept from his side; either transfixed with darts and lances by the soldiers of El Zagal, or crushed by stones from the heights. The marquis was a veteran warrior, and had been in many a bloody battle, but never before had death fallen

so thick and close around him. When he saw his remaining brother, Don Beltran, struck out of his saddle by a fragment of a rock, and his horse running wildly about without his rider, he gave a cry of anguish, and stood bewildered and aghast. A few faithful followers surrounded him, and entreated him to fly for his life. He would still have remained, to have shared the fortunes of his friend, Don Alonso de Aguilar, and his other companions in arms; but the forces of El Zagal were between him and them, and death was whistling by on every wind. Reluctantly, therefore, he consented to fly. Another horse was brought him; his faithful adalide guided him by one of the steepest paths, which lasted for four leagues; the enemy still hanging on his traces, and thinning the scanty ranks of his followers. At length the marquis reached the extremity of the mountain defiles, and, with a haggard remnant of his men, escaped by dint of hoof to Antequera.

The Count of Cifuentes, with a few of his retainers, in attempting to follow the Marquis of Cadiz, wandered into a narrow pass, where they were completely surrounded by the band of El Zagal. Finding all attempt at escape impossible, and resistance vain, the worthy count surrendered himself prisoner, as did also his brother, Don Pedro de Silva, and the few of his retainers who survived.

The dawn of day found Don Alonso de Aguilar, with a handful of his adherents, still among the mountains. They had attempted to follow the Marquis of Cadiz, but had been obliged to pause and defend themselves against the thickening forces of the enemy. They at length traversed the mountain, and reached the same valley where the marquis had made his last disastrous stand. Wearied and perplexed, they sheltered themselves in a natural grotto, under an overhanging rock, which kept off the darts of the enemy; while a bubbling fountain gave them the means of slaking their raging thirst, and refreshing their exhausted steeds. As day broke, the scene of slaughter unfolded its horrors. There lay the noble brothers and nephews of the gallant marquis transfixed with darts, or gashed and bruised with unseemly wounds;

while many other gallant cavaliers were stretched out dead and dying around, some of them partly stripped and plundered by the Moors. De Aguilar was a pious knight, but his piety was not humble and resigned, like that of the worthy Master of Santiago. He imprecated holy curses upon the infidels, for having thus laid low the flower of Christian chivalry, and he vowed in his heart bitter vengeance upon the surrounding country. By degrees the little force of De Aguilar was augmented by numbers of fugitives, who issued from caves and chasms, where they had taken refuge in the night. A little band of mounted knights was gradually formed, and the Moors having abandoned the heights to collect the spoils of the slain, this gallant but forlorn squadron was enabled to retreat to Antequera.

This disastrous affair lasted from Thursday evening throughout Friday, the twenty-first of March, the festival of St. Benedict. It is still recorded in Spanish calendars as the defeat of the mountains of Malaga; and the place where the greatest slaughter took place is pointed out to the present day, and is called *La cuesta de la Matanza*, or "the hill of the massacre." The principal leaders who survived returned to Antequera; many of the knights took refuge in Alhama, and others wandered about the mountains for eight days, living on roots and herbs, hiding themselves during the day and roaming forth at night. So enfeebled and disheartened were they, that they offered no resistance if attacked. Three or four soldiers would surrender to a Moorish peasant, and even the women of Malaga sallied forth and made prisoners. Some were thrown into the dungeons of frontier towns; others led captive to Granada; but by far the greater number were conducted to Malaga, the city they had threatened to attack. Two hundred and fifty principal cavaliers, alcaydes, commanders, and hidalgos of generous blood, were confined in the alcazaba or citadel of Malaga, to await their ransom; and five hundred and seventy of the common soldiery were crowded in an enclosure or courtyard of the alcazaba, to be sold as slaves.\*

\* Cura de Los Palacios.

Great spoils were collected of splendid armour and weapons taken from the slain, or thrown away by the cavaliers in their flight; and many horses, magnificently caparisoned, together with numerous standards; all which were paraded in triumph into the Moorish towns.

The merchants, also, who had come with the army, intending to traffic in the spoils of the Moors, were themselves made objects of traffic. Several of them were driven like cattle before the Moorish viragos to the market of Malaga, and, in spite of all their adroitness in trade, and their attempts to buy themselves off at a cheap ransom, they were unable to purchase their freedom without such draughts upon their money-bags at home, as drained them to the very bottom.

### CHAPTER XIII.

Effects of the disasters among the mountains of Malaga.

THE people of Antequera had scarcely recovered from the tumult of excitement and admiration, caused by the departure of the gallant band of cavaliers upon their foray, when they beheld the scattered wrecks flying for refuge to their walls. Day after day, and hour after hour, brought some wretched fugitive, in whose battered plight, and haggard, woe-begone demeanour, it was almost impossible to recognise the warrior, whom they had lately seen to issue so gayly and gloriously from their gates.

The arrival of the Marquis of Cadiz, almost alone, covered with dust and blood, his armour shattered and defaced, his countenance the picture of despair, filled every heart with sorrow; for he was greatly beloved by the people. The multitude asked, where was the band of brothers, that rallied round him as he went forth to the field; and when they heard that they had, one by one, been slaughtered at his side, they hushed their voices; or spoke to each other only in whispers as he passed, gazing at him in silent sympathy. No one attempted to console him in so great an affliction, nor did the good marquis speak ever a word, but, shutting himself up, brooded in lonely anguish over his misfortune. It was only the arrival of Don Alonso de Aguilar that

gave him a gleam of consolation; for, amidst the shafts of death that had fallen so thickly among his family, he rejoiced that his chosen friend and brother in arms had escaped uninjured.

For several days every eye was turned, in an agony of suspense, towards the Moorish border, anxiously looking, in every fugitive from the mountains, for the lineaments of some friend or relation, whose fate was yet a mystery. At length all doubt subsided into certainty; the whole extent of this great calamity was known, spreading grief and consternation throughout the land, and laying desolate the pride and hopes of palaces. It was a sorrow that visited the marble hall and silken pillow. Stately dames mourned over the loss of their sons, the joy and glory of their age; and many a fair cheek was blanched with wo, that had lately mantled with secret admiration. "All Andalusia," says an historian of the day, "was overwhelmed by a great affliction; there was no drying of the eyes which wept in her."<sup>\*</sup>

Fear and trembling reigned for a while along the frontier. Their spear seemed broken; their buckler cleft in twain. Every border town dreaded an attack, and the mother caught her infant to her bosom, when the watch-dog howled in the night, fancying it the war-cry of the Moor. All for a time appeared lost, and despondency even found its way to the royal breasts of Ferdinand and Isabella, amid the splendours of their court.

Great, on the other hand, was the joy of the Moors, when they saw whole legions of Christian warriors brought captive into their towns by rude mountain peasantry. They thought it the work of Allah in favour of the faithful. But when they recognised, among the captives thus dejected and broken down, several of the proudest of Christian chivalry; when they saw several of the banners and devices of the noblest houses of Spain, which they had been accustomed to behold in the foremost of the battle, now trailed ignominiously through their streets; when, in short, they witnessed the arrival of the Count of Cifuentes, the royal standard-bearer of

\* Cura de Los Palacios.

Spain, with his gallant brother, Don Pedro De Silva, brought prisoners into the gates of Granada, there were no bounds to their exultation. They thought that the days of their ancient glory were about to return, and that they were to renew their career of triumph over the unbelievers.

The Christian historians of the time are sorely perplexed to account for this misfortune; and why so many Christian knights, fighting in the cause of the holy faith, should thus, miraculously as it were, be given captive to a handful of infidel boors; for we are assured, that all this rout and destruction was effected by five hundred foot and fifty horse, and these mere mountaineers, without science or discipline.\* "It was intended," observes one historiographer, "as a lesson to their confidence and vainglory; overrating their own prowess, and thinking, that so chosen a band of chivalry had but to appear in the land of the enemy, and conquer. It was to teach them, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, but that God alone giveth the victory."

The worthy father Fray Antonio Agapida, however, asserts it to be a punishment for the avarice of the Spanish warriors. "They did not enter the kingdom of the infidels with the pure spirit of Christian knights, zealous only for the glory of the faith; but rather as greedy men of trade, to enrich themselves by vending the spoils of the infidels. Instead of preparing themselves by confession and communion, and executing their testaments, and making donations to churches and convents, they thought only of arranging bargains and sales of their anticipated booty. Instead of taking with them holy monks, to aid them with their prayers, they were followed by a train of worldlings, to keep alive their secular and sordid ideas, and to turn what ought to be holy triumphs into scenes of brawling traffic." Such is the opinion of the excellent Agapida, in which he is joined by the most worthy and upright of chroniclers, the curate of Los Palacios. Agapida comforts himself, however, with the

\* Cura de Los Palacios.

reflection, that this visitation was meant in mercy, to try the Castilian heart, and to extract from its present humiliation the elements of future success, as gold is extracted from amidst the impurities of earth; and in this reflection he is supported by the venerable historian, Pedro Abarca, of the society of Jesuits.\*\*

#### CHAPTER XIV.

How King Boabdil el Chico marched over the border.

THE defeat of the Christian cavaliers among the mountains of Malaga, and the successful inroad of Muley Aben Hassan into the lands of Medina Sidonia, had produced a favourable effect on the fortunes of the old monarch. The inconstant populace began to shout forth his name in the streets, and to sneer at the inactivity of his son, Boabdil el Chico. The latter, though in the flower of his age, and distinguished for vigour and dexterity in jousts and tournaments, had never yet fleshed his weapon in the field of battle; and it was murmured, that he preferred the silken repose of the cool halls of the Alhambra, to the fatigue and danger of the foray, and the hard encampments of the mountains.

The popularity of these rival kings depended upon their success against the Christians; and Boabdil el Chico found it necessary to strike some signal blow, to counterbalance the late triumph of his father. He was further incited by the fierce old Moor, his father-in-law, Ali Atar, alcaide of Loxa, with whom the coals of wrath against the Christians still burned among the ashes of age, and had lately been blown into a flame by the attack made by Ferdinand on the city under his command.

Ali Atar informed Boabdil, that the late discomfiture of the Christian knights had stripped Andalusia of the prime of her chivalry, and broken the spirit of the country. All the frontier of Cordova and Ecija now lay open to inroad; but he specially pointed out the city of Lucena as an object of attack; being feebly garrisoned, and lying in a country rich in pasturage, abounding in cattle

\*\* Abarca, *Anales de Aragon*, Rey 30, cap. 2, sec. 7.

and grain, in oil and wine. The fiery old Moor spoke from thorough information; for he had made many an incursion into those parts, and his very name was a terror throughout the country. It had become a byword in the garrison of Loxa, to call Lucena the garden of Ali Atar; for he was accustomed to forage its fertile territories for all his supplies.

Boabdil el Chico listened to the persuasions of this veteran of the borders. He assembled a force of nine thousand foot and seven hundred horse, most of them his own adherents, but many the partisans of his father: for both factions, however they might fight among themselves, were ready to unite in any expedition against the Christians. Many of the most illustrious and valiant of the Moorish nobility assembled around his standard, magnificently arrayed in sumptuous armour and rich embroidery, as though they were going to a festival, or a tilt of reeds, rather than an enterprise of iron war. Boabdil's mother, the Sultana Ayxa la Horra, armed him for the field, and gave him her benediction as she girded his cimeter to his side. His favourite wife Morayma wept, as she thought of the evils that might befall him. "Why dost thou weep, daughter of Ali Atar?" said the high-minded Ayxa; "these tears become not the daughter of a warrior, nor the wife of a king. Believe me, there lurks more danger for a monarch within the strong walls of a palace, than within the frail curtains of a tent. It is by perils in the field, that thy husband must purchase security on his throne."

But Morayma still hung upon his neck with tears and sad forebodings; and when he departed from the Alhambra, she betook herself to her mirador, which looks out over the vega; whence she watched the army, as it passed in shining order along the road that leads to Loxa; and every burst of warlike melody that came swelling on the breeze was answered by a gush of sorrow.

As the royal cavalcade issued from the palace, and descended through the streets of Granada, the populace greeted their youthful sovereign with shouts, and anticipated success that should wither the laurels of his father. In passing through

the gate of Elvira, however, the king accidentally broke his lance against the arch. At this, certain of the nobles turned pale, and entreated him not to proceed, for they regarded it as an evil omen. Boabdil scoffed at their fears, for he considered them mere idle fancies; or rather, says Fray Antonio Agapida, he was an incredulous pagan, puffed up with confidence and vainglory. He refused to take another spear, but drew forth his cimeter, and led the way (adds Agapida) in an arrogant and haughty style, as though he would set both heaven and earth at defiance. Another evil omen was sent, to deter him from his enterprise. Arriving at the rambla or dry ravine of Beyro, which is scarcely a bowshot from the city, a fox ran through the whole army, and close by the person of the king, and, though a thousand bolts were discharged at it, escaped uninjured to the mountains. The principal courtiers about Boabdil now reiterated their remonstrances against proceeding; for they considered these occurrences as mysterious portents of disasters to their army. The king, however, was not to be dismayed, but continued to march forward.\*

At Loxa the royal army was reinforced by old Ali Atar, with the chosen horsemen of the garrison, and many of the bravest warriors of the border towns. The people of Loxa shouted with exultation, when they beheld Ali Atar armed at all points, and once more mounted on his Barbary steed, which had often borne him over the borders. The veteran warrior, with nearly a century of years upon his head, had all the fire and animation of a youth at the prospect of a foray, and careered from rank to rank with the velocity of an Arab of the desert. The populace watched the army as it paraded over the bridge, and wound into the passes of the mountains; and still their eyes were fixed upon the pennon of Ali Atar, as if it bore with it an assurance of victory.

The Moorish army entered the Christian frontier by forced marches, hastily ravaging the country, driving off the flocks and herds, and making captives of

\* Marmol, Rebel. de los Moros, lib. 1, c. 12, fol. 14.

the inhabitants. They pressed on furiously, and made the latter part of their march in the night, that they might elude observation, and come upon Lucena by surprise. Boabdil was inexperienced in the art of war; but he had a veteran counsellor in his old father-in-law: for Ali Atar knew every secret of the country; and as he prowled through it, his eye ranged over the land, uniting, in its glare, the craft of the fox, with the sanguinary ferocity of the wolf. He had flattered himself that their march had been so rapid as to outstrip intelligence, and that Lucena would be an easy capture; when, suddenly, he beheld the alarm-fires, blazing upon the mountains. "We are discovered," said he to Boabdil el Chico; "the country will be up in arms. We have nothing left, but to strike boldly for Lucena: it is but slightly garrisoned, and we may carry it by assault, before it can receive assistance." The king approved of his counsel, and they marched rapidly for the gate of Lucena.

## CHAPTER XV.

How the Count de Cabra sallied forth from his castle, in quest of King Boabdil.

DON DIEGO DE CORDOVA, Count of Cabra, was in the castle of Vaena, which, with the town of the same name, is situated on a lofty sunburnt hill, on the frontier of the kingdom of Cordova, and but a few leagues from Lucena. The range of mountains of Horquera lies between them. The castle of Vaena was strong, and well furnished with arms; and the count had a numerous band of vassals and retainers: for it behoved the noblemen of the frontiers in those times to be well prepared, with man and horse, with lance and buckler, to resist the sudden incursions of the Moors. The Count of Cabra was a hardy and experienced warrior; shrewd in council, prompt in action, rapid and fearless in the field. He was one of the bravest cavaliers for an inroad, and had been quickened and sharpened in thought and action by living on the borders.

On the night of the 20th of April, 1483, the count was about to retire to rest, when the watchman from the turret brought him word, that there were alarm-

fires on the mountains of Horquera, and that they were made on the signal tower, overhanging the defile through which the road passes to Cabra and Lucena.

The count ascended the battlements, and beheld five lights blazing on the tower; a sign that there was a Moorish army attacking some place on the frontier. The count instantly ordered the alarm-bells to be sounded, and despatched couriers, to rouse the commanders of the neighbouring towns. He ordered all his retainers to prepare for action, and sent a trumpet through the town, summoning the men to assemble at the castle-gate at daybreak, armed and equipped for the field.

Throughout the remainder of the night, the castle resounded with the din of preparation. Every house in the town was in equal bustle; for in these frontier towns every house had its warrior, and the lance and buckler were ever hanging against the wall, ready to be snatched down for instant service. Nothing was heard but the noise of armourers, the shoeing of steeds, and furbishing of weapons; and all night long the alarm-fires kept blazing on the mountain.

When the morning dawned, the Count of Cabra sallied forth, at the head of two hundred and fifty cavaliers, of the best families of Vaena; all well appointed, exercised in arms, and experienced in the warfare of the borders. There were, besides, twelve hundred foot-soldiers; all brave and well-seasoned men of the same town. The count ordered them to hasten forward, whoever could make most speed, taking the road to Cabra, which was three leagues distant. That they might not loiter on the road, he allowed none of them to break their fast until they arrived at that place. The provident count despatched couriers in advance; and the little army, on reaching Cabra, found tables spread with food and refreshments at the gates of the town. There they were joined by Don Alonso de Cordova, senior of Zuheros.

Having made a hearty repast, they were on the point of resuming their march, when the count discovered, that, in the hurry of his departure from home, he had forgotten to bring the standard of Vaena, which, for upwards of eighty

years, had always been borne to battle by his family. It was now noon, and there was not time to return. He took, therefore, the standard of Cabra, the device of which is a goat, and which had not been seen in the wars for the last half century. When about to depart, a courier came galloping at full speed, bringing missives to the count, from his nephew, Don Diego Hernandez de Cordova, senior of Lucena, and alcaide de los Donzeles, entreating him to hasten to his aid, as his town was beset by the Moorish king, Boabdil el Chico, with a powerful army, who were actually setting fire to the gates.

The count put his little army instantly in movement for Lucena, which is only one league from Cabra. He was fired with the idea of having the Moorish king in person to contend with. By the time he had reached Lucena, the Moors had desisted from the attack, and were ravaging the surrounding country. He entered the town with a few of his cavaliers, and was received with joy by his nephew, whose whole force consisted but of eighty horse and three hundred foot. Don Diego Hernandez de Cordova was a young man; yet he was a prudent, careful, and capable officer. Having learned, the evening before, that the Moors had passed the frontiers, he had gathered within the walls all the women and children from the environs; had armed the men, sent couriers in all directions for succour, and had lighted alarm-fires on the mountains.

Boabdil had arrived with his army at daybreak, and had sent a message, threatening to put the garrison to the sword, if the place were not instantly surrendered. The messenger was a Moor of Granada, named Hamet, whom Don Diego had formerly known. He contrived to amuse him with negotiation, to gain time for succour to arrive. The fierce old Ali Atar, losing all patience, had made an assault upon the town, and stormed like a fury at the gate; but had been repulsed. Another and more serious attack was expected in the course of the night.

When the Count de Cabra had heard this account of the situation of affairs, he turned to his nephew with his usual alacrity of manner, and proposed, that they

should immediately sally forth in quest of the enemy. The prudent Don Diego remonstrated at the rashness of attacking so great a force with a mere handful of men. "Nephew," said the count, "I came from Vaena with a determination to fight this Moorish king, and I will not be disappointed."

"At any rate," replied Don Diego, "let us wait but two hours, and we shall have reinforcements, which have been promised me from Rambla, Santaella, Montilla, and other places in the neighbourhood." "If we wait these," said the hardy count, "the Moors will be off, and all our trouble will have been in vain. You may await them if you please: I am resolved on fighting."

The count paused not for a reply; but, in his prompt and rapid manner, sallied forth to his men. The young alcaide de los Donzeles, though more prudent than his ardent uncle, was equally brave. He determined to stand by him in his rash enterprise; and, summoning his little force, marched forth to join the count, who was already on the alert. They then proceeded together in quest of the enemy.

The Moorish army had ceased ravaging the country, and were not to be seen, the neighbourhood being hilly, and broken with deep ravines. The count despatched six scouts on horseback, to reconnoitre, ordering them to return with all speed when they should have discovered the enemy, and by no means to engage in skirmishing with stragglers. The scouts, ascending a high hill, beheld the Moorish army in a valley behind it; the cavalry ranged in five battalions, keeping guard, while the foot-soldiers were seated on the grass, making a repast. They returned immediately with the intelligence.

The count now ordered the troops to march in the direction of the enemy. He and his nephew ascended the hill, and saw, that the five battalions of Moorish cavalry had been formed in two; one of about nine hundred lances, and the other of about six hundred. The whole force seemed prepared to march for the frontier. The foot-soldiers were already in motion, with many prisoners, and a great train of mules and beasts of burden, laden with booty. At a distance was Boabdil



el Chico. They could not distinguish his person; but they knew him by his superb white charger, magnificently caparisoned; and by his being surrounded by a numerous guard, sumptuously armed and attired. Old Ali Atar was careering about the valley with his usual impatience, hurrying the march of the loitering troops.

The eyes of the Count de Cabra glistened with eager joy, as he beheld the royal prize within his reach. The immense disparity of their forces never entered into his mind. "By Santiago!" said he to his nephew, as they hastened down the hill, "had we waited for more forces, the Moorish king and his army would have escaped us!"

The count now harangued his men, to inspirit them to this hazardous encounter. He told them, not to be dismayed at the number of the Moors, for God often permitted the few to conquer the many; and he had great confidence that, through the divine aid, they were that day to achieve a signal victory, which should win them both riches and renown. He commanded, that no man should hurl his lance at the enemy, but should keep it in his hands, and strike as many blows with it as he could. He warned them, also, never to shout, except when the Moors did; for when both armies shouted together, there was no perceiving which made the most noise, and was the strongest. He desired his uncle, Lope de Mendoza, and Diego Cabrera, alcaide of Menica, to alight, and enter on foot, in the battalion of infantry, to animate them to the combat. He appointed, also, the alcaide of Vaena, and Diego de Clavijo, a cavalier of his household, to remain in the rear, and not to permit any one to lag behind, either to despoil the dead, or for any other purpose.

Such were the orders given by this most adroit, active, and intrepid cavalier to his little army; supplying, by admirable sagacity, and subtle management, the want of a more numerous force. His orders being given, and all arrangements made, he threw aside his lance, drew his sword, and commanded his standard to be advanced against the enemy.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## The Battle of Lucena.

THE Moorish king had descried the Spanish forces at a distance, although a slight fog prevented his seeing them distinctly, and ascertaining their numbers. His old father-in-law, Ali Atar, was by his side, who, being a veteran marauder, was well acquainted with all the standards and armorial bearings of the frontiers. When the king beheld the ancient and long disused banner of Cabra emerging from the mist, he turned to Ali Atar, and demanded whose ensign it was. The old borderer was for once at a loss; for the banner had not been displayed in battle in his time.

"Sire," replied he after a pause, "I have been considering that standard, but do not know it. It appears to be a dog, which is a device borne by the towns of Baeza and Ubeda. If it be so, all Andalusia is in movement against you; for it is not probable, that any single commander or community would venture to attack you. I would advise you therefore to retire."

The Count of Cabra, in winding down the hill towards the Moors, found himself on a much lower station than the enemy: he therefore ordered, in all haste, that his standard should be taken back, so as to gain the vantage ground. The Moors, mistaking this for a retreat, rushed impetuously towards the Christians. The latter, having gained the height proposed, charged down upon them at the same moment, with the battle-cry of "Santiago!" and, dealing the first blows, laid many of the Moorish cavaliers in the dust.

The Moors, thus checked in their tumultuous assault, were thrown into confusion, and began to give way; the Christians following hard upon them. Boabdil el Chico endeavoured to rally them. "Hold! hold! for shame!" cried he: "let us not fly, at least until we know our enemy!" The Moorish chivalry were stung by this reproof, and turned to make front, with the valour of men who feel that they are fighting under their monarch's eye.

At this moment, Lorenzo de Pores, alcaide of Luque, arrived with fifty

horse and one hundred foot, sounding an Italian trumpet from among a copse of oak trees, which concealed his force. The quick ear of old Ali Atar caught the note. "That is an Italian trumpet," said he to the king: "the whole world seems in arms against your majesty!"

The trumpet of Lorenzo de Pores was answered by that of the Count de Cabra in another direction, and it seemed to the Moors as if they were between two armies. Don Lorenzo, sallying from among the oaks, now charged upon the enemy. The latter did not wait to ascertain the force of this new foe. The confusion, the variety of alarms, the attacks from opposite quarters, the obscurity of the fog, all conspired to deceive them as to the number of their adversaries. Broken and dismayed, they retreated fighting; and nothing but the presence and remonstrances of the king prevented their retreat from becoming a headlong flight.

This skirmishing retreat lasted for about three leagues. Many were the acts of individual prowess between Christian and Moorish knights; and the way was strewed by the flower of the king's guards, and of his royal household. At length they came to the rivulet of Mingonzalez, the verdant banks of which were covered with willows and tamarisks. It was swollen by recent rain, and was now a deep and turbid torrent.

Here the king made a courageous stand, with a small body of cavalry, while his baggage crossed the stream. None but the choicest and most loyal of his guards stood by their monarch in this hour of extremity. The foot-soldiers took to flight the moment they passed the ford; many of the horsemen, partaking of the general panic, gave reins to their steeds, and scoured for the frontier. The little host of devoted cavaliers now serried their forces in front of their monarch, to protect his retreat. They fought hand to hand with the Christian warriors; disdainful to yield, or to ask for quarter. The ground was covered with the dead and dying. The king, having retreated along the river banks, and gained some distance from the scene of combat, looked back, and saw the loyal band at length give way.

They crossed the ford, followed pell-mell by the enemy, and several of them were struck down into the stream.

The king now dismounted from his white charger, whose colour and rich caparison made him too conspicuous, and endeavoured to conceal himself among the thickets which fringed the river. A soldier of Lucena, named Martin Hurtado, discovered him and attacked him with a pike. The king defended himself with cimeter and target, until another soldier assailed him, and he saw a third approaching. Perceiving that further resistance would be vain, he drew back, and called upon them to desist, offering them a noble ransom. One of the soldiers rushed forward to seize him; but the king struck him to the earth with a blow of his cimeter.

Don Diego Fernandez de Cordova coming up at this moment, the men said to him, "Señor, here is a Moor that we have taken, who seems to be a man of rank, and offers a large ransom."

"Slaves!" exclaimed King Boabdil, "you have not taken me. I surrender to this cavalier."

Don Diego received him with knightly courtesy. He perceived him to be a person of high rank; but the king concealed his quality, and gave himself out as the son of Aben Aleyzer, a nobleman of the royal household.\* Don Diego gave him in charge of five soldiers, to conduct him to the castle of Lucena; then putting spurs to his horse, he hastened to rejoin the Count de Cabra, who was in hot pursuit of the enemy. He overtook him at a stream called Riancal, and they continued to press on the skirts of the flying army during the remainder of the day. The pursuit was almost as hazardous as the battle; for had the enemy at any time recovered from their panic, they might, by a sudden reaction, have overwhelmed the small force of their pursuers. To guard against this peril, the wary count kept his battalion always in close order, and had a body of a hundred chosen lances in the advance. The Moors kept up a Parthian retreat. Several times they turned to make battle; but seeing this solid body

\* Garibay, lib. xl. cap. 31.

of steeled warriors pressing upon them, they again took to flight.

The main retreat of the army was along the valley watered by the Xenil, and opening through the mountains of Algaringo to the city of Loxa. The alarm-fires of the preceding night had roused the country. Every man snatched sword and buckler from the wall; and the towns and villages poured forth their warriors to harass the retreating foe. Ali Atar kept the main force of the army together, and turned fiercely from time to time upon his pursuers. He was like a wolf hunted through a country he had often made desolate by his maraudings.

The alarm of this invasion had reached the city of Antequera, where were several of the cavaliers who had escaped from the carnage in the mountains of Malaga. Their proud minds were festering with their late disgrace, and their only prayer was for vengeance on the infidels. No sooner did they hear of the Moors being over the border, than they were armed and mounted for action. Don Alonzo de Aguilar led them forth: a small body of but forty horsemen, but all cavaliers of prowess, and thirsting for revenge. They came upon the foe on the banks of the Xenil, where it winds through the valleys of Cordova. The river, swelled by the late rains, was deep and turbulent, and only fordable at certain places. The main body of the army was gathered in confusion on the banks, endeavouring to ford the stream, protected by the cavalry of Ali Atar.

No sooner did the little band of Alonzo de Aguilar come in sight of the Moors, than fury flashed from their eyes. "Remember the mountains of Malaga!" they cried to each other as they rushed to combat. Their charge was desperate, but was gallantly resisted. A scrambling and bloody fight ensued, hand to hand, and sword to sword, sometimes on land, sometimes in the water; many were lanced on the banks; others, throwing themselves into the river, sunk with the weight of their armour, and were drowned. Some, grappling together, fell from their horses, but continued their struggle in the waves, and helm and turban rolled together down the stream. The Moors were by far the superior in

number, and among them were many warriors of rank; but they were disheartened by defeat, while the Christians were excited even to desperation.

Ali Atar alone preserved all his fire and energy amid his reverses. He had been enraged at the defeat of the army, the loss of the king, and the ignominious flight he had been obliged to make, through a country which so often had been the scene of his exploits; but to be thus impeded in his flight, and harassed and insulted by a mere handful of warriors, roused the violent passions of the old Moor to perfect frenzy.

He had marked Don Alonzo de Aguilar dealing his blows, says Agapida, with the pious vehemence of a righteous knight, who knows that in every wound inflicted upon the infidels, he is doing God service. Ali Atar spurred his steed along the bank of the river, to come upon Don Alonzo by surprise. The back of that warrior was towards him; and collecting all his force, the Moor hurled his lance, to transfix him on the spot. The lance was not thrown with the usual accuracy of Ali Atar. It tore away a part of the cuirass of Don Alonzo, but failed to inflict a wound. The Moor rushed upon Don Alonzo with his cimeter; but the latter was on the alert, and parried his blow. They fought desperately upon the borders of the river, alternately pressing each other into the stream, and fighting their way again up the bank. Ali Atar was repeatedly wounded; and Don Alonzo, having pity on his age, would have spared his life. He called upon him to surrender. "Never," cried Ali Atar, "to a Christian dog." The words were scarce out of his mouth, when the sword of Don Alonzo clove his turbaned head, and sank deep into the brain. He fell dead without a groan: his body rolled into the Xenil; nor was it ever found and recognised.\* Thus fell Ali Atar, who had long been the terror of Andalusia. As he had hated and warred upon the Christians all his life, so he died in the very act of bitter hostility.

The fall of Ali Atar put an end to the transient stand of the cavalry. Horse

\* Cura de Los Palacios.

and foot mingled together in the desperate struggle across the Xenil, and many were trampled down, and perished beneath the waves. Don Alonso and his band continued to harass them, until they crossed the frontier; and every blow struck home to the Moors seemed to lighten the load of humiliation and sorrow, which had weighed heavy on their hearts.

In this disastrous rout, the Moors lost upwards of five thousand killed and made prisoners, many of whom were of the most noble lineages of Granada. Numbers fled to rocks and mountains, where they were subsequently taken. This battle was called by some the battle of Lucena; by others, the battle of the Moorish king, because of the capture of Boabdil. Twenty-two banners fell into the hands of the Christians, and were carried to Vaena, and hung up in the church, where, says an historian of after times, they remain to this day. Once a year, on the day of St. George, they are borne about in procession by the inhabitants, who at the same time give thanks to God, for this signal victory granted to their forefathers.

Great was the triumph of the Count de Cabra, when, on returning from the pursuit of the enemy, he found that the Moorish king had fallen into his hands. When the unfortunate Boabdil was brought before him, however, and he beheld him a dejected captive, whom, but shortly before, he had seen in royal splendour, surrounded by his army, the generous heart of the count was touched by sympathy. He said every thing that became a courteous and Christian knight, to comfort him; observing, that the same mutability of things which had suddenly destroyed his recent prosperity, might cause his present misfortunes as rapidly to pass away; since, in this world, nothing is stable, and even sorrow has its allotted term.

Thus consoling him by gentle and soothing words, and observing towards him the honour and reverence that his dignity and his misfortunes inspired, he conducted him a prisoner to his strong castle of Vaena.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## Lamentations of the Moors for the Battle of Lucena.

THE sentinels looked out from the watchtowers of Loxa, along the valley of the Xenil, which passes through the mountains of Algaringo. They looked, to behold the king returning in triumph, at the head of his shining host, laden with the spoil of the unbeliever. They looked, to behold the standard of their warlike idol, the fierce Ali Atar, borne by the chivalry of Loxa, ever foremost in the wars of the border.

In the evening of the 21st of April, they descried a single horseman, urging his faltering steed along the banks of the river. As he drew near, they perceived, by the flash of arms, that he was a warrior; and, on nearer approach, by the richness of his armour, and the comparison of his steed, they knew him to be a warrior of rank.

He reached Loxa faint and aghast; his Arabian courser covered with foam and dust and blood, panting and staggering with fatigue, and gashed with wounds. Having brought his master in safety, he sunk down and died before the gate of the city. The soldiers at the gate gathered round the cavalier, as he stood, mute and melancholy, by his expiring steed. They knew him to be the gallant Cidi Caleb, nephew of the chief alfaqui of the albaycen of Granada. When the people of Loxa beheld this noble cavalier thus alone, haggard and dejected, their hearts were filled with fearful forebodings.

"Cavalier," said they, "how fares it with the king and army?" He cast his hand mournfully towards the land of the Christians. "There they lie!" exclaimed he: "the heavens have fallen upon them! all are lost! all dead!"\*

Upon this, there was a great cry of consternation among the people, and loud wailings of women; for the flower of the youth of Loxa were with the army. An old Moorish soldier, scarred in many a border battle, stood leaning on his lance by the gateway. "Where is Ali Atar?" demanded he eagerly.

\* Cura de Los Palacios.

"If he still live, the army cannot be lost!"

"I saw his turban cloven by the Christian sword," replied Cidi Caleb. "His body is floating in the Xenil."

When the soldier heard these words, he smote his breast, and threw dust upon his head; for he was an old follower of Ali Atar.

The noble Cidi Caleb gave himself no repose; but, mounting another steed, hastened to carry the disastrous tidings to Granada. As he passed through the villages and hamlets, he spread sorrow around; for their chosen men had followed the king to the wars.

When he entered the gates of Granada, and announced the loss of the king and army, a voice of horror went throughout the city. Every one thought but of his own share in the general calamity, and crowded round the bearer of ill tidings. One asked after a father, another after a brother, some after a lover, and many a mother after her son. His replies were still of wounds and death. To one he replied, "I saw thy father pierced with a lance, as he defended the person of the king." To another, "Thy brother fell wounded under the hoofs of the horses; but there was no time to aid him, for the Christian cavalry were upon us." To a third, "I saw the horse of thy lover covered with blood, and galloping without his rider." To a fourth, "Thy son fought by my side on the banks of the Xenil: we were surrounded by the enemy, and driven into the stream. I heard him call aloud upon Allah in the midst of the waters: when I reached the other bank, he was no longer by my side!"

The noble Cidi Caleb passed on, leaving Granada in lamentation. He urged his steed up the steep avenue of trees and fountains, that leads to the Alhambra, nor stopped until he arrived before the gate of justice. Ayxa, the mother of Boabdil, and Morayma, his beloved and tender wife, had daily watched, from the tower of the Gomeres, to behold his triumphant return. Who shall describe their affliction, when they heard the tidings of Cidi Caleb? The sultana Ayxa spake not much, but sate as one entranced in wo. Every now and then

a deep sigh burst forth; but she raised her eyes to heaven. "It is the will of Allah!" said she; and with these words she endeavoured to repress the agonies of a mother's sorrow. The tender Morayma threw herself on the earth, and gave way to the full turbulence of her feelings, bewailing her husband and her father. The high-minded Ayxa rebuked the violence of her grief. "Moderate these transports, my daughter," said she; "remember, magnanimity should be the attribute of princes: it becomes not them to give way to clamorous sorrow, like common and vulgar minds." But Morayma could only deplore her loss with the anguish of a tender woman. She shut herself up in her mirror, and gazed all day with streaming eyes upon the vega. Every object before her recalled the causes of her affliction. The river Xenil, which ran shining amidst the groves and gardens, was the same on the banks of which had perished her father, Ali Atar: before her lay the road to Loxa, by which Boabdil had departed in martial state, surrounded by the chivalry of Granada. Ever and anon she would burst into an agony of grief. "Alas, my father!" she would exclaim, "the river runs smiling before me, that covers thy mangled remains! who will gather them to an honoured tomb, in the land of the unbeliever? And thou, oh, Boabdil! light of my eyes! joy of my heart! life of my life! Wo the day, and wo the hour, that I saw thee depart from these walls! The road by which thou hast departed is solitary: never will it be gladdened by thy return! The mountain thou hast traversed lies like a cloud in the distance, and all beyond it is darkness!"

The royal minstrels were summoned, to assuage the sorrows of the queen: they attuned their instruments to cheerful strains; but, in a little while, the anguish of their hearts prevailed, and turned their songs to lamentations.

"Beautiful Granada!" they exclaimed, "how is thy glory faded! The vivar-rambla no longer echoes to the tramp of steed and sound of trumpet; no longer is it crowded with thy youthful nobles, eager to display their prowess

in the tourney and the festive tilt of reeds. Alas! the flower of thy chivalry lies low in a foreign land! The soft note of the lute is no longer heard in thy mournful streets, the lively castanet is silent upon thy hills, and the graceful dance of the zambra is no more seen beneath thy bowers! Behold, the Alhambra is forlorn and desolate! In vain do the orange and myrtle breathe their perfumes into its silken chambers; in vain does the nightingale sing within its groves; in vain are its marble halls refreshed by the sound of fountains and the gush of limpid rills! Alas! the countenance of the king no longer shines within those halls; the light of the Alhambra is set for ever!"

Thus all Granada, say the Arabian chroniclers, gave itself up to lamentations; there was nothing but the voice of wailing from the palace to the cottage. All joined to deplore their youthful monarch, cut down in the freshness and promise of his youth. Many feared that the prediction of the astrologer was about to be fulfilled, and that the downfall of the kingdom would follow the death of Boabdil; while all declared, that had he survived, he was the very sovereign calculated to restore the realm to its ancient prosperity and glory.

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

How Muley Aben Hassan profited by the misfortunes of his son Boabdil.

AN unfortunate death atones with the world for a multitude of errors. While the populace thought their youthful monarch had perished in the field, nothing could exceed their grief for his loss, and their adoration of his memory: when, however, they learned, that he was still alive, and had surrendered himself captive to the Christians, their feelings underwent an instant change. They derided his talents as a commander, his courage as a soldier. They railed at his expedition, as rash and ill-conducted; and they reviled him, for not having dared to die on the field of battle, rather than surrender to the enemy.

The alfaquis, as usual, mingled with the populace, and artfully guided their discontents. "Behold," exclaimed they,

"the prediction is accomplished, which was pronounced at the birth of Boabdil! He has been seated on the throne, and the kingdom has suffered downfall and disgrace by his defeat and captivity. Comfort yourselves, oh Moslems! The evil day has passed by: the fates are satisfied; the sceptre, which has been broken in the feeble hand of Boabdil, is destined to resume its former power and sway, in the vigorous grasp of Aben Hassan."

The people were struck with the wisdom of these words. They rejoiced, that the baleful prediction, which had so long hung over them, was at an end; and declared, that none but Muley Aben Hassan had the valour and capacity necessary for the protection of the kingdom in this time of trouble.

The longer the captivity of Boabdil continued, the greater grew the popularity of his father. One city after another renewed allegiance to him: for power attracts power, and fortune creates fortune. At length he was enabled to return to Granada, and establish himself once more in the Alhambra. At his approach, his repudiated spouse, the sultana Ayxa, gathered together the family and treasures of her captive son, and retired with a handful of the nobles into the albaycen, the rival quarter of the city, the inhabitants of which still retained feelings of loyalty to Boabdil. Here she fortified herself, and held the semblance of a court, in the name of her son. The fierce Muley Aben Hassan would have willingly carried fire and sword into this factious quarter of the capital; but he dared not confide in his new and uncertain popularity. Many of the nobles detested him for his past cruelty; and a large portion of the soldiery, beside many of the people of his own party, respected the virtues of Ayxa la Horra, and pitied the misfortunes of Boabdil. Granada, therefore, presented the singular spectacle of two sovereignties within the same city. The old king fortified himself in the lofty towers of the Alhambra, as much against his own subjects as against the Christians: while Ayxa, with the zeal of a mother's affection, which waxes warmer and warmer towards her offspring when in adversity,

still maintained the standard of Boabdil on the rival fortress of the alcazaba; and kept his powerful faction alive within the walls of the albaycen.

#### CHAPTER XIX.

##### Captivity of Boabdil El Chico.

THE unfortunate Boabdil remained a prisoner, closely guarded in the castle of Vaena. From the towers of his prison he beheld the town below filled with armed men; and the lofty hill on which it was built, girdled by massive walls and ramparts, on which a vigilant watch was maintained, night and day. The mountains around were studded with watchtowers, overlooking the lonely roads which led to Granada; so that a turban could not stir over the border without the alarm being given, and the whole country put on the alert. Boabdil saw that there was no hope of escape from such a fortress, and that any attempt to rescue him would be equally in vain. His heart was filled with anxiety, as he thought on the confusion and ruin which his captivity must cause in his affairs; while sorrows of a softer kind overcame his fortitude, as he thought on the evils it might bring upon his family.

The Count de Cabra, though he maintained the most vigilant guard over his royal prisoner, yet treated him with profound deference. He had appointed the noblest apartments in the castle for his abode, and sought in every way to cheer him during his captivity. A few days only had passed away, when missives arrived from the Castilian sovereigns. Ferdinand had been transported with joy at hearing of the capture of the Moorish monarch, seeing the deep and politic uses that might be made of such an event: but the magnanimous spirit of Isabella was filled with compassion for the unfortunate captive. Their messages to Boabdil were full of sympathy and consolation; breathing that high and gentle courtesy, which dwells in noble minds.

This magnanimity in his foe cheered the dejected spirit of the captive monarch. "Tell my sovereigns, the king and the queen," said he to the messenger, "that I cannot be unhappy, being in the power

of such high and mighty princes; especially since they partake so largely of that grace and goodness, which Allah bestows upon the monarchs whom he greatly loves. Tell them, further, that I had long thought of submitting myself to their sway, to receive the kingdom of Granada from their hands, in the same manner that my ancestor received it from King John II., father of the gracious queen. My greatest sorrow, in this my captivity, is, that I must appear to do that from force, which I would fain have done from inclination."

In the mean time, Muley Aben Hassan, finding the faction of his son still formidable in Granada, was anxious to consolidate his power, by gaining possession of the person of Boabdil. For this purpose, he sent an embassy to the catholic monarchs, offering large terms for the ransom, or rather the purchase, of his son; proposing, among other conditions, to release the Count of Cifuentes, and nine other of the most distinguished captives, and to enter into a treaty of confederacy with the sovereigns. Neither did the implacable father make any scruple of testifying his indifference, whether his son were delivered up alive or dead, so that his person were placed assuredly within his power.

The humane heart of Isabella revolted at the idea of giving up the unfortunate prince into the hands of his most unnatural and inveterate enemy. A disdainful refusal was therefore returned to the old monarch, whose message had been couched in a vaunting spirit. He was informed, that the Castilian sovereigns would listen to no proposals of peace from Muley Aben Hassan, until he should lay down his arms, and offer them in all humility. Overtures in a different spirit were made by the mother of Boabdil, the sultana Ayxa la Horra, with the concurrence of the party, which still remained faithful to him. It was thereby proposed, that Mahomet Abdalla, otherwise called Boabdil, should hold his crown as vassal to the Castilian sovereigns; paying an annual tribute, and releasing seventy Christian captives annually for five years: that he should moreover pay a large sum upon the spot for his ransom, and at the same time

give freedom to four hundred Christians, to be chosen by the king: that he should also engage to be always ready to render military aid; and should come to the Cortes, or assemblage of nobles and distinguished vassals of the crown; whenever summoned. His only son, and the sons of twelve distinguished Moorish houses, were to be delivered as hostages.

King Ferdinand was at Cordova when he received this proposition; Queen Isabella was absent at the time. He was anxious to consult her in so momentous an affair; or rather he was fearful of proceeding too precipitately, and not drawing from this fortunate event all the advantage of which it was susceptible. Without returning any reply, therefore, to the mission, he sent missives to the castle of Vaena, where Boabdil remained in courteous durance of the brave Count de Cabra, ordering, that the captive monarch should be brought to Cordova.

The Count de Cabra set out with his illustrious prisoner; but when he arrived at Cordova, King Ferdinand declined seeing the Moorish monarch.

He was still undetermined what course to pursue; whether to retain him prisoner, set him at liberty on ransom, or treat him with politic magnanimity; and each course would require a different kind of reception. Until this point should be resolved, therefore, he gave him in charge to Martin de Alarcon, alcaide of the ancient fortress of Porcuna, with orders to guard him strictly, but to treat him with the distinction and deference due to a prince. These commands were strictly obeyed, and, with the exception of being restrained in his liberty, the monarch was as nobly entertained as he could have been in his royal palace at Granada.

In the mean time, Ferdinand availed himself of this critical moment, while Granada was distracted with factions and dissensions, and before he had concluded any treaty with Boabdil, to make a puissant and ostentatious inroad into the very heart of the kingdom, at the head of his most illustrious nobles. He sacked and destroyed several towns and castles, and extended his ravages to the very gates of Granada. Old Muley Aben Hassan did not venture to oppose

him. His city was filled with troops; but he was uncertain of their affection. He dreaded, that should he sally forth, the gates of Granada might be closed against him by the faction of the albaycen.

"The old Moor stood on the lofty tower of the Alhambra," says Antonio Agapida, "grinding his teeth, and foaming like a tiger shut up in his cage, as he beheld the glittering battalions of the Christians wheeling about the vega, and the standard of the cross shining forth from amidst the smoke of infidel villages and hamlets. The most catholic king," continues Agapida, "would gladly have persevered in this righteous ravage; but his munitions began to fail. Satisfied, therefore, with having laid waste the country of the enemy, and insulted old Muley Aben Hassan in his very capital, he returned to Cordova, covered with laurels, and his army loaded with spoils; and now bethought himself of coming to an immediate decision in regard to his royal prisoner."

#### CHAPTER XX.

Of the treatment of Boabdil by the Castilian sovereigns.

A STately conversation was held by King Ferdinand, in the ancient city of Cordova, composed of several of the most reverend prelates and renowned cavaliers of the kingdom, to determine upon the fate of the unfortunate Boabdil.

Don Alonso de Cardenas, the worthy Master of Santiago, was one of the first who gave his counsel. He was a pious and zealous knight, rigid in his devotion to the faith; and his holy zeal had been inflamed to peculiar vehemence since his disastrous crusade among the mountains of Malaga. He inveighed with ardour against any compromise or compact with the infidels. The object of this war, he observed, was not the subjection of the Moors, but their utter expulsion from the land, so that there might no longer remain a single stain of Mahometanism throughout Christian Spain. He gave it as his opinion, therefore, that the captive king ought not to be set at liberty.

Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, the valiant Marquis of Cadiz, on the contrary, spoke



warmly for the release of Boabdil. He pronounced it a measure of sound policy, even if done without conditions. It would tend to keep up the civil war in Granada, which was as a fire consuming the entrails of the enemy, and effecting more for the interests of Spain, without expense, than all the conquests of its arms.

The grand cardinal of Spain, Don Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, coincided in opinion with the Marquis of Cadiz. "Nay," added that pious prelate and politic statesman, "it would be sound wisdom to furnish the Moor with men and money, and all other necessaries to promote the civil war in Granada: by this means would be produced great benefit to the service of God; since we are assured by his infallible word, that 'a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand.'"\*

Ferdinand weighed these counsels in his mind, but was slow in coming to a decision. "He was religiously attentive to his own interests," observes Fray Antonio Agapida; "knowing himself to be but an instrument of Providence in this holy war; and that, therefore, in consulting his own advantage, he was promoting the interests of the faith." The opinion of Queen Isabella relieved him from his perplexity. That high-minded princess was zealous for the promotion of the faith, but not for the extermination of the infidels. The Moorish kings had held their thrones as vassals to her progenitors: she was content, at present, to accord the same privilege, and that the royal prisoner should be liberated, on condition of becoming a vassal to the crown. By this means might be effected the deliverance of many Christians captive, who were languishing in Moorish chains.

King Ferdinand adopted the magnanimous measure recommended by the queen, but he accompanied it with several shrewd conditions; exacting tribute, military services, and safe passage and maintenance for Christian troops throughout the places which should adhere to Boabdil. The captive king readily submitted to these stipulations; and swore, after the manner of his faith, to observe

them with exactitude. A truce was arranged for two years, during which the Castilian sovereigns engaged to maintain him on his throne, and to assist him in recovering all places which he had lost during his captivity.

When Boabdil el Chico had solemnly agreed to this arrangement in the castle of Porcuna, preparations were made to receive him in Cordova in regal style. Superb steeds, richly caparisoned, and raiment of brocade and silk, and the most costly cloths, with all other articles of sumptuous array, were furnished to him, and to fifty Moorish cavaliers, who had come to treat for his ransom, that he might appear in state befitting the monarch of Granada, and the most distinguished vassal of the Christian sovereigns. Money, also, was advanced, to maintain him in suitable grandeur during his residence at the Castilian court, and his return to his dominions. Finally, it was ordered by the sovereigns, that, when he came to Cordova, all the nobles and dignitaries of the court should go forth to receive him.

A question now arose among certain of those ancient and experienced men, who grow gray about a court in the profound study of forms and ceremonies; with whom a point of punctilio is as a vast political right, and who contract a sublime and awful idea of the external dignity of the throne. Certain of these court sages propounded the momentous question, whether the Moorish monarch, coming to do homage as a vassal, ought not to kneel, and kiss the hand of the king. "This was immediately decided in the affirmative, by a large number of ancient cavaliers, accustomed," says Antonio Agapida, "to the lofty punctilio of our most dignified court and transcendent sovereigns." The king, therefore, was informed, by those who arranged the ceremonials, that, when the Moorish monarch appeared in his presence, he was expected to extend his royal hand to receive the kiss of homage.

"I should certainly do so," replied King Ferdinand, "were he at liberty, and in his own kingdom: but I certainly shall not do so, seeing that he is a prisoner, and in mine."

The courtiers loudly applauded the

\* Salazar, Crónica del Gran Cardenal, p. 188.

magnanimity of this reply; though many condemned it in secret, as savouring of too much generosity towards an infidel; and the worthy Jesuit, Fray Antonio Agapida, fully concurs in their opinion.

The Moorish king entered Cordova with his little train of faithful knights, and escorted by all the nobility and chivalry of the Castilian court. He was conducted with great state and ceremony to the royal palace. When he came in presence of King Ferdinand, he knelt, and offered to kiss his hand, not merely in homage as his subject, but in gratitude for his liberty. Ferdinand declined the token of vassalage, and raised him graciously from the earth. An interpreter began, in the name of Boabdil, to laud the magnanimity of the Castilian monarch, and to promise the most implicit submission. "Enough," said King Ferdinand, interrupting the interpreter in the midst of his harangue; "there is no need of these compliments. I trust in his integrity, that he will do every thing becoming a good man and a good king." With these words, he received Boabdil el Chico into his royal friendship and protection.

#### CHAPTER XXI.

##### Return of Boabdil from captivity.

In the month of August, a noble Moor, of the race of the Abencerrages, arrived with a splendid retinue at the city of Cordova, bringing with him the son of Boabdil el Chico, and other of the noble youths of Granada, as hostages for the fulfilment of the terms of ransom. When the Moorish king beheld his son, his only child, who was to remain in his stead, a sort of captive in a hostile land, he folded him in his arms, and wept over him. "Wo the day that I was born!" exclaimed he, "and evil the star that presided at my birth! well was I called El Zogoybi, or 'the unlucky;' for sorrow is heaped upon me by my father, and sorrow do I transmit to my son!"

The afflicted heart of Boabdil, however, was soothed by the kindness of the Christian sovereigns, who received the hostage prince with a tenderness suited to his age, and a distinction worthy of his rank.

They delivered him in charge to the

worthy alcaÿde Martin de Alarcon, who had treated his father with such courtesy, during his confinement in the castle of Porcuna; giving orders, that, after the departure of the latter, his son should be entertained with great honour and princely attention in the same fortress.

On the 2d of September, a guard of honour assembled at the gate of the mansion of Boabdil to escort him to the frontiers of his kingdom. He pressed his child to his heart at parting; but he uttered not a word, for there were many Christian eyes to behold his emotion. He mounted his steed, and never turned his head to look again upon the youth! but those who were near him observed the vehement struggle that shook his frame, wherein the anguish of the father had well nigh subdued the studied equanimity of the king.

Boabdil el Chico and King Ferdinand sallied forth, side by side, from Cordova, amidst the acclamations of a prodigious multitude. When they were a short distance from the city, they separated, with many gracious expressions on the part of the Castilian monarch, and many thankful acknowledgments from his late captive, whose heart had been humbled by adversity. Ferdinand departed for Guadalupe, and Boabdil for Granada. The latter was accompanied by a guard of honour; and the viceroys of Andalusia, and the generals on the frontier, were ordered to furnish him with escorts, and to show him all possible honour on his journey. In this way, he was conducted, in royal state, through the country he had entered to ravage, and was placed in safety in his own dominions.

He was met on the frontier, by the principal nobles and cavaliers of his court, who had been secretly sent by his mother, the sultana Ayxa, to escort him to the capital.

The heart of Boabdil was lifted up for a moment, when he found himself in his own territories, surrounded by Moslem knights, with his own standards waving over his head; and he began to doubt the predictions of the astrologers. He soon found cause, however, to moderate his exultation. The loyal train, which had come to welcome him, was but scanty in number; and he missed many of his most

zealous and obsequious courtiers. He had returned, indeed, to his kingdom; but it was no longer the devoted kingdom he had left. The story of his vassalage to the Christian sovereigns had been made use of by his father to ruin him with his people. He had been represented as a traitor to his country, a renegado to his faith, and as leagued with the enemies of both to subdue the Moslems of Spain to the yoke of Christian bondage. In this way the mind of the public had been turned from him. The greater part of the nobility had thronged round the throne of his father in the Alhambra; and his mother, the resolute sultana Ayxa, with difficulty maintained her faction in the opposite towers of the alcazaba.

Such was the melancholy picture of affairs given to Boabdil by the courtiers who had come forth to meet him. They even informed him, that it would be an enterprise of difficulty and danger to make his way back to the capital, and regain a little court which still remained faithful to him in the heart of the city. The old tiger, Muley Aben Hassan, lay couched within the Alhambra, and the walls and gates of the city were strongly guarded by his troops. Boabdil shook his head at these tidings. He called to mind the ill omen of his breaking his lance against the gate of Elvira, when issuing forth so vaingloriously with his army, which he now saw clearly foreboded the destruction of that army, on which he had so confidently relied. "Henceforth," said he, "let no man have the impiety to scoff at omens."

Boabdil approached his capital by stealth, and in the night, prowling about its walls like an enemy seeking to destroy, rather than a monarch returning to his throne. At length he seized upon a postern-gate of the albaycen, a part of the city which had always been in his favour. He passed rapidly through the streets, before the populace were aroused from their sleep, and reached in safety the fortress of the alcazaba. Here he was received into the embraces of his intrepid mother, and his favourite wife Morayma. The transports of the latter, on the safe return of her husband, were mingled with tears; for she thought of her father, Ali

Atar, who had fallen in his cause; and of her only son, who was left a hostage in the hands of the Christians.

The heart of Boabdil, softened by his misfortunes, was moved by the changes in every thing round him; but his mother called up his spirit. "This," said she, "is no time for tears and fondness: a king must think of his sceptre and his throne, and not yield to softness like common men. Thou hast done well, my son, in throwing thyself resolutely into Granada: it must depend upon thyself whether thou remain here a king or a captive."

The old king, Muley Aben Hassan, had retired to his couch that night, in one of the strongest towers of the Alhambra; but his restless anxiety kept him from repose. In the first watch of the night, he heard a shout faintly rising from the quarter of the albaycen, which is on the opposite side of the deep valley of the Darro. Shortly afterwards, horsemen came galloping up the hill that leads to the main gate of the Alhambra, spreading the alarm, that Boabdil had entered the city, and possessed himself of the alcazaba.

In the first transports of his rage, the old king would have struck the messenger to earth. He hastily summoned his counsellors and commanders, exhorting them to stand by him in this critical moment; and, during the night, made every preparation to enter the albaycen, sword in hand, in the morning.

In the mean time, the sultana Ayxa had taken prompt and vigorous measures to strengthen her party. The albaycen was in the part of the city filled by the lower orders. The return of Boabdil was proclaimed throughout the streets, and large sums of money were distributed among the populace. The nobles, assembled in the alcazaba, were promised honours and rewards by Boabdil, as soon as he should be firmly seated on the throne. These well-timed measures had the customary effect; and by daybreak all the motley populace of the albaycen were in arms.

A doleful day succeeded. All Granada was a scene of tumult and horror. Drums and trumpets resounded in every part; all business was interrupted; the shops were shut, and the doors barri-

doed. Armed bands paraded the streets ; some shouting for Boabdil, and some for Muley Aben Hassan. When they encountered each other, they fought furiously, and without mercy ; every public square became a scene of battle. The great mass of the lower orders was in favour of Boabdil ; but it was a multitude without discipline or lofty spirit. Part of the people was regularly armed ; but the greater number had sallied forth with the implements of their trade. The troops of the old king, among whom were many cavaliers of pride and valour, soon drove the populace from the squares. They fortified themselves, however, in the streets, and lanes, which they barricaded. They made fortresses of their houses, and fought desperately from the windows and the roofs ; and many a warrior of the highest blood of Granada was laid low by plebeian hands, and plebeian weapons, in this civil brawl.

It was impossible that such violent convulsions should last long in the heart of a city. The people soon longed for repose, and a return to their peaceful occupations ; and the cavaliers detested these conflicts with the multitude, in which there were all the horrors of war, without its laurels. By the interference of the alfaquis, an armistice was at length effected. Boabdil was persuaded, that there was no dependence upon the inconstant favour of the multitude, and was prevailed upon to quit a capital, where he could only maintain a precarious seat upon his throne, by a perpetual and bloody struggle. He fixed his court at the city of Almeria, which was entirely devoted to him ; and which at that time vied with Granada in splendour and importance. This compromise of grandeur for tranquillity, however, was sorely against the counsel of his proud-spirited mother, the sultana Ayxa. Granada appeared in her eyes the only legitimate seat of dominion ; and she observed, with a smile of disdain, that he was not worthy of being called a monarch, who was not master of his capital.

## CHAPTER XXII.

Foray of the Moorish alcaides, and Battle of Lopera.

THOUGH Muley Aben Hassan had regained undivided sway over the city of Granada ; and the alfaquis, by his command, had denounced his son Boabdil as an apostate, and as one doomed by Heaven to misfortune ; still the latter had many adherents among the common people. Whenever, therefore, any act of the old monarch was displeasing to the turbulent multitude, they were prone to give him a hint of the slippery nature of his standing, by shouting out the name of Boabdil el Chico. Long experience had instructed Muley Aben Hassan in the character of the inconstant people over whom he ruled. "Allah achbar !" exclaimed he, "God is great ! but a successful inroad into the country of the unbelievers will make more converts to my cause, than a thousand texts of the Koran, expounded by ten thousand alfaquis."

At this time, King Ferdinand was absent from Andalusia on a distant expedition, with many of his troops. The moment was favourable for a foray ; and Muley Aben Hassan cast about his thoughts for a leader to conduct it. Ali Atar, the terror of the border, the scourge of Andalusia, was dead ; but there was another veteran general, scarcely inferior to him for predatory warfare. This was old Bexir, the gray and crafty alcaide of Malaga ; and the people under his command were ripe for an expedition of the kind. The signal defeat and slaughter of the Spanish knights, in the neighbouring mountains, had filled the people of Malaga with vanity and self-conceit : they had attributed to their own valour the defeat which had been caused by the nature of the country. Many of them wore the armour, and paraded in public with the horses, of the unfortunate cavaliers slain on that occasion ; which they vauntingly displayed as the trophies of their boasted victory. They had talked themselves into a contempt for the chivalry of Andalusia, and were impatient for an opportunity to overrun a country defended by such troops. This Muley Aben Hassan considered a favourable state of mind to

insure a daring inroad; and he sent orders to old Bexir, to gather together his people, and the choicest warriors of the borders, and to carry fire and sword into the very heart of Andalusia. The wary old Bexir immediately despatched his emissaries among the alcajdes of the border towns, calling upon them to assemble, with their troops, at the city of Ronda, close upon the Christian frontier.

Ronda was the most virulent nest of Moorish depredators in the whole border country. It was situated in the midst of the wild Serrania, or chain of mountains of the same name, which are uncommonly lofty, broken, and precipitous. It stood on an almost isolated rock, nearly encircled by a deep valley, or rather chasm, through which ran the beautiful river called Rio Verde. The Moors of this city were the most active, robust, and warlike of all the mountaineers; and their very children discharged the cross-bow with unerring aim. They were incessantly harassing the rich plains of Andalusia; their city abounded with Christian spoils; and their deep dungeons were crowded with Christian captives, who might sigh in vain for deliverance from this impregnable fortress. Such was Ronda in the time of the Moors; and it has ever retained something of the same character, even to the present day. Its inhabitants continue to be among the boldest, fiercest, and most adventurous of the Andalusian mountaineers; and the Serrania de Ronda is famous, as the most dangerous resort of the bandit and the contrabandista.

Hamet Zeli, surnamed El Zegri, was the commander of this belligerent city and its fierce inhabitants. He was of the tribe of the Zegrís, and one of the most proud and daring of that warlike race. Besides the inhabitants of Ronda, he had a legion of African Moors in his immediate service. They were of the tribe of the Gómeres; mercenary troops, whose hot African blood had not yet been tempered by the softer living of Spain; and whose whole business was to fight. These he kept always well armed and well appointed. The rich pasturage of the valley of Ronda produced a breed of horses, famous for

strength and speed; no cavalry, therefore, was better mounted than the band of Gómeres. Rapid on the march, and fierce in the attack, it would sweep down upon the Andalusian plains like a sudden blast from the mountains, and pass away as suddenly, before there was time for pursuit.

There was nothing that stirred up the spirit of the Moors of the frontier more thoroughly than the idea of a foray. The summons of Bexir was gladly obeyed by the alcajdes of the border towns; and in a little while there was a force of fifteen hundred horse, and four thousand foot, the very pith and marrow of the surrounding country, assembled within the walls of Ronda. The people of the place anticipated with eagerness the rich spoils of Andalusia, that were soon to crowd their gates. Throughout the day, the city resounded with the noise of kettledrum and trumpet; the high-mettled steeds stamped and neighed in their stalls, as if they shared the impatience for the foray; while the Christian captives sighed, as the varied din of preparation reached to their rocky dungeons, denoting that a fresh assault was preparing against their countrymen.

The infidel host sallied forth, full of spirits; anticipating an easy ravage, and abundant booty. They encouraged each other in a contempt for the prowess of the foe. Many of the warriors of Malaga, and of some of the mountain towns, had insultingly arrayed themselves in the splendid armour of the Christian knights, slain or taken prisoners in the famous massacre; and some of them rode the Andalusian steeds which had been captured on that occasion.

The wary Bexir had concerted his plans so secretly and expeditiously, that the Christian towns of Andalusia had not the least suspicion of the storm that had gathered beyond the mountains. The vast and rocky range of the Serrania de Ronda extended like a screen, covering all their movements from observation.

The army made its way as rapidly as the rugged nature of the mountains would permit, guided by Hamet el Zegri, the bold alcajde of Ronda, who knew every pass and defile. Not a drum, nor the clash of a cymbal, nor the blast of a

trumpet, was permitted to be heard. The mass of war rolled quietly on, as the gathering cloud to the brow of the mountains, intending to burst down, like the thunderbolt, upon the plain.

Never let the most wary commander fancy himself secure from discovery; for rocks have eyes, and trees have ears, and the birds of the air have tongues, to betray the most secret enterprise. There chanced, at this time, to be six Christian scouts prowling about the savage heights of the Serrania de Ronda. They were of that kind of lawless ruffians who infest the borders of belligerent countries, ready at any time to fight for pay, or prowl for plunder. The wild mountain passes of Spain have ever abounded with loose, rambling vagabonds of the kind: soldiers in war, robbers in peace; guides, guards, smugglers, or cut-throats, according to the circumstances of the case.

"These six marauders," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "were, on this occasion, chosen instruments, sanctified by the righteousness of their cause. They were lurking among the mountains, to entrap Moorish cattle, or Moorish prisoners; both of which were equally saleable in the Christian market."

They had ascended one of the loftiest cliffs, and were looking out, like birds of prey, ready to pounce upon any thing that might offer in the valley, when they descried the Moorish army emerging from a mountain glen. They watched it in silence, as it wound below them, remarking the standards of the various towns, and the pennons of the commanders. They hovered about on its march, skulking from cliff to cliff, until they saw the route by which it intended to enter the Christian country. They then dispersed, each making his way, by secret passes of the mountains, to some different alcaide, that they might spread the alarm far and wide, and each get a separate reward.

One hastened to Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero, the same valiant alcaide who had repulsed Muley Aben Hassan from the walls of Alhama, and who now commanded at Ecija, in the absence of the Master of Santiago. Others roused the town of Utrera, and the places of that neighbourhood, putting them all on the alert.

Puerto Carrero was a cavalier of consummate vigour and activity. He immediately sent couriers to the alcaides of the neighbouring fortresses, to Herman Carrello, captain of a body of the Holy Brotherhood, and to certain knights of the order of Alcantara. Puerto Carrero was the first to take the field. Knowing the hard and hungry service of these border scampers, he made every man take a hearty repast, and see that his horse was well shod, and perfectly appointed. Then, all being refreshed, and in valiant heart, he sallied forth to seek the Moors. He had but a handful of men, the retainers of his household, and troops of his captaincy; but they were well armed and mounted, and accustomed to the sudden rouses of the border, men with whom the cry of "Arm and out! to horse and to the field!" was sufficient at any time to put them in a fever of animation.

While the northern part of Andalusia was thus on the alert, one of the scouts had hastened southward, to the city of Xeres, and given the alarm to the valiant Marquis of Cadiz. When the marquis heard that the Moor was over the border, and that the standard of Malaga was in the advance, his heart bounded with a momentary joy; for he remembered the massacre in the mountains, where his valiant brothers had been mangled before his eyes. The very authors of his calamity were now at hand, and he flattered himself that the day of vengeance had arrived.

He made a hasty levy of his retainers, and of the fighting men of Xeres, and hurried off, with three hundred horse and two hundred foot, all resolute men, and panting for revenge.

In the mean time the veteran Bexir had accomplished his march, as he imagined, undiscovered. From the opening of the craggy defiles, he pointed out the fertile plains of Andalusia, and regaled the eyes of his soldiery with the rich country they were about to ravage. The fierce Gomerres of Ronda were flushed with joy at the sight; and even their steeds seemed to prick up their ears, and snuff the breeze, as they beheld the scenes of their frequent forays.

When they came to where the moun-

tain defile opened into the low land, Bexir divided his force into three parts: one, composed of foot-soldiers, and of such as were weakly mounted, he left to guard the pass; being too experienced a veteran not to know the importance of securing a retreat. A second body he placed in ambush, among the groves and thickets on the banks of the river Lopera. The third, consisting of light cavalry, he sent forth to ravage the Campiña, or great plain of Utrera. Most of this latter force was composed of the fiery Gomeres of Ronda, mounted on the fleet steeds bred among the mountains. It was led by the bold alcaide Hamet el Zegri, who was ever eager to be foremost in the foray.

Little suspecting that the country on both sides was on the alarm, and rushing from all directions, to close upon them in the rear, this fiery troop dashed forward, until they came within two leagues of Utrera. Here they scattered themselves about the plain, careering round the great herds of cattle, and flocks of sheep, and sweeping them in droves, to be hurried to the mountains.

While they were thus dispersed in every direction, a troop of horse, and body of foot, from Utrera, came suddenly upon them. The Moors rallied together in small parties, and endeavoured to defend themselves: but they were without a leader; for Hamet el Zegri was at a distance, having, like a hawk, made a wide circuit in pursuit of prey. The marauders soon gave way, and fled towards the ambush on the banks of the Lopera, being hotly pursued by the men of Utrera.

When they reached the Lopera, the Moors in ambush rushed forth, with furious cries; and the fugitives, recovering courage from this reinforcement, rallied, and turned upon their pursuers. The Christians stood their ground, though greatly inferior in number. Their lances were soon broken, and they came to sharp work with sword and cimeter. The Christians fought valiantly, but were in danger of being overwhelmed. The bold Hamet had collected a handful of his scattered Gomeres; and, leaving his prey, had galloped towards the scene of action. His little troop of horsemen had

reached the crest of a rising ground, at no great distance, when trumpets were heard in another direction, and Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero, and his followers, came galloping into the field, and charged upon the infidels in flank.

The Moors were astounded, at finding war thus breaking upon them from various quarters of what they had expected to find an unguarded country. They fought for a short time with desperation, and resisted a vehement assault from the knights of Alcantara, and the men-at-arms of the Holy Brotherhood. At length the veteran Bexir was struck from his horse by Puerto Carrero, and taken prisoner, and the whole force gave way and fled. In their flight they separated, and took two roads to the mountains; thinking, by dividing their forces, to distract the enemy. The Christians were too few to separate. Puerto Carrero kept them together, pursuing one division of the enemy with great slaughter. This battle took place at the fountain of the fig-tree, near to the Lopera. Six hundred Moorish cavaliers were slain, and many taken prisoners. Much spoil was collected on the field, with which the Christians returned in triumph to their homes.

The larger body of the enemy had retreated along a road, leading more to the south, by the banks of the Guadalete. When they reached that river, the sound of pursuit had died away; and they rallied, to breathe and refresh themselves on the margin of the stream. Their force was reduced to about a thousand horse, and a confused multitude of foot. While they were scattered, and partly dismounted, on the banks of the Guadalete, a fresh storm of war burst upon them from an opposite direction. It was the Marquis of Cadiz, leading on his household troops, and the fighting men of Xeres. When the Christian warriors came in sight of the Moors, they were roused to fury at beholding many of them arrayed in the armour of the cavaliers who had been slain among the mountains of Malaga. Nay, some, who had been in that defeat, beheld their own armour, which they had cast away in their flight, to enable themselves to climb the mountains. Exasperated at the sight, they rushed upon the foe, with the ferocity of tigers, rather

than the temperate courage of cavaliers. Each man felt as if he were avenging the death of a relative, or wiping out his own disgrace. The good marquis himself beheld a powerful Moor bestriding the horse of his brother Beltran: giving a cry of rage and anguish at the sight, he rushed through the thickest of the enemy, attacked the Moor with resistless fury, and, after a short combat, hurled him breathless to the earth.

The Moors, already vanquished in spirit, could not withstand the assault of men thus madly excited. They soon gave way, and fled for the defile of the Serrania de Ronda, where the body of troops had been stationed to secure a retreat. These, seeing them come galloping wildly up the defile, with Christian banners in pursuit, and the flash of weapons at their deadly work, thought all Andalusia was upon them, and fled, without awaiting an attack. The pursuit continued among glens and defiles; for the Christian warriors, eager for revenge, had no compassion on the foe.

When the pursuit was over, the Marquis of Cadiz and his followers reposed themselves upon the banks of the Guadalete, where they divided the spoil. Among this were found many rich corslets, helmets, and weapons, the Moorish trophies of the defeat in the mountains of Malaga. Several were claimed by their owners, others were known to have belonged to noble cavaliers, who had been slain, or taken prisoners. There were several horses also, richly caparisoned, which had pranced proudly with the unfortunate warriors, as they sallied out of Antequera upon that fatal expedition. Thus the exultation of the victors was dashed with melancholy, and many a knight was seen lamenting over the helmet or corslet of some loved companion in arms.

The good Marquis of Cadiz was resting under a tree, on the banks of the Guadalete, when the horse, which had belonged to his slaughtered brother Beltran, was brought to him. He laid his hand upon the mane, and looked wistfully at the empty saddle. His bosom heaved with violent agitation, and his lip quivered, and was pale. "Ay de mi, mi hermano!" "Wo is me, my brother!" was all that he said, for the grief of a

warrior has not many words. He looked around on the field strewn with the bodies of the enemy; and, in the bitterness of his wo, he felt consoled by the idea, that his brother had not been unrevengeed.\*

#### CHAPTER XXIII.

Retreat of Hamet el Zegri, Alcaide of Ronda.

THE bold alcaide of Ronda, Hamet el Zegri, had careered wide over the campiña of Utrera, encompassing the flocks and herds, when he heard the burst of war at a distance. There were with him but a handful of his Gomeres. He saw the scamper and pursuit afar off, and beheld the Christian horsemen spurring madly on towards the ambuscade, on the banks of the Lopera. Hamet tossed his hand triumphantly aloft for his men to follow him. "The Christian dogs are ours!" said he as he put spurs to his horse, to take the enemy in rear.

The little band which followed Hamet scarcely amounted to thirty horsemen. They spurred across the plain, and reached a rising ground, just as the force of Puerto Carrero had charged with sound of trumpet upon the flank of the party in ambush. Hamet beheld the headlong rout of the army with rage and consternation. They found the country was pouring forth its legions from every quarter, and perceived that there was no safety but in precipitate flight. But which way to fly? an army was between him and the mountain pass: all the forces of the neighbourhood were rushing to the borders; the whole route by which he had come was, by this time, occupied by the foe. He checked his steed, rose in his stirrups, and rolled a stern and thoughtful eye over the country; then, sinking into his saddle, he seemed to commune for a moment with himself. Turning quickly to his troop, he singled

\* "En el despojo de la batalla se vieron muchas ricas corazas e capacetes e barberas de las que se habian perdido en el Axarquia, e otras muchas armas, e algunas fueron conocidas de sus dueños que las habian dejado para fuir, e otras fueron conocidas, que eran muy señaladas de hombres principales que habian quedado muertos e cautivos, e fueron tomados muchos de los mismos caballos con sus ricas sillas, de los que quedaron en la Axarquia, e fueron conocidos cuyos eran."—*Cura de los Palacios*, c. 67.



out a renegado Christian, a traitor to his religion and his king. "Come hither," said Hamet: "thou knowest all the secret passes of this country?" "I do," replied the renegado. "Dost thou know any circuitous route, solitary and untravelled, by which we can pass wide within these troops, and reach the Serrania?" The renegado paused: "Such a route I know, but it is full of peril; for it leads through the heart of the Christian land." "It is well," said Hamet: "the more dangerous in appearance, the less it will be suspected. Now, hearken to me. Ride by my side. Thou seest this purse of gold and this cimeter. Take us, by the route thou hast mentioned, safe to the pass of the Serrania, and this purse shall be thy reward: betray us, and this cimeter shall cleave thee to the saddle-bow."\*

The renegado obeyed, trembling. They turned off from the direct road to the mountains, and struck southward towards Lebrixa, passing by the most solitary roads, and along those deep ramblas and ravines by which the country is intersected. It was indeed a daring course. Every now and then they heard the distant sound of trumpets, and the alarm-bells of towns and villages, and found that the war was still hurrying to the borders. They hid themselves in thickets and the dry beds of rivers, until the danger had passed by, and then resumed their course. Hamet el Zegri rode on in silence, his hand upon his cimeter, and his eyes upon the renegado guide, prepared to sacrifice him on the least sign of treachery; while his band followed, gnawing their lips with rage, at having thus to skulk through a country they had come to ravage.

When night fell they struck into more practicable roads, always keeping wide of the villages and hamlets, lest the watchdogs should betray them. In this way they passed, in deep midnight, by Acros, crossed the Guadalete, and effected their retreat to the mountains. The day dawned as they made their way up the savage defiles. Their comrades had been hunted up these very glens by the enemy. Every now and then they came

to where there had been a partial fight, or a slaughter of the fugitives; and the rocks were red with blood, and strewed with mangled bodies. The alcaide of Ronda was almost frantic with rage at seeing many of his bravest warriors, lying stiff and stark, a prey to the hawks and vultures of the mountains. Now and then some wretched Moor would crawl out of a cave or glen, whither he had fled for refuge; for, in the retreat, many of the horsemen had abandoned their steeds, thrown away their armour, and clambered up the cliffs, where they could not be pursued by the Christian cavalry.

The Moorish army had sallied forth from Ronda amidst shouts and acclamations; but wailings were heard within its walls as the alcaide and his broken band returned, without banner or trumpet, and haggard with famine and fatigue. The tidings of their disaster had preceded them, borne by the fugitives of the army. No one ventured to speak to the stern Hamet el Zegri as he entered the city, for they saw a dark cloud gathered upon his brow.

"It seemed," says the pious Antonio Agapida, "as if Heaven meted out this defeat, in exact retribution for the ills inflicted upon the Christian warriors in the heights of Malaga." It was equally signal and disastrous. Of the brilliant array of Moorish chivalry, which descended so confidently into Andalusia, not more than two hundred escaped. The choicest troops of the frontier were either taken or destroyed: the Moorish garrisons enfeebled, and many alcaides and cavaliers of noble lineage carried into captivity, who were afterwards obliged to redeem themselves with heavy ransoms.

This was called the battle of Lopera, and was fought on the 17th of September, 1483. Ferdinand and Isabella were at Vittoria, in Old Castile, when they received news of the victory, and the standards taken from the enemy. They celebrated the event with processions, illuminations, and other festivities. Ferdinand sent to the Marquis of Cadiz the royal raiment which he had worn on that day, and conferred on him, and on all those who should inherit his title, the privilege of

\* Cura de Los Palacios, ubi suprâ.

wearing royal robes on our Lady's day in September, in commemoration of this victory.

Queen Isabella was equally mindful of the great services of Don Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero. Besides many encomiums and favours, she sent to his wife the royal vestments and robe of brocade which she had worn on the same day, to be worn by her, during her life, on the anniversary of that battle.\*

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

Of the high and ceremonious reception at court of the Count de Cabra and the Alcayde de Los Donzeles.

IN the midst of the bustle of warlike affairs, the worthy chronicler Fray Antonio Agapida pauses to note, with curious accuracy, the distinguished reception given to the Count de Cabra, and his nephew, the alcaide de los Donzeles, at the stately and ceremonious court of Castile, in reward for the capture of the Moorish king Boabdil.

"The court," he observes, "was held, at the time, in the ancient Moorish palace of the city of Cordova; and the ceremonies were arranged by that venerable prelate Don Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, Bishop of Toledo, and Grand Cardinal of Spain.

"It was on Wednesday, the fourteenth of October," continues the precise Antonio Agapida, "that the good Count de Cabra, according to arrangement, appeared at the gate of Cordova. Here he was met by the grand cardinal, and the Duke of Villahermosa, illegitimate brother of the king, together with many of the first grandees and prelates of the kingdom. By this august train was he attended to the palace, amidst triumphant strains of martial music, and the shouts of a prodigious multitude.

"When the count arrived in presence of the sovereigns, who were seated in state, on a dais, or raised part of the hall of audience, they both arose. The king advanced exactly five steps toward the count, who knelt, and kissed his majesty's hand; but the king would not receive him as a mere vassal, but embraced him with affectionate cordiality.

\* Mariana. Abarca. Zurita. Pulgar, etc.

The queen, also, advanced two steps, and received the count with a countenance full of sweetness and benignity. After he had kissed her hand, the king and queen returned to their thrones; and cushions being brought, they desired the worthy count to be seated in their presence." This last circumstance is written in large letters, and followed by several notes of admiration, in the manuscript of the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida; who considers the extraordinary privilege of sitting in the presence of the catholic sovereigns an honour well worth fighting for.

"The good count took his seat at a short distance from the king; and near him was seated the Duke of Najera, then the Bishop of Palencia, then the Count of Aguilar, the Count Luna, and Don Gutiere de Cardenas, senior commander of Leon.

"On the side of the queen were seated the Grand Cardinal of Spain, the Duke of Villahermosa, the Count of Monte Rey, and the Bishops of Jaen and Cuenca, each in the order in which they are named. The Infanta Isabella was prevented, by indisposition, from attending this ceremony.

"And now festive music resounded through the sumptuous hall; and, behold, twenty ladies of the queen's retinue entered, magnificently attired; upon which twenty youthful cavaliers, very gay and galliard in their array, stepped forth; and, each taking his fair partner, they commenced a stately dance. The court, in the mean time," observes Fray Antonio Agapida, "looked on with lofty and becoming gravity.

"When the dance was concluded, the king and queen rose, to retire to supper, and dismissed the court with many gracious expressions. He was then attended, by all the grandees present, to the palace of the grand cardinal, where they partook of a sumptuous banquet.

"On the following Saturday, the alcaide de los Donzeles was received likewise with great honours; but the ceremonies were so arranged, as to be a degree less in dignity than those shown to his uncle; the latter being considered the principal actor in this great achievement. Thus, the grand cardinal and the

Duke of Villahermosa did not meet him at the gate of the city, but received him in the palace, and entertained him in conversation until summoned to the sovereigns.

“When the alcajde de los Donzeles entered the presence-chamber, the king and queen rose from their chairs; but, without advancing, they embraced him graciously, and commanded him to be seated next to the Count de Cabra.

“The Infanta Isabella came forth to this reception, and took her seat beside the queen. When the court were all seated, the music again sounded through the hall, and the twenty ladies came forth, as on the preceding occasion, richly attired, but in different raiment. They danced, as before; and the Infanta Isabella, taking a young Portuguese damsel for a partner, joined in the dance. When this was concluded, the king and queen dismissed the alcajde de los Donzeles with great courtesy, and the court broke up.”

The worthy Fray Antonio Agapida here indulges in a long eulogy on the scrupulous discrimination of the Castilian court, in the distribution of its honours and rewards; by which means every smile, and gesture, and word, of the sovereigns had its certain value, and conveyed its equivalent of joy to the heart of the subject: “a matter well worthy the study,” says he, “of all monarchs; who are too apt to distribute honours with a heedless caprice, that renders them of no avail.

“On the following Sunday, both the Count de Cabra and the alcajde de los Donzeles were invited to sup with the sovereigns. The court, that evening, was attended by the highest nobility, arrayed with that cost and splendour for which the Spanish nobility of those days was renowned.

“Before supper, there was a stately and ceremonious dance, befitting the dignity of so august a court. The king led forth the queen, in grave and graceful measure; the Count de Cabra was honoured with the hand of the Infanta Isabella; and the alcajde de los Donzeles danced with a daughter of the Marquis de Astorga.

“The dance being concluded, the

royal party repaired to the supper-table, which was placed on an elevated part of the saloon. Here, in full view of the court, the Count de Cabra and the alcajde de los Donzeles supped at the same table with the king, the queen, and the infanta. The royal family were served by the Marquis of Villena. The cup-bearer to the king was his nephew, Fadrique de Toledo, son to the Duke of Alva. Don Alonso de Estañiga had the honour of fulfilling that office for the queen, and Tello de Aguilar for the infanta. Other cavaliers of rank and distinction waited on the count and the alcajde de los Donzeles. At one o'clock, the two distinguished guests were dismissed, with many courteous expressions, by the sovereigns.\*

“Such,” says Fray Antonio Agapida, “were the great honours, paid at our most exalted and ceremonious court, to these renowned cavaliers. But the gratitude of the sovereigns did not end here. A few days afterwards, they bestowed upon them large revenues for life, and others to descend to their heirs; with the privilege, for them and their descendants, to prefix the title of Don to their names. They gave them, moreover, as armorial bearings, a Moor's head crowned, with a golden chain round the neck, in a sanguine field, and twenty-two banners round the margin of the escutcheon. Their descendants, of the houses of Cabra and Cordova, continue to bear these arms at the present day, in memorial of the victory of Lucena, and the capture of Boabdil el Chico.”

#### CHAPTER XXV.

How the Marquis of Cadiz concerted to surprise Zahara, and the result of his enterprise.

THE valiant Roderigo Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz, was one of the most vigilant of commanders. He kept in his pay a number of converted Moors, to serve as adalides or armed guides. These mongrel Christians were of great service in procuring information. Availing them-

\* The account given by Fray Antonio Agapida, of this ceremonial, so characteristic of the old Spanish court, agrees, in almost every particular, with an ancient manuscript, made up from the Chronicles of the Curate of Los Palacios, and other old Spanish writers.

selves of their Moorish character and tongue, they penetrated into the enemy's country, prowled about the castles and fortresses, noticed the state of the walls, the gates, and towers; the strength of their garrisons, and the vigilance or negligence of their commanders. All this they reported minutely to the marquis; who thus knew the state of every fortress upon the frontier, and when it might be attacked with advantage. Besides the various towns and cities over which he held a feudal sway, he had always an armed force about him, ready for the field. A host of retainers fed in his hall, who were ready to follow him to danger, and death itself, without inquiring who, or why, they fought. The armories of his castles were supplied with helms, and cuirasses, and weapons of all kinds, ready burnished for use; and his stables were filled with hardy steeds, that could stand a mountain scamper.

The marquis was aware, that the late defeat of the Moors, on the banks of the Lopera, had weakened their whole frontier; for many of the castles and fortresses had lost their alcajdes and their choicest troops. He sent out his warhounds, therefore, upon the range, to ascertain where a successful blow might be struck; and they soon returned with word, that Zahara was weakly garrisoned, and short of provisions.

This was the very fortress which, about two years before, had been stormed by Muley Aben Hassan; and its capture had been the first blow of this eventful war. It had ever since remained a thorn in the side of Andalusia. All the Christians had been carried away captive, and no civil population had been introduced in their stead. There were no women or children in the place. It was kept up as a mere military post, commanding one of the most important passes of the mountains, and was a stronghold of Moorish marauders. The marquis was animated by the idea of regaining this fortress for his sovereigns, and wresting from the old Moorish king this boasted trophy of his prowess.

He sent missives, therefore, to the brave Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero, who had distinguished himself in the late victory, and to Juan Almaraz, captain of

the men-at-arms of the Holy Brotherhood, informing them of his designs, and inviting them to meet him with their forces on the banks of the Guadalete.

"It was on the day," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "of the glorious apostles St. Simon and Judas, the 28th of October, in the year of grace 1483, that this chosen band of Christian soldiers assembled, suddenly and secretly, at the appointed place. Their forces, when united, amounted to six hundred horse and fifteen hundred foot. Their gathering-place was at the entrance of the defile leading to Zahara. That ancient town, renowned in Moorish warfare, is situated in one of the roughest passes of the Serrania de Ronda. It is built round the craggy cone of a hill, on the lofty summit of which is a strong castle. The country around is broken into deep barrancas or ravines, some of which approach its very walls. The place had, until recently, been considered impregnable; but," as the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida observes, "the walls of impregnable fortresses, like the virtue of self-confident saints, have their weak points of attack."

The Marquis of Cadiz advanced with his little army in the dead of the night, marching silently up the deep and dark defiles of the mountains, and stealing up the ravines, which extended to the walls of the town. Their approach was so noiseless, that the Moorish sentinels upon the walls heard not a voice or a foot fall. The Marquis was accompanied by his old escalador, Ortega de Prado, who had distinguished himself at the scaling of Alhama. This hardy veteran was stationed, with ten men, furnished with scaling-ladders, in a cavity among the rocks, close to the walls: at a little distance seventy men were hid in a ravine, to be at hand to second him, when he should have fixed his ladders. The rest of the troops were concealed in another ravine, commanding a fair approach to the gate of the fortress. A shrewd and wary adalide, well acquainted with the place, was appointed to give signals; and was so stationed, that he could be seen by the various parties in ambush, but was hidden from the garrison.

The remainder of the night passed away in profound quiet. The Moorish

sentinels could be heard tranquilly patrolling the walls, in perfect security. The day dawned, and the rising sun began to shine against the lofty peaks of the Serrania de Ronda. The sentinels looked, from their battlements, over a savage but quiet mountain country, where not a human being was stirring. They little dreamed of the mischief that lay lurking in every ravine and chasm of the rocks around them. Apprehending no danger of surprise in broad day, the greater part of the soldiers abandoned the walls and towers, and descended into the city.

By orders of the marquis, a small body of light cavalry passed along the glen, and, turning round a point of rock, showed themselves before the town. They skirred the fields almost to the gates, as if by way of bravado, and to defy the garrison to a skirmish. The Moors were not slow in replying to it. About seventy horse and a number of foot, who had guarded the walls, sallied forth impetuously, thinking to make easy prey of these insolent marauders. The Christian horsemen fled for the ravine; the Moors pursued them down the hill, until they heard a great shouting and tumult behind them. Looking round, they beheld their town assailed, and a scaling party mounting the walls, sword in hand. Wheeling about, they galloped furiously for the gate. The Marquis of Cadiz and Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero rushed forth at the same time, with their ambuscade, and endeavoured to cut them off; but the Moors succeeded in throwing themselves within the walls.

While Puerto Carrero stormed at the gate the marquis put spurs to his horse, and galloped to the support of Ortega de Prado and his scaling party. He arrived at a moment of imminent peril, when the party was assailed by fifty Moors, armed with cuirasses and lances, who were on the point of thrusting them from the walls. The marquis sprang from his horse, mounted a ladder, sword in hand, followed by a number of his troops, and made a vigorous attack upon the enemy.\* They were soon driven from the walls, and the gates and towers remained in

possession of the Christians. The Moors defended themselves for a short time in the street; but at length took refuge in the castle, the walls of which were strong, and capable of holding out until relief should arrive. The marquis had no desire to carry on a siege, and he had not provisions sufficient for many prisoners: he granted them, therefore, favourable terms. They were permitted, on leaving their arms behind them, to march out, with as much of their effects as they could carry; and it was stipulated, that they should pass over to Barbary. The marquis remained in the place, until both town and castle were put in a perfect state of defence, and strongly garrisoned.

Thus did Zahara return once more into the possession of the Christians, to the great confusion of old Muley Aben Hassan; who, having paid the penalty of his ill-timed violence, was now deprived of its vaunted fruits. The Castilian sovereigns were so gratified by this achievement of the valiant Ponce de Leon, that they authorized him, thenceforth, to entitle himself Duke of Cadiz and Marquis of Zahara. The warrior, however, was so proud of the original title, under which he had so often signalized himself, that he gave it the precedence, and always signed himself Marquis Duke of Cadiz. As the reader may have acquired the same predilection, we shall continue to call him by his ancient title.

#### CHAPTER XXVI.

Of the fortress of Alhama; and how wisely it was governed by the Count de Tendilla.

In this part of his chronicle the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida indulges in triumphant exultation over the downfall of Zahara. "Heaven sometimes speaks," says he, "through the mouths of false prophets, for the confusion of the wicked. By the fall of the fortress was the prediction of the santon of Granada in some measure fulfilled, that the ruins of Zahara should fall upon the heads of the infidels."

Our zealous chronicler scoffs at the Moorish alcaide, who lost his fortress by surprise, in broad daylight; and contrasts the vigilance of the Christian go-

\* Cura de Los Palacios, c. 68.

vernor of Alhama, the town taken in retaliation for the storming of Zahara.

The important post of Alhama was at this time confided, by King Ferdinand, to Don Diego Lopez de Mendoza, Count de Tendilla; a cavalier of noble blood, brother to the grand cardinal of Spain. He had been instructed by the king, not merely to maintain his post, but also to make sallies, and lay waste the surrounding country. His fortress was critically stationed. It was within seven leagues of Granada, and at no great distance from the warlike city of Loxa. It was nestled in the lap of the mountains, commanding the high road to Malaga, and a view over the extensive vega. Thus situate, in the heart of the enemy's country, surrounded by foes ready to assail him, and a rich country for him to ravage, it behoved this cavalier to be forever on the alert. He was in fact an experienced veteran, a shrewd and wary officer, and a commander amazingly prompt and fertile in expedients.

On assuming the command, he found, that the garrison consisted but of one thousand men, horse and foot. They were hardy troops, seasoned in rough mountain campaigning; but reckless and dissolute, as soldiers are apt to be, when accustomed to predatory warfare. They would fight hard for booty, and then gamble it heedlessly away, or squander it in licentious revellings. Alhama abounded with hawking, sharpening, idle hangers-on, eager to profit by the vices and follies of the garrison. The soldiers were oftener gambling and dancing beneath the walls, than keeping watch upon the battlements; and nothing was heard from morning till night, but the noisy contest of cards and dice, mingled with the sound of the bolero or fandango, the drowsy strumming of the guitar, and the rattling of the castanets; while often the whole was interrupted by the loud brawl and fierce and bloody contest.

The Count de Tendilla set himself vigorously to reform these excesses. He knew, that laxity of morals is generally attended by neglect of duty; and that the least breach of discipline, in the exposed situation of his fortress, might be fatal. "Here is but a handful of men," said he: "it is necessary that each man should be a hero."

He endeavoured to awaken a proper ambition in the minds of his soldiers, and to instil into them the high principles of chivalry. "A just war," he observed, "is often rendered wicked and disastrous by the manner in which it is conducted: for the righteousness of the cause is not sufficient to sanction the profligacy of the means; and the want of order and subordination among the troops may bring ruin and disgrace upon the best concerted plans." But we cannot describe the character and conduct of this renowned commander in more forcible language than that of Fray Antonio Agapida, excepting, that the pious father places, in the foreground of his virtues, his hatred of the Moors.

"The Count de Tendilla," says he, "was a mirror of Christian knighthood: watchful, abstemious, chaste, devout, and thoroughly filled with the spirit of the cause. He laboured incessantly and strenuously for the glory of the faith, and the prosperity of their most catholic majesties; and, above all, he hated the infidels with a pure and holy hatred. This worthy cavalier discountenanced all idleness, rioting, chambering, and wantonness, among his soldiers. He kept them constantly to the exercise of arms, making them adroit in the use of their weapons and management of their steeds, and prompt for the field at a moment's notice. He permitted no sound of lute, or harp, or song, or other loose minstrelsy, to be heard in his fortress; debauching the ear and softening the valour of the soldier: no other music was allowed but the wholesome rolling of the drums and braying of the trumpet, and such like spirit-stirring instruments, as fill the mind with thoughts of iron war. All wandering minstrels, sharpening pedlers, sturdy trulls, and other camp trumpery, were ordered to pack up their baggage, and were drummed out of the gates of Alhama. In place of such rabble, he introduced a train of holy friars, to inspirit his people by exhortation, and prayer, and choral chanting; and to spur them on to fight the good fight of faith. All games of chance were prohibited, except the game of war; and this he laboured, by vigilance and vigour, to reduce to a game of certainty. Heaven

smiled upon the efforts of this righteous cavalier. His men became soldiers at all points, and terrors to the Moors. The good count never set forth on a ravage without observing the rights of confession, absolution, and communion, and obliging his followers to do the same. Their banners were blessed by the holy friars whom he maintained in Alhama; and, in this way, success was secured to his arms; and he was enabled to lay waste the land of the heathen.

"The fortress of Alhama," continues Fray Antonio Agapida, "overlooked, from its lofty site, a great part of the fertile vega, watered by the Cazin and the Xenil. From this he made frequent sallies, sweeping away the flocks and herds from the pasture, the labourer from the field, and the convoy from the road; so that it was said by the Moors, that a beetle could not crawl across the vega without being seen by the Count de Tendilla. The peasantry, therefore, were fain to betake themselves to watch-towers and fortified hamlets, where they shut up their cattle, garnered their corn, and sheltered their wives and children. Even there they were not safe: the count would storm these rustic fortresses with fire and sword; make captives of their inhabitants; carry off the corn, the oil, the silks, and cattle; and leave the ruins blazing and smoking, within the very sight of Granada.

"It was a pleasing and refreshing sight," continues the good father, "to behold the pious knight and his followers returning from one of these crusades, leaving the rich land of the infidel in smoking desolation behind them. To behold the long line of mules and asses, laden with the plunder of the Gentiles, the hosts of captive Moors, men, women, and children; droves of sturdy beeves, lowing kine, and bleating sheep; all winding up the steep acclivity to the gates of Alhama, pricked on by the catholic soldiery. His garrison thus thrived on the fat of the land and the spoil of the infidel: nor was he unmindful of the pious fathers, whose blessings crowned his enterprises with success; a large portion of the spoil was always dedicated to the church, and the good friars were ever ready at the gates to

hail him on his return, and receive the share allotted them. Besides these allotments, he made many votive offerings, either in time of peril or on the eve of a foray; and the chapels of Alhama were resplendent with chalices, crosses, and other precious gifts, made by this catholic cavalier."

Thus eloquently does the venerable Fray Antonio Agapida dilate in praise of the good Count de Tendilla; and other historians, of equal veracity but less unction, agree in pronouncing him one of the ablest of Spanish generals. So terrible, in fact, did he become in the land, that the Moorish peasantry could not venture a league from Granada or Loxa, to labour in the fields, without peril of being carried into captivity. The people of Granada clamoured against Muley Aben Hassan for suffering his lands to be thus outraged and insulted, and demanded to have this bold marauder shut up in his fortress. The old monarch was roused by their remonstrances. He sent forth powerful troops of horse to protect the country during the season that the husbandmen were abroad in the fields. These troops patrolled, in formidable squadrons, in the neighbourhood of Alhama, keeping strict watch upon its gates, so that it was impossible for the Christians to make a sally, without being seen and interrupted.

While Alhama was thus blockaded by a roving force of Moorish cavalry, the inhabitants were awakened one night, by a tremendous crash, that shook the fortress to its foundations. The garrison flew to arms, supposing it some assault of the enemy. The alarm proved to have been caused by a rupture of a portion of the wall, which, undermined by heavy rains, had suddenly given way, leaving a large chasm yawning towards the plain.

The Count de Tendilla was for a time in great anxiety. Should this breach be discovered by the blockading horsemen, they would arouse the country. Granada and Loxa would pour out an overwhelming force, and they would find his walls ready sapped for an assault. In this fearful emergency, the count displayed his noted talent for expedients. He ordered a quantity of linen cloth to

be stretched in front of the breach, painted in imitation of stone, and indented with battlements, so as, at a distance, to resemble the other parts of the walls. Behind this screen, he employed workmen, day and night, in repairing the fracture. No one was permitted to leave the fortress, lest information of its defenceless plight should be carried to the Moors. Light squadrons of the enemy were seen hovering about the plain, but none approached near enough to discover the deception; and thus, in the course of a few days, the wall was rebuilt stronger than before.

There was another expedient of this shrewd veteran, which greatly excites the marvel of Agapida. "It happened," he observes, "that this catholic cavalier at one time was destitute of gold and silver, wherewith to pay the wages of his troops; and the soldiers murmured greatly, seeing that they had not the means of purchasing necessaries from the people of the town. In this dilemma, what does this most sagacious commander? He takes him a number of little morsels of paper, on which he inscribed various sums, large and small, according to the nature of the case, and signs them with his own hand and name. These did he give to the soldiery, in earnest of their pay. How! you will say, are soldiers to be paid with scraps of paper? Even so, I answer, and well paid too, as I will presently make manifest: for the good count issued a proclamation, ordering the inhabitants of Alhama to take these morsels of paper for the full amount thereon inscribed, promising to redeem them, at a future time, with silver and gold, and threatening a severe punishment, to all who should refuse. The people, having full confidence in his words, and trusting, that he would be as willing to perform the one promise, as he certainly was able to perform the other, took these curious morsels of paper without hesitation or demur.

"Thus, by a subtle and most miraculous kind of alchemy, did this catholic cavalier turn worthless paper into precious gold, and make his late impoverished garrison abound in money."

It is but just to add, that the Count

de Tendilla redeemed his promises like a loyal knight; and this miracle, as it appeared in the eyes of Fray Antonio Agapida, is the first instance on record of paper money, which has since inundated the civilized world with unbounded opulence.

#### CHAPTER XXVII.

Foray of Christian knights into the territories of the Moors.

THE Spanish cavaliers, who had survived the memorable massacre among the mountains of Malaga, although they had repeatedly avenged the death of their companions, yet could not forget the horror and humiliation of their defeat. Nothing would satisfy them but to undertake a second expedition of the kind, to carry fire and sword throughout a wide part of the Moorish territories, and to leave all those regions, which had triumphed in their disaster, a black and burning monument of their vengeance. Their wishes accorded with the policy of the king, who desired to lay waste the country, and destroy the resources of the enemy; every assistance was therefore given, to promote and accomplish their enterprise.

In the spring of 1484, the ancient city of Antequera again resounded with arms. Numbers of the same cavaliers, who had assembled there so gaily the preceding year, again came wheeling into the gates, with their steeled and shining warriors, but with a more dark and solemn brow than on that disastrous occasion; for they had the recollection of their slaughtered friends present to their minds, whose deaths they were to avenge.

In a little while there was a chosen force of six thousand horse and twelve thousand foot assembled in Antequera, many of them the very flower of Spanish chivalry, troops of the established military and religious orders, and of the Holy Brotherhood.

Every precaution had been taken to provide this army with all things needful for its extensive and perilous inroad. Numerous surgeons accompanied it, who were to attend upon the sick and wounded, without charge, being paid for their



services by the queen. Isabella also, in her considerate humanity, provided six spacious tents, furnished with beds, and all things requisite for the wounded and infirm. These continued to be used in all great expeditions throughout the war, and were called the Queen's Hospital. The worthy father, Fray Antonio Agapida, vaunts this benignant provision of the queen, as the first introduction of a regular camp hospital in campaigning service.

Thus thoroughly prepared, the cavaliers issued forth from Antequera in splendid and terrible array, but with less exulting confidence and vaunting ostentation than on their former foray: and this was the order of the army.

Don Alonso de Aguilar led the advanced guard, accompanied by Don Diego Fernandez de Cordova, alcaide de los Donzeles, and Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero, Count of Palma, with their household troops. They were followed by Juan de Merlo, Juan de Almara, and Carlos de Biezman, of the Holy Brotherhood, with the men-at-arms of their captaincies.

The second battalion was commanded by the Marquis of Cadiz and the Master of Santiago, with the cavaliers of Santiago, and the troops of the house of Ponce de Leon: with these also went the senior commander of Calatrava, and the knights of that order, and various other cavaliers and their retainers.

The right-wing of this second battalion was led by Gonsalvo de Cordova, afterwards renowned as grand captain of Spain: the left wing, by Diego Lopez de Avila. They were accompanied by several cavaliers, and certain captains of the Holy Brotherhood, with their men-at-arms.

The Duke of Medina Sidonia and the Count de Cabra commanded the third battalion, with the troops of their respective houses. They were accompanied by other commanders of note, with their forces.

The rearguard was brought up by the senior commander and knights of Alcantara, followed by the Andalusian chivalry, from Xeres, Ecija, and Carmona.

Such was the army that issued forth from the gates of Antequera, on one of

the most extensive *talas*, or devastating inroads, that ever laid waste the kingdom of Granada.

The army entered the Moorish territory by the way of Alora, destroying all the cornfields, vineyards, and orchards, and plantations of olives, round that city. It then proceeded through the rich valleys and fertile uplands of Coin, Cazaraboncla, Almixia, and Cartama, and, in ten days, all those fertile regions were a smoking and frightful desert. From hence it pursued its slow and destructive course, like the stream of lava of a volcano, through the regions of Pupiana, and Alhendin, and so on to the vega of Malaga, laying waste the groves of olives and almonds, and the fields of grain, and destroying every green thing. The Moors of some of those places interceded in vain for their groves and fields, offering to deliver up their Christian captives. One part of the army blockaded the towns, while the other ravaged the surrounding country. Sometimes the Moors sallied forth desperately to defend their property, but were driven back to their gates with slaughter, and their suburbs pillaged and burnt. It was an awful spectacle at night, to behold the volumes of black smoke, mingled with lurid flames, that rose from the burning suburbs, and the women on the walls of the town, wringing their hands, and shrieking at the desolation of their dwellings.

The destroying army, on arriving at the sea-coast, found vessels lying off shore, laden with all kinds of provisions and munitions for its use, which had been sent from Seville and Xeres. It was thus enabled to continue its desolating career. Advancing to the neighbourhood of Malaga, it was bravely assailed by the Moors of that city, and there was severe skirmishing for a whole day; but while the main part of the army encountered the enemy, the rest ravaged the whole vega, and destroyed all the mills. As the object of the expedition was not to capture places, but merely to burn, ravage, and destroy, the host, satisfied with the mischief they had done in the vega, turned their backs upon Malaga, and again entered the mountains. They passed by Coin, and

through the regions of Allagagna, and Gatero, and Alhamin; all which were likewise desolated. In this way did they make the circuit of that chain of rich and verdant valleys, the glory of those mountains, and the pride and delight of the Moors. For forty days did they continue on, like a consuming fire, leaving a smoking and howling waste to mark their course, until, weary with the work of destruction, and having fully sated their revenge for the massacre of the Axarquia, they returned in triumph to the meadows of Antequera.

In the month of June, King Ferdinand took command in person of this destructive army. He increased its force; and he added to its means of mischief several lombards, and other heavy artillery, intended for the battering of towns, and managed by engineers from France and Germany. With these, the Marquis of Cadiz assured the king, he would soon be able to reduce the Moorish fortresses. They were only calculated for defence against the engines anciently used in warfare. Their walls and towers were high and thin, depending on their rough and rocky situations. The stone and iron balls, thundered from the lombards, would soon tumble them in ruins upon the heads of their defenders.

The fate of Alora speedily proved the truth of this opinion. It was strongly posted on a rock, washed by a river. The artillery soon battered down two of the towers, and a part of the wall. The Moors were thrown into consternation at the vehemence of the assault, and the effect of these tremendous engines upon their vaunted bulwarks. The roaring of the artillery, and the tumbling of the walls, terrified the women; who beset the alcaide with vociferous supplications to surrender. The place was given up on the 20th of June, on condition that the inhabitants might depart with their effects. The people of Malaga, as yet unacquainted with the power of this battering ordnance, were so incensed at those of Alora, for what they considered a tame surrender, that they would not admit them into their city.

A similar fate attended the town of Setenil, built on a lofty rock, and esteemed impregnable. Many times had

it been besieged under former Christian kings, but never had it been taken. Even now, for several days, the artillery was directed against it without effect; and many of the cavaliers murmured at the Marquis of Cadiz, for having counselled the king to attack this unconquerable place.\*

On the same night that these reproaches were uttered, the marquis directed the artillery himself. He levelled the lombards at the bottom of the walls, and at the gates. In a little while, the gates were battered to pieces; a great breach was effected in the walls; and the Moors were fain to capitulate. Twenty-four Christian captives, who had been taken in the defeat of the mountains of Malaga, were rescued from the dungeons of this fortress, and hailed the Marquis of Cadiz as their deliverer.

Needless is it to mention the capture of various other places, which surrendered without waiting to be attacked. The Moors had always shown great bravery and perseverance in defending their towns; they were formidable in their sallies and skirmishes, and patient in enduring hunger and thirst when besieged: but this terrible ordnance, which demolished their walls with such ease and rapidity, overwhelmed them with confusion and dismay, and rendered vain all resistance. King Ferdinand was so struck with the force of this artillery, that he ordered the number of lombards to be increased; and these potent engines had henceforth a great influence on the fortunes of the war.

The last operation of this year, so disastrous to the Moors, was an inroad by King Ferdinand, in the latter part of summer, into the vega; in which he ravaged the country, burned two villages near to Granada, and destroyed the mills close to the very gates of the city.

Old Muley Aben Hassan was overwhelmed with dismay at this desolation; which, during the whole year, had been raging throughout his territories, and now reached to the walls of his capital. His fierce spirit was broken by misfortunes and infirmity: he offered to pur-

\* Cura de Los Palacios.

chase a peace, and to hold his crown as a tributary vassal. Ferdinand would listen to no propositions; the absolute conquest of Granada was the great object of the war; and he was resolved never to rest content without its complete fulfilment. Having supplied and strengthened the garrisons of the places he had taken in the heart of the Moorish territories, he enjoined their commanders to render every assistance to the younger Moorish king, in the civil war against his father. He then returned with his army to Cordova, in great triumph; closing a series of ravaging campaigns, that had filled the kingdom of Granada with grief and consternation.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

Attempt of El Zagal to surprise Boabdil in Almeria.

DURING this year of sorrow and disaster to the Moors, the younger king, Boabdil, most truly called the unfortunate, held a diminished and feeble court in the maritime city of Almeria. He retained little more than the name of king; and was supported, in even this shadow of royalty by the countenance and treasures of the Castilian sovereigns. Still he trusted that, in the fluctuation of events, the inconstant nation might once more return to his standard, and replace him on the throne of the Alhambra.

His mother, the high-spirited sultana Ayxa la Horra, endeavoured to rouse him from this passive state. "It is a feeble mind," said she, "that waits for the turn of fortune's wheel; the brave mind seizes upon it, and turns it to its purpose. Take the field, and you may drive danger before you; remain cowering at home, and it besieges you in your dwelling. By a bold enterprise, you may regain your splendid throne in Granada; by passive forbearance, you will forfeit even this miserable throne in Almeria."

Boabdil had not the force of soul to follow these courageous counsels; and, in a little time, the evils his mother had predicted fell upon him.

Old Muley Aben Hassan was almost extinguished by age and infirmity. He had nearly lost his sight, and was completely bed-ridden. His brother Abdalla,

surnamed El Zagal, or "the valiant," the same who had assisted in the massacre of the Spanish chivalry among the mountains of Malaga, was commander-in-chief of the Moorish armies; and gradually took upon himself most of the cares of sovereignty. Among other things, he was particularly zealous in espousing his brother's quarrel with his son; and he prosecuted it with such vehemence, that many affirmed there was something more than fraternal sympathy at the bottom of his zeal.

The disasters and disgraces inflicted on the country by the Christians, during this year, had wounded the national feelings of the people of Almeria; and many had felt indignant, that Boabdil should remain passive at such a time; or rather, should appear to make a common cause with the enemy. His uncle Abdalla diligently fomented this feeling by his agents. The same arts were made use of, that had been successful in Granada. Boabdil was secretly, but actively, denounced by the alfaquis as an apostate, leagued with the Christians against his country and his early faith. The affections of the populace and soldiery were gradually alienated from him, and a deep conspiracy concerted for his destruction. In the month of February, 1485, El Zagal suddenly appeared before Almeria, at the head of a troop of horse. The alfaquis were prepared for his arrival, and the gates were thrown open to him. He entered, with his band, and galloped to the citadel. The alcaide would have made resistance; but the garrison put him to death, and received El Zagal with acclamations. El Zagal rushed through the apartments of the alcazar, but he sought in vain for Boabdil. He found the sultana Ayxa la Horra in one of the saloons, with Ben Ahagete, a younger brother of the monarch, a valiant Abencerrage, and several attendants, who rallied round them to protect them. "Where is the traitor Boabdil?" exclaimed El Zagal. "I know no traitor more perfidious than thyself," exclaimed the intrepid sultana: "and I trust my son is in safety, to take vengeance on thy treason." The rage of El Zagal was without bounds, when he learned that his intended victim had escaped.

In his fury he slew the prince, Ben Ahagete: and his followers fell upon and massacred the Abencerrage and attendants. As to the proud sultana, she was borne away prisoner, and loaded with revilings; as having upheld her son in his rebellion, and fomented a civil war.

The unfortunate Boabdil had been apprised of his danger by a faithful soldier, just in time to make his escape. Throwing himself on one of the fleetest horses of his stables, and followed by a handful of adherents, he had galloped, in the confusion, out of the gates of Almeria. Several of the cavalry of El Zagal, who were stationed without the walls, perceived his flight, and attempted to pursue him. Their horses were jaded with travel, and he soon left them far behind. But whither was he to fly? Every fortress and castle in the kingdom was closed against him. He knew not whom among the Moors to trust; for they had been taught to detest him, as a traitor and an apostate. He had no alternative but to seek refuge among the Christians, his hereditary enemies. With a heavy heart, he turned his horse's head towards Cordova. He had to lurk, like a fugitive, through a part of his own dominions; nor did he feel himself secure until he had passed the frontier, and beheld the mountain barrier of his country towering behind him. Then it was that he became conscious of his humiliating state: a fugitive from his throne; an outcast from his nation; a king without a kingdom. He smote his breast in an agony of grief. "Evil indeed," exclaimed he, "was the day of my birth; and truly was I named El Zogoybi, the unlucky!"

He entered the gates of Cordova with downcast countenance, and with a train of only forty followers. The sovereigns were absent; but the cavaliers of Andalusia manifested that sympathy in the misfortunes of the monarch, that becomes men of lofty and chivalrous souls. They received him with the greatest distinction, attended him with the utmost courtesy; and he was honourably entertained by the civil and military commanders of that ancient city.

In the mean time, El Zagal put a new alcaide over Almeria, to govern in the

name of his brother; and having strongly garrisoned the place, he repaired to Malaga, where an attack of the Christians was apprehended. The young monarch being driven out of the land, and the old monarch blind and bed-ridden, El Zagal, at the head of the armies, was virtually the sovereign of Granada. The people were pleased with having a new idol to look up to, and a new name to shout forth; and El Zagal was hailed with acclamations, as the main hope of the nation.

#### CHAPTER XXIX.

How King Ferdinand commenced another campaign against the Moors, and how he laid siege to Coin and Cartama.

THE great effect of the battering ordnance, in demolishing the Moorish fortresses, in the preceding year, induced King Ferdinand to procure a powerful train for the campaign of 1485; in the course of which he resolved to assault some of the most formidable holds of the enemy. An army of nine thousand cavalry and twenty thousand infantry assembled at Cordova early in the spring; and the king took the field on the 5th of April. It had been determined, in secret council, to attack the city of Malaga, that ancient and important seaport, on which Granada depended for foreign aid and supplies. It was thought proper previously, however, to get possession of various towns and fortresses in the valleys of Santa Maria and Cartama, through which pass the roads to Malaga.

The first place assailed was the town of Benamaquex. It had submitted to the catholic sovereigns in the preceding year, but had since renounced its allegiance. King Ferdinand was enraged at the rebellion of the inhabitants. "I will make their punishment," said he, "a terror to others: they shall be loyal through force, if not through faith." The place was carried by storm; one hundred and eight of the principal inhabitants were either put to the sword or hanged on the battlements. The rest were carried into captivity.\*

The towns of Coin and Cartama were besieged on the same day; the first by a

\* Pulgar. Garibay. Cura de Los Palacios.

division of the army led on by the Marquis of Cadiz; the second by another division, commanded by Don Alonso de Aguilar, and Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero, the brave senior of Palma. The king, with the rest of the army, remained posted between the two places, to render assistance to either division. The batteries opened upon both places at the same time; and the thunder of the lombards was mutually heard from one camp to the other. The Moors made frequent sallies, and a valiant defence; but they were confounded by the tremendous uproar of the batteries, and the destruction of their walls. In the mean time, the alarm-fires gathered together the Moorish mountaineers of the Serrania, who assembled in great numbers in the city of Monda, about a league from Coin.

They made several attempts to enter the besieged town, but in vain; they were each time intercepted and driven back by the Christians, and were reduced to gaze at a distance, in despair, on the destruction of the place. While thus situated, there rode one day into Monda a fierce and haughty Moorish chieftain, at the head of a band of swarthy African horsemen. It was Hamet el Zegri, the fiery-spirited alcaide of Ronda, at the head of his band of Gomeres. He had not yet recovered from the rage and mortification of his defeat on the banks of the Lopera, in the disastrous foray of old Bexir, when he had been obliged to steal back to his mountains, with the loss of his bravest followers. He had ever since panted for revenge. He now rode among the host of warriors assembled at Monda. "Who among you," cried he, "feels pity for the women and children of Coin, exposed to captivity and death? Whoever he is, let him follow me, who am ready to die as a Moslem for the relief of Moslems!" So saying, he seized a white banner, and, waving it over his head, rode forth from the town, followed by the Gomeres. Many of the warriors, roused by his words and his example, spurred resolutely after his banner. The people of Coin, being prepared for this attempt, sallied forth as they saw the white banner, and made an attack upon the Christian camp; and, in the confusion of the moment, Hamet and his fol-

lowers galloped into the gates. This reinforcement animated the besieged, and Hamet exhorted them to hold out obstinately in defence of life and the town. As the Gomeres were veteran warriors, the more they were attacked, the harder they fought.

At length, a great breach was made in the walls; and Ferdinand, who was impatient of the resistance of the place, ordered the Duke of Naxera and the Count of Benavente to enter with their troops; and, as their forces were not sufficient, he sent word to Luis de Cerda, Duke of Medina Celi, to send a part of his people to their assistance.

The feudal pride of the duke was roused at this demand. "Tell my lord the king," said the haughty grandee, "that I have come to succour him with my household troops. If my people are ordered to any place, I am to go with them; but if I am to remain in the camp, they must remain with me: for troops cannot serve without their commander, nor their commander without his troops."

The reply of the high-spirited grandee perplexed the cautious Ferdinand, who knew the jealous pride of his powerful nobles. In the mean time, the people of the camp, having made all preparations for the assault, were impatient to be led forward. Upon this Pero Ruyz de Alarcon put himself at their head, and, seizing their mantas, or portable bulwarks, and their other defences, they made a gallant assault, and fought their way in at the breach. The Moors were so overcome by the fury of their assault, that they retreated fighting to the square of the town. Pero Ruyz de Alarcon thought the place was carried, when suddenly Hamet and his Gomeres came scouring through the streets with wild war-cries, and fell furiously upon the Christians. The latter were, in their turn, beaten back; and, while attacked in front by the Gomeres, were assailed by the inhabitants with all kinds of missiles, from their roofs and windows. They at length gave way, and retreated through the breach. Pero Ruyz de Alarcon still maintained his ground in one of the principal streets. The few cavaliers that stood by him urged him to fly: "No," said he, "I came here to

fight, and not to fly!" He was presently surrounded by the Gomeres. His companions fled for their lives. Before they fled, they saw him covered with wounds, but still fighting desperately for the fame of a good cavalier.\*

The resistance of the inhabitants, though aided by the valour of the Gomeres, was of no avail. The battering artillery of the Christians demolished their walls; combustibles were thrown into their town, which set it on fire in various places, and they were at length compelled to capitulate. They were permitted to depart with their effects, and the Gomeres with their arms. Hamet el Zegri and his African band sallied forth, and rode proudly through the Christian camp; nor could the Spanish cavaliers refrain from regarding with admiration that haughty warrior and his devoted and dauntless adherents.

The capture of Coin was accompanied by that of Cartama. The fortifications of the latter were repaired and garrisoned; but Coin being too extensive to be defended by a moderate force, its walls were demolished. The siege of these places struck such terror into the surrounding country, that the Moors of many of the neighbouring towns abandoned their homes, and fled, with such of their effects as they could carry away: upon which the king gave orders to demolish their walls and towers.

King Ferdinand now left his camp and his heavy artillery near Cartama, and proceeded with his lighter troops to reconnoitre Malaga. By this time the secret plan of attack, arranged in the council of war at Cordova, was known to all the world. The vigilant warrior, El Zagal, had thrown himself into the place. He had put all the fortifications, which were of vast strength, into a state of defence, and had sent orders to the alcaides of the mountain towns to hasten with their forces to his assistance.

The very day that King Ferdinand appeared before the place, El Zagal sallied forth to receive him at the head of a thousand cavalry, the choicest warriors of Granada. A hot skirmish took place among the gardens and olive trees near

the city. Many were killed on both sides, and this gave the Christians a sharp foretaste of what they might expect, if they attempted to besiege the place.

When the skirmish was over, the Marquis of Cadiz had a private conference with the king. He represented the difficulty of besieging Malaga with their present force, especially as their plans had been discovered and anticipated, and the whole country was marching over the mountains to oppose them. The marquis, who had secret intelligence from all quarters, had received a letter from Juceph Xerife, a Moor of Ronda, of Christian lineage, apprising him of the situation of that important place and its garrison, which at that moment laid it open to attack; and the marquis was urgent with the king to seize upon this critical moment, and secure a place, which was one of the most powerful Moorish fortresses on the frontiers, and, in the hands of Hamet el Zegri, had been the scourge of Andalusia. The good marquis had another motive for his advice, becoming a true and loyal knight. In the deep dungeons of Ronda languished several of his companions in arms, who had been captured in the defeat in the Axarquia. To break their chains, and restore them to liberty and light, he felt to be his peculiar duty, as one of those who had most promoted that disastrous enterprise.

King Ferdinand listened to the advice of the marquis. He knew the importance of Ronda, which was considered one of the keys of the kingdom of Granada; and he was disposed to punish the inhabitants, for the aid they had rendered to the garrison at Coin. The siege of Malaga, therefore, was abandoned for the present, and preparations made for a rapid and secret move against the city of Ronda.

#### CHAPTER XXX.

##### Siege of Ronda.

THE bold Hamet el Zegri, the alcaide of Ronda, had returned sullenly to his stronghold after the surrender of Coin. He had fleshed his sword in battle with the Christians; but his thirst for ven-

\* Pulgar, part iii. cap. 42.

geance was still unsatisfied. Hamet gloried in the strength of his fortress and the valour of his people. A fierce and warlike populace was at his command; his signal-fires would summon all the warriors of the Serrania; his Gomerers almost subsisted on the spoils of Andalusia; and in the rock on which his fortress was built were hopeless dungeons, filled with Christian captives, who had been carried off by these war-hawks of the mountains.

Ronda was considered as impregnable. It was situate in the heart of wild and rugged mountains, and perched upon an isolated rock, crested by a strong citadel, with triple walls and towers. A deep ravine, or rather a perpendicular chasm of rocks, of frightful depth, surrounded three parts of the city; through this flowed the Rio Verde, or Green River. There were two suburbs to the city, fortified by walls and towers, and almost inaccessible, from the natural asperity of the rocks. Around this rugged city were deep rich valleys, sheltered by the mountains, refreshed by constant streams, abounding with grain and the most delicious fruits, and yielding verdant meadows; in which was reared a renowned breed of horses, the best in the whole kingdom for a foray.

Hamet el Zegri had scarcely returned to Ronda, when he received intelligence, that the Christian army was marching to the siege of Malaga, and orders from El Zagal to send troops to his assistance. Hamet sent a part of his garrison for that purpose. In the mean time, he meditated an expedition to which he was stimulated by pride and revenge. All Andalusia was now drained of its troops: there was an opportunity, therefore, for an inroad, by which he might wipe out the disgrace of his defeat at the battle of Lopera. Apprehending no danger to his mountain city, now that the storm of war had passed down into the vega of Malaga, he left but a remnant of his garrison to man its walls; and, putting himself at the head of his band of Gomerers, swept down suddenly into the plains of Andalusia. He careered, almost without resistance, over those vast campiñas, or pasture-lands, which form a part of the domains of the Duke of

Medina Sidonia. In vain the bells were rung, and the alarm-fires kindled; the band of Hamet had passed by before any force could be assembled; and was only to be traced, like a hurricane, by the devastation it had made.

Hamet regained in safety the Serrania de Ronda, exulting in his successful inroad. The mountain glens were filled with long droves of cattle, and flocks of sheep, from the campiñas of Medina Sidonia. There were mules, too, laden with the plunder of the villages; and every warrior had some costly spoil of jewels for his favourite mistress.

As El Zegri drew near to Ronda, he was roused from his dream of triumph by the sound of heavy ordnance, bellowing through the mountain defiles. His heart misgave him: he put spurs to his horse, and galloped in advance of his lagging cavalgada. As he proceeded, the noise of the ordnance increased, echoing from cliff to cliff. Spurring his horse up a craggy height, which commanded an extensive view, he beheld, to his consternation, the country about Ronda white with the tents of a besieging army. The royal standard, displayed before a proud encampment, showed that Ferdinand himself was present; while the incessant blaze and thunder of artillery, and the volumes of overhanging smoke, told the work of destruction that was going on.

The royal army had succeeded in coming upon Ronda by surprise, during the absence of its alcaide, and most of its garrison; but its inhabitants were warlike, and defended themselves bravely, trusting that Hamet and his Gomerers would soon return to their assistance.

The fancied strength of their bulwarks had been of little avail against the batteries of the besiegers. In the space of four days, three towers, and great masses of the walls which defended the suburbs, were battered down, and the suburbs taken and plundered. Lombards and other heavy ordnance were now levelled at the walls of the city, and stones and missiles of all kinds hurled into the streets. The very rock on which the city stood shook with the thunder of the artillery; and the Christian captives,

deep within its dungeons, hailed the sound as the promise of deliverance.

When Hamet el Zegri beheld his city thus surrounded and assailed, he called upon his men to follow him and make a desperate attempt to cut their way through to its relief. They proceeded stealthily through the mountains, until they came to the nearest heights above the Christian camp. When night fell, and part of the army was sunk in sleep, they descended the rocks, and rushing suddenly upon the weakest part of the camp, endeavoured to break their way through, and gain the city. The camp was too strong to be forced; they were driven back to the crags of the mountains, whence they defended themselves by showering down darts and stones upon their pursuers.

Hamet now lighted alarm-fires about the heights; his standard was joined by the neighbouring mountaineers, and by troops from Malaga. Thus reinforced, he made repeated assaults upon the Christians, cutting off all stragglers from the camp. All his attempts, however, to force his way into the city were fruitless. Many of his bravest men were slain, and he was obliged to retreat into the fastnesses of the mountains.

In the mean while, the distress of Ronda was hourly increasing. The Marquis of Cadiz, having possession of the suburbs, was enabled to approach to the very foot of the perpendicular precipice, rising from the river, on the summit of which the city is built. At the foot of this rock is a living fountain of limpid water, gushing into a great natural basin. A secret mine led down from within the city to this fountain, by several hundred steps, cut in the solid rock. From this the city obtained its chief supply of water; and the steps were deeply worn by the weary feet of Christian captives employed in the painful labour. The Marquis of Cadiz discovered this subterranean passage, and directed his pioneers to countermine it through the solid body of the rock. They pierced to the shaft; and, stopping it up, deprived the city of the benefit of this precious fountain.

While the brave Marquis of Cadiz was thus pressing the siege with zeal, and

glowing with the generous thoughts of soon delivering his companions in arms from the Moorish dungeons, far other were the feelings of the alcaide, Hamet el Zegri. He smote his breast, and gnashed his teeth, in impotent fury, as he beheld, from the mountain cliffs, the destruction of the city. Every thunder of the Christian ordnance seemed to batter against his heart. He saw tower after tower tumbling by day, and at night the city blazed like a volcano. "They fired not merely stones from their ordnance," says a chronicler of the times, "but likewise great balls of iron, cast in moulds, which demolished every thing they struck." They threw also balls of tow, steeped in pitch and oil and gunpowder, which, when once on fire, were not to be extinguished, and which set the houses in flames.

Great was the horror of the inhabitants. They knew not where to flee for refuge: their houses were in a blaze, or shattered by the ordnance. The streets were perilous, from the falling ruins and the bounding balls, which dashed to pieces every thing they encountered. At night the city looked like a fiery furnace: the cries and wailings of the women were heard between the thunders of the ordnance, and reached even to the Moors on the opposite mountains, who answered them by yells of fury and despair.

All hope of external succour being at an end, the inhabitants of Ronda were compelled to capitulate. Ferdinand was easily prevailed upon to grant them favourable terms. The place was capable of longer resistance; and he feared for the safety of his camp, as the forces were daily augmenting on the mountains, and making frequent assaults. The inhabitants were permitted to depart with their effects, either to Barbary or elsewhere; and those who chose to reside in Spain had lands assigned them, and were indulged in the exercise of their religion.

No sooner did the place surrender, than detachments were sent to attack the Moors, who hovered about the neighbouring mountains. Hamet el Zegri, however, did not remain, to try a fruitless battle. He gave up the game as lost, and retreated with his Gomerés,



filled with grief and rage, but trusting to fortune to give him future vengeance.

The first care of the good Marquis of Cadiz, on entering Ronda, was to deliver his unfortunate companions in arms from the dungeons of the fortress. What a difference in their looks, from the time, when, flushed with health and hope, and arrayed in military pomp, they had sallied forth upon the mountain foray! Many of them were almost naked, with irons at their ankles, and beards reaching to their waists. Their meeting with the marquis was joyful, yet it had the look of grief; for their joy was mingled with many bitter recollections. There was an immense number of other captives, among whom were several young men of noble families, who, with filial piety, had surrendered themselves prisoners in place of their fathers.

The captives were all provided with mules, and sent to the queen at Cordova. The humane heart of Isabella melted at the sight of the piteous cavalcade. They were all supplied by her with food and raiment, and money to pay their expenses to their homes. Their chains were hung as pious trophies against the exterior of the church of St. Juan de los Reyes in Toledo, where the Christian traveller may regale his eyes with the sight of them at this very day.

Among the Moorish captives was a young infidel maiden of great beauty, who desired to become a Christian, and to remain in Spain. She had been inspired with the light of the true faith, through the ministry of a young man, who had been a captive in Ronda. He was anxious to complete his good work by marrying her. The queen consented to their pious wishes, having first taken care that the young maiden should be properly purified by the holy sacrament of baptism.

"Thus this pestilent nest of warfare and infidelity, the city of Ronda," says the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, "was converted to the true faith by the thunder of our artillery. An example which was soon followed by Casanbonelas, Alabilla, and other towns in these parts; insomuch that, in the course of this expedition, no less than seventy-two places were rescued from the vile sect of Maho-

met, and placed under the benignant domination of the cross."

#### CHAPTER XXXI.

How the people of Granada invited El Zagal to the throne; and how he marched to the capital.

THE people of Granada were a versatile, unsteady race, and exceedingly given to make and unmake kings. They had, for a long time, vacillated between old Muley Aben Hassan and his son, Boabdil el Chico; sometimes setting up the one, sometimes the other, and sometimes both at once, according to the pinch and pressure of external evils. They found, however, that the evils still went on increasing, in defiance of every change; and were at their wits' end to devise some new combination or arrangement, by which an efficient government might be wrought out of two bad kings.

When the tidings arrived of the fall of Ronda, and the consequent ruin of the frontier, a tumultuous assemblage took place in one of the public squares. As usual, the people attributed the misfortunes of the country exclusively to the faults of their rulers: for the populace never imagine, that any part of their miseries can originate with themselves. A crafty alfaqui, named Alyme Mazer, who had watched the current of their discontents, rose, and harangued them.

"You have been choosing and changing," said he, "between two monarchs; and who and what are they? Muley Aben Hassan for one; a man worn out by age and infirmities; unable to sally forth against the foe, even when ravaging to the very gates of the city: and Boabdil el Chico for the other; an apostate, a traitor, a deserter from his throne; a fugitive among the enemies of his nation; a man fated to misfortune, and proverbially named 'the unlucky.'"

"In a time of overwhelming war, like the present, he only is fit to sway a sceptre who can wield a sword. Would you seek such a man? You need not look far. Allah has sent such a one, in this time of distress, to retrieve the fortunes of Granada. You already know whom I mean. You know it can be no other than your general, the invincible Abdalla; whose surname of El Zagal has

become a watchword in battle, rousing the courage of the faithful, and striking terror into the unbelievers."

The multitude received the words of the alfaqui with acclamations; they were delighted with the idea of a third king over Granada; and Abdalla el Zagal, being of the royal family, and already in the virtual exercise of royal power, the measure had nothing in it that appeared either rash or violent. A deputation was therefore sent to El Zagal at Malaga, inviting him to repair to Granada, to receive the crown.

El Zagal expressed great surprise and repugnance, when the mission was announced to him; and nothing but his patriotic zeal for the public safety, and his fraternal eagerness to relieve the aged Aben Hassan from the cares of government, prevailed upon him to accept the offer of the crown. Leaving, therefore, Rodovan de Vanegas, one of the bravest Moorish generals, in command of Malaga, he departed for Granada, attended by three hundred trusty cavaliers.

Old Muley Aben Hassan did not wait for the arrival of his brother. Unable any longer to buffet with the storms of the times, his only solicitude was to seek some safe and quiet harbour of repose. In one of the deep valleys which indent the Mediterranean coast, and which are shut up, on the land side, by stupendous mountains, stood the little city of Almunecar. The valley was watered by the river Frio, and abounded with fruits, with grain, and with pasturage. The city was strongly fortified; and the garrison and alcaide were devoted to the old monarch. This was the place chosen by Muley Aben Hassan for his asylum. His first care was to send thither all his treasures; his next, to take refuge there himself; his third, that his sultana Zorayna, and their two sons, should follow him.

In the mean time, Muley Abdalla el Zagal pursued his journey towards the capital, attended by his three hundred cavaliers. The road from Malaga to Granada winds close by Alhama, and is commanded by that fortress. This had been a most perilous pass for the Moors during the time that Alhama was commanded by the Count de Tendilla. Not a traveller could escape his eagle eye;

and his garrison was ever ready for a sally. The Count de Tendilla, however, had been relieved from this arduous post; and it had been given in charge to Don Gutiere de Padilla, clavero or treasurer of the order of Calatrava: an easy, indulgent man, who had with him three hundred gallant knights of his order, beside other mercenary troops. The garrison had fallen off in discipline; the cavaliers were hardy in fight and daring in foray, but confident in themselves, and negligent of proper precautions. Just before the journey of El Zagal, a number of these cavaliers, with several soldiers of fortune of the garrison, in all one hundred and seventy men, had sallied forth to harass the Moorish country, during its present distracted state; and having ravaged the valleys of the Sierra Nevada, or snowy mountains, were returning to Alhama, in gay spirits, and laden with booty.

As El Zagal passed through the neighbourhood of Alhama, he recollected the ancient perils of the road, and sent light corridors in advance, to inspect each rock and ravine where a foe might lurk in ambush. One of these scouts, overlooking a narrow valley, which opened upon the road, descried a troop of horsemen, on the banks of a little stream. They were dismounted, and had taken the bridles from their steeds, that they might crop the fresh grass on the banks of the river. The horsemen were scattered about; some reposing in the shade of rocks and trees, others gambling for the spoil they had taken. Not a sentinel was posted to keep guard; every thing showed the perfect security of men who consider themselves beyond the reach of danger.

These careless cavaliers were, in fact, the knights of Calatrava, with a part of their companions in arms, returning from their foray. A part of their force had passed on with the cavalgada; ninety of the principal cavaliers had halted, to repose and refresh themselves in this valley. El Zagal smiled with ferocious joy, when he heard of their negligent security. "Here will be trophies," said he, "to grace our entrance into Granada." Approaching the valley with cautious silence, he wheeled into it at full speed,

at the head of his troop, and attacked the Christians so suddenly and furiously, that they had not time to put the bridles upon their horses, or even to leap into the saddles. They made a confused but valiant defence, fighting among the rocks, and in the rugged bed of the river. Their defence was useless; seventy-nine were slain, the remaining eleven were taken prisoners.

A party of the Moors galloped in pursuit of the *cávalgada*: they soon overtook it, winding slowly up a hill. The horse-men, who convoyed it, perceiving the enemy at a distance, made their escape, and left the spoil to be retaken by the Moors.

El Zagal gathered together his captives and his booty, and proceeded, elate with success, to Granada. He paused before the gate of Elvira; for as yet he had not been proclaimed king. This ceremony was immediately performed; for the fame of his recent exploit had preceded him, and had intoxicated the minds of the giddy populace.

He entered Granada in a sort of triumph. The eleven captive knights of Calatrava walked in front. Next were paraded the ninety captured steeds, bearing the armour and weapons of their late owners, and mounted by as many Moors. Then came seventy Moorish horsemen, with as many Christian heads hanging at their saddle-bows. Muley Abdalla el Zagal followed, surrounded by a number of distinguished cavaliers, richly attired; and the pageant was closed by a long *cávalgada* of the flocks, and herds, and other booty, recovered from the Christians.\*

The populace gazed with almost savage triumph at these captive cavaliers, and the gory heads of their companions; knowing them to have been part of the formidable garrison of Alhama, so long the scourge of Granada, and the terror of the vega. They hailed this petty triumph as an auspicious opening of the reign of their new monarch. For several days the names of Muley Aben Hassan and Boabdil el Chico were never mentioned but with contempt; and the whole city resounded with the praises of El Zagal, or "the valiant."

\* Zurita, lib. xx. c. 62. Mariana, Hist. España. Abarca, Anales de Aragon.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

How the Count de Cabra attempted to capture another king, and how he fared in his attempt.

THE elevation of a bold and active veteran to the throne of Granada, in place of its late bedridden king, made a vast difference in the aspect of the war, and called for some blow that should dash the confidence of the Moors in their new monarch, and animate the Christians to fresh exertions.

Don Diego de Cordova, the brave Count de Cabra, was at this time in his castle of Vaena, where he kept a wary eye upon the frontier. It was now the latter part of August; and he grieved, that the summer should pass away without any inroad into the country of the foe. He sent out his scouts on the prowl, and they brought him word, that the important post of Moclin was but weakly garrisoned. This was a castellated town, strongly situate upon a high mountain, partly surrounded by thick forests, and partly girdled by a river. It defended one of the rugged and solitary passes by which the Christians were wont to make their inroads; insomuch that the Moors, in their figurative way, denominated it the shield of Granada.

The Count de Cabra sent word to the monarchs of the feeble state of the garrison, and gave it as his opinion, that, by a secret and rapid expedition, the place might be surprised. King Ferdinand asked the advice of his counsellors. Some cautioned him against the sanguine temperament of the count, and his heedlessness of danger. Moclin, they observed, was near to Granada, and might be promptly reinforced. The opinion of the count, however, prevailed; the king considering him almost infallible in matters of border warfare, since his capture of Boabdil el Chico.

The king departed from Cordova, therefore, and took post at Alcalá la Real, for the purpose of being near to Moclin. The queen also proceeded to Vaena, accompanied by her children, Prince Juan and the Princess Isabella, and her great counsellor in all matters, public and private, spiritual and temporal, the venerable grand cardinal of Spain.

Nothing could exceed the pride and satisfaction of the loyal Count de Cabra, when he saw this stately train winding along the dreary mountain roads, and entering the gates of Vaena. He received his royal guests with all due ceremony, and lodged them in the best apartments that the warrior castle afforded; being the same that had formerly been occupied by the royal captive Boabdil.

King Ferdinand had concerted a wary plan to insure the success of the enterprise. The Count de Cabra and Don Martin Alonso de Montemayor were to set forth with their troops, so as to reach Moclin by a certain hour, and to intercept all who should attempt to enter, or should sally from the town. The Master of Calatrava, the troops of the grand cardinal commanded by the Count of Buendia, and the forces of the Bishop of Jaen, led by that belligerent prelate, amounting in all to four thousand horse and six thousand foot, were to set off in time to co-operate with the Count de Cabra, so as to surround the town. The king was to follow with his whole force, and encamp before the place.

And here the worthy Padre Fray Antonio Agapida breaks forth into a triumphant eulogy of the pious prelates, who thus mingled personally in these scenes of warfare. "As this was a holy crusade," says he, "undertaken for the advancement of the faith, and the glory of the church, so was it always countenanced and upheld by saintly men. For the victories of their most catholic majesties were not followed, like those of more worldly sovereigns, by erecting castles and towers, and appointing alcaides and garrisons, but by founding of convents and cathedrals, and the establishment of wealthy bishoprics. Wherefore their majesties were always surrounded, in court or camp, in the cabinet or in the field, by a crowd of ghostly advisers, inspiring them to the prosecution of this most righteous war. Nay, the holy men of the church did not scruple, at times, to buckle on the cuirass over the cassock, to exchange the crosier for the lance; and thus, with corporal hands, and temporal weapons, to fight the good fight of the faith."

But to return from this rhapsody of

the worthy friar. The Count de Cabra, being instructed in the complicated arrangements of the king, marched forth at midnight to execute them punctually. He led his troops by the little river, which winds below Vaena, and so up the wild defiles of the mountains; marching all night, and stopping only in the heat of the following day, to repose under the shadowy cliffs of a deep barranca, calculating to arrive at Moclin exactly in time to co-operate with the other forces.

The troops had scarcely stretched themselves on the earth to take repose, when a scout arrived, bringing word, that El Zagal had suddenly sallied out of Granada, with a strong force, and had encamped in the vicinity of Moclin. It was plain, that the wary Moor had received information of the intended attack. This, however, was not the idea that presented itself to the mind of the Count de Cabra. He had captured one king: here was a fair opportunity to secure another. What a triumph, to lodge a second captive monarch in his castle of Vaena! What a prisoner to deliver into the hands of his royal mistress! Fired with the thought, the good count forgot all the arrangements of the king; or rather, blinded by former success, he trusted every thing to courage and fortune; and thought that, by one bold swoop, he might again bear off the royal prize, and wear his laurels without competition. His only fear was, that the Master of Calatrava, and the belligerent bishop, might come up in time to share the glory of the victory. So ordering every one to horse, this hot-spirited cavalier pushed on for Moclin, without allowing his troops the necessary time for repose.\*

The evening closed as the count arrived in the neighbourhood of Moclin. It was the full of the moon, and a bright and cloudless night. The count was marching through one of those deep valleys or ravines, worn in the Spanish mountains by the brief but tremendous torrents, which prevail during the autumnal rains. It was walled, on both sides, by lofty and almost perpendicular cliffs; but the strong gleams of moonlight that penetrated to the bottom of the glen, glittered on the armour

\* Mariana, lib. xxv. c. 17. Abarca. Zurita, etc.

of the squadrons, as they silently passed through it. Suddenly the warcry of the Moors rose in various parts of the valley. "El Zagal! El Zagal!" was shouted from every cliff, accompanied by showers of missiles, that struck down several of the Christian warriors. The count lifted up his eyes, and beheld, by the light that prevailed, every cliff glistening with Moorish soldiery. The deadly shower fell thickly round him; and the shining armour of his followers made them fair objects for the aim of the enemy. The count saw his brother Gonzalo struck dead by his side; his own horse sunk under him, pierced by four Moorish lances; and he received a wound in the hand from an arquebuse. He remembered the horrible massacre of the mountains of Malaga, and feared a similar catastrophe. There was no time to pause. His brother's horse, freed from his slaughtered rider, was running at large; seizing the reins, he sprang into the saddle, called upon his men to follow him, and, wheeling round, retreated out of the fatal valley.

The Moors, rushing down from the heights, pursued the retreating Christians. The chase endured for a league; but it was a league of rough and broken ground, where the Christians had to turn and fight at almost every step. In these short but fierce combats, the enemy lost many cavaliers of note; but the loss of the Christians was infinitely more grievous, comprising numbers of the noblest warriors of Vaena and its vicinity. Many of the Christians, disabled by wounds, or exhausted by fatigue, turned aside, and endeavoured to conceal themselves among rocks and thickets, but never more rejoined their companions; being slain or captured by the Moors, or perishing in their wretched retreats.

The arrival of the troops led by the Master of Calatrava and the Bishop of Jaen, put an end to the rout. El Zagal contented himself with the laurels he had gained; and, ordering the trumpets to call off his men from the pursuit, returned in great triumph to Moclin.\*

Queen Isabella was at Vaena, awaiting in great anxiety, the result of the expe-

dition. She was in a stately apartment of the castle, looking towards the road that winds through the mountains from Moclin, and regarding the watchtowers, that crowned the neighbouring heights, in hopes of favourable signals. The prince and princess, her children, were with her, and her venerable counsellor, the grand cardinal. All shared in the anxiety of the moment. At length couriers were seen riding down towards the town. They entered its gates; but, before they reached the castle, the nature of their tidings was known to the queen, by the shrieks and wailings that rose from the streets below. The messengers were soon followed by wounded fugitives, hastening home to be relieved, or to die among their friends and families. The whole town resounded with lamentations, for it had lost the flower of its youth, and its bravest warriors. Isabella was a woman of courageous soul, but her feelings were overpowered by the spectacle of woe which presented itself on every side. Her maternal heart mourned over the death of so many loyal subjects, who, so shortly before, had rallied round her with devoted affection; and, losing her usual self-command, she sunk into deep despondency.

In this gloomy state of mind, a thousand apprehensions crowded upon her. She dreaded the confidence which this success would impart to the Moors. She feared, also, for the important fortress of Alhama, the garrison of which had not been reinforced since its foraging party had been cut off by this same El Zagal. On every side the queen saw danger and disaster, and feared that a general rout was about to attend the Castilian arms.

The grand cardinal comforted her with both spiritual and worldly counsel. He told her to recollect, that no country was ever conquered, without occasional reverses to the conquerors; that the Moors were a warlike people, fortified in a rough and mountainous country where they never could be conquered by her ancestors; and that, in fact, her armies had already, in three years, taken more cities than those of any of her predecessors had been able to do in twelve. He concluded by offering to take the field, with three thousand cavalry, his own retainers, paid

\* Zurita, lib. xx. c. 4. Pulgar, Crónica.

and maintained by himself, and either hasten to the relief of Alhama, or undertake any other expedition her majesty might command. The discreet words of the cardinal soothed the spirit of the queen, who always looked to him for consolation, and she soon recovered her usual equanimity.

Some of the counsellors of Isabella, of that politic class who seek to rise by the faults of others, were loud in their censures of the rashness of the count. The queen defended him with prompt generosity. "The enterprise," said she, "was rash; but not more rash than that of Lucena, which was crowned with success, and which we have all applauded, as the height of heroism. Had the Count de Cabra succeeded in capturing the uncle, as he did the nephew, who is there that would not have praised him to the skies?"

The magnanimous words of the queen put a stop to all invidious remarks in her presence; but certain of the courtiers, who had envied the count the glory gained by his former achievements, continued to magnify, among themselves, his present imprudence; and we are told by Fray Antonio Agapida, that they sneeringly gave the worthy cavalier the appellation of "Count de Cabra, the king-catcher."

Ferdinand had reached the place on the frontier called the Fountain of the King, within three leagues of Moclin, when he heard of the late disaster. He greatly lamented the precipitation of the count, but forebore to express himself with severity; for he knew the value of that loyal and valiant cavalier.\* He held a council of war to determine what course was to be pursued. Some of his cavaliers advised him to abandon the attempt upon Moclin, the place being strongly reinforced, and the enemy inspirited by his recent victory. Certain old Spanish hidalgos reminded him, that he had but a few Castilian troops in his army, without which staunch soldiery his predecessors never presumed to enter the Moorish territory; while others remonstrated, that it would be beneath the dignity of the king to retire from an

enterprise on account of the defeat of a single cavalier and his retainers. In this way, the king was distracted by a multitude of counsellors; when fortunately a letter from the queen put an end to his perplexities. Proceed we, in the next chapter, to relate what was the purport of that letter.

#### CHAPTER XXXIII.

##### Expedition against the castles of Cambil and Albahar.

"HAPPY are those princes," exclaims the worthy Padre Fray Antonio Agapida, "who have women and priests to advise them; for in these dwelleth the spirit of counsel!" While Ferdinand and his captains were confounding each other in their deliberations at the Fountain of the King, a quiet but deep little council of war was held in the state-apartment of the old castle of Vaena, between Queen Isabella, the venerable Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, Grand Cardinal of Spain, and Don Garcia Osorio, the belligerent bishop of Jaen. This last worthy prelate, who had exchanged his mitre for a helm, no sooner beheld the defeat of the enterprise against Moclin, than he turned the reins of his sleek, stall-fed steed, and hastened back to Vaena, full of a project for the employment of the army, the advancement of the faith, and the benefit of his own diocese. He knew that the actions of the king were influenced by the opinions of the queen; and that the queen always inclined a listening ear to the councils of saintly men. He laid his plans, therefore, with the customary wisdom of his cloth, to turn the ideas of the queen into the proper channel; and this was the purport of the worthy bishop's suggestions.

The bishopric of Jaen had for a long time been harassed by two Moorish castles, the scourge and terror of all that part of the country. They were situate on the frontiers of the kingdom of Granada, about four leagues from Jaen, in a deep, narrow, and rugged valley, surrounded by lofty mountains. Through this valley runs the Rio Frio, or "cold river," in a deep channel, between high precipitous rocks. On each side of the stream rise two vast rocks, nearly per-

\* Abarca, Anales de Aragon.

pendicular, within a stone's-throw of each other; blocking up the narrow gorge of the valley. On the summits of these rocks stood the two formidable castles of Cambil and Albahar, fortified with battlements and towers of great height and thickness. They were connected together by a bridge, thrown from rock to rock across the river. The road which passed through the valley traversed this bridge, and was completely commanded by these castles. They stood, like two giants of romance, guarding the pass and dominating the valley.

The kings of Granada, knowing the importance of these castles, kept them always well garrisoned and victualled, to stand a siege; with fleet steeds and hard riders, to forage the country of the Christians. The warlike race of the Abencerrages, the troops of the royal household, and others of the choicest chivalry of Granada, made them their strongholds, from whence to sally forth on those predatory and roving enterprises which were the delight of the Moorish cavaliers. As the wealthy bishopric of Jaen lay immediately at hand, it suffered more peculiarly from these marauders. They drove off the fat beeves, and the flocks of sheep from the pastures, and swept the labourers from the field. They scoured the country to the very gates of Jaen; so that the citizens could not venture from their walls without the risk of being borne off captive to the dungeons of these castles.

The worthy bishop, like a good pastor, beheld, with grief of heart, his fat bishopric daily waxing leaner and leaner, and poorer and poorer; and his holy ire was kindled at the thought, that the possessions of the church should thus be at the mercy of a crew of infidels.

It was the urgent counsel of the bishop, therefore, that the military force thus providentially assembled in the neighbourhood, since it was apparently foiled in its attempt upon Moclin, should be turned against these insolent castles, and the country delivered from their domination. The grand cardinal supported the suggestion of the bishop, and declared, that he had long meditated the policy of a measure of the kind. Their united opinions found favour with the queen,

and she despatched a letter on the subject to the king. It came just in time to relieve him from the distraction of a multitude of counsellors, and he immediately undertook the reduction of the castles.

The Marquis of Cadiz was, accordingly, sent in advance, with two thousand horse, to keep watch upon the garrisons, and prevent all entrance or exit until the king should arrive with the main army and the battering artillery. The queen, to be near at hand in case of need, moved her quarters to the city of Jaen, where she was received with martial honours by the belligerent bishop, who had buckled on his cuirass, and girded on his sword, to fight in the cause of his diocese.

In the mean time, the Marquis of Cadiz arrived in the valley, and completely shut up the Moors within their walls. The castles were under the command of Mahomet Lentin ben Usef, an Abencerrage, and one of the bravest cavaliers of Granada. In his garrisons were many troops of the fierce African tribe of Gomeris. Mahomet Lentin, confident in the strength of his fortresses, smiled, as he looked down from his battlements, upon the Christian cavalry, perplexed in the rough and narrow valley. He sent forth skirmishing parties to harass them; and there were many sharp combats between small parties and single knights; but the Moors were driven back to the castles; and all attempts to send intelligence of their situation to Granada were intercepted by the vigilance of the Marquis of Cadiz.

At length the legions of the royal army came pouring, with fluttering banner and vaunting trumpet, along the defiles of the mountains. They halted before the castles; but the king could not find room, in the narrow and rugged valley, to form his camp: he had to divide it into three parts, which were posted on different heights, and his tents whitened the sides of the neighbouring hills. When the encampment was formed, the army remained gazing idly at the castles. The artillery was upwards of four leagues in the rear, and without artillery all attack would be in vain.

The alcaide, Mahomet Lentin, knew the nature of the road by which the artil-

lery had to be brought. It was merely a rugged path, at times scaling almost perpendicular crags and precipices, up which it was utterly impossible for wheel-carriages to pass; neither was it in the power of man or beast to draw up the lombards and other ponderous ordnance. He felt assured, therefore, that they never could be brought to the camp; and, without their aid, what could the Christians effect against his rock-built castles? He scoffed at them, therefore, as he saw their tents by day, and their fires by night, covering the surrounding heights. "Let them linger here a little while longer," said he, "and the autumnal torrents will wash them from the mountains."

While the alcaide was thus closely mewed up within his walls, and the Christians lay inactive in their camp, he noticed, one calm autumnal day, the sound of implements of labour echoing among the mountains, and now and then the crash of a fallen tree, or a thundering report, as if some rock had been heaved from its bed, and hurled into the valley. The alcaide was on the battlements of his castle, surrounded by his knights. "Methinks," said he, "these Christians are making war upon the rocks and trees of the mountains, since they find our castles unassailable."

The sounds did not cease even during the night; every now and then the Moorish sentinel, as he paced the battlements, heard some crash echoing among the heights. The return of day explained the mystery. Scarcely did the sun shine against the summits of the mountains, than shouts burst from the cliffs opposite to the castles, and were answered from the camp with joyful sound of kettledrums and trumpets.

The astonished Moors lifted up their eyes, and beheld, as it were, a torrent of war breaking out of the narrow defile. There was a multitude of men with pick-axes, spades, and bars of iron, clearing away every obstacle, while behind them slowly moved along great teams of oxen, dragging heavy ordnance, and all the munitions of battering warfare.

"What cannot women and priests effect, when they unite in counsel!" exclaims again the worthy Antonio Agapida. The queen had held another con-

sultation with the grand cardinal, and the belligerent Bishop of Jaen. It was clear, that the heavy ordnance could never be conveyed to the camp by the regular road of the country, and on this must depend every hope of success. It was suggested, however, by the zealous bishop, that another road might be opened through a more practicable part of the mountains. It would be an undertaking extravagant and chimerical with ordinary means, and, therefore, unlooked-for by the enemy; but what could not kings do, who had treasures and armies at command?

The project struck the enterprising spirit of the queen. Six thousand men, with pickaxes, crowbars, and every other necessary implement, were set to work, day and night, to break a road through the very centre of the mountains. No time was to be lost; for it was rumoured, that El Zagal was about to march with a mighty host to the relief of the castles. The bustling Bishop of Jaen acted as pioneer, to mark the route and superintend the labourers; and the grand cardinal took care that the work should never languish through lack of money.\*

"When kings' treasures," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "are dispensed by priestly hands, there is no stint, as the glorious annals of Spain bear witness." Under the guidance of these ghostly men, it seemed as if miracles were effected. Almost an entire mountain was levelled, valleys filled up, trees hewn down, rocks broken and overturned; in short, all the obstacles, which nature had heaped around, entirely and promptly vanquished. In little more than twelve days this gigantic work was accomplished, and the ordnance dragged to the camp, to the great triumph of the Christians, and confusion of the Moors.†

No sooner was the heavy artillery arrived than it was disposed in all haste upon the neighbouring heights. Francisco Ramirez de Madrid, the first engineer in Spain, superintended the batteries, and soon opened a destructive fire upon the castles.

When the valiant alcaide, Mahomet

\* Zurita, *Anales de Aragon*, lib. xx. c. 64. Pulgar, part iii. c. 51.

† *Ibid.*



Lentin, found his towers tumbling about him, and his bravest men dashed from the walls, without the power of inflicting a wound upon the foe, his haughty spirit was greatly exasperated. "Of what avail," said he, "is all the prowess of knighthood against these cowardly engines, that murder from afar?"

For a whole day a tremendous fire kept thundering upon the castle of Albar. The lombards discharged large stones, which demolished two of the towers, and all the battlements which guarded the portal. If any Moors attempted to defend the walls, or repair the breaches, they were shot down by ribadoquines, and other small pieces of artillery. The Christian soldiery issued forth from the camp, under cover of this fire, and, approaching the castles, discharged flights of arrows and stones through the openings made by the ordinance.

At length, to bring the siege to a conclusion, Francisco Ramirez elevated some of the heaviest artillery on a mount, that rose in form of a cone or pyramid, on the side of the river near to Albar, and commanded both castles. This was an operation of great skill and excessive labour, but it was repaid by complete success; for the Moors did not dare to wait until this terrible battery should discharge its fury. Satisfied that all further resistance was vain, the valiant alcaide made signal for a parley. The articles of capitulation were soon arranged. The alcaide and his garrison were permitted to return in safety to the city of Granada, and the castles were delivered into the possession of King Ferdinand, on the day of the festival of St. Matthew, in the month of September. They were immediately repaired, strongly garrisoned, and given in charge to the city of Jaen.

The effects of this triumph were immediately apparent. Quiet and security once more settled upon the bishopric. The husbandmen tilled their fields in peace, the herds and flocks fattened unmolested in the pastures, and the vineyards yielded corpulent skinsful of rosy wine. The good bishop enjoyed, in the gratitude of his people, the approbation of his conscience, the increase of his

revenues, and the abundance of his table, a reward for all his toils and perils. "This glorious victory," exclaims Fray Antonio Agapida, "achieved by such extraordinary management and infinite labour, is a shining example of what a bishop can effect for the promotion of the faith, and the good of his diocese."

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

Enterprise of the knights of Calatrava against Zalea.

WHILE these events were taking place on the northern frontier of the kingdom of Granada, the important fortress of Alhama was neglected, and its commander, Don Gutiere de Padilla, clavero of Calatrava,\* reduced to great perplexity. The remnant of the foraging party which had been surprised and massacred by the fierce El Zagal, when on his way to Granada to receive the crown, had returned in confusion and dismay to the fortress. They could only speak of their own disgrace, being obliged to abandon their cavalgada, and to fly, pursued by a superior force. Of the flower of their party, the gallant knights of Calatrava, who had remained behind in the valley, they knew nothing. A few days cleared up the mystery, and brought tidings of their steeds, led in triumph into the gates of Granada; and their bleeding heads borne at the saddle-bows of the warriors of El Zagal. Their fellow-knights, who formed a part of the garrison, were struck with horror at the dismal story, and panted to revenge their death. Their number, however, was too much reduced by the loss to take the field; for the vega swarmed with the troops of El Zagal. They could not even venture forth to forage for provisions; and the defeat of the Count de Cabra having interrupted their customary supplies, they were reduced to such extremity, that they had to kill several of their horses for food.

Don Gutiere de Padilla, clavero of Calatrava, the commander of the fortress, was pondering one day over the

\* Clavero of Calatrava is he who bears the keys of the castle, convents, and archives of the order. It is an office of great honour and distinction.

gloomy state of affairs, when a Moor was brought before him, who had applied at the gate for an audience. He bore a budget, and appeared to be one of those itinerant merchants who wandered about the country in those days, hanging on the skirts of armies, to purchase the spoils of the soldiery, and who would pretend to sell amulets, trinkets, and perfumes, but would often draw forth from their wallets articles of great rarity and value: rich shawls, chains of gold, necklaces of pearls and diamonds, and costly gems, the plunder of camps and cities. The Moor approached the clavero with a mysterious look. "Senior," said he, "I would speak with you alone; I have a precious jewel to dispose of." "I need no jewels," said the clavero, abruptly; "take thy wares to the soldiery." "By the blood of him who died on the cross," exclaimed the Moor, with earnest solemnity, "do not turn a deaf ear to my offer: the jewel I have to sell would be to you of inestimable value, and you alone can be the purchaser."

The clavero was moved by the earnestness of the Moor, and perceived, that, under the figurative language common to his countrymen, he concealed some meaning of importance. He made a sign, therefore, to his attendants to withdraw. The Moor looked after them, until the door closed; then advancing cautiously, "What will you give me," said he, "if I deliver the fortress of Zalea into your hands?"

Zalea was a strong town about two leagues distant, which had been a hostile and dangerous neighbour to Alhama; its warriors laying ambuscades to surprise the knights of Calatrava, when out upon a forage, and to intercept and cut off their supplies and cavalgadas.

The clavero looked with mingled surprise and distrust at this itinerant pedler, who thus offered to traffic for a warlike town. "Thou talkest," said he, "of selling me Zalea; what means hast thou of making good the sale?" "I have a brother in the garrison," replied the Moor, "who for a proper sum paid down, will admit a body of troops by night into the citadel."

"And for a sum of gold, then," said the clavero, regarding him with stern

scrutiny, "thou art prepared to betray thy people and thy faith?"

"I abjure them and their faith," replied the Moor: "my mother was a Castilian captive; her people shall be my people, and her religion my religion."

The cautious clavero still distrusted the sincerity of this mongrel Moor and piebald Christian. "What assurance," continued he, "have I, that thou wilt deal more truly with me, than with the alcaide of the fortress thou wouldst betray? To me thou hast no tie of fealty, to him thou owest thy allegiance."

"I owe him no allegiance!" cried the Moor, fire flashing from his eyes: "the alcaide is a tyrant, a dog! he has robbed me of my merchandise, stripped me of my lawful booty, and ordered me the bastinado, because I dared to complain. May the curse of God light upon me, if I rest contented, until I have ample vengeance!"

"Enough," said the clavero; "I will trust to thy vengeance, even more than to thy Christianity."

Don Gutiere now summoned a council of his principal knights. They were all eager for the enterprise, as a mode of revenging the death of their companions, and wiping off the stigma cast upon the order by the late defeat. Spies were sent to reconnoitre Zalea, and to communicate with the brother of the Moor; the sum to be paid as a recompense was adjusted, and every arrangement made for the enterprise.

On the appointed night, a party of cavaliers set out under the guidance of the Moor. When they came near to Zalea, their leader bound the hands of the guide behind his back, and pledged his knightly word to strike him dead on the least sign of treachery; he then bade him lead the way. It was midnight, when they arrived in silence under the walls of the citadel. At a low signal, a ladder of ropes was let down: Gutiere Muñoz and Pedro de Alvarado were the first to ascend, followed by half a dozen others. They surprised the guards, cut them down, threw them over the wall, and gained possession of a tower. The alarm was given, the whole citadel was in confusion, but already the knights of Calatrava were in every part. They

called to each other to remember their brethren massacred in the valley of the vega, and their bloody heads borne in triumph to Granada. They fought with sanguinary fury; most of the half-armed and bewildered garrison were put to the sword; the rest were taken prisoners; in an hour they were masters of the citadel, and the town submitted of course.

They found the magazines stored with all kinds of provisions, with which they loaded an immense train of beasts of burden, for the relief of the famishing garrison of Alhama.

Thus did the gallant knights of Calatrava gain the strong town of Zalea, with scarcely any loss, and atone for the inglorious defeat sustained by their companions. Large reinforcements and supplies from the sovereigns arriving soon after, strengthened them in their own fortress, and enabled them to keep possession of their new conquest. This gallant affair took place about the same time as the capture of Cambil and Alhar; and these two achievements gave a prosperous termination to the chequered events of this important year. Ferdinand and Isabella retired for the winter to Alcala de Henares, where the queen, on the 16th of December, gave birth to the infanta Catherine, afterwards spouse to Henry VIII. of England.

#### CHAPTER XXXV.

##### Death of old Muley Aben Hassan.

THE personal exploits with which El Zagal had commenced his reign, in surprising the knights of Calatrava, and defeating the Count de Cabra, had given him a transient popularity, which he had promoted by feasts and tournaments, and other public rejoicings, in which the Moors delighted. Knowing, however, the uncertain nature of the people over whom he reigned, he feared some capricious revolution in favour of his deposed brother, Muley Aben Hassan. That once fiery old monarch was now blind and bedridden, and lived in a kind of durance in the city of Almuneçar. He was treated, however, with deference and attention; for the garrison had been originally appointed by himself. El Zagal, having now a little leisure during

the interval of the campaigns, became suddenly solicitous about the death of his brother, and had him removed to Salobreña, for the benefit of purer and more salubrious air.

The small town of Salobreña was situate on a lofty hill, that rose out of the centre of a beautiful and fertile valley on the Mediterranean coast. It was protected by a strong castle, built by the Moorish kings, as a place of deposit for their treasures. Here also they sent such of their sons and brothers as might endanger the security of their reign. They lived here, prisoners at large, in a state of voluptuous repose, under a serene sky, in a soft climate and luxuriant valley. The palace was adorned with fountains, and delicious gardens, and perfumed baths; a harem of beauties was at the command of the royal captives, and music and the dance beguiled the lagging hours. Nothing was denied them but the liberty to depart; that alone was wanting to render the abode a perfect paradise.

Notwithstanding the extreme salubrity of the air, and the assiduous attentions of the commander, who was devoted to El Zagal, and had been particularly charged by him to be watchful over the health of his brother, the old monarch had not been here many days before he expired. There was nothing surprising in this event; for life with him had long glimmered in the socket; but the measures immediately taken by El Zagal roused the suspicions of the public. With indecent haste, he ordered that the treasures of the deceased should be packed upon mules, and conveyed to Granada, where he took possession of them to the exclusion of the children. The sultana Zorayna, and her two sons, were imprisoned in the Alhambra, in the tower of Comares; the same place, where, by her instigation, the virtuous Ayxa la Horra and her son Boabdil had once been confined. There she had leisure to ruminate on the disappointment of all her schemes, perfidiously executed, for the advancement of those sons, who were her fellow-prisoners. The corpse of old Muley Aben Hassan was also brought to Granada; not in state, like the remains of a once powerful sovereign, but transported

ignominiously on a mule. It received no funeral honours, but was borne obscurely to the grave by two Christian captives, and deposited in the Royal Osario or charnel-house.\*

No sooner were the people well assured that old Muley Aben Hassan was dead and buried, than they all with one accord, began to deplore his loss, and extol his memory. They admitted, that he had been fierce and cruel, but then he had been brave: it was true, he had pulled down this war upon their heads; but he had himself also been crushed by it. In a word, he was dead; and his death atoned for every fault: for a king, just deceased, is generally either a hero or a saint. In proportion as they ceased to hate Muley Aben Hassan, they began to hate his brother El Zagal. The manner of the old king's death, the eagerness to seize upon his treasures, the scandalous neglect of his corpse, and the imprisonment of his sultana and children, all filled the public mind with dark suspicions; and the name of El Zagal was often coupled with the epithets of fratricide, in the low murmurings of the people.

As the public must always have some leading person to like, as well as to hate, there began once more to be an inquiry after Boabdil el Chico. That unfortunate monarch was living at Cordova, under the shade of the cold friendship of Ferdinand, who had ceased to regard him with much attention, when he was no longer useful to his interests. No sooner, however, did the public favour once more incline towards him, than the kindness of the catholic monarch immediately revived. He furnished him with money and means again to elevate his standard, and create a division in the Moorish power. By this assistance, Boabdil established the shadow of a court, at Velez el Blanco, a strong frontier town on the confines of Murcia, where he remained, as it were, with one foot over the border, and ready to draw that back, at a moment's warning. His presence, however, gave new life to his faction in Granada. It is true, the more courtly and opulent inhabitants of the quarter of the Alham-

bra still rallied round the throne of El Zagal, as the great seat of power; but then the inhabitants of the albaycen, the poorest part of the community, who had nothing to risk, and nothing to lose, were almost unanimous in favour of the indigent Boabdil. So it is in this wonderful system of sublunary affairs; the rich befriend the rich, the powerful stand by the powerful, while the poor enjoy the sterile assistance of their fellows: thus, each one seeking his kind, the admirable order of all things is maintained, and a universal harmony prevails.

#### CHAPTER XXXVI.

Of the Christian army, which assembled at the city of Cordova.

GREAT and glorious was the style with which the catholic sovereigns opened another year's campaign of this eventful war. It was like commencing another act of stately and heroic drama, where the curtain rises to the inspiring sound of martial melody, and the whole stage glitters with the array of warriors and the pomp of arms. The ancient city of Cordova was the place appointed by the sovereigns for the assemblage of the troops; and, early in the spring of 1486, the fair valley of the Guadalquivir resounded with the shrill blast of trumpet, and the impatient neighing of the war-horse. In this splendid era of Spanish chivalry there was a rivalry among the nobles, who most should distinguish himself by the splendour of his appearance, and the number and equipments of his feudal followers. Every day beheld some cavalier of note, the representative of some proud and powerful house, entering the gates of Cordova with sound of trumpet, and displaying his banner and device, renowned in many a contest. He would appear in sumptuous array, surrounded by pages and lackeys, no less gorgeously attired, and followed by a host of vassals and retainers, horse and foot, all admirably equipped in burnished armour.

Such was the state of Don Inigo Lopez de Mendoza, Duke del Infantado; who may be cited as a picture of a warlike noble of those times. He brought with him five hundred men-at-arms of his

\* Cura de Los Palacios, cap. lxxvii.

household, equipped and mounted *à la geneta* and *à la guisa*. The cavaliers who attended him were both magnificently armed and dressed. The housings of fifty of his horses were of rich cloth, embroidered with gold; and others were of brocade. The sumpter-mules had housings of the same, with halters of silk; while the bridles, head-pieces, and all the harnessing, glittered with silver.

The camp equipage of these noble and luxurious warriors was equally magnificent. Their tents were gay pavilions, of various colours, fitted up with silken hangings, and decorated with fluttering pennons. They had vessels of gold and silver for the service of their tables, as if they were about to engage in a course of stately feasts and courtly revels, instead of the stern encounters of rugged and mountainous warfare. Sometimes they passed through the streets of Cordova at night, in splendid cavalcade, with great numbers of lighted torches, the rays of which, falling upon polished armour, and nodding plumes, and silken scarfs, and trappings of golden embroidery, filled all beholders with admiration.\*

But it was not the chivalry of Spain alone which thronged the streets of Cordova. The fame of this war had spread throughout Christendom: it was considered a kind of crusade; and catholic knights from all parts hastened to signalize themselves in so holy a cause. There were several valiant chevaliers from France, among whom the most distinguished was Gaston de Léon, seneschal of Toulouse. With him came a gallant train, well armed and mounted, and decorated with rich surcoats and panaches of feathers. These cavaliers, it is said, eclipsed all others in the light festivities of the court. They were devoted to the fair; but not after the solemn and passionate manner of the Spanish lovers: they were gay, gallant, and joyous, in their amours, and captivated by the vivacity of their attacks. They were at first held in light estimation by the grave and stately Spanish knights, until they made themselves to be respected by their wonderful prowess in the field.

\* Pulgar, part iii, cap. 41, 56.

The most conspicuous of the volunteers, however, who appeared in Cordova on this occasion, was an English knight of royal connexion. This was the Lord Scales, Earl of Rivers, related to the Queen of England, wife of Henry VII. He had distinguished himself, in the preceding year, at the battle of Bosworth Field, where Henry Tudor, then Earl of Richmond, overcame Richard III. That decisive battle having left the country at peace, the Earl of Rivers, retaining a passion for warlike scenes, repaired to the Castilian court, to keep his arms in exercise in a campaign against the Moors. He brought with him a hundred archers, all dexterous with the long-bow and the cloth-yard arrow; also two hundred yeomen, armed cap-à-pié, who fought with pike and battle-axe; men robust of frame, and of prodigious strength.

The worthy Padre Fray Antonio Agapida describes this stranger knight and his followers with his accustomed accuracy and minuteness. "This cavalier," he observes, "was from the island of England, and brought with him a train of his vassals; men who had been hardened in certain civil wars which had raged in their country. They were a comely race of men, but too fair and fresh for warriors; not having the sunburnt, martial hue of our old Castilian soldiery. They were huge feeders, also, and deep carousers; and could not accommodate themselves to the sober diet of our troops, but must fain eat and drink after the manner of their own country. They were often noisy and unruly, also, in their wassail; and their quarter of the camp was prone to be a scene of loud revel and sudden brawl. They were withal of great pride; yet it was not like our inflammable Spanish pride: they stood not much upon the *pundonor* and high punctilio, and rarely drew the stiletto in their disputes: but their pride was silent and contumelious. Though from a remote and somewhat barbarous island, they yet believed themselves the most perfect men upon earth; and magnified their chieftain, the Lord Scales, beyond the greatest of our grandees. With all this, it must be said of them, that they were marvellous good

men in the field, dexterous archers, and powerful with the battle-axe. In their great pride and self-will, they always sought to press in the advance, and take the post of danger, trying to outvie our Spanish chivalry. They did not rush forward fiercely, or make a brilliant onset, like the Moorish and Spanish troops, but they went into the fight deliberately, and persisted obstinately, and were slow to find out when they were beaten. Withal, they were much esteemed, yet little liked, by our soldiery, who considered them staunch companions in the field, yet coveted but little fellowship with them in the camp.

"Their commander, the Lord Scales, was an accomplished cavalier, of gracious and noble presence, and fair speech. It was a marvel to see so much courtesy in a knight brought up so far from our Castilian court. He was much honoured by the king and queen, and found great favour with the fair dames about the court; who, indeed, are rather prone to be pleased with foreign cavaliers. He went always in costly state, attended by pages and esquires, and accompanied by noble young cavaliers of his country, who had enrolled themselves under his banner, to learn the gentle exercise of arms. In all pageants and festivals, the eyes of the populace were attracted by the singular bearing and rich array of the English earl and his train, who prided themselves in always appearing in the garb and manner of their country; and were indeed something very magnificent, delectable, and strange to behold."

The worthy chronicler is no less elaborate in his description of the masters of Santiago, Calatrava, and Alcantara, and their valiant knights; armed at all points, and decorated with the badges of their orders. "These," he affirms, "were the flower of Christian chivalry. Being constantly in service, they became more steadfast and accomplished in discipline than the irregular and temporary levies of the feudal nobles. Calm, solemn, and stately, they sat like towers upon their powerful chargers. On parades, they manifested none of the show and ostentation of the other troops. Neither, in battle, did they endeavour

to signalize themselves by any fiery vivacity, or desperate and vainglorious exploit; every thing with them was measured and sedate; yet it was observed, that none were more warlike in their appearance in the camp, or more terrible for their achievements in the field."

The gorgeous magnificence of the Spanish nobles found but little favour in the eyes of the sovereigns. They saw that it caused a competition in expense, ruinous to cavaliers of moderate fortune; and they feared that a softness and effeminacy might thus be introduced, incompatible with the stern nature of the war. They signified their disapprobation to several of the principal noblemen, and recommended a more sober and soldierlike display while in actual service.

"These are rare troops for a tourney, my lord," said Ferdinand to the Duke del Infantado, as he beheld his retainers glittering in gold and embroidery: "but gold, though gorgeous, is soft and yielding: iron is the metal for the field."

"Sire," replied the duke, "if my men parade in gold, your majesty will find they fight with steel." The king smiled, but shook his head; and the duke treasured up his speech in his heart.

It remains now to reveal the immediate object of this mighty and chivalrous preparation; which had, in fact, the gratification of a royal pique at bottom. The severe lesson which Ferdinand had received from the veteran Ali Atar, before the walls of Loxa, though it had been of great service in rendering him wary in his attacks upon fortified places, yet rankled sorely in his mind; and he had ever since held Loxa in peculiar odium. It was, in truth, one of the most belligerent and troublesome cities on the borders; incessantly harassing Andalusia by its incursions. It also intervened between the Christian territories and Alhama, and other important places, gained in the kingdom of Granada. For all these reasons, King Ferdinand had determined to make another grand attempt upon this warrior city; and for this purpose he had summoned to the field his most powerful chivalry.

It was in the month of May that the

king sallied from Cordova, at the head of his army. He had twelve thousand cavalry, and forty thousand foot-soldiers, with crossbows, lances, and arquebuses. There were six thousand pioneers, with hatchets, pickaxes, and crowbars, for levelling roads. He took with him, also, a great train of lombards and other heavy artillery; with a body of Germans, skilled in the service of ordnance, and the art of battering walls.

"It was a glorious spectacle," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "to behold this pompous pageant issuing forth from Cordova: the pennons and devices of the proudest houses of Spain, with those of gallant stranger knights, fluttering above a sea of crests and plumes; to see it slowly-moving, with flash of helmet, and cuirass, and buckler, across the ancient bridge, and reflected in the waters of the Guadalquivir: while the neigh of steed, and the blast of trumpet, vibrated in the air, and resounded to the distant mountains. But, above all," concludes the good father, with his accustomed zeal, "it was triumphant to behold the standard of the faith every where displayed; and to reflect, that this was no worldly-minded army, intent upon some temporal scheme of ambition or revenge; but a Christian host, bound on a crusade to extirpate the vile seed of Mahomet from the land, and to extend the pure dominion of the church."

#### CHAPTER XXXVII.

How fresh commotions broke out in Granada, and how the people undertook to allay them.

WHILE perfect unity of object, and harmony of operation, gave power to the Christian arms, the devoted kingdom of Granada continued a prey to internal feuds. The transient popularity of El Zagal had declined ever since the death of his brother, and the party of Boabdil el Chico was daily gaining strength. The albaycen and the Alhambra were again arrayed against each other in deadly strife, and the streets of unhappy Granada were daily dyed in the blood of her children.

In the midst of these dissensions, tidings arrived of the formidable army assembling at Cordova. The rival fac-

tions paused in their infatuated brawls, and were roused to a temporary sense of the common danger. They forthwith resorted to their old expedient of new-modelling their government, or rather, of making and unmaking kings. The elevation of El Zagal to the throne had not produced the desired effect. What, then, was to be done? Recall Boabdil el Chico, and acknowledge him again as sovereign? While they were in a popular tumult of deliberation, Hamet Aben Zarrax, surnamed El Santo, arose among them. This was the same wild, melancholy man, who had predicted the woes of Granada. He issued from one of the caverns of the adjacent height, which overhangs the Darro, and has since been called the Holy Mountain. His appearance was more haggard than ever; for the unheeded spirit of prophecy seemed to have turned inwardly, and preyed upon his vitals. "Beware, O Moslems!" exclaimed he, "of men, who are eager to govern, yet are unable to protect! Why slaughter each other for El Chico or El Zagal? Let your kings renounce their contests, and unite for the salvation of Granada, or let them be deposed!"

Hamet Aben Zarrax had long been revered as a saint; he was now considered an oracle. The old men and nobles immediately consulted together how the two rival kings might be brought to accord. They had tried most expedients: it was now determined to divide the kingdom between them; giving Granada, Malaga, Velez Malaga, Almeri, Alumneçar, and their dependencies, to El Zagal, and the residue to Boabdil el Chico. Among the cities granted to the latter, Loxa was particularly specified, with a condition that he should immediately take command of it in person; for the council thought the favour he enjoyed with the Castilian monarchs might avert the threatened attack.

El Zagal readily accorded to this arrangement. He had been hastily elevated to the throne by an ebullition of the people, and might be as hastily cast down again. It secured him one half of a kingdom to which he had no hereditary right, and he trusted to force or

fraud to gain the other half hereafter. The wily old monarch even sent a deputation to his nephew, making a merit of offering him cheerfully the half, which he had thus been compelled to relinquish, and inviting him to enter into an amicable coalition for the good of the country.

The heart of Boabdil shrunk from all connexion with a man who had sought his life, and whom he regarded as the murderer of his kindred. He accepted one half of the kingdom as an offer from the nation, not to be rejected by a prince, who scarcely held possession of the ground he stood on. He asserted, nevertheless, his absolute right to the whole, and only submitted to the partition out of anxiety for the present good of his people. He assembled his handful of adherents, and prepared to hasten to Loxa. As he mounted his horse to depart, Hamet Aben Zarrax stood suddenly before him. "Be true to thy country and thy faith," cried he, "hold no further communication with these Christian dogs. Trust not the hollow-hearted friendship of the Castilian king; he is mining the earth beneath thy feet. Choose one of two things: be a sovereign or a slave; thou canst not be both!"

Boabdil ruminated on these words: he made many wise resolutions; but he was prone always to act from the impulse of the moment, and was unfortunately given to temporize in his policy. He wrote to Ferdinand, informing him that Loxa and certain other cities had returned to their allegiance, and that he held them as vassal to the Castilian crown, according to their convention. He conjured him, therefore, to refrain from any meditated attack, offering free passage to the Spanish army to Malaga, or any other place under the dominion of his uncle.\*

Ferdinand turned a deaf ear to the entreaty, and to all professions of friendship and vassalage. Boabdil was nothing to him, but as an instrument for stirring up the flames of civil discord. He now insisted, that he had entered into a hostile league with his uncle, and had, consequently, forfeited all claims to his indulgence; and he prosecuted with

greater earnestness his campaign against the city of Loxa.

"Thus," observes the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, "did this most sagacious sovereign act upon the text in the eleventh chapter of the evangelist St. Luke, that 'a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand.' He had induced these infidels to waste and destroy themselves by internal dissensions, and finally cast forth the survivor; while the Moorish monarchs, by their ruinous contests, made good the old Castilian proverb in cases of civil war, 'El vencido vencido, y el vencidor perdido,' the conquered conquered, and the conqueror undone."\*

#### CHAPTER XXXVIII.

How King Ferdinand held a council of war at the Rock of the Lovers.

THE royal army, on its march against Loxa, lay encamped, one pleasant evening in May, in a meadow, on the banks of the river Yeguas, around the foot of a lofty cliff, called the Rock of the Lovers. The quarters of each nobleman, formed, as it were, a separate little encampment; his stately pavilion, surmounted by his fluttering pennon, rising above the surrounding tents of his vassals and retainers. A little apart from the others, as it were in proud reserve, was the encampment of the English earl. It was sumptuous in its furniture, and complete in its munitions. Archers, and soldiers armed with battle-axes, kept guard around it; while above, the standard of England rolled out its ample folds, and flapped in the evening breeze.

The mingled sounds of various tongues and nations were heard from the soldiery, as they watered their horses in the stream, or busied themselves round the fires which began to glow, here and there, in the twilight: the gay chanson of the Frenchman, singing of his amours on the pleasant banks of the Loire, or the sunny regions of the Garonne; the broad guttural tones of the German, chanting some doughty *kriegerlied*, or extolling the vintage of the Rhine; the wild romance of the Spaniard, reciting the achievements of the Cid, and many a

\* Zurita, lib. xx. c. 68.

\* Garibay, lib. xl. c. 33.



famous passage of the Moorish wars; and the long and melancholy ditty of the Englishman, treating of some feudal hero or redoubtable outlaw of his distant island.

On a rising ground, commanding a view of the whole encampment, stood the ample and magnificent pavilion of the king, with the banner of Castile and Aragon, and the holy standard of the cross erected before it. In this tent were assembled the principal commanders of the army, having been summoned by Ferdinand to a council of war, on receiving tidings that Boabdil had thrown himself into Loxa, with a considerable reinforcement. After some consultation, it was determined to invest Loxa on both sides: one part of the army was to seize upon the dangerous but commanding height of Santo Albhacin, in front of the city; while the remainder, making a circuit, should encamp on the opposite side.

No sooner was this resolved upon, than the Marquis of Cadiz stood forth, and claimed the post of danger, on behalf of himself and those cavaliers, his companions in arms, who had been compelled to relinquish it by the general retreat of the army on the former siege. The enemy had exulted over them, as if driven from it in disgrace. To regain that perilous height, to pitch their tents upon it, and to avenge the blood of their valiant compeer, the Master of Calatrava, who had fallen upon it, was due to their fame: the marquis demanded, therefore, that they might lead the advance, and secure the height, engaging to hold the enemy employed, until the main army should take its position on the opposite side of the city.

King Ferdinand readily granted his permission, upon which the Count de Cabra begged to be admitted to a share of the enterprise. He had always been accustomed to serve in the advance; and now that Boabdil was in the field, and a king was to be taken, he could not content himself with remaining in the rear. Ferdinand yielded his consent; for he was disposed to give the good count every opportunity to retrieve his late disaster.

The English earl, when he heard there was a work of danger in question, was eager to be of the party; but the king

restrained his ardour. "These cavaliers," said he, "conceive that they have an account to settle with their pride. Let them have the enterprise to themselves, my lord: if you follow these Moorish wars long, you will find no lack of perilous service."

The Marquis of Cadiz and his companions in arms struck their tents before daybreak. They were five thousand horse, and twelve thousand foot, and they marched rapidly along the defiles of the mountains; the cavaliers being anxious to strike the blow, and get possession of the height of Albhacin, before the king, with the main army, should arrive to their assistance.

The city of Loxa stands on a high hill, between two mountains, on the banks of the Xenil. To attain the height in question, the troops had to pass over a tract of country, rugged and broken, and a deep valley, intersected by the canals and water-courses, with which the Moors irrigated their lands. They were extremely embarrassed in this part of their march, and in imminent risk of being cut up in detail, before they could reach the height. The Count de Cabra, with his usual eagerness, endeavoured to push across this valley, in defiance of every obstacle. He, in consequence, soon became entangled with his cavalry among the canals; but his impatience would not permit him to retrace his steps, and choose a more practicable but circuitous route. Others slowly crossed another part of the valley by the aid of pontoons; while the Marquis of Cadiz, Don Alonso de Aguilar, and the Count de Ureña, being more experienced in the ground, from their former campaign, made a circuit round the bottom of the height, and, thus ascending, began to display their squadrons, and elevate their banners, on the redoubtable post, which, in the former siege, they had been compelled so reluctantly to abandon.

#### CHAPTER XXXIX.

How the royal army appeared before the city of Loxa, and how it was received, and of the doughty achievements of the English earl.

THE advance of the Christian army upon Loxa threw the wavering Boabdil

el Chico into one of his usual dilemmas ; and he was greatly perplexed between his oath of allegiance to the Spanish sovereigns, and his sense of duty to his subjects. His doubts were determined by the sight of the enemy, glittering upon the height of Albohacin, and by the clamours of the people to be led forth to battle. "Allah!" exclaimed he, "thou knowest my heart ; thou knowest I have been true in my faith to this Christian monarch ! I have offered to hold Loxa as his vassal, but he has preferred to approach it as an enemy : on his head be the infraction of our treaty !"

Boabdil was not wanting in courage ; he only needed decision. When he had once made up his mind, he acted vigorously. The misfortune was, he either did not make it up at all, or he made it up too late. He who decides tardily, generally acts rashly ; endeavouring to compensate, by hurry of action, for slowness of deliberation. Boabdil hastily buckled on his armour, and sallied forth, surrounded by his guards, and at the head of five hundred horse, and four thousand foot, the flower of his army. Some he detached to skirmish with the Christians, who were scattered and perplexed in the valley, and to prevent their concentrating their forces ; while, with his main body, he pressed forward, to drive the enemy from the height of Albohacin, before they had time to collect there in any number, or to fortify themselves in that important position.

The worthy Count de Cabra was yet entangled, with his cavalry, among the water-courses of the valley, when he heard the war-cries of the Moors, and saw their army rushing over the bridge. He recognised Boabdil himself by his splendid armour, the magnificent caparison of his steed, and the brilliant guard which surrounded him. The royal host swept on towards the height. An intervening hill hid it from his sight ; but loud shouts and cries, the din of drums and trumpets, and the reports of arquebuses, gave note that the battle had begun.

Here was a royal prize in the field, and the Count de Cabra unable to share in the action ! The good cavalier was in an agony of impatience. Every at-

tempt to force his way across the valley only plunged him into new difficulties. At length, after many eager but ineffectual efforts, he was obliged to order his troops to dismount, and slowly and carefully to lead their horses back, along slippery paths, and amid splashes of mire and water, where often there was scarcely a foothold. The good count groaned in spirit, and was in a profuse sweat with mere impatience as he went, fearing the battle might be fought, and the prize won or lost, before he could reach the field. Having at length toilfully unravelled the mazes of the valley, and arrived at firmer ground, he ordered his troops to mount, and led them full gallop to the height. Part of the good count's wishes were satisfied, but the dearest were disappointed. He came in season to partake of the very hottest of the fight, but the royal prize was no longer in the field.

Boabdil had led on his men with impetuous valour, or rather with hurried rashness. Heedlessly exposing himself in the front of battle, he received two wounds in the very first encounter. His guards rallied round him, defended him with matchless valour, and bore him bleeding out of the action. The Count de Cabra arrived just in time to see the loyal squadron crossing the bridge, and slowly conveying their disabled monarch towards the gate of the city.

The departure of Boabdil made no difference in the fury of the contest. A Moorish warrior, dark and terrible in aspect, mounted on a black charger, and followed by a band of savage Gomerces, rushed forward to take the lead. It was Hamet el Zegri, the fierce alcayde of Ronda, with the remnant of his once redoubtable garrison. Animated by his example, the Moors renewed their assaults upon the height. It was bravely defended on one side by the Marquis of Cadiz, on another by Don Alonso de Aguilar ; and as fast as the Moors ascended, they were driven back and dashed down the declivities. The Count de Ureña took his stand upon the fatal spot where his brother had fallen. His followers entered with zeal into the feelings of their commander, and heaps of the enemy sunk beneath their weapons, sa-

crifices to the manes of the lamented Master of Calatrava.

The battle continued with incredible obstinacy. The Moors knew the importance of the height to the safety of the city; the cavaliers felt their honours staked to maintain it. Fresh supplies of troops were poured out of the city; some battled on the height, while some attacked the Christians who were still in the valley, and among the orchards and gardens, to prevent their uniting their forces. The troops in the valley were gradually driven back, and the whole host of the Moors swept around the Albohacin. The situation of the Marquis of Cadiz and his companions was perilous in the extreme; they were a mere handful; and while they were fighting hand to hand with the Moors who assailed the height, they were galled from a distance by the crossbows and arquebuses of a host, that augmented each moment in number. At this critical juncture, King Ferdinand emerged from the mountains with the main body of the army, and advanced to an eminence commanding a full view of the field of action. By his side was the noble English cavalier, the Earl of Rivers. This was the first time he had witnessed a scene of Moorish warfare. He looked with eager interest at the chance-medley fight before him,—the wild career of cavalry, the irregular and tumultuous rush of infantry, and Christian helm and Moorish turban intermingling in deadly struggle. His high blood mounted at the sight; and his very soul was stirred within him, by the confused war-cries, the clangour of drums and trumpets, and the reports of arquebuses, that came echoing up the mountains. Seeing the king was sending a reinforcement to the field, he entreated permission to mingle in the affray, and fight according to the fashion of his country. His request being granted, he alighted from his steed. He was merely armed *en blanco*, that is to say, with morion, back-piece, and breast-plate; his sword was girded by his side, and in his hand he wielded a powerful battle-axe.

He was followed by a body of his yeomen, armed in like manner, and by a band of archers, with bows made of the tough English yew-tree. The earl turned to his troops, and addressed them briefly

and bluntly, according to the manner of his country. "Remember, my merry men all," said he, "the eyes of strangers are upon you; you are in a foreign land, fighting for the glory of God and the honour of merry old England!" A loud shout was the reply. The earl waved his battle-axe over his head. "St. George for England!" cried he; and to the inspiring sound of this old English war-cry, he and his followers rushed down to the battle, with manly and courageous hearts.\*

They soon made their way into the midst of the enemy; but, when engaged in the hottest of the fight, they made no shouts or outcries. They pressed steadily forward, dealing their blows to right and left, hewing down the Moors, and cutting their way with their battle-axes, like woodmen in a forest; while the archers, pressing into the opening they made, plied their bows vigorously, and spread death on every side.

When the Castilian mountaineers beheld the valour of the English yeomanry, they would not be outdone in hardihood. They could not vie with them in weight and bulk, but for vigour and activity they were surpassed by none. They kept pace with them, therefore, with equal heart and rival prowess, and gave a brave support to the stout islanders.

The Moors were confounded by the fury of these assaults, and disheartened by the loss of Hamet el Zegri, who was carried wounded from the field. They gradually fell back upon the bridge; the Christians followed up their advantage, and drove them over it tumultuously. The Moors retreated into the suburb, and Lord Rivers and his troops entered with them pell-mell, fighting in the streets and in the houses. King Ferdinand came up to the scene of action with his royal guard, and the infidels were all driven within the city walls. Thus were the suburbs gained by the hardihood of the English lord, without such an event having been premeditated.†

The Earl of Rivers, notwithstanding he had received a wound, still urged forward in the attack. He penetrated almost to the city gate, in defiance of a

\* Cura de Los Palacios.

† Cura de Los Palacios, MS.

shower of missiles, that slew many of his followers. A stone, hurled from the battlements, checked his impetuous career. It struck him in the face, dashed out two of his front teeth, and laid him senseless on the earth. He was removed to a short distance by his men; but, recovering his senses, refused to permit himself to be taken from the suburb.

When the contest was over, the streets presented a piteous spectacle, so many of their inhabitants had died in the defence of their thresholds, or been slaughtered without resistance. Among the victims was a poor weaver, who had been at work in his dwelling at this turbulent moment. His wife urged him to fly into the city. "Why should I fly?" said the Moor, "to be reserved for hunger and slavery? I tell you, wife, I will abide here; for better is it to die quickly by the steel, than to perish peaceably in chains and dungeons." He said no more, but resumed his occupation of weaving; and, in the indiscriminate fury of the assault, was slaughtered at his loom.\*

The Christians remained masters of the field, and proceeded to pitch three encampments for the prosecution of the siege. The king, with the great body of the army, took a position on the side of the city next to Granada. The Marquis de Cadiz and his brave companions once more pitched their tents upon the height of Santo Albahacin; but the English earl planted his standard sturdily within the suburb he had taken.

#### CHAPTER XL.

##### Conclusion of the siege of Loxa.

HAVING possession of the heights of Albahacin, and the suburb of the city, the Christians were enabled to choose the most favourable situations for their batteries. They immediately destroyed the stone bridge, by which the garrison had made its sallies; and they threw two wooden bridges across the river, and others over the canals and streams, so as to establish an easy communication between the different camps.

When all was arranged, a heavy fire was opened upon the city from various

points. They threw not only balls of stone and iron, but great carcasses of fire, which burst like meteors on the houses, wrapping them instantly in a blaze. The walls were shattered, and the towers toppled down by tremendous discharges from the lombards. Through the openings thus made, they could behold the interior of the city; houses tumbling down or in flames; men, women, and children flying in terror through the streets, and slaughtered by the shower of missiles sent through these openings from smaller artillery, and from cross-bows and arquebuses.

The Moors attempted to repair the breaches; but fresh discharges from the lombards buried them beneath the ruins of the walls they were mending. In their despair, many of the inhabitants rushed forth into the narrow streets of the suburbs, and assailed the Christians with darts, cimeters, and poniards; seeking to destroy rather than defend, and heedless of death, in the confidence, that to die fighting with an unbeliever was to be translated at once to paradise.

For two nights and a day this awful scene continued: when certain of the principal inhabitants began to reflect upon the hopelessness of resistance. Their king was disabled; their principal captains were either killed or wounded; their fortifications little better than heaps of ruins. They had urged the unfortunate Boabdil to the conflict; they now clamoured for a capitulation. A parley was procured from the Christian monarch, and the terms of surrender were soon adjusted. They were to yield up the city immediately, with all the Christian captives, and to sally forth with as much of their property as they could take with them. The Marquis of Cadiz, on whose honour and humanity they had great reliance, was to escort them to Granada, to protect them from assault or robbery. Such as chose to remain in Spain were to be permitted to reside in Castile, Aragon, or Valencia. As to Boabdil el Chico, he was to do homage as vassal to King Ferdinand; but no charge was to be urged against him, of having violated his former pledge. If he should yield up all pretensions to Granada, the title of Duke of Guadix was to

\* Pulgar, part iii. cap. 58.

be assigned him, and the territory thereto annexed, provided it should be recovered from El Zagal within six months.

The capitulation being arranged, they gave as hostages the alcaide of the city, and the principal officers, together with the sons of their late chieftain, the veteran Ali Atar. The warriors of Loxa then issued forth, humbled and dejected, at having to surrender those walls, which they had so long maintained with valour and renown; and the women and children filled the air with lamentations, at being exiled from their native homes.

Last came forth Boabdil, most truly called El Zogoybi, the unlucky. Accustomed, as he had been, to be crowned and uncrowned; to be ransomed, and treated as a matter of bargain, he had acceded of course to the capitulation. He was enfeebled by his wounds, and had an air of dejection; yet, it is said, his conscience acquitted him of a breach of faith towards the Castilian sovereigns; and the personal valour he had displayed had caused a sympathy for him among many of the Christian cavaliers. He kneeled to Ferdinand, according to the forms of vassalage, and then departed in melancholy mood for Priego, a town about three leagues distant. Ferdinand immediately ordered Loxa to be repaired and strongly garrisoned. He was greatly elated at the capture of this place, in consequence of his former defeat before its walls. He passed great encomiums upon the commanders who had distinguished themselves; and historians dwell particularly upon his visit to the tent of the English earl. His majesty consoled him for the loss of his teeth, by the consideration, that he might otherwise have been deprived of them by natural decay: whereas the lack of them would now be esteemed a beauty rather than a defect; serving as a trophy of the glorious cause in which he had been engaged.

The earl replied, "that he gave thanks to God and to the holy Virgin for being thus honoured by a visit from the most potent king in Christendom; that he accepted, with all gratitude, his gracious consolation for the loss he had sustained; though he held it little to lose two teeth in the service of God, who had given him all."

"A speech," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "full of most courtly wit and Christian piety; and one only marvels that it should be made by a native of an island so far distant from Castile."

#### CHAPTER XLI.

##### Capture of Illora.

KING FERDINAND followed up his victory at Loxa by laying seige to the strong town of Illora. This redoubtable fortress was perched upon a high rock, in the midst of a spacious valley. It was within four leagues of the Moorish capital; and its lofty castle, keeping vigilant watch over a wide circuit of country, was termed the Right Eye of Granada.

The alcaide of Illora was one of the bravest of the Moorish commanders, and made every preparation to defend his fortress to the last extremity. He sent the women and children, the aged and infirm, to the metropolis. He placed barricadoes in the suburbs, opened doors of communication from house to house, and pierced their walls with loop-holes, for the discharge of crossbows, arquebuses, and other missiles.

King Ferdinand arrived before the place with all his forces. He stationed himself upon the hill of Encinilla, and distributed the other encampments in various situations, so as to invest the fortress. Knowing the valiant character of the alcaide, and the desperate courage of the Moors, he ordered the encampments to be fortified with trenches and palisadoes, the guards to be doubled, and sentinels to be placed in all the watch-towers of the adjacent heights.

When all was ready, the Duke del Infantado demanded the attack. It was his first campaign; and he was anxious to disprove the royal insinuation made against the hardihood of his embroidered chivalry. King Ferdinand granted his demand, with a becoming compliment to his spirit. He ordered the Count de Cabra to make a simultaneous attack upon a different quarter. Both chiefs led forth their troops. Those of the duke were in fresh and brilliant armour, richly ornamented, and as yet uninjured by the service of the field. Those of the count were weatherbeaten veterans, whose ar-

mour was dinted and hacked in many a hard-fought battle. The youthful duke blushed at the contrast. "Cavaliers!" cried he, "we have been reproached with the finery of our arms: let us prove, that a trenchant blade may rest in a gilded sheath. Forward! to the foe! and I trust in God, that, as we enter this affray knights well accoutred, so we shall leave it cavaliers well proved!" His men responded by eager acclamations. and the duke led them forward to the assault. He advanced under a tremendous shower of stones, darts, balls, and arrows; but nothing could check his career. He entered the suburb sword in hand; his men fought furiously, though with great loss; for every dwelling had been turned into a fortress. After a severe conflict, he succeeded in driving the Moors into the town, about the same time that the other suburb was carried by the Count de Cabra and his veterans. The troops of the Duke del Infantado came out of the contest thinned in number, and covered with blood, and dust, and wounds. They received the highest encomiums of the king; and there was never afterwards any sneer at their embroidery.

The suburbs being taken, three batteries, each furnished with eight large lombards, were opened upon the fortress. The damage and havoc were tremendous; for the fortifications had not been constructed to withstand such engines. The towers were overthrown; the walls battered to pieces; the interior of the place was all exposed; houses demolished, and many people slain. The Moors were terrified by the tumbling ruins and the tremendous din. The alcaide had resolved to defend the place unto the last extremity. He beheld it a heap of rubbish; there was no prospect of aid from Granada; his people had lost all spirit to fight, and were vociferous for a surrender. With a reluctant heart he capitulated. The inhabitants were permitted to depart with all their effects, excepting their arms; and were escorted in safety, by the Duke del Infantado and the Count de Cabra, to the bridge of Pinos, within two leagues of Granada.

King Ferdinand gave directions to repair the fortifications of Illora, and to place it in a strong state of defence. He

left, as alcaide of the town and fortress, Gonsalvo de Cordova, younger brother of Don Alonso de Aguilar. This gallant cavalier was captain of the royal guards of Ferdinand and Isabella, and gave already proofs of that prowess, which afterwards rendered him so renowned.

#### CHAPTER XLII.

Of the arrival of Queen Isabella at the camp before Moclin, and of the pleasant sayings of the English earl.

THE war of Granada, however poets may embroider it with the flowers of their fancy, was certainly one of the sternest of those iron conflicts, which have been celebrated under the name of holy wars. The worthy Fray Antonio Agapida dwells with unsated delight upon the succession of rugged mountain enterprises, bloody battles, and merciless sackings and ravages, which characterize it; yet we find him, on one occasion, pausing, in the full career of victory over the infidels, to detail a stately pageant of the catholic sovereigns.

Immediately on the capture of Loxa, Ferdinand had written to Isabella, soliciting her presence at the camp, that he might consult with her as to the disposition of their newly-acquired territories.

It was in the early part of June that the queen departed from Cordova, with the Princess Isabella, and numerous ladies of her court. She had a glorious attendance of cavaliers and pages, with many guards and domestics. There were forty mules for the use of the queen, the princess, and their train.

As this courtly cavalcade approached the Rock of the Lovers, on the banks of the river Yeguas, they beheld a splendid train of knights advancing to meet them. It was headed by the accomplished cavalier, the Marquis Duke de Cadiz, accompanied by the adelantado of Andalusia. He had left the camp the day after the capture of Illora, and advanced thus far to receive the queen and escort her over the borders. The queen received the marquis with distinguished honour, for he was esteemed as the mirror of chivalry. His actions in this war had become the theme of every tongue, and

many hesitated not to compare him, in prowess, to the immortal Cid.\*

Thus gallantly attended, the queen entered the vanquished frontier of Granada, journeying securely along the pleasant banks of the Xenil, so lately subject to the scourings of the Moors. She stopped at Loxa, where she administered aid and consolation to the wounded, distributing money among them for their support, according to their rank.

The king, after the capture of Illora, had removed his camp before the fortress of Moclin, with an intention of besieging it. Thither the queen proceeded, still escorted through the mountain roads by the Marquis of Cadiz. As Isabella drew near to the camp, the Duke del Infantado issued forth a league and a half to receive her, magnificently arrayed, and followed by all his chivalry in glorious attire. With him came the standard of Seville, borne by the men-at-arms of that renowned city, and the prior of St. Juan, with his followers. They arranged themselves in order of battle on the left of the road by which the queen was to pass. The worthy Agapida is loyally minute in his description of the state and grandeur of the catholic sovereigns. The queen rode a chestnut mule, seated in a magnificent saddle chair, decorated with silver gilt. The housings of the mule were of fine crimson cloth; the borders embroidered with gold; the reins and headpiece were of satin, curiously embossed with needle-work of silk, and wrought with golden letters. The queen wore a brial or royal skirt of velvet, under which were others of brocade; a scarlet mantle, ornamented in the moresco fashion, and a black hat embroidered round the crown and brim.

The infanta was likewise mounted on a chestnut mule, richly caparisoned. She wore a brial or skirt of black brocade, and a black mantle, ornamented like that of the queen.

When the royal cavalcade passed by the chivalry of the Duke del Infantado, which was drawn out in battle array, the queen made a reverence to the standard of Seville, and ordered it to pass to the right hand. When she approached the camp, the multitude ran forth to meet

her, with great demonstrations of joy; for she was universally beloved by her subjects. All the battalions sallied forth in military array, bearing the various standards and banners of the camp, which were lowered in salutation as she passed.

The king now appeared, in royal state, mounted on a superb chestnut horse, and attended by many grandees of Castile. He wore a jubon or close vest of crimson cloth, with cuisses or short skirts of yellow satin; a loose cassock of brocade, a rich Moorish cimeter, and a hat with plumes. The grandees who attended him were arrayed with wonderful magnificence, each according to his taste and invention.

"These high and mighty princes," says Antonio Agapida, "regarded each other with great deference as allied sovereigns, rather than with connubial familiarity as mere husband and wife, when they approached each other: therefore, before embracing, they made three profound reverences; the queen taking off her hat, and remaining in a silk net or cawl, with her face uncovered. The king then approached, and embraced her, and kissed her respectfully on the cheek. He also embraced his daughter the princess, and, making the sign of the cross, he blessed her, and kissed her on the lips."\*

The good Agapida seems scarcely to have been more struck with the appearance of the sovereigns, than with that of the English earl. "He followed," says he, "immediately after the king, with great pomp, and in an extraordinary manner, taking precedence of all the rest. He was mounted, *à la guisa*, or with long stirrups, on a superb chestnut horse, with trappings of azure silk, which reached to the ground. The housings were of mulberry, powdered with stars of gold. He was armed in proof, and wore over his armour a short French mantle of black brocade. He had a white French hat with plumes; and carried on his left arm a small round buckler, banded with gold. Five pages attended him, apparelled in silk and brocade, and mounted on horses sumptuously

\* Cura de Los Palacios.

\* Cura de Los Palacios.

caparisoned. He had also a train of followers, attired after the fashion of his country."

He advanced in a chivalrous and courteous manner, making his reverences first to the queen and infanta, and afterwards to the king. Queen Isabella received him graciously, complimenting him on his courageous conduct at Loxa, and condoling with him on the loss of his teeth. The earl, however, made light of his disfiguring wound; saying, that "our blessed Lord, who had built all that house, had opened a window there, that he might see more readily what passed within."\* Whereupon, the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida is more than ever astonished at the pregnant wit of this island cavalier. The earl continued some little distance by the side of the royal family, complimenting them all with courteous speeches, his steed curveting and caracoling, but managed with great grace and dexterity, leaving the grandees and the people at large not more filled with admiration at the strangeness and magnificence of his state, than at the excellence of his horsemanship.†

To testify her sense of the gallantry and services of this noble English knight, who had come from so far to assist in their wars, the queen sent him, the next day, presents of twelve horses, with stately tents, fine linen, two beds, with coverings of gold brocade, and many other articles of great value.

Having refreshed himself as it were, with the description of this progress of Queen Isabella to the camp, and the glorious pomp of the catholic sovereigns, the worthy Antonio Agapida returns, with renewed relish, to his pious work of discomfiting the Moors.‡

\* Pietro Martyr, Epist. 61.

† Cura de Los Palacios.

‡ The description of this royal pageant, and the particulars concerning the English earl, agree precisely with the chronicle of Andres Bernaldes, the curate of Los Palacios. The English earl makes no further figure in this war. It appears from various histories, that he returned in the course of a year to England. In the following year, his passion for fighting took him to the Continent, at the head of four hundred adventurers, in aid of Francis, Duke of Brittany, against Louis XI. of France. He was killed, in the same year (1488), in the battle of St. Albans, between the Bretons and the French.

#### CHAPTER XLIII.

How King Ferdinand attacked Moelin, and of the strange events that attended its capture.

"THE catholic sovereigns," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "had by this time closely clipped the right wing of the Moorish vulture." In other words, most of the strong fortresses along the western frontier of Granada had fallen beneath the Christian artillery. The army now lay encamped before the town of Moelin, on the frontier of Jaen, one of the most stubborn fortresses of the border. It stood on a high rocky hill, the base of which was nearly girdled by a river. A thick forest protected the back part of the town towards the mountain. Thus strongly situate, it domineered, with its frowning battlements and massive towers, over all the mountain-passes into that part of the country, and was called the Shield of Granada. It had a double arrear of blood to settle with the Christians. Two hundred years before, a Master of Santiago and all his cavaliers had been lanced by the Moors before its gates. It had recently made terrible slaughter among the troops of the good Count de Cabra, in his precipitate attempt to entrap the old Moorish monarch. The pride of Ferdinand had been piqued, by being obliged, on that occasion, to recede from his plan, and abandon the concerted attack on the place. He was now prepared to take a full revenge.

El Zagal, the old warrior, king of Granada, anticipating a second attempt, had provided the place with ample munitions and provision; had ordered trenches to be dug, and additional bulwarks thrown up, and caused all the old men, the women, and the children, to be removed to the capital.

Such was the strength of the fortress, and the difficulties of its position, that Ferdinand anticipated much trouble in reducing it, and made every preparation for a regular siege. In the centre of his camp were two great mounds, one of sacks of flour, the other of grain, which were called the royal granary. Three batteries of heavy ordnance were opened against the citadel and principal towers, while smaller artillery, engines for the discharge of missiles, arquebuses, and



crossbows, were distributed in various places, to keep up a fire into any breach that might be made, and upon those of the garrison who should appear on the battlements.

The lombards soon made an impression on the works, demolishing a part of the wall, and tumbling down several of those haughty towers, which, from their height, had been impregnable before the invention of gunpowder. The Moors repaired their walls as well as they were able, and, still confiding in the strength of their situation, kept up a resolute defence, firing down from their lofty battlements and towers upon the Christian camp. For two nights and a day an incessant fire was kept up, so that there was not a moment in which the roaring of ordnance was not heard, or some damage sustained by the Christians or the Moors. It was a conflict, however, more of engineers and artillerymen than of gallant cavaliers; there was no sally of troops, or shock of armed men, or rush and charge of cavalry. The knights stood looking on with idle weapons, waiting until they should have an opportunity of signalizing their prowess, by scaling the walls or storming the breaches. As the place, however, was assailable only in one part, there was every prospect of a long and obstinate resistance.

The engines, as usual, discharged not only balls of stone and iron to demolish the walls, but flaming balls of inextinguishable combustibles, designed to set fire to the houses. One of these, which passed high through the air, like a meteor, sending out sparks, and crackling as it went, entered the window of a tower, which was used as a magazine of gunpowder. The tower blew up, with a tremendous explosion; the Moors who were upon its battlements, were hurled into the air, and fell mangled in various parts of the town; and the houses in its vicinity were rent and overthrown, as with an earthquake.

The Moors, who had never witnessed an explosion of this kind, ascribed the destruction of the tower to a miracle. Some, who had seen the descent of the flaming ball, imagined that the fire had fallen from heaven, to punish them for

their pertinacity. The pious Agapida himself believes that this fiery missile was conducted by divine agency, to confound the infidels—an opinion in which he is supported by other catholic historians.\*

Seeing heaven and earth, as it were, combined against them, the Moors lost all heart, and capitulated; and were permitted to depart with their effects, leaving behind all arms and munitions of war.

“The catholic army,” says Antonio Agapida, “entered Moclin in solemn state, not as a licentious host, intent upon plunder and desolation, but as a band of Christian warriors, coming to purify and regenerate the land. The standard of the cross, that ensign of this holy crusade, was borne in the advance, followed by the other banners of the army. Then came the king and queen, at the head of a vast number of armed cavaliers. They were accompanied by a band of priests and friars, with the choir of the royal chapel, chanting the canticle *Te Deum laudamus*. As they were moving through the streets in this solemn manner, every sound hushed, excepting the anthem of the choir, they suddenly heard issuing, as it were from under ground, a chorus of voices chanting the solemn response, *Benedictum qui venit in nomine Domini*.† The procession paused in wonder. The sounds arose from Christian captives, and among them several priests, who were confined in subterraneous dungeons.”

The heart of Isabella was greatly touched: she ordered the captives to be drawn forth from their cells; and was still more moved at beholding, by their wan, discoloured, and emaciated appearance, how much they had suffered. Their hair and beards were overgrown and shagged; they were wasted by hunger, and were half naked, and in chains. She ordered that they should be clothed and cherished, and money furnished them to bear them to their homes.‡

Several of the captives were brave cavaliers, who had been wounded and

\* Pulgar. Garibay. Lucio Marino Siculo, *Cosas Memorab. de Hispan.* lib. xx.

† Marino Siculo.

‡ Illoscas, *Hist. Pontif.*, lib. vi. c. 20, sect. 1.

made prisoners in the defeat of the Count de Cabra, by El Zagal, in the preceding year. There were also found other melancholy traces of that disastrous affair. On visiting the narrow pass, where the defeat had taken place, the remains of several Christian warriors were found in thickets, or hidden behind rocks, or in the clefts of the mountains. There were some who had been struck from their horses, and wounded too severely to fly. They had crawled away from the scene of action, and concealed themselves to avoid falling into the hands of the enemy, and had thus perished miserably and alone. The remains of those of note were known by their armour and devices, and were mourned over by their companions, who had shared the disasters of that day.\*

The queen had these remains piously collected, as the relics of so many martyrs who had fallen in the cause of the faith. They were interred, with great solemnity, in the mosques of Moclin, which had been purified, and consecrated to Christian worship. "There," says Antonio Agapida, "rest the bones of those truly catholic knights, in the holy ground, which, in a manner, had been sanctified by their blood; and all pilgrims, passing through those mountains, offer up prayers and masses for the repose of their souls."

The queen remained for some time at Moclin, administering comfort to the wounded and the prisoners, bringing the newly acquired territory into order, and founding churches and monasteries, and other pious institutions. "While the king marched in front, laying waste the land of the Philistines," says the figurative Antonio Agapida, "Queen Isabella followed his traces, as the binder follows the reaper, gathering the rich harvest that has fallen beneath his sickle. In this she was greatly assisted by the counsels of that cloud of bishops, friars, and clergymen, besides other saintly personages, which continually surrounded her, garnering the first fruits of this infidel land into the granaries of the church." Leaving her thus piously employed, the king pursued his career of conquest, de-

termined to lay waste the vega, and carry fire and sword to the very gates of Granada.

#### CHAPTER XLIV.

How King Ferdinand foraged the vega; and of the fate of the two Moorish brothers.

MULEY ABDALLA EL ZAGAL had been under a spell of ill fortune, ever since the suspicious death of the old king his brother. Success had deserted his standard, and, with his fickle subjects, want of success was one of the greatest crimes in a sovereign. He found his popularity declining, and he lost all confidence in his people. The Christian army marched in open defiance through his territories, and sat down deliberately before his fortresses; yet he dared not lead forth his legions to oppose them, lest the inhabitants of the albaycen, ever ripe for a revolt, should rise, and shut the gates of Granada against his return.

Every few days some melancholy train entered the metropolis, the inhabitants of some captured town, bearing the few effects that had been spared them, and weeping and bewailing the desolation of their homes. When the tidings arrived, that Illora and Moclin had fallen, the people were seized with consternation. "The right eye of Granada is extinguished!" exclaimed they; "the shield of Granada is broken! what shall protect us from the inroad of the foe?" When the survivors of the garrisons of those towns arrived, with downcast looks, bearing the marks of battle, and destitute of arms and standards, the populace reviled them in their wrath: but they answered, "We fought as long as we had force to fight, or walls to shelter us; but the Christians laid our towers and battlements in ruins, and we looked in vain for aid from Granada."

The alcajdes of Illora and Moclin were brothers; they were alike in prowess, and the bravest among the Moorish cavaliers. They had been the most distinguished in all tilts and tournaments which graced the happier days of Granada, and had distinguished themselves in the sterner conflicts of the field. Acclamation had always followed their banners, and they had long been the

\* Pulgar, part, iii. cap. 61.

delight of the people. Now, when they returned, after the capture of their fortresses, they were followed by the unsteady populace with execrations. The hearts of the alcajdes swelled with indignation; they found the ingratitude of their countrymen still more intolerable than the hostility of the Christians. Tidings came, that the enemy was advancing with his triumphant legions, to lay waste the country about Granada. Still El Zagal did not dare to take the field. The two alcajdes of Illora and Moclin stood before him. "We have defended your fortresses," said they, "until we were almost buried under their ruins; and, for our reward, we receive scoffs and revilings. Give us, O king, an opportunity in which knightly valour may signalize itself; not shut up behind stone walls, but in the open conflict of the field! The enemy approaches to lay our country desolate. Give us men to meet him in the advance; and let shame light upon our heads, if we be found wanting in the battle!"

The two brothers were sent forth with a large force of horse and foot. El Zagal intended, should they be successful, to issue out with his whole force; and, by a decisive victory, repair the losses he had suffered. When the people saw the well known standards of the brothers going forth to battle, there was a feeble shout; but the alcajdes passed on with stern countenances; for they knew the same voices would curse them were they to return unfortunate. They cast a farewell look upon fair Granada, and upon the beautiful fields of their infancy, as if for these they were willing to lay down their lives, but not for an ungrateful people.

The army of Ferdinand had arrived within two leagues of Granada, at the bridge of Pinos, a pass famous in the wars of the Moors and Christians for many a bloody conflict. It was the pass by which the Castilian monarchs generally made their inroads, and was capable of great defence, from the ruggedness of the country, and the difficulty of the bridge. The king, with the main body of the army, had attained the brow of a hill, when they beheld the advanced guard, under the Marquis of Cadiz and

the Master of Santiago, furiously attacked by the enemy in the vicinity of the bridge. The Moors rushed to the assault with their usual shouts, but with more than usual ferocity. There was a hard struggle at the bridge, both parties knowing the importance of the pass. The king particularly noted the prowess of two Moorish cavaliers, alike in arms and devices, and who, by their bearing and attendance, he perceived to be commanders of the enemy. They were the two brothers, the alcajdes of Illora and Moclin. Wherever they turned, they carried confusion and death into the ranks of the Christians; but they fought with desperation rather than valour. The Count de Cabra, and his brother, Don Martin de Cordova, pressed forward with eagerness against them; but, having advanced too precipitately, were surrounded by the foe, and in imminent danger. A young Christian knight, seeing their peril, hastened with his followers to their relief. The king recognised him for Don Juan de Aragon, Count of Ribargoza, his own nephew; for he was illegitimate son of the Duke of Villahermosa, illegitimate brother of King Ferdinand. The splendid armour of Don Juan, and the sumptuous caparison of his steed, rendered him a brilliant object of attack. He was assailed on all sides, and his superb steed slain under him; yet still he fought valiantly, bearing for a while the brunt of the fight, and giving the exhausted forces of the Count de Cabra time to recover breath.

Seeing the peril of these troops, and the general obstinacy of the contest, the king ordered the royal standard to be advanced, and hastened with all his forces to the relief of the Count de Cabra. At his approach the enemy gave way, and retreated towards the bridge. The two Moorish commanders endeavoured to rally their troops, and animate them to defend this pass to the utmost. They used prayers, remonstrances, menaces; but nearly in vain. They could only collect a scanty handful of cavaliers. With these they planted themselves at the head of the bridge, and disputed it inch by inch. The fight was hot and obstinate; for but few could contend hand to hand; yet many discharged

crossbows and arquebuses on the banks. The river was covered with the floating bodies of the slain. The Moorish band of cavaliers was almost entirely cut to pieces; the two brothers fell, covered with wounds, upon the bridge they had so resolutely defended. They had given up the battle for lost, but had determined not to return alive to ungrateful Granada. When the people of the capital heard how devotedly they had fallen, they lamented greatly their deaths, and extolled their memory. A column was erected to their honour in the vicinity of the bridge, which long went by the name of "The tomb of the brothers."

The army of Ferdinand now marched on, and established its camp in the vicinity of Granada. The worthy Agapida gives many triumphant details of the ravages committed in the vega, which was again laid waste; the grain, fruits, and other productions of the earth destroyed; and that earthly paradise rendered a dreary desert. He narrates several fierce but ineffectual sallies and skirmishes of the Moors in defence of their favourite plain; among which one deserves to be mentioned, as it records the achievement of one of the saintly heroes of this war.

During one of the movements of the Christian army near the walls of Granada, a battalion of fifteen hundred cavalry, and a large force of foot, had sallied from the city, and posted themselves near some gardens, which were surrounded by a canal, and traversed by ditches, for the purpose of irrigation.

The Moors beheld the Duke del Infantado pass by with his two splendid battalions; one of men-at-arms, the other of light cavalry, armed *à la geneta*. In company with him, but following as a rearguard, was Don Garcia Osorio, the belligerent Bishop of Jaen, attended by Francisco Bovadillo, the corregidor of his city, and followed by two squadrons of men-at-arms, from Jaen, Andujar, Ubeda, and Baza.\* The success of the preceding year's campaign had given the good bishop an inclination for warlike affairs; and he had once more buckled on his cuirass.

\* Pulgar, part iii. cap. 62.

The Moors were much given to stratagem in warfare. They looked wistfully at the magnificent squadrons of the Duke del Infantado; but their martial discipline precluded all attack. The good bishop promised to be a more easy prey. Suffering the duke and his troops to pass unmolested, they approached the squadrons of the bishop; and making a pretended attack, skirmished slightly, and fled in apparent confusion. The bishop considered the day his own; and, seconded by his corregidor Bovadillo, followed with valorous precipitation. The Moors fled into the *Huerta del Rey*, or orchard of the king. The troops of the bishop followed hotly after them. When the Moors perceived their pursuers fairly embarrassed among the intricacies of the garden, they turned fiercely upon them, while some of their number threw open the sluices of the Xenil. In an instant, the canal which encircled, and the ditches which traversed the garden, were filled with water, and the valiant bishop and his followers found themselves overwhelmed by a deluge.\* A scene of great confusion succeeded. Some of the men of Jaen, stoutest of heart and hand, fought with the Moors in the garden, while others struggled with the water, endeavouring to escape across the canal, in which attempt many horses were drowned. Fortunately the Duke del Infantado perceived the snare into which his companions had fallen, and despatched his light cavalry to their assistance. The Moors were compelled to flight, and driven along the road of Elvira up to the gates of Granada. Several Christian cavaliers perished in this affray; the bishop himself escaped with difficulty, having slipped from his saddle in crossing the canal, but saved himself by holding on to the tail of his charger. This perilous achievement seems to have satisfied the good bishop's belligerent propensities. "He retired on his laurels," says Agapida, "to his city of Jaen, where, on the fruition of all good things, he gradually waxed too corpulent for his corslet, which was hung up in the hall of his episcopal palace; and we

\* Pulgar.

hear no more of his military deeds throughout the residue of the holy war of Granada.”\*

King Ferdinand having completed his ravage of the vega, and kept El Zagal shut up in his capital, conducted his army back through the pass of Lope, to rejoin Queen Isabella at Moclin. The fortresses lately taken being well garrisoned and supplied, he gave the command of the frontier to his cousin, Don Fadrique de Toledo, afterwards so famous in the Netherlands as the Duke of Alba. The campaign being thus completely crowned with success, the sovereigns returned in triumph to the city of Cordova.

#### CHAPTER XLV.

Attempt of El Zagal upon the life of Boabdil; and how the latter was roused to action.

No sooner did the last squadron of Christian cavalry disappear behind the mountain of Elvira, and the note of its trumpets die away upon the ear, than the long-suppressed wrath of old Muley El Zagal burst forth. He determined no longer to be half a king, reigning over a divided kingdom in a divided capital; but to exterminate by any means, fair or foul, his nephew Boabdil and his confederates. He turned furiously upon those, whose factious conduct had deterred him from sallying upon the foe. Some he punished by confiscations, others by banishment, others by death. Once undisputed monarch of the entire kingdom, he trusted to his military skill to retrieve his fortune, and drive the Christians over the frontier.

Boabdil, however, had again retired to Velez el Blanco, on the confines of Murcia, where he could avail himself, in case of emergency, of any assistance or protection afforded him by the policy of Ferdinand. His defeat had blighted his reviving fortunes, for the people considered him as inevitably doomed to misfortune. Still, while he lived, El Zagal knew he would be a rallying-point for faction, and liable, at any moment, to be

elevated into power by the capricious multitude. He had recourse, therefore, to the most perfidious means to compass his destruction. He sent ambassadors to him, representing the necessity of concord, for the salvation of the kingdom; and even offering to resign the title of king, and to become subject to his sway, on receiving some estate, on which he could live in tranquil retirement. But, while the ambassadors bore these words of peace, they were furnished with poisoned herbs, which they were to administer secretly to Boabdil; and, if they failed in this attempt, they had pledged themselves to despatch him openly, while engaged in conversation. They were instigated to this treason by promises of great reward, and by assurances from the alfaquis, that Boabdil was an apostate, whose death would be acceptable to Heaven.

The young monarch was secretly apprised of the concerted treason, and refused an audience to the ambassadors. He denounced his uncle as the murderer of his father and his kindred, and the usurper of his throne, and vowed never to relent in hostility to him, until he should place his head on the walls of the Alhambra.

Open war again broke out between the two monarchs, though feebly carried on, in consequence of their mutual embarrassments. Ferdinand again extended his assistance to Boabdil, ordering the commanders of his fortresses to aid him in all enterprises against his uncle, and against such places as refused to acknowledge him as king. And Don Juan de Benavides, who commanded in Loxa, even made inroads, in his name, into the territories of Almeria, Baza, and Guadix, which owned allegiance to El Zagal.

The unfortunate Boabdil had three great evils to contend with; the inconstancy of his subjects, the hostility of his uncle, and the friendship of Ferdinand. The last was by far the most baneful; his fortunes withered under it. He was looked upon as the enemy of his faith and of his country. The cities shut their gates against him. The people cursed him. Even the scanty band of cavaliers, who had hitherto followed his ill-starred banner, began to desert him; for he had

\* Don Luis Osorio fué obispo de Jaen desde el año de 1483, y presidió en esta iglesia hasta el de 1496 en que murió en Flandes á donde fué acompañando á la Princesa Doña Juana, esposa del Archiduque Don Felipe.—España Sagrada, por Fr. M. Risco, tom. xli. trat. 77, c. 4.

not wherewithal to reward, or even to support them. His spirits sank with his fortune; and he feared that, in a little time, he should not have a spot of earth whereon to place his standard, or an adherent to rally under it.

In the midst of his despondency, he received a message from his lion-hearted mother, the sultana Ayxa la Horra. "For shame," said she, "to linger about the borders of your kingdom, when a usurper is seated in your capital! Why look abroad for perfidious aid, when you have loyal hearts beating true to you in Granada? The albaycen is ready to throw open its gates to receive you. Strike home vigorously. A sudden blow may mend all, or make an end. A throne, or a grave! for a king, there is no honourable medium."

Boabdil was of an undecided character: but there are circumstances which bring the most wavering to a decision, and, when once resolved, they are apt to act with a daring impulse, unknown to steadier judgments. The message of the sultana roused him from a dream. Granada, beautiful Granada! with its stately Alhambra, its delicious gardens, its gushing and limpid fountains, sparkling among groves of orange, citron, and myrtle, rose before him. "What have I done," exclaimed he, "that I should be an exile from this paradise of my forefathers, a wanderer and fugitive in my own kingdom, while a murderous usurper sits proudly upon my throne? Surely, Allah will befriend the righteous cause: one blow, and all may be my own!"

He summoned his scanty band of cavaliers. "Who is ready to follow his monarch unto the death?" said he; and every one laid his hand upon his cimeter. "Enough!" said he: "let each man arm himself, and prepare his steed in secret, for an enterprise of toil and peril: if we succeed, our reward is empire!"

#### CHAPTER XLVI.

How Boabdil returned secretly to Granada; and how he was received.

"IN the hand of God," exclaims an old Arabian chronicler, "is the destiny of princes: he alone giveth empire. A single Moorish horseman, mounted on a

fleet Arabian steed, was one day traversing the mountains which extend between Granada and the frontiers of Murcia. He galloped swiftly through the valleys, but paused and looked out cautiously from the summit of every height. A squadron of cavaliers followed warily at a distance. There were fifty lances. The richness of their armour and attire showed them to be warriors of noble rank, and their leader had a lofty and prince-like demeanour." The squadron thus described by the Arabian chronicler was the Moorish king Boabdil and his devoted followers.

For two nights and a day they pursued their adventurous journey, avoiding all populous parts of the country, and choosing the most solitary passes of the mountains. They suffered severe hardships and fatigues; but they suffered without a murmur. They were accustomed to rugged campaigning, and their steeds were of generous and unyielding spirit. It was midnight, and all was dark and silent, as they descended from the mountains, and approached the city of Granada. They passed along quietly under the shadow of its walls, until they arrived near the gate of the albaycen. Here Boabdil ordered his followers to halt, and remain concealed. Taking but four or five with him, he advanced resolutely to the gate, and knocked with the hilt of his cimeter. The guards demanded who sought to enter at that unseasonable hour. "Your king!" exclaimed Boabdil: "open the gate, and admit him."

The guards held forth a light, and recognised the person of the youthful monarch. They were struck with sudden awe, and threw open the gates, and Boabdil and his followers entered unmolested. They galloped to the dwellings of the principal inhabitants of the albaycen; thundering at their portals, and summoning them to rise, and take arms for their rightful sovereign. The summons was instantly obeyed; trumpets resounded throughout the streets; the gleam of torches and the flash of arms showed the Moors hurrying to their gathering-places; and by daybreak the whole force of the albaycen was rallied under the standard of Boabdil. Such

was the success of this sudden and desperate act of the young monarch ; for we are assured by contemporary historians, that there had been no previous concert or arrangement. "As the guards opened the gate of the city to admit him," observes a pious chronicler, "so God opened the hearts of the Moors to receive him as their king."\*

In the morning early, the tidings of this event roused El Zagal from his slumbers in the Alhambra. The fiery old warrior assembled his guard in haste, and made his way sword in hand, to the albaycen, hoping to come upon his nephew by surprise. He was vigorously met by Boabdil and his adherents, and driven back into the quarter of the Alhambra. An encounter took place between the two kings in the square before the principal mosque. Here they fought, hand to hand, with implacable fury, as though it had been agreed to decide their competition for the crown by single combat. In the tumult of this chance-medley affray, however, they were separated, and the party of El Zagal was ultimately driven from the square.

The battle raged for some time in the streets and places of the city ; but finding their powers of mischief cramped within such narrow limits, both parties sallied forth into the fields, and fought beneath the walls until evening. Many fell on both sides ; and at night each party withdrew into its quarter, until the morning gave them light to renew the unnatural conflict. For several days, the two divisions of the city remained like hostile powers arrayed against each other. The party of the Alhambra was more numerous than that of the albaycen, and contained most of the nobility and chivalry ; but the adherents of Boabdil were men hardened and strengthened by labour, and habitually skilled in the exercise of arms.

The albaycen underwent a kind of siege by the forces of El Zagal : they effected breaches in the walls, and made repeated attempts to carry it sword in hand, but were as often repulsed. The troops of Boabdil, on the other hand,

made frequent sallies ; and, in the conflicts which took place, the hatred of the combatants rose to such a pitch of fury, that no quarter was given on either side.

Boabdil perceived the inferiority of his force. He dreaded, also, that his adherents, being for the most part tradesmen and artisans, would become impatient of this interruption of their gainful occupations and disheartened by these continual scenes of carnage. He sent missives, therefore, in all haste, to Don Fadrique de Toledo, who commanded the Christian forces on the frontier, entreating his assistance.

Don Fadrique had received orders from the politic Ferdinand to aid the youthful monarch in all his contests with his uncle. He advanced, therefore, with a body of troops near to Granada ; but, wary lest some treachery might be intended, he stood for some time aloof, watching the movements of the parties. The furious and sanguinary nature of the conflicts, which distracted unhappy Granada, soon convinced him, that there was no collusion between the monarchs. He sent Boabdil, therefore, a reinforcement of Christian foot-soldiers and arquebusiers, under Fernan Alvarez de Sotomayor, alcaide of Colomara. This was as a firebrand thrown in to light up anew the flames of war in the city, which remained raging between the Moorish inhabitants for the space of fifty days.

#### CHAPTER XLVII.

How king Ferdinand laid siege to Velez Malaga.

HITHERTO the events of this renowned war have been little else than a succession of brilliant but brief exploits, such as sudden forays and wild skirmishes among the mountains, or the surprisal of castles, fortresses, and frontier towns. We approach now to more important and prolonged operations, in which ancient and mighty cities, the bulwarks of Granada, were invested by powerful armies, subdued by slow and regular sieges, and thus the capital left naked and alone.

The glorious triumphs of the catholic sovereigns, says Fray Antonio Agapida, had resounded throughout the East, and filled all heathenesse with alarm. The

\* Pulgar.

Grand Turk, Bajazet II. and his deadly foe the Grand Soldan of Egypt, suspending for a time their bloody feuds, entered into a league to protect the religion of Mahomet and the kingdom of Granada from the hostilities of the Christians. It was concerted between them, that Bajazet should send a powerful armada against the island of Sicily, then appertaining to the Spanish crown, for the purpose of distracting the attention of the Castilian sovereigns, while at the same time, great bodies of troops should be poured into Granada from the opposite coast of Africa.

Ferdinand and Isabella received timely intelligence of these designs. They resolved at once to carry the war into the seaboard of Granada, to possess themselves of its ports, and thus, as it were, to bar the gates of the kingdom against all external aid. Malaga was to be the main object of attack: it was the principal seaport of the kingdom, and almost necessary to its existence. It had long been the seat of opulent commerce, sending many ships to the coasts of Syria and Egypt. It was also the great channel of communication with Africa, through which were introduced supplies of money, troops, arms, and steeds, from Tunis, Tripoli, Fez, Tremezan, and other Barbary powers. It was emphatically called, therefore, the Hand and Mouth of Granada.

Before laying siege to this redoubtable city, however, it was deemed necessary to secure the neighbouring city of Velez Malaga, and its dependent places, which might otherwise harass the besieging army.

For this important campaign, the nobles of the kingdom were again summoned to take the field with their forces, in the spring of 1487. The menaced invasion of the infidel powers of the East had awakened new ardour in the bosoms of all true Christian knights, and so zealously did they respond to the summons of the sovereigns, that an army of twenty thousand cavalry, and fifty thousand foot, the flower of Spanish warriors, led by the bravest of Spanish cavaliers, thronged the renowned city of Cordova at the appointed time.

On the night before this mighty host

set forth upon its march, an earthquake shook the city. The inhabitants, awakened by the shaking of the walls and rocking of the towers, fled to the courts and squares, fearing to be overwhelmed by the ruins of their dwellings. The earthquake was most violent in the quarter of the royal residence, the site of the ancient palace of the Moorish kings. Many looked upon this as an omen of some impending evil, but Fray Antonio Agapida, in that infallible spirit of divination which succeeds an event, plainly reads in it a presage, that the empire of the Moors was about to be shaken to its centre.

It was on Saturday, the eve of the Sunday of Palms, says a worthy and loyal chronicler of the times, that the most catholic monarch departed with his army to render service to heaven, and make war upon the Moors.\* Heavy rains had swelled all the streams, and rendered the roads deep and difficult. The king therefore divided his host into two bodies. In one he put all the artillery, guarded by a strong body of horse, and commanded by the master of Alcantara, and Martin Alonso, senior of Montemayor. This division was to proceed by the road through the valleys, where pasturage abounded for the oxen which drew the ordnance.

The main body of the army was led by the king in person. It was divided into numerous battalions, each commanded by some distinguished cavalier. The king took the rough and perilous road of the mountains; and few mountains are more rugged and difficult than those of Andalusia. The roads are mere mule-paths, straggling amidst rocks and along the verge of precipices, clambering vast craggy heights, or descending into frightful chasms and ravines, with scanty and uncertain foothold for either man or steed. Four thousand pioneers were sent in advance, under the alcaide de los Donzeles, to conquer, in some degree, the asperities of the road. Some had pickaxes and crows, to break the rocks; some implements to construct bridges over the mountain torrents; while it was the duty of others to

\* Pulgar, Crónica de los Reyes Catholicos.



lay stepping-stones in the smaller streams. As the country was inhabited by fierce Moorish mountaineers, Don Diego de Castrillo was despatched, with a body of horse and foot, to take possession of the heights and passes. Notwithstanding every precaution, the royal army suffered excessively on its march. At one time, there was no place to encamp for five leagues of the most toilsome and mountainous country, and many of the beasts of burden sank down and perished on the road.

It was with the greatest joy, therefore, that the royal army emerged from these stern and frightful defiles, and came to where they looked down upon the vega of Velez Malaga. The region before them was one of the most delectable to the eye that ever was ravaged by an army. Sheltered from every rude blast by a screen of mountains, and sloping and expanding to the south, this lovely valley was quickened by the most generous sunshine, watered by the silver meanderings of the Velez, and refreshed by cooling breezes from the Mediterranean. The sloping hills were covered with vineyards and olive-trees, the distant fields waved with grain, or were verdant with pasturage, while around the city were delightful gardens, the favourite retreat of the Moors, where their white pavilions gleamed among groves of oranges, citrons, and pomegranates, and were surmounted by stately palms, those plants of southern growth, bespeaking a generous climate and a cloudless sky.

In the upper part of this delightful valley the city of Velez Malaga reared its warrior battlements, in stern contrast to the landscape. It was built on the declivity of a steep and insulated hill, and strongly fortified by walls and towers. The crest of the hill rose high above the town into a mere crag, inaccessible on every other side, and crowned by a powerful castle, which domineered over the surrounding country. Two suburbs swept down into the valley, from the skirts of the town, and were defended by bulwarks and deep ditches. The vast ranges of gray mountains, often capped with clouds, which rose to the North, were inhabited by a hardy and

warlike race, whose strong fortresses of Comares, Camillas, Competa, and Benemarhorga frowned down from cragged heights.

At the time that the Christian host arrived in sight of this valley, a squadron was hovering on the smooth sea before it, displaying the banner of Castile. This was commanded by the Count of Trevento, and consisted of four armed galleys, conveying a number of caravels, laden with supplies for the army.

After surveying the ground, King Ferdinand encamped on the side of a mountain, which advanced close to the city, and was the last of a rugged sierra, or chain of heights, that extended quite to Granada. On the summit of this mountain, and overlooking the camp, was a Moorish town, powerfully fortified, called Bentomiz, and which, from its vicinity, had been considered capable of yielding great assistance to Velez Malaga. Several of the generals remonstrated with the king for choosing a post so exposed to assaults from the mountaineers. Ferdinand replied, that he should thus cut off all communication between the town and the city; and that, as to the danger, his soldiers must keep the more vigilant guard against surprise.

King Ferdinand rode forth, attended by several cavaliers, and a small number of cuirassiers, appointing the various stations of the camp. While a body of foot-soldiers were taking possession, as an advanced guard, of an important height which overlooked the city, the king retired to a tent to take refreshment. While at table, he was startled by a sudden uproar, and, looking forth, beheld his soldiers flying before a superior force of the enemy. The king had on no other armour but a cuirass. Seizing a lance, however, he sprang upon his horse, and galloped to protect the fugitives, followed by his handful of knights and cuirassiers. When the Spaniards saw the king hastening to their aid, they turned upon their pursuers. Ferdinand, in his eagerness, threw himself into the midst of the foe. One of his grooms was killed beside him; but before the Moor who slew him could escape, the king transfixed him with his lance. He then sought to draw

his sword, which hung at his saddle-bow, but in vain. Never had he been exposed to such peril: he was surrounded by the enemy, without a weapon wherewith to defend himself.

In this moment of awful jeopardy, the Marquis of Cadiz, the Count de Cabra, the adelantado of Murcia, with two other cavaliers, named Garcilasso de la Vega and Diego de Atayde, came galloping to the scene of action, and, surrounding the king, made a loyal rampart of their bodies against the assaults of the Moors. The horse of the marquis was pierced by an arrow, and that worthy cavalier exposed to imminent danger: but, with the aid of his valorous companions, he quickly put the enemy to flight, and pursued them with slaughter to the very gates of the city.

When these loyal warriors returned from the pursuit, they remonstrated with the king for exposing his life in personal conflict, seeing that he had so many valiant captains, whose business it was to fight. They reminded him, that the life of a prince was the life of his people, and that many a brave army was lost by the loss of its commander. They entreated him, therefore, in future to protect them with the force of his mind in the cabinet, rather than his arm in the field.

Ferdinand acknowledged the wisdom of their advice, but declared, that he could not see his people in peril without venturing his person to assist them: a reply, say the old chroniclers, which delighted the whole army, inasmuch as they saw, that he not only governed them as a good king, but protected them as a valiant captain. Ferdinand, however, was conscious of the extreme peril to which he had been exposed, and made a vow never again to venture into battle without having his sword girt to his side.\*

When this achievement of the king was related to Isabella, she trembled amidst her joy at his safety; and afterwards, in memorial of the event, she granted to Velez Malaga, as the arms of

the city, the figure of the king on horse-back, with a groom lying dead at his feet, and the Moors flying.\*

The camp was formed, but the artillery was yet on the road, advancing with infinite labour at the rate of merely a league a day; for heavy rains had converted the streams of the valleys into raging torrents, and completely broken up the roads. In the mean time King Ferdinand ordered an assault on the suburbs of the city. They were carried, after a sanguinary conflict of six hours, in which many Christian cavaliers were killed and wounded, and among the latter Don Alvaro of Portugal, son of the Duke of Braganza. The suburbs were then fortified towards the city with trenches and palisades, and garrisoned by a chosen force under Don Fadrique de Toledo. Other trenches were dug round the city, and from the suburbs to the royal camp, so as to cut off all communication with the surrounding country.

Bodies of troops were also sent to take possession of the mountain passes, by which the supplies for the army had to be brought. The mountains, however, were so steep and rugged, and so full of defiles and lurking-places, that the Moors could sally forth and retreat in perfect security, frequently sweeping down upon Christian convoys, and bearing off both booty and prisoners to their strongholds. Sometimes the Moors would light fires at night on the sides of the mountains, which would be answered by fires from the watchtowers and fortresses. By these signals they would concert assaults upon the Christian camp, which, in consequence, was obliged to be continually on the alert, and ready to fly to arms.

King Ferdinand flattered himself, that the manifestation of his force had struck sufficient terror into the city, and that, by offers of clemency, it might be induced to capitulate. He wrote a letter, therefore, to the commanders, promising, in case of immediate surrender, that all the inhabitants should be permitted to depart with their effects; but threatening them with fire and sword if they persisted in defence. This letter was despatched by a cavalier named Carvajal,

\* Illescas, Hist. Pontif., lib. vi. c. 20. Vedmar, Hist. Velez Malaga.

\* Idem.

who, putting it on the end of a lance, gave it to the Moors who were on the walls of the city. The commanders replied, that the king was too noble and magnanimous to put such a threat in execution, and that they should not surrender, as they knew the artillery could not be brought to the camp, and they were promised succour by the king of Granada.

At the same time that he received this reply, the king learned, that at the strong town of Comares, upon a height about two leagues distant from the camp, a large number of warriors had assembled from the Axarquia, the same mountains in which the Christian cavaliers had been massacred in the beginning of the war; and that others were daily expected, for this rugged sierra was capable of furnishing fifteen thousand fighting men.

King Ferdinand felt that his army, thus disjointed and enclosed in an enemy's country, was in a perilous situation, and that the utmost discipline and vigilance were necessary. He put the camp under the strictest regulations, forbidding all gaming, blasphemy, or brawl, and expelling all loose women, and their attendant bully-ruffians, the usual fomenters of riot and contention among soldiery. He ordered that none should sally forth to skirmish without permission from their commanders; that none should set fire to the woods of the neighbouring mountains, and that all word of security given to Moorish places or individuals should be inviolably observed. These regulations were enforced by severe penalties, and had such salutary effect, that, though a vast host of various people was collected together, not an opprobrious epithet was heard, nor a weapon drawn in quarrel.

In the mean time the cloud of war went on gathering about the summits of the mountains: multitudes of the fierce warriors of the sierra descended to the lower heights of Bentomiz, which overhung the camp, intending to force their way into the city. A detachment was sent against them, which, after sharp fighting, drove them to the higher cliffs of the mountain, where it was impossible to pursue them.

Ten days had elapsed since the en-

campment of the army, yet still the artillery had not arrived. The lombards and other heavy ordnance were left, in despair, at Antequera; the rest came groaning slowly through the narrow valleys, which were filled with long trains of artillery and cars laden with munitions. At length part of the smaller ordnance arrived within half a league of the camp, and the Christians were animated with the hopes of soon being able to make a regular attack upon the fortifications of the city.

#### CHAPTER XLVIII.

How King Ferdinand and his army were exposed to imminent peril before Velez Malaga.

WHILE the standard of the cross waved on the hills before Velez Malaga, and every height and cliff bristled with hostile arms, the civil war between the factions of the Alhambra and the albaycen, or rather between El Zagal and El Chico, continued to convulse the city of Granada.

The tidings of the investment of Velez Malaga at length roused the attention of the old men and the alfaquis, whose heads were not heated by the daily broils. They spread themselves through the city, and endeavoured to arouse the people to a sense of their common danger.

"Why," said they, "continue these brawls between brethren and kindred? What battles are these, where even triumph is ignominious, and the victor blushes and conceals his scars? Behold the Christians ravaging the land won by the valour and blood of your forefathers, dwelling in the houses they have built, sitting under the trees they have planted, while your brethren wander about, houseless and desolate. Do you wish to seek your real foe? He is encamped on the mountains of Bentomiz. Do you want a field for the display of your valour? You will find it before the walls of Velez Malaga."

When they had roused the spirit of the people, they made their way to the rival kings, and addressed them with like remonstrances. Hamet Aben Zarrax, the inspired santón, reproached El Zagal with his blind and senseless ambition. "You are striving to be king," said he

bitterly, "yet suffer the kingdom to be lost."

El Zagal found himself in a perplexing dilemma. He had a double war to wage, with the enemy without and the enemy within. Should the Christians gain possession of the sea-coast, it would be ruinous to the kingdom; should he leave Granada to oppose them, his vacant throne might be seized on by his nephew. He made a merit of necessity: and, pretending to yield to the remonstrances of the alfaquis, endeavoured to compromise with Boabdil. He expressed deep concern at the daily losses of the country, caused by the dissensions of the capital; an opportunity now presented itself to retrieve all by a blow. The Christians had, in a manner, put themselves in a tomb between the mountains; nothing remained but to throw the earth upon them. He offered to resign the title of king, to submit to the government of his nephew, and fight under his standard; all he desired was to hasten to the relief of Velez Malaga, and to take full vengeance on the Christians.

Boabdil spurned his proposition as the artifice of a hypocrite and a traitor. "How shall I trust a man," said he, "who has murdered my father and my kindred by treachery, and repeatedly sought my own life, both by violence and stratagem?"

El Zagal foamed with rage and vexation; but there was no time to be lost. He was beset by the alfaquis and the nobles of his court; the youthful cavaliers were hot for action; the common people loud in their complaints that the richest cities were abandoned to the enemy. The old warrior was naturally fond of fighting; he saw also, that to remain inactive would endanger both crown and kingdom, whereas a successful blow would secure his popularity in Granada. He had a much more powerful force than his nephew, having lately received reinforcements from Baza, Guadix, and Almeria; he could march, therefore, with a large force, and yet leave a strong garrison in the Alhambra. He formed his measures accordingly, and departed suddenly in the night, at the head of one thousand horse and twenty thousand foot. He took the most unfre-

quented roads along the chain of mountains extending from Granada to the height of Bentomiz, and proceeded with such rapidity, as to arrive there before King Ferdinand had notice of his approach.

The Christians were alarmed one evening by the sudden blazing of great fires on the mountain, about the fortress of Bentomiz. By the ruddy light they beheld the flash of weapons and the array of troops, and they heard the distant sound of Moorish drums and trumpets. The fires of Bentomiz were answered by fires on the towers of Velez Malaga. The shouts of "El Zagal! El Zagal!" echoed along the cliffs and resounded from the city, and the Christians found that the old warrior-king of Granada was on the mountain above their camp.

The spirits of the Moors were suddenly raised to a pitch of the greatest exultation, while the Christians were astonished to see this storm of war ready to burst upon their heads. The Count de Cabra, with his accustomed eagerness when there was a king in the field, would fain have scaled the heights, and attacked El Zagal before he had time to form his camp; but Ferdinand, who was more cool and wary, restrained him. To attack the height would be to abandon the siege. He ordered every one, therefore, to keep vigilant watch at his post, and to stand ready to defend it to the utmost, but on no account to sally forth and attack the enemy.

All night the signal-fires kept blazing along the mountains, rousing and animating the whole country. The morning sun rose over the lofty summit of Bentomiz on a scene of martial splendour. As its rays glanced down the mountain, they lighted up the white tents of the Christian cavaliers, cresting its lower prominences, their pennons and ensigns fluttering in the morning breeze. The sumptuous pavilion of the king, with the holy standard of the cross, and the royal banners of Castile and Aragon, dominated the encampment. Beyond lay the city, its lofty castle and numerous towers glistening with arms; while above all, and just on the profile of the height, in the full blaze of the rising sun, were descried the tents of the Moor, his turban-

ed troops clustering about them, and his infidel banners floating against the sky. Columns of smoke rose where the night-fire had blazed, and the clash of the Moorish cymbal, the bray of the trumpet, and the neigh of steeds, were faintly heard from those airy heights. So pure and transparent is the atmosphere in this region, that every object can be distinctly seen at a great distance, and the Christians were able to behold the formidable hosts of foes that were gathering on the summits of the surrounding mountains.

One of the first measures of the Moorish king was to detach a large force under Rodovan de Vanegas, alcaide of Granada, to fall upon the convoy of ordnance, which stretched for a great distance through the mountain defiles. Ferdinand had anticipated this attempt, and sent the commander of Leon with a body of horse and foot to reinforce the master of Alcantara. El Zagal, from his mountain height, beheld the detachment issue from the camp, and immediately recalled Rodovan de Vanegas. The armies now remained quiet for a time, the Moor looking grimly down upon the Christian camp, like a tiger meditating a bound upon his prey. The Christians were in fearful jeopardy; a hostile city below them, a powerful army above them, and on every side mountains filled with implacable foes.

After El Zagal had maturely consulted the situation of the Christian camp, and informed himself of all the passes of the mountain, he conceived a plan to surprise the enemy, which he flattered himself would ensure their ruin, and perhaps the capture of King Ferdinand. He wrote a letter to the alcaide of the city, commanding him, in the dead of the night, on a signal-fire being made from the mountain, to sally forth with all his troops, and fall furiously upon the camp. The king would, at the same time, rush down with his army from the mountain, and assail it on the opposite side, thus overwhelming it at the hour of deep repose. This letter he despatched by a renegado Christian, who knew all the secret roads of the country, and, if taken, could pass himself for a Christian who had escaped from captivity.

The fierce El Zagal, confident in the

success of his stratagem, looked down upon the Christians as his devoted victims. As the sun went down, and the long shadows of the mountains stretched across the vega, he pointed with exultation to the camp below, apparently unconscious of the impending danger. "Allah achbar!" exclaimed he, "God is great! Behold, the unbelievers are delivered into our hands! their king and choicest chivalry will soon be at our mercy. Now is the time to show the courage of men, and by one glorious victory retrieve all that we have lost. Happy he who falls fighting in the cause of the prophet: he will at once be transported to the paradise of the faithful, and surrounded by immortal houries! Happy he who shall survive victorious: he will behold Granada, an earthly paradise, once more delivered from its foes, and restored to all its glory!" The words of El Zagal were received with acclamations by his troops, who waited impatiently for the appointed hour to pour down from their mountain-hold upon the Christians.

#### CHAPTER XLIX.

Result of the stratagem of El Zagal to surprise King Ferdinand.

QUEEN ISABELLA and her court had remained at Cordova, in great anxiety for the result of the royal expedition. Every day brought tidings of the difficulties which attended the transportation of the ordnance and munitions, and of the critical situation of the army.

While in this state of anxious suspense, couriers arrived with all speed from the frontiers, bringing tidings of the sudden sally of El Zagal from Granada to surprise the Christian camp. All Cordova was in consternation. The destruction of the Andalusian chivalry among the mountains of this very neighbourhood was called to mind; it was feared that similar ruin was about to burst forth, from rocks and precipices, upon Ferdinand and his army.

Queen Isabella shared in the public alarm; but it served to rouse all the energies of her heroic mind. Instead of uttering idle apprehensions, she sought only how to avert the danger. She called

upon all the men of Andalusia, under the age of seventy, to arm and hasten to the relief of their sovereign; and she prepared to set out with the first levies.

The grand cardinal of Spain, old Pedro Gonzales de Mendoza, in whom the piety of the saint and the wisdom of the counsellor were mingled with the fire of the cavalier, offered high pay to all horsemen who would follow him to aid their king and the Christian cause; and buckling on armour, prepared to lead them to the scene of danger.

The summons of the queen roused the quick Andalusian spirit. Warriors, who had long since given up fighting, and had sent their sons to battle, now seized the sword and lance that were resting on the wall, and marshalled forth their gray-headed domestics and their grandchildren for the field. The great dread was, that all aid would arrive too late. El Zagal and his host had passed like a storm through the mountains, and it was feared the tempest had already burst upon the Christian camp.

In the mean while the night had closed, which had been appointed by El Zagal for the execution of his plan. He had watched the last light of day expire, and all the Spanish camp remained tranquil. As the hours wore away, the camp-fires were gradually extinguished. No drum or trumpet sounded from below; nothing was heard but now and then the heavy tread of troops, or the echoing tramp of horses, the usual patrols of the camp, and the changes of the guard. El Zagal restrained his own impatience, and that of his troops, until the night should be advanced, and the camp sunk in that heavy sleep from which men are with difficulty awakened, and, when awakened, so prone to be bewildered and dismayed.

At length the appointed hour arrived. By order of the Moorish king a bright flame sprung up from the height of Bentomiz; but El Zagal looked in vain for the responding light from the city. His impatience could brook no longer delay: he ordered the advance of the army to descend the mountain defile, and attack the camp. The defile was narrow, and overhung by rocks. As the troops proceeded, they came suddenly, in a sha-

dowy hollow, upon a dark mass of Christian warriors. A loud shout burst forth, and the Christians rushed to assail them. The Moors, surprised and disconcerted, retreated in confusion to the height. When El Zagal heard of a Christian force posted in the defile, he doubted some counter-plan of the enemy. He gave orders to light the mountain-fires. On a signal given, bright flames sprung out on every height, from great pyres of wood prepared for the purpose. Cliff blazed out after cliff, until the whole atmosphere was in a glow of furnace light. The ruddy glare lit up the glens and passes of the mountains, and fell strongly upon the Christian camp, revealing all its tents, and every post and bulwark. Wherever El Zagal turned his eyes, he beheld the light of his fires flashed back from cuirass, and helm, and sparkling lance; he beheld a grove of spears planted in every pass, every assailable point bristling with arms, and squadrons of horse and foot, in battle array, awaiting his attack.

In fact, the letter of El Zagal to the alcaide of Velez Malaga had been intercepted by the vigilant Ferdinand, and the renegado messenger hanged, and secret measures taken, after the night had closed in, to give the enemy a warm reception. El Zagal saw that his plan of surprise was discovered and foiled: furious with disappointment, he ordered his troops forward to the attack. They rushed down the defile with loud cries, but were again encountered by the mass of Christian warriors, being the advanced guard of the army commanded by Don Hurtado de Mendoza, brother of the grand cardinal. The Moors were again repulsed, and retreated up the heights. Don Hurtado would have pursued them; but the ascent was steep and rugged, and easily defended by the Moors. A sharp action was kept up through the night with crossbows, darts, and arquebuses; the cliffs echoed with deafening uproar, while the fires, blazing upon the mountains, threw a lurid and uncertain light upon the scene.

When the day dawned, and the Moors saw that there was no co-operation from the city, they began to slacken in their ardour: they beheld also every pass of

the mountain filled with Christian troops, and began to apprehend an assault in return. Just then King Ferdinand sent the Marquis of Cadiz, with horse and foot, to seize upon a height occupied by a battalion of the enemy. The Marquis assailed the Moors with his usual intrepidity, and soon put them to flight. The others, who were above, seeing their companions flying, were seized with a sudden alarm. They threw down their arms and retreated. One of those unaccountable panics, which now and then seize upon great bodies of people, and to which the light-spirited Moors were very prone, now spread through the camp. They were terrified, they knew not why, or at what. They threw away swords, lances, breast-plates, crossbows, every thing that could burden or impede their flight, and, spreading themselves wildly over the mountains, fled headlong down the defiles. They fled, without pursuers, from the glimpse of each other's arms, from the sound of each other's footsteps. Rodovan de Vanegas, the brave alcaide of Granada, alone succeeded in collecting a body of the fugitives: he made a circuit with them through the passes of the mountains, and, forcing his way across a weak part of the Christian lines, galloped towards Velez Malaga. The rest of the Moorish host was completely scattered. In vain did El Zagal and his knights attempt to rally them; they were left almost alone, and had to consult their own security by flight. The Marquis of Cadiz, finding no opposition, ascended from height to height, cautiously reconnoitring, and fearful of some stratagem or ambush. All, however, was quiet. He reached, with his men, the place which the Moorish army had occupied: the heights were abandoned, and strewed with cuirasses, cimbers, crossbows, and other weapons. His force was too small to pursue the enemy, and he returned to the royal camp laden with the spoils.

King Ferdinand at first could not credit so signal and miraculous a defeat. He suspected some lurking stratagem. He ordered, therefore, that a strict watch should be maintained throughout the camp, and every one be ready for instant action. The following night a thousand cavaliers and hidalgos kept

guard about the royal tent, as they had done for several preceding nights; nor did the king relax this vigilance, until he received certain intelligence that the army was completely scattered, and El Zagal flying in confusion.

The tidings of this rout, and of the safety of the Christian army, arrived at Cordova just as the reinforcements were on the point of setting out. The anxiety and alarm of the queen and the public were turned to transports of joy and gratitude. The forces were disbanded, solemn processions were made, and *Te Deums* chanted in the churches for so signal a victory.

#### CHAPTER L.

How the people of Granada rewarded the valour of El Zagal.

THE daring spirit of the old warrior, Muley Abdalla El Zagal, in sallying forth to defend his territories, while he left an armed rival in his capital, had struck the people of Granada with admiration. They recalled his former exploits, and again anticipated some hardy achievement from his furious valour. Couriers from the army reported its formidable position on the height of Bentomiz. For a time there was a pause in the bloody commotions of the city; all attention was turned to the blow about to be struck at the Christian camp. The same considerations, which diffused anxiety and terror through Cordova, swelled every bosom with exulting confidence in Granada. The Moors expected to hear of another massacre, like that in the mountains of Malaga. "El Zagal has again entrapped the enemy!" was the cry. "The power of the unbelievers is about to be struck to the heart; and we shall soon see the Christian king led captive to the capital!" Thus the name of El Zagal was on every tongue. He was extolled as the saviour of the country, the only one worthy of wearing the Moorish crown. Boabdil was reviled as basely remaining passive while his country was invaded; and so violent became the clamour of the populace, that his adherents trembled for his safety.

While the people of Granada were impatiently looking for tidings of the

anticipated victory, scattered horsemen come spurring across the vega. They were fugitives from the Moorish army, and brought the first incoherent account of its defeat. Every one who attempted to tell the tale of this unaccountable panic and dispersion was as if bewildered by the broken recollection of some frightful dream. He knew not how or why it came to pass. He talked of a battle in the night among rocks and precipices, by the glare of bale-fires; of multitudes of armed foes in every pass, seen by gleams and flashes; of the sudden horror that seized upon the army at day-break, its headlong flight and total dispersion. Hour after hour the arrival of other fugitives confirmed the story of ruin and disgrace.

In proportion to their recent vaunting was the humiliation that now fell upon the people of Granada. There was a universal burst, not of grief, but indignation.

They confounded the leader with the army; the deserted with those who had abandoned him; and El Zagal, from being their idol, became the object of their execration. He had sacrificed the army; he had disgraced the nation; he had betrayed the country. He was a dastard, a traitor, he was unworthy to reign!

On a sudden, one among the multitude cried out, "Long live Boabdil el Chico!" The cry was echoed on all sides, and every one shouted, "Long live Boabdil el Chico! long live the legitimate king of Granada! and death to all usurpers!" In the excitement of the moment they thronged to the albaycen, and those, who had lately besieged Boabdil with arms, now surrounded his palace with acclamations. The keys of the city and of all the fortresses were laid at his feet; he was borne in state to the Alhambra, and once more seated, with all due ceremony, on the throne of his ancestors.

Boabdil had by this time become so accustomed to be crowned and uncrowned by the multitude, that he put no great faith in the duration of their loyalty.

He knew that he was surrounded by hollow hearts, and that most of the courtiers of the Alhambra were secretly

devoted to his uncle. He ascended the throne as the rightful sovereign, who had been dispossessed of it by usurpation, and he ordered the heads of four of the principal nobles to be struck off, who had been most zealous in support of the usurper. Executions of this kind were matters of course on any change of Moorish government, and Boabdil was extolled for his moderation and humanity, in being content with so small a sacrifice. The factions were awed into obedience; the populace, delighted with any change, extolled Boabdil to the skies, and the name of Muley Abdalla el Zagal was for a time a byword of scorn and opprobrium throughout the city.

Never was any commander more astonished and confounded by a sudden reverse than El Zagal. The evening had seen him with a powerful army at his command, his enemy within his grasp, and victory about to cover him with glory, and to consolidate his power. The morning beheld him a fugitive among the mountains; his army, his prosperity, his power, all dispelled he knew not how; gone like a dream of the night. In vain had he tried to stem the headlong flight of the soldiery. He saw his squadrons breaking and dispersing among the cliffs of the mountains, until, of all his host, only a handful of cavaliers remained faithful to him. With these he made a gloomy retreat towards Granada, but with a heart full of foreboding. When he drew near the city, he paused on the banks of the Xenil, and sent forth scouts to collect intelligence. They returned with dejected countenances. "The gates of Granada," said they, "are closed against you. The banner of Boabdil floats on the tower of the Alhambra."

El Zagal turned his steed, and departed in silence. He retreated to the town of Almuneçar, and from thence to Almeria, places which still remained faithful to him. Restless and uneasy at being so distant from the capital, he again changed his abode and repaired to the city of Guadix, within a few leagues of Granada. Here he remained, endeavouring to rally his forces, and preparing to avail himself of any change in the fluctuating politics of the metropolis.



## CHAPTER LI.

Surrender of Velez Malaga, and other places.

THE people of Velez Malaga had beheld the camp of Muley Abdalla el Zagal covering the summit of Bentomiz, and glittering in the last rays of the setting sun. During the night they had been alarmed and perplexed by signal fires on the mountain, and by the distant sound of battle. When the morning broke, the Moorish army had vanished as if by enchantment. While the inhabitants were lost in wonder and conjecture, a body of cavalry, the fragment of the army saved by Rodovan de Vanegas, the brave alcaide of Granada, came galloping to the gates. The tidings of this strange discomfiture of the host filled the city with consternation; but Rodovan exhorted the people to continue their resistance. He was devoted to El Zagal, and confident in his skill and prowess; and felt assured, that he would soon collect his scattered forces, and return with fresh troops from Granada. The people were comforted by the words and encouraged by the presence of Rodovan, and they had still a lingering hope, that the heavy artillery of the Christians might be locked up in the impassable defiles of the mountains. This hope was soon at an end. The very next day they beheld long laborious lines of ordnance slowly moving into the Spanish camp; lombards, ribadoquines, catapultas, and cars laden with munitions, while the escort, under the brave master of Alcantara, wheeled in great battalions into the camp, to augment the force of the besiegers.

The intelligence, that Granada had shut its gates against El Zagal, and that no reinforcements were to be expected, completed the despair of the inhabitants; even Rodovan himself lost confidence, and advised capitulation.

The terms were arranged between the alcaide and the noble Count de Cifuentes. The latter had been prisoner of Rodovan at Granada, who had treated him with chivalrous courtesy. They had conceived a mutual esteem for each other, and met as ancient friends.

Ferdinand granted favourable conditions; for he was eager to proceed against Malaga. The inhabitants were permitted

to depart with their effects, except their arms, and to reside, if they chose it, in Spain, in any place distant from the sea. One hundred and twenty Christians of both sexes were rescued from captivity by the surrender of Velez Malaga, and were sent to Cordova, where they were received with great tenderness by the queen, and her daughter the Infanta Isabella, in the famous cathedral, in the midst of public rejoicings for the victory.

The capture of Velez Malaga was followed by the surrender of Bentomiz, Comares, and all the towns and fortresses of the Axarquia, which were strongly garrisoned, and discreet and valiant cavaliers appointed as their alcaides. The inhabitants of nearly forty towns of the Alpuxarra mountains also sent deputations to the Castilian sovereigns, taking the oath of allegiance as Mudixares, or Moslem vassals.

About the same time came letters from Boabdil el Chico, announcing to the sovereigns the revolution of Granada in his favour. He solicited kindness and protection for the inhabitants who had returned to their allegiance, and for those of all other places which should renounce allegiance to his uncle. By this means, he observed, the whole kingdom of Granada would soon be induced to acknowledge his sway, and would be held by him in faithful vassalage to the Castilian crown.

The catholic sovereigns complied with his request. Protection was immediately extended to the inhabitants of Granada, permitting them to cultivate their fields in peace, and to trade with the Christian territories in all articles excepting arms, being provided with letters of surety from some Christian captain or alcaide. The same favour was promised to all other places that within six months should renounce El Zagal and come under allegiance to the younger king. Should they not do so within that time, the sovereigns threatened to make war upon them and conquer them for themselves. This measure had a great effect in inducing many to return to the standard of Boabdil.

Having made every necessary arrangement for the government and security of the newly conquered territory, Ferdinand

turned his attention to the great object of his campaign, the reduction of Malaga.

#### CHAPTER LII.

Of the city of Malaga and its inhabitants.

THE city of Malaga lies in the lap of a fertile valley, surrounded by mountains, excepting on the part which lies open to the sea. As it was one of the most important, so it was one of the strongest cities of the Moorish kingdom. It was fortified by walls of prodigious strength, studded with a great number of huge towers. On the land side it was protected by a natural barrier of mountains, and, on the other, the waves of the Mediterranean beat against the foundations of its massive bulwarks.

At one end of the city, near the sea, on a high mound, stood the alcazaba or citadel, a fortress of great strength. Immediately above this rose a steep and rocky mount, on the top of which, in old times, had been a pharos, or lighthouse, from which the height derived its name of Gibralfaro.\* It was at present crowned by an immense castle, which, from its lofty and cragged situation, its vast walls and mighty towers, was deemed impregnable. It communicated with the alcazaba by a covered way, six paces broad, leading down between two walls, along the profile or ridge of the rock. The castle of Gibralfaro commanded both citadel and city, and was capable, if both were taken, of maintaining a siege.

Two large suburbs adjoined the city: in the one towards the sea were dwelling-houses of the most opulent inhabitants, adorned with hanging gardens; the other, on the land side, was thickly peopled, and surrounded by strong walls and towers.

Malaga possessed a brave and numerous garrison, and the common people were active, hardy, and resolute; but the city was rich and commercial, and under the habitual control of numerous opulent merchants, who dreaded the ruinous consequences of a siege. They were little zealous for the warlike renown of their city, and longed rather to participate in

the enviable security of property, and the lucrative privileges of safe traffic with the Christian territories, granted to all places which declared for Boabdil. At the head of these gainful citizens was Ali Dordux, a mighty merchant, of uncounted wealth, whose ships traded to every port of the Levant, and whose word was a law in Malaga.

Ali Dordux assembled the most opulent and important of his commercial brethren, and they repaired in a body to the alcazaba, where they were received by the alcajde, Albozen Connexa, with that deference generally shown to men of their great local dignity and power of purse. Ali Dordux was ample and stately in his form, and fluent and emphatic in his discourse. His eloquence had an effect, therefore, upon the alcajde, as he represented the hopelessness of a defence of Malaga, the misery that must attend a siege, and the ruin that must follow a capture by force of arms. On the other hand, he set forth the grace that might be obtained from the Castilian sovereigns by an early and voluntary acknowledgment of Boabdil as king, the peaceful possession of their property, and the profitable commerce with the Christian ports that would be allowed them. He was seconded by his weighty and important coadjutors; and the alcajde, accustomed to regard them as the arbiters of the affairs of the place, yielded to their united counsels. He departed, therefore, with all speed, to the Christian camp, empowered to arrange a capitulation with the Castilian monarch, and in the mean time his brother remained in command of the alcazaba.

There was, at this time, as alcajde, in the old crag-built castle of Gibralfaro, a warlike and fiery Moor, an implacable enemy of the Christians. This was no other than Hamet Zeli, surnamed El Zegri, the once formidable alcajde of Ronda, and the terror of its mountains. He had never forgiven the capture of his favourite fortress, and panted for vengeance on the Christians. Notwithstanding his reverses, he had retained the favour of El Zagal, who knew how to appreciate a bold warrior of the kind, and had placed him in command of this important fortress of Gibralfaro.

\* A corruption of Gibel-fano, the hill of the lighthouse.

Hamet el Zegri had gathered round him the remnant of his band of Gomerés, with others of the same tribe. These fierce warriors were nestled, like so many war-hawks, about their lofty cliff. They looked down with martial contempt upon the commercial city of Malaga, which they were placed to protect; or rather, they esteemed it only for its military importance and its capability of defence. They held no communion with its trading, gainful inhabitants, and even considered the garrison of the alcazaba as their inferiors. War was their pursuit and passion; they rejoiced in its turbulent and perilous scenes; and, confident in the strength of the city, and above all, of their castle, they set at defiance the menace of Christian invasion. There were among them, also, many apostate Moors, who had once embraced christianity, but had since recanted, and had fled from the vengeance of the inquisition. These were desperadoes, who had no mercy to expect, should they again fall into the hands of the enemy.

Such were the fierce elements of the garrison of Gibralfaro; and its rage may easily be conceived at hearing, that Malaga was to be given up without a blow; that they were to sink into Christian vassals, under the intermediate sway of Boabdil el Chico, and that the alcaide of the alcazaba had departed to arrange the terms of capitulation.

Hamet el Zegri determined to avert, by desperate means, the threatened degradation. He knew that there was a large party in the city faithful to El Zagal, being composed of warlike men, who had taken refuge from the various mountain towns which had been captured. Their feelings were desperate as their fortunes, and, like Hamet, they panted for revenge upon the Christians. With these he had a secret conference, and received assurances of their adherence to him in any measures of defence. As to the council of the peaceful inhabitants, he considered it unworthy the consideration of a soldier, and he spurned at the interference of the wealthy merchant, Ali Dordux, in matters of warfare.

"Still," said Hamet el Zegri, "let us proceed regularly." So he descended with his Gomerés to the citadel, entered

it suddenly, put to death the brother of the alcaide and such of the garrison as made any demur, and then summoned the principal inhabitants to deliberate on measures for the welfare of the city.\*

The wealthy merchants again mounted to the citadel, excepting Ali Dordux, who refused to obey the summons. They entered with hearts filled with awe, for they found Hamet surrounded by his grim African guard, and all the array of military power, and they beheld the bloody traces of the recent massacre.

Hamet el Zegri rolled a dark and searching eye upon the assembly.— "Who," said he, "is loyal and devoted to Muley Abdalla el Zagal?" Every one present asserted his loyalty. "Good!" said Hamet, "and who is ready to prove his devotion to his sovereign by defending this his important city to the last extremity?" Every one present expressed his readiness. "Enough," observed Hamet: the "alcaide, Albozen Connexa, has proved himself a traitor to his sovereign and to you all; for he has conspired to deliver the place to the Christians. It behoves you to choose some other commander, capable of defending your city against the approaching enemy." The assembly declared unanimously, that there could be none so worthy of the command as himself. So Hamet el Zegri was appointed alcaide of Malaga, and immediately proceeded to man the forts and towers with his partisans, and to make every preparation for a desperate resistance.

Intelligence of these occurrences put an end to the negotiations between King Ferdinand and the superseded alcaide Albozen Connexa, and it was supposed there was no alternative but to lay siege to the place. The Marquis of Cadiz, however, found at Velez a Moorish cavalier of some note, a native of Malaga, who offered to tamper with Hamet el Zegri for the surrender of the city; or, at least, of the castle of Gibralfaro. The marquis communicated this to the king. "I put this business and the key of my treasury into your hand," said Ferdinand: "act, stipulate, and disburse, in my name, as you think proper."

\* Cura de Los Palacios. c. 82.

The marquis armed the Moor with his own lance, cuirass, and target, and mounted him on one of his own horses. He equipped also, in similar style, another Moor, his companion and relation. They bore secret letters to Hamet from the marquis, offering him the town of Coin in perpetual inheritance, and four thousand doblas in gold, if he would deliver up Gibralfaro: together with large sums to be distributed among his officers and soldiers; and he held out unlimited rewards for the surrender of the city.\*

Hamet had a warrior's admiration for the Marquis of Cadiz, and received his messengers with courtesy, in his fortress of Gibralfaro. He even listened to their propositions with patience, and dismissed them in safety, though with an absolute refusal. The marquis thought his reply was not so peremptory as to discourage another effort. The emissaries were despatched therefore, a second time, with further propositions. They approached Malaga in the night; but found the guards doubled, patrols abroad, and the whole place on the alert. They were discovered, pursued, and only saved themselves by the fleetness of their steeds, and their knowledge of the passes of the mountains.

Finding all attempts to tamper with the faith of Hamet el Zegri utterly futile, King Ferdinand publicly summoned the city to surrender; offering the most favourable terms in case of immediate compliance, but threatening captivity to all the inhabitants in case of resistance.

The message was delivered in presence of the principal inhabitants, who, however, were too much in awe of the stern alcaide to utter a word. Hamet el Zegri then rose haughtily, and replied, that the city of Malaga had not been confided to him to be surrendered, but defended; and the king should witness how he acquitted himself of his charge.†

The messengers returned with formidable accounts of the force of the garrison, the strength of the fortifications, and the determined spirit of the commander and his men. The king immediately sent orders to have the heavy

artillery forwarded from Antequera; and, on the seventh of May, marched with his army towards Malaga.

#### CHAPTER LIII.

Advance of King Ferdinand against Malaga.

THE army of Ferdinand advanced in lengthened line, glittering along the foot of the mountains which border the Mediterranean; while a fleet of vessels, freighted with heavy artillery and warlike munitions, kept pace with it, at a short distance from the land, covering the sea with a thousand gleaming sails. When Hamet el Zegri saw this force approaching, he set fire to the houses of the suburbs which adjoined the walls, and sent forth three battalions to encounter the advance guard of the enemy.

The Christian army drew near to the city at that end where the castle and rocky height of Gibralfaro defend the seaboard. Immediately opposite to the castle, and about two bow-shots' distance, and between it and the high chain of mountains, was a steep and rocky hill, commanding a pass through which the Christians must march to penetrate to the vega, and surround the city. Hamet el Zegri ordered the three battalions to take their stations, one on this hill, another in the pass near the castle, and a third on the side of the mountain near the sea.

A body of Spanish foot-soldiers of the advance guard, sturdy mountaineers of Galicia, sprang forward to climb the side of the height next the sea; at the same time a number of cavaliers and hidalgos of the royal household attacked the Moors who guarded the pass below. The Moors defended their posts with obstinate valour. The Gallicians were repeatedly overpowered and driven down the hill, but as often rallied; and, being reinforced by the hildalgos and cavaliers, returned to the assault. This obstinate struggle lasted for six hours. The strife was of a deadly kind, not merely with cross-bows and arquebuses, but hand to hand, with swords and daggers: no quarter was claimed or given on either side: they fought not to make captives, but to slay. It was but the advance guard of the Christian army that was engaged: so

\* Cura de Los Palacios, c. 82.

† Pulgar, part iii. c. 74.

narrow was the pass along the coast, that the army could proceed only in file. Horse and foot, and beasts of burden, were crowded one upon another, impeding each other, and blocking up the narrow and rugged defile. The soldiers heard the uproar of the battle, the sound of trumpets, and the war-cries of the Moors, but tried in vain to press forward to the assistance of their companions.

At length a body of foot-soldiers of the Holy Brotherhood climbed, with great difficulty, the steep side of the mountain which overhung the pass, and advanced with seven banners displayed. The Moors, seeing this force above them, abandoned the pass in despair.

The battle was still raging on the height. The Gallicians, though supported by Castilian troops, under Don Hurtado de Mendoza, and Garcilasso de la Vega, were severely pressed, and roughly handled by the Moors. At length a brave standard-bearer, Luys Mazedo by name, threw himself into the midst of the enemy, and planted his banner on the summit. The Gallicians and the Castilians, stimulated by this noble self-devotion, followed him, fighting desperately, and the Moors were at length driven to their castle of Gibralfaro.\*

This important height being taken, the pass lay open to the army: but by this time, evening was advancing, and the host was too weary and exhausted to seek proper situations for the encampment. The king, attended by several grandees and cavaliers, went the rounds at night, stationing outposts towards the city, and guards and patrols to give the alarm on the least movement of the enemy. All night the Christians lay upon their arms, lest there should be some attempt to sally forth and attack them.

When the morning dawned, the king gazed with admiration at this city, which he hoped soon to add to his dominions. It was surrounded on one side by vineyards, gardens, and orchards, which covered the hills with verdure; on the other side its walls were bathed by the smooth and tranquil sea. Its vast

and lofty towers and prodigious castles showed the labours of magnanimous men, in former times, to protect their favourite abode. Hanging gardens, groves of oranges, citrons, and pomegranates, with tall cedars and stately palms, were mingled with the stern battlements and towers, bespeaking the opulence and luxury that reigned within.

In the mean time the Christian army poured through the pass, and throwing out its columns, and extending its lines, took possession of every vantage-ground around the city. King Ferdinand surveyed the ground, and appointed the stations of the different commanders.

The important mount, which had cost so violent a struggle, and which faced the powerful fortress of Gibralfaro, was given in charge to Roderigo Ponce de Leon, the Marquis of Cadiz, who in all sieges claimed the post of danger. He had several noble cavaliers, with their retainers, in his encampment, which consisted of fifteen hundred horse, and fourteen thousand foot; and extended from the summit of the mount to the margin of the sea, completely blocking up the approach to the city on that side. From this post a line of encampments extended quite round the city to the seaboard, fortified by bulwarks and deep ditches; while a fleet of armed ships and galleys stretched before the harbour, so that the place was completely invested by sea and land. The various parts of the valley now resounded with the din of preparation, and were filled with artificers preparing warlike engines and munitions; armourers and smiths, with glowing forges and deafening hammers; carpenters and engineers constructing machines wherewith to assail the walls; stonecutters shaping stone balls for the ordnance; and burners of charcoal preparing fuel for the furnaces and forges.

When the encampment was formed, the heavy ordnance was landed from the ships, and mounted in various parts of the camp. Five huge lombards were placed on the mount commanded by the Marquis of Cadiz, so as to bear upon the castle of Gibralfaro.

The Moors made strenuous efforts to impede these preparations. A heavy fire was kept up from their ordnance

\* Pulgar, Crónica.

upon the men employed in digging trenches or constructing batteries, so that the latter had to work principally in the night. The royal tents had been stationed conspicuously and within reach of the Moorish batteries, but were so warmly assailed that they had to be removed behind a hill.

When the works were completed, the Christian batteries opened in return, and kept up a tremendous cannonade, while the fleet, approaching the land, assailed the city vigorously on the opposite side.

It was a glorious and delectable sight, observes Fray Antonio Agapida, to behold this infidel city thus surrounded by sea and land by a mighty Christian force. Every mound in its circuit was, as it were, a little city of tents, bearing the standard of some renowned catholic warrior. Besides the warlike ships and galleys which lay before the place, the sea was covered with innumerable sails, passing and repassing, appearing and disappearing, being engaged in bringing supplies for the subsistence of the army. It would have seemed a vast spectacle contrived to recreate the eye, had not the volleying bursts of flame and smoke from the ships, which appeared to lie asleep on the quiet sea, and the thunder of ordnance from camp and city, from tower and battlement, told the deadly warfare that was waging.

At night the scene was far more direful than in the day. The cheerful light of the sun was gone; there was nothing but the flashes of artillery, or the baleful gleams of combustibles thrown into the city, and the conflagration of the houses. The fire kept up from the Christian batteries was incessant; there were seven great lombards, in particular, called the Seven Sisters of Ximenes, which did tremendous execution. The Moorish ordnance replied in thunder from the walls; Gibralfaro was wrapped in volumes of smoke, rolling about its base; and Hamet el Zegri and his Gomeris looked out with triumph upon the tempest of war they had awakened. "Truly they were so many demons incarnate," says the pious Fray Antonio Agapida, "who were permitted by Heaven to enter into and possess this infidel city for its perdition."

## CHAPTER LIV.

### Siege of Malaga.

THE attack on Malaga by sea and land was kept up for several days with tremendous violence, but without producing any great impression, so strong were the ancient bulwarks of the city. The Count de Cifuentes was the first to signalize himself by any noted achievement. A main tower of the suburb had been shattered by the ordnance, and the battlements demolished, so as to yield no shelter to its defenders. Seeing this, the count assembled a gallant band of cavaliers of the royal household, and advanced to take it by storm. They applied scaling-ladders, and mounted, sword in hand. The Moors, having no longer battlements to protect them, descended to a lower floor, and made furious resistance from the windows and loopholes. They poured down boiling pitch and rosin, and hurled stones and darts and arrows on the assailants. Many of the Christians were slain; their ladders were destroyed by flaming combustibles, and the count was obliged to retreat from before the tower. On the following day he renewed the attack with superior force, and, after a severe combat succeeded in planting his victorious banner on the tower.

The Moors now assailed the tower in their turn. They undermined the part towards the city, placed props of wood under the foundation, and, setting fire to them, drew off to a distance. In a little while the props gave way, the foundation sank, the tower was rent, part of its wall fell with a tremendous noise, many of the Christians were thrown out headlong, and the rest were laid open to the missiles of the enemy.

By this time, however, a breach had been made in the wall adjoining the tower; and troops poured in to the assistance of their comrades. A continued battle was kept up for two days and a night by reinforcements from camp and city. The parties fought backwards and forwards through the breach of the wall with alternate success, and the vicinity of the town was strewed with the dead and wounded. At length the Moors gradually gave way, disputing every inch

of ground, until they were driven into the city; and the Christians remained masters of the greater part of the suburb.

This partial success, though gained with great toil and bloodshed, gave temporary animation to the Christians. They soon found, however, that the attack on the main works of the city was a much more arduous task. The garrison contained veterans who had served in many of the towns captured by the Christians. They were no longer confounded and dismayed by the battering ordnance and other strange engines of foreign invention, and had become expert in parrying their effects, in repairing breaches, and erecting counterworks.

The Christians, accustomed of late to speedy conquests of Moorish fortresses, became impatient of the slow progress of the siege. Many were apprehensive of a scarcity of provisions, from the difficulty of subsisting so numerous a host in the heart of the enemy's country, where it was necessary to transport supplies across rugged and hostile mountains, or subjected to the uncertainties of the seas. Many were also alarmed at the pestilence which broke out in the neighbouring villages, and some were so overcome by these apprehensions, as to abandon the camp and return to their homes.

Several of the loose and worthless hangers-on, that infest all great armies, hearing these murmurs, thought that the siege would soon be raised, and deserted to the enemy, hoping to make their fortunes. They gave exaggerated accounts of the alarms and discontents of the army, and represented the troops as daily returning home in bands. Above all, they declared, that the gunpowder was nearly exhausted, so that the artillery would soon be useless. They assured the Moors, therefore, that, if they persisted in their defence a little longer, the king would be obliged to draw off his forces, and abandon the siege.

The reports of these renegadoes gave fresh courage to the garrison. They made vigorous sallies upon the camp, harassing it by night and day, and obliging every part to be guarded with the most painful vigilance. They fortified the weak part of their walls with ditches and palisadoes, and gave every mani-

festation of a determined and unyielding spirit.

Ferdinand soon received intelligence of the reports which had been carried to the Moors. He understood, that they had been informed, likewise, that the queen was alarmed for the safety of the camp, and had written repeatedly, urging him to abandon the siege. As the best means of disproving all these falsehoods, and of destroying the vain hopes of the enemy, Ferdinand wrote to the queen, entreating her to come and take up her residence in the camp.

#### CHAPTER LV.

Siege of Malaga continued. Obstinacy of Hamet el Zegri.

GREAT was the enthusiasm of the army, when they beheld their patriot queen advancing in state, to share the toils and dangers of her people. Isabella entered the camp, attended by the dignitaries, and the whole retinue of her court, to manifest that this was no temporary visit. On one side of her was her daughter, the infanta; on the other, the grand cardinal of Spain; and Hernando de Talavera, the prior of Praxo, confessor to the queen, followed, with a great train of prelates, courtiers, cavaliers, and ladies of distinction. The cavalcade moved in calm and stately order through the camp, softening the iron aspect of war by this array of courtly grace and female beauty.

Isabella had commanded, that, on her coming to the camp, the horrors of war should be suspended, and fresh offers of peace made to the enemy. On her arrival, therefore, there had been a cessation of firing throughout the camp. A messenger was at the same time despatched to the besieged, informing them of her being in the camp, and of the determination of the sovereigns to make it their settled residence, until the city should be taken. The same terms were offered, in case of immediate surrender, that had been granted to Velez Malaga, but the inhabitants were threatened with captivity and the sword, should they persist in their defence.

Hamet el Zegri received this message with haughty contempt, and dismissed the messenger without deigning a reply.

“The Christian sovereigns,” said he, “have made this offer, in consequence of their despair. The silence of their batteries proves the truth of what has been told us, that their powder is exhausted. They have no longer the means of demolishing our walls; and, if they remain much longer, the autumnal rains will interrupt their convoys, and fill their camp with famine and disease. The first storm will disperse their fleet, which has no neighbouring port of shelter. Africa will then be open to us, to procure reinforcements and supplies.”

The words of Hamet el Zegri were hailed as oracular by his adherents. Many of the peaceful part of the community, however, ventured to remonstrate, and to implore him to accept the proffered mercy. The stern Hamet silenced them with a terrific threat. He declared, that whoever should talk of capitulating, or should hold any communication with the Christians, should be put to death. His fierce Gomeres, like true men of the sword, acted upon the menace of their chieftain as upon a written law, and, having detected several of the inhabitants in secret correspondence with the enemy, they set upon and slew them, and then confiscated their effects. This struck such terror into the citizens, that those who had been loudest in their murmurs became suddenly mute, and were remarked as evincing the greatest bustle and alacrity in the defence of the city.

When the messenger returned to the camp, and reported the contemptuous reception of the royal message, King Ferdinand was exceedingly indignant. Finding the cessation of firing, on the queen's arrival, had encouraged a belief among the enemy that there was a scarcity of powder in the camp, he ordered a general discharge from every battery. This sudden burst of war from every quarter soon convinced the Moors of their error, and completed the confusion of the citizens, who knew not which most to dread, their assailants or their defenders, the Christians or the Gomeres.

That evening the sovereigns visited the encampment of the Marquis of Cadiz, which commanded a view over a great part of the city and the camp. The

tent of the Marquis was of great magnitude, furnished with hangings of rich brocade, and French cloth of the rarest texture. It was in the oriental style, and, as it crowned the height, with the surrounding tents of other cavaliers, all sumptuously furnished, presented a gay and silken contrast to the opposite towers of Gibralfaro. Here a splendid collation was served up to the sovereigns; and the courtly revel that prevailed in this chivalrous encampment, the glitter of pageantry, and the bursts of festive music, made more striking the gloom and silence that reigned over the dark Moorish castle.

The Marquis of Cadiz, while it was yet light, conducted his royal visitors to every point that commanded a view of the warlike scene below. He caused the heavy lombards also to be discharged, that the queen and the ladies of the court might witness the effect of those tremendous engines. The fair dames were filled with awe and admiration, as the mountain shook beneath their feet with the thunder of the artillery, and they beheld great fragments of the Moorish walls tumbling down the rocks and precipices.

While the good marquis was displaying these things to his royal guests, he lifted up his eyes, and to his astonishment, beheld his own banner hanging out from the nearest tower of Gibralfaro. The blood mantled in his cheek, for it was a banner which he had lost at the time of the memorable massacre of the heights of Malaga. To make this taunt more evident, several of the Gomeres displayed themselves upon the battlements, arrayed in the helmets and cuirasses of some of the cavaliers, slain or captured on that occasion.\* The Marquis of Cadiz restrained his indignation, and held his peace; but several of his cavaliers vowed loudly to revenge this cruel bravado on the ferocious garrison of Gibralfaro.

#### CHAPTER LVI.

Attack of the Marquis of Cadiz upon Gibralfaro.

THE Marquis of Cadiz was not a cavalier that readily forgave an injury or

\* Diego de Valera, Crónica. MS.



an insult. On the morning after the royal banquet, his batteries opened a tremendous fire upon Gibraltar. All day the encampment was wrapped in wreaths of smoke; nor did the assault cease with the day, but throughout the night there was an incessant flashing and thundering of the lombards, and the following morning the assault rather increased than slackened in its fury. The Moorish bulwarks were no proof against these formidable engines. In a few days the lofty tower, on which the taunting banner had been displayed, was shattered; a smaller tower, in its vicinity, reduced to ruins; and a great breach made in the intervening walls.

Several of the hot-spirited cavaliers were eager for storming the breach sword in hand; others, more cool and wary, pointed out the rashness of such an attempt; for the Moors, working indefatigably in the night, had digged a deep ditch within the breach, and had fortified it with palisadoes and a high breast-work. All, however, agreed, that the camp might safely be advanced near to the ruined walls, and that it ought to be so placed, in return for the insolent defiance of the enemy.

The Marquis of Cadiz felt the temerity of the measure; but he was unwilling to damp the zeal of these high-spirited cavaliers; and, having chosen the post of danger in the camp, it did not become him to decline any service, merely because it might appear perilous. He ordered his outposts, therefore, to be advanced within a stone's throw of the breach, but exhorted the soldiers to maintain the utmost vigilance.

The thunder of the batteries had ceased; the troops, exhausted by two nights' fatigue and watchfulness, and apprehending no danger from the dismantled walls, were half of them asleep, the rest were scattered about in negligent security. On a sudden, upwards of two thousand Moors sallied forth from the castle, led on by Abraham Zenete, the principal captain under Hamet. They fell with fearful havoc upon the advance guard, slaying many of them in their sleep, and putting the rest to headlong flight. The marquis was in his tent, about a bow-shot distance, when he heard

the tumult of the onset, and beheld his men flying in confusion. He rushed forth, followed by his standard-bearers. "Turn again, cavaliers!" exclaimed he; "turn again! I am here, Ponce de Leon! To the foe! to the foe!" The flying troops stopped at hearing his well-known voice, rallied under his banner, and turned upon the enemy. The encampment by this time was roused; several cavaliers from the adjoining stations had hastened to the scene of action, with a number of Gallicians, and soldiers of the Holy Brotherhood. An obstinate and bloody contest ensued. The ruggedness of the place, the rocks, chasms, and declivities, broke it into numerous combats. Christian and Moor fought hand to hand, with swords and daggers; and often, grappling and struggling, rolled together down the precipices.

The banner of the marquis was in danger of being taken. He hastened to its rescue, followed by some of his bravest cavaliers. They were surrounded by the enemy, and several of them cut down. Don Diego Ponce de Leon, brother to the marquis, was wounded by an arrow; and his son-in-law, Luis Ponce, was likewise wounded: they succeeded, however, in rescuing the banner, and bearing it off in safety. The battle lasted for an hour: the height was covered with killed and wounded; and the blood flowed in streams down the rocks. At length, Abraham Zenete being disabled by the thrust of a lance, the Moors gave way, and retreated to the castle.

They now opened a galling fire from their battlements and towers, approaching the breaches, so as to discharge their crossbows and arquebuses into the advance guard of the encampment. The marquis was singled out: the shot fell thick about him, and one passed through his buckler, and struck upon his cuirass, but without doing him any injury. Every one now saw the danger and inutility of approaching the camp thus near to the castle; and those who had counselled it were now urgent that it should be withdrawn. It was accordingly removed back to its original ground, from which the marquis had most reluctantly advanced it. Nothing but his valour and timely aid had prevented this attack from

ending in a total rout of all that part of the army.

Many cavaliers of distinction fell in this contest; but the loss of none was felt more deeply than that of Ortega de Prado, captain of escaladors. He was one of the bravest men in the service; the same who had devised the first successful blow of the war, the storming of Alhama, where he was the first to plant and mount the scaling-ladders. He had always been high in the favour and confidence of the noble Ponce de Leon, who knew how to appreciate and avail himself of the merits of all able and valiant men.\*

#### CHAPTER LVII.

Siege of Malaga continued. Stratagems of various kinds.

GREAT were the exertions now made, both by the besiegers and the besieged, to carry on this contest with the utmost vigour. Hamet el Zegri went the rounds of the walls and towers, doubling the guards, and putting every thing into the best posture of defence. The garrison was divided into parties of a hundred, to each of which a captain was appointed. Some were to patrol; others to sally forth, and skirmish with the enemy; and others to hold themselves ready armed and in reserve. Six albatozas, or floating batteries, were manned, and armed with pieces of artillery, to attack the fleet.

On the other hand, the Castilian sovereigns kept open a communication, by sea, with various parts of Spain, from which they received provisions of all kinds. They ordered supplies of powder, also, from Valencia, Barcelona, Sicily, and Portugal. They made great preparations for storming the city. Towers of wood were constructed, to move on wheels, each capable of holding one hundred men. They were furnished with ladders, to be thrown from their summits to the tops of the walls; and within those ladders others were incased, to be let down for the descent of the troops into the city. There were galli-

pagos, or tortoises, also; being great wooden shields covered with hides, to protect the assailants, and those who undermined the walls.

Secret mines were commenced in various places. Some were intended to reach to the foundations of the walls, which were to be propped up with wood, ready to be set on fire; others were to pass under the walls, and remain ready to be broken open so as to give entrance to the besiegers. At these mines the army worked day and night; and during these secret preparations, the ordnance kept up a fire upon the city, to divert the attention of the besieged.

In the mean time, Hamet el Zegri displayed wonderful vigour and ingenuity in defending the city, and in repairing, or fortifying by deep ditches, the breaches made by the enemy. He noted, besides, every place where the camp might be assailed with advantage; and gave the besieging army no repose, night or day. While his troops sallied on the land, his floating batteries attacked the besiegers on the sea; so that there was incessant skirmishing. The tents, called the queen's hospital, were crowded with wounded; and the whole army suffered, from constant watchfulness and fatigue. To guard against the sudden assaults of the Moors, the trenches were deepened, and palisades erected in front of the camp; and in that part facing Gibralfaro, where the rocky heights did not admit of such defences, a high rampart of earth was thrown up. The cavaliers Garcilasso de la Vega, Juan de Zuniga, and Diego de Atayde, were appointed to go the rounds, and keep vigilant watch, that these fortifications were maintained in good order.

In a little while, Hamet discovered the mines secretly commenced by the Christians. He immediately ordered countermines. The soldiers mutually worked until they met, and fought hand to hand, in these subterranean passages. The Christians were driven out of one of their mines; fire was set to the wooden framework, and the mine destroyed. Encouraged by this success, the Moors attempted a general attack upon the mines and the besieging fleet. The battle lasted for six hours, on land and

\* Zurita. Mariana. Abarca.

water, above and below ground, on bulwark and in trench and mine. The Moors displayed wonderful intrepidity; but were finally repulsed at all points, and obliged to retire into the city, where they were closely invested, without the means of receiving any assistance from abroad.

The horrors of famine were now added to the other miseries of Malaga. Hamet el Zegri, with the spirit of a man bred up to war, considered every thing as subservient to the wants of the soldier, and ordered all the grain in the city to be gathered and garnered up for the sole use of those who fought. Even this was dealt out sparingly; and each soldier received four ounces of bread in the morning, and two in the evening, for his daily allowance.

The wealthy inhabitants, and all those peacefully inclined, mourned over a resistance, which brought destruction upon their houses, death into their families, and which they saw must end in their ruin and captivity. Still, none of them dared to speak openly of capitulation, or even to manifest their grief, lest they should awaken the wrath of their fierce defenders. They surrounded their civic champion, Ali Dordux, the great and opulent merchant, who had buckled on shield and cuirass, and taken spear in hand for the defence of his native city; and with a large body of the braver citizens, had charge of one of the gates and a considerable portion of the walls. Drawing Ali Dordux aside, they poured forth their griefs to him in secret. "Why," said they, "should we suffer our native city to be made a mere bulwark and fighting-place for foreign barbarians and desperate men? They have no families to care for, no property to lose, no love for the soil, and no value for their lives. They fight to gratify a thirst for blood, or a desire for revenge; and will fight on until Malaga be made a ruin, and its people slaves. Let us think and act for ourselves, our wives, and our children. Let us make private terms with the Christians before it is too late, and so save ourselves from destruction."

The bowels of Ali Dordux yearned towards his fellow-citizens. He be-

thought him also of the sweet security of peace, and the bloodless, yet gratifying, triumphs of gainful commerce. The idea likewise of a secret negotiation or bargain with the Castilian sovereigns, for the redemption of his native city, was more conformable to his accustomed habits than this violent appeal to arms; for though he had, for a time, assumed the warrior, he had not forgotten the merchant. Ali Dordux communed, therefore, with the citizen-soldiers under his command, and they readily conformed to his opinion. Concerting together, they wrote a proposition to the Castilian sovereigns, offering to admit the army into the part of the city intrusted to their care, on receiving assurance of protection for the lives and property of the inhabitants. This writing they delivered to a trusty emissary, to take to the Christian camp: appointing the hour and place of his return, that they might be ready to admit him unperceived.

The Moor made his way in safety to the camp, and was admitted to the presence of the sovereigns. Eager to gain the city without further cost of blood or treasure, they gave a written promise to grant the conditions; and the Moor set out joyfully on his return. As he approached the walls where Ali Dordux and his confederates were waiting to receive him, he was descried by a patrolling band of Gomerés, and considered a spy coming from the camp of the besiegers. They issued forth, and seized him, in sight of his employers, who gave themselves up for lost. The Gomerés had conducted him nearly to the gate, when he escaped from their grasp, and fled. They endeavoured to overtake him, but were encumbered with armour; he was lightly clad, and he fled for his life. One of the Gomerés paused, and, levelling his crossbow, let fly a bolt, which pierced the fugitive between the shoulders: he fell, and was nearly within their grasp; but rose again, and, with a desperate effort, attained the Christian camp. The Gomerés gave over the pursuit, and the citizens returned thanks to Allah for their deliverance from this fearful peril. As to the faithful messenger, he died of his wound, shortly after reaching the camp, consoled with

the idea, that he had preserved the secret and the lives of his employers.

#### CHAPTER LVIII.

Sufferings of the people of Malaga.

THE sufferings of Malaga spread sorrow and anxiety among the Moors; and they dreaded lest this beautiful city, once the bulwark of the kingdom, should fall into the hands of the unbelievers. The old warrior-king, Abdalla el Zagal, was still sheltered in Guadix, where he was slowly gathering together his shattered forces. When the people of Guadix heard of the danger and distress of Malaga, they urged to be led to its relief; and the alfaquis admonished El Zagal not to desert so righteous and loyal a city in its extremity. His own warlike nature made him feel a sympathy for a place that made so gallant a resistance; and he despatched as powerful a reinforcement as he could spare, under conduct of a chosen captain, with orders to throw themselves into the city.

Intelligence of this reinforcement reached Boabdil el Chico, in his royal palace of the Alhambra. Filled with hostility against his uncle, and desirous of proving his loyalty to the Castilian sovereigns, he immediately sent forth a superior force of horse and foot, to intercept the detachment. A sharp conflict ensued; the troops of El Zagal were routed with great loss, and fled back in confusion to Guadix.

Boabdil, not being accustomed to victories, was flushed with this melancholy triumph. He sent tidings of it to the Castilian sovereigns, accompanied with rich silks, boxes of Arabian perfume, a cup of gold richly wrought, and a female captive of Rebeda, as presents to the queen; and four Arabian steeds, magnificently caparisoned, a sword and dagger richly mounted, and several albornozes and other robes, sumptuously embroidered, for the king. He entreated them, at the same time, always to look upon him with favour, as their devoted vassal.

Boabdil was fated to be unfortunate even in his victories. His defeat of the forces of his uncle, destined to the relief of unhappy Malaga, shocked the feelings, and cooled the loyalty, of many of his

best adherents. The mere men of traffic might rejoice in their golden interval of peace, but the chivalrous spirits of Granada spurned a security purchased by such sacrifices of pride and affection. The people at large, having gratified their love of change, began to question, whether they had acted generously by their old fighting monarch. "El Zagal," said they, "was fierce and bloody, but then he was true to his country: he was an usurper, but then he maintained the glory of the crown which he usurped. If his sceptre was a rod of iron to his subjects, it was a sword of steel against their enemies. This Boabdil sacrifices religion, friends, country, every thing, to a mere shadow of royalty, and is content to hold a rush for a sceptre."

These factious murmurs soon reached the ears of Boabdil, and he apprehended another of his customary reverses. He sent in all haste to the Castilian sovereigns, beseeching military aid to keep him on his throne. Ferdinand graciously complied with a request so much in unison with his policy. A detachment of one thousand cavalry, and two thousand infantry, were despatched, under the command of Don Fernandez Gonsalez of Cordova, subsequently renowned as the grand captain. With this succour, Boabdil expelled from the city all those who were hostile to him, and in favour of his uncle. He felt secure in these troops, from their being distinct, in manners, language, and religion, from his subjects; and compromised with his pride, in thus exhibiting that most unnatural and humiliating of all regal spectacles, a monarch supported on his throne by foreign weapons, and by soldiers hostile to his people.

Nor was Boabdil el Chico the only Moorish sovereign that sought protection from Ferdinand and Isabella. A splendid galley, with lateen sails, and several banks of oars, came one day into the harbour of Malaga, displaying the standard of the crescent, but likewise a white flag in sign of amity. An ambassador landed from it within the Christian lines. He came from the King of Tremezan, and brought presents similar to those of Boabdil, consisting of Arabian coursers, with bits, stirrups, and

other furniture of gold, together with costly Moorish mantles: for the queen there were sumptuous shawls, robes, and silken stuffs, ornaments of gold, and exquisite oriental perfumes.

The King of Tremezan had been alarmed at the rapid conquests of the Spanish arms, and startled by the descent of several Spanish cruisers on the coast of Africa. He craved to be considered a vassal to the Castilian sovereigns, and that they would extend such favour and security to his ships and subjects as had been shown to other Moors, who had submitted to their sway. He requested a painting of their arms, that he and his subjects might recognise and respect their standard, whenever they encountered it. At the same time he implored their clemency towards unhappy Malaga, and that its inhabitants might experience the same favour that had been shown towards the Moors of other captured cities.

This embassy was graciously received by the Castilian sovereigns. They granted the protection required, ordering their commanders to respect the flag of Tremezan, unless it should be found rendering assistance to the enemy. They sent also to the Barbary monarch their royal arms, moulded in escutcheons of gold a hand's-breadth in size.\*

While thus the chances of assistance from without daily decreased, famine raged in the city. The inhabitants were compelled to eat the flesh of horses, and many died of hunger. What made the sufferings of the citizens the more intolerable was, to behold the sea covered with ships, daily arriving with provisions for the besiegers. Day after day, also, they saw herds of fat cattle and flocks of sheep driven into the camp. Wheat and flour were piled in large mounds in the centre of the encampments, glaring in the sunshine, and tantalizing the wretched citizens, who, while they and their children were perishing with hunger, beheld prodigal abundance reigning within a bow-shot of their walls.

\* Cura de Los Palacios. c. 84. Pulgar, part iii. c. 86.

## CHAPTER LIX.

How a Moorish santon undertook to deliver the city of Malaga from the power of its enemies.

THERE lived at this time, in a hamlet in the neighbourhood of Guadix, an ancient Moor, of the name of Abraham Algerbi. He was a native of Guerba, in the kingdom of Tunis, and had for several years led the life of a santon or hermit. The hot sun of Africa had dried his blood, and rendered him of an exalted yet melancholy temperament. He passed most of his time in meditation, prayer, and rigorous abstinence, until his body was wasted, and his mind bewildered, and he fancied himself favoured with divine revelations. The Moors, who have a great reverence for all enthusiasts of the kind, looked upon him as inspired, listened to all his ravings as veritable prophecies, and denominated him *El Santo*, or "the saint."

The woes of the kingdom of Granada had long exasperated the gloomy spirit of this man; and he had beheld with indignation this beautiful country wrested from the dominion of the faithful, and becoming a prey to the unbelievers. He had implored the blessing of Allah on the troops which issued forth from Guadix for the relief of Malaga; but when he saw them return, routed and scattered by their own countrymen, he retired to his cell, shut himself up from the world, and was plunged for a time in the blackest gloom.

On a sudden he made his appearance again in the streets of Guadix; his face haggard, his form emaciated, but his eye beaming with fire. He said, that Allah had sent an angel to him, in the solitude of his cell, revealing to him a mode of delivering Malaga from its perils, and striking horror and confusion into the camp of the unbelievers. The Moors listened with eager credulity to his words: four hundred of them offered to follow him even to the death, and to obey implicitly his commands. Of this number many were Gomerés, anxious to relieve their countrymen, who formed part of the garrison of Malaga.

They traversed the kingdom by the wild and lonely passes of the mountains, concealing themselves in the day, and

travelling only in the night, to elude the Christian scouts. At length they arrived at the mountains which tower above Malaga; and, looking down, beheld the city completely invested, a chain of encampments extending round it from shore to shore, and a line of ships blockading it by sea, while the continual thunder of artillery, and the smoke rising in various parts, showed, that the siege was pressed with great activity. The hermit scanned the encampments warily from his lofty height. He saw, that the part of the encampment of the Marquis of Cadiz, which was at the foot of the height, and on the margin of the sea, was the most assailable, the rocky soil not admitting ditches or palisades. Remaining concealed all day, he descended with his followers at night to the sea-coast, and approached silently to the outworks. He had given them their instructions: they were to rush suddenly upon the camp, fight their way through, and throw themselves into the city.

It was just at the gray of the dawning, when objects are obscurely visible, that they made this desperate attempt. Some sprang suddenly upon the sentinels; others rushed into the sea, and got round the works; others clambered over the breastworks. There was sharp skirmishing; a great part of the Moors were cut to pieces, but about two hundred succeeded in getting into the gates of Malaga.

The santon took no part in the conflict, nor did he endeavour to enter the city. His plans were of a different nature. Drawing apart from the battle, he threw himself on his knees, on a rising ground, and, lifting his hands to Heaven, appeared to be absorbed in prayer. The Christians, as they were searching for fugitives in the clefts of the rocks, found him at his devotions. He stirred not at their approach, but remained fixed as a statue, without changing colour, or moving a muscle. Filled with surprise not unmixed with awe, they took him to the Marquis of Cadiz. He was wrapped in a coarse alborno, or Moorish mantle; his beard was long and grizzled, and there was something wild and melancholy in his look, that inspired curiosity.

On being examined, he gave himself

out as a saint, to whom Allah had revealed the events that were to take place in that siege. The marquis demanded when and how Malaga was to be taken. He replied, that he knew full well; but he was forbidden to reveal those important secrets, except to the king and queen. The good marquis was not more given to superstitious fancies than other commanders of his time; yet there seemed something singular and mysterious about this man: he might have some important intelligence to communicate; so he was persuaded to send him to the king and queen. He was conducted to the royal tent, surrounded by a curious multitude, exclaiming, "El Moro Santo!" for the news had spread through the camp, that they had taken a Moorish prophet.

The king, having dined, was taking his siesta, or afternoon's sleep, in his tent: and the queen, though curious to see this singular being, yet, from a natural delicacy and reserve, delayed until the king should be present. He was taken, therefore, to an adjoining tent, in which were Doña Beatrix de Bovadilla, Marchioness of Moya, and Don Alvaro of Portugal, son of the Duke of Braganza, with two or three attendants. The Moor, ignorant of the Spanish tongue, had not understood the conversation of the guards, and supposed, from the magnificence of the furniture, and the silken hangings, that this was the royal tent. From the respect paid by the attendants to Don Alvaro and the marchioness, he concluded that they were the king and queen.

He now asked for a draught of water. A jar was brought to him, and the guard released his arm, to enable him to drink. The marchioness perceived a sudden change in his countenance, and something sinister in the expression of his eye, and shifted her position to a more remote part of the tent. Pretending to raise the water to his lips, the Moor unfolded his alborno so as to grasp a cimeter, which he wore concealed beneath; then, dashing down the jar, he drew his weapon, and gave Don Alvaro a blow on the head, that struck him to the earth, and nearly deprived him of life. Turning upon the marchioness, he

then made a violent blow at her, but in his eagerness and agitation, his cimeter caught in the drapery of the tent; the force of the blow was broken, and the weapon struck harmless upon some golden ornaments of her head-dress.\*

Ruy Lopez de Toledo, treasurer to the queen, and Juan de Belalcazar, a sturdy friar, who were present, grappled and struggled with the desperado; and immediately the guards who had conducted him from the Marquis of Cadiz fell upon him, and cut him to pieces.†

The king and queen, brought out of their tents by the noise, were filled with horror when they learned the imminent peril from which they had escaped. The mangled body of the Moor was taken by the people of the camp, and thrown into the city from a catapult. The Gomeres gathered up the body, with deep reverence, as the remains of a saint; they washed and perfumed it, and buried it with great honour and loud lamentations. In revenge of his death, they slew one of their principal Christian captives; and, having tied his body upon an ass, they drove the animal forth into the camp.

From this time there was appointed an additional guard around the tents of the king and queen, composed of twelve hundred cavaliers of rank of the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon. No person was admitted to the royal presence armed. No Moor was allowed to enter the camp without a previous knowledge of his character and business; and on no account was any Moor to be introduced into the presence of the sovereigns.

An act of treachery of such a ferocious nature gave rise to a train of gloomy apprehensions. There were many cabins and sheds about the camp, constructed of branches of trees, which had become dry and combustible; and fears were entertained, that they might be set on fire by the Mudixares, or Moorish vassals, who visited the army. Some even dreaded, that attempts might be made to poison the wells and fountains. To quiet these dismal alarms, all Mudixares were ordered to leave the camp; and all loose idle loiterers, who could not give a good

account of themselves, were taken into custody.

#### CHAPTER LX.

How Hamet El Zegri was hardened in his obstinacy by the arts of a Moorish astrologer.

AMONG those followers of the santon that had effected their entrance into the city was a dark African, of the tribe of Gomeres, who was likewise a hermit, or dervise, and passed among the Moors for a holy and inspired man. No sooner were the mangled remains of his predecessor buried with the honours of martyrdom, than this dervise elevated himself in his place, and professed to be gifted with the spirit of prophecy. He displayed a white banner, which he assured the Moors was sacred; that he had retained it for twenty years, for some signal purpose; and that Allah had revealed to him, that under that banner the inhabitants of Malaga should sally forth upon the camp of the unbelievers, put it to utter rout, and banquet upon the provisions in which it abounded.\* The hungry and credulous Moors were elated at this prediction, and cried out to be led forth at once to the attack; but the dervise told them the time was not yet arrived, for every event had its allotted day in the decrees of fate; they must wait patiently, therefore, until the appointed time should be revealed to him by Heaven. Hamet el Zegri listened to the dervise with profound reverence, and his example had great effect in increasing the awe and deference of his followers. He took the holy man up into his stronghold of Gibralfaro, consulted him on all occasions, and hung out his white banner on the loftiest tower, as a signal of encouragement to the people of the city.

In the mean time, the prime chivalry of Spain was gradually assembling before the walls of Malaga. The army which had commenced the siege had been worn out by extreme hardships, having had to construct immense works, to dig trenches and mines, to mount guard by sea and land, to patrol the mountains, and to sustain incessant conflicts. The sovereigns were obliged therefore to call upon

\* Pietro Martyr, epist. 62.

† Cura de Los Palacios.

\* Cura de Los Palacios.

various distant cities, for reinforcements of horse and foot. Many nobles, also, assembled their vassals, and repaired, of their own accord, to the royal camp.

Every little while, some stately galley or gallant caravel would stand into the harbour, displaying the well-known banner of some Spanish cavalier, and thundering from its artillery a salutation to the sovereigns, and a defiance to the Moors. On the land side also reinforcements would be seen, winding down the mountains to the sound of drum and trumpet, and marching into the camp with glistening arms, as yet unsullied by the toils of war.

One morning the whole sea was whitened by the sails, and vexed by the oars of ships and galleys bearing towards the port. One hundred vessels, of various kinds and sizes, arrived; some armed for warlike service, others deep-freighted with provisions. At the same time, the clangour of drum and trumpet bespoke the arrival of a powerful force by land, which came pouring in lengthening columns into the camp.

This mighty reinforcement was furnished by the Duke of Medina Sidonia, who reigned like a petty monarch over his vast possessions. He came with this princely force a volunteer to the royal standard, not having been summoned by the sovereigns, and he brought more-over a loan of twenty thousand doblas of gold.

When the camp was thus powerfully reinforced, Isabella advised, that new offers of an indulgent kind should be made to the inhabitants; for she was anxious to prevent the miseries of a protracted siege, or the effusion of blood that must attend a general attack. A fresh summons was therefore sent for the city to surrender, with a promise of life, liberty and property, in case of immediate compliance, but denouncing all the horrors of war, if the defence were obstinately continued.

Hamet el Zegri again rejected the offer with scorn. His main fortifications as yet were but little impaired, and were capable of holding out much longer; he trusted to the thousand evils and accidents that beset a besieging army, and to the inclemencies of the approaching

season; and it is said he, as well as his followers, had an infatuated belief in the predictions of the dervise.

The worthy Fray Antonio Agapida does not scruple to affirm, that the pretended prophet of the city was an arch necromancer, or Moorish magician; "of which there be countless many," says he, "in the filthy sect of Mahomet;" and that he was leagued with the prince of the powers of the air, to endeavour to work the confusion and defeat of the Christian army. The worthy father asserts also, that Hamet employed him in a high tower of Gibralfaro, which commanded a wide view over sea and land, where he wrought spells and incantations, with astrolabes and other diabolical instruments, to defeat the Christian ships and forces, whenever they were engaged with the Moors.

To the potent spells of this sorcerer he ascribes the perils and losses sustained by a party of cavaliers of the royal household, in a desperate combat to gain two towers of the suburb, near the gate of the city called La Puerta de Granada. The Christians, led on by Ruy Lopez de Toledo, the valiant treasurer of the queen, took, and lost, and retook the towers, which were finally set on fire by the Moors, and abandoned to the flames by both parties. To the same malignant influence he attributes the damage done to the Christian fleet, which was so vigorously assailed by the albatozas, or floating-batteries, of the Moors, that one ship of the Duke of Medina Sidonia was sunk, and the rest were obliged to retire.

"Hamet el Zegri," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "stood on the top of the high tower of Gibralfaro, and beheld this injury wrought upon the Christian force; and his proud heart was puffed up. And the Moorish necromancer stood beside him. And he pointed out to him the Christian host below, encamped on every eminence around the city, and covering its fertile valley, and the many ships floating upon the tranquil sea; and he bade him be strong of heart, for that, in a few days, all this mighty fleet would be scattered by the winds of Heaven; and that he should sally forth, under guidance of the sacred banner, and attack this host, and utterly defeat it, and make



spoil of those sumptuous tents ; and Malaga should be triumphantly revenged upon her assailants. So the heart of Hamet was hardened like that of Pharaoh, and he persisted in setting at defiance the Catholic sovereigns, and their army of saintly warriors."

## CHAPTER LXI.

Siege of Malaga continued. Destruction of a tower by Francisco Ramirez de Madrid.

SEEING the infatuated obstinacy of the besieged, the Christians now approached their works to the walls, gaining one position after another, preparatory to a general assault. Near the barrier of the city was a bridge with four arches, defended at each end by a strong and lofty tower, by which a part of the army would have to pass in making a general attack. The commander-in-chief of the artillery, Francisco Ramirez de Madrid, was ordered to take possession of this bridge. The approach to it was perilous in the extreme, from the exposed situation of the assailants, and the numbers of Moors that garrisoned the towers. Francisco Ramirez, therefore, secretly excavated a mine leading beneath the first tower, and placed a piece of ordnance, with its mouth upwards, immediately under the foundation, with a train of powder to produce an explosion at the necessary moment.

When this was arranged he advanced slowly with his forces in face of the towers, erecting bulwarks at every step, and gradually gaining ground, until he arrived near to the bridge. He then planted several pieces of artillery in his works, and began to batter the tower. The Moors replied bravely from their battlements; but in the heat of the combat the piece of ordnance under the foundation was discharged. The earth was rent open, a part of the tower overthrown, and several of the Moors torn to pieces: the rest took to flight, overwhelmed with terror at this thundering explosion bursting beneath their feet, and at beholding the earth vomiting flames and smoke; for never before had they witnessed such a stratagem in warfare. The Christians rushed forward and took possession of the abandoned post, and

immediately commenced an attack upon the other tower, at the opposite end of the bridge, to which the Moors had retired. An incessant fire of crossbows and arquebuses was kept up between the rival towers, volleys of stones were discharged, and no one dared to venture upon the intermediate bridge.

Francisco de Ramirez at length renewed his former mode of approach, making bulwarks as he advanced, while the Moors at the other end swept the bridge with their artillery. The combat was long and bloody, ferocious on the part of the Moors, patient and persevering on the part of the Christians. By slow degrees they accomplished their progress across the bridge, drove the enemy before them, and remained masters of this important pass.

For this valiant and skilful achievement, King Ferdinand, after the surrender of the city, conferred the dignity of knighthood upon Francisco Ramirez, in the tower which he had so gloriously gained.\* The worthy padre, Fray Antonio Agapida, indulges in more than a page of extravagant eulogy, upon this invention of blowing up the foundation of the tower by a piece of ordnance, which he affirms to be the first instance on record of gunpowder being used in a mine.

## CHAPTER LXII.

How the people of Malaga expostulated with Hamet el Zegri.

WHILE the dervise was deluding the garrison of Malaga with vain hopes, the famine increased to a terrible degree. The Gomerers ranged about the city as though it had been a conquered place; taking by force whatever they found eatable in the houses of the peaceful citizens, and breaking open vaults and cellars, and demolishing walls, wherever they thought provisions might be concealed.

The wretched inhabitants had no longer bread to eat; the horse-flesh also now failed them; and they were fain to devour skins and hides toasted at the fire, and to assuage the hunger of their children with vine-leaves, cut up

\* Pulgar, part iii. cap. 91.

and fried in oil. Many perished of famine or of the unwholesome food with which they endeavoured to relieve it; and many took refuge in the Christian camp, preferring captivity to the horrors which surrounded them.

At length the sufferings of the inhabitants became so great, as to conquer even their fears of Hamet and his Gomeres. They assembled before the house of Ali Dordux, the wealthy merchant, whose stately mansion was at the foot of the hill of the alcazaba; and they urged him to stand forth as their leader, and to intercede with Hamet el Zegri for a surrender. Ali Dordux was a man of courage as well as policy; he perceived also that hunger was giving boldness to the citizens, while he trusted it was subduing the fierceness of the soldiery. He armed himself therefore, cap-a-pi e, and undertook this dangerous parley with the alcaide. He associated with him an alfaqui, named Abrahen Alharris, and an important inhabitant, named Amar ben Amar; and they ascended to the fortress of Gibralfaro, followed by several of the trembling merchants.

They found Hamet El Zegri, not, as before, surrounded by ferocious guards, and all the implements of war; but in a chamber of one of the lofty towers, at a table of stone, covered with scrolls, and traced with strange characters and mystic diagrams; while instruments of singular and unknown form lay about the room. Beside Hamet el Zegri stood the prophetic dervise, who appeared to have been explaining to him the mysterious inscriptions of the scrolls. His presence filled the citizens with awe; for even Ali Dordux considered him a man inspired.

The alfaqui, Abrahen Alharris, whose sacred character gave him boldness to speak, now lifted up his voice, and addressed Hamet el Zegri. "We implore you," said he solemnly, "in the name of the most powerful God, no longer persist in a vain resistance, which must end in our destruction; but deliver up the city, while clemency is yet to be obtained. Think how many of our warriors have fallen by the sword; do not suffer those who survive to perish by famine. Our wives and children cry to us for bread, and we have none to give them. We

see them expire in lingering agony before our eyes, while the enemy mocks our misery by displaying the abundance of his camp. Of what avail is our defence? Are our walls, peradventure, more strong than the walls of Ronda? Are our warriors more brave than the defenders of Loxa? The walls of Ronda were thrown down, and the warriors of Loxa had to surrender. Do we hope for succour? From whence are we to receive it? The time for hope has gone by. Granada has lost its power: it no longer possesses chivalry, commanders, or a king. Boabdil sits a vassal in the degraded walls of the Alhambra: El Zagal is a fugitive, shut up within the walls of Guadix. The kingdom is divided against itself: its strength is gone, its pride fallen, its very existence at an end. In the name of Allah, we conjure thee, who art our captain, be not our direst enemy; but surrender these ruins of our once happy Malaga, and deliver us from these overwhelming horrors."

Such was the supplication forced from the inhabitants by the extremity of their sufferings. Hamet el Zegri listened to the alfaqui without anger; for he respected the sanctity of his office. His heart, too, was at that moment lifted up with a vain confidence. "Yet a few days of patience," said he, "and all these evils will suddenly have an end. I have been conferring with this holy man, and find that the time of our deliverance is at hand. The decrees of fate are inevitable: it is written in the book of destiny, that we shall sally forth, and destroy the camp of the unbelievers, and banquet upon those mountains of grain, which are piled up in the midst of it. So Allah hath promised, by the mouth of this his prophet. Allah achbar! God is great! Let no man oppose the decrees of Heaven!"

The citizens heard with profound reverence; for no true Moslem pretends to struggle against whatever is written in the book of fate. Ali Dordux, who had come prepared to champion the city, and to brave the ire of Hamet, humbled himself before this holy man, and gave faith to his prophecies as the revelations of Allah. So the deputies returned to the citizens, and exhorted them to be of good

cheer. "A few days longer," said they, "and our sufferings are to terminate. When the white banner is removed from the tower, then look out for deliverance; for the hour of sallying forth will have arrived." The people retired to their houses with sorrowful hearts. They tried in vain to quiet the cries of their famishing children; and day by day, and hour by hour, their anxious eyes were turned to the sacred banner, which still continued to wave on the tower of Gibralfaro.

## CHAPTER LXIII.

How Hamet el Zegri sallied forth, with the sacred banner, to attack the Christian camp.

"THE Moorish necromancer," observes the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, "remained shut up in the tower of Gibralfaro, devising devilish means to work mischief and discomfiture upon the Christians. He was daily consulted by Hamet el Zegri, who had great faith in those black and magic arts, which he had brought with him from the bosom of heathen Africa."

From the account given of this dervise and his incantations by the worthy father, it would appear, that he was an astrologer, and was studying the stars, and endeavouring to calculate the day and hour when a successful attack might be made upon the Christian camp.

Famine had now increased to such a degree as to distress even the garrison of Gibralfaro; although the Gomeres had seized upon all the provisions they could find in the city. Their passions were sharpened by hunger; and they became restless and turbulent, and impatient for action.

Hamet el Zegri was one day in council with his captains, perplexed by the pressure of events, when the dervise entered among them. "The hour of victory," exclaimed he, "is at hand! Allah has commanded that to-morrow morning ye shall sally forth to the fight. I will bear before you the sacred banner, and deliver your enemies into your hands. Remember, however, that ye are but instruments in the hands of Allah, to take vengeance on the enemies of the faith. Go into battle, therefore,

with pure hearts, forgiving each other all past offences; for those who are charitable towards each other, will be victorious over the foe."

The words of the dervise were received with rapture. All Gibralfaro and the alcazaba resounded immediately with the din of arms; and Hamet sent throughout the towers and fortifications of the city, and selected the choicest troops and most distinguished captains for this eventful combat.

In the morning early, the rumour went throughout the city, that the sacred banner had disappeared from the tower of Gibralfaro, and all Malaga was roused to witness the sally that was to destroy the unbelievers. Hamet descended from his stronghold, accompanied by his principal captain, Abrahen Zenete, and followed by his Gomeres. The dervise led the way, displaying the white banner, the sacred pledge of victory. The multitude shouted, "Allah achbar!" and prostrated themselves before the banner as it passed. Even the dreaded Hamet was hailed with praises; for, in their hope of speedy relief through the prowess of his arm, the populace forgot every thing but his bravery. Every bosom in Malaga was agitated by hope and fear; the old men, the women, and children, and all who went not forth to battle, mounted on tower, and battlement, and roof, to watch a combat that was to decide their fate.

Before sallying forth from the city, the dervise addressed the troops; reminding them of the holy nature of this enterprise, and warning them not to forget the protection of the sacred banner by any unworthy act. They were to press forward, fighting valiantly, and granting no quarter. The gate was then thrown open, and the dervise issued forth, followed by the army. They directed their assault upon the encampments of the Master of Santiago and the Master of Calatrava, and came upon them so suddenly, that they killed and wounded several of the guards. Abrahen Zenete made his way into one of the tents, where he beheld several Christian striplings, just starting from their slumber. The heart of the Moor was suddenly touched with pity for their youth, or, perhaps, he

scorned the weakness of the foe. He smote them with the flat, instead of the edge, of his sword. "Away, imps," cried he, "away to your mothers!" The fanatic dervise reproached him with his clemency. "I did not kill them," replied Zenete, "because I saw no beards!"\*

The alarm was given in the camp, and the Christians rushed from all quarters to defend the gates of the bulwarks. Don Pedro Puerto Carrero, senior of Moguer, and his brother, Don Alonso Pacheco, planted themselves, with their followers, in the gateway of the encampment of the Master of Santiago, and bore the whole brunt of the battle until they were reinforced. The gate of the encampment of the Master of Calatrava was, in like manner, defended by Lorenzo Saurez de Mendoza. Hamet el Zegri was furious at being thus checked, where he had expected a miraculous victory. He led his troops repeatedly to the attack, hoping to force the gates before succour should arrive. They fought with vehement ardour, but were as often repulsed; and every time they returned to the assault, they found their enemies doubled in number. The Christians opened a crossfire of all kinds of missiles from their bulwarks; the Moors could effect but little damage upon a foe thus protected behind their works, while they themselves were exposed from head to foot. The Christians singled out the most conspicuous cavaliers, the greater part of whom were either slain or wounded. Still the Moors, infatuated by the predictions of the prophet, fought desperately and devotedly; and they were furious to revenge the slaughter of their leaders. They rushed upon certain death, endeavouring madly to scale the bulwarks, or force the gates; and fell amidst showers of darts and lances, filling the ditches with their mangled bodies.

Hamet el Zegri raged along the front of the bulwarks, seeking an opening for attack. He gnashed his teeth with fury, as he saw so many of his chosen warriors slain around him. He seemed to have a charmed life; for, though constantly in the hottest of the fight, amidst showers of missiles, he still escaped unin-

jured. Blindly confiding in the prophecy of victory, he continued to urge on his devoted troops. The dervise, too, ran like a maniac through the ranks, waving his white banner, and inciting the Moors, by howlings rather than by shouts. In the midst of his frenzy, a stone from a catapult struck him on the head, and dashed out his bewildered brains.\*

When the Moors beheld their prophet slain, and his banner in the dust, they were seized with despair, and fled in confusion to the city. Hamet el Zegri made some effort to rally them, but was himself confounded by the fall of the dervise. He covered the flight of his broken forces, turning repeatedly upon their pursuers, and slowly making his retreat into the city.

The inhabitants of Malaga witnessed from their walls, with trembling anxiety, the whole of this disastrous conflict. At the first onset, on seeing the guards of the camp put to flight, they exclaimed, "Allah has given us the victory!" and they sent up shouts of triumph. Their exultation, however, was turned into doubt, when they beheld their troops repulsed in repeated attacks. They could perceive, from time to time, some distinguished warrior laid low, and others brought back bleeding to the city. When, at length, the sacred banner fell, and the routed troops came flying to the gates, pursued and cut down by the foe, horror and despair seized upon the populace.

As Hamet el Zegri entered the gates, he was greeted with loud lamentations. Mothers, whose sons had been slain, shrieked curses after him as he passed. Some, in the anguish of their hearts, threw down their famishing babes before him, exclaiming, "Trample on them with thy horse's feet, for we have no food to give them, and we cannot endure their cries!" All heaped execrations on his head as the cause of the woes of Malaga.

The warlike part of the citizens, also, and many warriors, who, with their wives and children, had taken refuge in Malaga from the mountain fortresses, now joined in the popular clamour; for their hearts were overcome by the sufferings of their families.

\* Cura de Los Palacios, c. 84.

\* Garibay, lib. xviii. c. 33.

Hamet el Zegri found it impossible to withstand this torrent of lamentations, curses, and reproaches. His military ascendancy was at an end; for most of his officers, and the prime warriors of his African band, had fallen in this disastrous sally. Turning his back, therefore, upon the city, and abandoning it to its own councils, he retired, with the remnant of his Gomeres, to his stronghold in the Gibralfaro.

## CHAPTER LXIV.

How the city of Malaga capitulated.

THE people of Malaga, being no longer overawed by Hamet el Zegri and his Gomeres, turned to Ali Dordux, the magnanimous merchant, and put the fate of the city into his hands. He had already gained the alcaides of the castle of the Genoese and of the citadel into his party; and, in the late confusion, had gained the sway over these important fortresses. He now associated himself with the alfaqui, Abrahen Alhariz, and four of the principal inhabitants; and, forming a provisional junta, they sent heralds to the Christian sovereigns, offering to surrender the city on certain terms, protecting the persons and property of the inhabitants, permitting them to reside as Mudixares, or tributary vassals, either in Malaga or elsewhere.

When these heralds arrived at the camp, and made known their mission, the anger of Ferdinand was kindled. "Return to your fellow-citizens," said he, "and tell them, that the day of grace is gone by. They have persisted in a fruitless defence, until they are driven by necessity to capitulate: they must surrender unconditionally, and abide the fate of the vanquished. Those who merit death shall suffer death; those who merit captivity shall be made captives."

This stern reply spread consternation among the people of Malaga; but Ali Dordux comforted them, and undertook to go in person, and pray for favourable terms. When the people beheld this great merchant, who was so eminent in their city, departing with his associates on this mission, they plucked up heart, for they said, "Surely the Christian king

will not turn a deaf ear to such a man as Ali Dordux!"

Ferdinand, however, would not even admit the ambassadors to his presence. "Send them to the devil," said he, in a great passion, to the commander of Leon. "I will not see them. Let them get back to their city. They shall all surrender to my mercy as vanquished enemies."\*

To give emphasis to this reply, he ordered a general discharge from all the artillery and batteries, and there was a great shout throughout the camp, and all the lombards and catapultas, and other engines, thundered furiously upon the city, doing great damage.

Ali Dordux and his companions returned with downcast countenances, and could scarce make the reply of the Christian sovereign be heard, for the roaring of the artillery, the tumbling of the walls, and the cries of women and children. The citizens were greatly astonished and dismayed, when they found the little respect paid to their most eminent man; but the warriors who were in the city exclaimed, "What has this merchant to do with questions between men of battle? Let us not address the enemy as abject suppliants, who have no power to injure; but as valiant men who have weapons in their hands."

So they despatched another message to the Christian sovereigns offering to yield up the city, and all their effects, on condition of being secured in their personal liberty. Should this be denied, they declared, that they would hang from the battlements fifteen hundred Christian captives, male and female; that they would put all their old men, their women and children, into the citadel, set fire to the city, and sally forth sword in hand, to fight until the last gasp. "In this way," said they, "the Spanish sovereigns shall gain a bloody victory, and the fall of Malaga be renowned while the world endures."

Various debates now took place in the Christian camp. Many of the cavaliers were exasperated against Malaga for its long resistance, which had caused the death of many of their relations and favourite companions. It had long been a

\* Cura de Los Palacios, cap. 84.

stronghold for Moorish depredators, and the mart where most of the warriors captured in the Axarquía had been exposed in triumph, and sold to slavery. They represented, moreover, that there were many Moorish cities yet to be besieged; and that an example ought to be made of Malaga, to prevent all obstinate resistance hereafter. They advised, therefore, that all the inhabitants should be put to the sword!\*

The humane heart of Isabella revolted at such sanguinary councils. She insisted, that their triumph should not be disgraced by cruelty. Ferdinand, however, was inflexible in refusing to grant any preliminary terms; insisting on an unconditional surrender. The people of Malaga now abandoned themselves to paroxysms of despair. On the one side, they saw famine and death; on the other, slavery and chains. The mere men of the sword, who had no families to protect, were loud for signalizing their fall by some illustrious action. "Let us sacrifice our Christian captives, and then destroy ourselves!" cried some. "Let us put all the women and children to death, set fire to the city, fall on the Christian camp, and die sword in hand!" cried others.

Ali Dordux gradually made his voice be heard amidst the general clamour. He addressed himself to the principal inhabitants, and to those who had children. "Let those who live by the sword die by the sword," cried he; "but let us not follow their desperate counsels. Who knows what sparks of pity may be awakened in the bosoms of the Christian sovereigns, when they behold our unoffending wives and daughters, and our helpless little ones! The Christian queen, they say, is full of mercy."

At these words the hearts of the unhappy people of Malaga yearned over their families; and they empowered Ali Dordux to deliver up the city to the mercy of the Castilian sovereigns.

The merchant now went to and fro, and had several communications with Ferdinand and Isabella; and interested several principal cavaliers in his cause. And he sent rich presents to the king and queen, of oriental merchandise, silks,

and stuffs of gold, and jewels, and precious stones, and spices, and perfumes, and many other rare and sumptuous things, which he had accumulated in his great tradings with the East; and he gradually found favour in the eyes of the sovereigns.\* Finding that there was nothing to be obtained for the city, he now like a prudent man and able merchant, began to negotiate for himself and his immediate friends.

He represented, that, from the first, they had been desirous of yielding up the city; but had been prevented by warlike and high-handed men, who had threatened their lives. He entreated, therefore, that mercy might be extended to them, and that they might not be confounded with the guilty.

The sovereigns had accepted the presents of Ali Dordux: how could they turn a deaf ear to his petition? So they granted a pardon to him, and to forty families which he named; and it was agreed, that they should be protected in their lives and property, and permitted to reside in Malaga as Mudixares or Moslem vassals; and to follow their customary pursuits.† All this being arranged, Ali Dordux delivered up twenty of the principal inhabitants, to remain as hostages until the whole city should be placed in the possession of the Christians.

Don Gutiere de Cardenas, senior commander of Leon, now entered the city, armed cap-a-pié, on horseback, and took possession, in the name of the Castilian sovereigns. He was followed by his retainers, and by the captains and cavaliers of the army; and in a little while the standards of the cross, and of the blessed Santiago, and of the catholic sovereigns, were elevated on the principal tower of the alcazaba. When these standards were beheld from the camp, the queen, and the princes, and the ladies of the court, and all the royal retinue, knelt down, and gave thanks and praises to the holy Virgin, and to Santiago, for this great triumph of the faith; and the bishops and other clergy who were present, and the choristers of the royal chapel, chanted *Te Deum laudamus*, and *Gloria in excelsis*.

\* Pulgar.

\* MS. Chron. of Valera.

† Cura de Los Palacios.

## CHAPTER LXV.

Fulfilment of the prophecy of the dervise. Fate of Hamet el Zegri.

No sooner was the city delivered up, than the wretched inhabitants implored permission to purchase bread for themselves and their children, from the heaps of grain, which they had so often gazed at wistfully from their walls. Their prayer was granted; and they issued forth, with the famished eagerness of starving men. It was piteous to behold the struggles of these unhappy people, as they contended who first should have their necessities relieved.

"Thus," says the pious Fray Antonio Agapida, "thus are the predictions of false prophets sometimes permitted to be verified; but always to the confusion of those who trust in them; for the words of the Moorish necromancer came to pass, that they should eat of those heaps of bread: but they ate of them in humiliation and defeat, and with sorrow and bitterness of heart."

Dark and fierce were the feelings of Hamet el Zegri, as he looked down from the castle of Gibralfaro, and beheld the Christian legions pouring into the city, and the standard of the cross supplanting the crescent on the citadel. "The people of Malaga," said he, "have trusted to a man of trade, and he has trafficked them away; but let us not suffer ourselves to be bound, hand and foot, and delivered up as part of his bargain. We have yet strong walls around us, and trusty weapons in our hands. Let us fight until buried beneath the last tumbling tower of Gibralfaro; or, rushing down from among its ruins, carry havoc among the unbelievers, as they throng the streets of Malaga!"

The fierceness of the Gomerés, however, was broken. They could have died in the breach, had their castle been assailed; but the slow advances of famine subdued their strength without rousing their passions, and sapped the force both of soul and body. They were almost unanimous for a surrender.

It was a hard struggle for the proud spirit of Hamet to bow itself to ask for

terms. Still he trusted, that the valour of his defence would gain him respect in the eyes of a chivalrous foe. "Ali," said he, "has negotiated like a merchant: I will capitulate as a soldier." He sent a herald, therefore, to Ferdinand, offering to yield up his castle, but demanding a separate treaty. The Castilian sovereign sent a laconic and stern reply: "He shall receive no terms, but such as have been granted to the community of Malaga."

For two days Hamet el Zegri remained brooding in his castle, after the city was in possession of the Christians. At length, the clamours of his followers compelled him to surrender. When the broken remnant of this fierce African garrison descended from their cragged fortress, they were so worn by watchfulness, famine and battle, yet carried such a lurking fury in their eyes, that they looked more like fiends than men. They were all condemned to slavery, excepting Abrahen Zenete. The instance of clemency which he had shown in refraining to harm the Spanish striplings on the last sally from Malaga, won him favourable terms. It was cited as a magnanimous act by the Spanish cavaliers; and all admitted, that, though a Moor in blood, he possessed the Christian heart of a Castilian hidalgó.\*

As to Hamet el Zegri, on being asked, what moved him to such hardened obstinacy, he replied, "When I undertook my command, I pledged myself to fight in defence of my faith, my city, and my sovereign, until slain or made prisoner; and depend upon it, had I had men to stand by me, I should have died fighting, instead of thus tamely surrendering myself, without a weapon in my hand."

"Such," says the pious Fray Antonio Agapida, "were the diabolical hatred, and stiffnecked opposition, of this infidel to our holy cause. But he was justly served by our most catholic and high-minded sovereign, for his pertinacious defence of the city; for Ferdinand ordered, that he should be loaded with chains, and thrown into a dungeon."†

\* Cura de Los Palacios, c. 84.

† Pulgar, Crónica.

## CHAPTER LXVI.

How the Castilian sovereigns took possession of the city of Malaga, and how King Ferdinand signalized himself by his skill in bargaining with the inhabitants for their ransom.

ONE of the first cares of the conquerors, on entering Malaga, was to search for Christian captives. Nearly sixteen hundred, men and women, were found, and among them were persons of distinction. Some of them had been ten, fifteen, and twenty years in captivity. Many had been servants to the Moors, or labourers on public works, and some had passed their time in chains and dungeons. Preparations were made to celebrate their deliverance as a Christian triumph. A tent was erected, not far from the city, and furnished with an altar, and all the solemn decorations of a chapel. Here the king and queen waited to receive the Christian captives. They were assembled in the city, and marshalled forth in piteous procession. Many of them had still the chains and shackles on their legs. They were wasted with famine, their hair and beards overgrown and matted, and their faces pale and haggard from long confinement. When they beheld themselves restored to liberty and surrounded by their countrymen, some stared wildly about, as if in a dream, others gave way to frantic transports, but most of them wept for joy. All present were moved to tears by so touching a spectacle. When the procession arrived at what is called the Gate of Granada, it was met by a great concourse from the camp, with crosses and pennons, who turned and followed the captives, singing hymns of praise and thanksgiving. When they came in presence of the king and queen, they threw themselves on their knees, and would have kissed their feet, as their saviours and deliverers; but the sovereigns prevented such humiliation, and graciously extended to them their hands. They then prostrated themselves before the altar, and all present joined them in giving thanks to God for their liberation from this cruel bondage. By orders of the king and queen, their chains were then taken off, and they were clad in decent raiment, and food was set before them. After they had ate and drank, and were refreshed and invigorated, they were provided with money, and all things

necessary for their journey, and sent joyfully to their homes.

While the old chroniclers dwell with becoming enthusiasm on this pure and affecting triumph of humanity, they go on, in a strain of equal eulogy, to describe a spectacle of a different nature. It so happened, that there were found in the city twelve of those renegado Christians, who had deserted to the Moors, and conveyed false intelligence during the siege. A barbarous species of punishment was inflicted upon them, borrowed, it is said, from the Moors, and peculiar to these wars. They were tied to stakes, in a public place, and horsemen exercised their skill in transpiercing them with pointed reeds, hurled at them while careering at full speed, until the miserable victims expired beneath their wounds. Several apostate Moors, also, who, having embraced Christianity, had afterwards relapsed into their early faith, and had taken refuge in Malaga from the vengeance of the Inquisition, were publicly burnt. "These," says an old Jesuit historian, exultingly, "these were the tilts of reeds, and the illuminations most pleasing for this victorious festival, and for the catholic piety of our sovereigns!"\*

When the city was cleansed from the impurities and offensive odours which had collected during the siege, the bishops, and other clergy who accompanied the court, and the choir of the royal chapel, walked in procession to the principal mosque, which was consecrated, and entitled Santa Maria de la Encarnacion. This done, the king and queen entered the city, accompanied by the Grand Cardinal of Spain, and the principal nobles and cavaliers of the army, and heard a solemn mass. The church was then elevated into a cathedral, and Malaga was made a bishopric, and many of the neighbouring towns were comprehended in its diocese. The queen took up her residence in the alcazaba, in the apartments of her valiant treasurer Ruy Lopez, whence she had a view of the whole city; but the king established his

\* Los renegados fueron acanavareados, y los conversos quemados: y estas fueron las cañas y luminarias mas alegres por la fiesta de la victoria, para la piedad catholica de nuestros reyes. Abarca, Anales de Aragon, tom. ii. rey 30, c. 3.



quarters in the warrior castle of Gibralfaro.

And now came to be considered the disposition of the Moorish prisoners. All those who were strangers in the city, and had either taken refuge there, or had entered to defend it, were at once considered slaves. They were divided into three lots. One was set apart for the service of God, in redeeming captives from bondage, either in the kingdom of Granada, or in Africa; the second lot was divided among those who had aided, either in field or cabinet, in the present siege, according to their rank; the third was appropriated to defray, by their sale, the great expenses incurred in the reduction of the place. A hundred of the Gomeres were sent as presents to Pope Innocent VIII., and were led in triumph through the streets of Rome, and afterwards converted to Christianity. Fifty Moorish maidens were sent to the Queen Joanna of Naples, sister to King Ferdinand, and thirty to the Queen of Portugal. Isabella made presents of others to the ladies of her household, and of the noble families of Spain.

Among the inhabitants of Malaga were four hundred and fifty Moorish Jews, for the most part women, speaking the Arabic language, and dressed in the Moorish fashion. These were ransomed by a wealthy Jew of Castile, farmer-general of the royal revenues derived from the Jews of Spain. He agreed to make up, within a certain time, the sum of twenty thousand doblas or pistoles of gold; all money and jewels of the captives being taken in payment. They were sent to Castile in two armed galleys.

As to the great mass of Moorish inhabitants, they implored that they might not be scattered and sold into captivity, but might be permitted to ransom themselves by an amount paid within a certain time. Upon this King Ferdinand took the advice of certain of his ablest counsellors. They said to him, if you hold out a prospect of hopeless captivity, the infidels will throw all their gold and jewels into the wells and pits, and you will lose the greater part of the spoil; but if you fix a general rate of ransom, and receive their money and jewels in payment, nothing will be destroyed. The

king relished greatly this advice; and it was arranged, that all the inhabitants should be ransomed at the general rate of thirty doblas or pistoles in gold for each individual, male or female, large or small; that all their gold, jewels, and other valuables, should be received immediately, in part payment of the general amount; and that the residue should be paid within eight months; that, if any of the number actually living should die in the interim, their ransom should nevertheless be claimed. If, however, the whole of the amount were not discharged at the expiration of the eight months, they should all be considered and treated as slaves.

The unfortunate Moors were eager to catch at the least hope of future liberty, and consented to these hard conditions. The most rigorous precautions were taken to exact them to the uttermost. The inhabitants were numbered by houses and families, and their names taken down. Their most precious effects were made up into parcels, and sealed and inscribed with their names; and they were ordered to repair with them to certain large corrales or enclosures, adjoining the alcazaba, which were surrounded by high walls, and overlooked by watchtowers; to which places the cavalgadas of Christian captives had usually been driven, to be confined until the time of sale, like cattle in a market. The Moors were obliged to leave their houses, one by one: all their money, necklaces, bracelets and anklets of gold, pearl, coral, and precious stones, were taken from them at the threshold, and their persons so rigorously searched, that they carried off nothing concealed.

Then might be seen old men, and helpless women, and tender maidens, some of high birth and gentle condition, passing through the streets, heavily burdened, towards the alcazaba. As they left their homes, they smote their breasts, and wrung their hands, and raised their weeping eyes to Heaven in anguish; and this is recorded as their plaint: "Oh, Malaga! city renowned and beautiful! where now is the strength of thy castles! where the grandeur of thy towers! of what avail have been thy mighty walls for the protection of thy children!

Behold them driven from thy pleasant abodes, doomed to drag out a life of bondage in a foreign land, and to die far from the home of their infancy! What will become of thy old men and matrons when their gray hairs shall be no longer revered! what will become of thy maidens, so delicately reared, and tenderly cherished, when reduced to hard and menial servitude! Behold, thy once happy families are scattered asunder, never again to be united! Sons are separated from their fathers, husbands from their wives, and tender children from their mothers. They will bewail each other in foreign lands; but their lamentations will be the scoff of the stranger. Oh, Malaga! city of our birth! who can behold thy desolation, and not shed tears of bitterness!\*"

When Malaga was completely secured, a detachment was sent against two fortresses near the sea, called Mexas and Osuna; which had frequently harassed the Christian camp. The inhabitants were threatened with the sword, unless they instantly surrendered. They claimed the same terms that had been granted to Malaga; imagining them to be, freedom of person, and security of property. Their claim was granted. They were transported to Malaga with all their riches; and, on arriving there, were overwhelmed with consternation at finding themselves captives. "Ferdinand," observes Fray Antonio Agapida, "was a man of his word: they were shut up in the alcazaba, with the people of Malaga, and shared their fate."

The unhappy captives remained thus crowded in the court-yards of the alcazaba, like sheep in a fold, until they could be sent by sea and land to Seville. They were then distributed about in city and country, each Christian family having one or more to feed and maintain as a servant, until the term fixed for the payment of the residue of the ransom should expire. The captives had obtained permission, that several of their number should go about among the Moorish towns of the kingdom of Granada, collecting contributions to aid in the purchase of their liberties; but these towns

\* Pulgar.

were too much impoverished by the war, and engrossed by their own distresses, to lend a listening ear. So the time expired, without the residue of the ransom being paid; and all the captives of Malaga, to the number, as some say, of eleven, and others, to fifteen thousand, became slaves! "Never," exclaims the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, in one of his usual bursts of zeal and loyalty, "never has there been recorded a more adroit and sagacious arrangement than this made by the catholic monarch, by which he not only secured all the property, and half of the ransom, of these infidels, but finally got possession of their persons into the bargain. This truly may be considered one of the greatest triumphs of the pious and politic Ferdinand, and as raising him above the generality of conquerors, who have merely the valour to gain victories, but lack the prudence and management necessary to turn them to account."

#### CHAPTER LXVII.

How King Ferdinand prepared to carry the war into a different part of the territories of the Moors.

THE western part of the kingdom of Granada had now been conquered by the Christian arms. The seaport of Malaga was captured; the fierce and warlike inhabitants of the Serrania de Ronda, and the other mountain-holds of the frontier, were all disarmed, and reduced to peaceful and laborious vassalage. Their haughty fortresses, which had so long overawed the valleys of Andalusia, now displayed the standard of Castile and Aragon; the watchtowers, which crowned every height, and from which the infidels had kept a vulture eye on the Christian territories, were now either dismantled, or garrisoned with catholic troops. "What signalized and sanctified this great triumph," adds the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, "were the emblems of ecclesiastical domination which every where appeared. In every direction arose stately convents and monasteries, those fortresses of the faith, garrisoned by its spiritual soldiery of monks and friars. The sacred melody of Christian bells was again heard among the mountains, calling to early matins, or sound-

ing the angelus at the solemn hour of evening."

While this part of the kingdom was thus reduced by the Christian sword, the central part, round the city of Granada, forming the heart of the Moorish territory, was held in vassalage of the Castilian monarch, by Boabdil, surnamed El Chico.

That unfortunate prince lost no occasion, by acts of homage, and by professions that must have been foreign to his heart, to propitiate the conquerors of his country. No sooner had he heard of the capture of Malaga, than he sent congratulations to the Catholic sovereigns, accompanied with presents of horses, richly caparisoned, for the king; and precious cloth of gold, and oriental perfumes, for the queen. His congratulations, and his presents, were received with the utmost graciousness; and the shortsighted prince, lulled by the temporary and politic forbearance of Ferdinand, flattered himself that he was securing the lasting friendship of that monarch.

The policy of Boabdil had its transient and superficial advantages. The portion of Moorish territory under his immediate sway had a respite from the calamities of war. The husbandmen cultivated their luxuriant fields in security, and the vega of Granada once more blossomed like the rose. The merchants again carried on a gainful traffic, and the gates of the city were thronged with beasts of burden, bringing the rich products of every clime. Yet, while the people of Granada rejoiced in their teeming fields and crowded marts, they secretly despised the policy which had procured them these advantages, and held Boabdil for little better than an apostate and an unbeliever.

Muley Abdalla el Zagal was now the hope of the unconquered part of the kingdom; and every Moor, whose spirit was not quite subdued with his fortunes, lauded the valour of the old monarch, and his fidelity to the faith, and wished success to his standard.

El Zagal, though he no longer sat enthroned in the Alhambra, yet reigned over more considerable domains than his nephew. His territories extended from the frontier of Jaen, along the borders of Murcia, to the Mediterranean, and reach-

ed into the centre of the kingdom. On the northeast he held the cities of Baza and Guadix, situate in the midst of fertile regions. He had the important seaport of Almeria, also, which at one time rivalled Granada itself in wealth and population. Besides these, his territories included a great part of the Alpuxarra mountains, which extend across the kingdom, and shoot out branches towards the sea-coast. This mountainous region was a stronghold of wealth and power. Its stern and rocky heights, rising to the clouds, seemed to set invasion at defiance; yet within their rugged embraces were sheltered delightful valleys, of the happiest temperature and richest fertility. The cool springs, and limpid rills, which gushed out in all parts of the mountains, and the abundant streams, which, for a great part of the year, were supplied by the Sierra Nevada, spread a perpetual verdure over the skirts and slopes of the hills, and, collecting in silver rivers in the valleys, wound along among plantations of mulberry trees, and groves of oranges and citrons, of almonds, figs, and pomegranates. Here was produced the finest silk of Spain, which gave employment to thousands of manufacturers. The sunburnt sides of the hills, also, were covered with vineyards. The abundant herbage of the mountain ravines, and the rich pasturage of the valleys, fed vast flocks and herds; and even the arid and rocky bosoms of the heights teemed with wealth, from the mines of various metals with which they were impregnated. In a word, the Alpuxarra mountains had ever been the great source of revenue to the monarchs of Granada. The inhabitants, also, were hardy and warlike; and a sudden summons from the Moorish king could at any time call forth fifty thousand fighting men from their rocky fortresses.

Such was the rich, but rugged, fragment of an empire, which remained under the sway of the old warrior monarch, El Zagal. The mountain barriers by which it was locked up had protected it from most of the ravages of war, and El Zagal prepared himself, by strengthening every fortress, to battle fiercely for its maintenance.

The catholic sovereigns saw, that fresh

troubles and toils awaited them. The war had to be carried into a new quarter, demanding immense expenditures; and new ways and means must be devised, to replenish their exhausted coffers. "As this was a holy war, however," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "and peculiarly redounded to the prosperity of the church, the clergy were full of zeal, and contributed vast sums of money and large bodies of troops. A pious fund was also produced from the first-fruits of that glorious institution, the Inquisition.

"It so happened, that, about this time, there were many families of wealth and dignity in the kingdoms of Aragon and Valencia, and the principality of Catalonia, whose forefathers had been Jews, but had been converted to Christianity. Notwithstanding the outward piety of these families, it was surmised, and soon came to be strongly suspected, that many of them had a secret hankering after Judaism; and it was even whispered, that some of them practised Jewish rites in private.

"The catholic monarch," continues Agapida, "had a righteous abhorrence of all kinds of heresy, and a fervent zeal for the faith. He ordered, therefore, a strict investigation of the conduct of these pseudo-Christians. Inquisitors were sent into these provinces for the purpose, who proceeded with their accustomed zeal. The consequence was that many families were convicted of apostacy from the Christian faith, and of the private practice of Judaism. Some, who had grace and policy sufficient to reform in time, were again received into the Christian fold, after being severely mulcted, and condemned to heavy penance; others were burnt at *auto da fés*, for the edification of the public; and their property was confiscated for the good of the state.

"As these Hebrews were of great wealth, and had an hereditary passion for jewelry, there was found abundant store in their possession of gold and silver, of rings, and necklaces, and strings of pearl, and coral, and precious stones: treasures easy of transportation, and wonderfully adapted for the emergencies of war. In this way," concludes the pious Agapida, "these backsliders, by the all-seeing contrivances of Providence,

were made to serve the righteous cause which they had so treacherously deserted; and their apostate wealth was sanctified by being devoted to the service of Heaven and the crown, in this holy crusade against the infidels."

It must be added, however, that these pious financial expedients received some check from the interference of Queen Isabella. Her penetrating eyes discovered, that many enormities had been committed under colour of religious zeal, and many innocent persons accused by false witnesses of apostacy, either through malice, or a hope of obtaining their wealth. She caused strict investigation, therefore, into the proceedings which had been held; many of which were reversed, and suborners punished in proportion to their guilt.\*

#### CHAPTER LXVIII.

How King Ferdinand invaded the eastern side of the kingdom of Granada; and how he was received by El Zagal.

"MULEY ABDALLA EL ZAGAL," says the venerable Jesuit father, Pedro Abarca, "was the most venomous Mahometan in all Morisma;" and the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida most devoutly echoes his opinion. "Certainly," adds the latter, "none ever opposed a more heathenish and diabolical obstinacy to the holy inroads of the cross and sword."

El Zagal felt that it was necessary to do something to quicken his popularity with the people; and that nothing was more effectual than a successful inroad. The Moors loved the stirring call to arms, and a wild foray among the mountains; and delighted more in a hasty spoil, wrested with hard fighting from the Christians, than in all the steady and certain gains secured by peaceful traffic.

There reigned at this time a careless security along the frontier of Jaen. The alcajdes of the Christian fortresses were confident of the friendship of Boabdil el Chico; and they fancied his uncle too distant, and too much engrossed by his own perplexities, to think of molesting them. On a sudden, El Zagal issued out of Guadix with a chosen band, passed

\* Pulgar, part. iii, cap. 100.

rapidly through the mountains which extend behind Granada, and fell, like a thunderbolt, upon the territories in the neighbourhood of Alcala la Real.

Before the alarm could be spread, and the frontier roused, he had made a wide career of destruction through the country; sacking and burning villages, sweeping off flocks and herds, and carrying away captives. The warriors of the frontier assembled; but El Zagal was already far on his return through the mountains; and he re-entered the gates of Guadix in triumph, his army laden with Christian spoil, and conducting an immense cavalgada. Such was one of the fierce El Zagal's preparations for the expected invasion of the Christian king: exciting the warlike spirit of his people, and gaining for himself a transient popularity.

King Ferdinand assembled his army at Murcia in the spring of 1488. He left that city on the fifth of June, with a flying camp of four thousand horse, and fourteen thousand foot. The Marquis of Cadiz led the van, followed by the adelantado of Murcia. The army entered the Moorish frontier by the sea-coast, spreading terror through the land; wherever it appeared, the towns surrendered without a blow, so great was the dread of experiencing the woes which had desolated the opposite frontier. In this way Vera, Velez el Rubico, Velez el Blanco, and many towns of inferior note, to the number of sixty, yielded at the first summons.

It was not until it approached Almeria, that the army met with resistance. This important city was commanded by the Prince Zelim, a relation of El Zagal. He led forth his Moors bravely to the encounter, and skirmished fiercely with the advance guard in the gardens near the city. King Ferdinand came up with the main body of the army, and called off his troops from the skirmish. He saw, that to attack the place with his present force was fruitless: having reconnoitred the city and its environs, therefore, against a future campaign, he retired with his army and marched towards Baza.

The old warrior, El Zagal, was himself drawn up in the city of Baza, with a powerful garrison. He felt confidence

in the strength of the place, and rejoiced when he heard that the Christian king was approaching.

In the valley in front of Baza there extended a great tract of gardens, like a continued grove, and intersected by canals and water-courses. In this he stationed a powerful ambuscade of arquebusiers, and crossbow-men. The vanguard of the Christian army came marching gaily up the valley, with great sound of drum and trumpet, and led on by the Marquis of Cadiz, and the adelantado of Murcia. As they drew near, El Zagal sallied forth with horse and foot, and attacked them, for a time, with great spirit. Gradually falling back, as if pressed by their superior valour, he drew the exulting Christians among the gardens. Suddenly the Moors in ambuscade burst from their concealment, and opened such a terrible fire in flank and rear, that many of the Christians were slain, and the rest thrown into confusion. King Ferdinand arrived in time to see the disastrous situation of his troops, and gave signal to the vanguard to retire.

El Zagal did not permit the foe to draw off unmolested. Ordering out fresh squadrons, he fell upon the rear of the retreating troops with loud and triumphant shouts, driving them before him with dreadful havoc. The old war-cry of "El Zagal! El Zagal!" was again vociferated by the Moors, and was echoed with transport from the walls of the city. The Christians were for a time in imminent peril of a complete rout; when fortunately the adelantado of Murcia threw himself, with a large body of horse and foot, between the pursuers and the pursued, covering the retreat of the latter, and giving them time to rally. The Moors were now attacked so vigorously in turn that they gave over the unequal contest, and drew back slowly into the city. Many valiant cavaliers were slain in the skirmish; among the number of whom was Don Philip of Aragon, master of the chivalry of Saint George of Montesor. He was illegitimate son of the king's illegitimate brother Don Carlos, and his death was greatly bewailed by Ferdinand. He had formerly been archbishop of Palmero; but had doffed the cassock for the cuirass; and had thus,

according to Fray Antonio Agapida, gained a glorious crown of martyrdom, by falling in this holy war.

The warm reception of his advance guard, by the old warrior El Zagal, brought King Ferdinand to a pause. He encamped on the banks of the neighbouring river Guadalentin, and began to consider, whether he had acted wisely in undertaking this campaign with his present force. His late successes had probably rendered him over-confident. El Zagal had again schooled him into his characteristic caution. He saw that the old warrior was too formidably enconced in Baza, to be dislodged by any thing except a powerful army, and battering artillery; and he feared, that should he persist in his invasion, some disaster might befall his army, either from the enterprise of the foe, or from a pestilence which prevailed in various parts of the country.

Ferdinand retired therefore from before Baza, as he had on a former occasion from before Loxa, all the wiser for a wholesome lesson in warfare, but by no means grateful to those who had given it; and with a solemn determination to have his revenge upon his teachers.

He now took measures for the security of the places gained in this campaign, placing in them strong garrisons, well armed and supplied, charging their alcajdes to be vigilant in their posts, and to give no rest to the enemy. The whole of the frontier was placed under the command of the brave Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero. As it was evident, from the warlike character of El Zagal, that there would be abundance of active service and hard fighting, many hidalgos and young cavaliers, eager for distinction, remained with Puerto Carrero.

All these dispositions being made, King Ferdinand closed the dubious campaign of this year; not, as usual, by returning in triumph, at the head of his army, to some important city of his dominions; but by disbanding the troops, and repairing to pray at the cross of Caravaca.

## CHAPTER LXIX.

How the Moors made various enterprises against the Christians.

“WHILE the pious King Ferdinand,” observes Fray Antonio Agapida, “was humbling himself before the cross, and devoutly praying for the destruction of his enemies, that fierce pagan, El Zagal, depending merely on his arm of flesh and his sword of steel, pursued his diabolical outrages upon the Christians.” No sooner was the invading army disbanded, than El Zagal sallied forth from his stronghold, and carried fire and sword into all those parts that had submitted to the Spanish yoke. The castle of Nixar, being carelessly guarded, was taken by surprise, and its garrison put to the sword. The old warrior raged with sanguinary fury about the whole frontier, attacking convoys, slaying, wounding, and making prisoners, and coming by surprise upon the Christians, wherever they were off their guard.

The alcajde of the fortress of Callar, confiding in the strength of its walls and towers, and on its difficult situation, being built on the summit of a lofty hill, and surrounded by precipices, ventured to absent himself from his post. The vigilant El Zagal was suddenly before it with a powerful force. He stormed the town, sword in hand, fought the Christians from street to street, and drove them, with great slaughter, to the citadel. Here a veteran captain, by the name of Juan de Avalos, a grayheaded warrior, scarred in many a battle, assumed the command, and made an obstinate defence. Neither the multitude of the enemy, nor the vehemence of their attacks, though led on by the terrible El Zagal himself, had power to shake the fortitude of this doughty old soldier.

The Moors undermined the outer walls, and one of the towers of the fortress, and made their way into the exterior court. The alcajde manned the tops of his towers; pouring down melted pitch, and showering darts, arrows, stones, and all kinds of missiles, upon the assailants. The Moors were driven out of the court; but, being reinforced with fresh troops, returned repeatedly to the assault. For five days the combat was kept up. The

Christians were nearly exhausted; but they were sustained by the cheerings of their staunch old alcaide; and they feared death from the cruel El Zagal, should they surrender. At length the approach of a powerful force, under Puerto Carrero, relieved them from this fearful peril. El Zagal abandoned the assault; but set fire to the town in his rage and disappointment, and retired to his stronghold of Guadix.

The example of El Zagal roused his adherents to action. Two bold Moorish alcaides, Ali Atar and Yza' Atar, commanding the fortresses of Alhenden and Salobrenna, laid waste the country of the subjects of Boabdil, and the places which had recently submitted to the Christians. They swept off the cattle, carried off captives, and harassed the whole of the newly conquered frontier.

The Moors, also, of Almeria, and Tavernas, and Pulchena, made inroads into Murcia, and carried fire and sword into its most fertile regions; while on the opposite frontier, among the wild valleys and rugged recesses of the Sierra Bermeja, or Red Mountains, many of the Moors, who had lately submitted, again flew to arms. The Marquis of Cadiz suppressed, by timely vigilance, the rebellion of the mountain town of Gausen, situate on a high peak, almost among the clouds; but others of the Moors fortified themselves in rock-built towers and castles, inhabited solely by warriors, whence they carried on a continual war of forage and depredation; sweeping suddenly down into the valleys, and carrying off flocks, and herds, and all kinds of booty, to these eagle nests, to which it was perilous and fruitless to pursue them.

The worthy Fray Antonio Agapida closes his story of this chequered year in quite a different strain from those triumphant periods, with which he is accustomed to wind up the victorious campaigns of the sovereigns. "Great and mighty," says this venerable chronicler, "were the floods and tempests, which prevailed throughout the kingdom of Castile and Aragon about this time. It seemed as though the windows of heaven were again opened, and a second deluge overwhelming the face of nature.

The clouds burst, as it were, in cataracts upon the earth; torrents rushed down from the mountains, overflowing the valleys. Brooks were swelled into raging rivers; houses were undermined; mills were swept away by their own streams; the affrighted shepherds saw their flocks drowned in the midst of the pasture, and were fain to take refuge for their lives in towers and high places. The Guadalquivir, for a time, became a roaring and tumultuous sea; inundating the immense plain of the Tablada, and filling the fair city of Seville with affright.

"A vast black cloud moved over the land accompanied by a hurricane and a trembling of the earth. Houses were unroofed, the walls and battlements of fortresses shaken, and lofty towers rocked to their foundations. Ships, riding at anchor, were either stranded or swallowed up. Others, under sail, were tossed to and fro upon mountain waves, and cast upon the land; where the whirlwind rent them in pieces; and scattered their fragments in the air. Doleful was the ruin, and great the terror, where this baleful cloud passed by; and it left a long track of desolation over sea and land. Some of the faint-hearted," adds Antonio Agapida, "looked upon this tumult of the elements as a prodigious event, out of the course of nature. In the weakness of their fears, they connected it with those troubles which occurred in various places; considering it a portent of some great calamity, about to be wrought by the violence of the bloody-handed El Zagal and his fierce adherents."

#### CHAPTER LXX.

How King Ferdinand prepared to besiege the city of Baza; and how the city prepared for defence.

THE stormy winter had passed away, and the spring of 1489 was advancing; yet the heavy rains had broken up the roads; the mountain brooks were swollen to raging torrents: and the late shallow and peaceful rivers were deep, turbulent, and dangerous. The Christian troops had been summoned to assemble in early spring, on the frontiers of Jaen, but were slow in arriving at the appointed place. They were entangled in the miry defiles

of the mountains, or fretted impatiently on the banks of impassable floods. It was late in the month of May before they assembled in sufficient force to attempt the proposed invasion; when, at length, a valiant army, of thirteen thousand horse and forty thousand foot, marched merrily over the border. The queen remained at the city of Jaén, with the prince-royal and the princesses, her children; accompanied and supported by the venerable Cardinal of Spain, and those reverend prelates who assisted in her councils throughout this holy war. The plan of king Ferdinand was to lay siege to the city of Baza, the key of the remaining possessions of the Moor. That important fortress taken, Guadix and Almeria must soon follow; and then the power of El Zagal would be at an end. As the catholic king advanced, he had first to secure various castles and strongholds in the vicinity of Baza, which might otherwise harass his army. Some of these made obstinate resistance; especially the town of Cuxar. The Christians assailed the walls with various machines, to sap them and batter them down. The brave alcaide, Hubec Adalgar, opposed force to force, and engine to engine. He manned his towers with his bravest warriors, who rained down an iron shower upon the enemy; and he linked caldrons together by strong chains, and cast fire from them, consuming the wooden engines of their assailants, and those who managed them. The siege was protracted for several days. The bravery of the alcaide could not save his fortress from an overwhelming foe, but it gained him honourable terms. Ferdinand permitted the garrison and the inhabitants to repair with their effects to Baza; and the valiant Hubec Adalgar marched forth with the remnant of his force, and took the way to that devoted city.

The delays, which had been caused to the invading army by these various circumstances, had been diligently improved by the old Moorish monarch, El Zagal; who felt that he was now making his last stand for empire; and that this campaign would decide, whether he should continue a king, or sink into a vassal.

El Zagal was but a few leagues from Baza, at the city of Guadix. This last

was the most important point of his remaining territories, being a kind of bulwark between them and the hostile city of Granada, the seat of his nephew's power. Though he heard of the tide of war, therefore, that was collecting, and rolling towards the city of Baza, he dared not go in person to its assistance. He dreaded that, should he leave Guadix, Boabdil would attack him in rear, while the Christian army was battling with him in front. El Zagal trusted in the great strength of Baza, to defy any violent assaults; and he profited by the delays of the Christian army, to supply it with all possible means of defence. He sent thither all the troops he could spare from his garrison of Guadix, and despatched missives throughout his territories, calling upon all true Moslems to hasten to Baza, to make a devoted stand in defence of their homes, their liberties, and their religion. The cities of Tavernas and Purchena, and the surrounding heights and valleys, responded to his orders, and sent forth their fighting men to the field. The rocky fastnesses of the Alpuxarras resounded with the din of arms. Troops of horse and bodies of foot-soldiers were seen winding down the rugged cliffs and defiles of those marble mountains, and hastening towards Baza. Many brave cavaliers of Granada, also, spurning the quiet and security of Christian vassalage, secretly left the city, and hastened to join their fighting countrymen. The great dependence of El Zagal, however, was upon the valour and loyalty of his cousin and brother-in-law, Cidi Yahye Alnazar Aben Zelim, who was alcaide of Almeria; a cavalier experienced in warfare, and redoubtable in the field. He wrote to him, to leave Almeria, and repair, with all speed, at the head of his troops to Baza. Cidi Yahye departed immediately, with ten thousand of the bravest Moors in the kingdom. These were, for the most part, hardy mountaineers, tempered to sun and storm, and tried in many a combat. None equalled them for a sally or a skirmish. They were adroit in executing a thousand stratagems, ambuscades, and evolutions. Impetuous in their assaults, yet governed in their utmost fury by a word or sign from their commander, at the sound of a trumpet they would



check themselves in the midst of their career, and wheel off and disperse; and, at another sound of a trumpet, they would as suddenly re-assemble, and return to the attack. They were upon the enemy when least expected, coming like a rushing blast, spreading havoc and consternation, and then passing away in an instant; so that, when one recovered from the shock, and looked around, behold, nothing was to be seen or heard of this tempest of war, but a cloud of dust, and the clatter of retreating troops!

When Cidi Yahye led his train of ten thousand valiant warriors into the gates of Baza, the city rung with acclamations; and for a time the inhabitants thought themselves secure. El Zagal also felt a glow of confidence, notwithstanding his own absence from the city. "Cidi Yahye," said he, "is my cousin and my brother-in-law, related to me by blood and marriage: he is a second self: happy is that monarch who has his kinsmen to command his armies!" With all these reinforcements, the garrison of Baza amounted to above twenty thousand men. There were at this time three principal leaders in the city; Mohammed ben Hassan, surnamed the Veteran, who was military governor, or alcaide, an old Moor, of great experience and discretion. The second was Hamet Abu Ali, who was captain of the troops stationed in the place; and the third was Hubec Adalgar, the valiant alcaide of Cuxar, who had repaired hither with the remains of his garrison. Over all these Cidi Yahye exercised a supreme command, in consequence of his being of the blood royal, and in the special confidence of Muley Abdalla el Zagal. He was eloquent and ardent in council, and fond of striking and splendid achievements; but he was a little prone to be carried away by the excitement of the moment, and the warmth of his imagination. The councils of war of these commanders, therefore, were more frequently controlled by the opinions of the old alcaide, Mohammed ben Hassan, for whose shrewdness, caution, and experience, Cidi Yahye himself felt the greatest deference.

The city of Baza was situate in a spacious valley, eight leagues in length and three in breadth, called the Hoya or

basin of Baza. It was surrounded by a range of mountains, called the Sierra of Xabalcohol; the streams of which, collecting themselves into two rivers, watered and fertilized the country. The city was built in the plain; but one part of it was protected by the rocky precipices of the mountain, and by a powerful citadel; the other part was defended by massive walls, studded with immense towers. It had suburbs towards the plain, imperfectly fortified by earthen walls. In front of these suburbs extended a tract of orchards and gardens, nearly a league in length, so thickly planted as to resemble a continued forest. Here every citizen, who could afford it, had his little plantation, and his garden of fruit, and flowers, and vegetables; watered by canals and rivulets, and dominated by a small tower, to serve for recreation or defence. This wilderness of groves and gardens, intersected in all parts by canals and runs of water, and studded by above a thousand small towers, formed a kind of protection to this side of the city; rendering all approach extremely difficult and perplexed, and affording covert to the defenders.

While the Christian army had been detained before the frontier posts, the city of Baza had been a scene of hurried and unremitting preparation. All the grain of the surrounding valley, though yet unripe, was hastily reaped, and borne into the city, to prevent it from yielding sustenance to the enemy. The country was drained of all its supplies. Flocks and herds were driven, bleating and bellowing, into the gates. Long trains of beasts of burden, some laden with food, others with lances, darts, and arms of all kinds, kept pouring into the place. Already there were munitions collected sufficient for a siege of fifteen months; yet still the eager and hasty preparation was going on, when the army of Ferdinand came in sight. On one side might be seen scattered parties of foot and horse, spurring to the gates; and muleteers, hurrying forward their burdened animals; all anxious to get under shelter before the gathering storm. On the other side, the cloud of war came sweeping down the valley; the roll of drum, or clang of trumpet, resounding occasion-

ally from its deep bosom, or the bright glance of arms flashing forth like vivid lightning from its columns. King Ferdinand pitched his tents in the valley, beyond the green labyrinth of gardens. He sent his heralds to summon the city to surrender, promising the most favourable terms, in case of immediate compliance; and avowing, in the most solemn terms, his resolution never to abandon the siege, until he had possession of the place.

Upon receiving this summons, the Moorish commanders held a council of war. The prince Cidi Yahye, indignant at the menace of the king, was for retorting by a declaration, that the garrison never would surrender, but would fight until buried under the ruins of the walls. "Of what avail," said the veteran Mohammed, "is a declaration of the kind, which we may falsify by our deeds? Let us threaten what we know we can perform; and let us endeavour to perform more than we threaten." In conformity to the advice of Mohammed ben Hassan, therefore, a laconic reply was sent to the Christian monarch, thanking him for his offer of favourable terms, but informing him, that they were placed in the city to defend, not to surrender it.

#### CHAPTER LXXI.

The battle of the gardens before Baza.

WHEN the reply of the Moorish commanders was brought to King Ferdinand, he prepared to press the siege with the utmost vigour. Finding the camp too far from the city, and that the intervening orchards afforded shelter for the sallies of the Moors, he determined to advance it beyond the gardens, in the space between them and the suburbs, where his batteries would have full play upon the city walls. A detachment was sent in advance, to take possession of the gardens, and to keep a check upon the suburbs, opposing any sally, while the encampment should be formed and fortified. The various commanders entered the orchards at different points. The young cavaliers marched fearlessly forward, but the experienced veterans foresaw infinite peril in the mazes of this

verdant labyrinth. The Master of St. Jago, as he led his troops into the centre of the gardens, exhorted them to keep by one another, and to press forward, in defiance of all difficulty or danger; assuring them, that God would give them the victory, if they attacked hardily and persisted resolutely.

Scarcely had they entered the verge of the orchards, when a din of drums and trumpets, mingled with war-cries, was heard from the suburbs, and a legion of Moorish warriors on foot poured forth. They were led on by the Prince Cidi Yahye. He saw the imminent danger of the city, should the Christians gain possession of the orchards. "Soldiers," he cried, "we fight for life and liberty, for our families, our country, our religion:\* nothing is left for us to depend upon but the strength of our hands, the courage of our hearts, and the almighty protection of Allah!" The Moors answered with shouts of war, and rushed to the encounter. The two hosts met in the middle of the gardens. A chance-medley combat ensued, with lances, arquebuses, crossbows, and cimeters. The perplexed nature of the ground, cut up and intersected by canals and streams, the closeness of the trees, the multiplicity of towers and petty edifices, gave greater advantages to the Moors, who were on foot, than to the Christians, who were on horseback. The Moors, too, knew the ground, all its alleys and passes; and were thus enabled to lurk, to sally forth, to attack and retreat, almost without injury.

The Christian commanders, seeing this, ordered many of the horsemen to dismount, and fight on foot. The battle then became fierce and deadly, each disregarding his own life, provided he could slay his enemy. It was not so much a general battle, as a multitude of petty actions; for every orchard and garden had its distinct contest. No one could see further than the little scene of fury and bloodshed around him, or knew how the general battle fared. In vain the captains exerted their voices; in vain the trumpets brayed forth signals and com-

\* "Illi [Mauri] pro fortunis, pro libertate, pro laribus patriciis, pro vitâ denique certabant."—Petrici Martyr. Epist. 70.

mands: all was confounded and unheard in the universal din and uproar; no one kept to his standard, but fought as his own fury or fear dictated.

In some places, the Christians had the advantage; in others, the Moors. Often a victorious party, pursuing the vanquished, came upon a superior and triumphant force of the enemy, and the fugitives turned back upon them in an overwhelming wave. Some broken remnants, in their terror and confusion, fled from their own countrymen, and sought refuge among their enemies, not knowing friend from foe in the obscurity of the groves. The Moors were more adroit in these wild skirmishings, from their flexibility, lightness, and agility, and the rapidity with which they would disperse, rally, and return again to the charge.\*

The hardest fighting was about the small garden towers and pavilions, which served as so many petty fortresses. Each party by turns gained them, defended them fiercely, and were driven out. Many of the towers were set on fire, and increased the horrors of the fight, by the wreaths of smoke and flame in which they wrapped the groves, and by the shrieks of those who were burning.

Several of the Christian cavaliers, bewildered by the uproar and confusion, and shocked at the carnage which prevailed, would have led their men out of the labyrinth, and knew not which way to retreat. While in this perplexity, the standard-bearer of one of the squadrons of the grand cardinal had his arm carried off by a cannon-ball; the standard was well nigh falling into the hands of the enemy, when Rodrigo de Mendoza, an intrepid youth, natural son of the grand cardinal, rushed to its rescue, through a shower of balls, lances, and arrows; and, bearing it aloft, dashed forward with it into the hottest of the combat, followed by his shouting soldiers. King Ferdinand, who remained in the skirts of the orchard, was in extreme anxiety. It was impossible to see much of the action, for the multipli-

city of trees, and towers, and wreaths of smoke; and those who were driven out defeated, or came out wounded and exhausted, gave different accounts, according to the fate of the partial conflicts in which they had been engaged. Ferdinand exerted himself to the utmost to animate and encourage his troops to this blind encounter, sending reinforcements of horse and foot to those points where the battle was most sanguinary and doubtful. Among those that were brought forth mortally wounded was Don Juan de Lara, a youth of uncommon merit, greatly prized by the king, beloved by the army, and recently married to Doña Catalina de Urrea, a young lady of distinguished beauty.\* They laid him at the foot of a tree, and endeavoured to staunch and bind up his wounds with a scarf which his bride had wrought for him: but his life-blood flowed too profusely; and while a holy friar was yet administering to him the last sacred offices of the church, he expired, almost at the feet of his sovereign.

On the other hand, the veteran al-cayde, Mohammed Ben Hassan, surrounded by a little band of chieftains, kept an anxious eye upon the scene of combat, from the walls of the city. For nearly twelve hours the battle had raged without intermission. The thickness of the foliage hid all the particulars from their sight; but they could see the flash of swords, and glance of helmets, among the trees. Columns of smoke rose in every direction, while the clash of arms, the thundering of ribadoquines and arquebuses, the shouts and cries of the combatants, and the groans and supplications of the wounded, bespoke the deadly conflict that was waging in the bosom of the groves. They were harassed too by the shrieks and lamentations of the Moorish women and children, as their wounded relatives were brought bleeding from the scene of action, and were stunned by a general outcry of wo, on the part of the combatants, as the body of Redoun Zalfarga, a renegade Christian, and one of the bravest of their generals, was borne breathless into the city.

At length the din of battle approached

\* Mariana, lib. xxv. cap. 13.

\* Mariana. P. Martyr. Zurita.

nearer to the skirts of the orchards. They beheld their warriors driven out from among the groves, by fresh squadrons of the enemy; and, after disputing the ground inch by inch, obliged to retire to a place between the orchards and the suburbs, which was fortified with palisadoes.

The Christians immediately planted opposing palisadoes, and established strong outposts near to the retreat of the Moors; while, at the same time, King Ferdinand ordered that his encampment should be pitched within the hard-won orchards.

Mohammed ben Hassan sallied forth to the aid of the Prince Cidi Yahye, and made a desperate attempt to dislodge the enemy from this formidable position; but the night had closed, and the darkness rendered it impossible to make any impression. The Moors, however, kept up constant assaults and alarms throughout the night, and the weary Christians, exhausted by the toils and sufferings of the day, were not allowed a moment of repose.\*

#### CHAPTER LXXII.

Siege of Baza. Embarrassment of the army.

THE morning sun rose upon a piteous scene before the walls of Baza. The Christian outposts, harassed throughout the night, were pale and haggard; while the multitude of slain, which lay before their palisadoes, showed the fierce attacks they had sustained, and the bravery of their defence.

Beyond them lay the groves and gardens of Baza; once the favourite resorts for recreation and delight, now a scene of horror and desolation. The towers and pavilions were smoking ruins; the canals and water-courses were discoloured with blood, and choked with the bodies of the slain. Here and there the ground, deep-dinted with the tramp of man and steed, and plashed and slippery with gore, showed where there had been some fierce and mortal conflict; while the bodies of Moors and Christians, ghastly in death, lay half concealed among the matted and trampled shrubs, and flowers, and herbage.

\* Pulgar, part iii, cap. 106, 107. Cura de Los Palacios, cap. 92. Zurita, lib. xx, cap. 81.

Amidst these sanguinary scenes arose the Christian tents, which had been hastily pitched among the gardens in the preceding evening. The experience of the night, however, and the forlorn aspect of every thing in the morning, convinced King Ferdinand of the perils and hardships to which his camp must be exposed, in its present situation; and, after a consultation with his principal cavaliers, he resolved to abandon the orchards.

It was a dangerous movement to extricate his army from so entangled a situation, in the face of so alert and daring an enemy. A bold front was therefore kept up towards the city. Additional troops were ordered to the advanced posts, and works begun, as if for a settled encampment. Not a tent was struck in the gardens; but in the mean time the most active and unremitting exertions were made to remove back all the baggage and furniture of the camp to the original station.

All day the Moors beheld a formidable show of war maintained in front of the gardens; while in the rear, the tops of the Christian tents, and the pennons of the different commanders, were seen rising above the groves. Suddenly, towards evening, the tents sunk and disappeared; the outposts broke up their stations, and withdrew; and the whole shadow of an encampment was fast vanishing from their eyes.

The Moor saw, too late, the subtle manœuvre of King Ferdinand. Cidi Yahye again sallied forth, with a large force of horse and foot, and pressed furiously upon the Christians. The latter, however, experienced in Moorish attack, retired in close order: sometimes turning upon the enemy, and driving them to their barricadoes, and then pursuing their retreat. In this way the army was extricated, without much further loss, from the perilous labyrinth of the gardens. The camp was now out of danger, but it was, also, too distant from the city to do mischief; while the Moors could sally forth, and return, without hinderance. The king called a council of war, to consider in what manner to proceed. The Marquis of Cadiz was for abandoning the siege for the present; the place

being too strong, too well garrisoned and provided, and too extensive, to be either carried by assault, reduced by famine, or invested by their limited forces: while, in lingering before it, the army would be exposed to the usual maladies and sufferings of besieging enemies; and, when the rainy season came on, would be shut up by the swelling of the two rivers. He recommended instead, that the king should throw garrisons of horse and foot into all the towns captured in the neighbourhood; and leave them to keep up a predatory war upon Baza, while he should overrun and ravage all the country; so that, in the following year, Almeria and Guadix, having all their subject towns and territories taken from them, might be starved into submission.

Don Gutiere de Cardenas, senior commander of Lara, on the other hand, maintained, that to abandon the siege would be construed by the enemy into a sign of weakness and irresolution. It would give new spirits to the partisans of El Zagal; and would gain to his standard many of the wavering subjects of Boabdil, if it did not encourage the fickle populace of Granada to open rebellion. He advised, therefore, that the siege should be prosecuted with vigour.

The pride of Ferdinand pleaded in favour of the last opinion: for it would be doubly humiliating again to return from a campaign in this part of the Moorish kingdom, without striking a blow. But when he reflected on all that his army had suffered, and on all that they must still suffer, should the siege continue, especially from the difficulty of obtaining a regular supply of provisions for so numerous a host, across a great extent of rugged and mountainous country, he determined to consult the safety of his people, and to adopt the advice of the Marquis of Cadiz.

When the soldiery heard that the king was about to raise the siege in mere consideration for their sufferings, they were filled with generous enthusiasm; and entreated, as with one voice, that the siege might never be abandoned until the city surrendered.

Perplexed by conflicting counsels, the king despatched messengers to the queen, at Jaen, requesting her advice. Posts

had been stationed between them in such manner, that missives from the camp could reach the queen within ten hours. Isabella sent instantly her reply. She left the policy of raising, or continuing, the siege, to the decision of the king and his captains; but, should they determine to persevere, she pledged herself, with the aid of God, to forward them men, money, provisions, and all other supplies, until the city should be taken.

The reply of the queen determined Ferdinand to persevere; and when his determination was made known to the army, it was hailed with as much joy as if it had been tidings of a victory.

#### CHAPTER LXXIII.

Siege of Baza continued. How King Ferdinand completely invested the city.

THE Moorish prince, Cidi Yahye, had received intelligence of the doubts and discussions in the Christian camp, and flattered himself with hopes, that the besieging army would soon retire in despair; though the veteran alcaide, Mohammed, shook his head with incredulity at the suggestion. A sudden movement next morning in the Christian camp seemed to confirm the sanguine hopes of the prince. The tents were struck, the artillery and baggage were conveyed away, and bodies of soldiers began to march along the valley. The momentary gleam of triumph was soon dispelled. The catholic king had merely divided his host into two camps, the more effectually to distress the city. One, consisting of four thousand horse, and eight thousand foot, with all the artillery and battering engines, took post on the side of the city towards the mountain. This was commanded by the valiant Marquis of Cadiz, with whom were Don Alonso de Aguilar, Luis Fernandez Puerto Carrero, and many other distinguished cavaliers.

The other camp was commanded by the king; having six thousand horse, and a great host of foot-soldiers, the hardy mountaineers of Biscay, Guipuscoa, Galicia, and the Asturias. Among the cavaliers who were with the king, were the brave Count de Tendilla, Don Rodrigo de Mendoza, and Don Alonso

de Cardenas, Master of Santiago. The two camps were wide asunder, on opposite sides of the city; and between them lay the thick wilderness of orchards. Both camps were therefore fortified by great trenches, breastworks, and palisades. The veteran Mohammed, as he saw these two formidable camps, glittering on each side of the city, and noted the well known pennons of renowned commanders fluttering above them, still comforted his companions. "These camps," said he, "are too far removed from each other for mutual succour and co-operation; and the forest of orchards is as a gulf between them." This consolation was but of short continuance. Scarcely were the Christian camps fortified, when the ears of the Moorish garrison were startled by the sound of innumerable axes, and the crash of falling trees. They looked with anxiety from their highest towers; and, behold, their favourite groves were sinking beneath the blows of the Christian pioneers! The Moors sallied forth with fiery zeal to protect their beloved gardens, and the orchards in which they so much delighted. The Christians, however, were too well supported to be driven from their work. Day after day, the gardens became the scene of incessant and bloody skirmishings. Still the devastation of the groves went on; for King Ferdinand was too well aware of the necessity of clearing away this screen of woods, not to bend all his forces to the undertaking. It was a work, however, of gigantic toil and patience. The trees were of such magnitude, and so closely set together, and spread over so wide an extent, that, notwithstanding four thousand men were employed, they could scarcely clear a strip of land ten paces broad, within a day: and such were the interruptions, from the incessant assaults of the Moors, that it was full forty days before the orchards were completely levelled.

The devoted city of Baza now lay stripped of its beautiful covering of groves and gardens, at once its ornament, its delight, and its protection. The besiegers went on slowly and surely, with almost incredible labours, to invest and isolate the city. They connected their camps by a deep trench across the plain,

a league in length, into which they diverted the waters of the mountain streams. They protected this trench by palisades, fortified by fifteen castles, at regular distances. They dug a deep trench also, two leagues in length, across the mountain, in the rear of the city, reaching from camp to camp, and fortified it on each side with walls of earth and stone, and wood. Thus the Moors were enclosed on all sides by trenches, palisades, walls, and castles; so that it was impossible for them to sally beyond this great line of circumvallation, nor could any force enter to their succour. Ferdinand made an attempt likewise to cut off the supply of water from the city: "for water," observes the worthy Agapida, "is more necessary to these infidels than bread; as they make use of it in repeated daily ablutions, enjoined by their damnable religion, and employ it in baths, and in a thousand other idle and extravagant modes, of which we Spaniards and Christians make but little account."

There was a noble fountain of pure water, which gushed out at the foot of the hill *Albohacen*, just behind the city. The Moors had almost a superstitious fondness for this fountain, and daily depended upon it for their supplies. Receiving intimation from some deserters of the plan of King Ferdinand to get possession of this precious fountain, they sallied forth at night, and threw up such powerful works upon the impending hill, as to set all attempts of the Christian assailants at defiance.

#### CHAPTER LXXIV.

Exploit of Hernando Perez del Pulgar, and other cavaliers.

THE siege of Baza, while it displayed the skill and science of the Christian commanders, gave but little scope for the adventurous spirit and fiery valour of the young Spanish cavaliers. They repined at the tedious monotony and dull security of their fortified camp; and longed for some soul-stirring exploit of difficulty and danger. Two of the most spirited of the youthful cavaliers were Francisco de Bazan, and Antonio de Cueva, the latter of whom was son to

the Duke of Albuquerque. As they were one day seated on the ramparts of the camp, and venting their impatience at this life of inaction, they were overheard by a veteran adalid, one of those scouts, or guides, who are acquainted with all parts of the country. "Señores," said he, "if you wish for a service of peril and profit, if you are willing to pluck the fiery old Moor by the beard, I can lead you to where you may put your mettle to the proof. Hard by the city of Guadix are certain hamlets, rich in booty: I can conduct you by a way in which you may come upon them by surprise; and, if you are as cool in the head as you are hot in the spur, you may bear off your spoils from under the very eyes of old El Zagal." The idea of thus making booty at the very gates of Guadix pleased the hot-spirited youths. These predatory excursions were frequent about this time; and the Moors of Padul, Alhenden, and other towns of the Alpuxarras, had recently harassed the Christian territories by expeditions of the kind. Francisco de Bazan and Antonio de Cueva soon found other young cavaliers of their age ready to join them in the adventure; and, in a little while, they had nearly three hundred horse and two hundred foot, ready equipped, and eager for the foray.

Keeping their destination secret, they sallied out of the camp, on the edge of an evening, and, guided by the adalid, made their way by starlight through the most secret roads of the mountains. In this way they pressed on rapidly day and night, until, early one morning before cock-crowing, they fell suddenly upon the hamlets, made prisoners of the inhabitants, sacked the houses, ravaged the fields, and, sweeping through the meadows, gathered together all the flocks and herds. Without giving themselves time to rest, they set out upon their return, making with all speed for the mountains, before the alarm should be given, and the country roused.

Several of the herdsmen, however, had fled to Guadix, and carried tidings of the ravage to El Zagal. The beard of old Muley trembled with rage. He immediately sent out six hundred of his choicest horse and foot, with orders to

recover the booty, and to bring those insolent marauders captive to Guadix.

The Christian cavaliers were urging their cavalgada of cattle and sheep up a mountain as fast as their own weariness would permit; when, looking back, they beheld a great cloud of dust, and presently descried the turbaned host hot upon their traces.

They saw that the Moors were superior in number; they were fresh also, both man and steed: whereas both they and their horses were fatigued by two days and two nights of hard marching. Several of the horsemen, therefore, gathered round the commanders, and proposed, that they should relinquish their spoil, and save themselves by flight. The captains, Francisco de Bazan and Antonio de Cueva, spurned at such craven counsel. "What!" cried they, "abandon our prey without striking a blow! Leave our foot-soldiers too in the lurch, to be overwhelmed by the enemy? If any one gives such counsel through fear, he mistakes the course of safety; for there is less danger in presenting a bold front to a foe, than in turning a dastard back; and fewer men are killed in a brave advance, than in a cowardly retreat."

Some of the cavaliers were touched by these words, and declared that they would stand by the foot-soldiers, like true companions in arms. The great mass of the party, however, were volunteers, brought together by chance, who received no pay, nor had any common tie to keep them together in time of danger. The pleasure of the expedition being over, each thought but of his own safety, regardless of his companions. As the enemy approached, the tumult of opinions increased; and every thing was in confusion. The captains, to put an end to the dispute, ordered the standard-bearer to advance against the Moors; well knowing that no true cavalier would hesitate to follow and defend his banner. The standard-bearer hesitated; the troops were on the point of taking to flight. Upon this, a cavalier of the royal guards, named Hernando Perez del Pulgar, alcayde of the fortress of Salar, rode to the front. He took off a handkerchief which he wore round his head, after the

Andalusian fashion, and, tying it to the end of his lance, elevated it in the air. "Cavaliers," cried he, "why do you take weapons in your hands, if you depend upon your feet for safety? This day will determine who is the brave man, and who the coward. He who is disposed to fight shall not want a standard; let him follow this handkerchief!" So saying, he waved his banner, and spurred bravely against the Moors. His example shamed some, and filled others with generous emulation. All turned with one accord, and, following the valiant Pulgar, rushed with shouts upon the enemy.

The Moors scarcely waited to receive the shock of their encounter. Seized with a sudden panic, they took to flight, and were pursued for a great distance with great slaughter. Three hundred of their dead strewed the road, and were stripped and despoiled by the conquerors; many were taken prisoners; and the Christian cavaliers returned in triumph to the camp, with a long cavalcade of sheep and cattle, and mules laden with booty, and bearing before them the singular standard, which had conducted them to victory.

When King Ferdinand was informed of the gallant action of Hernando Perez del Pulgar, he immediately conferred on him the honour of knighthood; and ordered, that, in memory of his achievements, he should bear for arms a lance with a handkerchief, together with a castle, and twelve lions. This is but one of many hardy and heroic deeds, done by that brave cavalier, in the wars against the Moors; by which he gained great renown, and the distinguished appellation of "El de las hazañas," or, "he of the exploits."\*

#### CHAPTER LXXV.

Continuation of the siege of Baza.

THE old Moorish king El Zagal mounted a tower, and looked out eagerly, to enjoy the sight of the Christian

\* Hernando del Pulgar, the historian, secretary to Queen Isabella, is confounded with this cavalier by some writers. He was also present at the siege of Baza, and recounted this transaction in his "Chronicle of the Catholic sovereigns, Ferdinand and Isabella."

marauders, brought captive into the gates of Guadix; but his spirits fell, when he beheld his own troops stealing back in the dusk of the evening in broken, dejected parties.

The fortune of war bore hard against the old monarch. His mind was harassed by the disastrous tidings brought each day from Baza, of the sufferings of the inhabitants, and the numbers of the garrison slain in the frequent skirmishes. He dared not go in person to the relief of the place; for his presence was necessary in Guadix, to keep a check upon his nephew in Granada. He made efforts to send reinforcements and supplies; but they were intercepted, and either captured or driven back. Still his situation was, in some respects, preferable to that of his nephew Boabdil. The old monarch was battling like a warrior on the last step of his throne. El Chico remained, a kind of pensioned vassal, in the luxurious abode of the Alhambra. The chivalrous part of the inhabitants of Granada could not but compare the generous stand made by the warriors of Baza, for their country and their faith, with their own time-serving submission to the yoke of an unbeliever. Every account they received of the wars of Baza wrung their hearts with agony; every account of the exploits of its devoted defenders brought blushes to their cheeks. Many stole forth secretly with their weapons, and hastened to join the besieged; and the partisans of El Zagal wrought upon the patriotism and passions of the remainder, until another of those conspiracies was formed, that were continually menacing the unsteady throne of Granada. It was concerted by the conspirators, to assail the Alhambra on a sudden; to slay Boabdil; to assemble all the troops, and march to Guadix; where, being reinforced by the garrison of that place, and led on by the old warrior monarch, they might fall, with overwhelming power, upon the Christian army before Baza.

Fortunately for Boabdil, he discovered the conspiracy in time, and had the heads of the leaders struck off, and placed upon the walls of the Alhambra: an act of severity, unusual with the mild and wavering monarch, which struck terror



into the disaffected, and produced a kind of mute tranquillity throughout the city.

King Ferdinand had full information of all these movements and measures for the relief of Baza, and took timely precautions to prevent them. Bodies of horsemen held watch in the mountain passes, to prevent all supplies, and to intercept any generous volunteers from Granada; and watchtowers were erected, or scouts placed, on any commanding height, to give the alarm, at the least sign of a hostile turban.

The Prince Cidi Yahye and his brave companions in arms were thus gradually walled up, as it were, from the rest of the world. A line of towers, the battlements of which bristled with troops, girdled their city; and behind the intervening bulwarks and palisades passed and repassed continual bodies of troops. Week after week, and month after month, glided away; but Ferdinand waited in vain for the garrison to be either terrified or starved into surrender. Every day they sallied forth with the spirit and alacrity of troops high fed, and flushed with confidence. "The Christian monarch," said the veteran Mohammed ben Hassan, "builds his hopes upon our growing faint and desponding: we must manifest unusual cheerfulness and vigour. What would be rashness in other service, becomes prudence with us." The Prince Cidi Yahye agreed with him in opinion; and sallied forth, with his troops, upon all kinds of hare-brained exploits. They laid ambushes, concerted surprises, and made the most desperate assaults. The great extent of the Christian works rendered them weak in many parts. Against these the Moors directed their attacks; suddenly breaking into them, making a hasty ravage, and bearing off their booty, in triumph, to the city. Sometimes they would sally forth, by the passes and clefts of the mountain in the rear of the city, which it was difficult to guard, and, hurrying down into the plain, would sweep off all cattle and sheep that were grazing near the suburbs, and all stragglers from the camp.

These partisan sallies brought on many sharp and bloody encounters; in some of which, Don Alonso de Aguilar and the alcaide de los Donzeles distinguished

themselves greatly. During one of these hot skirmishes, which happened on the skirts of the mountain about twilight, a valiant cavalier, named Martin Galindo, beheld a powerful Moor dealing deadly blows about him, and making great havoc among the Christians. Galindo pressed forward, and challenged him to single combat. The Moor, who was of the valiant tribe of the Abencerrages, was not slow in answering the call. Couching their lances, they rushed furiously upon each other. At the first shock, the Moor was wounded in the face, and borne out of his saddle. Before Galindo could check his steed, and turn from his career, the Moor sprang upon his feet, recovered his lance, and, rushing upon him, wounded him in the head and the arm. Though Galindo was on horseback, and the Moor on foot, yet such was the prowess and address of the latter, that the Christian knight, being disabled in the arm, was in the utmost peril, when his comrades hastened to his assistance. At their approach, the valiant pagan retreated slowly up the rocks, keeping them at bay, until he found himself among his companions.

Several of the young Spanish cavaliers, stung by the triumph of this Moslem knight, would have challenged others of the Moors to single combat; but King Ferdinand prohibited all vaunting encounters of the kind. He forbade his troops, also, to provoke skirmishes; well knowing, that the Moors were more dexterous than most people in this irregular mode of fighting, and were better acquainted with the ground.

#### CHAPTER LXXVI.

How two friars arrived at the camp; and how they came from the Holy Land.

"WHILE the holy Christian army," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "was thus beleaguering this infidel city of Baza, there rode into the camp, one day, two reverend friars of the order of Saint Francis. One was of portly person, and authoritative air. He bestrode a goodly steed, well conditioned, and well caparisoned; while his companion rode behind him, upon a humble hack, poorly accoutred; and, as he rode, he scarcely

raised his eyes from the ground, but maintained a meek and lowly air.

The arrival of two friars in the camp was not a matter of much note; for, in these holy wars, the church militant continually mingled in the affray, and helmet and cowl were always seen together; but it was soon discovered, that these worthy saints errant were from a far country, and on a mission of great import. They were, in truth, just arrived from the Holy Land; being two of the saintly men who kept vigil over the sepulchre of our blessed Lord at Jerusalem. He, of the tall and portly form, and commanding presence, was Fray Antonio Millan, prior of the Franciscan convent in the Holy City. He had a full and florid countenance, a sonorous voice, and was round, and swelling, and copious, in his periods, like one accustomed to harangue, and to be listened to with deference. His companion was small and spare in form, pale of visage, and soft, and silken, and almost whispering, in speech. "He had a humble and lowly way," said Agapida; "evermore bowing the head, as became one of his calling. Yet he was one of the most active, zealous, and effective brothers of the convent; and, when he raised his small black eye from the earth, there was a keen glance out of the corner, which showed, that, though harmless as a dove, he was, nevertheless, as wise as a serpent."

These holy men had come on a momentous embassy, from the Grand Soldan of Egypt; or, as Agapida terms him, in the language of the day, the Soldan of Babylon. The league, which had been made between that potentate and his arch foe, the Grand Turk, Bajazet II., to unite in arms for the salvation of Granada, as has been mentioned in a previous chapter of this chronicle, had come to nought. The infidel princes had again taken up arms against each other, and had relapsed into their ancient hostility. Still the Grand Soldan, as head of the whole Moslem sect, considered himself bound to preserve the kingdom of Granada from the grasp of unbelievers. He despatched, therefore, these two holy friars, with letters to the Castilian sovereigns, as well as to the pope, and to the King of Naples; remonstrating against the evils

done to the Moors of the kingdom of Granada, who were of his faith and kindred: whereas, it was well known, that great numbers of Christians were indulged and protected in the full enjoyment of their property, their liberty, and their faith, in his dominions. He insisted, therefore, that this war should cease; that the Moors of Granada should be reinstated in the territory of which they had been dispossessed: otherwise, he threatened to put to death all the Christians beneath his sway, to demolish their convents and temples, and to destroy the Holy Sepulchre.

This fearful menace had spread consternation among the Christians of Palestine; and when the intrepid Fray Antonio Millan and his lowly companions departed on their mission, they were accompanied far from the gates of Jerusalem by an anxious throng of brethren and disciples, who remained watching them with tearful eyes, as they journeyed over the plains of Judea.

These holy ambassadors were received with great distinction by King Ferdinand; for men of their cloth had ever high honour and consideration in his court. He had long and frequent conversations with them, about the Holy Land, the state of the Christian church in the dominions of the Grand Soldan, and of the policy and conduct of that arch infidel towards it. The portly prior of the Franciscan convent was full, and round, and oratorical in his replies, and the king expressed himself much pleased with the eloquence of his periods: but the politic monarch was observed to lend a close and attentive ear to the whispering voice of the lowly companion; "whose discourse," adds Agapida, "though modest and low, was clear and fluent, and full of subtle wisdom."

These holy friars had visited Rome in their journeying, where they had delivered the letter of the Soldan to the sovereign pontiff. His holiness had written by them to the Castilian sovereigns, requesting to know what reply they had to offer to this demand of the oriental potentate.

The King of Naples also wrote to them on the subject, but in wary terms. He inquired into the cause of this war

with the Moors of Granada, and expressed great marvel at its events; "as if," says Agapida, "both were not notorious throughout all the Christian world. Nay," adds the worthy friar, with becoming indignation, "he uttered opinions savouring of little better than damnable heresy; for he observed, that although the Moors were of a different sect, they ought not to be maltreated without just cause; and hinted, that, if the Castilian sovereigns did not suffer any crying injury from the Moors, it would be improper to do any thing which might draw great damage upon the Christians: as if, when once the sword of the faith was drawn, it ought ever to be sheathed, until this scum of heathendom were utterly destroyed, or driven from the land. But this monarch," he continues, "was more kindly disposed towards the infidels, than was honest and lawful in a Christian prince, and was at that very time in league with the Soldan, against their common enemy, the Grand Turk."

These pious sentiments of the truly catholic Agapida are echoed by Padre Mariana, in his history;\* but the worthy chronicler, Pedro Abarca, attributes the interference of the King of Naples, not to lack of orthodoxy in religion, but to an excess of worldly policy; he being apprehensive, that, should Ferdinand conquer the Moors of Granada, he might have time and means to assert a claim of the house of Aragon to the crown of Naples.

"King Ferdinand," continues the worthy father Pedro Abarca, "was no less master of dissimulation than his cousin of Naples; so he replied to him with the utmost suavity of manner; going into a minute and patient vindication of the war, and taking great apparent pains to inform him of those things, which all the world knew, but of which the other pretended to be ignorant.† At the same time, he soothed his solicitude about the fate of the Christians in the empire of the Grand Soldan; assuring him that the great revenue extorted from them in rents and tributes, would be a certain protection against the threatened violence.

To the pope, he made the usual vindi-

cation of the war; that it was for the recovery of ancient territory usurped by the Moors, for the punishment of wars and violences inflicted upon the Christians; and, finally, that it was a holy crusade, for the glory and advancement of the church.

"It was a truly edifying sight," says Agapida, "to behold these friars, after they had had their audience of the king, moving about the camp, always surrounded by nobles and cavaliers of high and martial renown. These were insatiable in their questions about the Holy Land, the state of the sepulchre of our Lord, and the sufferings of the devoted brethren who guarded it, and the pious pilgrims who resorted there to pay their vows. The portly prior of the convent would stand, with lofty and shining countenance, in the midst of these iron warriors, and declaim with resounding eloquence on the history of the sepulchre; but the humble brother would ever and anon sigh deeply, and, in low tones, utter some tale of suffering and outrage, at which his steel-clad hearers would grasp the hilts of their swords, and mutter between their clenched teeth prayers for another crusade."

The pious friars, having finished their mission to the king, and been treated with all due distinction, took their leave, and wended their way to Jaen, to visit the most catholic of queens. Isabella, whose heart was the seat of piety, received them as sacred men, invested with more than human dignity. During their residence at Jaen, they were continually in the royal presence; the respectable prior of the convent moved and melted the ladies of the court by his florid rhetoric; but his lowly companion was observed to have continual access to the royal ear. "That saintly and soft-spoken messenger," says Agapida, "received the reward of his humility; for the queen, moved by his frequent representations, made in all modesty and lowliness of spirit, granted a yearly sum in perpetuity of one thousand ducats in gold for the support of the monks of the convents of the Holy Sepulchre."\*

\* Mariana, lib. xxv. cap. 17.

† Abarca, Anales de Aragon, rey. xxx. cap. 3.

\* La Reyna dió á los frailes mil ducados de renta cada año para el sustento de los religiosos del Santo Sepulcro, que es la mejor limosna y sustento

Moreover, on the departure of these holy ambassadors, the excellent and most catholic queen delivered to them a veil devoutly embroidered with her own royal hands, to be placed over the Holy Sepulchre. A precious and inestimable present, which called forth a most eloquent tribute of thanks from the portly prior, but which brought tears into the eyes of his lowly companion.\*

#### CHAPTER LXXVII.

How Queen Isabella devised means to supply the army with provisions.

It has been the custom to laud the conduct and address of King Ferdinand in this most arduous and protracted war; but the sage Agapida is more disposed to give credit to the counsels and measures of the queen, who, he observes, though less ostensible in action, was in truth the very soul, the vital principle, of this great enterprise. While King Ferdinand was bustling in his camp, and making a glittering display with his gallant chivalry; she, surrounded by her saintly counsellors, in the episcopal palace of Jaen, was devising ways and means to keep the king and his army in existence. She had pledged herself to provide a supply of men and money, and provisions, until the city should be taken. The hardships of the siege caused a fearful waste of life; but the supply of men was the least difficult part of her undertaking. So beloved was the queen by the chivalry of Spain, that, on her calling on them for assistance, not a grandee or cavalier,

that yet lingered at home, but either repaired in person or sent forces to the camp; the ancient and warlike families vied with each other, in marshalling forth their vassals; and thus the besieged Moors beheld each day fresh troops arriving before their city, and new ensigns and pennons displayed, emblazoned with arms well known to the veteran warriors.

But the most arduous task was to keep up a regular supply of provisions. It was not the army alone that had to be supported, but also the captured towns and their garrisons; for the whole country round them had been ravaged, and the conquerors were in danger of starving in the midst of the land they had desolated. To transport what was daily required for such immense numbers was a gigantic undertaking, in a country where there was neither water-conveyance nor roads for carriages. Every thing had to be borne by beasts of burden, over rugged and broken paths of the mountains, and through dangerous defiles, exposed to the attacks and plunderings of the Moors.

The wary and calculating merchants accustomed to supply the army, shrunk from engaging, at their own risk, in so hazardous an undertaking. The queen therefore hired fourteen thousand beasts of burden, and ordered all the wheat and barley to be bought up in Andalusia, and in the domains of the knights of Santiago and Calatrava. She distributed the administration of these supplies among able and confidential persons. Some were employed to collect the grain, others to take it to the mills, others to superintend the grinding and delivery, and others to convey it to the camp. To every two hundred animals a muleteer was allotted, to take charge of them on the route. Thus great lines of convoys were in constant movement traversing the mountains to and fro, guarded by large bodies of troops, to defend them from hovering parties of the Moors. Not a single day's intermission was allowed; for the army depended upon the constant arrival of these supplies for daily food. The grain, when brought into the camp, was deposited in an immense granary, and sold to the army at a fixed price, which was never either raised or lowered.

que hasta nuestros dias ha quedado á estos religiosos de Jerusalem: para donde les dió la reyna un velo labrado por sus manos, para poner encima de la santa sepultura del Señor. Garibay, Comp. Hist., lib. xviii. cap. 36.

\* It is proper to mention the result of this mission of the two friars, and which the worthy Agapida has neglected to record. At a subsequent period, the catholic sovereigns sent the distinguished historian Pietro Martyr of Angleria, as ambassador to the Grand Soldan. That able man made such representations as were perfectly satisfactory to the oriental potentate. He also obtained from him the remission of many exactions and extortions heretofore practised upon Christian pilgrims visiting the Holy Sepulchre, which, it is presumed, had been gently, but cogently, detailed to the monarch by the lowly friar. Pietro Martyr wrote an account of his embassy to the Grand Soldan; a work greatly esteemed by the learned, and containing much curious information. It is entitled "De Legatione Babylonica."

Incredible were the expenses incurred in this business; but the queen had ghostly advisers, thoroughly versed in the art of getting at the resources of the country. Many worthy prelates opened the deep purses of the church, and furnished loans from the revenues of their dioceses and convents; and their pious contributions were eventually rewarded by Providence a hundredfold. Merchants and other wealthy individuals, confident of the punctual faith of the queen, advanced large sums on the security of her word: many noble families lent their plate without waiting to be asked. The queen, also, sold certain annual rents in inheritance, at great sacrifices, assigning the revenues of towns and cities for the payment. Finding all this insufficient to satisfy the enormous expenditure, she sent her gold and plate, and all her jewels to the cities of Valencia and Barcelona, where they were pledged for a great amount of money; which was immediately appropriated to keep up the supplies of the army.

Thus, through the wonderful activity, judgment, and enterprise of this heroic and magnanimous woman, a great host, encamped in the heart of a warlike country, accessible only over mountain roads, was maintained in continual abundance: nor was it merely supplied with the necessaries and comforts of life. The powerful escorts drew merchants and artificers from all parts, to repair, as if in caravans, to this great military market. In a little while the camp abounded with tradesmen and artists of all kinds, to administer to the luxury and ostentation of the youthful chivalry. Here might be seen cunning artificers in steel, and accomplished armourers, achieving those rare and sumptuous helmets and cuirasses richly gilt, inlaid, and embossed, in which the Spanish cavaliers delighted; saddlers, and harness-makers, and horse-milliners also, whose tents glittered with gorgeous housings and caparisons. The merchants spread forth their sumptuous silks, cloths, brocades, fine linen, and tapestry. The tents of the nobility were prodigally decorated with all kinds of the richest stuffs, and dazzled the eye with their magnificence: nor could the grave looks and grave speeches of King Ferdinand

prevent his youthful cavaliers from vying with each other in the splendour of their dresses and caparisons, on all occasions of parade and ceremony.

#### CHAPTER LXXVIII.

Of the disaster which befel the camp.

WHILE the Christian camp, thus gay and gorgeous, spread itself out like a holiday pageant before the walls of Baza; while a long line of beasts of burden, laden with provisions and luxuries, were seen descending the valley from morning till night, and pouring into the camp a continued stream of abundance, the unfortunate garrison found their resources rapidly wasting away, and famine already began to pinch the peaceful part of the community.

Cidi Yahye had acted with great spirit and valour, as long as there was any prospect of success; but he began to lose his usual fire and animation, and was observed to pace the walls of Baza with a pensive air, casting many a wistful look towards the Christian camp, and sinking into profound reveries and cogitations. The veteran alcaide, Mohammed ben Hassan, noticed these desponding moods, and endeavoured to rally the spirits of the prince. "The rainy season is at hand," would he cry: "the floods will soon pour down from the mountains; the rivers will overflow their banks, and inundate the valleys. The Christian king already begins to waver; he dares not linger and encounter such a season, in a plain cut up by canals and rivulets. A single wintry storm from our mountains would wash away his canvass city, and sweep off those gay pavilions, like wreaths of snow before the blast."

The Prince Cidi Yahye took heart at these words, and counted the days as they passed, until the stormy season should commence. As he watched the Christian camp, he beheld it one morning in universal commotion. There was an unusual sound of hammers in every part, as if some new engines of war were constructing. At length, to his astonishment, the walls and roofs of houses began to appear above the bulwarks. In a little while there were above a thousand edifices of wood and

plaster erected, covered with tiles, taken from the demolished towers of the orchards, and bearing pennons of various commanders and cavaliers; while the common soldiery constructed huts of clay and branches of trees, and thatched them with straw. Thus, to the dismay of the Moors, within four days the light tents and gay pavilions, which had whitened the hills and plains, passed away like summer clouds; and the unsubstantial camp assumed the solid appearance of a city laid out into streets and squares. In the centre rose a large edifice, which overlooked the whole, and the royal standard of Aragon and Castile, proudly floating above it, showed it to be the palace of the king.\*

Ferdinand had taken the sudden resolution thus to turn his camp into a city, partly to provide against the approaching season, and partly to convince the Moors of his fixed determination to continue the siege. In their haste to erect their dwellings, however, the Spanish cavaliers had not properly considered the nature of the climate. For the greater part of the year there scarcely falls a drop of rain on the thirsty soil of Andalusia: the ramblas, or dry channels of the torrents, remain deep and arid gashes and clefts in the sides of the mountains. The perennial streams shrink up to mere threads of water, which tinkling down the bottoms of the deep barrancas or ravines, scarcely feed and keep alive the rivers of the valleys. The rivers, almost lost in their wide and naked beds, seem like thirsty rills, winding in serpentine mazes through deserts of sand and stones; and so shallow and tranquil in their course, as to be forded in safety in almost every part. One autumnal tempest of rain, however, changes the whole face of nature. The clouds break in deluges among the vast congregation of mountains. The ramblas are suddenly filled with raging floods, the tinkling rivulets swell to thundering torrents, that come roaring down from the mountains, precipitating great masses of rocks in their career. The late meandering river spreads over its once naked bed, lashes its surges against the banks, and rushes,

\* Cura de Los Palacios. Pulgar, etc.

like a wide and foaming inundation, through the valley.

Scarcely had the Christians finished their slightly built edifices, when an autumnal tempest of this kind came scouring from the mountains. The camp was immediately overflowed. Many of the houses, undermined by the floods or beaten by the rain, crumbled away, and fell to the earth, burying man and beast beneath their ruins. Several valuable lives were lost, and great numbers of horses and other animals perished. To add to the distress and confusion of the camp, the daily supply of provisions suddenly ceased; for the rain had broken up the roads, and rendered the rivers impassable. A panic seized upon the army, for the cessation of a single day's supply produced a scarcity of bread and provender. Fortunately the rain was but transient. The torrents rushed by, and ceased; the rivers shrunk back again to their narrow channels; and the convoys, that had been detained upon their banks, arrived safely in the camp.

No sooner did Queen Isabella hear of this interruption of her supplies, than, with her usual vigilance and activity, she provided against its recurrence. She despatched six thousand foot-soldiers, under the command of experienced officers, to repair the roads, and to make causeways and bridges, for the distance of seven Spanish leagues. The troops, also, who had been stationed in the mountains by the king, to guard the defiles, made two paths, one for the convoys going to the camp, and the other for those returning, that they might not meet and impede each other. The edifices which had been demolished by the late floods, were rebuilt in a firmer manner, and precautions were taken to protect the camp from future inundations.

#### CHAPTER LXXIX.

Encounter between the Christians and Moors before Baza; and the devotion of the inhabitants to the defence of the city.

WHEN King Ferdinand beheld the ravage and confusion produced by a single autumnal storm, and bethought him of all the maladies to which a besieging camp

is exposed, in inclement seasons, he began to feel his compassion kindling for the suffering people of Baza, and an inclination to grant them more favourable terms. He sent, therefore, several messages to the alcaide, Mohammed ben Hassan, offering liberty of person and security of property for the inhabitants, and large rewards for himself, if he would surrender the city. The veteran Mohammed was not to be dazzled by the splendid offers of the monarch. He had received exaggerated accounts of the damage done to the Christian camp by the late storm, and of the sufferings and discontents of the army, in consequence of the transient interruption of supplies. He considered the overtures of Ferdinand as proofs of the desperate state of his affairs. "A little more patience," said the shrewd old warrior, "and we shall see this cloud of Christian locusts driven away before the winter storms. When they once turn their backs, it will be our lot to strike; and, with the help of Allah, the blow shall be decisive." He sent a firm though courteous refusal to the Christian monarch; and, in the mean time, animated his companions to sally forth, with more spirit than ever, to attack the Spanish outposts, and those labouring in the trenches. The consequence was a daily occurrence of the most daring and bloody skirmishes, that cost the lives of many of the bravest and most adventurous cavaliers of either army.

In one of these sallies, near three hundred horse and two thousand foot mounted the heights behind the city, to capture the Christians who were employed upon the works. They came by surprise upon a body of guards, esquires of the Count de Ureña; killed some, put the rest to flight, and pursued them down the mountain, until they came in sight of a small force under the Count de Tendilla and Gonsalvo of Cordova. The Moors came rushing down with such fury, that many of the men of the Count de Tendilla betook themselves to flight. The brave count considered it less dangerous to fight than to flee. Bracing his buckler, therefore, and grasping his trusty weapon, he stood his ground with his accustomed prowess. Gonsalvo of Cordova ranged himself by his side; and marshalling the troops

which remained with them, a valiant front was made to the Moors.

The infidels pressed them hard, and were gaining the advantage, when Alonso de Aguilar, hearing of the danger of his brother Gonsalvo, flew to his assistance, accompanied by the Count of Ureña and a body of their troops. A hot contest ensued, from cliff to cliff and glen to glen. The Moors were fewer in number; but they excelled in the dexterity and lightness requisite for these scrambling skirmishes. They were at length driven from their vantage-ground, and pursued by Alonso de Aguilar and his brother Gonsalvo to the very suburbs of the city; leaving many of the bravest of their men upon the field.

Such was one of innumerable rough encounters, which were daily taking place; in which many brave cavaliers were slain, without any apparent benefit to either party. The Moors, notwithstanding repeated defeats and losses, continued to sally forth daily with astonishing spirit and vigour; and the obstinacy of their defence seemed to increase with their sufferings.

The Prince Cidi Yahye was ever foremost in these sallies; but he grew daily more despairing of success. All the money in the military chest was expended, and there was no longer wherewithal to pay the hired troops. Still the veteran Mohammed ben Hassan undertook to provide for this emergency. Summoning the principal inhabitants, he represented the necessity of some exertion and sacrifice on their part, to maintain the defence of the city. "The enemy," said he, "dreads the approach of winter, and our perseverance drives him to despair. A little longer, and he will leave you in quiet enjoyment of your homes and families. But our troops must be paid, to keep them in good heart. Our money is exhausted, and all our supplies are cut off. It is impossible to continue our defence without your aid."

Upon this the citizens consulted together; and they collected all their vessels of gold and silver, and brought them to Mohammed ben Hassan. "Take these," said they, "and coin them, or sell them, or pledge them for money, wherewith to pay the troops." The

women of Baza, also, were seized with generous emulation. "Shall we deck ourselves with gorgeous apparel," said they, "when our country is desolate, and its defenders in want of bread?" So they took their collars, and bracelets, and anklets, and other ornaments of gold, and all their jewels, and placed them in the hands of the veteran alcaide. "Take these spoils of our vanity," said they; "and let them contribute to the defence of our homes and families. If Baza be delivered, we need no jewels to grace our rejoicing; and if Baza falls, of what avail are ornaments to the captive?"

By these contributions was Mohammed enabled to pay the soldiery, and to carry on the defence of the city with unabated spirit. Tidings were speedily conveyed to King Ferdinand of this generous devotion on the part of the people of Baza, and the hopes which the Moorish commanders gave them, that the Christian army would soon abandon the siege in despair. "They shall have a convincing proof of the fallacy of such hopes," said the politic monarch. So he wrote forthwith to Queen Isabella, praying her to come to the camp in state, with all her train and retinue; and publicly to take up her residence there for the winter. By these means, the Moors would be convinced of the settled determination of the sovereigns to persist in the siege until the city should surrender; and he trusted they would be brought to speedy capitulation.

#### CHAPTER LXXX.

How Queen Isabella arrives at the camp; and the consequences of her arrival.

MOHAMMED BEN HASSAN still encouraged his companions, with hopes that the royal army would soon relinquish the siege; when they heard one day shouts of joy from the Christian camp, and thundering salvos of artillery. Word was brought at the same time, from the sentinels on the watchtowers, that a Christian army was approaching down the valley. Mohammed and his fellow-commanders ascended one of the highest towers of the walls, and beheld in truth a numerous force, in shining array, descending the hills; and heard the distant

clangour of the trumpets, and the faint swell of the triumphant music. As the host drew nearer, they descried a stately dame, magnificently attired, whom they soon discovered to be the queen. She was riding on a mule; the sumptuous trappings of which were resplendent with gold, and reached to the ground. On her right hand rode her daughter, the Princess Isabella, equally splendid in her array: on her left, the venerable grand cardinal of Spain. A noble train of ladies and cavaliers followed her, together with pages and esquires, and a numerous guard of hidalgos of high rank, arrayed in superb armour. When the veteran Mohammed ben Hassan beheld that this was the Queen Isabella, arriving in state to take up her residence in the camp, his heart failed him. He shook his head mournfully, and, turning to his captains, "Cavaliers," said he, "the fate of Baza is decided!"

The Moorish commanders remained gazing, with a mingled feeling of grief and admiration, at this magnificent pageant, which foreboded the fall of their city. Some of the troops would have sallied forth in one of their desperate skirmishes, to attack the royal guard; but the Prince Cidi Yahye forbade them: nor would he allow any artillery to be discharged, or any molestation or insult to be offered: for the character of Isabella was venerated even by the Moors; and most of the commanders possessed that high and chivalrous courtesy which belongs to heroic spirits; for they were among the noblest and bravest cavaliers of the Moorish nation.

The inhabitants of Baza, when they learned, that the Christian queen was approaching the camp, eagerly sought every eminence that could command a view of the plain; and every battlement, and tower, and mosque, was covered with turbaned heads, gazing at the glorious spectacle. They beheld King Ferdinand issue forth in royal state, attended by the Marquis of Cadiz, the Master of Santiago, the Duke of Alva, the Admiral of Castile, and many other nobles of renown; while the whole chivalry of the camp, sumptuously arrayed, followed in his train, and the populace rent the air with acclamations at the sight of the patriot queen.



When the sovereigns had met and embraced each other, the two hosts mingled together, and entered the camp in martial pomp; and the eyes of the infidel beholders were dazzled by the flash of armour, the splendour of golden caparisons, the gorgeous display of silks, and brocades, and velvets, of tossing plumes and fluttering banners. There was at the same time a triumphant sound of drums and trumpets, clarions and sackbuts, mingled with the sweet melody of the dulcimer, which came swelling in bursts of harmony, that seemed to rise up to the heavens.\*

“On the arrival of the queen,” says the historian Hernando del Pulgar, who was present at the time, “it was marvellous to behold how, all at once, the rigour and turbulence of war were softened, and the storm of passion sunk into a calm. The sword was sheathed, the crossbow no longer launched its deadly shafts, and the artillery, which had hitherto kept up an incessant uproar, now ceased its thundering. On both sides there was still a vigilant guard kept up, the sentinels bristled the walls of Baza with their lances, and the guards patrolled the Christian camp; but there was no sallying forth to skirmish, nor any wanton violence nor carnage.”

Prince Cidi Yahye saw, by the arrival of the queen, that the Christians were determined to continue the siege; and he knew that the city would have to capitulate. He had been prodigal of the lives of his soldiers, as long as he thought a military good was to be gained by the sacrifice; but he was sparing of their blood in a hopeless cause, and wary of exasperating the enemy by an obstinate, hopeless defence.

At the request of Prince Cidi Yahye, a parley was granted, and the master commander of Leon, Don Gutiere de Cardenas, was appointed to confer with the valiant alcaide Mohammed. They met at an appointed place, within view of both camp and city, honourably attended by cavaliers of either army. Their meeting was highly courteous; for they had learned from rough encounters in the field, to admire each other's prowess.

The commander of Leon, in an earnest speech, pointed out the hopelessness of any further defence, and warned Mohammed of the ills which Malaga had incurred by its obstinacy. “I promise, in the name of my sovereign,” said he, “that, if you surrender immediately, the inhabitants shall be treated as subjects, and protected in property, liberty, and religion. If you refuse, you, who are now renowned as an able and judicious commander, will be chargeable with the confiscations, captivities, and deaths, which may be suffered by the people of Baza.”

The commander ceased, and Mohammed returned to the city, to consult with his companions. It was evident, that all further resistance was hopeless; but the Moorish commanders felt, that a cloud might rest upon their names should they, of their own discretion, surrender so important a place, without its having sustained an assault. Prince Cidi Yahye requested permission, therefore, to send an envoy to Guadix, with a letter to the old monarch, El Zagal, treating of the surrender. The request was granted; a safe conduct assured to the envoy, and the veteran alcaide, Mohammed ben Hassan, departed upon this momentous mission.

## CHAPTER LXXXI.

### Surrender of Baza.

THE old warrior king was seated in an inner chamber of the castle of Guadix, much cast down in spirit, and ruminating on his gloomy fortunes, when an envoy from Baza was announced, and the veteran alcaide Mohammed stood before him. El Zagal saw disastrous tidings written in his countenance. “How fares it with Baza?” said he, summoning up his spirits to the question. “Let this inform thee,” replied Mohammed; and he delivered into his hands the letter from the Prince Cidi Yahye. This letter spoke of the desperate situation of Baza, the impossibility of holding out longer, without assistance from El Zagal, and the favourable terms offered by the Castilian sovereigns. Had it been written by any other person, El Zagal might have received it with distrust and indig-

\*Cura de Los Palacios.

nation; but he confided in Cidi Yahye as in a second self; and the words of his letter sunk deep in his heart. When he had finished reading it, he sighed deeply, and remained for some time lost in thought, with his head drooping upon his bosom. Recovering himself at length, he called together the alfaquis, and the old men of Guadix; and, communicating the tidings from Baza, solicited their advice. It was a sign of sore trouble of mind and dejection of heart, when El Zagal sought the advice of others; but his fierce courage was tamed, for he saw the end of his power approaching. The alfaquis and the old men did but increase the distraction of his mind by a variety of counsels, none of which appeared of any avail; for, unless Baza were succoured, it was impossible that it should hold out, and every attempt to succour it had proved ineffectual.

El Zagal dismissed his council in despair, and summoned the veteran Mohammed before him. "Allah achbar!" exclaimed he, "God is great; there is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet! Return to my cousin, Cidi Yahye; tell him, it is out of my power to aid him; he must do as seems to him for the best. The people of Baza have performed deeds worthy of immortal fame: I cannot ask them to encounter further ills and perils, in maintaining a hopeless defence."

The reply of El Zagal determined the fate of the city. Cidi Yahye and his fellow-commanders immediately capitulated, and were granted the most favourable terms. The cavaliers and soldiers, who had come from other parts to the defence of the place, were permitted to depart freely, with their arms, horses and effects. The inhabitants had their choice, either to depart with their property, or to dwell in the suburbs, in the enjoyment of their religion and laws; taking an oath of fealty to the sovereigns, and paying the same tribute they had paid to the Moorish kings. The city and citadel were to be delivered up in six days; within which period the inhabitants were to remove all their effects; and, in the mean time, they were to place as hostages, fifteen Moorish youths, sons of the principal inhabitants, in the hands of the

commander of Leon. When Cidi Yahye and the alcajde Mohammed came to deliver up the hostages, among whom were the sons of the latter, they paid homage to the king and queen; who received them with the utmost courtesy and kindness, and ordered magnificent presents to be given to them, and likewise to the other Moorish cavaliers; consisting of money, robes, horses, and other things of great value.

The Prince Cidi Yahye was so captivated by the grace, the dignity, and generosity of Isabella, and the princely courtesy of Ferdinand, that he vowed never again to draw his sword against such magnanimous sovereigns.

The queen, charmed with his gallant bearing and his animated profession of devotion, assured him, that having him on her side, she already considered the war terminated, which had desolated the kingdom of Granada.

Mighty and irresistible are words of praise from the lips of sovereigns. Cidi Yahye was entirely subdued by this fair speech from the illustrious Isabella. His heart burned with a sudden flame of loyalty towards the sovereigns. He begged to be enrolled amongst the most devoted of their subjects; and in the fervour of his sudden zeal, engaged, not merely to dedicate his sword to their service, but to exert all his influence, which was great, in persuading his cousin, Muley Abdalla el Zagal, to surrender the cities of Guadix and Almeria, and to give up all further hostilities. Nay, so powerful was the effect produced upon his mind by his conversations with the sovereigns, that it extended even to his religion; for he became immediately enlightened as to the heathenish abominations of the vile sect of Mahomet, and struck with the truths of Christianity, as illustrated by such powerful monarchs. He consented, therefore, to be baptized, and to be gathered into the fold of the church. The pious Agapida indulges in a triumphant strain of exultation, on the sudden and surprising conversion of this princely infidel. He considers it one of the greatest achievements of the catholic sovereigns; and, indeed, one of the marvellous occurrences of this holy war. "But it is given to saints and pious

monarchs," says he, "to work miracles in the cause of the faith; and such did the most catholic Ferdinand in the conversion of the Prince Cidi Yahye."

Some of the Arabian writers have sought to lessen the wonder of this miracle, by alluding to great revenues, granted to the prince and his heirs by the Castilian monarchs; together with a territory in Marchena, with towns, lands, and vassals. "But in this," says Agapida, "we only see a wise precaution of King Ferdinand, to clinch and secure the conversion of his proselyte." The policy of the catholic monarch was at all times equal to his piety. Instead also of vaunting of this great conversion, and making a public parade of the entry of the prince into the Church, King Ferdinand ordered that the baptism should be performed in private, and kept a profound secret. He feared, that Cidi Yahye might otherwise be denounced as an apostate, and abhorred and abandoned by the Moors; and thus his influence destroyed in bringing the war to a speedy termination.\*

The veteran Mohammed ben Hassan was likewise won by the magnanimity and munificence of the Castilian sovereigns, and entreated to be received into their service; and his example was followed by many other Moorish cavaliers, whose services were graciously accepted and munificently rewarded.

Thus after a siege of six months and twenty days, the city of Baza surrendered, on the 4th of December, 1489, the festival of the glorious Santa Barbara; who is said, in the catholic calendar, to preside over thunder and lightning, fire and gunpowder, and all kind of combustible explosions. The king and queen made their solemn and triumphal entry on the following day; and the public joy was heightened by the sight of upwards of five hundred Christian captives, men, women, and children, delivered from the Moorish dungeons.

The loss of the Christians in this siege, amounted to twenty thousand men; of whom seventeen thousand died of disease, and not a few of mere cold; "a kind of death," says the historian Mariana, "pe-

cularly uncomfortable. But," adds the venerable Jesuit, "as these latter were chiefly people of ignoble rank, baggage-carriers and such like, the loss was not of great importance."

The surrender of Baza was followed by that of Almuñecar, Tavernas, and most of the fortresses of the Alpuxarra mountains. The inhabitants hoped, by prompt and voluntary submission, to secure equally favourable terms with those granted to the captured city; and the alcajdes, to receive similar rewards to those lavished on its commanders; nor were either of them disappointed. The inhabitants were permitted to remain as Mudixares, in the quiet enjoyment of their property and religion; and as to the alcajdes, when they came to the camp to render up their charges, they were received by Ferdinand with distinguished favour, and rewarded with presents of money, in proportion to the importance of the places they had commanded. Care was taken by the politic monarch, however, not to wound their pride, or shock their delicacy: so these sums were paid, under colour of arrears due to them, for their services to the former government. Ferdinand had conquered by dint of sword, in the earlier part of the war; but he found gold as potent as steel in this campaign of Baza.

With several of these mercenary chieftains came one, named Ali Aben Fahar; a seasoned warrior, who had held many important commands. He was a Moor of a lofty, stern, and melancholy aspect; and stood silent and apart, while his companions surrendered their several fortresses, and retired laden with treasure. When it came to his turn to speak, he addressed the sovereigns with the frankness of a soldier, but with a tone of dejection and despair. "I am a Moor," said he, "and of Moorish lineage; and am alcajde of the fair towns and castles of Purchena and Paterna. These were intrusted to me to defend; but those that should have stood by me, have lost all strength and courage, and seek only for security. These fortresses, therefore, most potent sovereigns, are yours, whenever you will send to take possession of them."

Large sums of money in gold were im-

\* Conde, tom. iii. cap. 40.

mediately ordered by Ferdinand to be delivered to the alcaide, as a recompence for so important a surrender. The Moor, however, put back the gift with a firm and haughty demeanour. "I come not," said he, "to sell what is not mine, but to yield what fortune has made yours; and your majesties may rest assured, that, had I been properly seconded, death would have been the price at which I would have sold my fortresses, and not the gold you offer me."

The Castilian monarchs were struck with the lofty and loyal spirit of the Moor, and desired to engage a man of such fidelity in their service; but the proud Moslem could not be induced to serve the enemies of his nation and his faith.

"Is there nothing, then," said Queen Isabella, "that we can do to gratify thee, and to prove to thee our regard?" "Yes," replied the Moor; "I have left behind me, in the towns and valleys which I have surrendered, many of my unhappy countrymen, with their wives and children, who cannot tear themselves from their native abodes. Give me your royal word, that they shall be protected in the peaceable enjoyment of their religion and their homes." "We promise it," said Isabella, "they shall dwell in peace and security. But for thyself; what dost thou ask for thyself?" "Nothing," replied Ali, "but permission to pass unmolested, with my horses and effects, into Africa."

The Castilian monarchs would fain have forced upon him gold and silver, and superb horses richly caparisoned; not as rewards, but as marks of personal esteem: but Ali Ben Fahar declined all presents and distinctions, as if he thought it criminal to flourish individually, during a time of public distress; and disdained all prosperity that seemed to grow out of the ruins of his country.

Having received a royal passport, he gathered together his horses and servants, his armour and weapons, and all his warlike effects, bade adieu to his weeping countrymen, with a brow stamped with anguish, but without shedding a tear, and, mounting his Barbary steed, turned his back upon the delightful valleys of his conquered country; departing on his

lonely way, to seek a soldier's fortune amidst the burning sands of Africa.\*

#### CHAPTER LXXXII.

Submission of El Zagal to the Castilian Sovereigns.

EVIL tidings never fail by the way through lack of messengers. They are wafted on the wings of the wind; and it is as if the very birds of the air would bear them to the ear of the unfortunate. The old king, El Zagal, buried himself in the recesses of his castle, to hide himself from the light of day, which no longer shone prosperously upon him; but every hour brought missives, thundering at the gate with the tale of some new disaster. Fortress after fortress had laid its keys at the feet of the Christian sovereigns. Strip by strip of warrior mountain and green fruitful valley was torn from his domains, and added to the territories of the conquerors. Scarcely a remnant remained to him, except a tract of the Alpujarras, and the noble cities of Guadix and Almeria. No one any longer stood in awe of the fierce old monarch: the terror of his frown had declined with his power. He had arrived at that stage of adversity, when a man's friends feel emboldened to tell him hard truths, and to give him unpalatable advice, and when his spirit is bowed down to listen quietly, if not meekly.

El Zagal was seated on his divan, his whole spirit absorbed in rumination on the transitory nature of human glory, when his kinsman and brother-in-law, the Prince Cidi Yahye, was announced. That illustrious convert to the true faith, and the interest of the conquerors of his country, hastened to Guadix with all the fervour of a new proselyte, eager to prove his zeal in the service of Heaven and the Castilian sovereigns, by persuading the old monarch to abjure his faith, and surrender his possessions.

Cidi Yahye still bore the guise of a Moslem; for his conversion was as yet a secret. The stern heart of El Zagal softened at beholding the face of a kinsman, in his hour of adversity. He folded his cousin to his bosom, and gave thanks to

\* Pulgar. Garibay, lib. xl. cap. 40. Cura de Los Palacios.

Allah, that, amidst all his troubles he had still a friend and counsellor, on whom he might rely. Cidi Yahye soon entered upon the real purpose of his mission. He represented to El Zagal the desperate state of affairs, and the irremediable decline of Moorish power in the kingdom of Granada. "Fate," said he, "is against our arms; our ruin is written in the heavens: remember the prediction of the astrologers, at the birth of your nephew Boabdil. We had hoped that their prediction was accomplished by his capture at Lucena; but it is now evident, that the stars portended, not a temporary and passing reverse of the kingdom, but a final overthrow. The constant succession of disasters, which have attended our efforts, show, that the sceptre of Granada is doomed to pass into the hands of the Christian monarchs. Such," concluded the prince, emphatically, and with a pious reverence, "such is the almighty will of God!"

El Zagal listened to these words in mute attention, without so much as moving a muscle of his face, or winking an eyelid. When the prince had concluded, he remained for a long time silent and pensive. At length, heaving a profound sigh from the very bottom of his heart, "Alahuma subahana hu!" exclaimed he, "the will of God be done! Yes, my cousin, it is but too evident that such is the will of Allah; and what he wills, he fails not to accomplish. Had he not decreed the fall of Granada, this arm, and this cimeter, would have maintained it."\*

"What then remains," said Cidi Yahye, "but to draw the most advantage from the wreck of empire that is left you? To persist in a war, is to bring complete desolation upon the land, and ruin and death upon its faithful inhabitants. Are you disposed to yield up your remaining towns to your nephew, El Chico, that they may augment his power, and derive protection from his alliance with the Christian sovereigns?"

The eye of El Zagal flashed fire at this suggestion. He grasped the hilt of his cimeter, and gnashed his teeth in fury. "Never," cried he, "will I make terms with that recreant and slave!

Sooner would I see the banners of the Christian monarchs floating above my walls, than they should add to the possessions of the vassal Boabdil."

Cidi Yahye immediately seized upon this idea, and urged El Zagal to make a frank and entire surrender. "Trust," said he, "to the magnanimity of the Castilian sovereigns. They will doubtless grant you high and honourable terms. It is better to yield to them as friends, what they must infallibly and before long wrest from you as enemies: for such, my cousin, is the almighty will of God!" "Alahuma subahana hu!" repeated El Zagal, "the will of God be done!" So the old monarch bowed his haughty neck, and agreed to surrender his territories to the enemies of his faith, rather than suffer them to augment the Moslem power, under the sway of his nephew.

Cidi Yahye now returned to Baza, empowered by El Zagal to treat, on his behalf, with the Christian sovereigns. The prince felt a species of exultation, as he expatiated on the rich relics of empire which he was authorized to cede. There was a great part of that line of mountains, which extends from the metropolis to the Mediterranean Sea, with its series of beautiful green valleys, like precious emeralds set in a golden chain. Above all these were Guadix and Almeria, two of the most inestimable jewels in the crown of Granada.

In return for these possessions, and for the claim of El Zagal to the rest of the kingdom, the sovereigns received him into their friendship and alliance, and gave him, in perpetual inheritance, the territory of Alhamin, in the Alpujarras, with half of the salinas, or salt-pits, of Malcha. He was to enjoy the title of King of Andaraxa, with two thousand Mudixares, or conquered Moors, for subjects; and his revenues were to be made up to the sum of four millions of maravedis: all these he was to hold as a vassal of the Castilian crown.

These arrangements being made, Cidi Yahye returned with them to Muley Abdalla; and it was concerted, that the ceremony of surrender and homage should take place at the city of Almeria.

\* Conde, t. iii. c. 40.

\* Cura de Los Palacios, cap. 94.

On the 17th of December, King Ferdinand departed from Baza, with a part of his army, and the queen soon followed with the remainder. Ferdinand passed in triumph by several of the newly-acquired towns, exulting in these trophies of his policy rather than his valour. As he drew near to Almeria, the Moorish king came forth to meet him, accompanied by the Prince Cidi Yahye, and a number of the principal inhabitants on horseback. The fierce brow of El Zagal was clouded with a kind of forced humility; but there was an impatient curl of the lip, with now and then a swelling of the bosom, and an indignant breathing from the distended nostril. It was evident he considered himself conquered, not by the power of man, but by the hand of heaven; and while he bowed to the decrees of fate, it galled his proud spirit to have to humble himself before its mortal agent. As he approached the Christian king, he alighted from his horse, and advanced to kiss his hand, in token of homage. Ferdinand, however, respected the royal title which the Moor had held; and would not permit the ceremony; but, bending from his saddle, graciously embraced him, and requested him to remount his steed.\* Several courteous speeches passed between them, and the fortress and city of Almeria, and all the remaining territories of El Zagal, were delivered up in form. When all was accomplished, the old warrior Moor retired to the mountains, with a handful of adherents, to seek his petty territory of Andaraxa, to bury his humiliation from the world, and to console himself with the shadowy title of a king.

#### CHAPTER LXXXIII.

Events at Granada subsequent to the submission of El Zagal.

Who can tell when to rejoice in this fluctuating world? Every wave of prosperity has its reacting surge, and we are often overwhelmed by the very billow on which we thought to be wafted into the haven of our hopes. When Jusef Aben Commixa, the vizier of Boabdil, surnamed El Chico, entered the royal sa-

loon of the Alhambra, and announced the capitulation of El Zagal, the heart of the youthful monarch leaped for joy. His great wish was accomplished; his uncle was defeated and dethroned; and he reigned without a rival, sole monarch of Granada. At length he was about to enjoy the fruits of his humiliation and vassalage. He beheld his throne fortified by the friendship and alliance of the Castilian monarch; there could be no question, therefore, of its stability. "Allah achbar!" exclaimed he, "God is great! Rejoice with me, O Jusef, the stars have ceased their persecution! Henceforth let no man call me El Zogoybi!"

In the first moment of his exultation, Boabdil would have ordered public rejoicings; but the shrewd Jusef shook his head. "The tempest has ceased," said he, "from one point of the heavens, but it may begin to rage from another. A troubled sea is beneath us, and we are surrounded by rocks and quicksands: let my lord the king defer rejoicings until all has settled into a calm." El Chico, however, could not remain tranquil in this day of exultation. He ordered his steed to be sumptuously caparisoned, and issuing out of the gate of the Alhambra, descended with a glittering retinue along the avenue of trees and fountains into the city, to receive the acclamations of the populace. As he entered the great square of the vivarrambla, he beheld crowds of people in violent agitation; but, as he approached, what was his surprise to hear groans, and murmurs, and bursts of execration! The tidings had spread through Granada, that Muley Abdalla el Zagal had been driven to capitulate, and that all his territories had fallen into the hands of the Christians. No one had inquired into the particulars, but all Granada had been thrown into a ferment of grief and indignation. In the heat of the moment, old Muley was extolled to the skies as a patriot prince, who had fought to the last for the salvation of his country; as a mirror of monarchs, scorning to compromise the dignity of his crown by any act of vassalage. Boabdil, on the contrary, had looked on exultingly at the hopeless yet heroic struggle of his uncle; he had rejoiced in the defeat of the faithful, and the triumph of

\* Cura de Los Palacois, cap. 93.

unbelievers. He had aided in the dismemberment and downfall of the empire. When they beheld him riding forth in gorgeous state, in what they considered a day of humiliation for all true Mōslems, they could not contain their rage, and, amidst the clamours that prevailed, Boabdil more than once heard his name coupled with the epithets of traitor and renegado.

Shocked and discomfited, the youthful monarch returned in confusion to the Alhambra. He shut himself up within its innermost courts, and remained a kind of voluntary prisoner, until the first burst of popular feeling should subside. He trusted that it would soon pass away; that the people would be too sensible of the sweets of peace to repine at the price at which it was obtained; at any rate, he trusted to the strong friendship of the Christian sovereigns to secure him even against the factions of his subjects.

The first missives from the politic Ferdinand showed Boabdil the value of his friendship.

The catholic monarch reminded him of a treaty which he had made, when captured in the city of Loxa. By this he had engaged, that, in case the catholic sovereigns should capture the cities of Guadix, Baza, and Almeria, he would surrender Granada into their hands within a limited time, and accept in exchange certain Moorish towns, to be held by him as their vassal. Ferdinand now informed him that Guadix, Baza, and Almeria, had fallen; he called upon him, therefore, to fulfil his engagement. If the unfortunate Boabdil had possessed the will, he had not the power, to comply with this demand. He was shut up in the Alhambra, while a tempest of popular fury raged without. Granada was thronged by refugees from the captured towns, many of them disbanded soldiers; others, broken-down citizens, rendered fierce and desperate by ruin: all railed at Boabdil as the real cause of their misfortunes. How was he to venture forth in such a storm? above all, how was he to talk to such men of surrender? In his reply to Ferdinand, he represented the difficulties of his situation; and that, so far from having control over his sub-

jects, his very life was in danger from their turbulence. He entreated the king, therefore, to rest satisfied for the present with his recent conquests, promising him that should he be able to regain full empire over his capital and its inhabitants, it would be but to rule over them as vassal to the Castilian crown.

Ferdinand was not to be satisfied with such a reply. The time was come to bring his game of policy to a close, and to consummate his conquest, by seating himself on the throne of the Alhambra. Professing to consider Boabdil as a faithless ally, who had broken his plighted word, he discarded him from his friendship, and addressed a second letter, not to that monarch, but to the commanders and council of the city. He demanded a complete surrender of the place, with all the arms in the possession either of the citizens, or of others who had recently taken refuge within its walls. If the inhabitants should comply with this summons, he promised them the indulgent terms which had been granted to Baza, Guadix, and Almeria: if they should refuse, he threatened them with the fate of Malaga.\*

The message of the catholic monarch produced the greatest commotion in the city. The inhabitants of the alacercia, that busy hive of traffic, and all others who had tasted the sweets of gainful commerce during the late cessation of hostilities, were for securing their golden advantages by timely submission: others, who had wives and children, looked on them with tenderness and solicitude, and dreaded, by resistance, to bring upon them the horrors of slavery. But, on the other hand, Granada was crowded with men from all parts, ruined by the war, exasperated by their sufferings, and eager only for revenge; with others, who had been reared amidst hostilities, who had lived by the sword, and whom a return of peace would leave without home or hope. There were others, too, no less fiery and warlike in their disposition, but animated by a loftier spirit: valiant and haughty cavaliers of the old chivalrous lineages, who had inherited a deadly hatred to the Christians from a long line

\* Cura de Los Palacios, cap. 96.

of warrior ancestors, and to whom the idea was worse than death, that Granada, illustrious Granada, for ages the seat of Moorish grandeur and delight, should become the abode of unbelievers. Among these cavaliers, the most eminent was Muza ben Abil Gazan. He was of royal lineage, of a proud and generous nature, and a form combining manly strength and beauty. None could excel him in the management of the horse, and dexterous use of all kinds of weapons. His gracefulness and skill in the tourney was the theme of praise among the Moorish dames; and his prowess in the field had made him the terror of the enemy. He had long repined at the timid policy of Boabdil, and had endeavoured to counteract its enervating effects, and to keep alive the martial spirit of Granada. For this reason, he had promoted jousts, and tiltings with the reed, and all those other public games which bear the semblance of war. He endeavoured, also, to inculcate into his companions in arms those high chivalrous sentiments, which lead to valiant and magnanimous deeds, but which are apt to decline with the independence of a nation. The generous efforts of Muza had been in a great measure successful: he was the idol of the youthful cavaliers; they regarded him as a mirror of chivalry, and endeavoured to imitate his lofty and heroic virtues.

When Muza heard the demand of Ferdinand, that they should deliver up their arms, his eye flashed fire. "Does the Christian king think that we are old men," said he, "and that staffs will suffice us? or that we are women, and can be contented with distaffs? Let him know, that a Moor is born to the spear and the cimeter; to career the steed, bend the bow, and launch the javelin: deprive him of these, and you deprive him of his nature. If the Christian king desires our arms, let him come and win them; but let him win them dearly. For my part, sweeter were a grave beneath the walls of Granada, on a spot I have died to defend, than the richest couch within her palaces, earned by submission to the unbeliever."

The words of Muza were received with enthusiastic shouts by the warlike part of the populace. Granada once

more awoke as a warrior shaking off a disgraceful lethargy. The commanders and council partook of the public excitement, and despatched a reply to the Christian sovereigns, declaring, that they would suffer death rather than surrender their city.

#### CHAPTER LXXXIV.

How King Ferdinand turned his hostilities against the city of Granada.

WHEN King Ferdinand received the defiance of the Moors, he made preparations for bitter hostilities. The winter season did not admit of an immediate campaign: he contented himself, therefore, with throwing strong garrisons into all his towns and fortresses in the neighbourhood of Granada, and gave the command of all the frontier of Jaen to Inigo Lopez de Mendoza, Count of Tendilla, who had shown such consummate vigilance and address in maintaining the dangerous post of Alhama. This renowned veteran established his headquarters in the mountain city of Alcala la Real, within eight leagues of the city of Granada, and commanding the most important passes of that rugged frontier.

In the mean time, the city of Granada resounded with the stir of war. The chivalry of the nation had again control of its councils; and the populace, having once more resumed their weapons, were anxious to wipe out the disgrace of their late passive submission, by signal and daring exploits.

Muza ben Abil Gazan was the soul of action. He commanded the cavalry, which he had disciplined with uncommon skill. He was surrounded by the noblest youth of Granada, who had caught his own generous and martial fire, and panted for the field; while the common soldiers, devoted to his person, were ready to follow him in the most desperate enterprises. He did not allow their courage to cool for want of action. The gates of Granada once more poured forth legions of light scouring cavalry, which skimmed the country up to the very gates of the Christian fortresses; sweeping off flocks and herds. The name of Muza became formidable throughout the frontier. He had many encounters with



the enemy, in the rough passes of the mountains; in which the superior lightness and dexterity of his cavalry gave him the advantage. The sight of his glistening legion, returning across the vega with long cavalgadas of booty, was hailed by the Moors as a revival of their ancient triumphs; but when they beheld Christian banners, borne into their gates as trophies, the exultation of the light-minded populace was beyond all bounds. The winter passed away, the spring advanced; yet Ferdinand delayed to take the field. He knew the city of Granada to be too strong and populous to be taken by assault, and too full of provisions to be speedily reduced by siege. "We must have patience and perseverance," said the politic monarch. "By ravaging the country this year, we shall produce a scarcity the next; and then the city may be invested with effect."

An interval of peace, aided by the quick vegetation of a prolific soil and happy climate, had restored the vega to all its luxuriance and beauty. The green pastures on the borders of the Xenil were covered with flocks and herds. The blooming orchards gave promise of abundant fruit; and the open plain was waving with ripening corn. The time was at hand to put in the sickle and reap the golden harvest, when, suddenly, a torrent of war came sweeping down from the mountains; and Ferdinand, with an army of five thousand horse and twenty thousand foot, appeared before the walls of Granada. He had left the queen and princess at the fortress of Moclin; and came, attended by the Duke of Medina Sidonia, the Marquis of Cadiz, the Marquis de Villena, the Counts of Ureña and Cabras, Don Alonso de Aguilar, and other renowned cavaliers. On this occasion King Ferdinand, for the first time, led his son, Prince Juan, into the field; and bestowed upon him the dignity of knighthood. As if to stimulate him to grand achievements, the ceremony took place on the banks of the grand canal, almost beneath the embattled walls of that warlike city, the object of such daring enterprises; and in the midst of that famous vega, which had been the field of so many chivalrous exploits. High above them shone resplendent the

red towers of the Alhambra, rising from amidst delicious groves, with the standard of Mahomet waving defiance to the Christian arms.

The Duke of Medina Sidonia, and the valiant Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz, were sponsors; and all the chivalry of the camp were assembled on the occasion. The prince, after he had been knighted, bestowed the same honour on several youthful cavaliers of high rank, just entering, like himself, on the career of arms.

Ferdinand did not loiter in carrying his desolating plans into execution. He detached parties in every direction to scour the country. Villages were sacked, burnt and destroyed; and the lovely vega once more was laid waste with fire and sword. The ravage was carried so close to Granada, that the city was wrapped in the smoke of its hamlets and gardens. The dismal cloud rolled up the hill, and hung about the towers of the Alhambra; where the unfortunate Boabdil still remained, shut up from the indignation of his subjects. The hapless monarch smote his breast, as he looked down from his mountain palace on the desolation effected by his late ally. He dared not even show himself in arms among the populace; for they cursed him, as the cause of the miseries brought anew to their doors. The Moors, however, did not suffer the Christians to carry on their ravages as unmolested as in former years. Muza incited them to incessant sallies. He divided his cavalry into small squadrons, each led by a daring commander. They were taught to hover round the Christian camp; to harass it from various and opposite quarters, cutting off convoys and straggling detachments; to waylay the army in its ravaging expeditions, lurking among rocks and passes of the mountains, or in hollows and thickets of the plain; and practising a thousand stratagems and surprises.

The Christian army had one day spread itself out, rather unguardedly, in its foraging about the vega. As the troops commanded by the Marquis de Villena approached the skirts of the mountains, they beheld a number of Moorish peasants, hastily driving a herd

of cattle into a narrow glen. The soldiers, eager for booty, pressed in pursuit of them. Scarcely had they entered the glen, when shouts arose from every side, and they were furiously attacked by an ambuscade of horse and foot. Some of the Christians took to flight; others stood their ground, and fought valiantly. The Moors had the vantage ground. Some showered darts and arrows from the clefts of the rocks; others fought hand to hand, on the plain; while their cavalry, rapid as lightning in their movements, carried havoc into the midst of the Christian forces. The Marquis de Villena, with his brother, Don Alonso de Pacheco, at the first onset of the Moors, spurred into the hottest of the fight. They had scarce entered, when Don Alonso was struck lifeless from his horse, before the eyes of his brother. Estevan de Suzon, a gallant captain, fell, fighting bravely by the side of the marquis; who remained with his chamberlain Solier, and a handful of knights, surrounded by the enemy. Several cavaliers, from other parts of the army, hastened to their assistance; when King Ferdinand, seeing that the Moors had the vantage ground, and that the Christians were suffering severely, gave signal for retreat. The marquis obeyed slowly and reluctantly; for his heart was full of grief and rage at the death of his brother. As he was retiring, he beheld his faithful chamberlain, Solier, defending himself bravely against six Moors. The marquis turned, and rushed to his rescue. He killed two of the enemy with his own hand, and put the rest to flight. One of the Moors, however, in retreating, rose in his stirrups, and, hurling his lance at the marquis, wounded him in the right arm, and crippled him for life.

In consequence of this wound, the marquis was ever after obliged to write his signature with his left hand, though capable of managing his lance with his right. The queen demanded one day of him, why he had adventured his life for that of a domestic. "Does not your majesty think," replied he, "that I ought to risk one life for him, who would have adventured three for me, had he possessed them?" The queen

was charmed with the magnanimity of the reply; and often quoted the marquis, as setting an heroic example to the chivalry of the age.

Such was one of the many ambuscades concerted by Muza; nor did he hesitate, at times, to present a bold front to the Christian forces, and defy them in the open field. King Ferdinand soon perceived, however, that the Moors seldom provoked a battle without having the advantage of ground; and that, though the Christians generally appeared to have the victory, they suffered the greatest loss; for retreating was a part of the Moorish system, by which they would draw their pursuers into confusion, and then turn upon them with a more violent and fatal attack. He commanded his captains, therefore, to decline all challenges to skirmish, and to pursue a secure system of destruction; ravaging the country, and doing all possible injury to the enemy, with slight risk to themselves.

#### CHAPTER LXXXV.

##### The fate of the castle of Roma.

ABOUT two leagues from Granada, on an eminence commanding an extensive view of the vega, stood the strong Moorish castle of Roma; a great place of refuge and security. Hither the neighbouring peasantry drove their flocks and herds, and hurried with their most precious effects, on the irruption of a Christian force; and any foraging or skirmishing party from Granada, on being intercepted in their return, threw themselves into Roma, manned its embattled towers, and set the enemy at defiance. The garrison were accustomed to these sudden claims upon their protection; to have parties of Moors clattering up to their gates, so hotly pursued, that there was barely time to throw open the portal, receive them within, and shut out their pursuers: while the Christian cavaliers had many a time reined in their panting steeds at the very entrance of the barbacan, and retired, cursing the strong walls of Roma, that robbed them of their prey.

The late ravages of Ferdinand, and the continual skirmishings in the vega,

had roused the vigilance of the castle. One morning early, as the sentinels kept watch upon the battlements, they beheld a cloud of dust advancing rapidly from a distance. Turbans and Moorish weapons soon caught their eyes; and as the whole approached, they descried a drove of cattle, urged on in great haste, and conveyed by one hundred and forty Moors, who led with them two Christian captives in chains.

When the cavalgada had arrived near to the castle, a Moorish cavalier of noble and commanding mien, and splendid attire, rode up to the foot of the tower, and entreated admittance. He stated, that they were returning with rich booty, from a foray into the lands of the Christians; but that the enemy was on their traces, and they feared to be overtaken before they could reach Granada. The sentinels descended in all haste, and flung open the gates. The long cavalgada defiled into the courts of the castle, which were soon filled with lowing and bleating flocks and herds, with neighing and stamping steeds, and with fierce-looking Moors from the mountains. The cavalier who had asked admission, was the chief of the party; he was somewhat advanced in life, of a lofty and gallant bearing, and had with him a son, a young man of great fire and spirit. Close by them followed the two Christian captives, with looks cast down and disconsolate.

The soldiers of the garrison had roused themselves from their sleep, and were busily occupied attending to the cattle, which crowded the courts; while the foraging party distributed themselves about the castle, to seek refreshment or repose. Suddenly a shout arose, that was echoed from court-yard, and hall, and battlements. The garrison, astonished and bewildered, would have rushed to their arms, but found themselves, almost before they could make resistance, completely in the power of an enemy.

The pretended foraging party consisted of Mudixares, Moors tributary to the Christians; and the commanders were the Prince Cidi Yahye, and his son, Alnayer. They had hastened from the mountains, with this small force, to aid

the catholic sovereigns during their summer's campaign; and they had concerted to surprise that important castle, and present it to King Ferdinand, as a gage of their faith, and the first-fruits of their devotion.

The politic monarch overwhelmed his new converts and allies with favours and distinctions, in return for this important acquisition; but he took care to despatch a strong force of veterans, and genuine Christian troops, to man the fortress.

As to the Moors who had composed the garrison, Cidi Yahye remembered that they were his countrymen, and could not prevail upon himself to deliver them into Christian bondage. He set them at liberty, and permitted them to repair to Granada; "a proof," says the pious Agapida, "that his conversion was not entirely consummated, but that there were still some lingerings of the infidel in his heart." His lenity was far from procuring him indulgence in the opinions of his countrymen: on the contrary, the inhabitants of Granada, when they learned from the liberated garrison the stratagem by which Roma had been captured, cursed Cidi Yahye for a traitor, and the garrison joined in the malediction.

But the indignation of the people of Granada was destined to be aroused to tenfold violence. The old warrior, Muley Abdalla el Zagal, had retired to his little mountain territory, and for a short time endeavoured to console himself, with his petty title of King of Andaraxa. He soon grew impatient, however, of the quiet and inaction of his mimic kingdom. His fierce spirit was exasperated by being shut up within such narrow limits; and his hatred rose to downright fury against Boabdil, whom he considered as the cause of his downfall. When tidings were brought him, that King Ferdinand was laying waste the vega, he took a sudden resolution: assembling the whole disposable force of his kingdom, which amounted but to two hundred men, he descended from the Alpuxarras, and sought the Christian camp; content to serve as vassal to the enemy of his faith and his nation, so that he might see Granada wrested from the sway of his nephew.

In his blind passion, the old wrathful monarch injured his own cause, and strengthened that of his adversary. The Moors of Granada had been clamorous in his praise, extolling him as a victim to his patriotism, and had refused to believe all reports of his treaty with the Christians; but when they beheld from the walls of the city his banner mingling with the banners of the unbelievers, and arrayed against his late people, and the capital he had commanded, they broke forth into curses and revilings, and heaped all kinds of stigmas upon his name.

Their next emotion was in favour of Boabdil. They gathered under the walls of the Alhambra, and hailed him as their only hope, as the sole dependence of the country. Boabdil could scarcely believe his senses, when he heard his name mingled with praises, and greeted with acclamations. Encouraged by this unexpected gleam of popularity, he ventured forth from his retreat, and was received with rapture. All his past errors were attributed to the hardships of his fortune, and the usurpation of his tyrant uncle; and whatever breath the populace could spare from uttering curses on El Zagal was expended in shouts in honour of El Chico.

#### CHAPTER LXXXVI.

How Boabdil el Chico took the field; and his expedition against Alhendin.

For thirty days had the vega been overrun by the Christian forces, and that vast plain, lately so luxuriant and beautiful, was become a wide scene of desolation. The destroying army having accomplished its task, passed over the bridge of Pinos, and wound up into the mountains, on the way to Cordova; bearing away the spoils of towns and villages, and driving off flocks and herds, in long dusty columns. The sound of the last Christian trumpet died away along the side of the mountain of Elvira, and not a hostile squadron was seen glistening in the mournful fields of the vega.

The eyes of Boabdil el Chico were at length opened to the real policy of King Ferdinand; and he saw that he had no longer any thing to depend upon but

the valour of his arm. No time was to be lost, in hastening to counteract the effect of the late Christian ravage, and in opening the channel for distant supplies to Granada.

Scarcely had the retiring squadrons of Ferdinand disappeared among the mountains, than Boabdil buckled on his armour, sallied forth from the Alhambra, and prepared to take the field. When the populace beheld him actually in arms against his late ally, both parties thronged with zeal to his standard. The hardy inhabitants also of the Sierra Nevada, or chain of snow-capped mountains, which rise above Granada, descended from their heights, and hastened into the city gates, to proffer their devotion to the youthful king. The great square of the vivarrambla shone with the proud array of legions of cavalry, decked with the colours and devices of the most ancient Moorish families, and marshalled forth by the patriot Muza to follow the king to battle.

It was on the 15th of June that Boabdil once more issued out from the gates of Granada on a martial enterprise. A few leagues from the city, within full view of it, and at the entrance of the Alpuxarra mountains, stood the powerful castle of Alhendin. It was built on an eminence, rising from the midst of a small town, and commanding a great part of the vega, and the main road to the rich valleys of the Alpuxarras. The castle was commanded by a valiant Christian cavalier, named Mendo de Quexada, and garrisoned by two hundred and fifty men, all seasoned and experienced warriors. It was a continual thorn in the side of Granada. The labourers of the vega were swept from their fields by its hardy soldiers, convoys were cut off on the passes of the mountains; and, as the garrison commanded a full view of the gates of the city, no band of merchants could venture forth on their needful journeys, without being swooped up by the war-hawks of Alhendin.

It was against this important fortress that Boabdil first led his troops. For six days and nights the fortress was closely besieged. The alcayde and his veteran garrison defended themselves valiantly; but they were exhausted by fatigue and constant watchfulness: for the Moors,

being continually relieved by fresh troops from Granada, kept up an unremitted and vigorous attack. Twice the barbacan was forced, and twice the assailants were driven forth headlong with excessive loss. The garrison, however, was diminished in number by the killed and wounded: there were no longer soldiers sufficient to man the walls and gateway. The brave alcaide was compelled to retire, with his surviving force, to the keep of the castle, in which he continued to make a desperate resistance.

The Moors now approached the foot of the tower, under shelter of wooden screens, covered with wet hides, to ward off missiles and combustibles. They went to work vigorously to undermine the tower, placing props of wood under the foundations, to be afterwards set on fire, so as to give the besiegers time to escape before the edifice should fall. Some of the Moors plied their crossbows and arquebuses to defend the workmen, and to drive the Christians from the wall, while the latter showered down stones and darts, and melted pitch, and flaming combustibles, on the miners.

The brave Mendo de Quexada had cast many an anxious eye across the vega, in hopes of seeing some Christian force hastening to his assistance. Not a gleam of spear or helm was to be descried; for no one had dreamed of this sudden irruption of the Moors. The alcaide saw his bravest men dead or wounded around him, while the remainder were sinking with watchfulness and fatigue. In defiance of all opposition, the Moors had accomplished their mine; the fire was brought before the walls, that was to be applied to the stanchions, in case the garrison persisted in defence; and in a little while the tower would crumble beneath him, and be rent and hurled in ruins to the plain. At the very last moment, and not till then, the brave alcaide made signal of surrender. He marched forth with the remnant of this veteran garrison, who were all made prisoners. Immediately Boabdil ordered the walls of the fortress to be razed, and fire to be applied to the stanchions, that the place might never again become a stronghold to the Christians, and a scourge to Granada. The alcaide and his fellow-

captives were passing in dejected convoy across the vega, when they heard a tremendous crash behind them. Turning to look upon their late fortress, they beheld nothing but a heap of tumbling ruins, and a vast column of smoke and dust, where once had stood the lofty tower of Alhendin.

## CHAPTER LXXXVII.

Exploit of the Count de Tendilla.

BOABDIL EL CHICO followed up his success by capturing the two fortresses of Marchena and Bulduy; he sent his alfaquis in every direction to proclaim a holy war, and to summon all true Moslems, of town or castle, mountain or valley, to saddle steed, and buckle on armour, and hasten to the standard of the faith. The tidings spread far and wide, that Boabdil el Chico was once more in the field, and victorious. The Moors of various places, dazzled by this gleam of success, hastened to throw off their sworn allegiance to the Castilian crown, and to elevate the standard of Boabdil; and the youthful monarch flattered himself, that the whole kingdom was on the point of returning to its allegiance.

The fiery cavaliers of Granada were eager to renew those forays into the Christian lands, in which they had formerly delighted. A number of them, therefore, concerted an irruption to the north into the territory of Jaen, to harass the country about Quexada. They had heard of a rich convoy of merchants and wealthy travellers on the way to the city of Baeza; and they anticipated a glorious conclusion to their foray in capturing this convoy.

Assembling a number of horsemen, lightly armed, and fleetly mounted, and one hundred foot-soldiers, these hardy cavaliers issued forth by night from Granada, made their way in silence through the defiles of the mountains, crossed the frontier without opposition, and suddenly appeared, as if fallen from the clouds, in the very heart of the Christian country.

The mountainous frontier, which separates Granada from Jaen, was at this time under the Count de Tendilla, the

same veteran who had distinguished himself by his vigilance and sagacity, when commanding the fortress of Alhama. He held his head-quarters at the city of Alcala la Real, in its impregnable fortress, perched high among the mountains, about six leagues from Granada, and predominating over all the frontier. From this cloud-capt hold among the rocks, he kept an eagle eye upon Granada, and had his scouts and spies in all directions; so that a crow could not fly over the border without his knowledge.

His fortress was a place of refuge for the Christian captives, who escaped by night from the Moorish dungeons of Granada. Often, however, they missed their way in the defiles of the mountains; and, wandering about bewildered, either repaired by mistake to some Moorish town, or were discovered and retaken at daylight by the enemy. To prevent these accidents, the count had a tower built at his own expense, on the top of one of the heights near Alcala, which commanded a view of the vega, and the country around. Here he kept a light blazing throughout the night, as a beacon for all Christian fugitives, to guide them to a place of safety.

The count was aroused one night from his repose by shouts and cries, which came up from the town, and approached the castle walls. "To arms! to arms! the Moor is over the border!" was the cry. A Christian soldier, pale and emaciated, and who still bore traces of the Moorish chains, was brought before the count. He had been taken as guide by the Moorish cavaliers, who had sallied from Granada, but had escaped from them among the mountains; and after much wandering, had found his way to Alcala by the signal-fire.

Notwithstanding the bustle and agitation of the moment, the Count de Tendilla listened calmly and attentively to the account of the fugitive, and questioned him minutely as to the time of departure of the Moors, and the direction and rapidity of their march. He saw, that it was too late to prevent their incursion and ravage; but he determined to await them, and give them a warm reception on their return. His soldiers were always on the alert, and ready to take the field at a

moment's warning. Choosing one hundred and fifty lances, hardy and valiant men, well disciplined, and well seasoned, as indeed were all his troops, he issued forth quietly before break of day, and, descending through the defiles of the mountains, stationed his little force in ambush in a deep barranca, or dry channel of a torrent, near Barzina, three leagues only from Granada, on the road by which the marauders would have to return. In the mean time, he sent scouts, to post themselves upon different heights, and look out for the approach of the enemy.

All day they remained concealed in the ravine, and for a great part of the following night; not a turban, however, was to be seen, excepting now and then a peasant returning from his labour, or a solitary muleteer hastening towards Granada. The cavaliers of the count began to grow restless and impatient: they feared, that the enemy might have taken some other route, or might have received intelligence of their ambush; and they urged him to abandon the enterprise, and return to Alcala. "We are here," said they, "almost at the gates of the Moorish capital; our movements may have been descried, and, before we are aware, Granada may pour forth its legions of swift cavalry, and crush us with an overwhelming force." The Count de Tendilla, however, persisted in remaining until the scouts should come in. About two hours before daybreak there were signal-fires on certain Moorish watch-towers of the mountains. While they were regarding these with anxiety, the scouts came hurrying into the ravine. "The Moors are approaching," said they; "we have reconnoitred them near at hand. They are between one and two hundred strong, but encumbered with many prisoners and much booty." The Christian cavaliers laid their ears to the ground, and heard the distant tramp of horses, and the tread of foot-soldiers. They mounted their horses, braced their shields, couched their lances, and drew near to the entrance of the ravine where it opened upon the road.

The Moors had succeeded in waylaying and surprising the Christian convoy on its way to Baeza. They had

captured a great number of prisoners, male and female, with great store of gold and jewels, and sumpter-mules, laden with rich merchandise. With these they had made a forced march over the dangerous parts of the mountains; but now, being so near to Granada, they fancied themselves in perfect security. They loitered along the road, therefore, irregularly and slowly, some singing, others laughing and exulting at having eluded the boasted vigilance of the Count de Tendilla; while ever and anon was heard the plaint of some female captive, bewailing the jeopardy of her honour; and the heavy sighing of the merchant, at beholding his property in the grasp of ruthless spoilers.

The Count de Tendilla waited until some of the escort had passed the ravine; then, giving the signal for assault, his cavaliers set up loud shouts and cries, and charged furiously into the centre of the foe. The obscurity of the place, and the hour, added to the terrors of the surprise. The Moors were thrown into confusion. Some rallied, fought desperately, and fell covered with wounds. Thirty-six were killed, and fifty-five were made prisoners; the rest, under cover of the darkness, made their escape to the rocks and defiles of the mountains. The good count unbound the prisoners, gladdening the hearts of the merchants, by restoring to them their merchandise; the female captives also regained their jewels of which they had been despoiled, excepting such as had been lost beyond recovery. Forty-five saddle-horses, of the choice Barbary breed, remained, as captured spoils of the Moors, together with costly armour, and booty of various kinds. Having collected every thing in haste, and arranged his cavalgada, the count urged his way with all speed for Alcala la Real, lest he should be pursued and overtaken by the Moors of Granada. As he wound up the steep ascent to his mountain city, the inhabitants poured forth to meet him with shouts of joy. This triumph was doubly enhanced by being received at the gates of the city by his wife, the daughter of the Marquis of Villena, a lady of distinguished merit, whom he had not seen for two years that he had been separated from his

home by the arduous duties of these iron wars.

#### CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

Expedition of Boabdil el Chico against Salobreña.  
Exploit of Fernando Perez del Pulgar.

KING BOABDIL found that his diminished territory was too closely overlooked by Christian fortresses, like Alcala la Real, and too strictly watched by vigilant alcajdes, like the Count of Tendilla, to be able to maintain itself by internal resources. His foraging expeditions were liable to be intercepted and defeated; while the ravage of the vega had swept off every thing on which the city depended for future sustenance. He felt the want of a sea-port, through which, as formerly, he might keep open a communication with Africa, and obtain reinforcements and supplies from beyond the seas. All the ports and harbours were in the hands of the Christians; and Granada and its remnant of dependent territory were completely landlocked.

In this emergency, the attention of Boabdil was called by circumstances to the seaport of Salobreña. This redoubtable town has already been mentioned in this chronicle, as a place deemed impregnable by the Moors; insomuch that their kings were accustomed, in time of peril, to keep their treasures in its citadel. It was situate on a high rocky hill; dividing one of those rich little vegas, or plains, which lie open to the Mediterranean, but run, like deep green bays, into the stern bosoms of the mountains. The vega was covered with beautiful vegetation; with rice and cotton, with groves of oranges, citrons, figs, and mulberries, and with gardens enclosed by hedges of reeds, of aloes, and the Indian fig. Running streams of cool water, from the springs and snows of the Sierra Nevada, kept this delightful valley continually fresh and verdant; while it was almost locked up by mountain barriers and lofty promontories, that stretched far into the sea.

Through the centre of this rich vega the rock of Salobreña reared its rugged back, nearly dividing the plain, and advancing to the margin of the sea; with just a strip of sandy beach at its foot,

laved by the blue waves of the Mediterranean.

The town covered the ridge and sides of the rocky hill, and was fortified by strong walls and towers; while on the highest and most precipitous part stood the citadel, a huge castle, that seemed to form a part of the living rock; the massive ruins of which, at the present day, attract the gaze of the traveller, as he winds his way far below, along the road which passes through the vega.

This important fortress had been intrusted to the command of Don Francisco Ramirez de Madrid, captain-general of the artillery, and the most scientific of all the Spanish leaders. That experienced veteran, however, was with the king at Cordova, having left a valiant cavalier as alcaide of the place.

Boabdil el Chico had full information of the state of the garrison, and the absence of its commander. Putting himself at the head of a powerful force, therefore, he departed from Granada, and made a rapid march through the mountains; hoping by this sudden movement, to seize upon Salobreña, before King Ferdinand could come to its assistance.

The inhabitants of Salobreña were Mudixares, or Moors, who had sworn allegiance to the Christians. Still, when they heard the sound of the Moorish drums and trumpets, and beheld the squadrons of their countrymen advancing across the vega, their hearts yearned towards the standard of their nation and their faith. A tumult arose in the place. The populace shouted the name of Boabdil el Chico, and, throwing open the gates, admitted him within the walls.

The Christian garrison was too few in number to contend for the possession of the town. They retreated to the citadel, and shut themselves up within its massive walls which they considered impregnable. Here they maintained a desperate defence, hoping to hold out until succour should arrive from the neighbouring fortresses.

The tidings that Salobreña was invested by the Moorish king, spread along the coast, and filled the Christians with alarm. Don Francisco Enriquez, uncle of the king, commanded the city of Velez Malaga, about twelve leagues distant, but

separated by ranges of those vast rocky mountains, which are piled along the Mediterranean, and tower in steep promontories and precipices above its waves.

Don Francisco summoned the alcaides of his district, to hasten with him to the relief of this important fortress. A number of cavaliers and their retainers answered to his call; among whom was Fernando Perez del Pulgar, surnamed El de las Hazañas (he of the exploits); the same who had signalized himself in a foray, by elevating a handkerchief on a lance for a banner, and leading on his disheartened comrades to victory. As soon as Don Francisco beheld a little band collected around him, he set out with all speed for Salobreña. The march was rugged and severe; climbing and descending immense mountains, and sometimes winding along the edge of giddy precipices, with the surges of the sea raging far below. When Don Francisco arrived with his followers at the lofty promontory, that stretches along one side of the little vega of Salobreña, he looked down with sorrow and anxiety upon a Moorish army of great force, encamped at the foot of the fortress; while Moorish banners, on various parts of the walls, showed, that the town was already in possession of the infidels. A solitary Christian standard alone floated on the top of the castle keep, indicating that the brave garrison were hemmed up in their rock-built citadel.

Don Francisco found it impossible, with his small force, to make any impression on the camp of the Moors, or to get to the relief of the castle. He stationed his little band upon a rocky height near the sea, where they were safe from the assaults of the enemy. The sight of this friendly banner, waving in their neighbourhood, cheered the hearts of the garrison; and he conveyed to them assurance of speedy succour from the king. In the mean time Fernando Perez del Pulgar, who always burned to distinguish himself by bold and striking exploits, in the course of a prowling expedition along the borders of the Moorish camp, remarked a postern-gate of the castle opening upon the steep part of the rocky hill, which looked towards the mountains. A sudden thought flashed upon the daring



mind of Pulgar. "Who will follow my banner," said he, "and make a dash for yonder postern?" A bold proposition, in time of warfare, never wants for bold spirits to accept it. Seventy resolute men immediately stepped forward. Pulgar put himself at their head. They cut their way suddenly through a weak part of the camp, fought up to the gate, which was eagerly thrown open to receive them, and succeeded in effecting their entrance into the fortress, before the alarm of their attempt had spread through the Moorish army.

The garrison was roused to new spirit by this unlooked-for reinforcement, and were enabled to make a more vigorous resistance. The Moors had intelligence, however, that there was a great scarcity of water in the castle; and they exulted in the idea, that this additional number of warriors would soon exhaust the cisterns, and compel them to surrender. When Pulgar heard of this hope entertained by the enemy, he caused a bucket of water to be lowered from the battlements, and threw a silver cup in bravado to the Moors.

The situation of the garrison, however, was daily growing more and more critical. They suffered greatly from thirst; while, to tantalize them in their sufferings, they beheld limpid streams winding in abundance through the green plain below them. They began to fear, that all succour would arrive too late; when one day they beheld a little squadron of vessels far at sea, but standing towards the shore. There was some doubt at first, whether it might not be a hostile armament from Africa; but as it approached, they descried, to their great joy, the banner of Castile.

It was a reinforcement, brought in all haste by the governor of the fortress, Don Francisco Ramirez. The squadron anchored at a steep rocky island, which rises from the very margin of the smooth sandy beach, directly in front of the rock of Salobreña, and stretches out into the sea. On this island Ramirez landed his men, and was as strongly posted as if in a fortress. His force was too scanty to attempt a battle; but he assisted to harass and distract the besiegers. Whenever King Boabdil made an attack upon

the fortress, his camp was assailed on one side by the troops of Ramirez, who landed from their island, and, on another, by those of Don Francisco Enriquez, who swept down from their rock; while Fernando del Pulgar kept up a fierce defence from every tower and battlement of the castle. The attention of the Moorish king was diverted, also, for a time, by an ineffectual attempt to relieve the little port of Adra, that had recently declared in his favour, but had been recaptured for the Christians by Cidi Yahye and his son Alnayer. Thus the unlucky Boabdil, bewildered on every hand, lost all the advantage that he had gained by his rapid march from Granada. While he was yet besieging the obstinate citadel, tidings were brought him, that King Ferdinand was in full march, with a powerful host, to its assistance. There was no time for further delay. He made a furious attack, with all his forces, upon the castle, but was again repulsed by Pulgar and his coadjutors; when, abandoning the siege in despair, he retreated with his army, lest King Ferdinand should get between him and his capital. On his way back to Granada, however, he in some sort consoled himself for his late disappointment, by overrunning a part of the territories and possessions lately assigned to his uncle El Zagal, and to Cidi Yahye. He defeated their alcajdes, destroyed several of their fortresses, burnt their villages; and, leaving the country behind him reeking and smoking with his vengeance, returned with considerable booty, to repose himself within the walls of the Alhambra.

#### CHAPTER LXXXIX.

How King Ferdinand treated the people of Guadix, and how El Zagal finished his royal career.

SCARCELY had Boabdil ensconced himself in his capital, when King Ferdinand, at the head of seven thousand horse, and twenty thousand foot, again appeared in the vega. He had set out in all haste from Cordova, to the relief of Salobreña; but hearing on his march that the siege was raised, he turned with his army, to make a second ravage round the walls of devoted Granada. His present forage lasted fifteen days, in the course of which

every thing that had escaped his former desolating visit was so completely destroyed, that scarcely a green thing, or a living animal was left on the face of the land. The Moors sallied frequently, and fought desperately in defence of their fields; but the work of destruction was accomplished, and Granada, once the queen of gardens, was left surrounded by a desert.

From hence Ferdinand marched to crush a conspiracy, which had lately manifested itself in the cities of Guadix, Baza, and Almeria. These recently conquered places had entered into secret correspondence with King Boabdil, inviting him to march to their gates, promising to rise upon the Christian garrisons, seize upon the citadels, and surrender themselves into his power. The Marquis of Villena had received notice of the conspiracy, and suddenly thrown himself, with a large force, into Guadix. Under pretence of making a review of the inhabitants, he made them sally forth into the fields before the city. When the whole Moorish population, capable of bearing arms, was thus without the walls, he ordered the gates to be closed. He then permitted them to enter two by two, and three by three, and to take forth their wives and children, and effects. The houseless Moors were fain to make themselves temporary hovels, in the gardens and orchards about the city. They were clamorous in their complaints at being thus excluded from their homes; but were told, they must wait with patience, until the charges against them could be investigated, and the pleasure of the king be known.\*

When Ferdinand arrived at Guadix, he found the unhappy Moors in their cabins among the orchards. They complained bitterly of the deception that had been practised upon them, and implored permission to return into the city, and live peaceably in their dwellings, as had been promised them in their articles of capitulation.

King Ferdinand listened graciously to their complaints. "My friends," said he in reply, "I am informed, that there has been a conspiracy among you, to kill my

alcalde and garrison, and to take part with my enemy, the King of Granada. I shall make a thorough investigation of this conspiracy. Those among you, who shall be proved innocent, shall be restored to their dwellings; but the guilty shall incur the penalty of their offences. As I wish, however, to proceed with mercy as well as justice, I now give you your choice, either to depart at once, without further question, going wherever you please, and taking with you your families and effects, under an assurance of safety, or to deliver up those who are guilty; not one of whom, I give you my word, shall escape punishment."

When the people of Guadix heard this, they communed among themselves, "and, as most of them," says the worthy Agapida, "were either culpable, or feared to be considered so, they accepted the alternative, and departed sorrowfully, they, and their wives, and their little ones." "Thus," in the words of that excellent and contemporary historian, Andres Bernaldes, commonly called the Curate of Los Palacios, "thus did the king deliver Guadix from the hands of the enemies of our holy faith, after seven hundred and seventy years, that it had been in their possession, even since the time of Roderick the Goth; and this was one of the mysteries of our Lord, who would not consent that the city should remain longer in the power of the Moors." A pious and sage remark, which is quoted with peculiar approbation by the worthy Agapida.

King Ferdinand offered similar alternatives to the Moors of Baza, Almeria, and other cities, accused of participation in this conspiracy; who generally preferred to abandon their homes, rather than incur the risk of an investigation. Most of them relinquished Spain, as a country where they could no longer live in security and independence, and departed with their families for Africa; such as remained were suffered to live in villages and hamlets, and other unwall'd places.\*

While Ferdinand was thus occupied at Guadix, dispensing justice and mercy, and receiving cities in exchange, the old

\* Zurita, l. xx. c. 85. Cura de Los Palacios, c. 97.

\* Garibay, lib. xiii. cap. 39. Pulgar, l. iii. c. 132.

monarch, Muley Abdalla, surnamed El Zagal, appeared before him. He was haggard with care, and almost crazed with passion. He had found his little territory of Andaraxa, and his two thousand subjects, as difficult to govern as had been the distracted kingdom of Granada. The charm, which had bound the Moors to him, was broken, when he appeared in arms under the banner of Ferdinand. He had returned from his inglorious campaign, with his petty army of two hundred men, followed by the execrations of the people of Granada, and the secret repining of those he had led into the field. No sooner had his subjects heard of the successes of Boabdil el Chico, than they seized their arms, assembled tumultuously, declared for the young monarch threatening the life of El Zagal.\* The unfortunate old king had with difficulty evaded their fury; and this last lesson seemed entirely to have cured him of his passion for sovereignty. He now entreated Ferdinand to purchase the towns and castles and other possessions, which had been granted to him; offering them at a low rate, and begging safe passage, for himself and his followers, to Africa. King Ferdinand graciously complied with his wishes. He purchased of him three-and-twenty towns and villages, in the valleys of Andaraxa and Alhauen, for which he gave him five millions of maravedis. El Zagal relinquished his right to one half of the salinas, or salt-pits, of Maleha, in favour of his brother-in-law, Cidi Yahye. Having thus disposed of his petty empire and possessions, he packed up all his treasure, of which he had a great amount, and, followed by many Moorish families, passed over to Africa.†

And here let us cast an eye beyond the present period of our chronicle, and trace the remaining career of El Zagal. His short and turbulent reign, and disastrous end, would afford a wholesome lesson to unprincipled ambition, were not all ambition of the kind fated to be blind to precept and example. When he arrived in Africa, instead of meeting with kindness and sympathy, he was seized and thrown in prison by the king of Fez,

as though he had been his vassal. He was accused of being the cause of the dissensions and downfall of the kingdom of Granada; and the accusation being proved to the satisfaction of the king of Fez, he condemned the unhappy El Zagal to perpetual darkness. A basin of glowing copper was passed before his eyes, which effectually destroyed his sight. His wealth, which had probably been the secret cause of these cruel measures, was confiscated and seized by his oppressor, and El Zagal was thrust forth, blind, helpless, and destitute, upon the world. In this wretched condition, the late Moorish monarch groped his way through the regions of Tingitania, until he reached the city of Velez de Gomer. The king of Velez had formerly been his ally, and felt some movement of compassion at his present altered and abject state. He gave him food and raiment, and suffered him to remain unmolested in his dominions. Death, which so often hurries off the prosperous and happy from the midst of untasted pleasures, spares, on the other hand, the miserable, to drain the last drop of his cup of bitterness. El Zagal dragged out a wretched existence of many years, in the city of Velez. He wandered about, blind and disconsolate, an object of mingled scorn and pity, and bearing above his raiment a parchment, on which was written in Arabic, "This is the unfortunate king of Andalusia."\*

#### CHAPTER XC.

Preparations of Granada for a desperate defence.

"How is thy strength departed, O Granada! how is thy beauty withered and despoiled, O city of groves and fountains! The commerce that once thronged thy streets, is at an end; the merchant no longer hastens to thy gates, with the luxuries of foreign lands. The cities, which once paid thee tribute, are wrested from thy sway; the chivalry, which filled thy vivarrambla with the sumptuous pageantry of war, have fallen in many battles. The Alhambra still rears its

\* *Cura de Los Palacios*, c. 97.

† *Conde*, part iv, cap. 41.

\* *Marmol de Rebellionne Maur.*, lib. i. cap. 16. *Pedraza, Hist. Granat.*, p. iii. c. 4. *Suarez, Hist. de Obispos de Guadiz y Baza*, c. 10.

ruddy towers from the midst of groves ; but melancholy reigns in its marble halls, and the monarch looks down from his lofty balconies upon a naked waste, where once had extended the blooming glories of the vega !”

Such is the lament of the Moorish writers, over the lamentable state of Granada, which remained a mere phantom of its former greatness. The two ravages of the vega, following so closely upon each other, had swept off all the produce of the year, and the husbandman had no longer the heart to till the field, seeing that the ripening harvest only brought the spoiler to his door.

During the winter season, King Ferdinand made diligent preparations for the last campaign, that was to decide the fate of Granada. As this war was waged purely for the promotion of the Christian faith, he thought it meet its enemies should bear the expenses. He levied, therefore, a general contribution upon all the Jews throughout his kingdom, by synagogues and districts, and obliged them to render in the proceeds at the city of Seville.\*

On the 11th of April, Ferdinand and Isabella departed for the Moorish frontier, with the solemn determination to lay close siege to Granada, and never to quit its walls until they planted the standard of the faith on the towers of the Alhambra. Many of the nobles of the kingdom, particularly those from the parts remote from the scene of action, wearied by the toils of war, and foreseeing that this would be a tedious siege, requiring patience and vigilance, rather than hardy deeds of arms, were contented with sending their vassals, while they stayed at home themselves, to attend to their domains. Many cities furnished soldiers at their cost, and the king took the field with an army of forty thousand infantry, and ten thousand horse. The principal captains, who followed him in this campaign, were Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, the Marquis of Cadiz, the Master of Santiago, the Marquis of Villena, the Counts of Tendilla, Cifuentes, Cabra, and Ureña, and Don Alonso de Aguilar.

Queen Isabella, accompanied by her

son, the Prince Juan, and by the princesses Juana, Maria, and Catalina, her daughters, proceeded to Alcala la Real, the mountain fortress and stronghold of the Count de Tendilla. Here she remained, to forward supplies to the army, and to be ready to repair to the camp whenever her presence might be required.

The army of Ferdinand poured into the vega, by various defiles of the mountains, and on the 23d of April, the royal tent was pitched at a village called Los Ojos de Huescar, about a league and a half from Granada. At the approach of this formidable force, the harassed inhabitants turned pale, and even many of the warriors trembled, for they felt that the last desperate struggle was at hand.

Boabdil el Chico assembled his council in the Alhambra, from the windows of which they could behold the Christian squadrons glistening through clouds of dust, as they poured along the vega. The utmost confusion and consternation reigned in the council. Many of the members, terrified with the horrors impending over their families, advised Boabdil to throw himself upon the generosity of the Christian monarch ; even several of the bravest suggested the possibility of obtaining honourable terms.

The wazir of the city, Abul Casim Abdelmelic, was called upon to report the state of the public means, for sustenance and defence. There were sufficient provisions, he said, for a few months' supply, independent of what might exist in the possession of merchants, and other rich inhabitants. “But of what avail,” said he, “is a temporary provision against the sieges of the Castilian monarch, which are interminable !”

He produced, also, the lists of men, capable of bearing arms. “The number,” said he, “is great ; but what can be expected from mere citizen soldiers ? They vaunt and menace in time of safety. None are so arrogant when the enemy is at a distance ; but when the din of war thunders at their gates, they hide themselves in terror.”

When Muza heard these words, he rose with generous warmth. “What reason have we,” said he “to despair ? The blood of those illustrious Moors, the ancient conquerors of Spain, still flows

\* Garibay, lib. viii, cap. 39.

in our veins. Let us be true to ourselves, and fortune will again be with us. We have a veteran force, both horse and foot, the flower of our chivalry; seasoned in war, and scarred in a thousand battles. As to the multitude of our citizens, spoken of so slightly, why should we doubt their valour? There are twenty thousand young men, in the fire of youth, for whom I will engage, that, in the defence of their homes, they will rival the most hardy veterans. Do we want provisions? Our horses are fleet, and our horsemen daring in foray. Let them scour and scourge the country of those apostate Moslems who have surrendered to the Christians. Let them make inroads into the lands of our enemies. We shall soon see them returning with cavalgadas to our gates; and to a soldier, there is no morsel so sweet as that wrested with hard fighting from the foe."

Boabdil el Chico, though he wanted firm and durable courage, was readily excited to sudden emotions of bravery. He caught a glow of resolution from the noble ardour of Muza. "Do what is needful," said he to his commanders: "into your hands I confide the common safety. You are the protectors of the kingdom; and, with the aid of Allah, will revenge the insults of our religion, the death of our friends and relations, and the sorrows and sufferings heaped upon our land."\*

To every one was now assigned his separate duty. The wazir had charge of the arms and provisions, and the enrolling of the people. Muza was to command the cavalry, to defend the gates, and to take the lead in all sallies and skirmishes. Naim Reduan and Mohammed Aben Zayda were his adjutants; Abdel Kerim Zegri, and the other captains, were to guard the walls; and the alcaides of the alcabaza, and of the red towers, had command of the fortresses.

Nothing now was heard but the din of arms, and the bustle of preparation. The Moorish spirit, quick to catch fire, was immediately in a flame; and the populace, in the excitement of the moment, set at nought the power of the Christians. Muza was in all parts of the city, infusing his

\* Conde.

own generous zeal into the bosoms of the soldiery. The young cavaliers rallied round him as their model; the veteran warriors regarded him with a soldier's admiration; the vulgar throng followed him with shouts; and the helpless part of the inhabitants, the old men and the women, hailed him with blessings as their protector.

On the first appearance of the Christian army, the principal gates of the city had been closed, and secured with bars, and bolts, and heavy chains. Muza now ordered them to be thrown open. "To me and my cavaliers," said he, "is intrusted the defence of the gates: our bodies shall be their barriers." He stationed at each gate a strong guard, chosen from his bravest men. His horsemen were always completely armed, and ready to mount at a moment's warning. Their steeds stood saddled and caparisoned in the stables, with lance and buckler beside them. On the least approach of the enemy, a squadron of horse gathered within the gate, ready to dart forth like the bolt from the thundercloud. Muza made no empty bravado, or haughty threat: he was more terrible in deeds than in words; and executed daring exploits, beyond even the vaunt of the vain-glorious. Such was the present champion of the Moors. Had they possessed many such warriors, or had Muza risen to power at an earlier period of the war, the fate of Granada might have been deferred, and the Moor, for a long time, have maintained his throne within the walls of the Alhambra.

#### CHAPTER XCI.

How King Ferdinand conducted the siege cautiously, and how Queen Isabella arrived at the camp.

THOUGH Granada was shorn of its glories, and nearly cut off from all external aid, still its mighty castles and massive bulwarks seemed to set all attack at defiance. Being the last retreat of Moorish power, it had assembled within its walls the remnants of the armies that had contended, step by step, with the invaders, in their gradual conquest of the land. All that remained of highborn and highbred chivalry was here. All that was loyal and patriotic was roused

to activity by the common danger; and Granada, that had so long been lulled into inaction by vain hopes of security, now assumed a formidable aspect in the hour of its despair.

Ferdinand saw, that any attempt to subdue the city by main force would be perilous and bloody. Cautious in his policy, and fond of conquests gained by art rather than by valour, he resorted to the plan which had been so successful with Baza, and determined to reduce the place by famine. For this purpose, his armies penetrated into the very heart of the Alpujarras; and ravaged the valleys, and sacked and burned the towns upon which the city depended for its supplies. Scouring parties, also, ranged the mountains behind Granada, and captured every casual convoy of provisions. The Moors became more daring as their situation became more hopeless. Never had Ferdinand experienced such vigorous sallies and assaults. Muza, at the head of his cavalry, harassed the borders of the camp, and even penetrated into the interior, making sudden spoil and ravage, and leaving his course to be traced by the wounded and slain. To protect his camp from these assaults, Ferdinand fortified it with deep trenches and strong bulwarks. It was of a quadrangular form, divided into streets, like a city, the troops being quartered in tents, and in booths, constructed of bushes and branches of trees. When it was completed, Queen Isabella came in state, with all her court, and the prince and princesses, to be present at the siege. This was intended, as on former occasions, to reduce the besieged to despair, by showing the determination of the sovereigns to reside in the camp until the city should surrender. Immediately after her arrival, the queen rode forth, to survey the camp and its environs. Wherever she went, she was attended by a splendid retinue; and all the commanders vied with each other in the pomp and ceremony with which they received her. Nothing was heard, from morning until night, but shouts and acclamations, and bursts of martial music; so that it appeared to the Moors as if a continual festival and triumph reigned in the Christian camp.

The arrival of the queen, however,

and the menaced obstinacy of the siege, had no effect in damping the fire of the Moorish chivalry. Muza inspired the youthful warriors with the most devoted heroism. "We have nothing left to fight for," said he, "but the ground we stand on: when this is lost, we cease to have a country and a name."

Finding the Christian king forbore to make an attack, Muza incited his cavaliers to challenge the youthful chivalry of the Christian army to single combat, or partial skirmishes. Scarcely a day passed without gallant conflicts of the kind, in sight of the city and the camp. The combatants rivalled each other in the splendour of their armour and array, as well as in the prowess of their deeds. Their contests were more like the stately ceremonials of tilts and tournaments, than the rude combats of the field. Ferdinand soon perceived, that they animated the fiery Moors with fresh zeal and courage, while they cost the lives of many of his bravest cavaliers: he again, therefore, forbade the acceptance of any individual challenges; and ordered that all partial encounters should be avoided. The cool and stern policy of the catholic sovereign bore hard upon the generous spirits of either army; but roused the indignation of the Moors, when they found they were to be subdued in this inglorious manner. "Of what avail," said they, "is chivalry and heroic valour? the crafty monarch of the Christians has no magnanimity in warfare: he seeks to subdue us through the weakness of our bodies, but shuns to encounter the courage of our souls!"

#### CHAPTER XCII.

Of the insolent defiance of Tarfe, the Moor, and the daring exploit of Fernando Perez del Pulgar.

WHEN the Moorish knights beheld that all courteous challenges were unavailing, they sought various means to provoke the Christian warriors to the field. Sometimes a body of them, fleetly mounted, would gallop up to the skirts of the camp, and try who should hurl his lance farthest within the barriers; having his name inscribed on it, or a label affixed to it, containing some taunting defiance. These bravadoes caused great

irritation; but still the Spanish warriors were restrained by the prohibition of the king.

Among the Moorish cavaliers was one named Tarfe, renowned for his great strength and daring spirit; but whose courage partook of fierce audacity rather than chivalric heroism. In one of these sallies, when they were skirting the Christian camp, this arrogant Moor outstripped his companions, overleaped the barriers, and, galloping close to the royal quarters, launched his lance so far within, that it remained quivering in the earth, close by the pavilions of the sovereigns. The royal guards rushed forth in pursuit; but the Moorish horsemen were already beyond the camp, and scouring in a cloud of dust for the city. Upon wresting the lance from the earth, a label was found upon it, importing that it was intended for the queen.

Nothing could equal the indignation of the Christian warriors at the insolence of the bravado, when they heard to whom the discourteous insult was offered. Fernando Perez del Pulgar surnamed "he of the exploits," was present, and resolved not to be outbraved by this daring infidel. "Who will stand by me," said he, "in an enterprise of desperate peril?" The Christian cavaliers well knew the hair-brained valour of del Pulgar; yet not one hesitated to step forward. He chose fifteen companions, all men of powerful arm and dauntless heart. In the dead of the night he led them forth from the camp, and approached the city cautiously, until he arrived at a postern-gate, which opened upon the Darro, and was guarded by foot-soldiers. The guards, little thinking of such an unwonted and partial attack, were for the most part asleep. The gate was forced, and a confused and chance-medley skirmish ensued. Fernando del Pulgar stopped not to take part in the affray. Putting spurs to his horse, he galloped furiously through the streets, striking fire out of the stones at every bound. Arrived at the principal mosque, he sprang from his horse, and, kneeling at the portal, took possession of the edifice as a Christian chapel, dedicating it to the blessed Virgin. In testimony of the ceremony, he took a tablet, which he had brought with him, on which

was inscribed in large letters, "AVE MARIA," and nailed it to the door of the mosque with his dagger. This done, he remounted his steed and galloped back to the gate. The alarm had been given; the city was in an uproar; soldiers were gathering from every direction. They were astonished at seeing a Christian warrior speeding from the interior of the city. Fernando del Pulgar, overturning some, and cutting down others, rejoined his companions, who still maintained possession of the gate, by dint of hard fighting, and they all made good their retreat to the camp. The Moors were at a loss to conjecture the meaning of this wild and apparently fruitless assault; but great was their exasperation, when, on the following day, they discovered the trophy of hardihood and prowess, the AVE MARIA, thus elevated in the very centre of the city. The mosque, thus boldly sanctified by Fernando del Pulgar, was eventually, after the capture of Granada, converted into a cathedral.\*

#### CHAPTER XCIII.

How Queen Isabella took a view of the city of Granada; and how her curiosity cost the lives of many Christians and Moors.

THE royal encampment lay at such a distance from Granada, that the general aspect of the city only could be seen, as it rose gracefully from the vega, covering the sides of the hills with palaces and towers. Queen Isabella had expressed an earnest desire to behold, nearer at hand, a place, the beauty of which was so renowned throughout the world; and the Marquis of Cadiz, with his accustomed courtesy, prepared a great military escort and guard, to protect her and the ladies of the court, while they enjoyed this perilous gratification.

\* In commemoration of this daring feat, the Emperor Charles V. in after years, conferred on Pulgar and his descendants the right of sepulture in that church, and the privilege of sitting in the choir during high mass. This Fernando Perez del Pulgar was a man of letters, as well as arms; and inscribed to Charles V. a summary of the achievements of Gonsalvo of Cordova, surnamed the Great Captain, who had been one of his comrades in arms. He is often confounded with Fernando del Pulgar, historian and secretary to Queen Isabella. See note to Pulgar's Chron. of the Catholic Sovereigns, part iii, c. 3, edit. Valencia, 1780.

It was on the morning after the event recorded in the preceding chapter, that a magnificent and powerful train issued forth from the Christian camp. The advance guard was composed of legions of cavalry, heavily armed, that looked like moving masses of polished steel. Then came the king and queen, with the prince and princesses, and the ladies of the court, surrounded by the royal body-guard, sumptuously arrayed, composed of the sons of the most illustrious houses of Spain. After these was the rear-guard, composed of a powerful force of horse and foot; for the flower of the army sallied forth that day. The Moors gazed with fearful admiration at this glorious pageant, wherein the pomp of the court was mingled with the terrors of the camp. It moved along in a radiant line across the vega, to the melodious thunders of martial music; while banner, and plume, and silken scarf, and rich brocade, gave a gay and gorgeous relief to the grim visage of iron war that lurked beneath.

The army moved towards the hamlet of Zubia, built on the skirts of the mountains, to the left of Granada, and commanding a view of the Alhambra, and the most beautiful quarter of the city. As they approached the hamlet, the Marquis of Villena, the Count Ureña, and Don Alonso de Aguilar, filed off with their battalions, and were soon seen glittering along the side of the mountain above the village. In the mean time, the Marquis of Cadiz, the Count de Tendilla, the Count de Cabra, and Don Alonso Fernandez, senior of Alcandrete and Montemayor, drew up their forces in battle array on the plain below the hamlet, presenting a living barrier of loyal chivalry, between the sovereigns and the city. Thus securely guarded, the royal party alighted, and entering one of the houses of the hamlet, which had been prepared for their reception, enjoyed a full view of the city from its terraced roof. The ladies of the court gazed with delight at the red towers of the Alhambra, rising from amidst shady groves, anticipating the time when the Catholic sovereigns should be enthroned within its walls, and its courts shine with the splendour of Spanish chivalry. "The reverend prelates and holy friars, who always

surrounded the queen, looked with serene satisfaction," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "at this modern Babylon; enjoying the triumph that awaited them, when those mosques and minarets should be converted into churches, and goodly priests and bishops should succeed to the infidel alfaquis."

When the Moors beheld the Christians thus drawn forth in full array in the plain, they supposed it was to offer them battle, and they hesitated not to accept it. In a little while the queen beheld a body of Moorish cavalry pouring into the vega, the riders managing their fleet and fiery steeds with admirable address. They were richly armed, and clothed in the most brilliant colours, and the caparisons of their steeds flamed with gold and embroidery. This was the favourite squadron of Muza, composed of the flower of the youthful cavaliers of Granada: others succeeded; some heavily armed, some *à la gineta*, with lance and buckler, and lastly came the legions of foot-soldiers, with arquebuse and cross-bow and spear and cimeter.

When the queen saw the army issuing from the city, she sent to the Marquis of Cadiz and forbade any attack upon the enemy, or the acceptance of any challenge to a skirmish; for she was loath that her curiosity should cost the life of a single human being.

The marquis promised to obey, though sorely against his will; and it grieved the spirit of the Spanish cavaliers to be obliged to remain with sheathed swords, while bearded by the foe. The Moors could not comprehend the meaning of this inaction of the Christians, after having apparently invited a battle. They sallied several times from their ranks, and approached near enough to discharge their arrows, but the Christians were immovable. Many of the Moorish horsemen galloped close to the Christian ranks, brandishing their lances and cimeters, and defying various cavaliers to single combat: but King Ferdinand had rigorously prohibited all duels of the kind, and they dared not transgress his orders under his very eye.

While this grim and reluctant tranquillity prevailed along the Christian line, there rose a mingled shout and



sound of laughter, near the gate of the city. A Moorish horseman, armed at all points, issued forth, followed by a rabble, who drew back as he approached the scene of danger. The Moor was more robust and brawny than was common with his countrymen. His visor was closed; he bore a large buckler and ponderous lance; his cimeter was of a Damascus blade, and his richly ornamented dagger was wrought by an artificer of Fez. He was known by his device to be Tarfe, the most insolent, yet valiant of the Moslem warriors; the same who had hurled into the royal camp his lance, inscribed to the queen. As he rode slowly along in front of the army, his very steed, prancing with fiery eye and distended nostril, seemed to breathe defiance to the Christians. But what were the feelings of the Spanish cavaliers, when they beheld tied to the tail of his steed, and dragged in the dust, the very inscription, *Ave Maria*, which Fernando Perez del Pulgar had affixed to the door of the mosque! A burst of horror and indignation broke forth from the army. Fernando del Pulgar was not at hand to maintain his previous achievement, but one of his young companions in arms, Garcilasso de la Vega by name, putting spurs to his horse, galloped to the hamlet of Zubia, threw himself on his knees before the king, and besought permission to accept the defiance of this insolent infidel, and to revenge the insult offered to our blessed Lady. The request was too pious to be refused: Garcilasso remounted his steed; he closed his helmet, graced by four sable plumes; grasped his buckler, of Flemish workmanship, and his lance, of matchless temper, and defied the haughty Moor in the midst of his career. A combat took place, in view of the two armies, and of the Castilian court. The Moor was powerful in wielding his weapons, and dexterous in managing his steed. He was of larger frame than Garcilasso, and more completely armed; and the Christians trembled for their champion. The shock of their encounter was dreadful; their lances were shivered, and sent up splinters in the air. Garcilasso was thrown back in his saddle, and his horse made a wide career before he could re-

cover his position, gather up the reins, and return to the conflict. They now encountered each other with swords. The Moor circled round his opponent as a hawk circles when about to make a swoop; his Arabian steed obeyed his rider with matchless quickness; at every attack of the infidel, it seemed as if the Christian knight must sink beneath his flashing cimeter. But if Garcilasso was inferior to him in power, he was superior in agility; many of his blows he parried, others he received on his Flemish buckler, which was proof against the Damascus blade. The blood streamed from numerous wounds, received by either warrior. The Moor, seeing his antagonist exhausted, availed himself of his superior force; and, grappling, endeavoured to wrest him from his saddle. They both fell to the earth; the Moor placed his knee on the breast of his victim, and, brandishing his dagger, aimed a blow at his throat. A cry of despair was uttered by the Christian warriors, when suddenly they beheld the Moor rolling lifeless in the dust! Garcilasso had shortened his sword, and, as his adversary raised his arm to strike, had pierced him to the heart. "It was a singular and miraculous victory," says Fray Antonio Agapida; "but the Christian knight was armed by the sacred nature of his cause, and the holy Virgin gave him strength, like another David, to slay this gigantic champion of the Gentiles."

The laws of chivalry were observed throughout the combat; no one interfered on either side. Garcilasso now despoiled his adversary; then, rescuing the holy inscription of "AVE MARIA" from its degrading situation, he elevated it on the point of his sword, and bore it off as a signal of triumph, amidst the rapturous shouts of the Christian army.

The sun had now reached the meridian, and the hot blood of the Moors was inflamed by its rays, and by the sight of the defeat of their champion. Muza ordered two pieces of ordnance to open a fire upon the Christians. A confusion was produced in one part of their ranks. Muza called the chiefs of the army: "Let us waste no more time in empty challenges, let us charge upon the enemy:

he who assaults has always an advantage in the combat." So saying, he rushed forward, followed by a large body of horse and foot, and charged so furiously upon the advance guard of the Christians, that he drove it in upon the battalion of the Marquis of Cadiz. The gallant marquis now considered himself absolved from all further obedience to the queen's commands. He gave the signal to attack. "Santiago!" was shouted along the line, and he pressed forward to the encounter, with his battalion of twelve hundred lances. The other cavaliers followed his example, and the battle instantly became general.

When the king and queen beheld the armies thus rushing to the combat, they threw themselves on their knees, and implored the Holy Virgin to protect her faithful warriors. The prince and princesses, the ladies of the court, and the prelates and friars who were present, did the same; and the effect of the prayers of these illustrious and saintly persons was immediately apparent. The fierceness with which the Moors had rushed to the attack was suddenly cooled; they were bold and adroit for a skirmish, but unequal to the veteran Spaniards in the open field. A panic seized upon the foot-soldiers; they turned, and took to flight. Muza and his cavaliers in vain endeavoured to rally them. Some sought refuge in the mountains; but the greater part fled to the city, in such confusion, that they overturned and trampled upon each other. The Christians pursued them to the very gates. Upwards of two thousand were killed, wounded, or taken prisoners, and the two pieces of ordnance were brought off, as trophies of the victory. Not a Christian lance but was bathed that day in the blood of an infidel.\*

Such was the brief but sanguinary action, which was known among the Christian warriors by the name of the Queen's Skirmish; for when the Marquis of Cadiz waited upon her majesty, to apologize for breaking her commands, he attributed the victory entirely to her presence. The queen, however, insisted, that all was owing to her troops being led on by so valiant a commander. Her

majesty had not yet recovered from her agitation at beholding so terrible a scene of bloodshed; though certain veterans present pronounced it as gay and gentle a fight as they had ever witnessed.

To commemorate this victory, the queen afterwards erected a monastery in the village of Zubia, dedicated to St. Francisco; which still exists, and in its garden is a laurel planted by the hands of her majesty.\*

#### CHAPTER XCIV.

##### Conflagration of the Christian camp.

THE ravages of war had as yet spared a little portion of the vega of Granada. A green belt of gardens and orchards still flourished round the city, extending along the banks of the Xenil and the Darro. They had been the solace and delight of the inhabitants in their happier days, and contributed to their sustenance in this time of scarcity. Ferdinand determined to make a final and exterminating ravage to the very walls of the city, so that there should not remain a single green thing for the sustenance of man or beast. The evening of a hot July day shone splendidly upon the Christian camp, which was in a bustle of preparation for the next day's service; for desperate resistance was expected from the Moors. The camp made a glorious appearance in the setting sun. The various tents of the royal family and the attendant nobles were adorned with rich hangings, having sumptuous devices, and with costly furniture; forming, as it were, a little city of silk and brocade, where the pinnacles of pavilions of various gay colours, surmounted with waving standards and fluttering pennons, might vie with the domes and minarets of the capital they were besieging.

In the midst of this gaudy metropolis,

\* The house, from whence the king and queen contemplated the battle, is likewise to be seen at the present day. It is in the first street, to the right, on entering the village from the vega, and the royal arms are painted on the ceilings. It is inhabited by a worthy farmer, Francisco Garcia, who, in showing the house, refuses all compensation, with true Spanish pride; offering, on the contrary, the hospitalities of his mansion to the stranger. His children are versed in the old Spanish ballads about the exploits of Fernando Perez del Pulgar and Garcilasso de la Vega.

\* Cura de Los Palacios.

the lofty tent of the queen domineered over the rest like a stately palace. The Marquis of Cadiz had courteously surrendered his own tent to the queen. It was the most complete and splendid in Christendom, and had been carried about with him throughout the war. In the centre rose a stately alfanque, or pavilion, in oriental taste, the rich hangings being supported by columns of lances, ornamented with martial devices. This centre pavilion, or silken tower, was surrounded by other compartments, some of painted linen, lined with silk, and all separated from each other by curtains. It was one of those camp palaces, which are raised and demolished in an instant, like the city of canvass that surrounds them.

As the evening advanced, the bustle in the camp subsided. Every one sought repose, preparatory to the next day's toil. The king retired early, that he might be up with the crowing of the cock, to head the destroying army in person. All stir of military preparation was hushed in the royal quarters; the very sound of minstrelsy was mute: and not the tinkling of a guitar was to be heard from the tents of the fair ladies of the court.

The queen had retired to the innermost part of her pavilion, where she was performing her orisons before a private altar. Perhaps the peril, to which the king might be exposed in the next day's foray, inspired her with more than usual devotion. While thus at her prayers, she was suddenly aroused by a glare of light, and wreaths of suffocating smoke. In an instant, the whole tent was in a blaze: there was a high gusty wind, which whirled the light flames from tent to tent, and speedily wrapped them all in one conflagration.

Isabella had barely time to save herself by instant flight. Her first thought, on being extricated from her tent, was for the safety of the king. She rushed to his tent; but the vigilant Ferdinand was already at the entrance of it. Starting from bed on the first alarm, and fancying it an assault of the enemy, he had seized his sword and buckler, and sallied forth undressed, with his cuirass upon his arm.

The late gorgeous camp was now a scene of wild confusion. The flames kept

spreading from one pavilion to another, glaring upon the rich armour and golden and silver vessels, which seemed melting in the fervent heat. Many of the soldiery had erected booths and bowers of branches, which being dry, crackled and blazed, and added to the rapid conflagration. The ladies of the court fled shrieking and half-dressed, from their tents. There was an alarm of drum and trumpet, and a distracted hurry about the camp, of men half armed.

The Prince Juan had been snatched out of bed by an attendant, and conveyed to the quarters of the Count de Cabra, which were at the entrance of the camp. The loyal count immediately summoned his people, and those of his cousin, Don Alonso de Montemayor, and formed a guard round the tent in which the prince was sheltered.

The idea, that this was a stratagem of the Moors, soon subsided; but it was feared, that they might take advantage of it to commence an assault. The Marquis of Cadiz, therefore, sallied forth with three thousand horse, to check an advance from the city. As they passed along it was one entire scene of hurry and consternation; some hastening to their posts at the call of drum and trumpet, some attempting to save rich effects and glittering armour, others dragging along terrified and restive horses.

When they emerged from the camp, they found the whole firmament illumined. The flames whirled up in long light spires; and the air was filled with sparks and cinders. A bright glare was thrown upon the city, revealing every battlement and tower. Turbanned heads were seen gazing from every roof, and armour gleamed along the walls; yet not a single warrior sallied from the gates. The Moors suspected some stratagem on the part of the Christians, and kept quietly within their walls. By degrees the flames expired, the city faded from sight, all again became dark and quiet, and the Marquis of Cadiz returned with his cavalry to the camp.

#### CHAPTER XCV.

The last ravage before Granada.

WHEN the day dawned on the Christian camp, nothing remained of that beautiful

assemblage of stately pavilions, but heaps of smouldering rubbish, with helms, and corslets, and other furniture of war, and masses of melted gold and silver glittering among the ashes. The wardrobe of the queen was entirely destroyed; and there was an immense loss in plate, jewels, costly stuffs, and sumptuous armour of the luxurious nobles. The fire at first had been attributed to treachery, but, on investigation, it was proved to be entirely accidental. The queen, on retiring to her prayers, had ordered her lady in attendance to remove a light, burning near her couch, lest it should prevent her sleeping. Through heedlessness, the taper was placed in another part of the tent, near the hangings, which, being blown against it by a gust of wind, immediately took fire.

The wary Ferdinand knew the sanguine temperament of the Moors, and hastened to prevent their deriving confidence from the night's disaster. At break of day, the drums and trumpets sounded to arms; and the Christian army issued from among the smoking ruins of their camp in shining squadrons, with flaunting banners, and bursts of martial melodies, as though the preceding night had been a time of high festivity, instead of terror.

The Moors had beheld the conflagration with wonder and perplexity. When the day broke, and they looked towards the Christian camp, they saw nothing but a dark smoking mass. Their scouts came in with the joyful intelligence, that the whole camp was a scene of ruin. Scarce had the tidings spread throughout the city, than they beheld the Christian army advancing towards the walls. They considered it a feint to cover their desperate situation, and prepare for a retreat. Boabdil el Chico had one of his impulses of valour; he determined to take the field in person, and to follow up this signal blow, which Allah had inflicted on the enemy.

The Christian army approached close to the city, and were laying waste gardens and orchards; when Boabdil sallied forth, surrounded by all that was left of the flower and chivalry of Granada. There is one place, where even the coward becomes brave; that sacred spot called home. What, then, must have been the

valour of the Moors, a people always of fiery spirit, when the war was thus brought to their thresholds? They fought among the scenes of their loves and pleasures, the scenes of their infancy, and the haunts of their domestic life. They fought under the eyes of their wives and children, their old men and their maidens, of all that was helpless and all that was dear to them; for all Granada crowded on tower and battlement, watching with trembling heart the fate of this eventful day.

It was not so much one battle as a variety of battles. Every garden and orchard became a scene of deadly contest; every inch of ground was disputed by the Moors with an agony of grief and valour. Every inch of ground that the Christians advanced, they valiantly maintained; but never did they advance with severer fighting, or greater loss of blood.

The cavalry of Muza was in every part of the field. Wherever it came, it gave fresh ardour to the fight. The Moorish soldier, fainting with heat, fatigue, and wounds, was roused to new life at the approach of Muza; and even he, who lay gasping in the agonies of death, turned his face towards him, and faintly uttered cheers and blessings as he passed.

The Christians had by this time gained possession of various towers near the city, from whence they had been annoyed by crossbows and arquebuses. The Moors, scattered in various actions, were severely pressed. Boabdil, at the head of the cavaliers of his guard, displayed the utmost valour; mingling in the fight, in various parts of the field, and endeavouring to inspirit the foot-soldiers to the combat. But the Moorish infantry was never to be depended upon. In the heat of the action a panic seized upon them. They fled; leaving their sovereign exposed, with his handful of cavaliers, to an overwhelming force. Boabdil was on the point of falling into the hands of the Christians; when, wheeling round, with his followers, they all threw the reins on the necks of their fleet steeds, and took refuge, by dint of hoof, within the walls of the city.\*

\* Zurita, lib. xx. c. 88.

Muza endeavoured to retrieve the fortune of the field. He threw himself before the retreating infantry; calling upon them to turn, and fight for their homes, their families, for every thing that was sacred and dear to them. It was all in vain. They were totally broken and dismayed, and fled tumultuously for the gates. Muza would fain have kept the field with his cavalry; but this devoted band, having stood the brunt of war throughout this desperate campaign, was fearfully reduced in number, and many of the survivors were crippled and enfeebled by their wounds. Slowly and reluctantly he retreated to the city, his bosom swelling with indignation and despair. When he entered the gates, he ordered them to be closed, and secured with bolts and bars; for he refused to place any further confidence in the archers and arquebusiers, who were stationed to defend them; and he vowed never more to sally forth with foot-soldiers to the field.

In the mean time, the artillery thundered from the walls, and checked all further advances of the Christians. King Ferdinand, therefore, called off his troops, and returned in triumph to the ruins of his camp; leaving the beautiful city of Granada, wrapped in the smoke of her fields and gardens, and surrounded by the bodies of her slaughtered children.

Such was the last sally made by the Moors in defence of their favourite city. The French ambassador, who witnessed it, was filled with wonder at the prowess, the dexterity, and daring, of the Moslems. In truth, this whole war was an instance, memorable in history, of the most persevering resolution. For nearly ten years had the war endured, exhibiting an almost uninterrupted series of disasters to the Moorish arms. Their towns had been taken one after another, and their brethren slain, or led into captivity. Yet they disputed every city, and town, and fortress, and castle; nay, every rock itself, as if they had been inspired by victories. Wherever they could plant foot to fight, or find wall or cliff from whence to launch an arrow, they disputed their beloved country; and now, when their capital was cut off from all relief, and had a whole nation thundering

at its gates, they still maintained defence, as if they hoped some miracle to interpose in their behalf. "Their obstinate resistance," says an ancient chronicler, "shows the grief with which the Moors yielded up the vega, which was to them a paradise and heaven. Exerting all the strength of their arms, they embraced, as it were, that most beloved soil, from which neither wounds, nor defeats, nor death itself, could part them. They stood firm, battling for it with the united force of love and grief; never drawing back the foot while they had hands to fight, or fortune to befriend them."\*

## CHAPTER XCVI.

Building of the city of Santa Fé. Despair of the Moors.

THE Moors now shut themselves up gloomily within their walls. There were no longer any daring sallies from their gates; and even the martial clangour of the drum and trumpet, which had continually resounded within the warrior city, was now seldom heard from its battlements. For a time they flattered themselves with hopes, that the late conflagration of the camp would discourage the besiegers; that, as in former years, their invasion would end with the summer, and that they would again withdraw before the autumnal rains. The measures of Ferdinand and Isabella soon crushed these hopes. They gave orders to build a regular city upon the site of their camp, to convince the Moors, that the siege was to endure until the surrender of Granada. Nine of the principal cities of Spain were charged with this stupendous undertaking, and they emulated each other with a zeal worthy of the cause. "It verily seemed," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "as though some miracle operated to aid this pious work, so rapidly did arise a formidable city, with solid edifices, and powerful walls, and mighty towers, where lately had been seen nothing but tents and light pavilions. The city was traversed by two principal streets, in form of a cross; terminating in four gates, facing the four winds; and in the centre was a vast square, where the whole army might be assembled. To this city it was

\* Abarca, Reyes de Aragon, rey xxx. c. 3.

proposed to give the name of Isabella, so dear to the army and the nation; but that pious princess," adds Antonio Agapida, "calling to mind the holy cause in which it was erected, gave it the name of Santa Fé, or the city of the Holy Faith; and it remains to this day, a monument of the piety and glory of the catholic sovereigns."

Hither the merchants soon resorted from all points. Long trains of mules were seen every day entering and departing from its gates; the streets were crowded with magazines filled with all kinds of costly and luxurious merchandise; a scene of bustling commerce and prosperity took place, while unhappy Granada remained shut up and desolate.

In the mean time the besieged city began to suffer the distress of famine. Its supplies were all cut off. A cavalgada of flocks and herds, and mules laden with money, coming to the relief of the city from the mountains of the Alpujarras, was taken by the Marquis of Cadiz, and led in triumph to the camp, in sight of the suffering Moors. Autumn arrived; but the harvests had been swept from the face of the country; a rigorous winter was approaching, and the city was almost destitute of provisions. The people sank into deep despondency. They called to mind all that had been predicted by astrologers at the birth of their ill-starred sovereign, and all that had been foretold of the fate of Granada, at the time of the capture of Zahara.

Boabdil was alarmed by the gathering dangers from without, and by the clamours of his starving people. He summoned a council, composed of the principal officers of the army, the alcajdes of the fortresses, the xeques, or sages of the city, and the alfaquis, or doctors of the faith. They assembled in the great hall of audience of the Alhambra, and despair was painted in their countenances. Boabdil demanded of them what was to be done in the present extremity; and their answer was, "Surrender." The venerable Abul Cazim Abdelmelic, governor of the city, represented its unhappy state. "Our granaries are nearly exhausted, and no further supplies are to be expected. The provender for the war-horses is required as sustenance for the soldiery; the very horses themselves are

killed for food. Of seven thousand steeds, which once could be sent into the field, three hundred only remain. Our city contains two hundred thousand inhabitants, old and young, with each a mouth that calls piteously for bread."

The xeques and principal citizens declared, that the people could no longer sustain the labours and sufferings of a defence: "And of what avail is our defence," said they, "when the enemy is determined to persist in the siege? what alternative remains, but to surrender, or to die?"

The heart of Boabdil was touched by this appeal, and he maintained a gloomy silence. He had cherished some faint hope of relief from the Soldan of Egypt, or the Barbary powers; but it was now at an end. Even if such assistance were to be sent, he had no longer a seaport where it might debark. The counsellors saw, that the resolution of the king was shaken, and they united their voices in urging him to capitulate.

The valiant Muza alone arose in opposition. "It is yet too early," said he, "to talk of a surrender. Our means are not exhausted; we have yet one source of strength remaining, terrible in its effects, and which often has achieved the most signal victory. It is our despair. Let us rouse the mass of the people; let us put weapons in their hands; let us fight the enemy to the very utmost, until we rush upon the points of their lances. I am ready to lead the way into the thickest of their squadrons; and much rather would I be numbered among those who fell in the defence of Granada, than of those who survived to capitulate for her surrender!"

The words of Muza were without effect, for they were addressed to broken-spirited and heartless men, or men perhaps to whom sad experience had taught discretion. They were arrived at that state of public depression, when heroes and heroism are no longer regarded, and when old men and their counsels rise into importance. Boabdil el Chico yielded to the general voice. It was determined to capitulate with the Christian sovereigns, and the venerable Abul Cazim Abdelmelic was sent forth to the camp, empowered to treat for terms.

## CHAPTER XCVII.

## Capitulation of Granada.

THE old governor, Abul Cazim Abdelmelic, was received with great distinction by Ferdinand and Isabella, who appointed Gonsalvo of Cordova, and Fernando de Zafra, secretary to the king, to confer with him. All Granada awaited in trembling anxiety the result of his negotiations. After repeated conferences, he at length returned with the ultimate terms of the catholic sovereigns. They agreed to suspend all attack for seventy days, at the end of which time, if no succour should have arrived to the Moorish king, the city of Granada was to be surrendered.

All Christian captives were to be liberated without ransom.

Boabdil and his principal cavaliers were to take an oath of fealty to the Castilian crown; and certain valuable territories in the Alpuxarras mountains were to be assigned to the Moorish monarch for his maintenance.

The Moors of Granada were to become subjects of the Spanish sovereigns, retaining their possessions, their arms, and horses, and yielding up nothing but their artillery. They were to be protected in the exercise of their religion, and governed by their own laws, administered by cadis of their own faith, under governors appointed by the sovereigns. They were to be exempted from tribute for three years, after which term the pay was to be the same as they had been accustomed to render to their native monarchs.

Those who chose to depart for Africa, within three years, were to be provided with a passage for themselves and their effects, free of charge, from whatever port they should prefer.

For the fulfilment of these articles, four hundred hostages from the principal families were required, previous to the surrender, to be subsequently restored. The son of the King of Granada, and all other hostages in the possession of the Castilian sovereigns, were to be given up at the same time.

Such were the conditions that the wazir, Abul Cazim, laid before the council

of Granada, as the best that could be obtained from the besieging foe.

When the members of the council found that the awful moment had arrived, in which they were to sign and seal the perdition of their empire, and blot themselves out as a nation, all firmness deserted them, and many gave way to tears. Muza alone retained an unaltered mien. "Leave, seniors," cried he, "this idle lamentation to helpless women and children. We are men; we have hearts, not to shed tender tears, but drops of blood. I see the spirit of the people so cast down, that it is impossible to save the kingdom. Yet there still remains an alternative for noble minds—a glorious death! Let us die defending our liberty, and avenging the woes of Granada! Our mother Earth will receive her children into her bosom, safe from the chains and oppressions of the conqueror; or, should any fail of a sepulchre to hide his remains, he will not want a sky to cover him: Allah forbid it should be said, the nobles of Granada feared to die in her defence!"

Muza ceased to speak, and a dead silence reigned in the assembly. Boabdil el Chico looked anxiously round, and scanned every face; but he read in them all the anxiety of care-worn men, in whose hearts enthusiasm was dead, and who had grown callous to every chivalrous appeal. "Allah achbar! God is great!" exclaimed he: "there is no God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet! it is in vain to struggle against the will of heaven. Too surely was it written in the book of fate, that I should be unfortunate, and the kingdom expire under my rule!"

"Allah achbar! God is great!" echoed the viziers and alfaquis: "the will of God be done!" So they all accorded with the king, that these evils were pre-ordained; that it was hopeless to contend with them; and that the terms offered by the Castilian monarchs were as favourable as could be expected. When Muza saw, that they were about to sign the treaty of surrender, he rose, in violent indignation. "Do not deceive yourselves," cried he, "nor think the Christians will be faithful to their promises, or their king as magnanimous in conquest, as he has been victorious in war. Death

is the least we have to fear: it is the plundering and sacking of our city, the profanation of our mosques, the ruin of our homes, the violation of our wives and daughters; cruel oppression, bigoted intolerance, whips and chains; the dungeon, the fagot, and the stake: such are the miseries and indignities we shall see and suffer; at least those grovelling souls will see them, who now shrink from an honourable death. For my part, by Allah, I will never witness them!" With these words he left the council-chamber, and strode gloomily through the Court of Lions, and the outer halls of the Alhambra, without deigning to speak to the obsequious courtiers who attended in them. He repaired to his dwelling, armed himself at all points, mounted his favourite war-horse, and issuing forth from the city by the gate of Elvira, he was never seen or heard of more.\*

Such is the account given by Arabian historians of the exit of Muza ben Abel Gazan: but the venerable Fray Antonio Agapida endeavours to clear up the mystery of his fate. That very evening, a party of Andalusian cavaliers, somewhat more than half a score of lances, were riding along the banks of the Xenil, where it winds through the vega. They beheld in the twilight a Moorish warrior approaching, closely locked up from head to foot in proof. His visor was closed, his lance in rest, his powerful charger barbed, like himself, in steel. The Christians were lightly armed, with corslet, helm, and target; for, during the truce, they apprehended no attack. Seeing, however, the unknown warrior approach in this hostile guise, they challenged him to stand and declare himself.

The Moslem answered not; but, charging into the midst of them, transfixing one knight with his lance, and bore him out of his saddle to the earth. Wheeling round, he attacked the others with his cimeter. His blows were furious and deadly: he seemed regardless of what wounds he received, so he could but slay. He was evidently fighting, not for glory, but revenge; eager to inflict death, but careless of surviving to enjoy victory. Nearly one half of the cavaliers fell be-

\* Conde, part iv.

neath his sword, before he received a dangerous wound, so completely was he cased in armour of proof. At length he was desperately wounded; and his steed, being pierced by a lance, fell to the ground. The Christians, admiring the valour of the Moor, would have spared his life; but he continued to fight upon his knees, brandishing a keen dagger of Fez. Finding at length he could no longer battle, and determined not to be taken prisoner, he threw himself, with an expiring exertion, into the Xenil; and his armour sank him to the bottom of the stream.

This unknown warrior the venerable Agapida pronounces to have been Muza ben Abel Gazan; and says, his horse was recognised by certain converted Moors of the Christian camp: the fact, however, has always remained in doubt.

#### CHAPTER XCVIII.

##### Commotions in Granada.

THE capitulation for the surrender of Granada was signed on the 25th of November, 1491, and produced a sudden cessation of those hostilities, which had raged for so many years. The Christian and Moor might now be seen mingling courteously on the banks of the Xenil and the Darro, where to have met a few days previous would have produced a scene of sanguinary contest. Still, as the Moors might be suddenly aroused to defence, if, within the allotted term of seventy days, succours should arrive from abroad; and as they were at all times a rash, inflammable people, the wary Ferdinand maintained a vigilant watch upon the city and permitted no supplies of any kind to enter. His garrisons in the seaports, and his cruisers in the Straits of Gibraltar, were ordered likewise to guard against any relief from the Grand Soldan of Egypt, or the princes of Barbary.

There was no need of such precautions. Those powers were either too much engrossed by their own wars, or too much daunted by the success of the Spanish arms, to interfere in a desperate cause; and the unfortunate Moors of Granada were abandoned to their fate.

The month of December had nearly



passed away; the famine became extreme; and there was no hope of any favourable event within the term specified in the capitulation. Boabdil saw, that to hold out to the end of the allotted time would only be to protract the miseries of his people. With the consent of his council, he determined to surrender the city on the 6th of January. On the 30th of December he sent his grand vizier, Josef Aben Comixa, with the four hundred hostages, to King Ferdinand to make known his intention; bearing him, at the same time, a present of a magnificent cimeter, and two Arabian steeds, superbly caparisoned.

The unfortunate Boabdil was doomed to meet with trouble to the end of his career. The very next day, the santon, or dervise, Hamet Aben Zarrax, the same who had uttered prophecies and excited commotions on former occasions, suddenly made his appearance. Whence he came no one knew: it was rumoured, that he had been in the mountains of the Alpuxarras, and on the coast of Barbary, endeavouring to rouse the Moslems to the relief of Granada. He was reduced to a skeleton. His eyes glowed in their sockets like coals, and his speech was little better than frantic raving. He harangued the populace in the streets and squares; inveighed against the capitulation; denounced the king and nobles as Moslems only in name; and called upon the people to sally forth against the unbelievers, for that Allah had decreed them a signal victory.

Upwards of twenty thousand of the populace seized their arms, and paraded the streets with shouts and outcries. The shops and houses were shut up; the king himself did not dare to venture forth, but remained a kind of prisoner in the Alhambra.

The turbulent multitude continued running, and shouting, and howling about the city, during the day and part of the night. Hunger and a wintry tempest tamed their frenzy; and, when morning came, the enthusiast who had led them on had disappeared. Whether he had been disposed of by the emissaries of the king, or by the leading men of the city, is not known; his disappearance remaining a mystery.

The Moorish king now issued from the Alhambra, attended by his principal nobles, and harangued the populace. He set forth the necessity of complying with the capitulation, from the famine that reigned in the city, the futility of defence, and from the hostages having already been delivered into the hands of the besiegers.

In the dejection of his spirits, the unfortunate Boabdil attributed to himself the miseries of the country. "It was my crime in ascending the throne in rebellion against my father," said he, mournfully, "which has brought these woes upon the kingdom; but Allah has grievously visited my sins upon my head! For your sake, my people, I have now made this treaty to protect you from the sword, your little ones from famine, your wives and daughters from the outrages of war, and to secure you in the enjoyment of your properties, your liberties, your laws, and your religion, under a sovereign of happier destinies than the ill-starred Boabdil!" The versatile populace were touched by the humility of their sovereign: they agreed to adhere to the capitulation; there was even a faint shout of "Long live Boabdil the unfortunate!" and they all returned to their homes in perfect tranquillity.

Boabdil immediately sent missives to King Ferdinand, apprising him of these events, and of his fears lest further delay should produce new tumults. He proposed, therefore, to surrender the city on the following day. The Castilian sovereigns assented with great satisfaction; and preparations were made, both in city and camp, for this great event, that was to seal the fate of Granada.

It was a night of doleful lamentings within the walls of the Alhambra; for the household of Boabdil were preparing to take a last farewell of that delightful abode. All the royal treasures, and the most precious effects of the Alhambra, were hastily packed upon mules; the beautiful apartments were despoiled, with tears and wailings, by their own inhabitants. Before the dawn of day, a mournful cavalcade moved obscurely out of a postern-gate of the Alhambra, and departed through one of the most retired quarters of the city. It was composed

of the family of the unfortunate Boabdil, whom he sent off thus privately, that they might not be exposed to the eyes of scoffers, or the exultation of the enemy. The mother of Boabdil, the sultana Ayxa la Horra, rode on in silence, with dejected yet dignified demeanour; but his wife Zorayma, and all the females of his household, gave way to loud lamentations, as they gave a last look to their favourite abode; now a mass of gloomy towers behind them. They were attended by the ancient domestics of the household, and by a small guard of veteran Moors, loyally attached to the fallen monarch, and who would have sold their lives dearly in defence of his family. The city was yet buried in sleep, as they passed through its silent streets. The guards at the gate shed tears as they opened it for their departure. They tarried not, but proceeded along the banks of the Xenil, on the road that leads to the Alpuxarras, until they arrived at a hamlet, at some distance from the city, where they halted, and waited until they should be joined by King Boabdil.

#### CHAPTER XCIX.

##### Surrender of Granada.

THE sun had scarcely begun to shed his beams upon the summits of the snowy mountains which rise above Granada, when the Christian camp was in motion. A detachment of horse and foot, led by distinguished cavaliers, and accompanied by Hernando de Talavera, bishop of Avila, proceeded to take possession of the Alhambra and the towers. It had been stipulated in the capitulation, that the detachment sent for the purpose should not enter by the streets of the city. A road had, therefore, been opened outside of the walls, leading by the Puerta de los Molinos (or the Gate of the Mills) to the summit of the Hill of Martyrs, and across the hill to a postern-gate of the Alhambra.

When the detachment arrived at the summit of the hill, the Moorish king came forth from the gate, attended by a handful of cavaliers, leaving his vizier, Josef Aben Comixa, to deliver up the palace. "Go, senior," said he, to the commander of the detachment; "go, and

take possession of those fortresses, which Allah has bestowed upon your powerful lord, in punishment of the sins of the Moors!" He said no more, but passed mournfully on, along the same road by which the Spanish cavaliers had come; descending to the vega, to meet the catholic sovereigns. The troops entered the Alhambra, the gates of which were wide open, and all its splendid courts and halls silent and deserted. In the mean time, the Christian court and army poured out of the city of Santa Fé, and advanced across the vega. The king and queen, with the prince and princesses, and the dignitaries and ladies of the court, took the lead; accompanied by the different orders of monks and friars, and surrounded by the royal guards, splendidly arrayed. The procession moved slowly forward, and paused at the village of Armilla, at the distance of half a league from the city.

The sovereigns waited here with impatience, their eyes fixed on the lofty tower of the Alhambra, watching for the appointed signal of possession. The time, that had elapsed since the departure of the detachment, seemed to them more than necessary for the purpose; and the anxious mind of Ferdinand began to entertain doubts of some commotion in the city. At length they saw the silver cross, the great standard of this crusade, elevated on the Torre de la Vela, or great watchtower, and sparkling in the sunbeams. This was done by Hernando de Talavera, bishop of Avila. Beside it was planted the pennon of the glorious apostle St. James; and a great shout of "Santiago! Santiago!" rose throughout the army. Lastly was reared the royal standard, by the king of arms; with the shout of "Castile! Castile! For King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella!" The words were echoed by the whole army, with acclamations that resounded across the vega. At sight of these signals of possession, the sovereigns fell upon their knees, giving thanks to God for this great triumph. The whole assembled host followed their example; and the choristers of the royal chapel broke forth into the solemn anthem of *Te Deum laudamus!*

The procession now resumed its march, with joyful alacrity, to the sound of tri-

umphant music, until they came to a small mosque, near the banks of the Xenil, and not far from the foot of the Hill of Martyrs, which edifice remains to the present day consecrated as the hermitage of St. Sebastian. Here the sovereigns were met by the unfortunate Boabdil, accompanied by about fifty cavaliers and domestics. As he drew near, he would have dismounted, in token of homage; but Ferdinand prevented him. He then proffered to kiss the king's hand, but this sign of vassalage was likewise declined: whereupon, not to be outdone in magnanimity, he leaned forward, and saluted the right arm of Ferdinand. Queen Isabella, also, refused to receive this ceremonial of homage; and, to console him under his adversity, delivered to him his son, who had remained as hostage ever since Boabdil's liberation from captivity. The Moorish monarch pressed his child to his bosom with tender emotion, and they seemed mutually endeared to each other by their misfortunes.\*

He then delivered the keys of the city to King Ferdinand, with an air of mingled melancholy and resignation. "These keys," said he, "are the last relics of the Arabian empire in Spain. Thine, O king, are our trophies, our kingdom, and our person! Such is the will of God! Receive them with the clemency thou hast promised, and which we look for at thy hands!"†

King Ferdinand restrained his exultation into an air of serene magnanimity. "Doubt not our promises," replied he; "or, that thou shalt regain from our friendship the prosperity of which the fortune of war has deprived thee."

On receiving the keys, King Ferdinand handed them to the queen. She, in her turn, presented them to her son, Prince Juan, who delivered them to the Count de Tendilla; that brave and loyal cavalier being appointed alcaide of the city, and captain-general of the kingdom of Granada.

Having surrendered the last symbol of power, the unfortunate Boabdil continued on towards the Alpuxarras, that he might not behold the entrance of the Christians into his capital. His devoted

band of cavaliers followed him in gloomy silence; but heavy sighs burst from their bosoms, as shouts of joy and strains of triumphant music were borne on the breeze from the victorious army.

Having rejoined his family, Boabdil set forward with a heavy heart for his allotted residence, in the valley of Porchena. At two leagues' distance, the cavalcade, winding into the skirts of the Alpuxarras, ascended an eminence commanding the last view of Granada. As they arrived at this spot, the Moors paused involuntarily, to take a farewell gaze at their beloved city, which a few steps more would shut from their sight for ever. Never had it appeared so lovely in their eyes. The sunshine, so bright in that transparent climate, lighted up each tower and minaret, and rested gloriously upon the crowning battlements of the Alhambra; while the vega spread its enamelled bosom of verdure below, glistening with the silver windings of the Xenil. The Moorish cavaliers gazed with a silent agony of tenderness and grief, upon that delicious abode, the scene of their loves and pleasures. While they yet looked, a light cloud of smoke burst forth from the citadel; and, presently, a peal of artillery, faintly heard, told that the city was taken possession of, and the throne of the Moslem kings was lost for ever. The heart of Boabdil, softened by misfortunes and overcharged with grief, could no longer contain itself. "Allah achbar! God is great!" said he; but the words of resignation died upon his lips, and he burst into a flood of tears.

His mother, the intrepid sultana Ayla la Horra, was indignant at his weakness. "You do well," said she, "to weep like a woman, for what you failed to defend like a man!"

The vizier Aben Comixa endeavoured to console his royal master. "Consider, sire," said he, "that the most signal misfortunes often render men as renowned as the most prosperous achievements, provided they sustain them with magnanimity." The unhappy monarch, however, was not to be consoled. His tears continued to flow. "Allah achbar!" exclaimed he, "when did misfortunes ever equal mine!"

From this circumstance, the hill, which

\* Zurita, *Anales de Aragon*.

† Abarca, *Anales de Aragon*, rey xxx, c. 3.

is not far from Padul, took the name of Fez Allah Achbar; but the point of view commanding the last prospect of Granada is known among the Spaniards by the name of *El último suspiro del Moro*, or "the last sigh of the Moor."

#### CHAPTER C.

##### How the Castilian sovereigns took possession of Granada.

WHEN the Castilian sovereigns had received the keys of Granada, from the hands of Boabdil el Chico, the royal army resumed its triumphal march. As it approached the gates of the city, in all the pomp of courtly and chivalrous array, a procession of a different kind came forth to meet it. This was composed of more than five hundred Christian captives, many of whom had languished for years in Moorish dungeons. Pale and emaciated, they came clanking their chains in triumph, and shedding tears of joy. They were received with tenderness by the sovereigns. The king hailed them as good Spaniards; as men loyal and brave; as martyrs to the holy cause. The queen distributed liberal relief among them with her own hands, and they passed on before the squadrons of the army, singing hymns of jubilee.\*

The sovereigns did not enter the city on the day of its surrender; but waited until it should be fully occupied by their troops, and public tranquillity insured. The Marquis de Villena, and the Count de Tendilla, with three thousand cavalry, and as many infantry, marched in, and took possession, accompanied by the proselyte prince, Cidi Yahye, now known by the Christian appellation of Don Pedro de Granada, who was appointed chief al-guazil of the city, and had charge of the Moorish inhabitants; and by his son, the late Prince Alnayer, now Don Alonso de Granada, who was appointed admiral of the fleets. In a little while every battlement glistened with Christian helms and lances, the standard of the faith and of the realm floated from every tower, and the thundering salvos of the ordnance told, that the subjugation of the city was complete.

\* Abarca, ubi supra. Zurita, etc.

The grandees and cavaliers now knelt, and kissed the hands of the king and queen, and the Prince Juan, and congratulated them on the acquisition of so great a kingdom; after which the royal procession returned in state to Santa Fé.

It was on the 6th of January, the day of Kings, and the festival of the Epiphany, that the sovereigns made their triumphal entry. "The king and queen," says the worthy Fray Antonio Agapida, "looked on this occasion as more than mortal. The venerable ecclesiastics, to whose advice and zeal this glorious conquest ought in a great measure to be attributed, moved along, with hearts swelling with holy exultation, but with chastened and downcast looks of edifying humility; while the hardy warriors, in tossing plumes and shining steel, seemed elevated with a stern joy, at finding themselves in possession of this object of so many toils and perils. As the streets resounded with the tramp of steed, and swelling peals of music, the Moors buried themselves in the deepest recesses of their dwellings. There they bewailed in secret the fallen glory of their race; but suppressed their groans, lest they should be heard by their enemies, and increase their triumph."

The royal procession advanced to the principal mosque, which had been consecrated as a cathedral. Here the sovereigns offered up prayers and thanksgivings, and the choir of the royal chapel chanted a triumphant anthem, in which they were joined by all the courtiers and cavaliers. "Nothing," says Fray Antonio Agapida, "could exceed the thankfulness to God of the pious King Ferdinand, for having enabled him to eradicate from Spain the empire and name of that accursed heathen race, and for the elevation of the cross in that city, wherein the impious doctrines of Mahomet had so long been cherished. In the fervour of his spirit, he supplicated from Heaven a continuance of its grace, and that this glorious triumph might be perpetuated."\* The prayer of the pious monarch was responded by the people,

\* The words of Fray Antonio Agapida are little more than an echo of those of the worthy Jesuit, Father Mariana, (l. xxv, c. 18.)

and even his enemies were for once convinced of his sincerity.

When the religious ceremonies were concluded, the court ascended to the stately palace of the Alhambra, and entered by the great gate of justice. The halls, lately occupied by turbaned infidels, now rustled with stately dames and Christian courtiers, who wandered with eager curiosity over this far-famed palace, admiring its verdant courts and gushing fountains, its halls decorated with elegant arabesques, and storied with inscriptions, and the splendour of its gilded and brilliantly painted ceilings.

It had been a last request of the unfortunate Boabdil, and one which showed how deeply he felt the transition of his fate, that no person might be permitted to enter or depart by the gate of the Alhambra through which he had sallied forth to surrender his capital. His request was granted: the portal was closed up, and remains so to the present day; a mute memorial of that event.\*

The Spanish sovereigns fixed their throne in the presence-chamber of the palace, so long the seat of Moorish royalty. Hither the principal inhabitants of Granada repaired, to pay them homage, and kiss their hands, in token of vassalage; and their example was followed by deputies from all the towns and fortresses of the Alpuxarras, which had not hitherto submitted.

Thus terminated the war of Granada, after ten years of incessant fighting;

\* Garibay, *Compend. Hist.*, l. xl, c. 42.

The existence of this gateway, and the story connected with it, are perhaps known to few, but were identified in the researches made to verify this history. The gateway is at the bottom of a great tower, at some distance from the main body of the Alhambra. The tower has been rent and ruined by gunpowder at the time when the fortress was evacuated by the French. Great masses lie around, half-covered by vines and fig-trees. A poor man, by the name of Mateo Ximenes, who lives in one of the hovels among the ruins of the Alhambra, where his family has lived for many generations, pointed out the gateway, still closed up with stones. He remembered to have heard his father and grandfather say, that it had always been stopped up, and that out of it King Boabdil had gone, when he surrendered Granada. The route of the unfortunate king may be traced from thence across the garden of the convent of *Los Martyres*, and down a ravine beyond, through a street of gipsy caves and hovels, by the gate of *Los Mylinos*, and so on to the *Hermitage of St. Sebastian*. None but an antiquarian, however, will be able to trace it, unless aided by the humble historian of the place, Mateo Ximenes.

“equalling, says Fray Antonio Agapida, “the far-famed siege of Troy in duration, and ending, like that, in the capture of the city.” Thus ended, also, the dominion of the Moors in Spain, after having endured seven hundred and seventy-eight years from the memorable defeat of Roderick, the last of the Goths, on the banks of the Guadalete. The authentic Agapida is uncommonly particular in fixing the epoch of this event. This great triumph of our holy catholic faith,” according to his computation, “took place in the beginning of January, in the year of our Lord 1492; being 3655 years from the population of Spain by the patriarch Tubal; 3797 from the general deluge; 5453 from the creation of the world, according to Hebrew calculation; and in the month Rabic, in the 897th year of the Hegira, or flight of Mahomet: whom may God confound!” saith the pious Agapida.

## APPENDIX.

### FATE OF BOABDIL EL CHICO.

THE Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada is finished: but the reader may be desirous of knowing the subsequent fortunes of some of the principal personages. The unfortunate Boabdil retired to the valley of Porchena, where a small but fertile territory had been allotted him; comprising several towns, with all their rights and revenues. Great estates had likewise been bestowed on his vizier, Jusef Aben Comixa, and his valiant relation and friend Jusef Venegas, both of whom resided near him. Were it in the heart of man, in the enjoyment of present competence, to forget past splendour, Boabdil might at length have been happy. Dwelling in the bosom of a delightful valley, surrounded by obedient vassals, devoted friends, and a loving family, he might have looked back upon his past career as upon a troubled and terrific dream; and might have thanked his

stars, that he had at length awaked to sweet and tranquil security. But the dethroned prince could never forget, that he had once been a monarch; and the remembrance of the regal splendours of Granada made all present comforts contemptible in his eyes. No exertions were spared by Ferdinand and Isabella, to induce him to embrace the catholic religion: but he remained true to the faith of his fathers; and it added not a little to his humiliation, to live a vassal under Christian sovereigns.

It is probable, that his residence in the kingdom was equally irksome to the politic Ferdinand, who could not feel perfectly secure in his newly-conquered territories, while there was one within their bounds, who might revive pretensions to the throne. A private bargain was therefore made, in the year 1496, between Ferdinand and Jusef Aben Comixa; in which the latter, as vizier of Boabdil, undertook to dispose of his master's scanty territory for eighty thousand ducats of gold. This, it is affirmed, was done without the consent or knowledge of Boabdil; but the vizier probably thought he was acting for the best. The shrewd Ferdinand does not appear to have made any question about the right of the vizier to make the sale; but paid the money with secret exultation. Jusef Aben Comixa loaded the treasure upon mules, and departed joyfully for the Alpuxarras. He spread the money in triumph before Boabdil. "Señor," said he, "I have observed, that, as long as you live here, you are exposed to constant peril. The Moors are rash and irritable. They may make some sudden insurrection, elevate your standard as a pretext, and thus overwhelm you and your friends with utter ruin. I have observed, also, that you pine away with grief; being continually reminded in this country, that you were once its sovereign, but never more must hope, to reign. I have put an end to these evils. Your territory is sold. Behold the price of it. With this gold, you may buy far greater possessions in Africa, where you may live in honour and security."

When Boabdil heard these words, he burst into a sudden transport of rage; and, drawing his cimeter, would have sacrificed the officious Jusef on the spot, had

not the attendants interfered, and hurried the vizier from his presence.

Boabdil was not of a vindictive spirit, and his anger soon passed away. He saw, that the evil was done; and he knew the spirit of the politic Ferdinand too well, to hope that he would retract the bargain. Gathering together the money, therefore, and all his jewels and precious effects, he departed with his family and household for a port, where a vessel had been carefully provided by the Castilian king to transport them to Africa.

A crowd of his former subjects witnessed his embarkation. As the sails were unfurled, and swelled to the breeze, and the vessel parted from the land, the spectators would fain have given him a parting cheering; but the humble state of their once proud sovereign forced itself upon their minds, and the ominous surname of his youth rose involuntarily to their tongues. "Farewell, Boabdil! Allah preserve thee, El Zogoybi!" burst spontaneously from their lips. The unlucky appellation sank into the heart of the expatriated monarch; and tears dimmed his eyes, as the snowy summits of the mountains of Granada gradually faded from his view.

He was received with welcome at the court of his relation, Muley Ahmed, King of Fez; and resided for many years in his territories. How he passed his life, whether repining or resigned, history does not mention. The last we find recorded of him is in the year 1526, thirty-four years after the surrender of Granada, when he followed the King of Fez to the field to quell the rebellion of two brothers, named Xerifes. The armies came in sight of each other on the banks of Guadiswed, at the ford of Bacuba. The river was deep; the banks were high and broken. For three days the armies remained firing at each other across the stream, neither party venturing to attempt the dangerous ford.

At length the King of Fez divided his army into three battalions; the first led on by his son and by Boabdil el Chico. They boldly dashed across the ford, scrambled up the opposite bank, and attempted to keep the enemy employed, until the other battalions should have time to cross. The rebel army, however,

attacked them with such fury, that the son of the King of Fez and several of the bravest alcaides were slain upon the spot, and multitudes driven back into the river, which was already crowded with passing troops. A dreadful confusion took place; the horse trampled upon the foot; the enemy pressed on them with fearful slaughter; those who escaped the sword perished by the stream. The river was choked by the dead bodies of men and horses, and by the scattered baggage of the army. In this scene of horrible carnage fell Boabdil, truly called El Zogoybi, or the unlucky: "an instance," says the ancient chronicler, "of the scornful caprice of fortune; dying in defence of the kingdom of another, after wanting spirit to die in defence of his own."\*

*Note.*—A portrait of Boabdil El Chico is to be seen in the picture-gallery of the Generalife. He is represented with a mild, handsome face, a fair complexion, and yellow hair. His dress is of yellow brocade, relieved with black velvet, and he has a black velvet cap, surmounted with a crown. In the armoury of Madrid are two suits of armour, said to have belonged to him, one of solid steel, with very little ornament; the morion closed. From the proportions of these suits of armour, he must have been of full stature and vigorous form.

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DEATH

OF

THE MARQUIS OF CADIZ.

THE renowned Roderigo Ponce de Leon, Marquis Duke of Cadiz, was unquestionably the most distinguished among the cavaliers of Spain, for his zeal, enterprise, and heroism, in the great crusade of Granada. He began the war by the capture of Alhama; he was engaged in almost every inroad and siege of importance during its continuance; and he was present at the surrender of the capital, which was the closing scene of the conquest. The renown he thus acquired was sealed by

\* Marmol., *Descrip. de Africa*, p. i. l. ii. c. 40. *Idem. Hist. Reb. de los Moros*, l. i. c. 21.

his death, in the forty-eighth year of his age, which happened almost immediately at the close of his triumphs, and before a leaf of his laurels had time to wither. He died at his palace, in the city of Seville, on the twenty-seventh day of August, 1492, but a few months after the surrender of Granada, and of an illness caused by the exposure and fatigues he had undergone in this memorable war. That honest chronicler, Andres Bernaldes, the curate of Los Palacios, who was a contemporary of the marquis, draws his portrait from actual knowledge and observation. "He was universally cited," says he, "as the most perfect model of chivalrous virtue of the age. He was temperate, chaste, and rigidly devout; a benignant commander, a valiant defender of his vassals, a great lover of justice, and an enemy to all flatterers, liars, robbers, traitors, and poltroons. His ambition was of a lofty kind; he sought to distinguish himself and his family by heroic and resounding deeds, and to increase the patrimony of his ancestors by the acquisition of castles, domains, vassals, and other princely possessions. His recreations were all of a warlike nature: he delighted in geometry, as applied to fortifications, and spent much time and treasure in erecting and repairing fortresses. He relished music, but of a military kind; the sound of clarions and sackbuts, of drums and trumpets. Like a true cavalier, he was a protector of the sex on all occasions, and an injured woman never applied to him in vain for redress. His prowess was so well known, and his courtesy to the fair, that the ladies of the court, when they accompanied the queen to the wars, rejoiced to find themselves under his protection; for, wherever his banner was displayed, the Moors dreaded to adventure. He was a faithful and devoted friend, but a formidable enemy; for he was slow to forgive, and his vengeance was persevering and terrible.

The death of this good cavalier spread grief and lamentation throughout all ranks; for he was universally honoured and beloved. His relations, dependents, and companions in arms, put on mourning for his loss; and so numerous were

they, that half of Seville was clad in black. None, however, deplored his death more deeply and sincerely than his friend and chosen companion, Don Alonso de Aguilar.

The funeral ceremonies were of the most solemn and sumptuous kind. The body of the marquis was arrayed in a costly shirt, a doublet of brocade, a sayo, or long robe of black velvet, a marlota, or Moorish tunic of brocade, that reached to the feet, and scarlet stockings. His sword, superbly gilt, was girded to his side, as he used to wear it when in the field. Thus magnificently attired, the body was enclosed in a coffin, which was covered with black velvet, and decorated with a cross of white damask. It was then placed on a sumptuous bier, in the centre of the great hall of the palace.

Here the duchess made great lamentation over the body of her lord, in which she was joined by her train of damsels and attendants, as well as by the pages and esquires, and innumerable vassals of the marquis.

In the close of the evening, just before the "Ave Maria," the funeral train issued from the palace. Ten banners were borne around the bier, the particular trophies of the marquis, won from the Moors by his valour in individual enterprises, before King Ferdinand had commenced the war of Granada. The procession was swelled by an immense train of bishops, priests, and friars of different orders, together with the civil and military authorities, and all the chivalry of Seville; headed by the Count of Cifuentes, at that time intendente, or commander of the city. It moved slowly and solemnly through the streets, stopping occasionally, and chanting litanies and responses. Two hundred and forty waxen tapers shed a light like the day about the bier. The balconies and windows were crowded with ladies, who shed tears as the funeral train passed by; while the women of the lower classes were loud in their lamentations, as if bewailing the loss of a father or a brother. On approaching the convent of St. Augustine, the monks came forth with the cross and tapers, and eight censers, and conducted the body into the church, where it lay in state until all the vigils were performed by the

different orders, after which it was deposited in the family-tomb of the Ponces in the same church, and the ten banners were suspended over the sepulchre.\*

His tomb, with the banners mouldering above it, remained for ages an object of veneration with all who had read or heard of his virtues and achievements. In the year 1810, however, the chapel was sacked by the French, its altars overturned, and the sepulchres of the family of the Ponces shattered to pieces. The present Duchess of Benavente, the worthy descendant of this illustrious and heroic line, has since piously collected the ashes of her ancestors, restored the altar, and repaired the chapel. The sepulchres, however, were utterly destroyed, and an inscription of gold letters, on the wall of the chapel, to the right of the altar, is now all that denotes the place of sepulture of the brave Roderigo Ponce de Leon.

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THE LEGEND  
OF THE

DEATH OF DON ALONSO DE  
AGUILAR.

To such as feel an interest in the fortunes of the valiant Don Alonso de Aguilar, the chosen friend and companion in arms of Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz, and one of the most distinguished heroes of the war of Granada, a few particulars of his remarkable fate will not be unacceptable. They are found among the manuscripts of the worthy Padre Fray Antonio Agapida, and appear to have been appended to his chronicle.

For several years after the conquest of Granada, the country remained feverish and unquiet. The zealous efforts of the catholic clergy to effect the conversion of the infidels, and the pious coercion used for that purpose by government, exasperated the stubborn Moors of the mountains. Several zealous missionaries were maltreated, and, in the town of Dayrin, two of them were seized, and exhorted, with many menaces, to embrace the

\* Cura de Los Palacios, c. 104.



Moslem faith. On their resolutely refusing they were killed with staffs and stones, by the Moorish women and children, and their bodies burnt to ashes.\*

Upon this event, a body of Christian cavaliers assembled in Andalusia, to the number of eight hundred; and, without waiting for orders from the king, revenged the death of these martyrs, by plundering and laying waste the Moorish towns and villages. The Moors fled to the mountains, and their cause was espoused by many of their nation, who inhabited those rugged regions. The storm of rebellion began to gather, and mutter its thunders in the Alpuxarras. They were echoed from the Serrania of Ronda, ever ready for rebellion; but the strongest hold of the insurgents was in the Sierra Vermeja, or chain of red mountains, lying near the sea, the savage rocks and precipices of which may be seen from Gibraltar.

When King Ferdinand heard of these tumults, he issued a proclamation, ordering all the Moors of the insurgent regions to leave them within ten days, and repair to Castile; giving secret instructions, however, that those, who should voluntarily embrace the Christian faith, might be permitted to remain. At the same time he ordered Don Alonso de Aguilar, and the Counts of Ureña and Cifuentes, to march against the rebels.

Don Alonso de Aguilar was at Cordova when he received the commands of the king. "What force is allotted us for this expedition?" said he. On being told, he perceived that the number of troops was far from adequate. "When a man is dead," said he, "we send four men into his house to bring forth the body. We are now sent to chastise those Moors, who are alive, vigorous, in open rebellion, and ensconced in their castles; and they do not give us man to man." These words of the brave Alonso de Aguilar were afterwards frequently repeated; but, though he saw the desperate nature of the enterprise, he did not hesitate to undertake it.

Don Alonso was, at that time, in the fifty-first year of his age. He was a veteran warrior, in whom the fire of youth was yet unquenched, though tem-

pered by experience. The greater part of his life had been passed in the camp and in the field, until danger was as his natural element. His muscular frame had acquired the firmness of iron, without the rigidity of age. His armour and weapons seemed to have become a part of his nature; and he sat like a man of steel on his powerful war-horse.

He took with him, on this expedition, his son, Don Pedro de Cordova; a youth of bold and generous spirit, in the freshness of his days, and armed and arrayed with all the bravery of a young Spanish cavalier. When the populace of Cordova beheld the veteran father, the warrior of a thousand battles, leading forth his youthful son to the field, they bethought themselves of the family appellation. "Behold," cried they, "the eagle teaching his young to fly! Long live the valiant line of Aguilar!"\*

The prowess of Don Alonso and of his companions in arms was renowned throughout the Moorish towns. At their approach, therefore, numbers of the Moors submitted, and hastened to Ronda to embrace Christianity. Among the mountaineers, however, there were many of the Gandules, a fierce tribe from Africa, too proud of spirit to bend their necks to the yoke. At their head was a Moor, named El Feri of Ben Estepar, renowned for strength and courage. At his instigations, his followers gathered together their families and most precious effects; placed them on mules, and, driving before them their flocks and herds, abandoned their valleys, and retired up the craggy passes of the Sierra Vermeja. On the summit was a fertile plain, surrounded by rocks and precipices, which formed a natural fortress. Here El Feri placed all the women and children, and all the property. By his orders, his followers piled great stones on the rocks and cliffs, which commanded the defiles and the steep side of the mountain, and prepared to defend every pass that led to his place of refuge.

The Christian commanders arrived, and pitched their camp before the town of Monardo; a strong place, curiously fortified, and situated at the foot of the

\* Cura de Los Palacios, c. 165.

\* Aguilar, the Spanish for eagle.

highest part of the Sierra Vermeja. Here they remained for several days, unable to compel a surrender. They were separated from the skirt of the mountain by a deep barranca or ravine, at the bottom of which flowed a small stream. The Moors commanded by El Feri, drew down from their mountain height, and remained on the opposite side of the brook, to defend a pass which led up to their stronghold.

One afternoon, a number of Christian soldiers, in mere bravado, seized a banner, crossed the brook, and scrambling up the opposite bank, attacked the Moors. They were followed by numbers of their companions; some in aid, some in emulation, but most in hope of booty. A sharp action ensued on the mountain side. The Moors were greatly superior in number, and had the vantage-ground. When the Counts of Ureña and Cifuentes beheld this skirmish, they asked Don Alonso de Aguilar his opinion. "My opinion," said he, "was given at Cordova, and remains the same. This is a desperate enterprise. However, the Moors are at hand; and if they suspect weakness in us, it will increase their courage and our peril. Forward then to the attack, and I trust in God we shall gain a victory!" So saying, he led his troops into the battle.\*

On the skirts of the mountains were several level places, like terraces. Here the Christians pressed valiantly upon the Moors, and had the advantage; but the latter retreated to the steep and craggy heights, from whence they hurled darts and rocks upon their assailants. They defended their passes and defiles with ferocious valour; but were driven from height to height, until they reached the plain on the summit of the mountain, where their wives and children were sheltered. Here they would have made a stand; but Alonso de Aguilar, with his son Don Pedro, charged upon them at the head of three hundred men, and put them to flight, with dreadful carnage. While they were pursuing the flying enemy, the rest of the army, thinking the victory achieved, dispersed themselves over the plain in search of plunder.

They pursued the shrieking females, tearing off their necklaces, bracelets, and anklets of gold; and they found so much treasure of various kinds collected in this spot, that they threw by their armour and weapons, to load themselves with booty.

Evening was closing: the Christians, intent upon spoil, had ceased to pursue the Moors, and the latter were arrested in their flight by the cries of their wives and children. Their fierce leader, El Feri, threw himself before them. "Friends, soldiers," cried he, "whither do you fly? whither can you seek refuge, where the enemy cannot follow you? Your wives, your children, are behind you; turn and defend them: you have no chance for safety, but from the weapons in your hands!"

The Moors turned at his words. They beheld the Christians scattered about the plain many of them without armour, and all encumbered with spoil. "Now is the time," shouted El Feri; "charge upon them while laden with your plunder! I will open a path for you!" He rushed to the attack, followed by his Moors, with shouts and cries, that echoed through the mountains. The scattered Christians were seized with a panic, and, throwing down their booty, began to fly in all directions. Don Alonso de Aguilar advanced his banner, and endeavoured to rally them. Finding his horse of no avail in these rocky heights, he dismounted, and caused his men to do the same. He had a small band of tried followers, with which he opposed a bold front to the Moors, calling on the scattered troops to rally in the rear.

Night had completely closed. It prevented the Moors from seeing the smallness of the force with which they were contending; and Don Alonso and his cavaliers dealt their blows so vigorously, that, aided by the darkness, they seemed multiplied to ten times their number. Unfortunately a small cask of gunpowder blew up near to the scene of action. It shed a momentary but brilliant light over all the plain, and on every rock and cliff. The Moors beheld with surprise, that they were opposed by a mere handful of men, and that the greater part of the Christians were flying from the field.

\* Bleda, l. v. c. 26.

They put up loud shouts of triumph. While some continued the conflict with redoubled ardour, others pursued the fugitives, hurling after them stones and darts, and discharging showers of arrows. Many of the Christians, in their terror and their ignorance of the mountains, rushed headlong from the brinks of precipices, and were dashed in pieces.

Don Alonso de Aguilar still maintained his ground; but while a party of Moors assailed him in front, others galled him with all kinds of missiles from the impending cliffs. Some of the cavaliers, seeing the hopeless nature of the conflict, proposed, that they should abandon the height, and retreat down the mountain. "No," said Don Alonso proudly; "never did the banner of the house of Aguilar retreat one foot in the field of battle." He had scarcely uttered these words, when his son Don Pedro was stretched at his feet. A stone hurled from a cliff had struck out two of his teeth, and a lance passed quivering through his thigh. The youth attempted to rise, and with one knee on the ground, to fight by the side of his father. Don Alonso, finding him wounded, urged him to quit the field. "Fly, my son," said he. "Let us not put every thing at venture upon one hazard: conduct thyself as a good Christian, and live to comfort and honour thy mother."

Don Pedro still refused to quit him; whereupon Don Alonso ordered several of his followers to bear him off by force. His friend, Don Francisco Alvarez of Cordova, taking him in his arms, conveyed him to the quarters of the Count of Ureña, who had halted on the heights, at some distance from the scene of battle, for the purpose of rallying and succouring the fugitives. Almost at the same moment, the count beheld his own son, Don Pedro Giron, brought in grievously wounded.

In the mean time, Don Alonso, with two hundred cavaliers, maintained the unequal contest. Surrounded by foes, they fell, one after another, like so many noble stags encircled by the hunters. Don Alonso was the last survivor. He was without horse, and almost without armour; his corslet unlaced, and his bosom gashed with wounds. Still he

kept a brave front towards the enemy, and, retiring between two rocks, defended himself with such valour, that the slain lay in a heap before him.

He was assailed in this retreat by a Moor of surpassing strength and fierceness. The contest was for some time doubtful; but Don Alonso received a wound in the head, and another in the breast, that made him stagger. Closing and grappling with his foe, they had a desperate struggle, until the Christian cavalier, exhausted by his wounds, fell upon his back. He still retained his grasp upon his enemy. "Think not," cried he, "thou hast an easy prize: know, that I am Don Alonso, he of Aguilar!" "If thou art Don Alonso," replied the Moor, "know, that I am El Feri, of Ben Estepar!" They continued their deadly struggle, and both drew their daggers: but Don Alonso was exhausted by seven ghastly wounds. While he was yet struggling, his heroic soul departed from his body, and he expired in the grasp of the Moor.

Thus fell Alonso de Aguilar, the mirror of Andalusian chivalry; one of the most powerful grandees of Spain, for person, blood, estate, and office. For forty years he had waged successful wars upon the Moors: in childhood, by his household and retainers; in manhood, by the prowess of his arm, and the wisdom and valour of his spirit. His pennon had always been foremost in danger; he had been general of armies, viceroy of Andalusia, and the author of glorious enterprises, in which kings were vanquished, and mighty alcaides and warriors laid low. He had slain many Moslem chiefs with his own arm, and, among others, the renowned Ali Atar, of Loxa, fighting foot to foot, on the banks of the Xenil. His judgment, discretion, magnanimity, and justice, vied with his prowess. He was the fifth lord of his warlike house, that fell in battle with the Moors. "His soul," observes Padre Abarca, "it is believed ascended to heaven, to receive the reward of so Christian a captain: for that very day he had armed himself with the sacraments of confession and communion."\*

\* Abarca, *Anales de Aragon*, rey xxx, cap. 2.

The Moors, elated with their success, pursued the fugitive Christians down the defiles and sides of the mountains. It was with the utmost difficulty that the Count de Ureña could bring off a remnant of his forces from that disastrous height. Fortunately, on the lower slope of the mountain they found the rear guard of the army, led by the Count de Cifuentes, who had crossed the brook and the ravine to come to their assistance. As the fugitives came flying in headlong terror down the mountain, it was with difficulty the count kept his own troops from giving way in panic, and retreating in confusion across the brook. He succeeded, however, in maintaining order, in rallying the fugitives and checking the fury of the Moors. Then, taking his station on a rocky eminence, he maintained his post until morning, sometimes sustaining violent attacks, at other times rushing forth, and making assaults upon the enemy. When morning dawned, the Moors ceased to combat, and drew up to the summit of the mountain.

It was then that the Christians had time to breathe, and to ascertain the dreadful loss they had sustained. Among the many valiant cavaliers, who had fallen, was Don Francisco Ramirez of Madrid, who had been captain-general of artillery throughout the war of Granada, and contributed greatly, by his valour and ingenuity, to that renowned conquest. But all other griefs and cares were forgotten in anxiety for the fate of Don Alonso de Aguilar. His son, Don Pedro de Cordova, had been brought off with great difficulty from the battle; and afterwards lived to be Marquis of Priego. But of Don Alonso nothing was known, except that he was left with a handful of cavaliers, fighting valiantly against an overwhelming force. As the rising sun lighted up the red cliffs of the mountains, the soldiers watched with anxious eyes, if perchance his pennon might be descried, fluttering from any precipice or defile: but nothing of the kind was to be seen. The trumpet call was repeatedly sounded: but empty echoes alone replied. A silence reigned about the mountain summit, which showed that the deadly strife was over. Now and then

a wounded warrior came, dragging his feeble steps from among the cliffs and rocks; but, on being questioned, he shook his head mournfully, and could tell nothing of the fate of his commander.

The tidings of this disastrous defeat, and of the perilous situation of the survivors, reached King Ferdinand at Granada. He immediately marched, at the head of all the chivalry of his court, to the mountains of Ronda. His presence, with a powerful force, soon put an end to the rebellion. A part of the Moors were suffered to ransom themselves, and to embark for Africa; others were made to embrace Christianity; and those of the town where the Christian missionaries had been massacred were sold as slaves. From the conquered Moors, the mournful but heroic end of Don Alonso de Aguilar was ascertained. On the morning after the battle, when the Moors came to strip and bury the dead, the body of Don Alonso was found among those of more than two hundred of his followers, many of them alcaides and cavaliers of distinction. Though the person of Don Alonso was well known to the Moors, being so distinguished among them, both in peace and war, yet it was so covered and disfigured with wounds, that it could with difficulty be recognised. They preserved it with care, and, on making their submission, delivered it up to King Ferdinand. It was conveyed with great state, to Cordova, amidst the tears and lamentations of all Andalusia. When the funeral train entered Cordova, and the inhabitants saw the coffin, containing the remains of their favourite hero, and the war-horse, led in mournful trappings, on which they had so lately seen him sally forth from their gates, there was a general burst of grief throughout the city. The body was interred with great pomp and solemnity in the church of St. Ipolito. Many years afterwards, his grand-daughter, Doña Catalina of Aguilar and Cordova, Marchioness of Priego, caused his tomb to be altered. On examining the body, the head of a lance was found among the bones, received, without doubt, among the wounds of his last mortal combat. The name of this accomplished and Christian cavalier has ever remained a popular theme of the

chronicler and poet; and is endeared to the public memory by many of the historical ballads and songs of his country. For a long time the people of Cordova were indignant at the brave Count de Ureña, who, they thought, had abandoned Don Alonso in his extremity; but the Castilian monarch acquitted him of all charge of the kind, and continued him in honour and office. It was proved, that neither he nor his people could succour Don Alonso, or even know of his peril, from the darkness of the night.

There is a mournful little Spanish ballad, or romance, which breathes the public grief on this occasion; and the populace, on the return of the Count de Ureña to Cordova, assailed him with one of its plaintive and reproachful verses:

“Decid, Conde de Ureña,  
Don Alonso donde queda?”\*

Count Ureña! Count Ureña!  
Tell us, where is Don Alonso?

\* Bleda, l. v. c. 26.

END OF THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA.



THE ALHAMBRA:

A

SERIES OF TALES AND SKETCHES

OF THE

MOORS AND SPANIARDS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE "SKETCH BOOK."

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PHILADELPHIA:

LEA AND BLANCHARD.

1840.

ENTERED, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1836,  
By WASHINGTON IRVING,  
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# THE ALHAMBRA.

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TO DAVID WILKIE, ESQ. R. A.

MY DEAR SIR,

You may remember, that in the rambles we once took together about some of the old cities of Spain, particularly Toledo and Seville, we remarked a strong mixture of the Saracenic with the Gothic, remaining from the time of the Moors; and were more than once struck with scenes and incidents in the streets, which reminded us of passages in the "Arabian Nights." You then urged me to write something that should illustrate those peculiarities, "something in the Haroun Alraschid style," that should have a dash of that Arabian spice which pervades every thing in Spain. I call this to your mind, to show you that you are, in some degree, responsible for the present work, in which I have given a few "Arabesque" sketches from the life, and tales founded on popular traditions, which were chiefly struck off during a residence in one of the most Moresco-Spanish places in the Peninsula.

I inscribe these pages to you as a memorial of the pleasant scenes we have witnessed together in that land of adventure, and as a testimonial of an esteem for your worth which is only exceeded by admiration of your talents.

Your friend and fellow-traveller,  
THE AUTHOR.

May, 1832.

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## THE JOURNEY.

In the spring of 1829, the Author of this Work, whom curiosity had brought

into Spain, made a rambling expedition from Seville to Granada, in company with a friend, a member of the Russian Embassy at Madrid. Accident had thrown us together from distant regions of the globe, and a similarity of taste led us to wander together among the romantic mountains of Andalusia. Should these pages meet his eye, wherever thrown by the duties of his station, whether mingling in the pageantry of courts, or meditating on the truer glories of Nature, may they recall the scenes of our adventurous companionship, and with them the remembrance of one, in whom neither time nor distance will obliterate the remembrance of his gentleness and worth.

And here, before setting forth, let me indulge in a few previous remarks on Spanish scenery and Spanish travelling. Many are apt to picture Spain to their imaginations as a soft southern region, decked out with all the luxuriant charms of voluptuous Italy. On the contrary, though there are exceptions in some of the maritime provinces, yet, for the greater part, it is a stern, melancholy country, with rugged mountains, and long sweeping plains, destitute of trees, and indescribably silent and lonesome, partaking of the savage and solitary character of Africa. What adds to this silence and loneliness, is the absence of singing-birds, a natural consequence of the want of groves and hedges. The vulture and the eagle are seen wheeling about the mountain-cliffs, and soaring over the plains, and groups of shy bustards stalk about the heaths; but the myriads of smaller birds, which animate the whole face of other countries, are met with in but few provinces in Spain,

and in those chiefly among the orchards and gardens which surround the habitations of men.

In the interior provinces the traveller occasionally traverses great tracts cultivated with grain as far as the eye can reach, waving at times with verdure, at other times naked and sunburnt, but he looks round in vain for the hand that has tilled the soil. At length, he perceives some village on a steep hill, or rugged crag, with mouldering battlements and ruined watchtower; a stronghold, in old times, against civil war, or Moorish inroad; for the custom among the peasantry of congregating together for mutual protection, is still kept up in most parts of Spain, in consequence of the maraudings of roving freebooters.

But though a great part of Spain is deficient in the garniture of groves and forests, and the softer charms of ornamental cultivation, yet its scenery has something of a high and lofty character to compensate the want. It partakes something of the attributes of its people; and I think that I better understand the proud, hardy, frugal, and abstemious Spaniard, his manly defiance of hardships, and contempt of effeminate indulgences, since I have seen the country he inhabits.

There is something, too, in the sternly simple features of the Spanish landscape, that impresses on the soul a feeling of sublimity. The immense plains of the Castiles and of La Mancha, extending as far as the eye can reach, derive an interest from their very nakedness and immensity, and have something of the solemn grandeur of the ocean. In ranging over these boundless wastes, the eye catches sight here and there of a straggling herd of cattle attended by a lonely herdsman, motionless as a statue, with his long slender pike tapering up like a lance into the air; or, beholds a long train of mules slowly moving along the waste like a train of camels in the desert; or, a single herdsman, armed with blunderbuss and stiletto, and prowling over the plain. Thus the country, the habits, the very looks of the people, have something of the Arabian character. The general insecurity of the country is evinced in the universal use of weapons.

The herdsman in the field, the shepherd in the plain, has his musket and his knife. The wealthy villager rarely ventures to the market-town without his trabuco, and, perhaps, a servant on foot with a blunderbuss on his shoulder; and the most petty journey is undertaken with the preparation of a warlike enterprise.

The dangers of the road produce also a mode of travelling, resembling, on a diminutive scale, the caravans of the East. The arrieros, or carriers, congregate in convoys, and set off in large and well-armed trains on appointed days; while additional travellers swell their number, and contribute to their strength. In this primitive way is the commerce of the country carried on. The muleteer is the general medium of traffic, and the legitimate traverser of the land, crossing the peninsula from the Pyrenees and the Asturias to the Alpuxarras, the Serrania de Ronda, and even to the gates of Gibraltar. He lives frugally and hardily: his alforjas of coarse cloth hold his scanty stock of provisions; a leathern bottle, hanging at his saddle-bow, contains wine or water, for a supply across barren mountains and thirsty plains. A mulecloth, spread upon the ground, is his bed at night, and his packsaddle is his pillow. His low, but clean-limbed and sinewy form betokens strength; his complexion is dark and sunburnt; his eye resolute, but quiet in its expression, except when kindled by sudden emotion; his demeanour is frank, manly, and courteous, and he never passes you without a grave salutation: "Dios guarde a usted!" "Vaya usted con Dios, caballero!" "God guard you!" "God be with you, cavalier!"

As these men have often their whole fortune at stake upon the burden of their mules, they have their weapons at hand, slung on their saddles, and ready to be snatched out for desperate defence. But their united numbers render them secure against petty bands of marauders, and the solitary bandolero, armed to the teeth, and mounted on his Andalusian steed, hovers about them, like a pirate about a merchant convoy, without daring to make an assault.

The Spanish muleteer has an inex-

haustible stock of songs and ballads, with which to beguile his incessant way-faring. The airs are rude and simple, consisting of but few inflexions. These he chants forth with a loud voice, and long, drawling cadence, seated sideways on his mule, who seems to listen with infinite gravity, and to keep time, with his paces, to the tune. The couplets thus chanted, are often old traditional romances about the Moors, or some legend of a saint, or some love-ditty; or what's still more frequent, some ballad about a bold contrabandista, or hardy bandolero, for the smuggler and the robber are poetical heroes among the common people of Spain. Often, the song of the muleteer is composed at the instant, and relates to some local scene, or some incident of the journey. This talent of singing and improvising is frequent in Spain, and is said to have been inherited from the Moors. There is something wildly pleasing in listening to these ditties among the rude and lonely scenes that they illustrate; accompanied, as they are, by the occasional jingle of the mule-bell.

It has a most picturesque effect also to meet a train of muleteers in some mountain-pass. First you hear the bells of the leading mules, breaking with their simple melody the stillness of the airy height; or, perhaps, the voice of the muleteer admonishing some tardy or wandering animal, or chanting, at the full stretch of his lungs, some traditional ballad. At length you see the mules slowly winding along the cragged defile, sometimes descending precipitous cliffs, so as to present themselves in full relief against the sky, sometimes toiling up the deep arid chasms below you. As they approach, you descry their gay decorations of worsted tufts, tassels, and saddle-cloths, while, as they pass by, the ever-ready trabuco, slung behind the packs and saddles, gives a hint of the insecurity of the road.

The ancient kingdom of Granada, into which we are about to penetrate, is one of the most mountainous regions of Spain. Vast sierras, or chains of mountains, destitute of shrub or tree, and mottled with variegated marbles and granites, elevate their sunburnt summits against a deep

blue sky; yet in their rugged bosoms lie engulfed the most verdant and fertile valleys, where the desert and the garden strive for mastery, and the very rock is, as it were, compelled to yield the fig, the orange, and the citron, and to blossom with the myrtle and the rose.

In the wild passes of these mountains the sight of walled towns and villages, built like eagles' nests among the cliffs, and surrounded by Moorish battlements, or of ruined watchtowers perched on lofty peaks, carries the mind back to the chivalric days of Christian and Moslem warfare, and to the romantic struggle for the conquest of Granada. In traversing these lofty sierras the traveller is often obliged to alight and lead his horse up and down the steep and jagged ascents and descents, resembling the broken steps of a staircase. Sometimes the road winds along dizzy precipices, without parapet to guard him from the gulfs below, and then will plunge down steep, and dark, and dangerous declivities. Sometimes it straggles through rugged barrancas, or ravines, worn by winter torrents, the obscure path of the contrabandista; while, ever and anon, the ominous cross, the monument of robbery and murder, erected on a mound of stone at some lonely part of the road, admonishes the traveller that he is among the haunts of banditti, perhaps at that very moment under the eye of some lurking bandolero. Sometimes, in winding through the narrow valleys, he is startled by a hoarse bellowing, and beholds above him on some green fold of the mountain side, a herd of fierce Andalusian bulls, destined for the combat of the arena. There is something awful in the contemplation of these terrific animals, clothed with tremendous strength, and ranging their native pastures in untamed wildness, strangers almost to the face of man: they know no one but the solitary herdsman who attends upon them, and even he at times dares not venture to approach them. The low bellowing of these bulls, and their menacing aspect as they look down from their rocky height, give additional wildness to the savage scenery around.

I have been betrayed unconsciously into a longer disquisition than I had intended on the general features of Span-

ish travelling; but there is a romance about all the recollections of the Peninsula that is dear to the imagination.

It was on the first of May that my companion and myself set forth from Seville on our route to Granada. We had made all due preparations for the nature of our journey, which lay through mountainous regions, where the roads are little better than mere mulepaths, and too frequently beset by robbers. The most valuable part of our luggage had been forwarded by the arrieros; we retained merely clothing and necessaries for the journey, and money for the expenses of the road, with a sufficient surplus of the latter to satisfy the expectations of robbers should we be assailed, and to save ourselves from the rough treatment that awaits the too wary and empty-handed traveller. A couple of stout hired steeds were provided for ourselves, and a third for our scanty luggage, and for the conveyance of a sturdy Biscayan lad of about twenty years of age, who was to guide us through the perplexed mazes of the mountain roads, to take care of the horses, to act occasionally as our valet, and at all times as our guard; for he had a formidable trabuco or carbine, to defend us from rateros, or solitary footpads, about which weapon he made much vainglorious boasts, though, to the discredit of his generalship, I must say that it generally hung unloaded behind his saddle. He was, however, a faithful, cheery, kind-hearted creature, full of saws and proverbs as that miracle of squires the renowned Sancho himself, whose name we bestowed upon him; and, like a true Spaniard, though treated by us with companionable familiarity, he never for a moment, in his utmost hilarity, overstepped the bounds of respectful decorum.

Thus equipped and attended, we set out on our journey, with a genuine disposition to be pleased. With such a disposition, what a country is Spain for a traveller, where the most miserable inn is as full of adventure as an enchanted castle, and every meal is in itself an achievement! Let others repine at the lack of turnpike roads and sumptuous hotels, and all the elaborate comforts of a country cultivated into tameness and com-

monplace; but give me the rude mountain scramble, the roving, hap-hazard wayfaring, the frank, hospitable, though half-wild manners, that give such a true game flavour to romantic Spain!

Our first evening's entertainment had a relish of the kind. We arrived after sunset at a little town, among the hills, after a fatiguing journey over a wide houseless plain, where we had been repeatedly drenched with showers. In the inn were a party of Miqueletes, who were patrolling the country in pursuit of robbers. The appearance of foreigners like ourselves, was unusual in this remote town; mine host, with two or three old gossiping comrades in brown cloaks, studied our passports in a corner of the posada, while an alguazil took notes by the dim light of a lamp. The passports were in foreign languages and perplexed them, but our Squire Sancho assisted them in their studies, and magnified our importance with the grandiloquence of a Spaniard. In the mean time the magnificent distribution of a few cigars had won the hearts of all around us; in a little while the whole community seemed put in agitation to make us welcome. The corregidor himself waited upon us, and a great rush-bottomed arm-chair was ostentatiously bolstered into our room by our landlady, for the accommodation of that important personage. The commander of the patrol took supper with us; a lively, talking, laughing Andaluz, who had made a campaign in South America, and recounted his exploits in love and war with much pomp of phrase, vehemence of gesticulation, and mysterious rolling of the eye. He told us that he had a list of all the robbers in the country, and meant to ferret out every mother's son of them; he offered us at the same time some of his soldiers as an escort. "One is enough to protect you, Señores; the robbers know me and know my men; the sight of one is enough to spread terror through a whole sierra." We thanked him for his offer, but assured him in his own strain, that with the protection of our redoubtable squire, Sancho, we were not afraid of all the ladrones of Andalusia.

While we were supping with our Drawcansir friend, we heard the notes of a

guitar, and the click of castañets, and presently a chorus of voices singing a popular air. In fact mine host had gathered together the amateur singers and musicians, and the rustic belles of the neighbourhood, and on going forth, the court-yard of the inn presented a scene of true Spanish festivity. We took our seats with mine host and hostess and the commander of the patrol, under the archway of the court; the guitar passed from hand to hand, but a jovial shoemaker was the Orpheus of the place. He was a pleasant-looking fellow, with huge black whiskers; his sleeves were rolled up to his elbows, he touched the guitar with masterly skill, and sang little amorous ditties with an expressive leer at the women, with whom he was evidently a favourite. He afterwards danced a fandango with a buxom Andalusian damsel, to the great delight of the spectators. But none of the females present could compare with mine host's pretty daughter, Pepita, who had slipped away and made her toilette for the occasion, and had covered her head with roses; and who distinguished herself in a bolero with a handsome young dragoon. We had ordered our host to let wine and refreshment circulate freely among the company, yet though there was a motley assembly of soldiers, muleteers, and villagers, no one exceeded the bounds of sober enjoyment. The scene was a study for a painter: the picturesque group of dancers, the troopers in their half military dresses, the peasantry wrapped in their brown cloaks; nor must I omit to mention the old meagre alguazil, in a short black cloak, who took no notice of any thing going on, but sat in a corner diligently writing by the dim light of a huge copper lamp, that might have figured in the days of Don Quixote.

I am not writing a regular narrative, and do not pretend to give the varied events of several days' rambling, over hill and dale, and moor and mountain. We travelled in true contrabandista style, taking every thing rough and smooth, as we found it, and mingling with all classes and conditions in a kind of vagabond companionship. It is the true way to travel in Spain. Knowing the scanty larders of the inns, and the naked tracts

of country which the traveller has often to traverse, we had taken care, on starting, to have the alforjas, or saddle-bags, of our squire well stocked with cold provisions, and his bota, or leathern bottle, which was of portly dimensions, filled to the neck with choice Valdepeñas wine. As this was a munition for our campaign more important than even his trabuco, we exhorted him to have an eye to it; and I will do him the justice to say that his namesake, the trencher-loving Sancho himself, could not excel him as a provident purveyor. Though the alforjas and bota were repeatedly and vigorously assailed throughout the journey, they appeared to have a miraculous property of being never empty; for our vigilant squire took care to sack every thing that remained from our evening repasts at the inns, to supply our next day's luncheon.

What luxurious noontide repasts we made, on the green sward by the side of a brook or fountain, under a shady tree! and then what delicious siestas on our cloaks spread out on the herbage!

We paused one day at noon, for a repast of the kind. It was in a pleasant little green meadow, surrounded by hills covered with olive trees. Our cloaks were spread on the grass under an elm-tree, by the side of a bubbling rivulet; our horses were tethered where they might crop the herbage; and Sancho produced his alforjas with an air of triumph. They contained the contributions of four days' journeying, but had been signally enriched by the foraging of the previous evening in a plenteous inn at Antequera. Our squire drew forth the heterogeneous contents, one by one, and these seemed to have no end. First came forth a shoulder of roasted kid, very little the worse for wear; then an entire partridge; then a great morsel of salted codfish wrapped in paper; then the residue of a ham; then the half of a pullet, together with several rolls of bread, and a rabble rout of oranges, figs, raisins, and walnuts. His bota also had been recruited with some excellent wine of Malaga. At every fresh apparition from his larder, he would enjoy our ludicrous surprise, throwing himself back on the grass, and shouting with laughter. Nothing pleased

the simple-hearted varlet more than to be compared, for his devotion to the trencher, to the renowned squire of Don Quixote. He was well versed in the history of the Don, and, like most of the common people of Spain, he firmly believed it to be a true history.

"All that, however, happened a long time ago, señor?" said he to me one day, with an inquiring look.

"A very long time," was the reply.

"I dare say more than a thousand years?" still looking dubiously.

"I dare say, not less."

The squire was satisfied.

As we were making the repast above described, and diverting ourselves with the simple drollery of our squire, a solitary beggar approached us, who had almost the look of a pilgrim. He was evidently very old, with a gray beard, and supported himself on a staff, yet age had not bowed him down; he was tall and erect, and had the wreck of a fine form. He wore a round Andalusian hat, a sheepskin jacket, and leathern breeches, gaiters and sandals. His dress, though old and patched, was decent, his demeanour manly, and he addressed us with that grave courtesy that is to be remarked in the lowest Spaniard. We were in a favourable mood for such a visiter; and in a freak of capricious charity, gave him some silver, a loaf of fine wheaten bread, and a goblet of our choice wine of Malaga. He received them thankfully, but without any grovelling tribute of gratitude. Tasting the wine, he held it up to the light, with a slight beam of surprise in his eye, then quaffing it off at a draught, "It is many years," said he, "since I have tasted such wine. It is a cordial to an old man's heart." Then, looking at the beautiful wheaten loaf, "*bendito sea tal pan!*" "blessed be such bread!" So saying, he put it in his wallet. We urged him to eat it on the spot. "No, señores," replied he, "the wine I had to drink or leave; but the bread I must take home to share with my family."

Our man Sancho sought our eye, and reading permission there, gave the old man some of the ample fragments of our repast, on condition, however, that he should sit down and make a meal.

He accordingly took his seat at some little distance from us, and began to eat slowly and with a sobriety and decorum that would have become an hidalgo. There was altogether a measured manner and a quiet self-possession about the old man, that made me think he had seen better days: his language, too, though simple, had occasionally something picturesque and almost poetical in the phraseology. I set him down for some broken-down cavalier. I was mistaken; it was nothing but the innate courtesy of a Spaniard, and the poetical turn of thought and language often to be found in the lowest classes of this clear-witted people. For fifty years, he told us, he had been a shepherd, but now he was out of employ, and destitute. "When I was a young man," said he, "nothing could harm or trouble me; I was always well, always gay; but now I am seventy-nine years of age, and a beggar, and my heart begins to fail me."

Still he was not a regular mendicant: it was not until recently that want had driven him to this degradation; and he gave a touching picture of the struggle between hunger and pride, when abject destitution first came upon him. He was returning from Malaga without money; he had not tasted food for some time, and was crossing one of the great plains of Spain, where there were but few habitations. When almost dead with hunger, he applied at the door of a venta or country inn. "*Perdone usted por Dios, hermano!*" (Excuse us, brother, for God's sake!) was the reply—the usual mode in Spain of refusing a beggar. "I turned away," said he, "with shame greater than my hunger, for my heart was yet too proud. I came to a river with high banks and deep rapid current, and felt tempted to throw myself in: 'What should such an old, worthless, wretched man as I live for?' But when I was on the brink of the current, I thought on the Blessed Virgin, and turned away. I travelled on until I saw a country seat at a little distance from the road, and entered the outer gate of the court-yard. The door was shut, but there were two young señoras at a window. I approached and begged:—'*Perdone usted por Dios, hermano!*' (Excuse us, brother, for God's

sake!) and the window closed. I crept out of the court-yard, but hunger overcame me, and my heart gave way: I thought my hour at hand, so I laid myself down at the gate, commended myself to the Holy Virgin, and covered my head to die. In a little while afterwards the master of the house came home: seeing me lying at his gate, he uncovered my head, had pity on my gray hairs, took me into his house, and gave me food. So, señores, you see that one should always put confidence in the protection of the Virgin."

The old man was on his way to his native place, Archidona, which was close by, on the summit of a steep and rugged mountain. He pointed to the ruins of its old Moorish castle: "That castle," he said, "was inhabited by a Moorish king at the time of the wars of Granada. Queen Isabella invaded it with a great army; but the king looked down from his castle among the clouds, and laughed her to scorn! Upon this the Virgin appeared to the queen, and guided her and her army up a mysterious path in the mountains, which had never before been known. When the Moor saw her coming, he was astonished, and springing with his horse from a precipice, was dashed to pieces! The marks of his horse's hoofs," said the old man, "are to be seen in the margin of the rock to this day. And see, señores, yonder is the road by which the queen and her army mounted: you see it like a riband up the mountain side; but the miracle is, that, though it can be seen at a distance, when you come near, it disappears!"

The ideal road to which he pointed was undoubtedly a sandy ravine of the mountain, which looked narrow and defined at a distance, but became broad and indistinct on an approach.

As the old man's heart warmed with wine and wassail, he went on to tell us a story of the buried treasure left under the castle by the Moorish king. His own house was next to the foundations of the castle. The curate and notary dreamed three times of the treasure, and went to work at the place pointed out in their dreams. His own son-in-law heard the sound of their pickaxes and spades at night. What they found nobody knows;

they became suddenly rich, but kept their own secret. Thus the old man had once been next door to fortune, but was doomed never to get under the same roof.

I have remarked, that the stories of treasure buried by the Moors, which prevail throughout Spain, are most current among the poorest people. It is thus kind Nature consoles with shadows for the lack of substantial. The thirsty man dreams of fountains and running streams; the hungry man of ideal banquets; and the poor man of heaps of hidden gold: nothing certainly is more magnificent than the imagination of a beggar.

The last travelling sketch I shall give, is an evening at the little city of Loxa. This was a famous belligerent frontier post in the time of the Moors, and repulsed Ferdinand from its walls. It was the stronghold of old Ali Atar, the father-in-law of Boabdil, when that fiery veteran sallied forth with his son-in-law on their disastrous inroad, that ended in the death of the chieftain and the capture of the monarch. Loxa is wildly situated in a broken mountain pass, on the banks of the Xenil, among rocks and groves, and meadows and gardens. The people seem still to retain the bold fiery spirit of the olden time. Our inn was suited to the place. It was kept by a young and handsome Andalusian widow, whose trim basquina of black silk, fringed with bugles, set off the play of a graceful form and round pliant limbs. Her step was firm and elastic; her dark eye was full of fire: and the coquetry of her air, and varied ornaments of her person, showed that she was accustomed to be admired.

She was well matched by a brother, nearly about her own age; they were perfect models of the Andalusian Majo and Maja. He was tall, vigorous, and well-formed, with a clear olive complexion, a dark beaming eye, and curling chestnut whiskers that met under his chin. He was gallantly dressed in a short green velvet jacket, fitted to his shape, profusely decorated with silver buttons, with a white handkerchief in each pocket. He had breeches of the same, with rows of buttons from the hips to the knees; a pink silk handkerchief

round his neck, gathered through a ring, on the bosom of a neatly plaited shirt; a sash round the waist to match; bottinas, or spatterdashes, of the finest russet leather, elegantly worked, and open at the calf to show his stocking; and russet shoes, setting off a well-shaped foot.

As he was standing at the door, a horseman rode up and entered into low and earnest conversation with him. He was dressed in similar style, and almost with equal finery; a man about thirty, square built, with strong Roman features, handsome, though slightly pitted with the small-pox; with a free, bold, and somewhat daring air; his powerful black horse was decorated with tassels and fanciful trappings, and a couple of broad-mouthed blunderbusses hung behind the saddle. He had the air of one of those contrabandistas that I have seen in the mountains of La Ronda, and evidently had a good understanding with the brother of mine hostess; nay, if I mistake not, he was a favoured admirer of the widow. In fact, the whole inn and its inmates had something of a contrabandista aspect, and the blunderbuss stood in a corner beside the guitar. The horseman I have mentioned passed his evening in the posada, and sang several bold mountain romances with great spirit. As we were at supper, two poor Asturians put in in distress, begging food and a night's lodging. They had been waylaid by robbers as they came from a fair among the mountains, robbed of a horse, which carried all their stock in trade, stripped of their money and most of their apparel, beaten for having offered resistance, and left almost naked in the road. My companion, with a prompt generosity, natural to him, ordered them a supper and a bed, and gave them a sum of money to help them forward towards their home.

As the evening advanced, the dramatis personæ thickened. A large man, about sixty years of age, of powerful frame, came strolling in, to gossip with mine hostess. He was dressed in the ordinary Andalusian costume, but had a huge sabre tucked under his arm, wore large mustaches, and had something of a lofty swaggering air. Every one seemed to regard him with great deference.

Our man Sancho whispered to us that

he was Don Ventura Rodriguez, the hero and champion of Loxa, famous for his prowess and the strength of his arm. In the time of the French invasion he surprised six troopers who were asleep: he first secured their horses, then attacked them with his sabre, killed some, and took the rest prisoners. For this exploit the king allows him a peseta (the fifth of a duro, or dollar, per day, and has dignified him with the title of Don.

I was amused to notice his swelling language and demeanour. He was evidently a thorough Andalusian, boastful as he was brave. His sabre was always in his hand or under his arm. He carries it always about with him as a child does her doll, calls it his Santa Teresa, and says that when he draws it, "Tiembra la tierra!"—the earth trembles!

I sat until a late hour listening to the varied themes of this motley group, who mingled together with the unreserve of a Spanish posada. We had contrabandista songs, stories of robbers, guerilla exploits, and Moorish legends. The last were from our handsome landlady, who gave a poetical account of the *Infiernos*, or infernal regions of Loxa—dark caverns, in which subterranean streams and waterfalls make a mysterious sound. The common people say that there are money-coiners shut up there from the time of the Moors; and that the Moorish kings kept their treasures in those caverns.

Were it the purport of this work, I could fill its pages with the incidents and scenes of our rambling expedition; but other themes invite me. Journeying in this manner, we at length emerged from the mountains, and entered upon the beautiful Vega of Granada. Here we took our last mid-day's repast, under a grove of olive trees, on the borders of a rivulet, with the old Moorish capital in the distance, and animated by the ruddy towers of the Alhambra, while, far above it, the snowy summits of the Sierra Nevada shone like silver. The day was without a cloud, and the heat of the sun tempered by cool breezes from the mountains; after our repast, we spread our cloaks and took our last siesta, lulled by the humming of bees among the flowers, and the notes of ringdoves from the neighbouring olive trees. When the sul-



try hours were past, we resumed our journey; and after passing between hedges of aloes and Indian figs, and through a wilderness of gardens, arrived, about sunset, at the gates of Granada.

To the traveller imbued with a feeling for the historical and poetical, the Alhambra of Granada is as much an object of veneration, as is the Kaaba, or sacred house of Mecca, to all true Moslem pilgrims. How many legends and traditions, true and fabulous; how many songs and romances, Spanish and Arabian, of love, war, and chivalry, are associated with this romantic pile! The reader may judge, therefore, of our delight, when, shortly after our arrival in Granada, the Governor of the Alhambra gave us his permission to occupy his vacant apartments in the Moorish palace. My companion was soon summoned away by the duties of his station; but I remained for several months spellbound, in the old enchanted pile. The following papers are the result of my reveries and researches during that delicious thralldom. If they have the power of imparting any of the witching charms of the place to the imagination of the reader, he will not repine at lingering with me for a season in the legendary halls of the Alhambra.

#### GOVERNMENT OF THE ALHAMBRA.

THE Alhambra is an ancient fortress or castellated palace of the Moorish kings of Granada, where they held dominion over this their boasted terrestrial paradise, and made their last stand for empire in Spain. The palace occupies but a portion of the fortress, the walls of which, studded with towers, stretch irregularly round the whole crest of a lofty hill that overlooks the city, and forms a spur of the Sierra Nevada, or snowy mountain.

In the time of the Moors, the fortress was capable of containing an army of forty thousand men within its precincts, and served occasionally as a stronghold of the sovereigns against their rebellious subjects. After the kingdom had passed

into the hands of the Christians, the Alhambra continued a royal demesne, and was occasionally inhabited by the Castilian monarchs. The emperor Charles V. began a sumptuous palace within its walls, but was deterred from completing it by repeated shocks of earthquakes. The last royal residents were Philip V., and his beautiful queen, Elizabetha of Parma, early in the eighteenth century. Great preparations were made for their reception. The palace and gardens were placed in a state of repair, and a new suite of apartments erected, and decorated by artists brought from Italy. The sojourn of the sovereigns was transient, and after their departure the palace once more became desolate. Still the place was maintained with some military state. The governor held it immediately from the crown, its jurisdiction extended down into the suburbs of the city, and was independent of the Captain-General of Granada. A considerable garrison was kept up, the governor had his apartments in the front of the old Moorish palace, and never descended into Granada without some military parade. The fortress in fact was a little town of itself, having several streets of houses within its walls, together with a Franciscan convent and a parochial church.

The desertion of the court, however, was a fatal blow to the Alhambra. Its beautiful halls became desolate, and some of them fell to ruin; the gardens were destroyed, and the fountains ceased to play. By degrees the dwellings became filled up with a loose and lawless population; contrabandistas, who availed themselves of its independent jurisdiction to carry on a wide and daring course of smuggling, and thieves and rogues of all sorts, who made this their place of refuge from whence they might depredate upon Granada and its vicinity. The strong arm of government at length interfered: the whole community was thoroughly sifted; none were suffered to remain but such as were of honest character, and had legitimate right to a residence; the greater part of the houses were demolished, and a mere hamlet left, with the parochial church and the Franciscan convent. During the recent troubles in Spain, when Granada was in the hands

of the French, the Alhambra was garrisoned by their troops, and the palace was occasionally inhabited by the French commander. With that enlightened taste which has ever distinguished the French nation in their conquests, this monument of Moorish elegance and grandeur was rescued from the absolute ruin and desolation that were overwhelming it. The roofs were repaired, the saloons and galleries protected from the weather, the gardens cultivated, the water-courses restored, the fountains once more made to throw up their sparkling showers; and Spain may thank her invaders for having preserved to her the most beautiful and interesting of her historical monuments.

On the departure of the French they blew up several towers of the outer wall, and left the fortifications scarcely tenable. Since that time the military importance of the post is at an end. The garrison is a handful of invalid soldiers, whose principal duty is to guard some of the outer towers, which serve occasionally as a prison of state; and the governor, abandoning the lofty hill of the Alhambra, resides in the centre of Granada, for the more convenient despatch of his official duties. I cannot conclude this brief notice of the state of the fortress without bearing testimony to the honourable exertions of its present commander, Don Francisco de Serna, who is tasking all the limited resources at his command to put the palace in a state of repair, and, by his judicious precautions, has for some time arrested its too certain decay. Had his predecessors discharged the duties of their station with equal fidelity, the Alhambra might yet have remained in almost its pristine beauty: were government to second him with means equal to his zeal, this edifice might still be preserved to adorn the land, and to attract the curious and enlightened of every clime for many generations.

#### INTERIOR OF THE ALHAMBRA.

THE Alhambra has been so often and so minutely described by travellers, that

a mere sketch will, probably, be sufficient for the reader to refresh his recollection; I will give, therefore, a brief account of our visit to it the morning after our arrival in Granada.

Leaving our posada of La Espada, we traversed the renowned square of the Vivarrambla, once the scene of Moorish jousts and tournaments, now a crowded market-place. From thence we proceeded along the Zacatin, the main street of what, in the time of the Moors, was the Great Bazaar, where the small shops and narrow alleys still retain the oriental character. Crossing an open place in front of the palace of the captain-general, we ascended a confined and winding street, the name of which reminded us of the chivalric days of Granada. It is called the Calle, or street of the Gomeres, from a Moorish family famous in chronicle and song. This street led up to a massive gateway of Grecian architecture, built by Charles V., forming the entrance to the domains of the Alhambra.

At the gate were two or three ragged and superannuated soldiers, dozing on a stone bench, the successors of the Zegrís and the Abencerrages; while a tall meagre varlet, whose rusty brown cloak was evidently intended to conceal the ragged state of his nether garments, was lounging in the sunshine and gossiping with an ancient sentinel on duty. He joined us as we entered the gate, and offered his services to show us the fortress.

I have a traveller's dislike to officious ciceroni, and did not altogether like the garb of the applicant.

"You are well acquainted with the place, I presume?"

"Ninguno mas; pues, señor, soy hijo de la Alhambra."—(Nobody better; in fact, sir, I am a son of the Alhambra!)

The common Spaniards have certainly a most poetical way of expressing themselves. "A son of the Alhambra!" the appellation caught me at once; the very tattered garb of my new acquaintance assumed a dignity in my eyes. It was emblematic of the fortunes of the place and befitted the progeny of a ruin.

I put some further questions to him, and found that his title was legitimate. His family had lived in the fortress from

generation to generation ever since the time of the conquest. His name was Mateo Ximenes. "Then, perhaps," said I, "you may be a descendant from the great Cardinal Ximenes?"—"Dios sabe! God knows, Señor! It may be so. We are the oldest family in the Alhambra,—*Cristianos Viejos*, old Christians, without any taint of Moor or Jew. I know we belong to some great family or other, but I forget whom. My father knows all about it: he has the coat-of-arms hanging up in his cottage, up in the fortress." There is not any Spaniard, however poor, but has some claim to high pedigree. The first title of this ragged worthy, however, had completely captivated me, so I gladly accepted the services of the "son of the Alhambra."

We now found ourselves in a deep narrow ravine, filled with beautiful groves, with a steep avenue, and various foot-paths winding through it, bordered with stone seats, and ornamented with fountains. To our left, we beheld the towers of the Alhambra beetling above us; to our right, on the opposite side of the ravine, we were equally dominated by rival towers on a rocky eminence. These, we were told, were the Torres Vermejos, or vermilion towers, so called from their ruddy hue. No one knows their origin. They are of a date much anterior to the Alhambra: some suppose them to have been built by the Romans; others, by some wandering colony of Phœnicians. Ascending the steep and shady avenue, we arrived at the foot of a huge square Moorish tower, forming a kind of barbican, through which passed the main entrance to the fortress. Within the barbican was another group of veteran invalids, one mounting guard at the portal, while the rest, wrapped in their tattered cloaks, slept on the stone benches. This portal is called the Gate of Justice, from the tribunal held within its porch during the Moslem domination, for the immediate trial of petty causes: a custom common in the Oriental nations, and occasionally alluded to in the sacred Scriptures.

The great vestibule, or porch of the gate, is formed by an immense Arabian arch, of the horse-shoe form, which springs to half the height of the tower.

On the keystone of this arch is engraven a gigantic hand. Within the vestibule, on the keystone of the portal, is sculptured, in like manner, a gigantic key. Those who pretend to some knowledge of Mahometan symbols, affirm that the hand is the emblem of doctrine, and the key of faith; the latter, they add, was emblazoned on the standard of the Moslems when they subdued Andalusia, in opposition to the Christian emblem of the Cross. A different explanation, however, was given by the legitimate son of the Alhambra, and one more in unison with the notions of the common people, who attach something of mystery and magic to every thing Moorish, and have all kind of superstitions connected with this old Moslem fortress.

According to Mateo, it was a tradition handed down from the oldest inhabitants, and which he had from his father and grandfather, that the hand and key were magical devices on which the fate of the Alhambra depended. The Moorish king who built it was a great magician, or, as some believed, had sold himself to the devil, and had laid the whole fortress under a magic spell. By this means it had remained standing for several hundred years, in defiance of storms and earthquakes, while almost all other buildings of the Moors had fallen to ruin, and disappeared. This spell, the tradition went on to say, would last until the hand on the outer arch should reach down and grasp the key, when the whole pile would tumble to pieces, and all the treasures buried beneath it by the Moors would be revealed.

Notwithstanding this ominous prediction, we ventured to pass through the spellbound gateway, feeling some little assurance against magic art in the protection of the Virgin, a statue of whom we observed above the portal.

After passing through the barbican, we ascended a narrow lane, winding between walls, and came on an open esplanade within the fortress, called the Plaza de los Algibes, or Place of the Cisterns, from great reservoirs which undermine it, cut in the living rock by the Moors for the supply of the fortress. Here, also, is a well of immense depth, furnishing the purest and coldest of

water; another monument of the delicate taste of the Moors, who were indefatigable in their exertions to obtain that element in its crystal purity.

In front of this esplanade is the splendid pile commenced by Charles V., intended, it is said, to eclipse the residence of the Moslem kings. With all its grandeur and architectural merit, it appeared to us like an arrogant intrusion, and, passing by it, we entered a simple, unostentatious portal, opening into the interior of the Moorish palace.

The transition was almost magical: it seemed as if we were at once transported into other times and another realm, and were treading the scenes of Arabian story. We found ourselves in a great court, paved with white marble, and decorated at each end with light Moorish peristyles: it is called the Court of the Alberca. In the centre was an immense basin or fish-pond, a hundred and thirty feet in length by thirty in breadth, stocked with gold-fish, and bordered by hedges of roses. At the upper end of this court rose the great Tower of Comares.

From the lower end we passed through a Moorish archway into the renowned Court of Lions. There is no part of the edifice that gives us a more complete idea of its original beauty and magnificence than this, for none has suffered so little from the ravages of time. In the centre stands the fountain famous in song and story. The alabaster basins still shed their diamond drops; and the twelve lions which support them, cast forth their crystal streams as in the days of Boabdil. The court is laid out in flower-beds, and surrounded by light Arabian arcades of open filagree-work, supported by slender pillars of white marble. The architecture, like that of all the other parts of the palace, is characterized by elegance rather than grandeur; bespeaking a delicate and graceful taste, and a disposition to indolent enjoyment. When one looks upon the fairy tracery of the peristyles, and the apparently fragile fretwork of the walls, it is difficult to believe that so much has survived the wear and tear of centuries, the shocks of earthquakes, the violence of war, and the quiet, though no less baneful, pilferings of the tasteful traveller: it is almost sufficient to excuse

the popular tradition, that the whole is protected by a magic charm.

On one side of the court, a portal, richly adorned, opens into a lofty hall, paved with white marble, and called the Hall of the Two Sisters. A cupola, or lantern, admits a tempered light from above, and a free circulation of air. The lower part of the walls is encrusted with beautiful Moorish tiles, on some of which are emblazoned the escutcheons of the Moorish monarchs: the upper part is faced with the fine stucco-work invented at Damascus, consisting of large plates, cast in moulds, and artfully joined, so as to have the appearance of having been laboriously sculptured by the hand into light relievos and fanciful arabesques, intermingled with texts of the Koran, and poetical inscriptions in Arabian and Cufic characters. These decorations of the walls and cupolas are richly gilded, and the interstices pencilled with lapis-lazuli, and other brilliant and enduring colours. On each side of the hall are recesses for ottomans and couches. Above an inner porch is a balcony, which communicated with the women's apartment. The latticed 'jalousies' still remain, from whence the dark-eyed beauties of the harem might gaze unseen upon the entertainments of the hall below.

It is impossible to contemplate this once favourite abode of oriental manners, without feeling the early associations of Arabian romance, and almost expecting to see the white arm of some mysterious princess beckoning from the balcony, or some dark eye sparkling through the lattice. The abode of beauty is here, as if it had been inhabited but yesterday; but where are the Zoraydas and Lindaraxas!

On the opposite side of the Court of Lions, is the Hall of the Abencerrages; so called from the gallant cavaliers of that illustrious line who were here perfidiously massacred. There are some who doubt the whole truth of this story; but our humble attendant Mateo pointed out the very wicket of the portal through which they are said to have been introduced, one by one, and the white marble fountain in the centre of the hall, where they were beheaded. He showed us also

certain broad ruddy stains in the pavement, traces of their blood, which, according to popular belief, can never be effaced. Finding we listened to him with easy faith, he added, that there was often heard at night, in the Court of Lions, a low, confused sound, resembling the murmuring of a multitude; with now and then a faint tinkling, like the distant clank of chains. These noises are probably produced by the bubbling currents and tinkling falls of water, conducted under the pavement, through pipes and channels, to supply the fountains; but, according to the legend of the son of the Alhambra, they are made by the spirits of the murdered Abencerrages, who nightly haunt the scene of their suffering, and invoke the vengeance of Heaven on their destroyer.

From the Court of Lions we retraced our steps through the Court of the Alberca, or Great Fish-pool; crossing which, we proceeded to the Tower of Comares, so called from the name of the Arabian architect. It is of massive strength and lofty height, domineering over the rest of the edifice, and overhanging the steep hill-side, which descends abruptly to the banks of the Darro. A Moorish archway admitted us into a vast and lofty hall, which occupies the interior of the tower, and was the grand audience-chamber of the Moslem monarchs, thence called the Hall of Ambassadors. It still bears the traces of past magnificence. The walls are richly stuccoed and decorated with arabesques; the vaulted ceiling of cedar-wood, almost lost in obscurity, from its height, still gleams with rich gilding, and the brilliant tints of the Arabian pencil. On three sides of the saloon are deep windows cut through the immense thickness of the walls, the balconies of which look down upon the verdant valley of the Darro, the streets and convents of the Albaycin, and command a prospect of the distant Vega.

I might go on to describe minutely the other delightful apartments of this side of the palace; the Tocador, or toilet of the queen, an open belvidere, on the summit of a tower, where the Moorish sultan enjoyed the pure breezes from the mountain, and the prospect of the surrounding

paradise; the secluded little patio, or garden of Lindaraxa, with its alabaster fountain, its thickets of roses and myrtles, of citron and oranges; the cool halls and grottoes of the baths, where the glare and heat of day are tempered into a soft mysterious light, and a pervading freshness. But I forbear to dwell minutely on those scenes; my object is merely to give the reader a general introduction into an abode, where, if so disposed, he may linger and loiter with me through the remainder of this work, gradually becoming familiar with all its localities.

An abundant supply of water, brought from the mountains by old Moorish aqueducts, circulates throughout the palace, supplying its baths and fishpools, sparkling in jets within its halls, or murmuring in channels along the marble pavements. When it has paid its tribute to the royal pile, and visited its gardens and pastures, it flows down the long avenue leading to the city, tinkling in rills, gushing in fountains, and maintaining a perpetual verdure in those groves that embower and beautify the whole hill of the Alhambra.

Those only who have sojourned in the ardent climates of the South, can appreciate the delights of an abode, combining the breezy coolness of the mountain, with the freshness and verdure of the valley.

While the city below pants with the noontide heat, and the parched Vega trembles to the eye, the delicate airs from the Sierra Nevada play through these lofty halls, bringing with them the sweetness of the surrounding gardens. Every thing invites to that indolent repose, the bliss of southern climes; and while the half-shut eye looks out from shaded balconies upon the glittering landscape, the ear is lulled by the rustling of groves, and the murmur of running streams.

#### THE TOWER OF COMARES.

THE reader has had a sketch of the interior of the Alhambra, and may be desirous of a general idea of its vicinity.

The morning is serene and lovely ; the sun has not gained sufficient power to destroy the freshness of the night ; we will mount to the summit of the Tower of Comares, and take a bird's-eye view of Granada and its environs.

Come, then, worthy reader and comrade, follow my steps into this vestibule, ornamented with rich tracery, which opens to the Hall of Ambassadors. We will not enter the hall, however, but turn to the left, to this small door, opening in the wall. Have a care ! here are steep winding steps and but scanty light ; yet up this narrow, obscure, and winding staircase, the proud monarchs of Granada and their queens have often ascended to the battlements of the tower, to watch the approach of Christian armies ; or to gaze on the battles in the Vega. At length we are on the terraced roof, and may take breath for a moment, while we cast a general eye over the splendid panorama of city and country ; of rocky mountain, verdant valley, and fertile plain ; of castle, cathedral, Moorish towers, and Gothic domes, crumbling ruins, and blooming groves.

Let us approach the battlements, and cast our eyes immediately below. See, on this side we have the whole plan of the Alhambra laid open to us, and can look down into its courts and gardens. At the foot of the tower is the Court of the Alberca, with its great tank or fish-pool, bordered with flowers ; and yonder is the Court of Lions, with its famous fountains, and its light Moorish arcades ; and in the centre of the pile is the little garden of Lindaraxa, buried in the heart of the building, with its roses and citrons, and shrubbery of emerald green.

That belt of battlements, studded with square towers, straggling round the whole brow of the hill, is the outer boundary of the fortress. Some of the towers, you may perceive, are in ruins, and their massive fragments are buried among vines, fig-trees, and aloes.

Let us look on this northern side of the tower. It is a giddy height ; the very foundations of the tower rise above the groves of the steep hill-side. And see ! a long fissure in the massive walls, shows that the tower has been rent by some of the earthquakes, which from

time to time have thrown Granada into consternation ; and which, sooner or later must reduce this crumbling pile to a mere mass of ruin. The deep narrow glen below us, which gradually widens as it opens from the mountains, is the valley of the Darro ; you see the little river winding its way under embowered terraces, and among orchards and flower-gardens. It is a stream famous in old times for yielding gold, and its sands are still sifted occasionally, in search of the precious ore. Some of those white pavilions, which here and there gleam from among groves and vineyards, were rustic retreats of the Moors, to enjoy the refreshment of their gardens.

The airy palace, with its tall white towers and long arcades, which breasts yon mountain, among pompous groves and hanging gardens, is the Generalife, a summer palace of the Moorish kings, to which they resorted during the sultry months, to enjoy a still more breezy region than that of the Alhambra. The naked summit of the height above it, where you behold some shapeless ruins, is the Silla del Moro, or Seat of the Moor ; so called, from having been a retreat of the unfortunate Boabdil, during the time of an insurrection, where he seated himself, and looked down mournfully upon his rebellious city.

A murmuring sound of water now and then rises from the valley. It is from the aqueduct of yon Moorish mill, nearly at the foot of the hill. The avenue of trees beyond is the Alameda, along the bank of the Darro, a favourite resort in evenings, and a rendezvous of lovers in the summer nights, when the guitar may be heard at a late hour from the benches along its walks. At present there are but a few loitering monks to be seen there, and a group of water-carriers from the fountain of Avellanos.

You start ! 'tis nothing but a hawk that we have frightened from his nest. This old tower is a complete breeding-place for vagrant birds ; the swallow and martlet abound in every chink and cranny, and circle about it the whole day long ; while at night, when all other birds have gone to rest, the moping owl comes out of its lurking-place, and utters its boding cry from the battlements.

See how the hawk we have dislodged sweeps away below us, skimming over the tops of the trees, and sailing up to the ruins above the Generalife!

Let us leave this side of the tower, and turn our eyes to the west. Here you behold in the distance, a range of mountains bounding the Vega, the ancient barrier between Moslem Granada and the land of the Christians. Among their heights you may still discern warrior towns, whose gray walls and battlements seem of a piece with the rocks on which they are built; while here and there is a solitary atalaya, or watch-tower, mounted on some lofty point, and looking down, as it were, from the sky, into the valleys on either side. It was down the defiles of these mountains, by the pass of Lope, that the Christian armies descended into the Vega. It was round the base of yon gray and naked mountain, almost insulated from the rest, and stretching its bold rocky promontory into the bosom of the plain, that the invading squadrons would come bursting into view, with flaunting banners, and the clangour of drums and trumpets. How changed is the scene! Instead of the glittering line of mailed warriors, we behold the patient train of the toilful muleteer, slowly moving along the skirts of the mountain. Behind that promontory is the eventful bridge of Pinos, renowned for many a bloody strife between Moors and Christians; but still more renowned as being the place where Columbus was overtaken and called back by the messenger of Queen Isabella, just as he was departing in despair, to carry his project of discovery to the court of France.

Behold another place famous in the history of the discoverer. Yon line of walls and towers, gleaming in the morning sun, in the very centre of the Vega, in the city of Santa Fé, built by the catholic sovereigns during the siege of Granada, after a conflagration had destroyed their camp. It was to these walls that Columbus was called back by the heroic queen; and within them the treaty was concluded, that led to the discovery of the western world.

Here, towards the south, the eye revels on the luxuriant beauties of the Vega;

a blooming wilderness of grove and garden, and teeming orchard, with the Xenil winding through it in silver links, and feeding innumerable rills, conducted through ancient Moorish channels, which maintain the landscape in perpetual verdure. Here are the beloved bowers and gardens and rural retreats, for which the Moors fought with such desperate valour. The very farm-houses and hovels which are now inhabited by the boors, retain traces of arabesques and other tasteful decorations, which show them to have been elegant residences in the days of the Moslems.

Beyond the embowered region of the Vega, you behold to the south a line of arid hills, down which a long train of mules is slowly moving. It was from the summit of one of those hills that the unfortunate Boabdil cast back his last look upon Granada, and gave vent to the agony of his soul. It is the spot famous in song and story, "The last sigh of the Moor."

Now raise your eyes to the snowy summit of yon pile of mountains, shining like a white summer cloud in the blue sky. It is the Sierra Nevada, the pride and delight of Granada; the source of her cooling breezes and perpetual verdure, of her gushing fountains and perennial streams. It is this glorious pile of mountains that gives to Granada that combination of delights so rare in a southern city; the fresh vegetation and the temperate airs of a northern climate, with the vivifying ardour of a tropical sun, and the cloudless azure of a southern sky. It is this aerial treasure of snow, which, melting in proportion to the increase of the summer heat, sends down rivulets and streams through every glen and gorge of the Alpuxarras, diffusing emerald verdure and fertility throughout a chain of happy and sequestered valleys.

Those mountains may well be called the glory of Granada. They dominate the whole extent of Andalusia, and may be seen from its most distant parts. The muleteer hails them, as he views their frosty peaks from the sultry level of the plain; and the Spanish mariner on the deck of his bark, far, far off on the bosom of the blue Mediterranean, watches

them with a pensive eye, thinks of delightful Granada, and chants, in low voice, some old romance about the Moors.

But enough—the sun is high above the mountains, and is pouring his full fervour upon our heads. Already the terraced roof of the tower is hot beneath our feet: let us abandon it, and descend and refresh ourselves under the arcades by the Fountain of the Lions.

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REFLECTIONS

ON

THE MOSLEM DOMINATION IN SPAIN.

ONE of my favourite resorts is the balcony of the central window of the Hall of Ambassadors, in the lofty tower of Comares. I have just been seated there, enjoying the close of a long brilliant day. The sun, as he sank behind the purple mountains of Alhama, sent a stream of effulgence up the valley of the Darro, that spread a melancholy pomp over the ruddy towers of the Alhambra; while the Vega, covered with a slight sultry vapour that caught the setting ray, seemed spread out in the distance like a golden sea. Not a breath of air disturbed the stillness of the hour, and though the faint sound of music and merriment now and then arose from the gardens of the Darro, it but rendered more impressive the monumental silence of the pile which overshadowed me. It was one of those hours and scenes in which memory asserts an almost magical power; and, like the evening sun beaming on these mouldering towers, sends back her retrospective rays to light up the glories of the past.

As I sat watching the effect of the declining day-light upon this Moorish pile, I was led into a consideration of the light, elegant, and voluptuous character, prevalent throughout its internal architecture; and to contrast it with the grand but gloomy solemnity of the gothic edifices, reared by the Spanish conquerors. The very architecture thus bespeaks the opposite and irreconcilable natures of

the two warlike people who so long battled here for the mastery of the peninsula. By degrees, I fell into a course of musing upon the singular fortunes of the Arabian or Moresco-Spaniards, whose whole existence is as a tale that is told, and certainly forms one of the most anomalous, yet splendid episodes in history. Potent and durable as was their dominion, we scarcely know how to call them. They are a nation, as it were, without a legitimate country or a name. A remote wave of the great Arabian inundation, cast upon the shores of Europe, they seemed to have all the impetus of the first rush of the torrent. Their career of conquest, from the rock of Gibraltar to the cliffs of the Pyrenees, was as rapid and brilliant as the Moslem victories of Syria and Egypt. Nay, had they not been checked on the plains of Tours, all France, all Europe, might have been overrun with the same facility as the empires of the East, and the crescent might at this day have glittered on the fanes of Paris and of London.

Repelled within the limits of the Pyrenees, the mixed hordes of Asia and Africa, that formed this great eruption, gave up the Moslem principle of conquest, and sought to establish in Spain a peaceful and permanent dominion. As conquerors, their heroism was only equalled by their moderation; and in both, for a time, they excelled the nations with whom they contended. Severed from their native homes, they loved the land given them as they supposed by Allah, and strove to embellish it with every thing that could administer to the happiness of man. Laying the foundations of their power in a system of wise and equitable laws, diligently cultivating the arts and sciences, and promoting agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, they gradually formed an empire unrivalled for its prosperity by any of the empires of Christendom; and diligently drawing round them the graces and refinements that marked the Arabian empire in the East, at the time of its greatest civilisation, they diffused the light of Oriental knowledge through the Western regions of benighted Europe.

The cities of Arabian Spain became the resort of Christian artisans, to in-



struct themselves in the useful arts. The Universities of Toledo, Cordova, Seville, and Granada, were sought by the pale student from other lands, to acquaint himself with the sciences of the Arabs, and the treasured lore of antiquity; the lovers of the gay sciences resorted to Cordova and Granada, to imbibe the poetry and music of the East; and the steel-clad warriors of the north hastened thither to accomplish themselves in the graceful exercises and courteous usages of chivalry.

If the Moslem monuments in Spain, if the mosque of Cordova, the alcazar of Seville, and the Alhambra of Granada, still bear inscriptions fondly boasting of the power and permanency of their domination, can the boast be derided as arrogant and vain? Generation after generation, century after century, had passed away, and still they maintained possession of the land. A period had elapsed longer than that which has passed since England was subjugated by the Norman Conqueror, and the descendants of Musa and Taric might as little anticipate being driven into exile across the same straits, traversed by their triumphant ancestors, as the descendants of Rollo and William, and their veteran peers, may dream of being driven back to the shores of Normandy.

With all this, however, the Moslem empire in Spain was but a brilliant exotic, that took no permanent root in the soil it embellished. Severed from all their neighbours in the West, by impassable barriers of faith and manners, and separated by seas and deserts from their kindred of the East, they were an isolated people. Their whole existence was a prolonged, though gallant and chivalric struggle, for a foothold in a usurped land.

They were the outposts and frontiers of Islamism. The peninsula was the great battle-ground where the Gothic conquerors of the North, and the Moslem conquerors of the East, met and strove for mastery; and the fiery courage of the Arab was at length subdued by the obstinate and persevering valour of the Goth.

Never was the annihilation of a people more complete than that of the Moresco-

Spaniards. Where are they? Ask the shores of Barbary and its desert places. The exiled remnant of their once powerful empire disappeared among the barbarians of Africa, and ceased to be a nation. They have not even left a distinct name behind them, though for nearly eight centuries they were a distinct people. The home of their adoption and of their occupation for ages, refuses to acknowledge them, except as invaders and usurpers. A few broken monuments are all that remain to bear witness to their power and dominion, as solitary rocks left far in the interior, bear testimony to the extent of some vast inundation. Such is the Alhambra. A Moslem pile, in the midst of a Christian land; an Oriental palace amidst the Gothic edifices of the West; an elegant memento of a brave, intelligent, and graceful people, who conquered, ruled, and passed away.

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#### THE HOUSEHOLD.

It is time that I give some idea of my domestic arrangements in this singular residence. The Royal Palace of the Alhambra is entrusted to the care of a good old maiden dame, called Doña Antonia Molina; but who, according to Spanish custom, goes by the more neighbourly appellation of Tía Antonia (Aunt Antonia). She maintains the Moorish halls and gardens in order, and shows them to strangers; in consideration of which she is allowed all the perquisites received from visitors, and all the produce of the gardens, excepting, that she is expected to pay an occasional tribute of fruits and flowers to the governor. Her residence is in a corner of the palace; and her family consists of a nephew and niece, the children of two different brothers. The nephew, Manuel Molina, is a young man of sterling worth, and Spanish gravity. He has served in the armies both in Spain and the West Indies; but is now studying medicine, in hopes of one day or other becoming physician to the fortress, a post worth at least a hundred and forty dollars a-year. As to the niece, she is a plump little

black-eyed Andalusian damsel, named Dolores; but who, from her bright looks and cheerful disposition, merits a merrier name. She is the declared heiress of all her aunt's possessions, consisting of certain ruinous tenements in the fortress, yielding a revenue of about one hundred and fifty dollars. I had not been long in the Alhambra, before I discovered that a quiet courtship was going on between the discreet Manuel and his bright-eyed cousin, and that nothing was wanting to enable them to join their hands and expectations, but that he should receive his doctor's diploma, and purchase a dispensation from the Pope, on account of their consanguinity.

With the good dame Antonia I have made a treaty, according to which, she furnishes me with board and lodging; while the merry-hearted little Dolores keeps my apartment in order, and officiates as handmaid at meal-times. I have also at my command a tall, stuttering, yellow-haired lad, named Pepe, who works in the gardens, and would fain have acted as valet; but, in this, he was forestalled by Mateo Ximenes, "the son of the Alhambra!" This alert and officious wight has managed, somehow or other, to stick by me ever since I first encountered him at the outer gate of the fortress, and to weave himself into all my plans, until he has fairly appointed and installed himself my valet, cicerone, guide, guard, and historiographic squire; and I have been obliged to improve the state of his wardrobe, that he may not disgrace his various functions; so that he has cast his old brown mantle, as a snake does his skin, and now appears about the fortress with a smart Andalusian hat and jacket, to his infinite satisfaction, and the great astonishment of his comrades. The chief fault of honest Mateo is an over-anxiety to be useful. Conscious of having foisted himself into my employ, and that my simple and quiet habits render his situation a sinecure, he is at his wits' end to devise modes of making himself important to my welfare. I am, in a manner, the victim of his officiousness; I cannot put my foot over the threshold of the palace, to stroll about the fortress, but he is at my elbow, to explain every thing I see;

and if I venture to ramble among the surrounding hills, he insists upon attending me as a guard, though I vehemently suspect he would be more apt to trust to the length of his legs than the strength of his arms, in case of an attack. After all, however, the poor fellow is at times an amusing companion; he is simple-minded, and of infinite good humour, with the loquacity and gossip of a village barber, and knows all the small-talk of the place and its environs; but what he chiefly values himself on, is his stock of local information, having the most marvellous stories to relate, of every tower, and vault, and gateway of the fortress, in all of which he places the most implicit faith.

Most of these he has derived, according to his own account, from his grandfather, a little legendary tailor, who lived to the age of nearly a hundred years, during which he made but two migrations beyond the precincts of the fortress. His shop, for the greater part of a century, was the resort of a knot of venerable gossips, where they would pass half the night talking about old times, and the wonderful events and hidden secrets of the place. The whole living, moving, thinking, and acting, of this historical little tailor, had thus been bounded by the walls of the Alhambra; within them he had been born, within them he lived, breathed, and had his being; within them he died, and was buried. Fortunately for posterity, his traditionary lore died not with him. The authentic Mateo, when an urchin, used to be an attentive listener to the narratives of his grandfather, and of the gossip group assembled round the shop-board; and is thus possessed of a stock of valuable knowledge concerning the Alhambra, not to be found in the books, and well worthy the attention of every curious traveller.

Such are the personages that contribute to my domestic comforts in the Alhambra; and I question whether any of the potentates, Moslem or Christian, who have preceded me in the palace, have been waited upon with greater fidelity, or enjoyed a serener sway.

When I rise in the morning, Pepe, the stuttering lad from the gardens, brings

me a tribute of fresh-culled flowers, which are afterwards arranged in vases, by the skilful hand of Dolores, who takes a female pride in the decorations of my chamber. My meals are made wherever caprice dictates; sometimes in one of the Moorish halls, sometimes under the arcades of the Court of Lions, surrounded by flowers and fountains: and when I walk out, I am conducted by the assiduous Mateo, to the most romantic retreats of the mountains, and delicious haunts of the adjacent valleys, not one of which but is the scene of some wonderful tale.

Though fond of passing the greater part of my day alone, yet I occasionally repair in the evenings to the little domestic circle of Doña Antonia. This is generally held in an old Moorish chamber, that serves for kitchen as well as hall, a rude fireplace having been made in one corner, the smoke from which has discoloured the walls, and almost obliterated the ancient arabesques. A window, with a balcony overhanging the valley of the Darro, lets in the cool evening breeze; and here I take my frugal supper of fruit and milk, and mingle with the conversation of the family. There is a natural talent or mother wit, as it is called, about the Spaniards, which renders them intellectual and agreeable companions, whatever may be their condition in life, or however imperfect may have been their education: add to this, they are never vulgar; nature has endowed them with an inherent dignity of spirit. The good Tia Antonia is a woman of strong and intelligent, though uncultivated mind; and the bright-eyed Dolores, though she has read but three or four books in the whole course of her life, has an engaging mixture of *naïveté* and good sense, and often surprises me by the pungency of her artless sallies. Sometimes the nephew entertains us by reading some old comedy of Calderon or Lope de Vega, to which he is evidently prompted by a desire to improve, as well as to amuse his cousin Dolores; though, to his great mortification, the little damsel generally falls asleep before the first act is completed. Sometimes Tia Antonia has a little levee of humble friends

and dependents, the inhabitants of the adjacent hamlet, or the wives of the invalid soldiers. These look up to her with great deference, as the custodian of the palace, and pay their court to her by bringing the news of the place, or the rumours that may have straggled up from Granada. In listening to these evening gossipings I have picked up many curious facts, illustrative of the manners of the people and the peculiarities of the neighbourhood. These are simple details of simple pleasures; it is the nature of the place alone that gives them interest and importance. I tread haunted ground, and am surrounded by romantic associations. From earliest boyhood, when, on the banks of the Hudson, I first pored over the pages of an old Spanish story about the wars of Granada, that city has ever been a subject of my waking dreams; and often have I trod in fancy the romantic halls of the Alhambra. Behold for once a day-dream realized; yet I can scarce credit my senses, or believe that I do indeed inhabit the palace of Boabdil, and look down from its balconies upon chivalric Granada. As I loiter through these oriental chambers, and hear the murmur of fountains and the song of the nightingale; as I inhale the odour of the rose, and feel the influence of the balmy climate, I am almost tempted to fancy myself in the paradise of Mahomet, and that the plump little Dolores is one of the bright-eyed houris, destined to administer to the happiness of true believers.

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### THE TRUANT.

SINCE noting the foregoing pages, we have had a scene of petty tribulation in the Alhambra, which has thrown a cloud over the sunny countenance of Dolores. This little damsel has a female passion for pets of all kinds, and from the superabundant kindness of her disposition, one of the ruined courts of the Alhambra is thronged with her favourites. A stately peacock and his hen seem to hold regal sway here, over pompous turkeys,

querulous guinea-fowls, and a rabble rout of common cocks and hens. The great delight of Dolores, however, has for some time been centered in a youthful pair of pigeons, who have lately entered into the holy state of wedlock, and who have even supplanted a tortoise-shell cat and kittens in her affections.

As a tenement for them wherein to commence housekeeping, she had fitted up a small chamber adjacent to the kitchen, the window of which looked into one of the quiet Moorish courts. Here they lived in happy ignorance of any world beyond the court and its sunny roofs. Never had they aspired to soar above the battlements, or to mount to the summit of the towers. Their virtuous union was at length crowned by two spotless and milk-white eggs, to the great joy of their cherishing little mistress. Nothing could be more praiseworthy than the conduct of the young married folks on this interesting occasion. They took turns to sit upon the nest until the eggs were hatched, and while their callow progeny required warmth and shelter; while one thus stayed at home, the other foraged abroad for food, and brought home abundant supplies.

This scene of conjugal felicity has suddenly met with a reverse. Early this morning, as Dolores was feeding the male pigeon, she took a fancy to give him a peep at the great world. Opening a window, therefore, which looks down upon the valley of the Darro, she launched him at once beyond the walls of the Alhambra. For the first time of his life the astonished bird had to try the full vigour of his wings. He swept down into the valley, and then rising upwards with a surge, soared almost to the clouds. Never before had he risen to such a height, or experienced such delight in flying; and, like a young spend-thrift just come to his estate, he seemed giddy with excess of liberty, and with the boundless field of action suddenly opened to him. For the whole day he has been circling about in capricious flights, from tower to tower, from tree to tree. Every attempt has been vain to lure him back by scattering grain upon the roofs; he seems to have lost all

thought of home, of his tender helpmate and his callow young. To add to the anxiety of Dolores, he has been joined by two *palomas ladrones*, or robber pigeons, whose instinct it is to entice wandering pigeons to their own dove-cotes. The fugitive, like many other thoughtless youths on their first launching upon the world, seems quite fascinated with these knowing, but graceless companions, who have undertaken to show him life, and introduce him to society. He has been soaring with them over all the roofs and steeples of Granada. A thunderstorm has passed over the city, but he has not sought his home; night has closed in, and still he comes not. To deepen the pathos of the affair, the female pigeon, after remaining several hours on the nest, without being relieved, at length went forth to seek her recreant mate; but stayed away so long that the young ones perished for want of the warmth and shelter of the parent bosom. At a late hour in the evening, word was brought to Dolores, that the truant bird had been seen upon the towers of the Generalife. Now it happens that the *administrador* of that ancient palace has likewise a dovecote, among the inmates of which are said to be two or three of these inveigling birds, the terror of all neighbouring pigeon-fanciers. Dolores immediately concluded, that the two feathered sharpers who had been seen with her fugitive, were these bloods of the Generalife. A council of war was forthwith held in the chamber of Tia Antonia. The Generalife is a distinct jurisdiction from the Alhambra, and of course some punctilio, if not jealousy, exists between their custodians. It was determined, therefore, to send Pepe, the stuttering lad of the gardens, as ambassador to the administrador, requesting, that if such fugitive should be found in his dominions, he might be given up as a subject of the Alhambra. Pepe departed accordingly, on his diplomatic expedition, through the moonlight groves and avenues, but returned in an hour with the afflicting intelligence that no such bird was to be found in the dovecote of the Generalife. The administrador, however, pledged his sovereign word that if such vagrant should appear

there, even at midnight, he should instantly be arrested, and sent back prisoner to his little black-eyed mistress.

Thus stands the melancholy affair, which has occasioned much distress throughout the palace, and has sent the inconsolable Dolores to a sleepless pillow.

“Sorrow endureth for a night,” says the proverb, “but joy cometh in the morning.” The first object that met my eyes, on leaving my room this morning, was Dolores, with the truant pigeon in her hands, and her eyes sparkling with joy. He had appeared at an early hour on the battlements, hovering shyly about from roof to roof, but at length entered the window, and surrendered himself prisoner. He gained little credit, however, by his return; for the ravenous manner in which he devoured the food set before him, showed that, like the prodigal son, he had been driven home by sheer famine. Dolores upbraided him for his faithless conduct, calling him all manner of vagrant names (though, woman like, she fondled him at the same time to her bosom, and covered him with kisses.) I observed, however, that she had taken care to clip his wings to prevent all future soaring; a precaution, which I mention for the benefit of all those who have truant lovers or wandering husbands. More than one valuable moral might be drawn from the story of Dolores and her pigeon.

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#### THE AUTHOR'S CHAMBER.

ON taking up my abode in the Alhambra, one end of a suite of empty chambers of modern architecture, intended for the residence of the governor, was fitted up for my reception. It was in front of the palace, looking forth upon the esplanade; the further end communicated with a cluster of little chambers, partly Moorish, partly modern, inhabited by Tia Antonia and her family; these terminated in a large room, which serves the good old dame for parlour, kitchen, and hall of audience. It had boasted of some splendour in the time of the Moors, but a fireplace

had been built in one corner, the smoke from which had discoloured the walls, nearly obliterated the ornaments, and spread a sombre tint on the whole. From these gloomy apartments, a narrow blind corridor and a dark winding staircase, led down an angle of the tower of Comares, groping along which, and opening a small door at the bottom, you were suddenly dazzled by emerging into the brilliant antechamber of the Hall of Ambassadors, with the fountain of the court of the Alberca sparkling before you.

I was dissatisfied with being lodged in a modern and frontier apartment of the palace, and longed to ensconce myself in the very heart of the building. As I was rambling one day about the Moorish halls, I found, in a remote gallery, a door which I had not before noticed, communicating apparently with an extensive apartment, locked up from the public. Here then was a mystery; here was the haunted wing of the castle. I procured the key, however, without difficulty; the door opened to a range of vacant chambers of European architecture, though built over a Moorish arcade, along the little garden of Lindaraxa. There were two lofty rooms, the ceilings of which were of deep panel work of cedar, richly and skilfully carved with fruits and flowers, intermingled with grotesque masks or faces, but broken in many places. The walls had evidently, in ancient times, been hung with damask, but were now naked, and scrawled over with the insignificant names of aspiring travellers; the windows, which were dismantled and open to wind and weather, looked into the garden of Lindaraxa, and the orange and citron trees flung their branches into the chamber. Beyond these rooms were two saloons, less lofty, looking also into the garden. In the compartments of the panelled ceilings, were baskets of fruit and garlands of flowers, painted by no mean hand, and in tolerable preservation. The walls had also been painted in fresco in the Italian style, but the paintings were nearly obliterated; the windows were in the same shattered state as in the other chambers. This fanciful suite of rooms terminated in an open gallery

with balustrades, which ran at right angles and along another side of the garden. The whole apartment had a delicacy and elegance in its decorations, and there was something so choice and sequestered in its situation, along this retired little garden, that it awakened an interest in its history. I found on inquiry, that it was an apartment fitted up by Italian artists in the early part of the last century, at the time when Philip V. and the beautiful Elizabeth of Parma were expected at the Alhambra; and was destined for the queen and the ladies of her train. One of the loftiest chambers had been her sleeping-room; and a narrow staircase leading from it, though now walled up, opened to the delightful belvedere, originally a mirador of the Moorish sultanas, but fitted up as a boudoir for the fair Elizabeth, and which still retains the name of the *tocador*, or *toilette*, of the queen. The sleeping-room I have mentioned, commanded from one window a prospect of the Generalife and its embowered terraces: under another window played the alabaster fountain of the garden of Lindaraxa. That garden carried my thoughts still further back to the period of another reign of beauty: to the days of the Moorish sultans.

"How *beauteous* is this garden!" says an Arabic inscription, "where the flowers of the earth vie with the stars of heaven! What can compare with the vase of yon alabaster fountain filled with crystal water? Nothing but the moon in her fulness, shining in the midst of an unclouded sky!"

Centuries had elapsed, yet how much of this scene of apparently fragile beauty remained. The garden of Lindaraxa was still adorned with flowers; the fountain still presented its crystal mirror; it is true, the alabaster had lost its whiteness, and the basin beneath, overrun with weeds, had become the nestling-place of the lizard; but there was something in the very decay, that enhanced the interest of the scene, speaking as it did, of that mutability which is the irrevocable lot of man and all his works. The desolation too of these chambers, once the abode of the proud and elegant Elizabetha, had a more touching charm

for me, than if I had beheld them in their pristine splendour, glittering with the pageantry of a court. I determined at once to take up my quarters in this apartment.

My determination excited great surprise in the family, who could not imagine any rational inducement for the choice of so solitary, remote, and forlorn an apartment. The good Tia Antonia considered it highly dangerous; the neighbourhood, she said, was infested by vagrants; the caverns of the adjacent hills swarmed with gipsies; the palace was ruinous, and easy to be entered in many parts; and the rumour of a stranger quartered alone in one of the ruined apartments, out of the hearing of the rest of the inhabitants, might tempt unwelcome visitors in the night, especially as foreigners are always supposed to be well stocked with money. Dolores represented the frightful loneliness of the place, nothing but bats and owls flitting about; then there were a fox and a wild cat that kept about the vaults and roamed about at night.

I was not to be diverted from my humour; so calling in the assistance of a carpenter, and the ever officious Mateo Ximenes, the doors and windows were soon placed in a state of tolerable security. With all these precautions, I must confess, the first night I passed in these quarters was inexpressibly dreary. I was escorted by the whole family to my chamber, and their taking leave of me, and returning along the waste ante-chambers and echoing galleries, reminded me of those hobgoblin stories where the hero is left to accomplish the adventure of an enchanted house.

Even the thoughts of the fair Elizabetha, and the beauties of her court, who had once graced these chambers, now, by a perversion of fancy, added to the gloom. Here was the scene of their transient gayety and loveliness; here were the very traces of their elegance and enjoyment; but what and where were they?—Dust and ashes! tenants of the tomb! phantoms of the memory!

A vague and indescribable awe was creeping over me. I would fain have ascribed it to the thoughts of robbers awakened by the evening's conversation,

but I felt that it was something more unreal and absurd. In a word, the long-buried impressions of the nursery were reviving, and asserting their power over my imagination. Every thing began to be affected by the working of my mind. The whispering of the wind among the citron trees beneath my window, had something sinister. I cast my eyes into the garden of Lindaraxa; the groves presented a gulf of shadows; the thickets, indistinct and ghastly shapes. I was glad to close the window, but my chamber itself became infected. A bat had found its way in, and flitted about my head and athwart my solitary lamp; the grotesque faces carved in the cedar ceiling seemed to mope and mow at me.

Rousing myself, and half smiling at this temporary weakness, I resolved to brave it, and, taking lamp in hand, sallied forth to make a tour of the ancient palace. Notwithstanding every mental exertion, the task was a severe one. The rays of my lamp extended to but a limited distance around me; I walked as it were in a mere halo of light, and all beyond was thick darkness. The vaulted corridors were as caverns; the vaults of the halls were lost in gloom; what unseen foe might not be lurking before or behind me! my own shadow playing about the walls and the echoes of my own footsteps disturbed me.

In this excited state, as I was traversing the great Hall of Ambassadors, there were added real sounds to these conjectural fancies. Low moans, and indistinct ejaculations seemed to rise, as it were, beneath my feet; I paused and listened. They then appeared to resound from without the tower. Sometimes they resembled the howlings of an animal, at others they were stifled shrieks, mingled with articulate ravings. The thrilling effect of these sounds in that still hour and singular place, destroyed all inclination to continue my lonely perambulation. I returned to my chamber with more alacrity than I had sallied forth, and drew my breath more freely when once more within its walls, and the door bolted behind me. When I awoke in the morning with the sun shining in at my window and lighting up every part of the building with his cheerful and

truth-telling beams, I could scarcely recall the shadows and fancies conjured up by the gloom of the preceding night; or believe that the scenes around me, so naked and apparent, could have been clothed with such imaginary horrors.

Still the dismal howlings and ejaculations I had heard, were not ideal; but they were soon accounted for by my handmaid Dolores; being the ravings of a poor maniac, a brother of her aunt, who was subject to violent paroxysms, during which he was confined in a vaulted room beneath the Hall of Ambassadors.

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#### THE ALHAMBRA BY MOONLIGHT.

I HAVE given a picture of my apartment on my first taking possession of it; a few evenings have produced a thorough change in the scene and in my feelings. The moon, which then was invisible, has gradually gained upon the night, and now rolls in full splendour above the towers, pouring a flood of tempered light into every court and hall. The garden beneath my window is gently lighted up; the orange and citron trees are tipped with silver; the fountain sparkles in the moonbeams, and even the blush of the rose is faintly visible.

I have sat for hours at my window, inhaling the sweetness of the garden, and musing on the chequered fortunes of those whose history is dimly shadowed out in the elegant memorials around. Sometimes I have issued forth at midnight, when every thing was quiet, and have wandered over the whole building. Who can do justice to a moonlight night in such a climate and in such a place! The temperature of an Andalusian midnight in summer is perfectly ethereal. We seem lifted up into a purer atmosphere; there is a serenity of soul, a buoyancy of spirits, an elasticity of frame, that render mere existence enjoyment. The effect of moonlight too, on the Alhambra, has something like enchantment. Every rent and chasm of time, every mouldering tint and weather-stain disappears; the marble resumes its

original whiteness; the long colonnades brighten in the moonbeams, the halls are illuminated with a softened radiance, until the whole edifice reminds one of the enchanted palace of an Arabian tale.

At such a time I have ascended to the little pavilion called the Queen's Toilette, to enjoy its varied and extensive prospect. To the right, the snowy summits of the Sierra Nevada would gleam like silver clouds against the darker firmament, and all the outlines of the mountain would be softened, yet delicately defined. My delight, however, would be to lean over the parapet of the tocador, and gaze down upon Granada, spread out like a map below me; all buried in deep repose, and its white palaces and convents sleeping, as it were, in the moonshine.

Sometimes I would hear the faint sounds of castañets from some party of dancers lingering in the Alameda, at other times I have heard the dubious tones of a guitar, and the notes of a single voice rising from some solitary street, and have pictured to myself some youthful cavalier serenading his lady's window; a gallant custom of former days, but now sadly on the decline, except in the remote towns and villages of Spain. Such were the scenes that have detained me for many an hour loitering about the courts and balconies of the castle, enjoying that mixture of revery and sensation which steal away existence in a southern climate, and it has been almost morning before I have retired to my bed, and been lulled to sleep by the falling waters of the fountain of Lindaraxa.

#### INHABITANTS OF THE ALHAMBRA.

I HAVE often observed, that the more proudly a mansion has been tenanted in the day of its prosperity, the humbler are its inhabitants in the day of its decline, and that the palace of the king, commonly ends in being the nestling-place of the beggar.

The Alhambra is in a rapid state of similar transition. Whenever a tower falls to decay, it is seized upon by some tatterdemalion family, who become joint

tenants, with the bats and owls, of its gilded halls; and hang their rags, those standards of poverty, out of the windows and loopholes.

I have amused myself with remarking some of the motley characters that have thus usurped the ancient abode of royalty, and who seem as if placed here to give a farcical termination to the drama of human pride. One of these even bears the mockery of a regal title. It is a little old woman named Maria Antonia Sabonea, but who goes by the appellation of La Reyna Coquina, or the Cockle-Queen. She is small enough to be a fairy, and a fairy she may be for aught I can find out, for no one seems to know her origin. Her habitation is in a kind of closet under the outer staircase of the palace, and she sits in the cool stone corridor, plying her needle and singing from morning till night, with a ready joke for every one that passes; for though one of the poorest, she is one of the merriest little women breathing. Her great merit is a gift for story-telling, having, I verily believe, as many stories at her command, as the inexhaustible Scheherezade of the Thousand and One Nights. Some of these I have heard her relate in the evening tertulias of Dame Antonia, at which she is occasionally a humble attendant.

That there must be some fairy gift about this mysterious little old woman, would appear from her extraordinary luck, since, notwithstanding her being very little, very ugly, and very poor, she has had, according to her own account, five husbands and a half, reckoning as a half one, a young dragoon who died during courtship. A rival personage to this little fairy queen, is a portly old fellow with a bottle nose, who goes about in a rusty garb, with a cocked hat of oil-skin and a red cockade. He is one of the legitimate sons of the Alhambra, and has lived here all his life, filling various offices, such as deputy alguazil, sexton of the parochial church, and marker of a fives' court established at the foot of one of the towers. He is as poor as a rat, but as proud as he is ragged, boasting of his descent from the illustrious house of Aguilar, from which sprang Gonsalvo of Cordova, the grand captain. Nay, he actually bears the name of



Alonso de Aguilar, so renowned in the history of the conquest; though the graceless wags of the fortress have given him the title of *el padre santo*, or the holy father, the usual appellation of the Pope, which I had thought too sacred in the eyes of true catholics to be thus ludicrously applied. It is a whimsical caprice of fortune to present, in the grotesque person of this tatterdemalion, a namesake and descendant of the proud Alonso de Aguilar, the mirror of Andalusian chivalry, leading an almost mendicant existence about this once haughty fortress, which his ancestor aided to reduce; yet, such might have been the lot of the descendants of Agamemnon and Achilles, had they lingered about the ruins of Troy!

Of this motley community, I find the family of my gossiping squire, Mateo Ximenes, to form, from their numbers at least, a very important part. His boast of being a son of the Alhambra, is not unfounded. His family has inhabited the fortress ever since the time of the conquest, handing down an hereditary poverty from father to son; not one of them having ever been known to be worth a maravedi. His father, by trade a riband weaver, and who succeeded the historical tailor at the head of the family, is now near seventy years of age, and lives in a hovel of reeds and plaster, built by his own hands just above the iron gate. The furniture consists of a crazy bed, a table, and two or three chairs; a wooden chest, containing his clothes and the archives of his family; that is to say, a few papers concerning old lawsuits, which he cannot read; but the pride of his hovel is a blazon of the arms of the family, brilliantly coloured, and suspended in a frame against the wall; clearly demonstrating by its quarterings, the various noble houses with which this poverty-stricken brood claims affinity.

As to Mateo himself, he has done his utmost to perpetuate his line, having a wife and a numerous progeny, who inhabit an almost dismantled hovel in the hamlet. How they manage to subsist, He only who sees into all mysteries can tell; the subsistence of a Spanish family of the kind, is always a riddle to me;

yet they do subsist, and what is more, appear to enjoy their existence. The wife takes her holiday stroll in the Paseo of Granada, with a child in her arms and half a dozen at her heels; and the eldest daughter, now verging into womanhood, dresses her hair with flowers, and dances gaily to the *castañets*.

Here are two classes of people to whom life seems one long holiday, the very rich, and the very poor; one because they need do nothing, the other because they have nothing to do; but there are none who understand the art of doing nothing and living upon nothing better than the poor classes of Spain. Climate does one half, and temperament the rest. Give a Spaniard the shade in summer, and the sun in winter; a little bread, garlic, oil, and garbances, an old brown cloak and a guitar, and let the world roll on as it pleases. Talk of poverty! with him it has no disgrace. It sits upon him with a grandiose style, like his ragged cloak. He is a *hidalgo*, even when in rags.

The "sons of the Alhambra" are an eminent illustration of this practical philosophy. As the Moors imagined that the celestial paradise hung over this favoured spot, so I am inclined at times to fancy, that a gleam of the golden age still lingers about the ragged community. They possess nothing, they do nothing, they care for nothing. Yet, though apparently idle all the week, they are as observant of all holy days and saints' days as the most laborious artisan. They attend all fêtes and dancings in Granada and its vicinity, light bonfires on the hills on St. John's eve, and have lately danced away the moonlight nights on the harvest home of a small field within the precincts of the fortress, which yielded a few bushels of wheat.

Before concluding these remarks, I must mention one of the amusements of the place which has particularly struck me. I had repeatedly observed a long lean fellow perched on the top of one of the towers, manœuvring two or three fishing-rods, as though he was angling for the stars. I was for some time perplexed by the evolutions of this aerial fisherman, and my perplexity increased on observing others employed in like

manner on different parts of the battlements and bastions; it was not until I consulted Mateo Ximenes, that I solved the mystery.

It seems that the pure and airy situation of this fortress has rendered it, like the castle of Macbeth, a prolific breeding-place for swallows and martlets, who sport about its towers in myriads, with the holiday glee of urchins just let loose from school. To entrap these birds in their giddy circlings, with hooks baited with flies, is one of the favourite amusements of the ragged "sons of the Alhambra," who, with the good-for-nothing ingenuity of arrant idlers, have thus invented the art of angling in the sky!

### THE COURT OF LIONS.

THE peculiar charm of this old dreamy palace, is its power of calling up vague reveries and picturings of the past, and thus clothing naked realities with the illusions of the memory and the imagination. As I delight to walk in these "vain shadows," I am prone to seek those parts of the Alhambra which are most favourable to this phantasmagoria of the mind; and none are more so than the Court of Lions, and its surrounding halls. Here the hand of time has fallen the lightest, and the traces of Moorish elegance and splendour exist in almost their original brilliancy. Earthquakes have shaken the foundations of this pile, and rent its rudest towers; yet see, not one of those slender columns has been displaced, not an arch of that light and fragile colonnade has given way, and all the fairy fretwork of these domes, apparently as unsubstantial as the crystal fabrics of a morning's frost, yet exist after the lapse of centuries, almost as fresh as if from the hand of the Moslem artist. I write in the midst of these mementos of the past, in the fresh hour of early morning, in the fated Hall of the Abencerrages. The blood-stained fountain, the legendary monument of their massacre, is before me; the lofty jet almost casts its dew upon my paper. How difficult to reconcile the ancient tale of violence and blood with the gentle and peaceful scene

around! Every thing here appears calculated to inspire kind and happy feelings, for every thing is delicate and beautiful. The very light falls tenderly from above, through the lantern of a dome tinted and wrought as if by fairy hands. Through the ample and fretted arch of the portal I behold the Court of Lions, with brilliant sunshine gleaming along its colonnades, and sparkling in its fountains. The lively swallow dives into the Court, and then surging upwards, darts away twittering over the roofs; the busy bee toils humming among the flower beds; and painted butterflies hover from plant to plant, and flutter up and sport with each other in the sunny air. It needs but a slight exertion of the fancy to picture some pensive beauty of the harem, loitering in these secluded haunts of oriental luxury.

He, however, who would behold this scene under an aspect more in unison with its fortunes, let him come when the shadows of evening temper the brightness of the Court, and throw a gloom into the surrounding halls. Then nothing can be more serenely melancholy, or more in harmony with the tale of departed grandeur.

At such times I am apt to seek the Hall of Justice, whose deep shadowy arcades extend across the upper end of the Court. Here was performed, in presence of Ferdinand and Isabella, and their triumphant court, the pompous ceremonial of high mass, on taking possession of the Alhambra. The very cross is still to be seen upon the wall, where the altar was erected, and where officiated the Grand Cardinal of Spain, and others of the highest religious dignitaries of the land. I picture to myself the scene when this place was filled with the conquering host, that mixture of mitred prelate and shaven monk, and steel-clad knight and silken courtier; when crosses and crosses, and religious standards, were mingled with proud armorial ensigns and the banners of the haughty chiefs of Spain, and flaunted in triumph through these Moslem halls. I picture to myself Columbus, the future discoverer of a world, taking his modest stand in a remote corner, the humble and neglected spectator of the pageant. I see in imagi-

nation the catholic sovereigns prostrating themselves before the altar, and pouring forth thanks for their victory; while the vaults resounded with sacred minstrelsy; and the deep-toned *Te Deum*.

The transient illusion is over—the pageant melts from the fancy—monarch, priest, and warrior, return into oblivion, with the poor Moslems over whom they exulted. The hall of their triumph is waste and desolate. The bat flits about its twilight vault, and the owl hoots from the neighbouring tower of Comares.

On entering the Court of the Lions, a few evenings since, I was startled at beholding a turbaned Moor quietly seated near the fountain. It seemed, for a moment, as if one of the superstitions of the place were realized, and some ancient inhabitant of the Alhambra had broken the spell of centuries, and become visible. He proved, however, to be a mere ordinary mortal, a native of Tetuan in Barbary, who had a shop in the Zacatin of Granada, where he sold rhubarb, trinkets, and perfumes. As he spoke Spanish fluently, I was enabled to hold conversation with him, and found him shrewd and intelligent. He told me that he came up the hill occasionally in the summer, to pass a part of the day in the Alhambra, which reminded him of the old palaces in Barbary, which were built and adorned in similar style, though with less magnificence.

As we walked about the palace, he pointed out several of the Arabic inscriptions, as possessing much poetic beauty.

“Ah, señor,” said he, “when the Moors held Granada, they were a gayer people than they are now-a-days. They thought only of love, of music, and poetry. They made stanzas upon every occasion, and set them all to music. He who could make the best verses, and she who had the most tuneful voice, might be sure of favour and preferment. In those days, if any one asked for bread, the reply was, make me a couplet; and the poorest beggar, if he begged in rhyme, would often be rewarded with a piece of gold.”

“And is the popular feeling for poetry,” said I, “entirely lost among you?”

“By no means, señor, the people of

Barbary, even those of the lower classes, still make couplets, and good ones too, as in the olden time; but talent is not rewarded as it was then: the rich prefer the jingle of their gold to the sound of poetry or music.”

As he was talking, his eye caught one of the inscriptions that foretold perpetuity to the power and glory of the Moslem monarchs, the masters of this pile. He shook his head, and shrugged his shoulders, as he interpreted it. “Such might have been the case,” said he, “the Moslems might still have been reigning in the Alhambra, had not Boabdil been a traitor, and given up his capital to the Christians. The Spanish monarchs would never have been able to conquer it by open force.”

I endeavoured to vindicate the memory of the unlucky Boabdil from this aspersion, and to show that the dissensions which led to the downfall of the Moorish throne, originated in the cruelty of his tiger-hearted father; but the Moor would admit of no palliation.

“Muley Hassan,” said he, “might have been cruel; but he was brave, vigilant, and patriotic. Had he been properly seconded, Granada would still have been ours; but his son Boabdil thwarted his plans, crippled his power, sowed treason in his palace, and dissension in his camp. May the curse of God light upon him for his treachery!” With these words the Moor left the Alhambra.

The indignation of my turbaned companion agrees with an anecdote related by a friend, who in the course of a tour in Barbary, had an interview with the Pacha of Tetuan. The Moorish governor was particular in his inquiries about the soil, and especially concerning the favoured regions of Andalusia, the delights of Granada, and the remains of its royal palace. The replies awakened all those fond recollections, so deeply cherished by the Moors, of the power and splendour of their ancient empire in Spain. Turning to his Moslem attendants, the pacha stroked his beard, and broke forth in passionate lamentations, that such a sceptre should have fallen from the sway of true believers. He consoled himself, however, with the persuasion, that the power and prosperity of the Spanish nation were on

the decline; that a time would come when the Moors would conquer their rightful domains; and that the day was perhaps not far distant, when Mahomedan worship would again be offered up in the Mosque of Cordova and a Mahomedan prince sit on his throne in the Alhambra.

Such is the general aspiration and belief among the Moors of Barbary; who consider Spain, and especially Andalusia, their rightful heritage, of which they have been despoiled by treachery and violence. These ideas are fostered and perpetuated by the descendants of the exiled Moors of Granada, scattered among the cities of Barbary. Several of these reside in Tetuan, preserving their ancient names, such as Paez and Medina, and refraining from intermarriage with any families who cannot claim the same high origin. Their vaunted lineage is regarded with a degree of popular deference, rarely shown in Mahomedan communities to any hereditary distinction, except in the royal line.

These families, it is said, continue to sigh after the terrestrial paradise of their ancestors, and to put up prayers in their mosques on Fridays, imploring Allah to hasten the time when Granada shall be restored to the faithful: an event to which they look forward as fondly and confidently as did the Christian crusaders to the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre. Nay, it is added, that some of them retain the ancient maps and deeds of the estates and gardens of their ancestors at Granada, and even the keys of the houses; holding them as evidences of their hereditary claims, to be produced at the anticipated day of restoration.

The Court of the Lions has also its share of supernatural legends. I have already mentioned the belief in the murmuring of voices and clanking of chains, made at night by the spirits of the murdered Abencerrages. Mateo Ximenes, a few evenings since, at one of the gatherings in Dame Antonia's apartment, related a fact which happened within the knowledge of his grandfather, the legendary tailor.

There was an invalid soldier, who had charge of the Alhambra to show it to strangers. As he was one evening, about

twilight, passing through the Court of Lions, he heard footsteps in the Hall of the Abencerrages. Supposing some visitors to be lingering there, he advanced to attend upon them, when to his astonishment he beheld four Moors richly dressed, with gilded cuirasses and cimeters, and poniards glittering with precious stones. They were walking to and fro, with solemn pace; but paused and beckoned to him. The old soldier, however, took to flight, and could never afterwards be prevailed upon to enter the Alhambra. Thus it is that men sometimes turn their backs upon fortune; for it is the firm opinion of Mateo, that the Moors intended to reveal the place where their treasures lay buried. A successor to the invalid soldier was more knowing, he came to the Alhambra poor; but at the end of a year went off to Malaga, bought houses, set up a carriage, and still lives there one of the richest as well as oldest men of the place; all which, Mateo sagely surmises, was in consequence of his finding out the golden secret of these phantom Moors.

#### BOABDIL EL CHICO.

My conversation with the man in the Court of Lions, set me to musing on the singular fate of Boabdil. Never was surname more applicable than that bestowed upon him by his subjects, of "El Zogoybi," or "the unlucky." His misfortunes began almost in his cradle. In his tender youth, he was imprisoned and menaced with death by an inhuman father, and only escaped through a mother's stratagem; in after years his life was embittered and repeatedly endangered, by the hostilities of a usurping uncle; his reign was distracted by external invasions and internal feuds: he was alternately the foe, the prisoner, the friend, and always the dupe of Ferdinand, until conquered and dethroned by the mingled craft and force of that perfidious monarch. An exile from his native land, he took refuge with one of the princes of Africa, and fell obscurely in battle, fighting in the cause of a stranger. His misfortunes ceased not with his death. If Boabdil cherished

a desire to leave an honourable name on the historic page, how cruelly has he been defrauded of his hopes! Who is there that has turned the least attention to the romantic history of the Moorish domination in Spain, without kindling with indignation at the alleged atrocities of Boabdil? Who has not been touched with the woes of his lovely and gentle queen, subjected by him to a trial of life and death, on a false charge of infidelity? Who has not been shocked by his alleged murder of his sister and her two children, in a transport of passion? Who has not felt his blood boil, at the inhuman massacre of the gallant Abencerrages, thirty-six of whom, it is affirmed, he ordered to be beheaded in the Court of Lions? All these charges have been reiterated in various forms; they have passed into ballads, dramas, and romances, until they have taken too thorough possession of the public mind to be eradicated. There is not a foreigner of education that visits the Alhambra, but asks for the fountain where the Abencerrages were beheaded; and gazes with horror at the grated gallery where the queen is said to have been confined; not a peasant of the Vega or the Sierra, but sings the story in rude couplets, to the accompaniment of his guitar, while his hearers learn to execrate the very name of Boabdil.

Never, however, was name more foully and unjustly slandered. I have examined all the authentic chronicles and letters written by Spanish authors, contemporary with Boabdil; some of whom were in the confidence of the catholic sovereigns, and actually present in the camp throughout the war. I have examined all the Arabian authorities I could get access to, through the medium of translation, and can find nothing to justify these dark and hateful accusations. The whole of these tales may be traced to a work commonly called "The Civil Wars of Granada," containing a pretended history of the feuds of the Zegriss and Abencerrages, during the last struggle of the Moorish empire. This work appeared originally in Spanish, and professed to be translated from the Arabic by one Gines Perez de Hila, an inhabitant of Murcia. It has since passed into various languages, and Florian has taken from it

much of the fable of his Gonsalvo of Cordova; it has since, in a great measure, usurped the authority of real history, and is currently believed by the people, and especially the peasantry, of Granada. The whole of it, however, is a mass of fiction, mingled with a few disfigured truths, which give it an air of veracity. It bears internal evidence of its falsity; the manners and customs of the Moors being extravagantly misrepresented in it, and scenes depicted totally incompatible with their habits and their faith, and which never could have been recorded by a Mahometan writer.

I confess there seems to me something almost criminal in the wilful perversions of this work: great latitude is undoubtedly to be allowed to romantic fiction, but there are limits which it must not pass, and the names of the distinguished dead, which belong to history, are no more to be calumniated than those of the illustrious living. One would have thought, too, that the unfortunate Boabdil had suffered for his justifiable hostility to the Spaniards, by being stripped of his kingdom, without having his name thus wantonly traduced, and rendered a by-word and a theme of infamy in his native land, and in the very mansion of his fathers!

It is not intended hereby to affirm that the transactions imputed to Boabdil, are totally without historic foundation; but as far as they can be traced, they appear to have been the acts of his father, Aben Hassan, who is represented, by both Christian and Arabian chroniclers, as being of a cruel and ferocious nature. It was he who put to death the cavaliers of the illustrious line of the Abencerrages, upon suspicion of their being engaged in a conspiracy to dispossess him of his throne.

The story of the accusation of the Queen of Boabdil, and of her confinement in one of the towers, may also be traced to an incident in the life of his tiger-hearted father. Aben Hassan, in his advanced age, married a beautiful Christian captive of noble descent, who took the Moorish appellation of Zorayda, by whom he had two sons. She was of an ambitious spirit, and anxious that her children should succeed to the crown.

For this purpose she worked upon the suspicious temper of the king; inflaming him with jealousies of his children by his other wives and concubines, whom she accused of plotting against his throne and life. Some of them were slain by the ferocious father. Ayxa la Horra, the virtuous mother of Boabdil, who had once been his cherished favourite, became likewise the object of his suspicion. He confined her and her son in the tower of Comares, and would have sacrificed Boabdil to his fury, but that this tender mother lowered him from the tower, in the night, by means of the scarfs of herself and her attendants, and thus enabled him to escape to Guadix.

Such is the only shadow of a foundation that I can find for the story of the accused and captive queen; and in this it appears that Boabdil was the persecuted, instead of the persecutor.

Throughout the whole of his brief, turbulent, and disastrous reign, Boabdil gives evidence of a mild and amiable character. He, in the first instance, won the hearts of the people by his affable and gracious manners; he was always peaceable, and never inflicted any severity of punishment upon those who occasionally rebelled against him. He was personally brave, but he wanted moral courage; and, in times of difficulty and perplexity, was wavering and irresolute. This feebleness of spirit hastened his downfall, while it deprived him of that heroic grace which would have given a grandeur and dignity to his fate, and rendered him worthy of closing the splendid drama of the Moslem domination in Spain.

#### MEMENTOS OF BOABDIL.

WHILE my mind was still warm with the subject of the unfortunate Boabdil, I set forth to trace the mementos connected with his story, which yet exist in this scene of his sovereignty and his misfortunes. In the picture-gallery of the Palace of the Generalife hangs his portrait. The face is mild, handsome, and somewhat melancholy, with a fair complexion and yellow hair; if it be a true represen-

tation of the man, he may have been wavering and uncertain, but there is nothing of cruelty or unkindness in his aspect.

I next visited the dungeon where he was confined in his youthful days, when his cruel father meditated his destruction. It is a vaulted room in the tower of Comares, under the Hall of Ambassadors; a similar room, separated by a narrow passage, was the prison of his mother, the virtuous Ayxa la Horra. The walls are of prodigious thickness, and the small windows secured by iron bars. A narrow stone gallery, with a low parapet, extends round three sides of the tower, just below the windows, but at a considerable height from the ground. From this gallery, it is presumed, the queen lowered her son with the scarfs of herself and her female attendants, during the darkness of night, to the hill side, at the foot of which waited a domestic with a fleet steed to bear the prince to the mountains.

As I paced this gallery, my imagination pictured the anxious queen leaning over the parapet, and listening, with the throbbings of a mother's heart, to the last echoes of the horse's hoof, as her son scoured along the narrow valley of the Darro.

My next search was for the gate by which Boabdil departed from the Alhambra when about to surrender his capital. With the melancholy caprice of a broken spirit, he requested of the catholic monarchs that no one afterwards might be permitted to pass through this gate. His prayer, according to ancient chronicles, was complied with, through the sympathy of Isabella, and the gate walled up. For some time I inquired in vain for such a portal; at length my humble attendant, Mateo, learned, among the old residents of the fortress, that a ruinous gateway still existed, by which, according to tradition, the Moorish king had left the fortress, but which had never been open within the memory of the oldest inhabitant.

He conducted me to the spot. The gateway is in the centre of what was once an immense tower, called *La Torre de los Siete Suelos*, or, the Tower of the Seven Floors. It is a place famous, in

the superstitious stories of the neighbourhood, for being the scene of strange apparitions and Moorish enchantments.

This once redoubtable tower is now a mere wreck, having been blown up with gunpowder by the French, when they abandoned the fortress. Great masses of the wall lie scattered about, buried in the luxuriant herbage, or overshadowed by vines and fig trees. The arch of the gateway, though rent by the shock, still remains; but the last wish of poor Boabdil has again, though unintentionally, been fulfilled, for the portal has been closed up by loose stones gathered from the ruins, and remains impassable.

Following up the route of the Moslem monarch, as it remains on record, I crossed on horseback the hill of Los Martyres, keeping along the garden of the convent of the same name, and thence down a rugged ravine, beset by thickets of aloes and Indian figs, and lined by caves and hovels swarming with gipsies. It was the road taken by Boabdil to avoid passing through the city. The descent was so steep and broken, that I was obliged to dismount and lead my horse.

Emerging from the ravine, and passing by the *Puerta de los Molinos* (the Gate of the Mills), I issued forth upon the public promenade called the Prado, and pursuing the course of the Xenil, arrived at a small Moorish mosque, now converted into the chapel or hermitage of San Sebastian. A tablet on the wall relates that on this spot Boabdil surrendered the keys of Granada to the Castilian sovereigns. From thence I rode slowly across the Vega to a village where the family and household of the unhappy king awaited him, for he had sent them forward on the preceding night from the Alhambra, that his mother and wife might not participate in his personal humiliation, or be exposed to the gaze of the conquerors. Following on in the route of the melancholy band of royal exiles, I arrived at the foot of a chain of barren and dreary heights, forming the skirt of the Alpuxarra mountains. From the summit of one of these the unfortunate Boabdil took his last look at Granada; it bears a name expressive of his sorrows, *la Cuesta de las Lágrimas* (the Hill of Tears).

Beyond it, a sandy road winds across a rugged cheerless waste, doubly dismal to the unhappy monarch, as it led to exile.

I spurred my horse to the summit of a rock, where Boabdil uttered his last sorrowful exclamation, as he turned his eyes from taking their farewell gaze: it is still denominated *el último Suspiro del Moro* (the last Sigh of the Moor). Who can wonder at his anguish at being expelled from such a kingdom and such an abode? With the Alhambra he seemed to be yielding up all the honours of his line, and all the glories and delights of life.

It was here, too, that his affliction was embittered by the reproach of his mother, Ayxa, who had so often assisted him in times of peril, and had vainly sought to instil into him her own resolute spirit. "You do well," said she, "to weep as a woman over what you could not defend as a man,"—a speech that savours more of the pride of the princess than the tenderness of the mother.

When this anecdote was related to Charles V. by Bishop Guevara, the emperor joined in the expression of scorn at the weakness of the wavering Boabdil. "Had I been he, or he been I," said the haughty potentate, "I would rather have made this Alhambra my sepulchre than have lived without a kingdom in the Alpuxarra."

How easy it is for those in power and prosperity to preach heroism to the vanquished! how little can they understand that life itself may rise in value with the unfortunate, when nought but life remains!

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### THE BALCONY.

In the Hall of Ambassadors, at the central window, there is a balcony, of which I have already made mention: it projects like a cage from the face of the tower, high in mid air above the tops of the trees that grow on the steep hill-side. It serves me as a kind of observatory, where I often take my seat to consider, not merely the heaven above, but the earth beneath. Besides the magnificent prospect which it commands of mountain,

valley, and vega, there is a busy little scene of human life laid open to inspection immediately below. At the foot of the hill is an alameda, or public walk, which, though not so fashionable as the more modern and splendid paseo of the Xenil, still boasts a varied and picturesque concourse. Hither resort the small gentry of the suburbs, together with priests and friars, who walk for appetite and digestion, majos and majas, the beaux and belles of the lower classes, in their Andalusian dresses, swaggering contrabandistas, and sometimes half-muffled and mysterious loungers of the higher ranks, on some secret assignation.

It is a moving and motley picture of Spanish life and character, which I delight to study; and, as the naturalist has his microscope to aid him in his investigations, so I have a small pocket telescope which brings the countenances of the motley groups so close, as almost, at times, to make me think I can divine their conversation by the play and expression of their features. I am thus, in a manner, an invisible observer, and, without quitting my solitude, can throw myself in an instant into the midst of society,—a rare advantage to one of somewhat shy and quiet habits, and who, like myself, is fond of observing the drama of life without becoming an actor in the scene.

There is a considerable suburb lying below the Alhambra, filling the narrow gorge of the valley, and extending up the opposite hill of the Albaycin. Many of the houses are built in the Moorish style, round patios, or courts, cooled by fountains, and open to the sky; and as the inhabitants pass much of their time in these courts, and on the terraced roofs during the summer season, it follows that many a glance at their domestic life may be obtained by an aerial spectator like myself, who can look down on them from the clouds.

I enjoy, in some degree, the advantages of the student in the famous old Spanish story, who beheld all Madrid unroofed for his inspection; and my gossiping squire, Mateo Ximenes, officiates occasionally as my Asmodeus, to give me anecdotes of the different mansions and their inhabitants.

I prefer, however, to perform conjectural histories for myself, and thus can sit for hours weaving from casual incidents and indications that pass under my eye, the whole tissue of schemes, intrigues, and occupations of certain of the busy mortals below. There is scarce a pretty face, or a striking figure, that I daily see, about which I have not thus gradually framed a dramatic story, though some of my characters will occasionally act in direct opposition to the part assigned them, and disconcert my whole drama. A few days since, as I was reconnoitring with my glass the streets of the Albaycin, I beheld the procession of a novice about to take the veil; and remarked several circumstances that excited the strongest sympathy in the fate of the youthful being thus about to be consigned to a living tomb. I ascertained to my satisfaction that she was beautiful; and, by the paleness of her cheek, that she was a victim, rather than a votary. She was arrayed in bridal garments, and decked with a chaplet of white flowers, but her heart evidently revolted at this mockery of a spiritual union, and yearned after its earthly loves. A tall stern-looking man walked near her in the procession; it was evidently the tyrannical father, who, from some bigoted or sordid motive, had compelled this sacrifice. Amidst the crowd was a dark handsome youth, in Andalusian garb, who seemed to fix on her an eye of agony. It was doubtless the secret lover from whom she was for ever to be separated. My indignation rose as I noted the malignant expression painted on the countenances of the attendant monks and friars. The procession arrived at the chapel of the convent; the sun gleamed for the last time upon the chaplet of the poor novice, as she crossed the fatal threshold, and disappeared within the building. The throng poured in with cowl, and cross, and minstrelsy; the lover paused for a moment at the door. I could not divine the tumult of his feelings; but he mastered them, and entered. There was a long interval—I pictured to myself the scene passing within; the poor novice despoiled of her transient finery, clothed in the conventual garb, her bridal chaplet taken from her brow, her beautiful head



shorn of its long silken tresses—I heard her murmur the irrevocable vow. I saw her extended on her bier; the death-pall spread over her; the funeral service was performed; I heard the deep tones of the organ, and the plaintive requiem chanted by the nuns; the father looked on with a hard unfeeling countenance. The lover—but no, my imagination refused to paint the lover; there the picture remained a blank.

After a time the throng again poured forth, and dispersed various ways, to enjoy the light of the sun, and mingle with the stirring scenes of life; the victim, however, remained behind. Almost the last that came forth were the father and the lover; they were in earnest conversation. The latter was vehement in his gesticulations; I expected some violent termination to my drama; but an angle of a building interfered and closed the scene. My eye has since frequently been turned to that convent with painful interest. I remarked late at night a light burning in a remote window of one of its towers. “There,” said I, “the unhappy nun sits weeping in her cell, while perhaps her lover paces the street below in unavailing anguish.”

The officious Mateo interrupted my meditations and destroyed in an instant the cobweb tissue of my fancy. With his usual zeal he had gathered facts concerning the scene, that had put my fictions all to flight. The heroine of my romance was neither young nor handsome; she had no lover—she had entered the convent of her own free will, as a respectable asylum, and was one of the most cheerful residents within its walls.

It was some little while before I could forgive the wrong done me by the nun in being thus happy in her cell, in contradiction to all the rules of romance; I diverted my spleen, however, by watching, for a day or two, the pretty coquetries of a dark-eyed brunette, who, from the covert of a balcony shrouded with flowering shrubs and a silken awning, was carrying on a mysterious correspondence, with a handsome, dark, well-whiskered cavalier, who was frequently in the street beneath her window. Sometimes I saw him at an early hour, stealing forth

wrapped to the eyes in a mantle. Sometimes he loitered at a corner, in various disguises, apparently waiting for a private signal to slip into the house. Then there was the tinkling of a guitar at night, and a lantern shifted from place to place in the balcony. I imagined another intrigue like that of *Almaviva*, but was again disconcerted in all my suppositions, by being informed that the supposed lover was the husband of the lady, and a noted contrabandista; and that all his mysterious signs and movements had doubtless some smuggling scheme in view.

I occasionally amused myself with noting from this balcony the gradual changes that came over the scenes below, according to the different stages of the day.

Scarce has the gray dawn streaked the sky, and the earliest cock crowed from the cottages of the hill-side, when the suburbs give sign of reviving animation; for the fresh hours of dawning are precious in the summer season in a sultry climate. All are anxious to get the start of the sun, in the business of the day. The muleteer drives forth his loaded train for the journey; the traveller slings his carbine behind his saddle, and mounts his steed at the gate of the hostel; the brown peasant urges his loitering beasts, laden with panniers of sunny fruit and fresh dewy vegetables; for already the thrifty housewives are hastening to the market.

The sun is up and sparkles along the valley, tipping the transparent foliage of the groves. The matin bells resound melodiously through the pure bright air, announcing the hour of devotion. The muleteer halts his burthened animals before the chapel, thrusts his staff through his belt behind, and enters with hat in hand, smoothing his coal-black hair, to hear a mass, and put up a prayer for a prosperous wayfaring across the sierra. And now steals forth on fairy foot the gentle señora, in trim *basquiña*, with restless fan in hand, and dark eye flashing from beneath the gracefully folded mantilla: she seeks some well-frequented church to offer up her morning orisons; but the nicely adjusted dress, the dainty shoe, and cobweb stocking, the raven tresses, exquisitely braided, the

fresh plucked rose, that gleams among them like a gem, show that earth divides with Heaven the empire of her thoughts. Keep an eye upon her, careful mother, or virgin aunt, or vigilant duenna, whichever you be, that walk behind.

As the morning advances, the din of labour augments on every side; the streets are thronged with man, and steed, and beast of burthen, and there is a hum and murmur, like the surges of the ocean. As the sun ascends to his meridian, the hum and bustle gradually decline; at the height of noon there is a pause. The panting city sinks into lassitude, and for several hours there is a general repose. The windows are closed, the curtains drawn, the inhabitants retired into the coolest recesses of their mansions; the full-fed monk snores in his dormitory; the brawny porter lies stretched on the pavement beside his burthen; the peasant and the labourer sleep beneath the trees of the Alameda, lulled by the sultry chirping of the locust. The streets are deserted, except by the water-carrier, who refreshes the ear by proclaiming the merits of his sparkling beverage, "colder than the mountain snow."

As the sun declines, there is again a gradual reviving, and when the vesper bell rings out his sinking knell, all nature seems to rejoice that the tyrant of the day has fallen. Now begins the bustle of enjoyment, when the citizens pour forth to breathe the evening air, and revel away the brief twilight in the walks and gardens of the Darro and the Xenil.

As night closes, the capricious scene assumes new features. Light after light gradually twinkles forth; here a taper from a balconied window; there a votive lamp before the image of a saint. Thus, by degrees, the city emerges from the pervading gloom, and sparkles with scattered lights, like the starry firmament. Now break forth from court and garden, and street and lane, the tinkling of innumerable guitars, and the clicking of castañets; blending, at this lofty height, in a faint but general concert. Enjoy the moment, is the creed of the gay and amorous Andalusian, and at no time does he practise it more zealously than in the balmy nights of summer, wooing

his mistress with the dance, the love-ditty, and the passionate serenade.

I was one evening seated in the balcony, enjoying the light breeze that came rustling along the side of the hill, among the tree tops, when my humble historiographer Mateo, who was at my elbow, pointed out a spacious house, in an obscure street of the Albaycin, about which he related, as nearly as I can recollect, the following anecdote.

#### THE ADVENTURE OF THE MASON.

"THERE was once upon a time a poor mason, or bricklayer, in Granada, who kept all the Saint's days and holidays, and Saint Monday into the bargain, and yet, with all his devotion, he grew poorer and poorer, and could scarcely earn bread for his numerous family. One night he was roused from his first sleep by a knocking at his door. He opened it, and beheld before him a tall, meagre, cadaverous-looking priest.

"'Hark ye, honest friend!' said the stranger; 'I have observed that you are a good Christian, and one to be trusted; will you undertake a job this very night?'

"'With all my heart, Señor Padre, on condition that I am paid accordingly.'

"'That you shall be; but you must suffer yourself to be blindfolded.'

"To this the mason made no objection; so, being hoodwinked, he was led by the priest through various rough lanes and winding passages, until they stopped before the portal of a house. The priest then applied a key, turned a creaking lock, and opened what sounded like a ponderous door. They entered, the door was closed and bolted, and the mason was conducted through an echoing corridor, and a spacious hall, to an interior part of the building. Here the bandage was removed from his eyes, and he found himself in a patio, or court, dimly lighted by a single lamp. In the centre was the dry basin of an old Moorish fountain, under which the priest requested him to form a small vault, bricks and mortar being at hand for the purpose. He accordingly worked all night, but without

finishing the job. Just before daybreak, the priest put a piece of gold into his hand, and having again blindfolded him, conducted him back to his dwelling.

“‘Are you willing,’ said he, ‘to return and complete your work?’

“‘Gladly, Señor Padre, provided I am so well paid.’

“‘Well, then, to-morrow at midnight I will call again.’

“‘He did so, and the vault was completed.

“‘Now,’ said the priest, ‘you must help me to bring forth the bodies that are to be buried in this vault.’

“‘The poor mason’s hair rose on his head at these words: he followed the priest, with trembling steps, into a retired chamber of the mansion, expecting to behold some ghastly spectacle of death, but was relieved on perceiving three or four portly jars standing in one corner. They were evidently full of money, and it was with great labour that he and the priest carried them forth and consigned them to their tomb. The vault was then closed, the pavement replaced, and all traces of the work obliterated. The mason was again hoodwinked and led forth by a route different from that by which he had come. After they had wandered for a long time through a perplexed maze of lanes and alleys, they halted. The priest then put two pieces of gold into his hand: ‘Wait here,’ said he, ‘until you hear the cathedral bell toll for matins. If you presume to uncover your eyes before that time, evil will befall you.’ so saying, he departed. The mason waited faithfully, amusing himself by weighing the gold pieces in his hand, and clinking them against each other. The moment the cathedral bell rang its matin peal, he uncovered his eyes, and found himself on the banks of the Xenil, from whence he made the best of his way home, and revelled with his family for a whole fortnight on the profits of his two nights’ work; after which, he was as poor as ever.

“‘He continued to work a little, and pray a good deal, and keep Saints’ days and holidays, from year to year, while his family grew up as gaunt and ragged as a crew of gipsies. As he was seated one evening at the door of his hovel, he

was accosted by a rich old curmudgeon, who was noted for owning many houses, and being a griping landlord. The man of money eyed him for a moment from beneath a pair of anxious shagged eyebrows.

“‘I am told, friend, that you are very poor.’

“‘There is no denying the fact, señor—it speaks for itself.’

“‘I presume then, that you will be glad of a job, and will work cheap.’

“‘As cheap, my master, as any mason in Granada.’

“‘That’s what I want. I have an old house fallen into decay, that costs me more money than it is worth to keep it in repair, for nobody will live in it; so I must contrive to patch it up and keep it together at as small expense as possible.’

“‘The mason was accordingly conducted to a large deserted house that seemed going to ruin. Passing through several empty halls and chambers, he entered an inner court, where his eye was caught by an old Moorish fountain. He paused for a moment, for a dreaming recollection of the place came over him.

“‘Pray,’ said he, ‘who occupied this house formerly?’

“‘A pest upon him!’ cried the landlord, ‘it was an old miserly priest, who cared for nobody but himself. He was said to be immensely rich, and, having no relations, it was thought he would leave all his treasures to the Church. He died suddenly, and the priests and friars thronged to take possession of his wealth; but nothing could they find but a few ducats in a leathern purse. The worst luck has fallen on me, for, since his death, the old fellow continues to occupy my house without paying rent, and there’s no taking the law of a dead man. The people pretend to hear the clinking of gold all night in the chamber where the old priest slept, as if he were counting over his money, and sometimes a groaning and moaning about the court. Whether true or false, the stories have brought a bad name on my house, and not a tenant will remain in it.’

“‘Enough,’ said the mason sturdily: ‘let me live in your house rent-free until some better tenant present, and I will engage to put it in repair, and to quiet

the troubled spirit that disturbs it. I am a good Christian and a poor man, and am not to be daunted by the devil himself, even though he should come in the shape of a big bag of money!

"The offer of the honest mason was gladly accepted; he moved with his family into the house, and fulfilled all his engagements. By little and little he restored it to its former state; the clinking of gold was no more heard at night in the chamber of the defunct priest, but began to be heard by day in the pocket of the living mason. In a word, he increased rapidly in wealth, to the admiration of all his neighbours, and became one of the richest men in Granada: he gave large sums to the Church, by way, no doubt, of satisfying his conscience, and never revealed the secret of the vault until on his death-bed to his son and heir."

#### A RAMBLE AMONG THE HILLS.

I FREQUENTLY amuse myself towards the close of the day, when the heat has subsided, with taking long rambles about the neighbouring hills and the deep umbrageous valleys, accompanied by my historiographic squire, Mateo, to whose passion for gossiping I on such occasions give the most unbounded license; and there is scarce a rock, or ruin, or broken fountain, or lonely glen, about which he has not some marvellous story, or, above all, some golden legend; for never was poor devil so munificent in dispensing hidden treasures.

A few evenings since, we took a long stroll of the kind, in the course of which Mateo was more than usually communicative. It was towards sunset that we sallied forth from the Great Gate of Justice, and ascending an alley of trees, Mateo paused under a clump of fig and pomegranate trees, at the foot of a huge ruined tower, called the Tower of the Seven Floors (*de los Sietes Suelos*). Here, pointing to a low archway in the foundation of the tower, he informed me of a monstrous sprite, or hobgoblin, said to infest this tower ever since the time of the Moors, and to guard the treasures of

a Moslem king. Sometimes it issues forth in the dead of the night, and scours the avenues of the Alhambra and the streets of Granada, in the shape of a headless horse, pursued by six dogs with terrible yells and howlings.

"But have you ever met with it yourself, Mateo, in any of your rambles?" demanded I.

"No, señor, God be thanked! but my grandfather, the tailor, knew several persons that had seen it, for it went about much oftener in his time than at present; sometimes in one shape, sometimes in another. Every body in Granada has heard of the Bellado, for the old women and the nurses frighten the children with it when they cry. Some say it is the spirit of a cruel Moorish king, who killed his six sons and buried them in these vaults, and that they hunt him at night in revenge."

I forbear to dwell upon the marvellous details given by the simple-minded Mateo about this redoubtable phantom, which has, in fact, been time out of mind a favourite theme of nursery tales and popular tradition in Granada, and of which honourable mention is made by an ancient and learned historian and topographer of the place. I would only observe that, through this tower was the gateway by which the unfortunate Boabdil issued forth to surrender his capital.

Leaving this eventful pile, we continued our course, skirting the fruitful orchards of the Generalife, in which two or three nightingales were pouring forth a rich strain of melody. Behind these orchards we passed a number of Moorish tanks, with a door cut into the rocky bosom of the hill, but closed up. These tanks, Mateo informed me, were favourite bathing places of himself and his comrades in boyhood, until frightened away by a story of a hideous Moor, who used to issue forth from the door in the rock to entrap unwary bathers.

Leaving these haunted tanks behind us, we pursued our ramble up a solitary mule-path that wound among the hills, and soon found ourselves amidst wild and melancholy mountains, destitute of trees, and here and there tinted with scanty verdure. Every thing within sight was severe and sterile, and it was scarcely

possible to realize the idea that but a short distance behind us was the Generalife, with its blooming orchards and terraced gardens, and that we were in the vicinity of delicious Granada, that city of groves and fountains. But such is the nature of Spain—wild and stern the moment it escapes from cultivation; the desert and the garden are ever side by side.

The narrow defile up which we were passing is called, according to Mateo, *el Barranco de la Tinaja*, or, the ravine of the jar, because a jar full of Moorish gold was found here in old times. The brain of poor Mateo is continually running upon these golden legends.

"But what is the meaning of the cross I see yonder upon a heap of stones, in that narrow part of the ravine?"

"Oh, that's nothing—a muleteer was murdered there some years since."

"So then, Mateo, you have robbers and murderers even at the gates of the Alhambra?"

"Not at present, señor; that was formerly, when there used to be many loose fellows about the fortress; but they've all been weeded out. Not but that the gipsies who live in caves in the hill-sides, just out of the fortress, are many of them fit for any thing; but we have had no murder about here for a long time past. The man who murdered the muleteer was hanged in the fortress."

Our path continued up the barranca, with a bold, rugged height to our left, called the *Silla del Moro*, or Chair of the Moor, from the tradition already alluded to, that the unfortunate Boabdil fled thither during a popular insurrection, and remained all day seated on the rocky summit, looking mournfully down on his factious city.

We at length arrived on the highest part of the promontory above Granada, called the Mountain of the Sun. The evening was approaching; the setting sun just gilded the loftiest heights. Here and there a solitary shepherd might be descried driving his flock down the declivities, to be folded for the night; or a muleteer and his lagging animals, threading some mountain path, to arrive at the city gates before nightfall.

Presently the deep tones of the cath-

edral bell came swelling up the defiles, proclaiming the hour of "oracion" or prayer. The note was responded to from the belfry of every church, and from the sweet bells of the convents among the mountains. The shepherd paused on the fold of the hill, the muleteer in the midst of the road, each took off his hat and remained motionless for a time, murmuring his evening prayer. There is always something pleasingly solemn in this custom, by which, at a melodious signal, every human being throughout the land unites at the same moment in a tribute of thanks to God for the mercies of the day. It spreads a transient sanctity over the land, and the sight of the sun sinking in all his glory, adds not a little to the solemnity of the scene.

In the present instance the effect was heightened by the wild and lonely nature of the place. We were on the naked and broken summit of the haunted Mountain of the Sun, where ruined tanks and cisterns, and the mouldering foundations of extensive buildings, spoke of former populousness, but where all was now silent and desolate.

As we were wandering among these traces of old times, Mateo pointed out to me a circular pit, that seemed to penetrate deep into the bosom of the mountain. It was evidently a deep well, dug by the indefatigable Moors, to obtain their favourite element in its greatest purity. Mateo, however, had a different story, and much more to his humour. This was, according to tradition, an entrance to the subterranean caverns of the mountain, in which Boabdil and his court lay bound in magic spell; and from whence they sallied forth at night, at allotted times, to revisit their ancient abodes.

The deepening twilight, which, in this climate, is of such short duration, admonished us to leave this haunted ground. As we descended the mountain defiles, there was no longer herdsman or muleteer to be seen, nor any thing to be heard but our own footsteps and the lonely chirping of the cricket. The shadows of the valleys grew deeper and deeper, until all was dark around us. The lofty summit of the Sierra Nevada alone re-

tained a lingering gleam of daylight; its snowy peaks glaring against the dark blue firmament, and seeming close to us, from the extreme purity of the atmosphere.

"How near the Sierra looks this evening!" said Mateo; "it seems as if you could touch it with your hand; and yet it is many long leagues off." While he was speaking, a star appeared over the snowy summit of the mountain, the only one yet visible in the heavens, and so pure, so large, so bright and beautiful, as to call forth ejaculations of delight from honest Mateo.

"Que estrella hermosa! que clara y limpia es!—No puede ser estrella mas brillante!"

(What a beautiful star! how clear and lucid—no star could be more brilliant!)

I have often remarked this sensibility of the common people of Spain to the charms of natural objects. The lustre of a star, the beauty or fragrance of a flower, the crystal purity of a fountain, will inspire them with a kind of poetical delight; and then, what euphonious words their magnificent language affords, with which to give utterance to their transports!

"But what lights are those, Mateo, which I see twinkling along the Sierra Nevada, just below the snowy region, and which might be taken for stars, only that they are ruddy, and against the dark side of the mountain?"

"Those, señor, are fires, made by the men who gather snow and ice for the supply of Granada. They go up every afternoon with mules and asses, and take turns, some to rest and warm themselves by the fires, while others fill the panniers with ice. They then set off down the mountain, so as to reach the gates of Granada before sunrise. That Sierra Nevada, señor, is a lump of ice in the middle of Andalusia, to keep it all cool in summer."

It was now completely dark; we were passing through the barranca, where stood the cross of the murdered muleteer; when I beheld a number of lights moving at a distance, and apparently advancing up the ravine. On nearer approach, they proved to be torches

borne by a train of uncouth figures arrayed in black: it would have been a procession dreary enough at any time, but was peculiarly so in this wild and solitary place.

Mateo drew near, and told me in a low voice, that it was a funeral train bearing a corpse to the burying ground among the hills.

As the procession passed by, the lugubrious light of the torches falling on the rugged features and funeral-weeds of the attendants, had the most fantastic effect, but was perfectly ghastly, as it revealed the countenance of the corpse, which, according to the Spanish custom, was borne uncovered on an open bier. I remained for some time gazing after the dreary train as it wound up the dark defile of the mountain. It put me in mind of the old story of a procession of demons bearing the body of a sinner up the crater of Stromboli.

"Ah! señor," cried Mateo, "I could tell you a story of a procession once seen among these mountains, but then you'd laugh at me, and say it was one of the legacies of my grandfather the tailor."

"By no means, Mateo. There is nothing I relish more than a marvellous tale."

"Well, señor, it is about one of those very men we have been talking of, who gather snow on the Sierra Nevada."

"You must know, that a great many years since, in my grandfather's time, there was an old fellow, Tio Nicolo by name, who had filled the panniers of his mule with snow and ice, and was returning down the mountain. Being very drowsy, he mounted upon the mule, and soon falling asleep, went with his head nodding and bobbing about from side to side, while his surefooted old mule stepped along the edge of the precipices, and down steep and broken barrancas, just as safe and steady as if it had been on plain ground. At length, Tio Nicolo awoke, and gazed about him, and rubbed his eyes—and, in good truth, he had reason. The moon shone almost as bright as day, and he saw the city below him, as plain as your hand, and shining with its white buildings, like a silver platter in the moonshine; but, Lord! señor, it

was nothing like the city he had left a few hours before! Instead of the cathedral, with its great dome and turrets, and the churches with their spires, and the convents with their pinnacles, all surmounted with the blessed cross, he saw nothing but Moorish mosques, and minarets, and cupolas, all topped off with glittering crescents, such as you see on the Barbary flags. Well, señor, as you may suppose, Tio Nicolo was mightily puzzled at all this, but while he was gazing down upon the city, a great army came marching up the mountain, winding along the ravines, sometimes in the moonshine, sometimes in the shade. As it drew nigh, he saw that there were horse and foot all in Moorish armour. Tio Nicolo tried to scramble out of their way, but his old mule stood stock still, and refused to budge, trembling, at the same time, like a leaf—for dumb beasts, señor, are just as much frightened at such things as human beings. Well, señor, the hobgoblin army came marching by; there were men that seemed to blow trumpets, and others to beat drums and strike cymbals, yet never a sound did they make; they all moved on without the least noise, just as I have seen painted armies move across the stage in the theatre of Granada, and all looked as pale as death. At last, in the rear of the army, between two black Moorish horsemen, rode the Grand Inquisitor of Granada, on a mule as white as snow. Tio Nicolo wondered to see him in such company, for the Inquisitor was famous for his hatred of Moors, and, indeed, of all kinds of Infidels, Jews, and heretics, and used to hunt them out with fire and scourge. However, Tio Nicolo felt himself safe, now that there was a priest of such sanctity at hand. So making the sign of the cross, he called out for his benediction, when, hombre! he received a blow that sent him and his old mule over the edge of a steep bank, down which they rolled, head over heels, to the bottom! Tio Nicolo did not come to his senses until long after sunrise, when he found himself at the bottom of a deep ravine, his mule grazing beside him, and the panniers of snow completely melted. He crawled back to Granada, sorely bruised and battered, but was glad

to find the city looking as usual, with Christian churches and crosses. When he told the story of his night's adventure, every one laughed at him; some said he had dreamed it all, as he dozed on his mule; others thought it all a fabrication of his own—but what was strange, señor, and made people afterwards think more seriously of the matter, was, that the Grand Inquisitor died within the year. I have often heard my grandfather, the tailor, say that there was more meant by that hobgoblin army bearing off the resemblance of the priest, than folks dared to surmise."

"Then you would insinuate, friend Mateo, that there is a kind of Moorish limbo, or purgatory, in the bowels of these mountains, to which the padre inquisitor was borne off."

"God forbid, señor! I know nothing of the matter—I only relate what I heard from my grandfather."

By the time Mateo had finished the tale which I have more succinctly related, and which was interlarded with many comments, and spun out with minute details, we reached the gate of the Alhambra.

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### LOCAL TRADITIONS.

THE common people of Spain have an oriental passion for story-telling, and are fond of the marvellous. They will gather round the doors of their cottages in summer evenings, or in the great cavernous chimney corners of the ventas in the winter, and listen with insatiable delight to miraculous legends of saints, perilous adventures of travellers, and daring exploits of robbers and contra-bandistas. The wild and solitary character of the country, the imperfect diffusion of knowledge, the scarceness of general topics of conversation, and the romantic adventurous life that every one leads in a land where travelling is yet in its primitive state, all contribute to cherish this love of oral narration, and to produce a strong infusion of the extravagant and incredible. There is no theme, however, more prevalent and popular than that of treasures buried

by the Moors; it pervades the whole country. In traversing the wild sierras, the scenes of ancient foray and exploit, you cannot see a Moorish atalaya, or watchtower, perched among the cliffs, or beetling above its rock-built village, but your muleteer, on being closely questioned, will suspend the smoking of his cigarillo to tell some tale of Moslem gold buried beneath its foundations; nor is there a ruined alcazar in a city but has its golden tradition handed down from generation to generation among the poor people of the neighbourhood.

These, like most popular fictions, have sprung from some scanty groundwork of fact. During the wars between Moor and Christian which distracted this country for centuries, towns and castles were liable frequently and suddenly to change owners, and the inhabitants, during sieges and assaults, were fain to bury their money and jewels in the earth, or hide them in vaults and wells, as is often done at the present day in the despotic and belligerent countries of the east. At the time of the expulsion of the Moors, also, many of them concealed their most precious effects, hoping that their exile would be but temporary, and that they would be enabled to return and retrieve their treasures at some future day. It is certain that from time to time hoards of gold and silver coin have been accidentally dug up, after a lapse of centuries, from among the ruins of Moorish fortresses and habitations; and it requires but a few facts of the kind to give birth to a thousand fictions.

The stories thus originating have generally something of an oriental tinge, and are marked with that mixture of the Arabic and the Gothic which seems to me to characterize every thing in Spain, and especially in its southern provinces. The hidden wealth is always laid under magic spell, and secured by charm and talisman. Sometimes it is guarded by uncouth monsters or fiery dragons, sometimes by enchanted Moors, who sit by it in armour, with drawn swords, but motionless as statues, maintaining a sleepless watch for ages.

The Alhambra, of course, from the peculiar circumstances of its history, is a stronghold for popular fictions of

the kind; and various relics dug up from time to time, have contributed to strengthen them. At one time an earthen vessel was found containing Moorish coins and the skeleton of a cock, which, according to the opinion of certain shrewd inspectors, must have been buried alive. At another time a vessel was dug up, containing a great scarabæus or beetle of baked clay, covered with Arabic inscriptions, which was pronounced a prodigious amulet of occult virtues. In this way the wits of the ragged brood who inhabit the Alhambra have been set wool-gathering, until there is not a hall, or tower, or vault, of the old fortress, that has not been made the scene of some marvellous tradition. Having, I trust, in the preceding papers made the reader in some degree familiar with the localities of the Alhambra, I shall now launch out more largely into the wonderful legends connected with it, and which I have diligently wrought into shape and form, from various legendary scraps and hints picked up in the course of my perambulations; in the same manner that an antiquary works out a regular historical document from a few scattered letters of an almost defaced inscription.

If any thing in these legends should shock the faith of the over-scrupulous reader, he must remember the nature of the place, and make due allowances. He must not expect here, the same laws of probability that govern commonplace scenes, and every-day life; he must remember that he treads the halls of an enchanted palace, and that all is "haunted ground."

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THE

HOUSE OF THE WEATHERCOCK.

ON the brow of the lofty hill of the Albaycin, the highest part of the city of Granada, stand the remains of what was once a royal palace, founded shortly after the conquest of Spain by the Arabs. It is now converted into a manufactory, and has fallen into such obscurity, that it cost me much trouble to find it, not-



withstanding that I had the assistance of the sagacious, and all-knowing Mateo Ximenes. This edifice still bears the name by which it has been known for centuries, namely, "La Casa del Gallo de Viento," *i. e.*, the House of the Weathercock. It was so called from a bronze figure of a warrior on horseback, armed with shield and spear, erected on one of its turrets, and turning with every wind; bearing an Arabic motto, which, translated into Spanish, was as follows :

Dice el sabio Aben Habuz,  
Que asi se defiende el Andaluz.

In this way, says Aben Habuz the wise,  
The Andalusian his foe defies.

This Aben Habuz, according to Moorish chronicles, was a captain in the invading army of Taric, and was left by him as Alcalde of Granada. He is supposed to have intended this warlike effigy as a perpetual memorial to the Moslem inhabitants, that, surrounded as they were by foes, their safety depended upon being always on their guard, and ready for the field.

Traditions, however, give a different account of this Aben Habuz and his palace, and affirm that his bronze horseman was originally a talisman of great virtue, though, in after ages, it lost its magic properties, and degenerated into a mere weathercock.

The following are the traditions alluded to.

#### LEGEND OF

#### THE ARABIAN ASTROLOGER.

In old times, many hundred years ago, there was a Moorish king, named Aben Habuz, who reigned over the kingdom of Granada. He was a retired conqueror, that is to say, one who having in his more youthful days led a life of constant foray and depredation, now that he had grown feeble and superannuated, "languished for repose," and desired nothing more than to live at peace with all the world, to husband his laurels, and to enjoy in quiet the possessions he had wrested from his neighbours.

It so happened, however, that this most reasonable and pacific old monarch had young rivals to deal with; princes full of his early passion for fame and fighting, and who were disposed to call him to account for the scores he had run up with their fathers. Certain distant districts of his own territories, also, which during the days of his vigour he had treated with a high hand, were prone, now that he languished for repose, to rise in rebellion and threaten to invest him in his capital. Thus he had foes on every side, and as Granada is surrounded by wild and craggy mountains, which hide the approach of an enemy, the unfortunate Aben Habuz was kept in a constant state of vigilance and alarm, not knowing in what quarter hostilities might break out.

It was in vain that he built watch-towers on the mountains, and stationed guards at every pass, with orders to make fires by night and smoke by day, on the approach of an enemy. His alert foes, baffling every precaution, would break out of some unthought of defile, ravage his lands beneath his very nose, and then make off with prisoners and booty to the mountains. Was ever peaceable and retired conqueror in a more uncomfortable predicament?

While Aben Habuz was harassed by these perplexities and molestations, an ancient Arabian physician arrived at his court. His gray beard descended to his girdle, and he had every mark of extreme age, yet he had travelled almost the whole way from Egypt on foot, with no other aid than a staff, marked with hieroglyphics. His fame had preceded him. His name was Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ajeeb; he was said to have lived ever since the days of Mahomet, and to be the son of Abu Ajeeb, the last of the companions of the Prophet. He had, when a child, followed the conquering army of Amru into Egypt, where he had remained many years studying the dark sciences, and particularly magic, among the Egyptian priests.

It was, moreover, said, that he had found out the secret of prolonging life, by means of which he had arrived to the great age of upwards of two centuries, though, as he did not discover the secret

until well stricken in years, he could only perpetuate his gray hairs and wrinkles.

This wonderful old man was honourably entertained by the king; who, like most superannuated monarchs, began to take physicians into great favour. He would have assigned him an apartment in his palace, but the astrologer preferred a cave on the side of the hill which rises above the city of Granada, being the same on which the Alhambra has since been built. He caused the cave to be enlarged so as form a spacious and lofty hall, with a circular hole at the top, through which, as through a well, he could see the heavens and behold the stars even at mid-day. The walls of this hall were covered with Egyptian hieroglyphics, with cabalistic symbols, and with the figures of the stars in their signs. This hall he furnished with many implements, fabricated under his directions by cunning artificers of Granada, but the occult properties of which were known only to himself.

In a little while the sage Ibrahim became the bosom counsellor of the king, who applied to him for advice in every emergency. Aben Habuz was once inveighing against the injustice of his neighbours, and bewailing the restless vigilance he had to observe, to guard himself against their invasions; when he had finished, the astrologer remained silent for a moment, and then replied, "Know, O king, that when I was in Egypt I beheld a great marvel devised by a pagan priestess of old. On a mountain, above the city of Borsa, and overlooking the great valley of the Nile, was a figure of a ram, and above it a figure of a cock, both of molten brass, and turning upon a pivot. Whenever the country was threatened with invasion, the ram would turn in the direction of the enemy, and the cock would crow; upon this the inhabitants of the city knew of the danger, and of the quarter from which it was approaching, and could take timely means to guard against it."

"God is great!" exclaimed the pacific Aben Habuz, "what a treasure would be such a ram to keep an eye upon these mountains around me, and then such a cock, to crow in time of danger! Allah

achbar! how securely I might sleep in my palace with such sentinels on the top!"

The astrologer waited until the ecstasies of the king had subsided, and then proceeded.

"After the victorious Amru (may he rest in peace!) had finished his conquest of Egypt, I remained among the ancient priests of the land, studying the rites and ceremonies of their idolatrous faith, and seeking to make myself master of the hidden knowledge for which they are renowned. I was one day seated on the banks of the Nile, conversing with an ancient priest, when he pointed to the mighty pyramids which rose like mountains out of the neighbouring desert. 'All that we can teach thee,' said he, 'is nothing to the knowledge locked up in those mighty piles. In the centre of the central pyramid is a sepulchral chamber, in which is enclosed the mummy of the high priest who aided in rearing that stupendous pile; and with him is buried a wondrous book of knowledge, containing all the secrets of magic and art. This book was given to Adam after his fall, and was handed down from generation to generation to King Solomon the wise, and by its aid he built the temple of Jerusalem. How it came into the possession of the builder of the pyramids, is known to him alone who knows all things.

"When I heard these words of the Egyptian priest, my heart burned to get possession of that book. I could command the services of many of the soldiers of our conquering army, and of a number of the native Egyptians: with these I set to work, and pierced the solid mass of the pyramid, until, after great toil, I came upon one of its interior and hidden passages. Following this up, and threading a fearful labyrinth, I penetrated into the very heart of the pyramid, even to the sepulchral chamber, where the mummy of the high priest had lain for ages. I broke through the outer cases of the mummy, unfolded its many wrappers and bandages, and, at length, found the precious volume on its bosom. I seized it with a trembling hand, and groped my way out of the pyramid, leaving the mummy in its dark and

silent sepulchre, there to await the final day of resurrection and judgment."

"Son of Abu Ajeeb," exclaimed Aben Habuz, "thou hast been a great traveller, and seen marvellous things; but of what avail to me is the secret of the pyramid, and the volume of knowledge of the wise Solomon?"

"This it is, O king! by the study of that book I am instructed in all magic arts, and can command the assistance of genii to accomplish my plans. The mystery of the Talisman of Borsa is therefore familiar to me, and such a talisman can I make; nay, one of greater virtues."

"O wise son of Abu Ajeeb," cried Aben Habuz, "better were such a talisman than all the watchtowers on the hills, and sentinels upon the borders. Give me such a safeguard, and the riches of my treasury are at thy command."

The astrologer immediately set to work to gratify the wishes of the monarch. He caused a great tower to be erected upon the top of the royal palace, which stood on the brow of the hill of the Albaycin. The tower was built of stones brought from Egypt, and taken, it is said, from one of the pyramids. In the upper part of the tower was a circular hall, with windows looking towards every point of the compass, and before each window was a table, on which was arranged, as on a chess-board, a mimic army of horse and foot, with the effigy of the potentate that ruled in that direction, all carved of wood. To each of these there was a small lance, no bigger than a bodkin, on which were engraved certain Chaldaic characters. This hall was kept constantly closed, by a gate of brass, with a great lock of steel, the key of which was in possession of the king.

On the top of the tower was a bronze figure of a Moorish horseman, fixed on a pivot, with a shield on one arm, and his lance elevated perpendicularly. The face of this horseman was towards the city, as if keeping guard over it; but if any foe were at hand, the figure would turn in that direction, and would level the lance as if for action.

When this talisman was finished, Aben Habuz was all impatient to try its virtues; and longed as ardently for an

invasion as he had ever sighed after repose. His desire was soon gratified. Tidings were brought early one morning by the sentinel appointed to watch the tower, that the face of the bronze horseman was turned towards the mountains of Elvira, and that his lance pointed directly against the pass of Lope.

"Let the drums and trumpets sound to arms, and all Granada be put on the alert," said Aben Habuz.

"O king," said the astrologer, "let not your city be disquieted, nor your warriors called to arms; we need no aid of force to deliver you from your enemies. Dismiss your attendants, and let us proceed alone to the secret hall of the tower."

The ancient Aben Habuz mounted the staircase of the tower, leaning on the arm of the still more ancient Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ajeeb. They unlocked the brazen door, and entered. The window that looked towards the pass of Lope was open. "In this direction," said the astrologer, "lies the danger; approach, O king, and behold the mystery of the table."

King Aben Habuz approached the seeming chess-board, on which were arranged the small wooden effigies, when, to his surprise, he perceived that they were all in motion. The horses pranced and curveted, the warriors brandished their weapons, and there was a faint sound of drums and trumpets, and the clang of arms, and neighing of steeds; but all no louder, nor more distinct, than the hum of the bee or the summer-fly, in the drowsy ear of him who lies at noontide in the shade.

"Behold, O king," said the astrologer, "a proof that thy enemies are even now in the field. They must be advancing through yonder mountains, by the passes of Lope. Would you produce a panic and confusion amongst them, and cause them to retreat without loss of life, strike these effigies with the but-end of this magic lance; but would you cause bloody feud and carnage among them, strike with the point."

A livid streak passed across the countenance of the pacific Aben Habuz; he seized the mimic lance with trembling eagerness, and tottered towards the table,

his gray beard wagged with chuckling exultation: "Son of Abu Ajeeb," exclaimed he, "I think we will have a little blood!"

So saying, he thrust the magic lance into some of the pigmy effigies, and belaboured others with the but-end, upon which the former fell as dead upon the board, and the rest, turning upon each other, began, pellmell, a chance-medley fight.

It was with difficulty the astrologer could stay the hand of the most pacific of monarchs, and prevent him from absolutely exterminating his foes; at length he prevailed upon him to leave the tower, and to send out scouts to the mountains by the pass of Lope.

They returned with the intelligence, that a Christian army had advanced through the heart of the Sierra, almost within sight of Granada, where a dissension had broken out among them; they had turned their weapons against each other, and after much slaughter had retreated over the border.

Aben Habuz was transported with joy on thus proving the efficacy of the talisman. "At length," said he, I shall lead a life of tranquillity, and have all my enemies in my power. O wise son of Abu Ajeeb, what can I bestow on thee in reward for such a blessing?"

"The wants of an old man and a philosopher, O king, are few and simple; grant me but the means of fitting up my cave as a suitable hermitage, and I am content."

"How noble is the moderation of the truly wise!" exclaimed Aben Habuz, secretly pleased at the cheapness of the recompense. He summoned his treasurer, and bade him dispense whatever sums might be required by Ibrahim to complete and furnish his hermitage.

The astrologer now gave orders to have various chambers hewn out of the solid rock, so as to form ranges of apartments connected with his astrological hall; these he caused to be furnished with luxurious ottomans and divans, and the walls to be hung with the richest silks of Damascus. "I am an old man," said he, "and can no longer rest my bones on stone couches, and these damp walls require covering."

He had baths too constructed, and provided with all kinds of perfumes and aromatic oils. "For a bath," said he, "is necessary to counteract the rigidity of age, and to restore freshness and suppleness to the frame withered by study."

He caused the apartments to be hung with innumerable silver and crystal lamps, which he filled with a fragrant oil, prepared according to a receipt discovered by him in the tombs of Egypt. This oil was perpetual in its nature, and diffused a soft radiance like the tempered light of day. "The light of the sun," said he, "is too garish and violent for the eyes of an old man, and the light of the lamp is more congenial to the studies of a philosopher."

The treasurer of King Aben Habuz groaned at the sums daily demanded to fit up this hermitage, and he carried his complaints to the king. The royal word, however, was given; Aben Habuz shrugged his shoulders. "We must have patience," said he, "this old man has taken his idea of a philosophic retreat from the interior of the pyramids, and of the vast ruins of Egypt; but all things have an end, and so will the furnishing of his cavern."

The king was in the right, the hermitage was at length complete, and formed a sumptuous subterranean palace. "I am now content," said Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ajeeb to the treasurer, "I will shut myself up in my cell, and devote my time to study. I desire nothing more, nothing except a trifling solace, to amuse me at the intervals of mental labour."

"O wise Ibrahim, ask what thou wilt, I am bound to furnish all that is necessary for thy solitude."

"I would fain have then a few dancing women," said the philosopher.

"Dancing women!" echoed the treasurer with surprise.

"Dancing women," replied the sage gravely; "a few will suffice, for I am an old man, and a philosopher, of simple habits, and easily satisfied. Let them, however, be young, and fair to look upon; for the sight of youth and beauty is refreshing to old age."

While the philosopher, Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ajeeb, passed his time thus sagely in his hermitage, the pacific Aben Habuz

carried on furious campaigns in effigy in his tower. It was a glorious thing for an old man, like himself, of quiet habits, to have war made easy, and to be enabled to amuse himself in his chamber by brushing away whole armies like so many swarms of flies.

For a time he rioted in the indulgence of his humours, and even taunted and insulted his neighbours, to induce them to make incursions; but by degrees they grew wary from repeated disasters, until no one ventured to invade his territories. For many months the bronze horseman remained on the peace establishment with his lance elevated in the air, and the worthy old monarch began to repine at the want of his accustomed sport, and to grow peevish at his monotonous tranquillity.

At length, one day, the talismanic horseman veered suddenly round, and lowering his lance, made a dead point towards the mountains of Guadix. Aben Habuz hastened to his tower, but the magic table in that direction remained quiet; not a single warrior was in motion. Perplexed at the circumstance, he sent forth a troop of horse to scour the mountains and reconnoitre. They returned after three days' absence.

"We have searched every mountain pass," said they, "but not a helm or spear was stirring. All that we have found in the course of our foray, was a Christian damsel of surpassing beauty, sleeping at noontide beside a fountain, whom we have brought away captive."

"A damsel of surpassing beauty!" exclaimed Aben Habuz, his eyes gleaming with animation; "let her be conducted into my presence."

The beautiful damsel was accordingly conducted into his presence. She was arrayed with all the luxury of ornament that had prevailed among the Gothic Spaniards at the time of the Arabian conquest. Pearls of dazzling whiteness were entwined with her raven tresses; and jewels sparkled on her forehead, rivalling the lustre of her eyes. Around her neck was a golden chain, to which was suspended a silver lyre, which hung by her side.

The flashes of her dark refulgent eye were like sparks of fire on the withered,

yet combustible, heart of Aben Habuz; the swimming voluptuousness of her gait made his senses reel. "Fairest of women," cried he, with rapture, "who and what art thou?"

"The daughter of one of the Gothic princes, who but lately ruled over this land. The armies of my father have been destroyed as if by magic, among these mountains; he has been driven into exile, and his daughter is a captive."

"Beware, O king!" whispered Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ajeeb, "this may be one of those Northern sorceresses of whom we have heard, who assume the most seductive forms to beguile the unwary. Methinks I read witchcraft in her eye, and sorcery in every movement. Doubtless this is the enemy pointed out by the talisman."

"Son of Abu Ajeeb," replied the king, "thou art a wise man, I grant, a conjuror for aught I know; but thou art little versed in the ways of woman. In that knowledge will I yield to no man; no, not the wise Solomon himself, notwithstanding the number of his wives and concubines. As to this damsel, I see no harm in her, she is fair to look upon, and finds favour in my eyes."

"Hearken, O king!" replied the astrologer. "I have given thee many victories by means of my talisman, but have never shared any of the spoil. Give me then this stray captive, to solace me in my solitude with her silver lyre. If she be indeed a sorceress, I have counter spells that set her charms at defiance."

"What! more women!" cried Aben Habuz. "Hast thou not already dancing women enough to solace thee?"

"Dancing women have I, it is true, but no singing women. I would fain have a little minstrelsy to refresh my mind when weary with the toils of study."

"A truce with thy hermit cravings," said the king, impatiently. "This damsel have I marked for my own. I see much comfort in her; even such comfort as David, the father of Solomon the wise, found in the society of Abishag the Shunamite."

Further solicitations and remonstrances of the astrologer only provoked a more

peremptory reply from the monarch, and they parted in high displeasure. The sage shut himself up in his hermitage to brood over his disappointment; ere he departed, however, he gave the king one more warning to beware of his dangerous captive. But where is the old man in love that will listen to council? Aben Habuz resigned himself to the full sway of his passion. His only study was how to render himself amiable in the eyes of the Gothic beauty. He had not youth to recommend him, it is true, but then he had riches; and when a lover is old, he is generally generous. The Zacatin of Granada was ransacked for the most precious merchandise of the East; silks, jewels, precious gems, exquisite perfumes, all that Asia and Africa yielded of rich and rare, were lavished upon the princess. All kinds of spectacles and festivities were devised for her entertainment; minstrelsy, dancing, tournaments, bull-fights: Granada, for a time, was a scene of perpetual pageant. The Gothic princess regarded all this splendour with the air of one accustomed to magnificence. She received every thing as a homage due to her rank, or rather to her beauty, for beauty is more lofty in its exactions even than rank. Nay, she seemed to take a secret pleasure in exciting the monarch to expenses that made his treasury shrink; and then treating his extravagant generosity as a mere matter of course. With all his assiduity and munificence, also, the venerable lover could not flatter himself that he had made any impression on her heart. She never frowned on him, it is true, but then she never smiled. Whenever he began to plead his passion, she struck her silver lyre. There was a mystic charm in the sound. In an instant the monarch began to nod; a drowsiness stole over him, and he gradually sank into a sleep, from which he awoke wonderfully refreshed, but perfectly cooled, for the time, of his passion. This was very baffling to his suit; but then these slumbers were accompanied by agreeable dreams, that completely enthralled the senses of the drowsy lover; so he continued to dream on, while all Granada scoffed at his infatuation, and groaned at the treasures lavished for a song.

At length a danger burst on the head of Aben Habuz, against which his talisman yielded him no warning. An insurrection broke out in his very capital: his palace was surrounded by an armed rabble, who menaced his life and the life of his Christian paramour. A spark of his ancient warlike spirit was awakened in the breast of the monarch. At the head of a handful of his guards he sallied forth, put the rebels to flight, and crushed the insurrection in the bud.

When quiet was again restored, he sought the astrologer, who still remained shut up in his hermitage, chewing the bitter cud of resentment.

Aben Habuz approached him with a conciliatory tone. "O wise son of Abu Ajeeb," said he, "well didst thou predict dangers to me from this captive beauty: tell me then, thou who art so quick at foreseeing peril, what I should do to avert it."

"Put from thee the infidel damsel who is the cause."

"Sooner would I part with my kingdom," cried Aben Habuz.

"Thou art in danger of losing both," replied the astrologer.

"Be not harsh and angry, O most profound of philosophers; consider the double distress of a monarch and a lover, and devise some means of protecting me from the evils by which I am menaced. I care not for grandeur, I care not for power, I languish only for repose; would that I had some quiet retreat where I might take refuge from the world, and all its cares, and pomps, and troubles, and devote the remainder of my days to tranquillity and love."

The astrologer regarded him for a moment, from under his bushy eyebrows.

"And what wouldst thou give, if I could provide thee such a retreat?"

"Thou shouldst name thy own reward, and whatever it might be, if within the scope of my power, as my soul liveth, it should be thine."

"Thou hast heard, O king, of the Garden of Irem, one of the prodigies of Arabia the Happy."

"I have heard of that garden; it is recorded in the Koran, even in the chapter entitled 'The Dawn of Day.' I have,

moreover, heard marvellous things related of it by pilgrims who had been to Mecca; but I consider them wild fables, such as travellers are wont to tell who have visited remote countries."

"Discredit not, O king, the tales of travellers," rejoined the astrologer gravely, "for they contain precious rarities of knowledge brought from the ends of the earth. As to the Palace and Garden of Irem, what is generally told of them is true; I have seen them with mine own eyes—listen to my adventure; for it has a bearing upon the object of your request."

"In my younger days, when a mere Arab of the desert, I tended my father's camels. In traversing the Desert of Aden, one of them strayed from the rest, and was lost. I searched after it for several days, but in vain, until wearied and faint, I laid myself down one noontide, and slept under a palm tree by the side of a scanty well. When I awoke, I found myself at the gate of a city. I entered, and beheld noble streets, and squares, and market-places; but all were silent and without an inhabitant. I wandered on until I came to a sumptuous palace with a garden, adorned with fountains and fish-ponds, and groves and flowers, and orchards laden with delicious fruit; but still no one was to be seen. Upon which, appalled at this loneliness, I hastened to depart; and, after issuing forth at the gate of the city, I turned to look upon the place, but it was no longer to be seen, nothing but the silent desert extended before my eyes.

"In the neighbourhood I met with an aged dervise, learned in the traditions and secrets of the land, and related to him what had befallen me. 'This,' said he, 'is the far-famed Garden of Irem, one of the wonders of the desert. It only appears at times to some wanderer like thyself, gladdening him with the sight of towers and palaces, and garden walls overhung with richly laden fruit trees, and then vanishes, leaving nothing but a lonely desert. And this is the story of it. In old times, when this country was inhabited by the Addites, King Sheddad, the son of Ad, the great grandson of Noah, founded here a splendid city. When it was finished, and he saw its

grandeur, his heart was puffed up with pride and arrogance, and he determined to build a royal palace, with gardens that should rival all that was related in the Koran of the celestial paradise. But the curse of Heaven fell upon him for his presumption. He and his subjects were swept from the earth, and his splendid city, and palace, and gardens, were laid under a perpetual spell, that hides them from the human sight, excepting that they are seen at intervals, by way of keeping his sin in perpetual remembrance.'

"This story, O king, and the wonders I had seen, ever dwelt in my mind; and in after years, when I had been in Egypt, and was possessed of the book of knowledge of Solomon the wise, I determined to return and revisit the Garden of Irem. I did so, and found it revealed to my instructed sight. I took possession of the palace of Sheddad, and passed several days in his mock paradise. The genii who watch over the place, were obedient to my magic power, and revealed to me the spells by which the whole garden had been, as it were, conjured into existence, and by which it was rendered invisible. Such a palace and garden, O king, can I make for thee, even here, on the mountain above the city. Do I not know all the secret spells? and am I not in possession of the book of knowledge of Solomon the wise?"

"O wise son of Abu Ajeeb!" exclaimed Aben Habuz, trembling with eagerness, "thou art a traveller indeed, and hast seen and learnt marvellous things! Contrive me such a paradise, and ask any reward, even to the half of my kingdom."

"Alas!" replied the other, "thou knowest I am an old man, and a philosopher, and easily satisfied; all the reward I ask is the first beast of burden, with its load, that shall enter the magic portal of the palace."

The monarch gladly agreed to so moderate a stipulation, and the astrologer began his work. On the summit of the hill, immediately above his subterranean hermitage, he caused a great gateway or barbacan to be erected, opening through the centre of a strong tower.

There was an outer vestibule or porch, with a lofty arch, and within it a portal secured by massive gates. On the keystone of the portal the astrologer, with his own hand, wrought the figure of a huge key; and on the keystone of the outer arch of the vestibule, which was loftier than that of the portal, he carved a gigantic hand. These were potent talismans, over which he repeated many sentences in an unknown tongue.

When this gateway was finished, he shut himself up for two days in his astrological hall, engaged in secret incantations; on the third he ascended the hill, and passed the whole day on its summit. At a late hour of the night he came down, and presented himself before Aben Habuz. "At length, O king," said he, "my labour is accomplished. On the summit of the hill stands one of the most delectable palaces that ever the head of man devised, or the heart of man desired. It contains sumptuous halls and galleries, delicious gardens, cool fountains, and fragrant baths: in a word, the whole mountain is converted into a paradise. Like the Garden of Irem, it is protected by a mighty charm, which hides it from the view and search of mortals, excepting such as possess the secret of its talismans."

"Enough!" cried Aben Habuz joyfully, "to-morrow morning with the first light we will ascend and take possession."

The happy monarch slept but little that night. Scarcely had the rays of the sun begun to play about the snowy summit of the Sierra Nevada, when he mounted his steed, and, accompanied only by a few chosen attendants, ascended a steep and narrow road leading up the hill. Beside him, on a white palfrey, rode the Gothic princess, her whole dress sparkling with jewels, while round her neck was suspended her silver lyre. The astrologer walked on the other side of the king, assisting his steps with his hieroglyphic staff, for he never mounted steed of any kind.

Aben Habuz looked to see the towers of the palace brightening above him, and the embowered terraces of its gardens stretching along the heights; but as yet nothing of the kind was to be descried. "That is the mystery and safeguard of

the place," said the astrologer, "nothing can be discerned until you have passed the spellbound gateway, and been put in possession of the place."

As they approached the gateway, the astrologer paused, and pointed out to the king the mystic hand and key carved upon the portal and the arch. "These," said he, "are the talismans which guard the entrance to this paradise. Until yonder hand shall reach down and seize that key, neither mortal power nor magic artifice can prevail against the lord of this mountain."

While Aben Habuz was gazing with open mouth, and silent wonder, at these mystic talismans, the palfrey of the princess proceeded, and bore her in at the portal, to the very centre of the barbacan.

"Behold," cried the astrologer, "my promised reward; the first animal with its burthen that should enter the magic gateway."

Aben Habuz smiled at what he considered a pleasantry of the ancient man; but when he found him to be in earnest, his gray beard trembled with indignation.

"Son of Abu Ajeeb," said he, sternly, "what equivocation is this? Thou knowest the meaning of my promise: the first beast of burthen, with its load, that should enter this portal. Take the strongest mule in my stables, load it with the most precious things of my treasury, and it is thine; but dare not to raise thy thoughts to her who is the delight of my heart."

"What need I of wealth," cried the astrologer, scornfully; "have I not the book of knowledge of Solomon the wise, and through it the command of the secret treasures of the earth? The princess is mine by right; thy royal word is pledged; I claim her as my own."

The princess looked down haughtily from her palfrey, and a light smile of scorn curled her rosy lip at this dispute between two graybeards for the possession of youth and beauty. The wrath of the monarch got the better of his discretion. "Base son of the desert," cried he, "thou may'st be master of many arts, but know me for thy master, and presume not to juggle with thy king."



“My master!” echoed the astrologer, “my king! The monarch of a mole-hill to claim sway over him who possesses the talismans of Solomon! Farewell, Aben Habuz; reign over thy petty kingdom, and revel in thy paradise of fools; for me, I will laugh at thee in my philosophic retirement.”

So saying, he seized the bridle of the palfrey, smote the earth with his staff, and sank with the Gothic princess through the centre of the barbican. The earth closed over them, and no trace remained of the opening by which they had descended.

Aben Habuz was struck dumb for a time with astonishment. Recovering himself, he ordered a thousand workmen to dig, with pickaxe and spade, into the ground where the astrologer had disappeared. They digged and digged, but in vain; the flinty bosom of the hill resisted their implements; or if they did penetrate a little way, the earth filled in again as fast as they threw it out. Aben Habuz sought the mouth of the cavern at the foot of the hill, leading to the subterranean palace of the astrologer: but it was no where to be found. Where once had been an entrance, was now a solid surface of primeval rock. With the disappearance of Ibrahim Ebn Abu Ajeeb, ceased the benefit of his talismans. The bronze horseman remained fixed, with his face towards the hill, and his spear pointed to the spot where the astrologer had descended, as if there still lurked the deadliest foe of Aben Habuz.

From time to time the sound of music, and the tones of a female voice, could be faintly heard from the bosom of the hill; and a peasant one day brought word to the king, that in the preceding night he had found a fissure in the rock, by which he had crept in until he looked down into a subterranean hall, in which sat the astrologer, on a magnificent divan, slumbering and nodding to the silver lyre of the princess, which seemed to hold a magic sway over his senses.

Aben Habuz sought the fissure in the rock, but it was again closed. He renewed the attempt to unearth his rival, but all in vain. The spell of the hand and key was too potent to be counteracted by human power. As to the

summit of the mountain, the site of the promised palace and garden, it remained a naked waste; either the boasted elysium was hidden from sight by enchantment, or was a mere fable of the astrologer. The world charitably supposed the latter, and some used to call the place, “The King’s Folly;” while others named it, “The Fool’s Paradise.”

To add to the chagrin of Aben Habuz, the neighbours whom he had defied and taunted, and cut up at his leisure while master of the talismanic horseman, finding him no longer protected by magic spell, made inroads into his territories from all sides, and the remainder of the life of the most pacific of monarchs, was a tissue of turmoils.

At length Aben Habuz died, and was buried. Ages have since rolled away. The Alhambra has been built on the eventful mountain, and in some measure realizes the fabled delights of the Garden of Irem. The spellbound gateway still exists entire, protected no doubt by the mystic hand and key, and now forms the Gate of Justice, the grand entrance to the fortress. Under that gateway, it is said, the old astrologer remains in his subterranean hall, nodding on his divan, lulled by the silver lyre of the princess.

The old invalid sentinels who mount guard at the gate, hear the strains occasionally in the summer nights; and yielding to their soporific power, doze quietly at their posts. Nay, so drowsy an influence pervades the place, that even those who watch by day may generally be seen nodding on the stone benches of the barbican, or sleeping under the neighbouring trees; so that in fact it is the drowsiest military post in all Christendom. All this, say the ancient legends, will endure from age to age. The princess will remain captive to the astrologer, and the astrologer bound up in magic slumber by the princess, until the last day, unless the mystic hand shall grasp the fated key, and dispel the whole charm of this enchanted mountain.

#### THE TOWER OF LAS INFANTAS.

IN an evening’s stroll up a narrow glen, overshadowed by fig trees, pome-

granates, and myrtles, that divides the lands of the fortress from those of the Generalife, I was struck with the romantic appearance of a Moorish tower in the outer wall of the Alhambra, that rose high above the tree-tops, and caught the ruddy rays of the setting sun. A solitary window at a great height commanded a view of the glen; and as I was regarding it, a young female looked out, with her head adorned with flowers. She was evidently superior to the usual class of people that inhabit the old towers of the fortress; and this sudden and picturesque glimpse of her reminded me of the descriptions of captive beauties in fairy tales. These fanciful associations of my mind were increased on being informed by my attendant Mateo, that this was the tower of the Princesses (La Torre de las Infantas); so called, from having been, according to tradition, the residence of the daughters of the Moorish kings. I have since visited the tower. It is not generally shown to strangers, though well worthy attention, for the interior is equal, for beauty of architecture and delicacy of ornament, to any part of the palace. The elegance of the central hall, with its marble fountain, its lofty arches, and richly fretted dome; arabesques and stucco work of the small but well-proportioned chamber, though injured by time and neglect, all accord with the story of its being anciently the abode of royal beauty.

The little old fairy queen who lives under the staircase of the Alhambra and frequents the evening tertulias of Dame Antonia, tells some fanciful traditions about three Moorish princesses, who were once shut up in this tower by their father, a tyrant king of Granada, and were only permitted to ride out at night about the hills, when no one was permitted to come in their way, under pain of death. They still, according to her account, may be seen occasionally when the moon is in the full, riding in lonely places along the mountain side, on palfreys richly caparisoned and sparkling with jewels, but they vanish on being spoken to.

But before I relate any thing further respecting these princesses, the reader may be anxious to know something about the fair inhabitant of the tower, with her

head dressed with flowers, who looked out from the lofty window. She proved to be the newly married spouse of the worthy adjutant of invalids; who, though well stricken in years, had had the courage to take to his bosom a young and buxom Andalusian damsel. May the good old cavalier be happy in his choice, and find the Tower of the Princesses a more secure residence for female beauty, than it seems to have proved in the time of the Moslems, if we may believe the following legend!

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### LEGEND

OF THE

### THREE BEAUTIFUL PRINCESSES.

IN old times there reigned a Moorish king in Granada, whose name was Mohamed, to which his subjects added the appellation of El Haygari, or "The Left-handed." Some say he was so called on account of his being really more expert with his sinister than his dexter hand; others, because he was prone to take every thing by the wrong end, or, in other words, to mar wherever he meddled. Certain it is, either through misfortune or mismanagement, he was continually in trouble: thrice was he driven from his throne, and, on one occasion, barely escaped to Africa with his life, in the disguise of a fisherman. Still he was as brave as he was blundering; and though left-handed, wielded his cimeter to such purpose, that he each time re-established himself upon his throne by dint of hard fighting. Instead, however, of learning wisdom from adversity, he hardened his neck, and stiffened his left arm in wilfulness. The evils of a public nature which he thus brought upon himself and his kingdom, may be learned by those who will delve into the Arabian annals of Granada; the present legend deals but with his domestic policy.

As this Mohamed was one day riding forth with a train of his courtiers, by the foot of the mountain of Elvira, he met a band of horsemen returning from a foray into the land of the Christians. They were conducting a long string of mules

laden with spoil, and many captives of both sexes, among whom the monarch was struck with the appearance of a beautiful damsel, richly attired, who sat weeping on a low palfrey, and heeded not the consoling words of a duenna who rode beside her.

The monarch was struck with her beauty, and, on inquiring of the captain of the troop, found that she was the daughter of the alcaide of a frontier fortress, that had been surprised and sacked in the course of the foray. Mohamed claimed her as his royal share of the booty, and had her conveyed to his harem in the Alhambra. There every thing was devised to soothe her melancholy; and the monarch, more and more enamoured, sought to make her his queen. The Spanish maid at first repulsed his addresses—he was an infidel—he was the open foe of her country—what was worse, he was stricken in years!

The monarch, finding his assiduities of no avail, determined to enlist in his favour the duenna, who had been captured with the lady. She was an Andalusian by birth, whose Christian name is forgotten, being mentioned in Moorish legends by no other appellation than that of the discreet Kadiga—and discreet in truth she was, as her whole history makes evident. No sooner had the Moorish king held a little private conversation with her, than she saw at once the cogency of his reasoning, and undertook his cause with her young mistress.

“Go to, now!” cried she, “what is there in all this to weep and wail about? Is it not better to be mistress of this beautiful palace, with all its gardens and fountains, than to be shut up within your father’s old frontier tower? As to this Mohamed being an infidel, what is that to the purpose? You marry him, not his religion: and if he is waxing a little old, the sooner will you be a widow, and mistress of yourself; at any rate, you are in his power, and must either be a queen or a slave. When in the hands of a robber, it is better to sell one’s merchandise for a fair price, than to have it taken by main force.”

The arguments of the discreet Kadiga prevailed. The Spanish lady dried her tears, and became the spouse of Mohamed

the Left-handed; she even conformed, in appearance, to the faith of her royal husband; and her discreet duenna immediately became a zealous convert to the Moslem doctrines; it was then the latter received the Arabian name of Kadiga, and was permitted to remain in the confidential employ of her mistress.

In due process of time the Moorish king was made the proud and happy father of three lovely daughters, all born at a birth: he could have wished they had been sons, but consoled himself with the idea that three daughters at a birth were pretty well for a man somewhat stricken in years, and left-handed!

As usual with all Moslem monarchs, he summoned his astrologers on this happy event. They cast the nativities of the three princesses, and shook their heads. “Daughters, O king!” said they, “are always precarious property; but these will most need your watchfulness when they arrive at a marriageable age; at that time gather them under your wings, and trust them to no other guardianship.”

Mohamed the Left-handed was acknowledged to be a wise king by his courtiers, and was certainly so considered by himself. The prediction of the astrologers caused him but little disquiet, trusting to his ingenuity to guard his daughters and outwit the Fates.

The threefold birth was the last matrimonial trophy of the monarch; his queen bore him no more children, and died within a few years, bequeathing her infant daughters to his love, and to the fidelity of the discreet Kadiga.

Many years had yet to elapse before the princesses would arrive at that period of danger—the marriageable age: “It is good, however, to be cautious in time,” said the shrewd monarch; so he determined to have them reared in the royal castle of Salobreña. This was a sumptuous palace, incrustated, as it were, in a powerful Moorish fortress, on the summit of a hill that overlooks the Mediterranean sea. It was a royal retreat, in which the Moslem monarchs shut up such of their relations as might endanger their safety, allowing them all kinds of luxuries and amusements, in the midst of which they passed their lives in voluptuous indolence.

Here the princesses remained, immured from the world, but surrounded by enjoyments, and attended by female slaves who anticipated their wishes. They had delightful gardens for their recreation, filled with the rarest fruits and flowers, with aromatic groves and perfumed baths. On three sides the castle looked down upon a rich valley, enamelled with all kinds of culture, and bounded by the lofty Alpuxarra mountains; on the other side it overlooked the broad sunny sea.

In this delicious abode, in a propitious climate, and under a cloudless sky, the three princesses grew up into wondrous beauty; but, though all reared alike, they gave early tokens of diversity of character. Their names were Zayda, Zorayda, and Zorahayda; and such was their order of seniority, for there had been precisely three minutes between their births.

Zayda, the eldest, was of an intrepid spirit, and took the lead of her sisters in every thing, as she had done in entering first into the world. She was curious and inquisitive, and fond of getting at the bottom of things.

Zorayda had a great feeling for beauty, which was the reason, no doubt, of her delighting to regard her own image in a mirror or a fountain, and of her fondness for flowers, and jewels, and other tasteful ornaments.

As to Zorahayda, the youngest, she was soft and timid, and extremely sensitive, with a vast deal of disposable tenderness, as was evident from her number of pet flowers, and pet birds, and pet animals, all of which she cherished with the fondest care. Her amusements, too, were of a gentle nature, and mixed up with musing and reverie. She would sit for hours in a balcony, gazing on the sparkling stars of a summer's night; or on the sea when lit up by the moon; and at such times, the song of a fisherman, faintly heard from the beach, or the notes of a Moorish flute from some gliding bark, sufficed to elevate her feelings into ecstasy. The least uproar of the elements, however, filled her with dismay; and a clap of thunder was enough to throw her into a swoon.

Years rolled on smoothly and serene-

ly; the discreet Kadiga, to whom the princesses were confided, was faithful to her trust, and attended them with unremitting care.

The castle of Salobreña, as has been said, was built upon a hill on the sea-coast. One of the exterior walls straggled down the profile of the hill until it reached a jutting rock, overhanging the sea, with a narrow sandy beach at its foot, laved by the rippling billows. A small watchtower on this rock had been fitted up as a pavilion, with latticed windows to admit the sea-breeze. Here the princesses used to pass the sultry hours of mid-day.

The curious Zayda was one day seated at one of the windows of the pavilion, as her sisters, reclining on ottomans, were taking the siesta, or noontide slumber. Her attention had been attracted to a galley which came coasting along with measured strokes of the oar. As it drew near, she observed that it was filled with armed men. The galley anchored at the foot of the tower: a number of Moorish soldiers landed on the narrow beach, conducting several Christian prisoners. The curious Zayda awakened her sisters, and all three peeped cautiously through the close jealousies of the lattice, which screened them from sight. Among the prisoners were three Spanish cavaliers, richly dressed. They were in the flower of youth, and of noble presence; and the lofty manner in which they carried themselves, though loaded with chains and surrounded with enemies, bespoke the grandeur of their souls. The princesses gazed with intense and breathless interest. Cooped up as they had been in this castle among female attendants, seeing nothing of the male sex but black slaves, or the rude fishermen of the sea-coast, it is not to be wondered at, that the appearance of three gallant cavaliers in the pride of youth and manly beauty, should produce some commotion in their bosom.

"Did ever nobler being tread the earth than that cavalier in crimson?" cried Zayda, the eldest of the sisters. "See how proudly he bears himself, as though all around him were his slaves!"

"But notice that one in blue!" exclaimed Zorayda. "What grace! what elegance! what spirit!"

The gentle Zorahayda said nothing, but she secretly gave preference to the cavalier in green.

The princesses remained gazing until the prisoners were out of sight; then heaving long-drawn sighs, they turned round, looked at each other for a moment, and sat down, musing and pensive, on their ottomans.

The discreet Kadiga found them in this situation; they related to her what they had seen, and even the withered heart of the duenna was warmed. "Poor youths!" exclaimed she, "I'll warrant their captivity makes many a fair and highborn lady's heart ache in their native land! Ah! my children, you have little idea of the life these cavaliers lead in their own country. Such pranking at tournaments! such devotion to the ladies! such courting and serenading!"

The curiosity of Zayda was fully aroused; she was insatiable in her inquiries, and drew from the duenna the most animated pictures of the scenes of her youthful days and native land. The beautiful Zorayda bridled up, and slyly regarded herself in a mirror, when the theme turned upon the charms of the Spanish ladies; while Zorahayda suppressed a struggling sigh at the mention of moonlight serenades.

Every day the curious Zayda renewed her inquiries, and every day the sage duenna repeated her stories, which were listened to with profound interest, though with frequent sighs, by her gentle auditors. The discreet old woman at length awakened to the mischief she might be doing. She had been accustomed to think of the princesses only as children; but they had imperceptibly ripened beneath her eye, and now bloomed before her three lovely damsels of the marriageable age. It is time, thought the duenna, to give notice to the king.

Mohamed the Left-handed was seated one morning on a divan in one of the cool halls of the Alhambra, when a slave arrived from the fortress of Salobreña, with a message from the sage Kadiga, congratulating him on the anniversary of his daughters' birthday. The slave at the same time presented a delicate little basket decorated with flowers, within which, on a couch of vine and fig-leaves,

lay a peach, an apricot, and a nectarine, with their bloom and down and dewy sweetness upon them, and all in the early stage of tempting ripeness. The monarch was versed in the oriental language of fruits and flowers, and readily divined the meaning of this emblematical offering.

"So," said he, "the critical period pointed out by the astrologers is arrived: my daughters are at a marriageable age. What is to be done? They are shut up from the eyes of men; they are under the eyes of the discreet Kadiga—all very good,—but still they are not under my own eye, as was prescribed by the astrologers: I must gather them under my wing, and trust to no other guardianship."

So saying, he ordered that a tower of the Alhambra should be prepared for their reception, and departed at the head of his guards for the fortress of Salobreña, to conduct them home in person.

About three years had elapsed since Mohamed had beheld his daughters, and he could scarcely credit his eyes at the wonderful change which that small space of time had made in their appearance. During the interval, they had passed that wondrous boundary line in female life which separates the crude, uninformed, and thoughtless girl from the blooming, blushing, meditative woman. It is like passing from the flat, bleak, uninteresting plains of La Mancha to the voluptuous valleys and swelling hills of Andalusia.

Zayda was tall and finely formed, with a lofty demeanour and a penetrating eye. She entered with a stately and decided step, and made a profound reverence to Mohamed, treating him more as her sovereign than her father. Zorayda was of the middle height, with an alluring look and swimming gait, and a sparkling beauty, heightened by the assistance of the toilette. She approached her father with a smile, kissed his hand, and saluted him with several stanzas from a popular Arabian poet, with which the monarch was delighted. Zorahayda was shy and timid, smaller than her sisters, and with a beauty of that tender beseeching kind which looks for fondness and protection. She was little fitted

to command like her elder sister, or to dazzle like the second, but was rather formed to creep to the bosom of manly affection, to nestle within it, and be content. She drew near her father with a timid, and almost faltering step, and would have taken his hand to kiss, but on looking up into his face, and seeing it beaming with a paternal smile, the tenderness of her nature broke forth, and she threw herself upon his neck.

Mohamed the Left-handed surveyed his blooming daughters with mingled pride and perplexity; for while he exulted in their charms, he bethought himself of the prediction of the astrologers. "Three daughters! three daughters!" muttered he repeatedly to himself, "and all of a marriageable age! Here's tempting Hesperian fruit, that requires a dragon watch!"

He prepared for his return to Granada by sending heralds before him, commanding every one to keep out of the road by which he was to pass, and that all doors and windows should be closed at the approach of the princesses. This done, he set forth, escorted by a troop of black horsemen of hideous aspect, and clad in shining armour.

The princesses rode beside the king, closely veiled, on beautiful white palfreys, with velvet caparisons, embroidered with gold, and sweeping the ground; the bits and stirrups were of gold, and the silken bridles adorned with pearls and precious stones. The palfreys were covered with little silver bells, that made the most musical tinkling as they ambled gently along. Wo to the unlucky wight, however, who lingered in the way when he heard the tinkling of these bells!—the guards were ordered to cut him down without mercy.

The cavalcade was drawing near to Granada, when it overtook, on the banks of the river Xenil, a small body of Moorish soldiers with a convoy of prisoners. It was too late for the soldiers to get out of the way, so they threw themselves on their faces on the earth, ordering their captives to do the like. Among the prisoners were the three identical cavaliers whom the princesses had seen from the pavilion. They either did not understand, or were too haughty

to obey the order, and remained standing and gazing upon the cavalcade as it approached.

The ire of the monarch was kindled at this flagrant defiance of his orders. Drawing his cimeter, and pressing forward, he was about to deal a left-handed blow that would have been fatal to at least one of the gazers, when the princesses crowded round him, and implored mercy for the prisoners; even the timid Zorahayda forgot her shyness, and became eloquent in their behalf. Mohamed paused, with uplifted cimeter, when the captain of the guard threw himself at his feet. "Let not your majesty," said he; "do a deed that may cause great scandal throughout the kingdom. These are three brave and noble Spanish knights, who have been taken in battle, fighting like lions; they are of high birth, and may bring great ransoms."—

"Enough!" said the king; "I will spare their lives, but punish their audacity—let them be taken to the Vermilion Towers and put to hard labour."

Mohamed was making one of his usual left-handed blunders. In the tumult and agitation of this blustering scene, the veils of the three princesses had been thrown back, and the radiance of their beauty revealed; and in prolonging the parley, the king had given that beauty time to have its full effect. In those days people fell in love much more suddenly than at present, as all ancient stories make manifest: it is not a matter of wonder, therefore, that the hearts of the three cavaliers were completely captured; especially as gratitude was added to their admiration; it is a little singular, however, though no less certain, that each of them was enraptured with a several beauty. As to the princesses, they were more than ever struck with the noble demeanour of the captives, and cherished in their breasts all that they had heard of their valour and noble lineage.

The cavalcade resumed its march; the three princesses rode pensively along on their tinkling palfreys, now and then stealing a glance behind in search of the Christian captives, and the latter were conducted to their allotted prison in the Vermilion Towers.

The residence provided for the princesses was one of the most dainty that fancy could devise. It was in a tower somewhat apart from the main palace of the Alhambra, though connected with it by the main wall that encircled the whole summit of the hill. On one side it looked into the interior of the fortress, and had, at its foot, a small garden filled with the rarest flowers. On the other side it overlooked a deep embowered ravine that separated the grounds of the Alhambra from those of the Generalife. The interior of the tower was divided into small fairy apartments, beautifully ornamented in the light Arabian style, surrounding a lofty hall, the vaulted roof of which rose almost to the summit of the tower. The walls and ceiling of the hall were adorned with arabesques and fretwork, sparkling with gold and with brilliant pencilling. In the centre of the marble pavement was an alabaster fountain, set round with aromatic shrubs and flowers, and throwing up a jet of water that cooled the whole edifice and had a lulling sound. Round the hall were suspended cages of gold and silver wire, containing singing-birds of the finest plumage or sweetest note.

The princesses had been represented as always cheerful when in the Castle of Salobreña; the king had expected to see them enraptured with the Alhambra. To his surprise, however, they began to pine, and grow melancholy, and dissatisfied with every thing around them. The flowers yielded them no fragrance, the song of the nightingale disturbed their night's rest, and they were out of all patience with the alabaster fountain with its eternal drop-drop and splash-splash, from morning till night, and from night till morning.

The king, who was somewhat of a testy, tyrannical disposition, took this at first in high dudgeon; but he reflected that his daughters had arrived at an age when the female mind expands and its desires augment. "They are no longer children," said he to himself, "they are women grown, and require suitable objects to interest them." He put in requisition, therefore, all the dress-makers, and the jewellers, and the artificers in gold and silver throughout the

Zacatin of Granada, and the princesses were overwhelmed with robes of silk, and of tissue, and of brocade, and cashmere shawls, and necklaces of pearls and diamonds, and rings, and bracelets, and anklets, and all manner of precious things.

All, however, was of no avail; the princesses continued pale and languid in the midst of their finery, and looked like three blighted rose-buds, drooping from one stalk. The king was at his wits' end. He had in general a laudable confidence in his own judgment, and never took advice. The whims and caprices of three marriageable damsels, however, are sufficient, said he, to puzzle the shrewdest head. So for once in his life he called in the aid of counsel.

The person to whom he applied was the experienced duenna.

"Kadiga," said the king, "I know you to be one of the most discreet women in the whole world, as well as one of the most trustworthy; for these reasons I have always continued you about the persons of my daughters. Fathers cannot be too wary in whom they repose such confidence; I now wish you to find out the secret malady that is preying upon the princesses, and to devise some means of restoring them to health and cheerfulness."

Kadiga promised implicit obedience. In fact she knew more of the malady of the princesses than they did themselves. Shutting herself up with them, however, she endeavoured to insinuate herself into their confidence.

"My dear children, what is the reason you are so dismal and downcast in so beautiful a place, where you have every thing that heart can wish?"

The princesses looked vacantly round the apartment, and sighed.

"What more, then, would you have? Shall I get you the wonderful parrot that talks all languages and is the delight of Granada?"

"Odious!" exclaimed the Princess Zada. "A horrid, screaming bird, that chatters words without ideas: one must be without brains to tolerate such a pest."

"Shall I send for a monkey from the rock of Gibraltar, to divert you with his antics?"

"A monkey! faugh!" cried Zorayda; "the detestable mimic of man. I hate the nauseous animal."

"What say you to the famous black singer Casem, from the royal harem in Morocco? They say he has a voice as fine as a woman's."

"I am terrified at the sight of these black slaves," said the delicate Zorahayda; "besides, I have lost all relish for music."

"Ah! my child, you would not say so," replied the old woman, slyly, "had you heard the music I heard last evening, from the three Spanish cavaliers, whom we met on our journey. But, bless me, children! what is the matter that you blush so, and are in such a flutter?"

"Nothing, nothing, good mother; pray proceed."

"Well; as I was passing by the Vermilion Towers last evening, I saw the three cavaliers resting after their day's labour. One was playing on the guitar, so gracefully, and the others sung by turns; and they did it in such style, that the very guards seemed like statues, or men enchanted. Allah forgive me! I could not help being moved at hearing the songs of my native country. And then to see three such noble and handsome youths in chains and slavery!"

Here the kind-hearted old woman could not restrain her tears.

"Perhaps, mother, you could manage to procure us a sight of the cavaliers," said Zayda.

"I think," said Zorayda, "a little music would be quite reviving."

The timid Zorahayda said nothing, but threw her arms round the neck of Kadiga.

"Mercy on me!" exclaimed the discreet old woman: "what are you talking of, my children? Your father would be the death of us all if he heard of such a thing. To be sure, these cavaliers are evidently well-bred and highminded youths; but what of that? they are the enemies of our faith, and you must not even think of them but with abhorrence."

There is an admirable intrepidity in the female will, particularly when about the marriageable age, which is not to be deterred by dangers and prohibitions. The princesses hung round their old

duenna, and coaxed, and entreated, and declared that a refusal would break their hearts.

What could she do? She was certainly the most discreet old woman in the whole world, and one of the most faithful servants to the king; but was she to see three beautiful princesses break their hearts for the mere tinkling of a guitar? Besides, though she had been so long among the Moors, and changed her faith in imitation of her mistress, like a trusty follower, yet she was a Spaniard born, and had the lingerings of Christianity in her heart. So she set about to contrive how the wish of the princesses might be gratified.

The Christian captives, confined in the Vermilion Towers, were under the charge of a big-whiskered, broad-shouldered renegado, called Hussein Baba, who was reputed to have a most itching palm. She went to him privately, and slipping a broad piece of gold into his hand, "Hussein Baba," said she, "my mistresses, the three princesses, who are shut up in the tower, and in sad want of amusement, have heard of the musical talents of the three Spanish cavaliers, and are desirous of hearing a specimen of their skill. I am sure you are too kindhearted, to refuse them so innocent a gratification."

"What! and to have my head set grinning over the gate of my own tower! for that would be the reward, if the king should discover it."

"No danger of any thing of the kind; the affair may be managed so that the whim of the princesses may be gratified, and their father be never the wiser. You know the deep ravine outside of the walls that passes immediately below the tower. Put the three Christians to work there, and at the intervals of their labour let them play and sing, as if for their own recreation. In this way the princesses will be able to hear them from the windows of the tower, and you may be sure of their paying well for your compliance."

As the good old woman concluded her harangue, she kindly pressed the rough hand of the renegado, and left within it another piece of gold.

Her eloquence was irresistible. The



very next day the three cavaliers were put to work in the ravine. During the noontide heat, when their fellow-labourers were sleeping in the shade, and the guard nodding drowsily at his post, they seated themselves among the herbage at the foot of the tower, and sang a Spanish roundelay to the accompaniment of the guitar.

The glen was deep, the tower was high, but their voices rose distinctly in the stillness of the summer noon. The princesses listened from their balcony; they had been taught the Spanish language by their duenna, and were moved by the tenderness of the song. The discreet Kadiga, on the contrary, was terribly shocked. "Allah preserve us!" cried she, "they are singing a love-ditty, adressed to yourselves. Did ever mortal hear of such audacity? I will run to the slave-master, and have them soundly bastinadoed."

"What! bastinado such gallant cavaliers, and for singing so charmingly!" The three beautiful princesses were filled with horror at the idea. With all her virtuous indignation, the good old woman was of a placable nature, and easily appeased. Besides, the music seemed to have a beneficial effect upon her young mistresses. A rosy bloom had already come to their cheeks, and their eyes began to sparkle. She made no further objection, therefore, to the amorous ditty of the cavaliers.

When it was finished, the princesses remained for a time: at length Zorayda took up a lute, and with a sweet, though faint and trembling voice, warbled a little Arabian air, the burden of which was, "The rose is concealed among her leaves, but she listens with delight to the song of the nightingale."

From this time forward the cavaliers worked almost daily in the ravine. The considerate Hussein Baba became more and more indulgent, and daily more prone to sleep at his post. For some time a vague intercourse was kept up by popular songs and romances, which, in some measure, responded to each other, and breathed the feelings of the parties. By degrees, the princesses showed themselves at the balcony, when they could do so without being perceived by the

guards. They conversed with the cavaliers, also, by means of flowers, with the symbolical language of which they were mutually acquainted: the difficulties of their intercourse added to its charms, and strengthened the passion they had so singularly conceived; for love delights to struggle with difficulties, and thrives the most hardily on the scantiest soil.

The change effected in the looks and spirits of the princesses by this secret intercourse, surprised and gratified the left-handed king; but no one was more elated than the discreet Kadiga, who considered it all owing to her able management.

At length there was an interruption in this telegraphic correspondence: for several days the cavaliers ceased to make their appearance in the glen. The three beautiful princesses looked out from the tower in vain. In vain they stretched their swanlike necks from the balcony; in vain they sang like captive nightingales in their cage: nothing was to be seen of their Christian lovers; not a note responded from the groves. The discreet Kadiga sallied forth in quest of intelligence, and soon returned with a face full of trouble. "Ah, my children!" cried she, "I saw what all this would come to, but you would have your way; you may now hang up your lutes on the willows. The Spanish cavaliers are now ransomed by their families; they are down in Granada, and preparing to return to their native country."

The three beautiful princesses were in despair at the tidings. The fair Zayda was indignant at the slight put upon them, in thus being deserted without a parting word. Zorayda wrung her hands and cried, and looked in the glass, and wiped away her tears and cried afresh. The gentle Zorahayda leaned over the balcony and wept in silence, and her tears fell drop by drop among the flowers of the bank where the faithless cavaliers had so often been seated.

The discreet Kadiga did all in her power to soothe their sorrow. "Take comfort, my children," said she, "this is nothing when you are used to it. This is the way of the world. Ah! when you are as old as I am, you will know how to value these men. I'll

warrant, these cavaliers have their loves among the Spanish beauties of Cordova and Seville, and will soon be serenading under their balconies, and thinking no more of the Moorish beauties in the Alhambra. Take comfort, therefore, my children, and drive them from your hearts."

The comforting words of the discreet Kadiga only redoubled the distress of the three princesses, and for two days they continued inconsolable. On the morning of the third, the good old woman entered their apartment, all ruffling with indignation.

"Who would have believed such insolence in mortal man!" exclaimed she, as soon as she could find words to express herself; "but I am rightly served for having connived at this deception of your worthy father. Never talk more to me of your Spanish cavaliers."

"Why, what has happened, good Kadiga?" exclaimed the princesses in breathless anxiety.

"What has happened?—treason has happened; or what is almost as bad, treason has been proposed, and to me, the most faithful of subjects, the trustiest of duennas! Yes, my children, the Spanish cavaliers have dared to tamper with me, that I should persuade you to fly with them to Cordova, and to become their wives!"

Here the excellent old woman covered her face with her hands, and gave way to a violent burst of grief and indignation. The three beautiful princesses turned pale and red, red and pale, and trembled, and looked down, and cast shy looks at each other, but said nothing. Meantime the old woman sat rocking backward and forward in violent agitation, and now and then breaking out into exclamations,—  
"That ever I should live to be so insulted!—I, the most faithful of servants!"

At length the eldest princess, who had most spirit, and always took the lead, approached her, and laying her hand upon her shoulder, "Well, mother," said she, "supposing we were willing to fly with these Christian cavaliers—is such a thing possible?"

The good old woman paused suddenly in her grief, and looking up, "Possible!" echoed she: "to be sure it is possible.

Have not the cavaliers already bribed Hussein Baba, the renegado captain of the guard, and arranged the whole plan? But, then, to think of deceiving your father! your father, who has placed such confidence in me!" Here the worthy woman gave way to a fresh burst of grief, and began again to rock backward and forward, and to wring her hands.

"But our father has never placed any confidence in us," said the eldest princess, "but has trusted to bolts and bars, and treated us as captives."

"Why, that is true enough," replied the old woman, again pausing in her grief; "he has indeed treated you most unreasonably, keeping you shut up here, to waste your bloom in a moping old tower, like roses left to wither in a flower-jar. But, then, to fly from your native land!"

"And is not the land we fly to the native land of our mother, where we shall live in freedom? And shall we not each have a youthful husband in exchange for a severe old father?"

"Why, that again is all very true; and your father, I must confess, is rather tyrannical: but, what then," relapsing into her grief, "would you leave me behind to bear the brunt of his vengeance?"

"By no means, my good Kadiga; cannot you fly with us?"

"Very true, my child; and to tell the truth, when I talked the matter over with Hussein Baba, he promised to take care of me if I would accompany you in your flight: but, then, bethink you, my children, are you willing to renounce the faith of your father?"

"The Christian faith was the original faith of our mother," said the eldest princess; "I am ready to embrace it, and so, I am sure, are my sisters."

"Right again!" exclaimed the old woman, brightening up; "it was the original faith of your mother, and bitterly did she lament, on her death-bed, that she had renounced it. I promised her then to take care of your souls, and I rejoice to see that they are now in a fair way to be saved. Yes, my children, I too was born a Christian, and have remained a Christian in my heart, and am resolved to return to the faith. I have talked on the subject with Hussein Baba,

who is a Spaniard by birth, and comes from a place not far from my native town. He is equally anxious to see his own country, and to be reconciled to the Church; and the cavaliers have promised, that if we are disposed to become man and wife, on returning to our native land, they will provide for us handsomely."

In a word, it appeared that this extremely discreet and provident old woman had consulted with the cavaliers and the renegado, and had concerted the whole plan of escape. The eldest princess immediately assented to it: and her example, as usual, determined the conduct of her sisters. It is true, the youngest hesitated, for she was gentle and timid of soul, and there was a struggle in her bosom between filial feeling and youthful passion: the latter, however, as usual, gained the victory, and with silent tears, and stifled sighs, she prepared herself for flight.

The rugged hill, on which the Alhambra is built, was, in old times, perforated with subterranean passages, cut through the rock, and leading from the fortress to various parts of the city, and to distant sally-ports on the banks of the Darro and the Xenil. They had been constructed at different times by the Moorish kings, as means of escape from sudden insurrections, or of secretly issuing forth on private enterprises. Many of them are now entirely lost, while others remain, partly choked up with rubbish, and partly walled up; monuments of the jealous precautions and warlike stratagems of the Moorish government. By one of these passages, Hussein Baba had undertaken to conduct the Princesses to a sally-port beyond the walls of the city, where the cavaliers were to be ready with fleet steeds, to bear the whole party over the borders.

The appointed night arrived: the tower of the princesses had been locked up as usual, and the Alhambra was buried in deep sleep. Towards midnight, the discreet Kadiga listened from the balcony of a window that looked into the garden. Hussein Baba, the renegado, was already below, and gave the appointed signal. The duenna fas-

tened the end of a ladder of ropes to the balcony, lowered it into the garden, and descended. The two eldest princesses followed her with beating hearts; but when it came to the turn of the youngest princess, Zorahayda, she hesitated, and trembled. Several times she ventured a delicate little foot upon the ladder, and as often drew it back, while her poor little heart fluttered more and more the longer she delayed. She cast a wistful look back into the silken chamber; she had lived in it, to be sure like a bird in a cage; but within it she was secure: who could tell what dangers might beset her, should she flutter forth into the wide world! Now she bethought her of her gallant Christian lover, and her little foot was instantly upon the ladder; and anon she thought of her father, and shrank back. But fruitless is the attempt to describe the conflict in the bosom of one so young and tender, and loving, but so timid and so ignorant of the world.

In vain her sisters implored, the duenna scolded, and the renegado blasphemed beneath the balcony; the gentle little Moorish maid stood doubting and wavering on the verge of elopement; tempted by the sweetness of the sin, but terrified at its perils.

Every moment increased the danger of discovery. A distant tramp was heard. "The patrols are walking the rounds," cried the renegado; "if we linger, we perish. Princess, descend instantly, or we leave you."

Zorahayda was for a moment in fearful agitation; then loosening the ladder of ropes, with desperate resolution, she flung it from the balcony.

"It is decided!" cried she, "flight is now out of my power! Allah guide and bless ye, my dear sisters!"

The two eldest princesses were shocked at the thoughts of leaving her behind, and would fain have lingered, but the patrol was advancing; the renegado was furious, and they were hurried away to the subterraneous passage. They groped their way through a fearful labyrinth, cut through the heart of the mountain, and succeeded in reaching, undiscovered, an iron gate that opened outside of the walls. The Spanish cavaliers

were waiting to receive them, disguised as Moorish soldiers of the guard, commanded by the renegado.

The lover of Zorahayda was frantic, when he learnt that she had refused to leave the tower; but there was no time to waste in lamentations. The two princesses were placed behind their lovers, the discreet Kadiga mounted behind the renegado, and all set off at a round pace in the direction of the pass of Lope, which leads through the mountains towards Cordova.

They had not proceeded far when they heard the noise of drums and trumpets from the battlements of the Alhambra.

"Our flight is discovered," said the renegado.

"We have fleet steeds, the night is dark, and we may distance all pursuit," replied the cavaliers.

They put spurs to their horses, and scoured across the Vega. They attained to the foot of the mountain of Elvira, which stretches like a promontory into the plain. The renegado paused and listened. "As yet," said he, "there is no one on our traces, we shall make good our escape to the mountains."

While he spoke, a pale fire sprang up in a light blaze on the top of the watch-tower of the Alhambra.

"Confusion!" cried the renegado, "that fire will put all the guards of the passes on the alert. Away! away! Spur like mad,—there is no time to be lost."

Away they dashed—the clattering of their horses' hoofs echoed from rock to rock, as they swept along the road that skirts the rocky mountain of Elvira. As they galloped on, they beheld that the pale fire of the Alhambra was answered in every direction; light after light blazed on the atalayas, or watch-towers of the mountains.

"Forward! forward!" cried the renegado, with many an oath, "to the bridge,—to the bridge, before the alarm has reached there!"

They doubled the promontory of the mountains, and arrived in sight of the famous Puente del Pinos, that crosses a rushing stream often dyed with Christian and Moslem blood. To their confusion,

the tower on the bridge blazed with lights and glittered with armed men, The renegado pulled up his steed, rose in his stirrups and looked about him for a moment; then beckoning to the cavaliers, he struck off from the road, skirted the river for some distance, and dashed into its waters. The cavaliers called upon the princesses to cling to them, and did the same. They were borne for some distance down the rapid current, the surges roared round them, but the beautiful princesses clung to their Christian knights, and never uttered a complaint. The cavaliers attained the opposite bank in safety, and were conducted by the renegado, by rude and unfrequented paths, and wild barrancas, through the heart of the mountains, so as to avoid all the regular passes. In a word, they succeeded in reaching the ancient city of Cordova; where their restoration to their country and friends was celebrated with great rejoicings, for they were of the noblest families. The beautiful princesses were forthwith received into the bosom of the Church, and, after being in all due form made regular Christians, were rendered happy wives.

In our hurry to make good the escape of the princesses across the river, and up the mountains, we forgot to mention the fate of the discreet Kadiga. She had clung like a cat to Hussein Baba in the scamper across the Vega, screaming at every bound, and drawing many an oath from the whiskered renegado; but when he prepared to plunge his steed into the river, her terror knew no bounds. "Grasp me not so tightly," cried Hussein Baba, "hold on my belt and fear nothing." She held firmly with both hands by the leathern belt that girded the broad-backed renegado; but when he halted with the cavaliers to take breath on the mountain summit, the duenna was no longer to be seen.

"What has become of Kadiga?" cried the princesses in alarm.

"Allah alone knows!" replied the renegado, "my belt came loose when in the midst of the river, and Kadiga was swept with it down the stream. The will of Allah be done! but it was an embroidered belt, and of great price."

There was no time to waste in idle regrets; yet bitterly did the princesses bewail the loss of their discreet counselor. That excellent old woman, however, did not lose more than half of her nine lives in the stream; a fisherman, who was drawing his nets some distance down the stream, brought her to land, and was not a little astonished at his miraculous draught. What further became of the discreet Kadiga, the legend does not mention; certain it is that she evinced her discretion in never venturing within the reach of Mohamed the Left-handed.

Almost as little is known of the conduct of that sagacious monarch when he discovered the escape of his daughters, and the deceit practised upon him by the most faithful of servants. It was the only instance in which he had called in the aid of counsel, and he was never afterwards known to be guilty of a similar weakness. He took good care, however, to guard his remaining daughter, who had no disposition to elope: it is thought, indeed, that she secretly repented having remained behind: now and then she was seen leaning on the battlements of the tower, and looking mournfully towards the mountains in the direction of Cordova, and sometimes the notes of her lute were heard accompanying plaintive ditties, in which she was said to lament the loss of her sisters and her lover, and to bewail her solitary life. She died young, and, according to popular rumour, was buried in a vault beneath the tower, and her untimely fate has given rise to more than one traditional fable.

#### VISITERS TO THE ALHAMBRA.

It is now nearly three months since I took up my abode in the Alhambra, during which time the progress of the season has wrought many changes. When I first arrived every thing was in the freshness of May; the foliage of the trees was still tender and transparent; the pomegranate had not yet shed

its brilliant crimson blossoms; the orchards of the Xenil and the Darro were in full bloom; the rocks were hung with wild flowers, and Granada seemed completely surrounded by a wilderness of roses, among which innumerable nightingales sang, not merely in the night, but all day long.

The advance of summer has withered the rose and silenced the nightingale, and the distant country begins to look parched and sunburnt; though a perennial verdure reigns immediately round the city, and in the deep narrow valleys at the foot of the snow-capped mountains.

The Alhambra possesses retreats graduated to the heat of the weather, among which the most peculiar is the almost subterranean apartment of the baths. This still retains its ancient Oriental character, though stamped with the touching traces of decline. At the entrance, opening into a small court formerly adorned with flowers, is a hall, moderate in size, but light and graceful in architecture. It is overlooked by a small gallery supported by marble pillars and Moresco arches. An alabaster fountain in the centre of the pavement still throws up a jet of water to cool the place. On each side are deep alcoves with raised platforms, where the bathers, after their ablutions, reclined on luxurious cushions, soothed to voluptuous repose by the fragrance of the perfumed air and the notes of soft music from the gallery. Beyond this hall are the interior chambers, still more private and retired, where no light is admitted but through small apertures in the vaulted ceilings. Here was the sanctum sanctorum of female privacy, where the beauties of the harem indulged in the luxury of the baths. A soft mysterious light reigns through the place, the broken baths are still there, and traces of ancient elegance. The prevailing silence and obscurity have made this a favourite resort of bats, who nestle during the day in the dark nooks and corners, and on being disturbed, flit mysteriously about the twilight chambers, heightening, in an indescribable degree, their air of desertion and decay.

In this cool and elegant, though dilapidated retreat, which has the freshness

and seclusion of a grotto, I have of late passed the sultry hours of the day, emerging towards sunset; and bathing, or rather swimming, at night in the great reservoir of the main court. In this way I have been enabled in a measure to counteract the relaxing and enervating influence of the climate.

My dream of absolute sovereignty, however, is at an end. I was roused from it lately by the report of fire-arms, which reverberated among the towers as if the castle had been taken by surprise. On sallying forth, I found an old cavalier with a number of domestics, in possession of the Hall of Ambassadors. He was an ancient count who had come up from his palace in Granada to pass a short time in the Alhambra for the benefit of purer air; and who, being a veteran and inveterate sportsman, was endeavouring to get an appetite for his breakfast by shooting at swallows from the balconies. It was a harmless amusement, for though, by the alertness of his attendants in loading his pieces, he was enabled to keep up a brisk fire, I could not accuse him of the death of a single swallow. Nay, the birds themselves seemed to enjoy the sport, and to deride his want of skill, skimming in circles close to the balconies and twittering as they darted by.

The arrival of this old gentleman has in some manner changed the aspect of affairs, but has likewise afforded matter for agreeable speculation. We have tacitly shared the empire between us, like the last kings of Granada, excepting that we maintain a most amicable alliance. He reigns absolute over the Court of the Lions and its adjacent halls, while I maintain peaceful possession of the regions of the baths and the little garden of Lindaraxa. We take our meals together under the arcades of the court, where the fountains cool the air, and bubbling rills run along the channels of the marble pavement.

In the evening a domestic circle gathers about the worthy old cavalier. The countess comes up from the city, with a favourite daughter about sixteen years of age. Then there are the official dependents of the count, his chaplain, lawyer, his secretary, his steward, and other officers and agents of his extensive posses-

sions. Thus he holds a kind of domestic court, where every person seeks to contribute to his amusement without sacrificing his own pleasure or self-respect. In fact, whatever may be said of Spanish pride, it certainly does not enter into social or domestic life. Among no people are the relations between kindred more cordial, or between superior and dependent more frank and genial; in these respects there still remains, in the provincial life of Spain, much of the vaunted simplicity of the olden times.

The most interesting member of this family group, however, is the daughter of the count, the charming though almost infantile little Carmen. Her form has not yet attained its maturity, but has already the exquisite symmetry and pliant grace so prevalent in this country. Her blue eyes, fair complexion, and light hair, are unusual in Andalusia, and give a mildness and gentleness to her demeanour, in contrast to the usual fire of Spanish beauty, but in perfect unison with the guileless and confiding innocence of her manners. She has, however, all the innate aptness and versatility of her fascinating countrywomen, and sings, dances, and plays the guitar, and other instruments, to admiration.

A few days after taking up his residence in the Alhambra, the count gave a domestic fête on his Saint's day, assembling round him the members of his family and household, while several old servants came from his distant possessions to pay their reverence to him, and partake of the good cheer. This patriarchal spirit, which characterized the Spanish nobility in the days of their opulence, has declined with their fortunes; but some who, like the count, still retain their ancient family possessions, keep up a little of the ancient system and have their estates overrun and almost eaten up by generations of idle retainers. According to this magnificent old Spanish system, in which the national pride and generosity bore equal parts, a superannuated servant was never turned off, but became a charge for the rest of his days; nay, his children and his children's children, and often their relatives, to the right and left, became gradually entailed upon the family. Hence the

huge palaces of the Spanish nobility, which have such an air of empty ostentation from the greatness of their size compared with the mediocrity and scantiness of their furniture, were absolutely required in the golden days of Spain, by the patriarchal habits of their possessors. They were little better than vast barracks for the hereditary generations of hangers on, that battened at the expense of a Spanish noble. The worthy old count, who has estates in various parts of the kingdom, assures me that some of them barely feed the hordes of dependents nestled upon them; who consider themselves entitled to be maintained upon the place rent-free, because their forefathers have been so for generations.

The domestic fête of the count broke in upon the usual still life of the Alhambra; music and laughter resounded through its late silent halls; there were groups of the guests amusing themselves about the galleries and gardens, and officious servants from town hurrying through the courts, bearing viands to the ancient kitchen, which was again alive with the tread of cooks and scullions, and blazed with unwonted fires.

The feast, for a Spanish set dinner is literally a feast, was laid in the beautiful Moresco hall called "La Sala de los dos Hermanas" (the saloon of the two sisters), the table groaned with abundance, and a joyous conviviality prevailed round the board; for though the Spaniards are generally an abstemious people, they are complete revellers at a banquet. For my own part, there was something peculiarly interesting in thus sitting at a feast in the royal halls of the Alhambra, given by the representative of one of its most renowned conquerors; for the venerable count, though unwarlike himself, is the lineal descendant and representative of the "Great Captain," the illustrious Gonsalvo of Cordova, whose sword he guards in the archives of his palace at Granada.

The banquet ended, the company adjourned to the Hall of Ambassadors. Here every one contributed to the general amusement by exerting some peculiar talent; singing, improvising, telling won-

derful tales, or dancing to that all-pervading talisman of Spanish pleasure, the guitar.

The life and charm of the whole assemblage, however, was the gifted little Carmen. She took her part in two or three scenes from Spanish comedies, exhibiting a charming dramatic talent; she gave imitations of the popular Italian singers with singular and whimsical felicity, and a rare quality of voice; she imitated the dialects, dances and ballads of the gipsies and the neighbouring peasantry, but did every thing with a facility, a neatness, a grace, and an all-pervading prettiness, that were perfectly fascinating.

The great charm of her performances, however, was their being free from all pretension, or ambition of display. She seemed unconscious of the extent of her own talents, and in fact is accustomed only to exert them casually, like a child, for the amusement of the domestic circle. Her observation and tact must be remarkably quick, for her life is passed in the bosom of her family, and she can only have had casual and transient glances at the various characters and traits, brought out *impromptu* in moments of domestic hilarity like the one in question. It is pleasing to see the fondness and admiration with which every one of the household regard her; she is never spoken of, even by the domestics, by any other appellation than that of La Niña, "the child," an appellation which thus applied has something peculiarly kind and endearing in the Spanish language.

Never shall I think of the Alhambra without remembering the lovely little Carmen sporting in happy and innocent girlhood in its marble halls, dancing to the sound of the Moorish castañets, or mingling the silver warbling of her voice with the music of the fountains.

On this festive occasion several curious and amusing legends and traditions were told; many of which have escaped my memory; but out of those that most struck me, I will endeavour to shape forth some entertainment for the reader.

LEGEND OF  
PRINCE AHMED AL KAMEL;  
OR,  
THE PILGRIM OF LOVE.

THERE was once a Moorish king of Granada, who had but one son, whom he named Ahmed, to which his courtiers added the surname of Al Kamel or the perfect, from the indubitable signs of super-excellence which they perceived in him in his very infancy. The astrologers countenanced them in their foresight, predicting every thing in his favour that could make a perfect prince and a prosperous sovereign. One cloud only rested upon his destiny, and even that was of a roseate hue. He would be of an amorous temperament, and run great perils from the tender passion. If, however, he could be kept from the allurements of love, until of mature age, these dangers would be averted, and his life thereafter be one uninterrupted course of felicity.

To prevent all danger of the kind, the king wisely determined to rear the prince in a seclusion where he should never see a female face, nor hear even the name of love. For this purpose he built a beautiful palace on the brow of the hill above the Alhambra, in the midst of delightful gardens, but surrounded by lofty walls, being, in fact, the same palace known at the present day by the name of the Generalife. In this palace the youthful prince was shut up, and entrusted to the guardianship and instruction of Eben Bonabben, one of the wisest and driest of Arabian sages, who had passed the greatest part of his life in Egypt studying hieroglyphics, and making researches among the tombs and pyramids, and who saw more charms in an Egyptian mummy, than in the most tempting of living beauties. The sage was ordered to instruct the prince in all kinds of knowledge but one—he was to be kept utterly ignorant of love. "Use every precaution for the purpose you may think proper," said the king, "but remember, O Eben Bonabben, if my son learns aught of that forbidden knowledge while under your care, your head shall answer for it." A withered smile came

over the dry visage of the wise Bonabben at the menace. "Let your majesty's heart be as easy about your son, as mine is about my head: am I a man likely to give lessons in the idle passion?"

Under the vigilant care of the philosopher, the prince grew up, in the seclusion of the palace and its gardens. He had black slaves to attend upon him,—hideous mutes, who knew nothing of love, or, if they did, had not words to communicate it. His mental endowments were the peculiar care of Eben Bonabben, who sought to initiate him into the abstruse lore of Egypt; but in this the prince made little progress, and it was soon evident that he had no turn for philosophy.

He was, however, amazingly ductile for a youthful prince, ready to follow any advice, and always guided by the last counsellor. He suppressed his yawns, and listened patiently to the long and learned discourses of Eben Bonabben, from which he imbibed a smattering of various kinds of knowledge, and thus happily attained his twentieth year, a miracle of princely wisdom—but totally ignorant of love.

About this time, however, a change came over the conduct of the prince. He completely abandoned his studies, and took to strolling about the gardens, and musing by the side of the fountains. He had been taught a little music among his various accomplishments; it now engrossed a great part of his time, and a turn for poetry became apparent. The sage Eben Bonabben took the alarm, and endeavoured to work these idle humours out of him by a severe course of algebra—but the prince turned from it with distaste. "I cannot endure algebra," said he; "it is an abomination to me. I want something that speaks more to the heart."

The sage Eben Bonabben shook his dry head at the words. "Here is an end to philosophy," thought he. "The prince has discovered he has a heart!" He now kept anxious watch upon his pupil, and saw that the latent tenderness of his nature was in activity, and only wanted an object. He wandered about the gardens of the Generalife in an in-



toxication of feelings of which he knew not the cause. Sometimes he would sit plunged in a delicious reverie; then he would seize his lute and draw from it the most touching notes, and then throw it aside, and break forth into sighs and ejaculations.

By degrees this loving disposition began to extend to inanimate objects; he had his favourite flowers, which he cherished with tender assiduity; then he became attached to various trees, and there was one in particular of a graceful form and drooping foliage, on which he lavished his amorous devotion, carving his name on its bark, hanging garlands on its branches, and singing couplets in its praise, to the accompaniment of his lute.

The sage Eben Bonabben was alarmed at this excited state of his pupil. He saw him on the very brink of forbidden knowledge—the least hint might reveal to him the fatal secret. Trembling for the safety of the prince and the security of his own head, he hastened to draw him from the seductions of the garden, and shut him up in the highest tower of the Generalife. It contained beautiful apartments, and commanded an almost boundless prospect, but was elevated far above that atmosphere of sweets, and those wicking bowers so dangerous to the feelings of the too susceptible Ahmed.

What was to be done, however, to reconcile him to this restraint, and to beguile the tedious hours? He had exhausted almost all kinds of agreeable knowledge; and algebra was not to be mentioned. Fortunately Eben Bonabben had been instructed, when in Egypt, in the language of birds, by a Jewish Rabin, who had received it in lineal transmission from Solomon the wise, who had been taught it by the Queen of Sheba. At the very mention of such a study, the eyes of the prince sparkled with animation, and he applied himself to it with such avidity, that he soon became as great an adept as his master.

The tower of the Generalife was no longer a solitude; he had companions at hand with whom he could converse. The first acquaintance he formed was with a hawk, who built his nest in a crevice of the lofty battlements, from

whence he soared far and wide in quest of prey. The prince, however, found little to like or esteem in him. He was a mere pirate of the air, swaggering and boastful, whose talk was all about rapine and courage and desperate exploits.

His next acquaintance was an owl, a mighty wise-looking bird, with a huge head and staring eyes, who sat blinking and goggling all day in a hole in the wall, but roamed forth at night. He had great pretensions to wisdom, talked something of astrology and the moon, and hinted at the dark sciences; but he was grievously given to metaphysics, and the prince found his prosings even more ponderous than those of the sage Eben Bonabben.

Then there was a bat, that hung all day by his heels in the dark corner of a vault, but sallied out in a slipshod style at twilight. He, however, had but twilight ideas on all subjects, derided things of which he had taken but an imperfect view, and seemed to take delight in nothing.

Besides these there was a swallow, with whom the prince was at first much taken. He was a smart talker, but restless, bustling, and for ever on the wing; seldom remaining long enough for any continued conversation. He turned out in the end to be a mere smatterer, who did but skim over the surface of things, pretending to know every thing, but knowing nothing thoroughly.

These were the only feathered associates with whom the prince had any opportunity of exercising his newly-acquired language; the tower was too high for any other birds to frequent it. He soon grew weary of his new acquaintances, whose conversation spoke so little to the head, and nothing to the heart; and gradually relapsed into his loneliness. A winter passed away, spring opened with all its bloom and verdure and breathing sweetness, and the happy time arrived for birds to pair and build their nests. Suddenly, as it were, a universal burst of song and melody broke forth from the groves and gardens of the Generalife, and reached the prince in the solitude of his tower. From every side he heard the same universal theme—love—love—love—chant-

ed forth and responded to in every variety of note and tone. The prince listened in silence and perplexity. "What can be this love," thought he, "of which the world seems so full, and of which I know nothing!" He applied for information to his friend the hawk. The ruffian bird answered in a tone of scorn: "you must apply," said he, "to the vulgar peaceable birds of earth who are made for the prey of us princes of the air. My trade is war, and fighting my delight. In a word, I am a warrior, and know nothing of this thing called love."

The prince turned from him with disgust, and sought the owl in his retreat. "This is a bird," said he "of peaceful habits, and may be able to solve my question." So he asked the owl to tell him what was this love about which all the birds in the groves below were singing.

Upon this, the owl put on a look of offended dignity. "My nights," said he, "are taken up in study and research, and my days in ruminating in my cell upon all that I have learnt. As to these singing birds of whom you talk, I never listen to them—I despise them and their themes. Allah be praised, I cannot sing; I am a philosopher, and know nothing of this thing called love."

The prince now repaired to the vault, where his friend the bat was hanging by the heels, and propounded the same question. The bat wrinkled up his nose into a most snappish expression. "Why do you disturb me in my morning's nap with such an idle question?" said he peevishly. "I only fly by twilight, when all birds are asleep, and never trouble myself with their concerns. I am neither bird nor beast, and I thank heaven for it. I have found out the villany of the whole of them, and hate them one and all. In a word, I am a misanthrope—and know nothing of this thing called love."

As a last resort, the prince now sought the swallow, and stopped him just as he was circling about the summit of the tower. The swallow, as usual, was in a prodigious hurry, and had scarce time to make a reply. "Upon my word," said he, "I have so much public business to attend to, and so many pursuits

to follow, that I have had no time to think on the subject. I have every day a thousand visits to pay; a thousand affairs of importance to examine into, that leave me not a moment of leisure for these little sing-song matters. In a word, I am a citizen of the world—I know nothing of this thing called love." So saying the swallow dived into the valley, and was out of sight in a moment.

The prince remained disappointed and perplexed, but with his curiosity still more piqued by the difficulty of gratifying it. While in this mood, his ancient guardian entered the tower. The prince advanced eagerly to meet him. "O sage Eben Bonabben," cried he, "thou hast revealed to me much of the wisdom of the earth; but there is one thing of which I remain in utter ignorance, and would fain be informed."

"My prince has but to make the inquiry, and every thing within the limited range of his servant's intellect is at his command."

"Tell me, O most profound of sages, what is the nature of this thing called love?"

The sage Eben Bonabben was struck as with a thunderbolt. He trembled and turned pale, and felt as if his head sat but loosely on his shoulders.

"What could suggest such a question to my prince—where could he have learnt so idle a word?"

The prince led him to the window of the tower. "Listen, O Eben Bonabben," said he. The sage listened. The nightingale sat in a thicket below the tower, singing to his paramour the rose; from every blossomed spray and tufted grove arose a strain of melody; and love—love—love—was still the unvarying strain.

"Allah achbar! God is great!" exclaimed the wise Bonabben. "Who shall pretend to keep this secret from the heart of man, when even the birds of the air conspire to betray it?"

Then turning to Ahmed—"O my prince," cried he, "shut thine ears to these seductive strains. Close thy mind against this dangerous knowledge. Know that this love is the cause of half the ills of wretched mortality. It is this which produces bitterness and strife between

brethren and friends; which causes treacherous murder and desolating war. Care and sorrow, weary days and sleepless nights, are its attendants. It withers the bloom and blights the joys of youth, and brings on the ills and griefs of premature old age. Allah preserve thee, my prince, in total ignorance of this thing called love!"

The sage Eben Bonabben hastily retired, leaving the prince plunged in still deeper perplexity. It was in vain he attempted to dismiss the subject from his mind; it still continued uppermost in his thoughts, and teased and exhausted him with vain conjectures. Surely, said he to himself, as he listened to the tuneful strains of the birds, there is no sorrow in those notes; every thing seems tenderness and joy. If love be the cause of such wretchedness and strife, why are not these birds drooping in solitude, or tearing each other in pieces, instead of fluttering cheerfully about the groves, or sporting with each other among flowers?

He lay one morning on his couch meditating on this inexplicable matter. The window of his chamber was open to admit the soft morning breeze which came laden with the perfume of orange blossoms from the valley of the Darro. The voice of the nightingale was faintly heard, still chanting the wonted theme. As the prince was listening and sighing, there was a sudden rushing noise in the air; a beautiful dove, pursued by a hawk, darted in at the window, and fell panting on the floor; while the pursuer, balked of his prey, soared off to the mountains.

The prince took up the gasping bird, smoothed its feathers and nestled it in his bosom. When he had soothed it by his caresses, he put it in a golden cage, and offered it with his own hands, the whitest and finest of wheat and the purest of water. The bird, however, refused food, and sat drooping and pining, and uttering piteous moans.

"What aileth thee?" said Ahmed. "Hast thou not every thing thy heart can wish?"

"Alas, no!" replied the dove; "am I not separated from the partner of my heart, and that too in the happy spring-time, the very season of love!"

"Of love!" echoed Ahmed; "I pray thee, my pretty bird, canst thou then tell me what is love?"

"Too well can I, my prince. It is the torment of one, the felicity of two, the strife and enmity of three. It is a charm which draws two beings together, and unites them by delicious sympathies, making it happiness to be with each other, but misery to be apart. Is there no being to whom you are drawn by these ties of tender affection?"

"I like my old teacher Eben Bonabben better than any other being; but he is often tedious and I occasionally feel myself happier without his society."

"That is not the sympathy I mean. I speak of love, the great mystery and principle of life; the intoxicating revel of youth; the sober delight of age. Look forth, my prince, and behold how at this blest season all nature is full of love. Every created being has its mate; the most insignificant bird sings to its paramour; the very beetle woos its lady-beetle in the dust, and yon butterflies which you see fluttering high above the tower and toying in the air, are happy in each other's loves. Alas, my prince! hast thou spent so many of the precious days of youth without knowing any thing of love? Is there no gentle being of another sex—no beautiful princess or lovely damsel who has ensnared your heart, and filled your bosom with a soft tumult of pleasing pains and tender wishes?"

"I begin to understand," said the prince, sighing; "such a tumult I have more than once experienced without knowing the cause; and where should I seek for an object, such as you describe, in this dismal solitude?"

A little further conversation ensued, and the first amatory lesson of the prince was complete.

"Alas!" said he, "if love be indeed such a delight and its interruption such a misery, Allah forbid that I should mar the joy of any of its votaries." He opened the cage, took out the dove, and having fondly kissed it, carried it to the window. "Go, happy bird," said he, "rejoice with the partner of thy heart in the days of youth and springtime. Why should I make thee a fellow-prisoner in

this dreary tower, where love can never enter?"

The dove flapped its wings in rapture, gave one vault in the air, and then swooped downward on whistling wings to the blooming bowers of the Darro.

The prince followed him with his eyes, and then gave way to bitter repining. The singing of the birds, which once delighted him, now added to his bitterness. Love! love! love! Alas, poor youth! he now understood the strain.

His eyes flashed fire when next he beheld the sage Bonabben. "Why hast thou kept me in this abject ignorance?" cried he. "Why has the great mystery and principle of life been withheld from me, in which I find the meanest insect is so learned? Behold all nature is in a revel of delight. Every created being rejoices with its mate. This—this is the love about which I have sought instruction. Why am I alone debarred its enjoyment? Why has so much of my youth been wasted without a knowledge of its raptures?"

The sage Bonabben saw that all further reserve was useless; for the prince had acquired the dangerous and forbidden knowledge. He revealed to him, therefore, the predictions of the astrologers, and the precautions that had been taken in his education to avert the threatened evils. "And now, my prince," added he, "my life is in your hands. Let the king your father discover that you have learned the passion of love while under my guardianship, and my head must answer for it."

The prince was as reasonable as most young men of his age, and easily listened to the remonstrances of his tutor, since nothing pleaded against them. Besides, he really was attached to the sage Bonabben, and being as yet but theoretically acquainted with the passion of love, he consented to confine the knowledge of it to his own bosom, rather than endanger the head of the philosopher.

His discretion was doomed, however, to be put to still further proofs. A few mornings afterwards, as he was ruminating on the battlements of the tower, the dove which had been released by him came hovering in the air, and alighted fearlessly upon his shoulder.

The prince fondled it to his heart. "Happy bird," said he, "who can fly, as it were, with the wings of the morning to the uttermost parts of the earth. Where hast thou been since we parted?"

"In a far country, my prince, from whence I bring you tidings in reward for my liberty. In the wild compass of my flight, which extends over plain and mountain, as I was soaring in the air, I beheld below me a delightful garden, with all kinds of fruits and flowers. It was in a green meadow, on the banks of a wandering stream; and in the centre of the garden was a stately palace. I alighted in one of the bowers to repose after my weary flight. On the green bank below me was a youthful princess, in the very sweetness and bloom of her years. She was surrounded by female attendants, young like herself, who decked her with garlands and coronets of flowers; but no flower of field or garden could compare with her for loveliness. Here, however, she bloomed in secret, for the garden was surrounded by high walls, and no mortal man was permitted to enter. When I beheld this beautiful maid, thus young and innocent and unspotted by the world, I thought, here is the being formed by heaven to inspire my prince with love."

The description was a spark of fire to the combustible heart of Ahmed: all the latent amorousness of his temperament had at once found an object, and he conceived an immeasurable passion for the princess. He wrote a letter, couched in the most impassioned language, breathing his fervent devotion, but bewailing the unhappy thralldom of his person, which prevented him from seeking her out and throwing himself at her feet. He added couplets of the most tender and moving eloquence, for he was a poet by nature and inspired by love. He addressed his letter—"To the unknown beauty, from the captive Prince Ahmed;" then perfuming it with musk and roses, he gave it to the dove.

"Away, trustiest of messengers!" said he. "Fly over mountain and valley and river and plain; rest not in bower nor set foot on earth, until thou hast given this letter to the mistress of my heart."

The dove soared high in air, and

taking his course, darted away in one undeviating direction. The prince followed him with his eye until he was a mere speck on a cloud, and gradually disappeared behind a mountain.

Day after day he watched for the return of the messenger of love, but he watched in vain. He began to accuse him of forgetfulness, when towards sunset one evening the faithful bird fluttered into his apartment, and falling at his feet, expired. The arrow of some wanton archer had pierced his breast, yet he had struggled with the lingering of life to execute his mission. As the prince bent with grief over this gentle martyr to fidelity, he beheld a chain of pearls round his neck, attached to which, beneath his wing, was a small enamelled picture. It represented a lovely princess in the very flower of her years. It was doubtless the unknown beauty of the garden; but who and where was she—how had she received his letter, and was this picture sent as a token of her approval of his passion? Unfortunately the death of the faithful dove left every thing in mystery and doubt.

The prince gazed on the picture till his eyes swam with tears. He pressed it to his lips and to his heart, he sat for hours contemplating it almost in an agony of tenderness. "Beautiful image!" said he, "alas, thou art but an image! Yet thy dewy eyes beam tenderly upon me; those rosy lips look as though they would speak encouragement: vain fancies! Have they not looked the same on some more happy rival? But where in this wide world shall I hope to find the original? Who knows what mountains, what realms may separate us—what adverse chances may intervene? Perhaps now, even now, lovers may be crowding around her, while I sit here a prisoner in a tower, wasting my time in adoration of a painted shadow."

The resolution of Prince Ahmed was taken. "I will fly from this palace," said he, "which has become an odious prison, and, a pilgrim of love, will seek this unknown princess throughout the world." To escape from the tower in the day, when every one was awake, might be a difficult matter; but at night the palace was slightly guarded; for no

one apprehended any attempt of the kind from the prince who had always been so passive in his captivity. How was he to guide himself, however, in his darkling flight, being ignorant of the country? He bethought him of the owl, who was accustomed to roam at night, and must know every by-lane and secret pass. Seeking him in his hermitage, he questioned him touching his knowledge of the land. Upon this the owl put on a mighty self-important look. "You must know, O prince," said he, "that we owls are of a very ancient and extensive family, though rather fallen to decay, and possess ruinous castles and palaces in all parts of Spain. There is scarcely a tower of the mountains, or a fortress of the plains, or an old citadel of a city, but has some brother, or uncle, or cousin quartered in it; and in going the rounds to visit my numerous kindred, I have pryed into every nook and corner, and made myself acquainted with every secret of the land." The prince was overjoyed to find the owl so deeply versed in topography, and now informed him, in confidence, of his tender passion and his intended elopement, urging him to be his companion and counsellor.

"Go to!" said the owl with a look of displeasure, "am I a bird to engage in a love affair? I whose whole time is devoted to meditation and the moon?"

"Be not offended, most solemn owl," replied the prince; "abstract thyself for a time from meditation and the moon, and aid me in my flight, and thou shalt have whatever heart can wish."

"I have that already," said the owl: "a few mice are sufficient for my frugal table, and this hole in the wall is spacious enough for my studies: and what more does a philosopher like myself desire?"

"Bethink thee, most wise owl, that while moping in thy cell and gazing at the moon, all thy talents are lost to the world. I shall one day be a sovereign prince, and may advance thee to some post of honour and dignity."

The owl though a philosopher and above the ordinary wants of life, was not above ambition; so he was finally prevailed on to elope with the prince, and be his guide and Mentor in his pilgrimage.

The plans of a lover are promptly executed. The prince collected all his jewels, and concealed them about his person as travelling funds. That very night he lowered himself by his scarf from a balcony of the tower, clambered over the outer walls of the Generalife, and, guided by the owl, made good his escape before morning to the mountains.

He now held a council with his Mentor as to his future course.

"Might I advise," said the owl, "I would recommend you to repair to Seville. You must know, that many years since I was on a visit to an uncle, an owl of great dignity and power, who lived in a ruined wing of the alcazar of that place. In my hoverings at night over the city I frequently remarked a light burning in a lonely tower. At length I alighted on the battlements, and found it to proceed from the lamp of an Arabian magician: he was surrounded by his magic books, and on his shoulder was perched his familiar, an ancient raven, who had come with him from Egypt. I am acquainted with that raven, and owe to him a great part of the knowledge I possess. The magician is since dead, but the raven still inhabits the tower, for these birds are of wonderful long life. I would advise you, O prince, to seek that raven, for he is a soothsayer and a conjurer, and deals in the black art, for which all ravens, and especially those of Egypt, are renowned."

The prince was struck with the wisdom of this advice, and accordingly bent his course towards Seville. He travelled only in the night, to accommodate his companion, and lay by during the day in some dark cavern or mouldering watchtower, for the owl knew every hiding-hole of the kind, and had a most antiquarian taste for ruins.

At length one morning at daybreak they reached the city of Seville, where the owl, who hated the glare and bustle of crowded streets, halted without the gate and took up his quarters in a hollow tree.

The prince entered the gate and readily found the magic tower, which rose above the houses of the city, as a palm-tree rises above the shrubs of the desert;

it was in fact the same tower that is standing at the present day, and known as the Giralda, the famous Moorish tower of Seville.

The prince ascended by a great winding staircase to the summit of the tower, where he found the cabalistic raven, an old, mysterious, grayheaded bird, ragged in feather, with a film over one eye that gave him the glare of a spectre. He was perched on one leg, with his head turned on one side, poring with his remaining eye on a diagram described on the pavement.

The prince approached him with the awe and reverence naturally inspired by his venerable appearance and supernatural wisdom. "Pardon me, most ancient and darkly wise raven," exclaimed he, "if for a moment I interrupt those studies which are the wonder of the world. You behold before you a votary of love, who would fain seek your counsel how to obtain the object of his passion."

"In other words," said the raven, with a significant look, "you seek to try my skill in palmistry. Come, show me your hand, and let me decipher the mysterious lines of fortune."

"Excuse me," said the prince, "I come not to pry into the decrees of fate, which are hidden by Allah from the eyes of mortals; I am a pilgrim of love, and seek but to find a clue to the object of my pilgrimage."

"And can you be at any loss for an object in amorous Andalusia?" said the old raven, leering upon him with his single eye; "above all, can you be at a loss in wanton Seville, where blackeyed damsels dance the zambra under every orange grove!"

The prince blushed, and was somewhat shocked at hearing an old bird, with one foot in the grave, talk thus loosely. "Believe me," said he gravely, "I am on none such light and vagrant errand as thou dost insinuate. The blackeyed damsels of Andalusia who dance among the orange groves of the Guadalquivir are as nought to me. I seek one unknown but immaculate beauty, the original of this picture; and I beseech thee, most potent raven, if it be within the scope of thy knowledge or

the reach of thy art, inform me where she may be found."

The grayheaded raven was rebuked by the gravity of the prince.

"What know I," replied he drily, "of youth and beauty? my visits are to the old and withered, not the fresh and fair: the harbinger of fate am I; who croak bodings of death from the chimney-top, and flap my wings at the sick man's window. You must seek elsewhere for tidings of your unknown beauty."

"And where can I seek, if not among the sons of wisdom, versed in the book of destiny? A royal prince am I, fated by the stars, and sent on a mysterious enterprise on which may hang the destiny of empires."

When the raven heard that it was a matter of vast moment in which the stars took interest, he changed his tone and manner, and listened with profound attention to the story of the prince. When it was concluded, he replied, "Touching this princess I can give thee no information of myself, for my flight is not among gardens, or around ladies bowers: but hie thee to Cordova, seek the palm-tree of the great Aberahman, which stands in the court of the principal mosque: at the foot of it thou wilt find a great traveller who has visited all countries and courts, and been a favourite with queens and princesses. He will give thee tidings of the object of thy search."

"Many thanks for this precious information," said the prince. "Farewell, most venerable conjuror."

"Farewell, pilgrim of love," said the raven drily, and again fell to pondering on the diagram.

The prince sallied forth from Seville, sought his fellow-traveller the owl, who was still dozing in the hollow tree, and set off for Cordova.

He approached it along hanging gardens, and orange and citron groves, overlooking the fair valley of the Guadalquivir. When arrived at its gates, the owl flew up to a dark hole in the wall, and the prince proceeded in quest of the palm tree planted in days of yore by the great Aberahman. It stood in the midst of the great court of the mosque, towering from amidst orange

and cypress trees. Dervises and faquirs were seated in groups under the cloisters of the court, and many of the faithful were performing their ablutions at the fountains before entering the mosque.

At the foot of the palm tree was a crowd listening to the words of one who appeared to be talking with great volubility. "This," said the prince to himself, "must be the great traveller who is to give me tidings of the unknown princess." He mingled in the crowd, but was astonished to perceive that they were all listening to a parrot, who with his bright green coat, pragmatistical eye, and consequential topknot, had the air of a bird on excellent terms with himself.

"How is this," said the prince to one of the bystanders, "that so many grave persons can be delighted with the garrulity of a chattering bird?"

"You know not whom you speak of," said the other; "this parrot is a descendant of the famous parrot of Persia, renowned for his story-telling talent, He has all the learning of the East at the tip of his tongue, and can quote poetry as fast as he can talk. He has visited various foreign courts, and where he has been considered an oracle of erudition. He has been a universal favourite also with the fair sex, who have a vast admiration for erudite parrots that can quote poetry."

"Enough," said the prince, "I will have some private talk with this distinguished traveller."

He sought a private interview, and expounded the nature of his errand. He had scarcely mentioned it, when the parrot burst into a fit of dry rickety laughter that absolutely brought tears in his eyes. "Excuse my merriment," said he, "but the mere mention of love always sets me laughing."

The prince was shocked at this ill-timed merriment. "Is not love," said he, "the great mystery of nature, the secret principle of life, the universal bond of sympathy?"

"A fig's end!" cried the parrot, interrupting him; "pr'ythee where hast thou learnt this sentimental jargon? trust me, love is quite out of vogue; one never hears of it in the company of wits and people of refinement."

The prince sighed as he recalled the different language of his friend the dove. But this parrot, thought he, has lived about the court, he affects the wit and the fine gentleman, he knows nothing of the thing called love. Unwilling to provoke any more ridicule of the sentiment which filled his heart, he now directed his inquiries to the immediate purport of his visit.

"Tell me," said he, "most accomplished parrot, thou who hast every where been admitted to the most secret bowers of beauty, hast thou in the course of thy travels met with the original of this portrait!"

The parrot took the picture in his claw, turned his head from side to side, and examined it curiously with either eye. "Upon my honour," said he, "a very pretty face; very pretty: but then one sees so many pretty women in one's travels that one can hardly—but hold—bless me! now I look at it again—sure enough this is the Princess Aldegonda: how could I forget one that is so prodigious a favourite with me?"

"The Princess Aldegonda!" echoed the prince, "and where is she to be found?"

"Softly, softly," said the parrot, "easier to be found than gained. She is the only daughter of the Christian king who reigns at Toledo, and is shut up from the world until her seventeenth birthday, on account of some prediction of those meddling fellows the astrologers. You'll not get a sight of her—no mortal man can see her. I was admitted to her presence to entertain her, and I assure you, on the word of a parrot who has seen the world, I have conversed with much sillier princesses in my time."

"A word in confidence, my dear parrot," said the prince. "I am heir to a kingdom, and shall one day sit upon a throne. I see that you are a bird of parts, and understand the world. Help me to gain possession of this princess, and I will advance you to some distinguished place about court."

"With all my heart," said the parrot; "but let it be a sinecure if possible, for we wits have a great dislike to labour."

Arrangements were promptly made;

the prince sallied forth from Cordova through the same gate by which he had entered; called the owl down from the hole in the wall, introduced him to his new travelling companion as a brother savant, and away they set off on their journey.

They travelled much more slowly than accorded with the impatience of the prince, but the parrot was accustomed to high life, and did not like to be disturbed early in the morning. The owl on the other hand was for sleeping at mid-day, and lost a great deal of time by his long siestas. His antiquarian taste also was in the way; for he insisted on pausing and inspecting every ruin, and had long legendary tales to tell about every old tower and castle in the country. The prince had supposed that he and the parrot, being both birds of learning, would delight in each other's society, but never had he been more mistaken. They were eternally bickering. The one was a wit, the other a philosopher. The parrot quoted poetry, was critical on new readings, and eloquent on small points of erudition; the owl treated all such knowledge as trifling, and relished nothing but metaphysics. Then the parrot would sing songs and repeat bon mots and crack jokes upon his solemn neighbour, and laugh outrageously at his own wit; all which proceedings the owl considered as a grievous invasion of his dignity, and would scowl and sulk and swell, and be silent for a whole day together.

The prince heeded not the wranglings of his companions, being wrapped up in the dreams of his own fancy, and the contemplation of the portrait of the beautiful princess. In this way they journeyed through the stern passes of the Sierra Morena, across the sunburnt plains of La Mancha and Castile, and along the banks of the "Golden Tagus," which winds its wizard mazes over one half of Spain and Portugal. At length they came in sight of a strong city with walls and towers built on a rocky promontory round the foot of which the Tagus circled with brawling violence.

"Behold," exclaimed the owl, "the ancient and renowned city of Toledo; a city famous for its antiquities. Behold



those venerable domes and towers, hoary with time and clothed with legendary grandeur, in which so many of my ancestors have meditated."

"Pish!" cried the parrot, interrupting his solemn antiquarian rapture, "what have we to do with antiquities, and legends, and your ancestry? Behold what is more to the purpose—behold the abode of youth and beauty—behold at length, O prince, the abode of your long-sought princess."

The prince looked in the direction indicated by the parrot, and beheld, in a delightful green meadow on the banks of the Tagus, a stately palace rising from amidst the bowers of a delicious garden. It was just such a place as had been described by the dove as the residence of the original of the picture. He gazed at it with a throbbing heart; "Perhaps at this moment," thought he, "the beautiful princess is sporting beneath those shady bowers, or pacing with delicate step those stately terraces, or reposing beneath those lofty roofs!" As he looked more narrowly, he perceived that the walls of the garden were of great height, so as to defy access, while numbers of armed guards patrolled around them.

The prince turned to the parrot. "O most accomplished of birds," said he, "thou hast the gift of human speech. Hie thee to yon garden; seek the idol of my soul, and tell her that Prince Ahmed, a pilgrim of love, and guided by the stars, has arrived in quest of her on the flowery banks of the Tagus."

The parrot, proud of his embassy, flew away to the garden; mounted above its lofty walls, and after soaring for a time over the lawns and groves, alighted on the balcony of a pavilion that overhung the river. Here, looking in at the casement, he beheld the princess reclining on a couch, with her eyes fixed on a paper, while tears gently stole after each other down her pallid cheek.

Pluming his wings for a moment, adjusting his bright green coat, and elevating his top-knot, the parrot perched himself beside her with a gallant air: then assuming a tenderness of tone, "Dry thy tears, most beautiful of princesses," said he, "I come to bring solace to thy heart."

The princess was startled on hearing a voice, but turning and seeing nothing but a little green-coated bird bobbing and bowing before her; "Alas! what solace canst thou yield," said she, "seeing thou art but a parrot!"

The parrot was nettled at the question. "I have consoled many beautiful ladies in my time," said he; "but let that pass. At present I come ambassador from a royal prince. Know that Ahmed, the Prince of Granada, has arrived in quest of thee, and is encamped even now on the flowery banks of the Tagus."

The eyes of the beautiful princess sparkled at these words even brighter than the diamonds in her coronet. "O sweetest of parrots," cried she, "joyful indeed are thy tidings, for I was faint and weary, and sick almost unto death with doubt of the constancy of Ahmed. Hie thee back, and tell him that the words of his letter are engraven in my heart, and his poetry has been food to my soul. Tell him, however, that he must prepare to prove his love by force of arms; tomorrow is my seventeenth birth-day, when the king my father holds a great tournament; several princes are to enter the lists, and my hand is to be the prize of the victor."

The parrot again took wing, and rustling through the groves, flew back to where the prince awaited his return. The rapture of Ahmed on finding the original of his adored portrait, and finding her kind and true, can only be conceived by those favoured mortals who have had the good fortune to realize day-dreams and turn a shadow into substance: still there was one thing that alloyed his transport—this impending tournament. In fact, the banks of the Tagus were already glittering with arms, and resounding with trumpets of the various knights, who, with proud retinues, were prancing on towards Toledo to attend the ceremonial. The same star that had controlled the destiny of the prince, had governed that of the princess, and until her seventeenth birth-day she had been shut up from the world, to guard her from the tender passion. The fame of her charms, however, had been enhanced rather than obscured by this seclusion. Several powerful princes had contended

for her alliance; and her father, who was a king of wondrous shrewdness, to avoid making enemies by showing partiality, had referred them to the arbitration of arms. Among the rival candidates were several renowned for strength and prowess. What a predicament for the unfortunate Ahmed, unprovided as he was with weapons, and unskilled in the exercises of chivalry! "Luckless prince that I am!" said he, "to have been brought up in seclusion under the eye of a philosopher! Of what avail are algebra and philosophy in affairs of love? Alas, Eben Bonabben! why hast thou neglected to instruct me in the management of arms?" Upon this the owl broke silence, preluding his harangue with a pious ejaculation, for he was a devout Mussulman.

"Allah achbar! God is great!" exclaimed he, "in his hands are all secret things—he alone governs the destiny of princes! Know, O prince, that this land is full of mysteries, hidden from all but those who, like myself, can grope after knowledge in the dark. Know that in the neighbouring mountains there is a cave, and in that cave there is an iron table, and on that table there lies a suit of magic armour, and beside that table there stands a spellbound steed, which have been shut up there for many generations."

The prince stared with wonder, while the owl, blinking his huge round eyes, and erecting his horns, proceeded:

"Many years since, I accompanied my father to these parts on a tour of his estates, and we sojourned in that cave; and thus became I acquainted with the mystery. It is a tradition in our family which I have heard from my grandfather, when I was yet but a very little owlet, that this armour belonged to a Moorish magician, who took refuge in this cavern when Toledo was captured by the Christians, and died here, leaving his steed and weapons under a mystic spell, never to be used but by a Moslem, and by him only from sunrise to mid-day. In that interval, whoever uses them will overthrow every opponent."

"Enough: let us seek this cave!" exclaimed Ahmed.

Guided by his legendary Mentor, the

prince found the cavern, which was in one of the wildest recesses of those rocky cliffs which rise around Toledo; none but the mousing eye of an owl or an antiquary could have discovered the entrance to it. A sepulchral lamp of everlasting oil shed a solemn light through the place. On an iron table in the centre of the cavern lay the magic armour, against it leaned the lance, and beside it stood an Arabian steed, caparisoned for the field, but motionless as a statue. The armour was bright and unsullied as it had gleamed in days of old; the steed in as good condition as if just from the pasture; and when Ahmed laid his hand upon his neck, he pawed the ground and gave a loud neigh of joy that shook the walls of the cavern. Thus amply provided with "horse to ride and weapon to wear," the prince determined to defy the field in the impending tourney.

The eventful morning arrived. The lists for the combat were prepared in the vega, or plain, just below the cliff-built walls of Toledo, where stages and galleries were erected for the spectators, covered with rich tapestry, and sheltered from the sun by silken awnings. All the beauties of the land were assembled in those galleries, while below them pranced plumed knights with their pages and esquires, among whom figured conspicuously the princes who were to contend in the tourney. All the beauties of the land, however, were eclipsed when the Princess Aldegonda appeared in the royal pavilion, and for the first time broke forth upon the gaze of an admiring world. A murmur of wonder ran through the crowd at her transcendent loveliness; and the princes who were candidates for her hand, merely on the faith of her reported charms, now felt tenfold ardour for the conflict.

The princess, however, had a troubled look. The colour came and went from her cheek, and her eye wandered with a restless and unsatisfied expression over the plumed throng of knights. The trumpets were about sounding for the encounter, when the herald announced the arrival of a stranger knight; and Ahmed rode into the field. A steel helmet studded with gems rose above his turban; his cuirass was embossed with

gold; his cimeter and dagger were of the workmanship of Fez, and flamed with precious stones. A round shield was at his shoulder, and in his hand he bore the lance of charmed virtue. The caparison of his Arabian steed was richly embroidered and swept the ground, and the proud animal pranced and snuffed the air, and neighed with joy at once more beholding the array of arms. The lofty and graceful demeanour of the prince struck every eye, and when his appellation was announced, "The Pilgrim of Love," an universal flutter and agitation prevailed among the fair dames in the galleries.

When Ahmed presented himself at the lists, however, they were closed against him; none but princes, he was told, were admitted to the contest. He declared his name and rank. "Still worse!"—he was a Moslem, and could not engage in a tourney where the hand of a Christian princess was the prize.

The rival princes surrounded him with haughty and menacing aspects; and one of insolent demeanour and herculean frame sneered at his light and youthful form, and scoffed at his amorous appellation. The ire of the prince was roused. He defied his rival to the encounter. They took distance, wheeled, and charged; and at the first touch of the magic lance, the brawny scoffer was tilted from his saddle. Here the prince would have paused, but, alas! he had to deal with a demoniac horse and armour—once in action nothing could control them. The Arabian steed charged into the thickest of the throng; the lance overturned every thing that presented; the gentle prince was carried pell-mell about the field, strewing it with high and low, gentle and simple, and grieving at his own involuntary exploits. The king stormed and raged at this outrage on his subjects and his guests. He ordered out all his guards—they were unhorsed as fast as they came up. The king threw off his robes, grasped buckler and lance, and rode forth to awe the stranger with the presence of majesty itself. Alas! majesty fared no better than the vulgar—the steed and lance were no respecters of persons; to the dismay of Ahmed, he was borne full tilt against the king, and

in a moment the royal heels were in the air, and the crown was rolling in the dust.

At this moment the sun reached the meridian; the magic spell resumed its power; the Arabian steed scoured across the plain, leaped the barrier, plunged into the Tagus, swam its raging current, bore the prince breathless and amazed to the cavern, and resumed his station like a statue, beside the iron table. The prince dismounted right gladly, and replaced the armour, to abide further decrees of fate. Then seating himself in the cavern, he ruminated on the desperate state to which this demoniac steed and armour had reduced him. Never should he dare to show his face at Toledo after inflicting such disgrace upon its chivalry, and such an outrage on its king. What too would the princess think of so rude and riotous an achievement? Full of anxiety, he sent forth his winged messengers to gather tidings. The parrot resorted to all the public places and crowded resorts of the city, and soon returned with a world of gossip. All Toledo was in consternation. The princess had been borne off senseless to the palace; the tournament had ended in confusion; every one was talking of the sudden apparition, prodigious exploits, and strange disappearance of the Moslem knight. Some pronounced him a Moorish magician; others thought him a demon who had assumed a human shape, while others related traditions of enchanted warriors hidden in the caves of the mountains, and thought it might be one of these who had made a sudden irruption from his den. All agreed that no mere ordinary mortal could have wrought such wonders, or unhorsed such accomplished and stalwart Christian warriors.

The owl flew forth at night and hovered about the dusky city, perching on the roofs and chimneys. He then wheeled his flight up to the royal palace, which stood on the rocky summit of Toledo, and went prowling about its terraces and battlements, eaves-dropping at every cranny, and glaring in with his big goggling eyes at every window where there was a light, so as to throw two or three maids of honour into fits.

It was not until the gray dawn began to peer above the mountains that he returned from his mousing expedition, and related to the prince what he had seen.

"As I was prying about one of the loftiest towers of the palace," said he, "I beheld through a casement a beautiful princess. She was reclining on a couch with attendants and physicians around her, but she would none of their ministry and relief. When they retired I beheld her draw forth a letter from her bosom, and read and kiss it, and give way to loud lamentations; at which, philosopher as I am, I could not but be greatly moved."

The tender heart of Ahmed was distressed at these tidings. "Too true were thy words, O sage Eben Bonabben," cried he; "care and sorrow and sleepless nights are the lot of lovers. Allah preserve the princess from the blighting influence of this thing called love!"

Further intelligence from Toledo corroborated the report of the owl. The city was a prey to uneasiness and alarm. The princess was conveyed to the highest tower of the palace, every avenue to which was strongly guarded. In the mean time a devouring melancholy had seized upon her, of which no one could divine the cause—she refused food and turned a deaf ear to every consolation. The most skilful physicians had essayed their art in vain; it was thought some magic spell had been practised upon her, and the king made proclamation, declaring that whoever should effect her cure should receive the richest jewel in the royal treasury.

When the owl, who was dozing in a corner, heard of this proclamation, he rolled his large eyes, and looked more mysterious than ever.

"Allah achbar!" exclaimed he, "happy the man that shall effect that cure, should he but know what to choose from the royal treasury."

"What mean you, most reverend owl?" said Ahmed.

"Hearken, O prince, to what I shall relate. We owls, you must know, are a learned body, and much given to dark and dusty research. During my late prowling at night about the domes and

turrets of Toledo, I discovered a college of antiquarian owls, who hold their meeting in a great vaulted tower where the royal treasury is deposited. Here they were discussing the forms and inscriptions and designs of ancient gems and jewels, and of golden and silver vessels, heaped up in the treasury, the fashion of every country and age; but mostly they were interested about certain relics and talismans that have remained in the treasury since the time of Roderick the Goth. Among these was a box of sandal wood secured by bands of steel of Oriental workmanship, and inscribed with mystic characters known only to the learned few. This box and its inscription had occupied the college for several sessions, and had caused much long and grave dispute. At the time of my visit a very ancient owl, who had recently arrived from Egypt, was seated on the lid of the box lecturing upon the inscription, and he proved from it that the coffer contained the silken carpet of the throne of Solomon the wise; which doubtless had been brought to Toledo by the Jews who took refuge there after the downfall of Jerusalem."

When the owl had concluded his antiquarian harangue, the prince remained for a time absorbed in thought. "I have heard," said he, "from the sage Eben Bonabben, of the wonderful properties of that talisman, which disappeared at the fall of Jerusalem, and was supposed to be lost to mankind. Doubtless it remains a sealed mystery to the Christians of Toledo. If I can get possession of that carpet my fortune is secure."

The next day the prince laid aside his rich attire, and arrayed himself in the simple garb of an Arab of the desert. He dyed his complexion to a tawny hue, and no one could have recognised in him the splendid warrior who had caused such admiration and dismay at the tournament. With staff in hand and scrip by his side and a small pastoral reed, he repaired to Toledo, and presenting himself at the gate of the royal palace, announced himself as a candidate for the reward offered for the cure of the princess. The guards would have driven him away with blows. "What can a

vagrant Arab like thyself pretend to do," said they, "in a case where the most learned of the land have failed?" The king, however, overheard the tumult, and ordered the Arab to be brought into his presence.

"Most potent king," said Ahmed, "you behold before you a Bedouin Arab, the greater part of whose life has been passed in the solitudes of the desert. These solitudes, it is well known, are the haunts of demons and evil spirits, who beset us poor shepherds in our lonely watchings, enter into and possess our flocks and herds, and sometimes render even the patient camel furious; against these our counter-charm is music; and we have legendary airs handed down from generation to generation, that we chant and pipe, to cast forth these evil spirits. I am of a gifted line, and possess this power in its fullest force. If it be any evil influence of the kind that holds a spell over thy daughter, I pledge my head to free her from its sway."

The king, who was a man of understanding, and knew the wonderful secrets possessed by the Arabs, was inspired with hope by the confident language of the prince. He conducted him immediately to the lofty tower, secured by several doors, in the summit of which was the chamber of the princess. The windows opened upon a terrace with balustrades, commanding a view over Toledo and all the surrounding country. The windows were darkened, for the princess lay within, a prey to a devouring grief that refused all alleviation.

The prince seated himself on the terrace, and performed several wild Arabian airs on his pastoral pipe, which he had learnt from his attendants in the Generalife at Granada. The princess continued insensible, and the doctors who were present shook their heads and smiled with incredulity and contempt: at length the prince laid aside the reed and, to a simple melody, chanted the amatory verses of the letter which had declared his passion.

The princess recognised the strain—a fluttering joy stole to her heart: she raised her head and listened; tears

rushed to her eyes and streamed down her cheeks; her bosom rose and fell with a tumult of emotions. She would have asked for the minstrel to be brought into her presence, but maiden coyness held her silent. The king read her wishes, and at his command Ahmed was conducted into the chamber. The lovers were discreet; they but exchanged glances, yet those glances spoke volumes. Never was triumph of music more complete. The rose had returned to the soft cheek of the princess, the freshness to her lip, and the dewy light to her languishing eyes.

All the physicians present stared at each other with astonishment. The king regarded the Arab minstrel with admiration mixed with awe. "Wonderful youth!" exclaimed he, "thou shalt henceforth be the first physician of my court, and no other prescription will I take but thy melody. For the present receive thy reward, the most precious jewel in my treasury."

"O king," replied Ahmed, "I care not for silver or gold or precious stones. One relic hast thou in thy treasury, handed down from the Moslems who once owned Toledo—a box of sandal wood containing a silken carpet: give me that box, and I am content."

All present were surprised at the moderation of the Arab; and still more when the box of sandal wood was brought and the carpet drawn forth. It was of fine green silk, covered with Hebrew and Chaldaic characters. The court physicians looked at each other, and shrugged their shoulders, and smiled at the simplicity of this new practitioner, who could be content with so paltry a fee.

"This carpet," said the prince, "once covered the throne of Solomon the wise; it is worthy of being placed beneath the feet of beauty."

So saying, he spread it on the terrace beneath an ottoman that had been brought forth for the princess; then seating himself at her feet—

"Who," said he, "shall counteract what is written in the book of fate? Behold the prediction of the astrologers verified. Know, O king, that your daughter and I have long loved each

other in secret. Behold in me the Pilgrim of Love!"

These words were scarcely from his lips, when the carpet rose in the air, bearing off the prince and princess. The king and the physicians gazed after it with open mouths and straining eyes, until it became a little speck on the white bosom of a cloud, and then disappeared in the blue vault of heaven.

The king in a rage summoned his treasurer. "How is this," said he, "that thou hast suffered an infidel to get possession of such a talisman?"

"Alas, sir, we knew not its nature, nor could we decipher the inscription of the box. If it be indeed the carpet of the throne of the wise Solomon, it is possessed of magic power, and can transport its owner from place to place through the air."

The king assembled a mighty army, and set off for Granada in pursuit of the fugitives. His march was long and toilsome. Encamping in the Vega, he sent a herald to demand restitution of his daughter. The king himself came forth with all his court to meet him. In the king he beheld the real minstrel, for Ahmed had succeeded to the throne on the death of his father, and the beautiful Aldegonda was his sultana.

The Christian king was easily pacified when he found that his daughter was suffered to continue in her faith; not that he was particularly pious; but religion is always a point of pride and etiquette with princes. Instead of bloody battles, there was a succession of feasts and rejoicings, after which the king returned well pleased to Toledo, and the youthful couple continued to reign as happily as wisely in the Alhambra.

It is proper to add, that the owl and the parrot had severally followed the prince by easy stages to Granada; the former travelling by night, and stopping at the various hereditary possessions of his family, the latter figuring in gay circles of every town and city on his route.

Ahmed gratefully requited the services which they had rendered on his pilgrimage. He appointed the owl his prime minister, the parrot his master of ceremonies. It is needless to say that never

was a realm more sagely administered, or a court conducted with more exact punctilio.

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LEGEND OF

THE MOOR'S LEGACY.

JUST within the fortress of the Alhambra, in front of the royal palace, is a broad open esplanade, called the Place or Square of the Cisterns (la Plaza de los Algibes), so called from being undermined by reservoirs of water, hidden from sight, and which have existed from the time of the Moors. At one corner of this esplanade is a Moorish well, cut through the living rock to a great depth, the water of which is cold as ice and clear as crystal. The wells made by the Moors are always in repute, for it is well known what pains they took to penetrate to the purest and sweetest springs and fountains. The one of which we now speak is famous throughout Granada, insomuch that the water-carriers, some bearing great water-jars on their shoulders, others driving asses before them laden with earthen vessels, are ascending and descending the steep woody avenues of the Alhambra, from early dawn until a late hour of the night.

Fountains and wells, ever since the scriptural days, have been noted gossiping places in hot climates; and at the well in question there is a kind of perpetual club kept up during the livelong day, by the invalids, old women, and other curious do-nothing folk of the fortress, who sit here on the stone benches, under an awning spread over the well to shelter the toll-gatherer from the sun, and dawdle over the gossip of the fortress, and question every water-carrier that arrives about the news of the city, and make long comments on every thing they hear and see. Not an hour of the day but loitering housewives and idle maid-servants may be seen, lingering with pitcher on head or in hand, to hear the last of the endless tattle of these worthies.

Among the water-carriers who once resorted to this well, there was a sturdy,

strong-backed, bandy-legged little fellow, named Pedro Gil, but called Peregil for shortness. Being a water-carrier, he was a Gallego, or native of Galicia, of course. Nature seems to have formed races of men, as she has of animals, for different kinds of drudgery. In France the shoe-blacks are all Savoyards, the porters of hotels all Swiss, and in the days of hoops and hair-powder in England, no man could give the regular swing to a sedan chair but a bog-trotting Irishman. So in Spain, the carriers of water and bearers of burdens are all sturdy little natives of Galicia. No man says, "Get me a porter," but, "Call a Gallego."

To return from this digression, Peregil the Gallego had begun business with merely a great earthen jar which he carried upon his shoulder; by degrees he rose in the world, and was enabled to purchase an assistant of a correspondent class of animals, being a stout shaggy-haired donkey. On each side of this his long-cared aide-de-camp, in a kind of pannier, were slung his water-jars, covered with fig-leaves to protect them from the sun. There was not a more industrious water-carrier in all Granada, nor one more merry withal. The streets rang with his cheerful voice as he trudged after his donkey, singing forth the usual summer note that resounds through the Spanish town; "*Quien quiere agua—agua mas fria que la nieve?*"—"who wants water—water colder than snow? Who wants water from the well of the Alhambra, cold as ice and clear as crystal?" When he served a customer with a sparkling glass, it was always with a pleasant word that caused a smile; and if, perchance, it was a comely dame or dimpling damsel, it was always with a sly leer and a compliment to her beauty that was irresistible. Thus Peregil the Gallego was noted throughout all Granada for being one of the civilest, pleasantest, and happiest of mortals. Yet it is not he who sings loudest and jokes most that has the lightest heart. Under all this air of merriment, honest Peregil had his cares and trouble. He had a large family of ragged children to support, who were hungry and clamorous as a nest of young swallows, and beset him

with their outcries for food whenever he came home of an evening. He had a helpmate too, who was any thing but a help to him. She had been a village beauty before marriage, noted for her skill at dancing the bolero and rattling the castañets; and she still retained her early propensities, spending the hard earnings of honest Peregil in frippery, and laying the very donkey under requisition for junketing parties into the country on Sundays, and Saint's days, and those innumerable holidays which are rather more numerous in Spain than the days of the week. With all this she was a little of a slattern, something more of a lie-a-bed, and, above all, a gossip of the first water; neglecting house, household, and every thing else, to loiter slipshod in the houses of her gossip neighbours.

He, however, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, accommodates the yoke of matrimony to the submissive neck. Peregil bore all the heavy dispensations of wife and children with as meek a spirit as his donkey bore the water-jars; and, however he might shake his ears in private, never ventured to question the household virtues of his slattern spouse.

He loved his children too even as an owl loves its owlets, seeing in them his own image multiplied and perpetuated; for they were a sturdy, long-backed, bandy-legged little brood. The great pleasure of honest Peregil was, whenever he could afford himself a scanty holiday, and had a handful of maravedies to spare, to take the whole litter forth with him, some in his arms, some tugging at his skirts, and some trudging at his heels, and to treat them to a gambol among the orchards of the Vega, while his wife was dancing with her holiday friends in the Angosturas of the Darro.

It was a late hour one summer night, and most of the water-carriers had desisted from their toils. The day had been uncommonly sultry; the night was one of those delicious moonlights, which tempt the inhabitants of those southern climes to indemnify themselves for the heat and inaction of the day, by lingering in the open air and enjoying its tempered sweetness until after midnight. Customers for water were, therefore,

still abroad. Peregil, like a considerate painstaking little father, thought of his hungry children. "One more journey to the well," said he to himself, "to earn a Sunday's puchero for the little ones." So saying, he trudged manfully up the steep avenue of the Alhambra, singing as he went, and now and then bestowing a hearty thwack with a cudgel on the flanks of his donkey, either by way of cadence to the song, or refreshment to the animal; for dry blows serve in lieu of provender in Spain for all beasts of burden.

When arrived at the well, he found it deserted by every one except a solitary stranger in Moorish garb, seated on the stone bench in the moonlight. Peregil paused at first and regarded him with surprise, not unmixed with awe, but the Moor feebly beckoned him to approach. "I am faint and ill," said he; "aid me to return to the city, and I will pay thee double what thou couldst gain by thy jars of water."

The honest heart of the little water-carrier was touched with compassion at the appeal of the stranger. "God forbid," said he, "that I should ask fee or reward for doing a common act of humanity." He accordingly helped the Moor on his donkey, and set off slowly for Granada, the poor Moslem being so weak that it was necessary to hold him on the animal to keep him from falling to the earth.

When they entered the city, the water-carrier demanded whether he should conduct him. "Alas!" said the Moor faintly, "I have neither home nor habitation, I am a stranger in the land. Suffer me to lay my head this night beneath thy roof, and thou shalt be amply repaid."

Honest Peregil thus saw himself unexpectedly saddled with an infidel guest, but he was too humane to refuse a night's shelter to a fellow-being in so forlorn a plight, so he conducted the Moor to his dwelling. The children, who had sallied forth open-mouthed as usual on hearing the tramp of the donkey, ran back with affright, when they beheld the turbaned stranger, and hid themselves behind their mother. The latter stepped forth intrepidly, like a ruffling hen before her brood when a vagrant dog approaches.

"What infidel companion," cried she, "is this you have brought home at this late hour, to draw upon us the eyes of the Inquisition?"

"Be quiet, wife," replied the Gallego, "here is a poor sick stranger, without friend or home; wouldst thou turn him forth to perish in the street?"

The wife would still have remonstrated, for although she lived in a hovel, she was a furious stickler for the credit of her house: the little water-carrier, however, for once was stiff-necked, and refused to bend beneath the yoke. He assisted the poor Moslem to alight, and spread a mat and a sheepskin for him on the ground, in the coolest part of the house; being the only kind of bed that his poverty afforded.

In a little while the Moor was seized with violent convulsions, which defied all the ministering skill of the simple water-carrier. The eye of the poor patient acknowledged his kindness. During an interval of his fits he called him to his side, and addressing him in a low voice, "My end," said he, "I fear is at hand. If I die I bequeath you this box as a reward for your charity:" so saying, he opened his albornoz, or cloak, and showed a small box of sandal wood, strapped round his body. "God grant, my friend," replied the worthy little Gallego, "that you may live many years to enjoy your treasure, whatever it may be." The Moor shook his head; he laid his hand upon the box, and would have said something more concerning it, but his convulsions returned with increased violence, and in a little while he expired.

The water-carrier's wife was now as one distracted. "This comes," said she, "of your foolish good nature, always running into scrapes to oblige others. What will become of us when this corpse is found in our house? We shall be sent to prison as murderers; and if we escape with our lives, shall be ruined by notaries and alguazils."

Poor Peregil was in equal tribulation, and almost repented himself of having done a good deed. At length a thought struck him. "It is not yet day," said he; "I can convey the dead body out of the city, and bury it in the sands on the banks of the Xenil. No one saw the



Moor enter our dwelling, and no one will know any thing of his death."

So said, so done. The wife aided him; they rolled the body of the unfortunate Moslem in the mat on which he had expired, laid it across the ass, and Peregil set out with it for the banks of the river.

As ill luck would have it, there lived opposite to the water-carrier a barber named Pedrillo Pedrugo, one of the most prying, tattling, and mischief-making of his gossip tribe. He was a weasel-faced, spider-legged varlet, supple and insinuating; the famous barber of Seville could not surpass him for his universal knowledge of the affairs of others, and he had no more power of retention than a sieve. It was said that he slept with but one eye at a time, and kept one ear uncovered, so that, even in his sleep, he might see and hear all that was going on. Certain it is, he was a sort of scandalous chronicle for the quid-nuncs of Granada, and had more customers than all the rest of his fraternity.

This meddlesome barber heard Peregil arrive at an unusual hour at night, and the exclamations of his wife and children. His head was instantly popped out of a little window which served him as a look-out, and he saw his neighbour assist a man in Moorish garb into his dwelling. This was so strange an occurrence, that Pedrillo Pedrugo slept not a wink that night. Every five minutes he was at his loop-hole, watching the lights that gleamed through the chinks of his neighbour's door, and before daylight he beheld Peregil sally forth with his donkey unusually laden.

The inquisitive barber was in a fidget; he slipped on his clothes, and, stealing forth silently, followed the water-carrier at a distance, until he saw him dig a hole in the sandy bank of the Xenil, and bury something that had the appearance of a dead body.

The barber hied him home, and fidgeted about his shop, setting every thing upside down, until sunrise. He then took a basin under his arm, and sallied forth to the house of his daily customer the alcalde.

The alcalde was just risen. Pedrillo Pedrugo seated him in a chair, threw a

napkin round his neck, put a basin of hot water under his chin, and began to mollify his beard with his fingers.

"Strange doings!" said Pedrugo, who played barber and newsmonger at the same time—"Strange doings! Robbery, and murder, and burial, all in one night!"

"Hey!—how!—what is that you say?" cried the alcalde.

"I say," replied the barber, rubbing a piece of soap over the nose and mouth of the dignitary, for a Spanish barber disdains to employ a brush—"I say that Peregil the Gallego has robbed and murdered a Moorish Mussulman, and buried him, this blessed night. *Maldita sea la noche*—accursed be the night for the same!"

"But how do you know all this?" demanded the alcalde.

"Be patient, señor, and you shall hear all about it," replied Pedrillo, taking him by the nose and sliding a razor over his cheek. He then recounted all that he had seen, going through both operations at the same time, shaving his beard, washing his chin, and wiping him dry with a dirty napkin, while he was robbing, murdering, and burying the Moslem.

Now it so happened that this alcalde was one of the most overbearing, and at the same time most griping and corrupt curmudgeons in all Granada. It could not be denied, however, that he set a high value upon justice, for he sold it at its weight in gold. He presumed the case in point to be one of murder and robbery; doubtless there must be rich spoil; how was it to be secured into the legitimate hands of the law? for as to merely entrapping the delinquent—that would be feeding the gallows; but entrapping the booty—that would be enriching the judge, and such, according to his creed, was the great end of justice. So thinking, he summoned to his presence his trustiest alguazil—a gaunt, hungry-looking varlet, clad according to the custom of his order, in the ancient Spanish garb, a broad black beaver turned up at the sides; a quaint ruff; a small black cloak dangling from his shoulders; rusty black under-clothes that set off his spare wiry frame, while

in his hand he bore a slender white wand, the dreaded insignia of his office. Such was the legal blood-hound of the ancient Spanish breed, that he put upon the traces of the unlucky water-carrier, and such was his speed and certainty, that he was upon the haunches of poor Peregil before he had returned to his dwelling, and brought both him and his donkey before the dispenser of justice.

The alcalde bent upon him one of his most terrific frowns. "Hark ye, culprit!" roared he, in a voice that made the knees of the little Gallego smite together—"hark ye, culprit! there is no need of denying thy guilt, every thing is known to me. A gallows is the proper reward for the crime thou hast committed, but I am merciful, and readily listen to reason. The man that has been murdered in thy house was a Moor, an infidel, the enemy of our faith. It was doubtless in a fit of religious zeal that thou hast slain him. I will be indulgent, therefore; render up the property of which thou hast robbed him, and we will hush the matter up."

The poor water-carrier called upon all the saints to witness his innocence; alas! not one of them appeared; and if they had, the alcalde would have disbelieved the whole calendar. The water-carrier related the whole story of the dying Moor with the straight-forward simplicity of truth, but it was all in vain. "Wilt thou persist in saying," demanded the judge, "that this Moslem had neither gold nor jewels, which were the object of thy cupidity?"

"As I hope to be saved, your worship," replied the water-carrier, "he had nothing but a small box of sandal wood, which he bequeathed to me in reward for my services."

"A box of sandal wood! a box of sandal wood!" exclaimed the alcalde, his eyes sparkling at the idea of precious jewels. "And where is this box? where have you concealed it?"

"An' it please your grace," replied the water-carrier, "it is in one of the panniers of my mule, and heartily at the service of your worship."

He had hardly spoken the words, when the keen alguazil darted off and re-appeared in an instant with the mys-

terious box of sandal wood. The alcalde opened it with an eager and trembling hand; all pressed forward to gaze upon the treasures it was expected to contain; when, to their disappointment, nothing appeared within, but a parchment scroll, covered with Arabic characters, and an end of a waxen taper.

When there is nothing to be gained by the conviction of a prisoner, justice even in Spain, is apt to be impartial. The alcalde having recovered from his disappointment, and found that there was really no booty in the case, now listened dispassionately to the explanation of the water-carrier, which was corroborated by the testimony of his wife. Being convinced, therefore, of his innocence, he discharged him from arrest; nay more, he permitted him to carry off the Moor's legacy, the box of sandal wood and its contents, as the well-merited reward of his humanity; but he retained his donkey in payment of costs and charges.

Behold the unfortunate little Gallego reduced once more to the necessity of being his own water-carrier, and trudging up to the well of the Alhambra with a great earthen jar upon his shoulder.

As he toiled up the hill in the heat of a summer noon, his usual good humour forsook him. "Dog of an alcalde!" would he cry, "to rob a poor man of his means of subsistence, of the best friend he had in the world!" And then at the remembrance of the beloved companion of his labours, all the kindness of his nature would break forth. "Ah donkey of my heart!" would he exclaim, resting his burden on a stone, and wiping the sweat from his brow—"Ah donkey of my heart! I warrant me thou thinkest of thy old master! I warrant me thou missest the water-jars—poor beast!"

To add to his afflictions, his wife received him, on his return home, with whimperings and repinings; she had clearly the vantage ground of him, having warned him not to commit the egregious act of hospitality that had brought on him all these misfortunes; and, like a knowing woman, she took every occasion to throw her superior sagacity in his teeth. If ever her children lacked food, or needed a new garment,

she could answer with a sneer—"Go to your father—he is heir to King Chico of the Alhambra: ask him to help you out of the Moor's strong box."

Was ever poor mortal so soundly punished for having done a good action? The unlucky Peregil was grieved in flesh and spirit, but still he bore meekly with the railings of his spouse. At length, one evening, when, after a hot day's toil, she taunted him in the usual manner, he lost all patience. He did not venture to retort upon her, but his eye rested upon the box of sandal wood, which lay on a shelf with lid half open, as if laughing in mockery at his vexation. Seizing it up, he dashed it with indignation to the floor:—"Unlucky was the day that I ever set eyes on thee," he cried, "or sheltered thy master beneath my roof!"

As the box struck the floor, the lid flew wide open, and the parchment scroll rolled forth. Peregil sat regarding the scroll for some time in moody silence. At length rallying his ideas—"Who knows," thought he, "but this writing may be of some importance, as the Moor seems to have guarded it with such care?" Picking it up, therefore, he put it in his bosom, and the next morning, as he was crying water through the streets, he stopped at the shop of a Moor, a native of Tangiers, who sold trinkets and perfumery in the Zacatin, and asked him to explain the contents.

The Moor read the scroll attentively, then stroked his beard and smiled. "This manuscript," said he, "is a form of incantation for the recovery of hidden treasure, that is under the power of enchantment. It is said to have such virtue, that the strongest bolts and bars, nay, the adamant rock itself, will yield before it!"

"Bah!" cried the little Gallego, "what is all that to me? I am no enchanter, and know nothing of buried treasure." So saying, he shouldered his water-jar, left the scroll in the hands of the Moor, and trudged forward on his daily rounds.

That evening, however, as he rested himself about twilight at the well of the Alhambra, he found a number of gossips assembled at the place, and their conversation, as is not unusual in that

shadowy hour, turned upon old tales and traditions of a supernatural nature. Being all poor as rats, they dwelt with peculiar fondness upon the popular theme of enchanted riches left by the Moors in various parts of the Alhambra. Above all, they concurred in the belief that there were great treasures buried deep in the earth under the tower of the seven floors.

These stories made an unusual impression on the mind of honest Peregil, and they sank deeper and deeper into his thoughts as he returned alone down the darkling avenues. "If, after all, there should be treasure hid beneath that tower—and if the scroll I left with the Moor should enable me to get at it!" In the sudden ecstasy of the thought he had well nigh let fall his water-jar.

That night he tumbled and tossed, and could scarcely get a wink of sleep for the thoughts that were bewildering his brain. Bright and early, he repaired to the shop of the Moor, and told him all that was passing in his mind. "You can read Arabic," said he; "suppose we go together to the tower, and try the effect of the charm; if it fails we are no worse off than before, but if it succeeds we will share equally all the treasure we may discover."

"Hold," replied the Moslem; "this writing is not sufficient of itself; it must be read at midnight, by the light of a taper singularly compounded and prepared, the ingredients of which are not within my reach. Without such taper the scroll is of no avail."

"Say no more!" cried the little Gallego, "I have such a taper at hand, and will bring it here in a moment." So saying, he hastened home, and soon returned with the end of a yellow wax taper that he had found in the box of sandal wood.

The Moor felt it and smelt to it. "Here are rare and costly perfumes," said he, "combined with this yellow wax. This is the kind of taper specified in the scroll. While this burns, the strongest walls and most secret caverns will remain open. Wo to him, however, who lingers within until it be extinguished. He will remain enchanted with the treasure."

It was now agreed between them to try the charm that very night. At a late hour, therefore, when nothing was stirring but bats and owls, they ascended the woody hill of the Alhambra, and approached that awful tower, shrouded by trees and rendered formidable by so many traditionary tales. By the light of a lanthorn, they groped their way through bushes, and over fallen stones, to the door of a vault beneath the tower. With fear and trembling they descended a flight of steps cut into the rock. It led to an empty chamber, damp and drear, from which another flight of steps led to a deeper vault. In this way they descended four several flights, leading into as many vaults, one below the other, but the floor of the fourth was solid; and though, according to tradition, there remained three vaults still below, it was said to be impossible to penetrate further, the residue being shut up by strong enchantment. The air of this vault was damp and chilly, and had an earthy smell, and the light scarce cast forth any rays. They paused here for a time in breathless suspense, until they faintly heard the clock of the watchtower strike midnight; upon this they lit the waxen taper, which diffused an odour of myrrh, frankincense, and storax.

The Moor began to read in a hurried voice. He had scarce finished when there was a noise of subterraneous thunder. The earth shook, and the floor yawning open, disclosed a flight of steps. Trembling with awe they descended, and by the light of the lanthorn found themselves in another vault, covered with Arabic inscriptions. In the centre stood a great chest, secured with seven bands of steel, at each end of which sat an enchanted Moor in armour, but motionless as a statue, being controlled by the power of the incantation. Before the chest were several jars filled with gold and silver and precious stones. In the largest of these they thrust their arms up to the elbow, and at every dip hauled forth handfuls of broad yellow pieces of Moorish gold, or bracelets and ornaments of the same precious metal, while occasionally a necklace of Oriental pearls would stick to their fingers. Still they trembled and breathed short while

cramping their pockets with the spoils; and cast many a fearful glance at the two enchanted Moors, who sat grim and motionless, glaring upon them with unwinking eyes. At length, struck with a sudden panic at some fancied noise, they both rushed up the staircase, tumbled one over another into the upper apartment, overturned and extinguished the waxen taper, and the pavement again closed with a thundering sound.

Filled with dismay, they did not pause until they had groped their way out of the tower, and beheld the stars shining through the trees. Then seating themselves upon the grass, they divided the spoil, determined to content themselves for the present with the mere skimming of the jars, but to return on some future night and drain them to the bottom. To make sure of each other's good faith, also, they divided the talismans between them, one retaining the scroll and the other the taper; this done, they set off with light hearts and well-lined pockets for Granada.

As they wended their way down the hill, the shrewd Moor whispered a word of counsel in the ear of the simple little water-carrier.

"Friend Peregil," said he, "all this affair must be kept a profound secret until we have secured the treasure and conveyed it out of harm's way. If a whisper of it gets to the ear of the alcalde we are undone!"

"Certainly," replied the Gallego, "nothing can be more true."

"Friend Peregil," said the Moor, "you are a discreet man, and I make no doubt can keep a secret: but you have a wife."

"She shall not know a word of it," replied the little water-carrier sturdily.

"Enough," said the Moor, "I depend upon thy discretion and thy promise."

Never was promise more positive and sincere; but, alas! what man can keep a secret from his wife? Certainly not such a one as Peregil the water-carrier, who was one of the most loving and tractable of husbands. On his return home, he found his wife moping in a corner. "Mighty well," cried she as he entered, "you've come at last; after rambling about until this hour of the

night. I wonder you have not brought home another Moor as a housemate." Then bursting into tears, she began to wring her hands and smite her breast: "Unhappy woman that I am!" exclaimed she, "what will become of me! My house stripped and plundered by lawyers and alguazils; my husband a do-no-good, that no longer brings home bread for his family, but goes rambling about day and night, with infidel Moors! O my children! my children! what will become of us? we shall all have to beg in the streets!"

Honest Peregil was so moved by the distress of his spouse, that he could not help whimpering also. His heart was as full as his pocket, and not to be restrained. Thrusting his hand into the latter, he hauled forth three or four broad gold pieces, and slipped them into her bosom. The poor woman stared with astonishment, and could not understand the meaning of this golden shower. Before she could recover her surprise, the little Gallego drew forth a chain of gold and dangled it before her, capering with exultation, his mouth distended from ear to ear.

"Holy Virgin protect us!" exclaimed the wife. "What hast thou been doing, Peregil? surely thou hast not been committing murder and robbery!"

The idea scarce entered the brain of the poor woman, when it became a certainty with her. She saw a prison and a gallows in the distance, and a little bandy-legged Gallego hanging pendant from it; and, overcome by the horrors conjured up by her imagination, fell into violent hysterics.

What could the poor man do? He had no other means of pacifying his wife and dispelling the phantoms of her fancy, than by relating the whole story of his good fortune. This, however, he did not do until he had exacted from her the most solemn promise to keep it a profound secret from every living being.

To describe her joy would be impossible. She flung her arms round the neck of her husband, and almost strangled him with her caresses. "Now, wife," exclaimed the little man with honest exultation, "what say you now to the Moor's legacy? Henceforth never

abuse me for helping a fellow-creature in distress."

The honest little Gallego retired to his sheepskin mat, and slept as soundly as if on a bed of down. Not so his wife; she emptied the whole contents of his pockets upon the mat, and sat all night counting gold pieces of Arabic coin, trying on necklaces and ear-rings, and fancying the figure she should one day make when permitted to enjoy her riches.

On the following morning, the honest Gallego took a broad golden coin, and repaired with it to a jeweller's shop in the Zacatin to offer it for sale, pretending to have found it among the ruins of the Alhambra. The jeweller saw that it had an Arabic inscription, and was of the purest gold; he offered however, but a third of its value, with which the water-carrier was perfectly content. Peregil now bought new clothes for his little flock, and all kinds of toys, together with ample provisions for a hearty meal, and, returning to his dwelling, set all his children dancing around him, while he capered in the midst, the happiest of fathers.

The wife of the water-carrier kept her promise of secrecy with surprising strictness. For a whole day and a half she went about with a look of mystery and a heart swelling almost to bursting, yet she held her peace, though surrounded by her gossips. It is true, she could not help giving herself a few airs, apologized for her ragged dress, and talked of ordering a new *basquiña* all trimmed with gold lace and bugles, and a new lace mantilla. She threw out hints of her husband's intention of leaving off his trade of water-carrying, as it did not altogether agree with his health. In fact she thought they should all retire to the country for the summer, that the children might have the benefit of the mountain air, for there was no living in the city in this sultry season.

The neighbours stared at each other, and thought the poor woman had lost her wits; and her airs and graces and elegant pretensions were the theme of universal scoffing and merriment among her friends, the moment her back was turned.

If she restrained herself abroad, however, she indemnified herself at home, and putting a string of rich Oriental pearls round her neck, Moorish bracelets on her arms, and an aigrette of diamonds on her head, sailed backwards and forwards in her slattern rags about the room, now and then stopping to admire herself in a piece of broken mirror. Nay, in the impulse of her simple vanity, she could not resist, on one occasion, showing herself at the window, to enjoy the effect of her finery on the passers by.

As the fates would have it, Pedrillo Pedrugo, the meddlesome barber, was at this moment sitting idly in his shop on the opposite side of the street, when his ever-watchful eye caught the sparkle of a diamond. In an instant he was at his loop-hole, reconnoitring the slattern spouse of the water-carrier, decorated with the splendour of an eastern bride. No sooner had he taken an accurate inventory of her ornaments, than he posted off with all speed to the alcalde. In a little while the hungry alguazil was again on the scent, and before the day was over the unfortunate Peregil was again dragged into the presence of the judge.

"How is this, villain!" cried the alcalde in a furious voice. "You told me that the infidel who died in your house left nothing behind but an empty coffer, and now I hear of your wife flaunting in her rags decked out with pearls, and diamonds. Wretch that thou art! prepare to render up the spoils of thy miserable victim, and to swing on the gallows that is already tired of waiting for thee."

The terrified water-carrier fell on his knees and made a full relation of the marvellous manner in which he had gained his wealth. The alcalde, the alguazil, and the inquisitive barber, listened with greedy ears to this Arabian tale of enchanted treasure. The alguazil was despatched to bring the Moor who had assisted in the incantation. The Moslem entered half frightened out of his wits at finding himself in the hands of the harpies of the law. When he beheld the water-carrier standing with sheepish looks and downcast countenance, he comprehended the whole

matter. "Miserable animal," said he, as he passed near him, "did I not warn thee against babbling to thy wife?"

The story of the Moor coincided exactly with that of his colleague; but the alcalde affected to be slow of belief, and threw out menaces of imprisonment and rigorous investigation.

"Softly, good Señor Alcalde," said the Mussulman, who by this time had recovered his usual shrewdness and self-possession. "Let us not mar Fortune's favours in the scramble for them. Nobody knows any thing of this matter but ourselves—let us keep the secret. There is wealth enough in the cave to enrich us all. Promise a fair division, and all shall be produced—refuse, and the cave shall remain for ever closed."

The alcalde consulted apart with the alguazil. The latter was an old fox in his profession. "Promise any thing," said he, "until you get possession of the treasure. You may then seize upon the whole, and if he and his accomplice dare to murmur, threaten them with the fagot and the stake as infidels and sorcerers."

The alcalde relished the advice. Smoothing his brow and turning to the Moor, "This is a strange story," said he, "and may be true, but I must have ocular proof of it. This very night you must repeat the incantation in my presence. If there be really such treasure, we will share it amicably between us, and say nothing further of the matter; if ye have deceived me, expect no mercy at my hands. In the mean time you must remain in custody."

The Moor and the water-carrier cheerfully agreed to these conditions, satisfied that the event would prove the truth of their words.

Towards midnight the alcalde sallied forth secretly, attended by the alguazil and the meddlesome barber, all strongly armed. They conducted the Moor and the water-carrier as prisoners, and were provided with the stout donkey of the latter to bear off the expected treasure. They arrived at the tower without being observed; and tying the donkey to a fig tree, descended into the fourth vault of the tower.

The scroll was produced, and the

yellow waxen taper lighted, and the Moor read the form of incantation. The earth trembled as before, and the pavement opened with a thundering sound, disclosing the narrow flight of steps. The alcalde, the alguazil, and the barber were struck aghast, and could not summon courage to descend. The Moor and the water-carrier entered the lower vault, and found the two Moors seated as before, silent and motionless. They removed two of the great jars, filled with golden coin and precious stones. The water-carrier bore them up one by one upon his shoulders, but though a strong-backed little man, and accustomed to carry burdens, he staggered beneath their weight, and found when slung on each side of his donkey, they were as much as the animal could bear.

"Let us be content for the present," said the Moor, "here is as much treasure as we can carry off without being perceived, and enough to make us all wealthy to our heart's desire."

"Is there more treasure remaining behind?" demanded the alcalde.

"The greatest prize of all," said the Moor, "a huge coffer bound with bands of steel, and filled with pearls and precious stones."

"Let us have up the coffer by all means," cried the grasping alcalde.

"I will descend for no more," said the Moor doggedly; "enough is enough for a reasonable man—more is superfluous."

"And I," said the water-carrier, "will bring up no further burden to break the back of my poor donkey."

Finding commands, threats, and entreaties equally vain, the alcalde turned to his two adherents. "Aid me," said he, "to bring up the coffer, and its contents shall be divided between us." So saying he descended the steps, followed with trembling reluctance by the alguazil and the barber.

No sooner did the Moor behold them fairly earthed than he extinguished the yellow taper; the pavement closed with its usual crash, and the three worthies remained buried in its womb.

He then hastened up the different flights of steps, nor stopped until in the open air. The little water-carrier fol-

lowed him as fast as his short legs would permit.

"What hast thou done?" cried Peregil, as soon as he could recover breath. "The alcalde and the other two are shut up in the vault."

"It is the will of Allah!" said the Moor devoutly.

"And will you not release them?" demanded the Gallego.

"Allah forbid!" replied the Moor, smoothing his beard. "It is written in the book of fate that they shall remain enchanted until some future adventurer arrive to break the charm. The will of God be done!" So saying, he hurled the end of the waxen taper far among the gloomy thickets of the glen.

There was now no remedy, so the Moor and the water-carrier proceeded with the richly laden donkey towards the city, nor could honest Peregil refrain from hugging and kissing his long-eared fellow-labourer, thus restored to him from the clutches of the law; and in fact, it is doubtful which gave the simple-hearted little man most joy at the moment, the gaining of the treasure, or the recovery of the donkey.

The two partners in good luck divided their spoil amicably and fairly, except that the Moor, who had a little taste for trinketry, made out to get into his heap most of the pearls and precious stones and other baubles, but then he always gave the water-carrier in lieu magnificent jewels of massy gold, of five times the size, with which the latter was heartily content. They took care not to linger within reach of accidents, but made off to enjoy their wealth undisturbed in other countries. The Moor returned to Africa, to his native city of Tetuan, and the Gallego, with his wife, his children, and his donkey, made the best of his way to Portugal. Here, under the admonition and tuition of his wife, he became a personage of some consequence, for she made the worthy little man array his long body and short legs in doublet and hose, with a feather in his hat and a sword by his side; and laying aside his familiar appellation of Peregil, assumed the more sonorous title of Don Pedro Gil: his progeny grew up a thriving and merry-hearted, though short and bandy-

legged generation, while Señora Gil, befringed, belaced and betasselled from her head to her heels, with glittering rings on every finger, became a model of slattern fashion and finery.

As to the alcalde and his adjuncts, they remained shut up under the great tower of the seven floors, and there they remain spellbound at the present day. Whenever there shall be a lack in Spain of pimping barbers, sharking alguazils, and corrupt alcaldes, they may be sought after; but if they have to wait until such time for their deliverance, there is danger of their enchantment enduring until doomsday.

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THE LEGEND OF

THE ROSE OF THE ALHAMBRA;

OR,

THE PAGE AND THE GER-FALCON.

FOR some time after the surrender of Granada by the Moors, that delightful city was a frequent and favourite residence of the Spanish sovereigns, until they were frightened away by successive shocks of earthquakes, which toppled down various houses, and made the old Moslem towers rock to their foundation.

Many many years then rolled away during which Granada was rarely honoured by a royal guest. The palaces of the nobility remained silent and shut up; and the Alhambra, like a slighted beauty, sat in mournful desolation among her neglected gardens. The tower of *Infantas*, once the residence of the three beautiful Moorish princesses, partook of the general desolation, and the spider spun her web athwart the gilded vault, and bats and owls nestled in those chambers that had been graced by the presence of *Zayda*, *Zorayda*, and *Zorahayda*. The neglect of this tower may partly have been owing to some superstitious notions of the neighbours. It was rumoured that the spirit of the youthful *Zorahayda*, who had perished in that tower, was often seen by moonlight seated beside the fountain in the hall, or

moaning about the battlements, and that the notes of her silver lute would be heard at midnight by wayfarers passing along the glen.

At length the city of Granada was once more welcomed by the royal presence. All the world knows that Philip V. was the first Bourbon that swayed the Spanish sceptre. All the world knows that he married, in second nuptials, *Elizabetta* or *Isabella* (for they are the same), the beautiful princess of Parma; and all the world knows that by this chain of contingencies a French prince and an Italian princess were seated together on the Spanish throne. For the reception of this illustrious pair, the Alhambra was repaired and fitted up with all possible expedition. The arrival of the court changed the whole aspect of the lately deserted palace. The clangour of drum and trumpet; the tramp of steed about the avenues and outer court; the glitter of arms and display of banners about barbican and battlement, recalled the ancient and warlike glories of the fortress. A softer spirit, however, reigned within the royal palace. There was the rustling of robes and the cautious tread and murmuring voice of reverential courtiers about the antechambers; a loitering of pages and maids of honour about the gardens, and the sound of music stealing from open casements.

Among those who attended in the train of the monarchs was a favourite page of the queen, named *Ruyz de Alarcon*. To say that he was a favourite page of the queen was at once to speak his eulogium; for every one in the suite of the stately *Elizabetta* was chosen for grace, and beauty, and accomplishments. He was just turned of eighteen, light and lithe of form, and graceful as a young *Antinous*. To the queen he was all deference and respect, yet he was at heart a roguish stripling, petted and spoiled by the ladies about the court, and experienced in the ways of women far beyond his years.

This loitering page was one morning rambling about the groves of the *Generalife*, which overlook the grounds of the Alhambra. He had taken with him for his amusement a favourite *ger-falcon* of the queen. In the course of his rambles,



seeing a bird rising from a thicket, he unhooded the hawk and let him fly. The falcon towered high in the air, made a swoop at his quarry, but missing it, soared away regardless of the calls of the page. The latter followed the truant bird with his eye, in its capricious flight, until he saw it alight upon the battlements of a remote and lonely tower, in the outer wall of the Alhambra, built on the edge of a ravine that separated the royal fortress from the grounds of the Generalife. It was in fact the "Tower of the Princesses."

The page descended into the ravine and approached the tower, but it had no entrance from the glen, and its lofty height rendered any attempt to scale it fruitless. Seeking one of the gates of the fortress, therefore, he made a wide circuit to that side of the tower facing within the walls.

A small garden enclosed by a trellis-work of reeds overhung with myrtle, lay before the tower. Opening a wicket, the page passed between beds of flowers and thickets of roses to the door. It was closed and bolted. A crevice in the door gave him a peep into the interior. There was a small Moorish hall with fretted walls, light marble columns, and an alabaster fountain surrounded with flowers. In the centre hung a gilt cage, containing a singing bird; beneath it, on a chair, lay a tortoise-shell cat among reels of silk and other articles of female labour, and a guitar decorated with ribands leaned against the fountain.

Ruyz de Alarcon was struck with these traces of female taste and elegance in a lonely, and, as he had supposed, deserted tower. They reminded him of the tales of enchanted halls current in the Alhambra; and the tortoise-shell cat might be some spell-bound princess.

He knocked gently at the door. A beautiful face peeped out from a little window above, but was instantly withdrawn. He waited, expecting that the door would be opened, but he waited in vain; no footstep was to be heard within—all was silent. Had his senses deceived him, or was this beautiful apparition the fairy of the tower? He knocked again, and more loudly. After a little while the beaming face once more peeped

forth; it was that of a blooming damsel of fifteen.

The page immediately doffed his plumed bonnet, and entreated in the most courteous accents to be permitted to ascend the tower in pursuit of his falcon.

"I dare not open the door, señor," replied the little damsel, blushing, "my aunt has forbidden it."

"I do beseech you, fair maid—it is the favourite falcon of the queen: I dare not return to the palace without it."

"Are you then one of the cavaliers of the court?"

"I am, fair maid; but I shall lose the queen's favour and my place, if I lose this hawk."

"Santa Maria! it is against you cavaliers of the court my aunt has charged me especially to bar the door."

"Against wicked cavaliers doubtless, but I am none of these, but a simple harmless page, who will be ruined and undone if you deny me this small request."

The heart of the little damsel was touched by the distress of the page. It was a thousand pities he should be ruined for the want of so trifling a boon. Surely too he could not be one of those dangerous beings whom her aunt had described as a species of cannibal, ever on the prowl to make prey of thoughtless damsels; he was gentle and modest, and stood so entreatingly with cap in hand, and looked so charming.

The sly page saw that the garrison began to waver, and redoubled his entreaties in such moving terms, that it was not in the nature of mortal maiden to deny him; so the blushing little warden of the tower descended and opened the door with a trembling hand; and if the page had been charmed by a mere glimpse of her countenance from the window, he was ravished by the full length portrait now revealed to him.

Her Andalusian bodice and trim basquiña set off the round but delicate symmetry of her form, which was as yet scarce verging into womanhood. Her glossy hair was parted on her forehead, with scrupulous exactness, and decorated with a fresh-plucked rose, according to the universal custom of the country. It is true her complexion was tinged by the

ardour of a southern sun, but it served to give richness to the mantling bloom of her cheek, and to heighten the lustre of her melting eyes.

Ruyz de Alarcon beheld all this with a single glance, for it became him not to tarry; he merely murmured his acknowledgments, and then bounded lightly up the spiral staircase in quest of his falcon.

He soon returned with the truant bird upon his fist. The damsel, in the mean time, had seated herself by the fountain in the hall, and was winding silk; but in her agitation she let fall the reel upon the pavement. The page sprang and picked it up, then dropping gracefully on one knee presented it to her; but, seizing the hand extended to receive it, imprinted on it a kiss more fervent and devout than he had ever imprinted on the fair hand of his sovereign.

"Ave Maria, señor!" exclaimed the damsel, blushing still deeper with confusion and surprise, for never before had she received such a salutation.

The modest page made a thousand apologies, assuring her it was the way, at court, of expressing the most profound homage and respect.

Her anger, if anger she felt, was easily pacified, but her agitation and embarrassment continued, and she sat blushing deeper and deeper, with her eyes cast down upon her work, entangling the silk which she attempted to wind.

The cunning page saw the confusion in the opposite camp, and would fain have profited by it, but the fine speeches he would have uttered died upon his lips; his attempt at gallantry were awkward and ineffectual, and to his surprise, the adroit page, who had figured with such grace and effrontery among the most knowing and experienced ladies of the court, found himself awed and abashed in the presence of a simple damsel of fifteen.

In fact, the artless maiden, in her own modesty and innocence, had guardians more effectual than the bolts and bars prescribed by her vigilant aunt. Still, where is the female bosom proof against the first whisperings of love? The little damsel, with all her artlessness, instinctively comprehended all that the faltering tongue of the page failed to express,

and her heart was fluttered at beholding, for the first time, a lover at her feet—and such a lover!

The diffidence of the page, though genuine, was short-lived, and he was recovering his usual ease and confidence, when a shrill voice was heard at a distance.

"My aunt is returning from mass!" cried the damsel in affright: "I pray you, señor, depart."

"Not until you grant me that rose from your hair as a remembrance."

She hastily untwisted the rose from her raven locks. "Take it," cried she, agitated and blushing, "but pray begone."

The page took the rose, and at the same time covered with kisses the fair hand that gave it. Then, placing the flower in his bonnet, and taking the falcon upon his fist, he bounded off through the garden, bearing away with him the heart of the gentle Jacinta.

When the vigilant aunt arrived at the tower, she remarked the agitation of her niece, and an air of confusion in the hall; but a word of explanation sufficed. "A ger-falcon had pursued his prey into the hall."

"Mercy on us! to think of a falcon flying into the tower. Did ever one hear of so saucy a hawk! Why, the very bird in the cage is not safe!"

The vigilant Fredegonda was one of the most wary of ancient spinsters. She had a becoming terror and distrust of what she denominated the "opposite sex," which had gradually increased through a long life of celibacy. Not that the good lady had ever suffered from their wiles, nature having set up a safeguard in her face that forbade all trespass upon her premises; but ladies who have least cause to fear for themselves, are most ready to keep a watch over their more tempting neighbours.

The niece was the orphan of an officer who had fallen in the wars. She had been educated in a convent, and had recently been transferred from her sacred asylum to the immediate guardianship of her aunt, under whose overshadowing care she vegetated in obscurity, like an opening rose blooming beneath a brier. Nor indeed is this comparison entirely

accidental; for, to tell the truth, her fresh and dawning beauty had caught the public eye, even in her seclusion, and, with that poetical turn common to the people of Andalusia, the peasantry of the neighbourhood had given her the appellation of "the Rose of the Alhambra."

The wary aunt continued to keep a faithful watch over her tempting little niece as long as the court continued at Granada, and flattered herself that her vigilance had been successful. It is true, the good lady was now and then discomposed by the tinkling of guitars and chanting of love ditties from the moonlit groves beneath the tower; but she would exhort her niece to shut her ears against such idle minstrelsy, assuring her that it was one of the arts of the opposite sex, by which simple maids were often lured to their undoing. Alas! what chance with a simple maid has a dry lecture against a moonlight serenade?

At length King Philip cut short his sojourn at Granada, and suddenly departed with all his train. The vigilant Fredegonda watched the royal pageant as it issued forth from the Gate of Justice and descended the great avenue leading to the city. When the last banner disappeared from her sight, she returned exulting to her tower, for all her cares were over. To her surprise, a light Arabian steed pawed the ground at the wicket-gate of the garden:—to her horror, she saw through the thickets of roses a youth, in gaily embroidered dress, at the feet of her niece. At the sound of her footsteps he gave a tender adieu, bounded lightly over the barrier of reeds and myrtles, sprang upon his horse, and was out of sight in an instant.

The tender Jacinta, in the agony of her grief, lost all thought of her aunt's displeasure. Throwing herself into her arms, she broke forth into sobs and tears.

"Ay de mi!" cried she; "he's gone!—he's gone!—he's gone! and I shall never see him more!"

"Gone!—who is gone?—what youth is that I saw at your feet?"

"A queen's page, aunt, who came to bid me farewell."

"A queen's page, child!" echoed the

vigilant Fredegonda, faintly; "and when did you become acquainted with a queen's page?"

"The morning that the ger-falcon came into the tower. It was the queen's ger-falcon, and he came in pursuit of it."

"Ah silly, silly girl! know that there are no ger-falcons half so dangerous as these young pranking pages, and it is precisely such simple birds as thee that they pounce upon."

The aunt was at first indignant at learning, that in despite of her boasted vigilance, a tender intercourse had been carried on by the youthful lovers, almost beneath her eye; but when she found that her simple-hearted niece, though thus exposed, without the protection of bolt or bar, to all the machinations of the opposite sex, had come forth unsinged from the fiery ordeal, she consoled herself with the persuasion that it was owing to the chaste and cautious maxims in which she had, as it were, steeped her to the very lips.

While the aunt laid this soothing action to her pride, the niece treasured up the oft-repeated vows of fidelity of the page. But what is the love of restless, roving man? A vagrant stream that dallies for a time with each flower upon its bank, then passes on, and leaves them all in tears.

Days, weeks, months elapsed, and nothing more was heard of the page. The pomegranate ripened, the vine yielded up its fruit, the autumnal rains descended in torrents from the mountains; the Sierra Nevada became covered with a snowy mantle, and wintry blasts howled through the halls of the Alhambra—still he came not. The winter passed away. Again the genial spring burst forth with song and blossom and balmy zephyr; the snows melted from the mountains, until none remained but on the lofty summit of Nevada, glistening through the sultry summer air. Still nothing was heard of the forgetful page.

In the mean time, the poor little Jacinta grew pale and thoughtful. Her former occupations and amusements were abandoned, her silk lay entangled, her guitar unstrung, her flowers were neglected, the notes of her bird unheeded, and her eyes, once so bright, were dimmed

with secret weeping. If any solitude could be devised to foster the passion of a love-lorn damsel, it would be such a place as the Alhambra, where every thing seems disposed to produce tender and romantic reveries. It is a very paradise for lovers: how hard then to be alone in such a paradise—and not merely alone, but forsaken!

“Alas, silly child!” would the staid and immaculate Fredegonda say, when she found her niece in one of her desponding moods—“did I not warn thee against the wiles and deceptions of these men? What couldst thou expect, too, from one of a haughty and aspiring family—thou an orphan, the descendant of a fallen and impoverished line? Be assured, if the youth were true, his father, who is one of the proudest nobles about the court, would prohibit his union with one so humble and portionless as thou. Pluck up thy resolution, therefore, and drive these idle notions from thy mind.”

The words of the immaculate Fredegonda only served to increase the melancholy of her niece, but she sought to indulge it in private. At a late hour one midsummer night, after her aunt had retired to rest, she remained alone in the hall of the tower, seated beside the alabaster fountain. It was here that the faithless page had first knelt and kissed her hand; it was here that he had often vowed eternal fidelity. The poor little damsel’s heart was overladen with sad and tender recollections, her tears began to flow, and slowly fell drop by drop into the fountain. By degrees the crystal water became agitated, and—bubble—bubble—bubble—boiled up and was tossed about, until a female figure, richly clad in Moorish robes, slowly rose to view.

Jacinta was so frightened that she fled from the hall, and did not venture to return. The next morning she related what she had seen to her aunt, but the good lady treated it as a fantasy of her troubled mind, or supposed she had fallen asleep and dreamt beside the fountain. “Thou hast been thinking of the story of the three Moorish princesses that once inhabited this tower,” continued she, “and it has entered into thy dreams.”

“What story, aunt? I know nothing of it.”

“Thou hast certainly heard of the three princesses, Zayda, Zorayda, and Zorahayda, who were confined in this tower by the king their father, and agreed to fly with three Christian cavaliers. The two first accomplished their escape, but the third failed in her resolution, and it is said, died in this tower.”

“I now recollect to have heard of it,” said Jacinta, “and to have wept over the fate of the gentle Zorahayda.”

“Thou mayest well weep over her fate,” continued the aunt, “for the lover of Zorahayda was thy ancestor. He long bemoaned his Moorish love, but time cured him of his grief, and he married a Spanish lady, from whom thou art descended.”

Jacinta ruminated upon these words. “That what I have seen is no fantasy of the brain,” said she to herself, “I am confident. If indeed it be the spirit of the gentle Zorahayda, which I have heard lingers about this tower, of what should I be afraid? I’ll watch by the fountain to-night—perhaps the visit will be repeated.”

Towards midnight, when every thing was quiet, she again took her seat in the hall. As the bell in the distant watchtower of the Alhambra struck the midnight hour, the fountain was again agitated; and—bubble—bubble—bubble—it tossed about the waters until the Moorish female again rose to view. She was young and beautiful; her dress was rich with jewels, and in her hand she held a silver lute. Jacinta trembled and was faint, but was reassured by the soft and plaintive voice of the apparition, and the sweet expression of her pale, melancholy countenance.

“Daughter of mortality,” said she, “what aileth thee? Why do thy tears trouble my fountain, and thy sighs and plaints disturb the quiet watches of the night?”

“I weep because of the faithlessness of man, and I bemoan my solitary and forsaken state.”

“Take comfort; thy sorrows may yet have an end. Thou beholdest a Moorish princess, who, like thee, was unhappy in her love. A Christian knight, thy ancestor, won my heart, and would have borne me to his native land and to the

bosom of his church. I was a convert in my heart, but I lacked courage equal to my faith, and lingered till too late. For this the evil genii are permitted to have power over me, and I remain enchanted in this tower until some pure Christian will deign to break the magic spell. Wilt thou undertake the task ?

"I will," replied the damsel trembling.

"Come hither then, and fear not ; dip thy hand in the fountain, sprinkle the water over me, and baptize me after the manner of thy faith ; so shall the enchantment be dispelled, and my troubled spirit have repose."

The damsel advanced with faltering steps, dipped her hand in the fountain, collected water in the palm, and sprinkled it over the pale face of the phantom.

The latter smiled with ineffable benignity. She dropped her silver lute at the feet of Jacinta, crossed her white arms upon her bosom and melted from sight, so that it seemed merely as if a shower of dew drops had fallen into the fountain.

Jacinta retired from the hall filled with awe and wonder. She scarcely closed her eyes that night, but when she awoke at daybreak out of a troubled slumber, the whole appeared to her like a distempered dream. On descending into the hall, however, the truth of the vision was established, for, beside the fountain, she beheld the silver lute glittering in the morning sunshine.

She hastened to her aunt, to relate all that had befallen her, and called her to behold the lute as a testimonial of the reality of her story. If the good lady had any lingering doubts, they were removed when Jacinta touched the instrument, for she drew forth such ravishing tones as to thaw even the frigid bosom of the immaculate Fredegonda, that region of eternal winter, into a genial flow. Nothing but supernatural melody could have produced such an effect.

The extraordinary power of the lute became every day more and more apparent. The wayfarer passing by the tower was detained, and, as it were, spellbound, in breathless ecstasy. The very birds gathered in the neighbouring trees, and hushing their own strains, listened in charmed silence.

Rumour soon spread the news abroad. The inhabitants of Granada thronged to the Alhambra to catch a few notes of the transcendent music that floated about the tower of Las Infantas.

The lovely little minstrel was at length drawn forth from her retreat. The rich and powerful of the land contended who should entertain and do honour to her ; or rather, who should secure the charms of her lute to draw fashionable throngs to their saloons. Wherever she went her vigilant aunt kept a dragon watch at her elbow, awing the throngs of impassioned admirers, who hung in raptures on her strains. The report of her wonderful powers spread from city to city. Malaga, Seville, Cordova, all became successively mad on the theme ; nothing was talked of throughout Andalusia but the beautiful minstrel of the Alhambra. How could it be otherwise among a people so musical and gallant as the Andalusians, when the lute was magical in its powers, and the minstrel inspired by love ?

While all Andalusia was thus music-mad, a different mood prevailed at the court of Spain. Philip V., as is well known, was a miserable hypochondriac, and subject to all kinds of fancies. Sometimes he would keep to his bed for weeks together, groaning under imaginary complaints. At other times he would insist on abdicating his throne, to the great annoyance of his royal spouse, who had a strong relish for the splendours of a court and the glories of a crown, and guided the sceptre of her imbecile lord with an expert and steady hand.

Nothing was found to be so efficacious in dispelling the royal megrims as the powers of music ; the queen took care, therefore, to have the best performers, both vocal and instrumental, at hand, and retained the famous Italian singer, Farinelli, about the court as a kind of royal physician.

At the moment we treat of, however, a freak had come over the mind of this sapient and illustrious Bourbon that surpassed all former vagaries. After a long spell of imaginary illness, which set all the strains of Farinelli, and the consultations of a whole orchestra of court fiddlers at defiance, the monarch fairly,

in idea, gave up the ghost, and considered himself absolutely dead.

This would have been harmless enough, and even convenient both to his queen and courtiers, had he been content to remain in the quietude befitting a dead man, but to their annoyance he insisted upon having the funeral ceremonies performed over him, and, to their inexpressible perplexity, began to grow impatient and to revile bitterly at them for negligence and disrespect, in leaving him unburied. What was to be done? To disobey the king's positive commands was monstrous in the eyes of the obsequious courtiers of a punctilious court—but to obey him and bury him alive, would be downright regicide!

In the midst of this fearful dilemma a rumour reached the court, of the female minstrel who was turning the brains of all Andalusia. The queen despatched missions in all haste to summon her to St. Ildefonso, where the court at that time resided.

Within a few days, as the queen, with her maids of honour, was walking in those stately gardens intended, with their avenues and terraces and fountains, to eclipse the glories of Versailles, the far-famed minstrel was conducted into her presence. The imperial Elizabetha gazed with surprise at the youthful and unpretending appearance of the little being that had set the world madding. She was in her picturesque Andalusian dress, her silver lute was in her hand, and she stood with modest and downcast eyes, but with a simplicity and freshness of beauty that still bespoke her "the Rose of the Alhambra."

As usual she was accompanied by the ever vigilant Fredegonda, who gave the whole history of her parentage and descent to the inquiring queen. If the stately Elizabetha had been interested by the appearance of Jacinta, she was still more pleased when she learnt that she was of a meritorious though impoverished line, and that her father had bravely fallen in the service of the crown. "If thy powers equal their renown," said she, "and thou canst cast forth this evil spirit that possesses thy sovereign, thy fortunes shall henceforth be my care, and honours and wealth attend thee."

Impatient to make trial of her skill, she led the way at once to the apartment of the moody monarch.

Jacinta followed with downcast eyes through files of guards and crowds of courtiers. They arrived at length at a great chamber hung with black. The windows were closed to exclude the light of day: a number of yellow wax tapers in silver sconces diffused a lugubrious light, and dimly revealed the figures of mutes in mourning dresses, and courtiers who glided about with noiseless step and wo-begone visage. On the midst of a funeral bed or bier, his hands folded on his breast, and the tip of his nose just visible, lay extended this would-be-buried monarch.

The queen entered the chamber in silence, and pointing to a footstool in an obscure corner, beckoned to Jacinta to sit down and commence.

At first she touched her lute with a faltering hand, but gathering confidence and animation as she proceeded, drew forth such soft aerial harmony, that all present could scarce believe it mortal. As to the monarch, who had already considered himself in the world of spirits, he set it down for some angelic melody or music of the spheres. By degrees the theme was varied, and the voice of the minstrel accompanied the instrument. She poured forth one of the legendary ballads treating of the ancient glories of the Alhambra and the achievements of the Moors. Her whole soul entered into the theme, for with the recollections of the Alhambra was associated the story of her love. The funeral chamber resounded with the animating strain. It entered into the gloomy heart of the monarch. He raised his head and gazed around: he sat up on his couch, his eye began to kindle—at length, leaping upon the floor, he called for sword and buckler.

The triumph of music, or rather of the enchanted lute was complete; the demon of melancholy was cast forth; and, as it were, a dead man brought to life. The windows of the apartment were thrown open; and the glorious effulgence of Spanish sunshine burst into the late lugubrious chamber; all eyes sought the lovely enchantress, but the lute had fallen from her hand, she had sunk upon the

earth, and the next moment was clasped to the bosom of Ruyz de Alcarcon.

The nuptials of the happy couple were shortly after celebrated with great splendour; but hold—I hear the reader ask, how did Ruyz de Alarcon account for his long neglect? O that was all owing to the opposition of a proud pragmatistical old father: besides, young people, who really like one another, soon come to an amicable understanding, and bury all past grievances when once they meet.

But how was the proud pragmatistical old father reconciled to the match?

O his scruples were easily overcome by a word or two from the queen, especially as dignities and rewards were showered upon the blooming favourite of royalty. Besides, the lute of Jacinta, you know, possessed a magic power, and could control the most stubborn head and hardest breast.

And what came of the enchanted lute?

O that is the most curious matter of all, and plainly proves the truth of all this story. That lute remained for some time in the family, but was purloined and carried off, as was supposed, by the great singer Farinelli, in pure jealousy. At his death it passed into other hands in Italy, who were ignorant of its mystic powers, and melting down the silver, transferred the strings to an old Cremona fiddle. The strings still retain something of their magic virtues. A word in the reader's ear, but let it go no further—that fiddle is now bewitching the whole world—it is the fiddle of Paganini!

### THE VETERAN.

AMONG the curious acquaintances I have made in my rambles about the fortress, is a brave and battered old colonel of Invalids, who is nestled like a hawk in one of the Moorish towers. His history, which he is fond of telling, is a tissue of those adventures, mishaps, and vicissitudes that render the life of almost every Spaniard of note as varied and whimsical as the pages of Gil Blas.

He was in America at twelve years of age, and reckons among the most signal

and fortunate events of his life, his having seen General Washington. Since then he has taken a part in all the wars of his country; he can speak experimentally of most of the prisons and dungeons of the Peninsula; has been lamed of one leg, crippled in his hands, and so cut up and carbonadoed, that he is a kind of walking monument of the troubles of Spain, on which there is a scar for every battle and broil, as every year was notched upon the tree of Robinson Crusoe. The greatest misfortune of the brave old cavalier, however, appears to have been his having commanded at Malaga during a time of peril and confusion, and been made a general by the inhabitants, to protect them from the invasion of the French. This has entailed upon him a number of just claims upon government, that I fear will employ him until his dying day in writing and printing petitions and memorials, to the great disquiet of his mind, exhaustion of his purse, and penance of his friends; not one of whom can visit him without having to listen to a mortal document of half an hour in length, and to carry away half a dozen paraphlets in his pocket. This, however, is the case throughout Spain: every where you meet with some worthy wight brooding in a corner and nursing up some pet grievance and cherished wrong. Besides, a Spaniard who has a lawsuit, or a claim upon government, may be considered as furnished with employment for the remainder of his life.

I visited the veteran in his quarters, in the upper part of the Torre del Vino, or Wine Tower. His room was small but snug, and commanded a beautiful view of the Vega. It was arranged with a soldier's precision. Three muskets and a brace of pistols, all bright and shining, were suspended against the wall with a sabre and a cane, hanging side by side, and above them, two cocked hats, one for parade, and one for ordinary use. A small shelf, containing some half dozen books, formed his library, one of which, a little old mouldy volume of philosophical maxims, was his favourite reading. This he thumbed and pondered over day by day: applying every maxim to his own particular case, provided it had a little tinge of wholesome bitterness,

and treated of the injustice of the world. Yet he is social and kind-hearted, and provided he can be diverted from his wrongs and his philosophy, is an entertaining companion. I like these old weatherbeaten sons of fortune, and enjoy their rough campaigning anecdotes. In the course of my visit to the one in question, I learnt some curious facts about an old military commander of the fortress, who seems to have resembled him in some respects, and to have had similar fortunes in the wars. These particulars have been augmented by inquiries among some of the old inhabitants of the place, particularly the father of Mateo Ximenes, of whose traditional stories the worthy I am about to introduce to the reader, is a favourite hero.

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THE

GOVERNOR AND THE NOTARY.

IN former times there ruled as governor of the Alhambra, a doughty old cavalier, who, from having lost one arm in the wars, was commonly known by the name of el Gobernador Manco, or "the one-armed governor." He in fact prided himself upon being an old soldier, wore his mustachios curled up to his eyes, a pair of campaigning boots, and a Toledo as long as a spit, with his pocket handkerchief in the basket hilt.

He was, moreover, exceedingly proud and punctilious, and tenacious of all his privileges and dignities. Under his sway the immunities of the Alhambra, as a royal residence and domain, were rigidly exacted. No one was permitted to enter the fortress with fire-arms, or even with a sword or staff, unless he were of a certain rank; and every horseman was obliged to dismount at the gate, and lead his horse by the bridle. Now as the hill of the Alhambra rises from the very midst of the city of Granada, being, as it were, an excrescence of the capital, it must at all times be somewhat irksome to the captain-general, who commands the province, to have thus an *imperium in imperio*, a petty independent post in the very centre of his domains. It was

rendered the more galling in the present instance, from the irritable jealousy of the old governor, that took fire on the least question of authority and jurisdiction, and from the loose vagrant character of the people that had gradually nestled themselves within the fortress, as in a sanctuary, and from thence carried on a system of roguery and depredation at the expense of the honest inhabitants of the city.

Thus there was a perpetual feud and heart-burning between the captain-general and the governor, the more virulent on the part of the latter, inasmuch as the smallest of two neighbouring potentates is always the most captious about dignity. The stately palace of the captain-general stood in the Plaza Nueva, immediately at the foot of the hill of the Alhambra, and here was always a bustle and parade of guards, and domestics, and city functionaries. A beetling bastion of the fortress overlooked the palace and public square in front of it; and on this bastion the old governor would occasionally strut backwards and forwards, with his Toledo girded by his side, keeping a wary eye down upon his rival, like a hawk reconnoitring his quarry from his nest in a dry tree.

Whenever he descended into the city it was in grand parade, on horseback surrounded by his guards, or in his state coach, an ancient and unwieldy Spanish edifice of carved timber and gilt leather, drawn by eight mules, with running footmen, out-riders and lackeys, on which occasions he flattered himself he impressed every beholder with awe and admiration as vicegerent of the king, though the wits of Granada, particularly those who loitered about the palace of the captain-general, were apt to sneer at his petty parade, and in allusion to the vagrant character of his subjects, to greet him with the appellation of "the king of the beggars." One of the most fruitful sources of dispute between these two doughty rivals, was the right claimed by the governor to have all things passed free of duty through the city, that were intended for the use of himself or his garrison. By degrees this privilege had given rise to extensive smuggling. A nest of contrabandistas took up their abode



in the hovels of the fortress, and the numerous caves in its vicinity, and drove a thriving business under the connivance of the soldiers of the garrison.

The vigilance of the captain-general was aroused. He consulted his legal adviser and factotum, a shrewd meddling escribano, or notary, who rejoiced in an opportunity of perplexing the old potentate of the Alhambra, and involving him in a maze of legal subtleties. He advised the captain-general to insist upon the right of examining every convoy passing through the gates of his city, and he penned a long letter for him in vindication of his right. Governor Manco was a straight-forward cut-and-thrust old soldier, who hated an escribano worse than the devil, and this one in particular worse than all other escribanos. "What!" said he, curling up his mustachios fiercely, "does the captain-general set his man of the pen to practise confusions upon me? I'll let him see that an old soldier is not to be baffled by schoolcraft."

He seized his pen and scrawled a short letter in a crabbed hand, in which, without deigning to enter into argument, he insisted on the right of transit free of search, and denounced vengeance on any custom-house officer who should lay his unhallowed hand on any convoy protected by the flag of the Alhambra. While this question was agitated between the two pragmatistical potentates, it so happened that a mule laden with supplies for the fortress arrived one day at the gate of Xenil, by which it was to traverse a suburb of the city on its way to the Alhambra. The convoy was headed by a testy old corporal, who had long served under the governor, and was a man after his own heart; as rusty and staunch as an old Toledo blade. As they approached the gate of the city, the corporal placed the banner of the Alhambra on the pack-saddle of the mule, and, drawing himself up to a perfect perpendicular, advanced with his head dressed to the front, but with the wary sideglance of a cur passing through hostile ground, ready for a snap or a snarl.

"Who goes there?" said the sentinel at the gate.

"Soldier of the Alhambra," said the corporal, without turning his head.

"What have you in charge?"

"Provisions for the garrison."

"Proceed."

The corporal marched straight forward, followed by the convoy, but had not advanced many paces before a posse of custom-house officers rushed out of a small toll-house.

"Hallo there!" cried the leader. "Muleteer, halt, and open those packages."

The corporal wheeled round, and drew himself up in battle array. "Respect the flag of the Alhambra," said he; "these things are for the governor."

"A figo for the governor, and a figo for his flag. Muleteer, halt, I say."

"Stop the convoy at your peril!" cried the corporal, cocking his musket; "Muleteer, proceed."

The muleteer gave his beast a hearty thwack; the custom-house officer sprang forward and seized the halter; whereupon the corporal levelled his piece and shot him dead.

The street was immediately in an uproar.

The old corporal was seized, and after undergoing sundry kicks and cuffs and cudgellings, which are generally given impromptu by the mob in Spain, as a foretaste of the after penalties of the law, he was loaded with irons, and conducted to the city prison; while his comrades were permitted to proceed with the convoy, after it had been well rummaged, to the Alhambra.

The old governor was in a towering passion when he heard of this insult to his flag and capture of his corporal. For a time he stormed about the Moorish halls, and vapoured about the bastions, and looked down fire and sword upon the palace of the captain-general. Having vented the first ebullition of his wrath, he despatched a message demanding the surrender of the corporal, as to him alone belonged the right of sitting in judgment on the offences of those under his command. The captain-general, aided by the pen of the delighted escribano, replied at great length, arguing that as the offence had been committed within the walls of his city, and against one of his civil officers, it was clearly within his proper jurisdiction. The

governor rejoined by a repetition of his demand; the captain-general gave a sur-rejoinder of still greater length and legal acumen; the governor became hotter and more peremptory in his demands, and the captain-general cooler and more copious in his replies; until the old lion-hearted soldier absolutely roared with fury at being thus entangled in the meshes of legal controversy.

While the subtle escribano was thus amusing himself at the expense of the governor, he was conducting the trial of the corporal, who, mewed up in a narrow dungeon of the prison, had merely a small grated window at which to show his iron-bound visage and receive the consolations of his friends.

A mountain of written testimony was diligently heaped up, according to Spanish form, by the indefatigable escribano; the corporal was completely overwhelmed by it. He was convicted of murder and sentenced to be hanged.

It was in vain the governor sent down remonstrance and menace from the Alhambra. The fatal day was at hand, and the corporal was put *in capilla*, that is to say, in the chapel of the prison, as is always done with culprits the day before execution, that they may meditate on their approaching end and repent them of their sins.

Seeing things drawing to an extremity, the old governor determined to attend to the affair in person. For this purpose he ordered out his carriage of state, and, surrounded by his guards, rumbled down the avenue of the Alhambra into the city. Driving to the house of the escribano, he summoned him to the portal.

The eye of the old governor gleamed like a coal at beholding the smirking man of the law advancing with an air of exultation.

"What is this I hear," cried he, "that you are about to put to death one of my soldiers?"

"All according to law—all in strict form of justice," said the self-sufficient escribano, chuckling and rubbing his hands. "I can show your excellency the written testimony in the case."

"Fetch it hither," said the governor. The escribano bustled into his office, delighted with having another opportunity

of displaying his ingenuity at the expense of the hard-headed veteran.

He returned with a satchel full of papers, and began to read a long deposition with professional volubility. By this time a crowd had collected, listening with outstretched necks and gaping mouths.

"Pr'ythee, man, get into the carriage, out of this pestilent throng, that I may the better hear thee," said the governor.

The escribano entered the carriage, when, in a twinkling, the door was closed, the coachman smacked his whip—mules, carriage, guards and all dashed off at a thundering rate, leaving the crowd in gaping wonderment; nor did the governor pause until he had lodged his prey in one of the strongest dungeons of the Alhambra.

He then sent down a flag of truce in military style, proposing a cartel or exchange of prisoners—the corporal for the notary. The pride of the captain-general was piqued; he returned a contemptuous refusal, and forthwith caused a gallows, tall and strong, to be erected in the centre of the Plaza Nueva for the execution of the corporal.

"Oho! is that the game?" said Governor Manco. He gave orders, and immediately a gibbet was reared on the verge of the great beetling bastion that overlooked the Plaza. "Now," said he, in a message to the captain-general, "hang my soldier when you please; but at the same time that he is swung off in the square, look up to see your escribano dangling against the sky."

The captain-general was inflexible; troops were paraded in the square; the drums beat, the bell tolled. An immense multitude of amateurs had collected to behold the execution. On the other hand, the governor paraded his garrison on the bastion, and tolled the funeral-dirge of the notary from the Torre de la Campana, or Tower of the Bell.

The notary's wife pressed through the crowd with a whole progeny of little embryo escribanos at her heels, and throwing herself at the feet of the captain-general, implored him not to sacrifice the life of her husband and the welfare of her numerous little ones, to a point of pride; "for you know the old governor

too well," said she, "to doubt that he will put his threat in execution, if you hang the soldier."

The captain-general was overpowered by her tears and lamentations, and the clamours of her callow brood. The corporal was sent up to the Alhambra, under a guard, in his gallows' garb, like a hooded friar, but with head erect and a face of iron. The escribano was demanded in exchange, according to the cartel. The once bustling and self-sufficient man of the law was drawn forth from his dungeon more dead than alive. All his flippancy and conceit had evaporated; his hair, it is said, had nearly turned gray with affright, and he had a downcast, dogged look, as if he still felt the halter round his neck.

The old governor stuck his one arm a-kimbo, and for a moment surveyed him with an iron smile. "Henceforth, my friend," said he, "moderate your zeal in hurrying others to the gallows; be not too certain of your safety, even though you should have the law on your side; and above all, take care how you play off your school-craft another time upon an old soldier."

### GOVERNOR MANCO AND THE SOLDIER.

WHEN Governor Manco, or "the one-armed," kept up a show of military state in the Alhambra, he became nettled at the reproaches continually cast upon his fortress, of being a nestling-place of rogues and contrabandistas. On a sudden, the old potentate determined on reform, and setting vigorously to work, ejected whole nests of vagabonds out of the fortress and the gipsy caves with which the surrounding hills are honey-combed. He sent out soldiers, also, to patrol the avenues and footpaths, with orders to take up all suspicious persons.

One bright summer morning, a patrol, consisting of the testy old corporal who had distinguished himself in the affair of the notary, a trumpeter and two privates, was seated under the garden wall of the Generalife, beside the road which leads

down from the Mountain of the Sun, when they heard the tramp of a horse, and a male voice singing in rough, though not unmusical tones, an old Castilian campaigning song.

Presently they beheld a sturdy, sun-burnt fellow, clad in the ragged garb of a foot soldier, leading a powerful Arabian horse, caparisoned in the ancient Moresco fashion.

Astonished at the sight of a strange soldier descending steep in hand, from that solitary mountain, the corporal stepped forth and challenged him.

"Who goes there?"

"A friend."

"Who and what are you?"

"A poor soldier just from the wars, with a cracked crown and empty purse for a reward."

By this time they were enabled to view him more narrowly. He had a black patch across his forehead, which, with a grizzled beard, added to a certain dare-devil cast of countenance, while a slight squint threw into the whole an occasional gleam of roguish good humour.

Having answered the question of the patrol, the soldier seemed to consider himself entitled to make others in return. "May I ask," said he, "what city is that which I see at the foot of the hill?"

"What city!" cried the trumpeter; "come, that's too bad. Here's a fellow lurking about the Mountain of the Sun, and demands the name of the great city of Granada!"

"Granada! Madre di Dios! can it be possible?"

"Perhaps not!" rejoined the trumpeter; "and perhaps you have no idea that yonder are the towers of the Alhambra."

"Son of a trumpet," replied the stranger, "do not trifle with me; if this be indeed the Alhambra, I have some strange matters to reveal to the governor."

"You will have an opportunity," said the corporal, "for we mean to take you before him." By this time the trumpeter had seized the bridle of the steed, the two privates had each secured an arm of the soldier, the corporal put himself in front, gave the word, "Forward—march!" and away they marched for the Alhambra.

The sight of a ragged foot soldier and a fine Arabian horse, brought in captive by the patrol, attracted the attention of all the idlers of the fortress, and of those gossip groups that generally assemble about wells and fountains at early dawn. The wheel of the cistern paused in its rotations, and the slip-shod servant-maid stood gaping, with pitcher in hand, as the corporal passed by with his prize. A motley train gradually gathered in the rear of the escort.

Knowing nods and winks and conjectures passed from one to another. "It is a deserter," said one; "A contrabandista," said another; "A bandalero," said a third;—until it was affirmed that a captain of a desperate band of robbers had been captured by the prowess of the corporal and his patrol. "Well, well," said the old crones, one to another, "captain or not, let him get out of the grasp of old Governor Manco if he can, though he is but one-handed."

Governor Manco was seated in one of the inner halls of the Alhambra, taking his morning's cup of chocolate in company with his confessor, a fat Franciscan friar, from the neighbouring convent. A demure, dark-eyed damself of Malaga, the daughter of his housekeeper, was attending upon him. The world hinted that the damsel who, with all her demureness, was a sly buxom baggage, had found out a soft spot in the iron heart of the old governor, and held complete control over him. But let that pass—the domestic affairs of these mighty potentates of the earth should not be too narrowly scrutinized.

When word was brought that a suspicious stranger had been taken lurking about the fortress, and was actually in the outer court, in durance of the corporal, waiting the pleasure of his excellency, the pride and stateliness of office swelled the bosom of the governor. Giving back his chocolate cup into the hands of the demure damsel, he called for his basket-hilted sword, girded it to his side, twirled up his mustachios, took his seat in a large high-backed chair, assumed a bitter and forbidding aspect, and ordered the prisoner into his presence. The soldier was brought in, still closely pinioned by his captors, and

guarded by the corporal. He maintained, however, a resolute self-confident air, and returned the sharp, scrutinizing look of the governor with an easy squint, which by no means pleased the punctilious old potentate.

"Well, culprit," said the governor, after he had regarded him for a moment in silence, "what have you to say for yourself—who are you?"

"A soldier, just from the wars, who has brought away nothing but scars and bruises."

"A soldier—humph—a foot soldier by your garb. I understand you have a fine Arabian horse. I presume you brought him too from the wars; beside your scars and bruises."

"May it please your excellency, I have something strange to tell about that horse. Indeed I have one of the most wonderful things to relate. Something too that concerns the security of this fortress, indeed of all Granada. But it is a matter to be imparted only to your private ear, or in the presence of such only as are in your confidence."

The governor considered for a moment, and then directed the corporal and his men to withdraw, but to post themselves outside of the door, and be ready at a call. "This holy friar," said he, "is my confessor, you may say any thing in his presence—and this damsel," nodding towards the handmaid, who had loitered with an air of great curiosity, "this damsel is of great secrecy and discretion, and to be trusted with any thing."

The soldier gave a glance between a squint and a leer at the demure handmaid. "I am perfectly willing," said he, "that the damsel should remain."

When all the rest had withdrawn, the soldier commenced his story. He was a fluent, smooth-tongued varlet, and had a command of language above his apparent rank.

"May it please your excellency," said he, "I am, as I before observed, a soldier, and have seen some hard service, but my term of enlistment being expired, I was discharged, not long since, from the army at Valladolid, and set out on foot for my native village in Andalusia. Yesterday evening the sun went down

as I was traversing a great dry plain of Old Castile."

"Hold," cried the governor, "what is this you say? Old Castile is some two or three hundred miles from this."

"Even so," replied the soldier coolly, "I told your excellency I had strange things to relate; but not more strange than true; as your excellency will find, if you will deign me a patient hearing."

"Proceed, culprit!" said the governor, twirling up his mustachios.

"As the sun went down," continued the soldier, "I cast my eyes about in search of some quarters for the night, but far as my sight could reach, there were no signs of habitation. I saw that I should have to make my bed on the naked plain, with my knapsack for a pillow; but your excellency is an old soldier, and knows that to one who has been in the wars, such a night's lodging is no great hardship."

The governor nodded assent, as he drew his pocket-handkerchief out of the basket-hilt, to drive away a fly that buzzed about his nose.

"Well, to make a long story short," continued the soldier, "I trudged forward for several miles until I came to a bridge over a deep ravine, through which ran a little thread of water, almost dried up by the summer heat. At one end of the bridge was a Moorish tower, the upper end all in ruins, but a vault in the foundation quite entire. Here, thinks I, is a good place to make a halt; so I went down to the stream, took a hearty drink, for the water was pure and sweet, and I was parched with thirst; then, opening my wallet, I took out an onion and a few crusts, which were all my provisions, and seating myself on a stone on the margin of the stream, began to make my supper; intending afterwards to quarter myself for the night in the vault of the tower; and capital quarters they would have been for a campaigner just from the wars, as your excellency, who is an old soldier, may suppose."

"I have put up gladly with worse in my time," said the governor, returning his pocket-handkerchief into the hilt of his sword.

"While I was quietly crunching my crust," pursued, the soldier, "I heard

something stir within the vault; I listened—it was the tramp of a horse. By and by, a man came forth from a door in the foundation of the tower, close by the water's edge, leading a powerful horse by the bridle. I could not well make out what he was by starlight. It had a suspicious look to be lurking among the ruins of a tower, in that wild solitary place. He might be a mere wayfarer, like myself; he might be a contrabandista; he might be a bandalero! what of that? thank heaven and my poverty, I had nothing to lose; so I sat still and crunched my crusts.

"He led his horse to the water, close by where I was sitting, so that I had a fair opportunity of reconnoitring him. To my surprise he was dressed in a Moorish garb, with a cuirass of steel, and a polished skullcap, that I distinguished by the reflection of the stars upon it. His horse, too, was harnessed in the Moresco fashion, with great shovel stirrups. He led him, as I said, to the side of the stream, into which the animal plunged his head almost to the eyes, and drank until I thought he would have burst.

"'Comrade,' said I, 'your steed drinks well; it's a good sign when a horse plunges his muzzle bravely into the water.'

"'He may well drink,' said the stranger, speaking with a Moorish accent, 'it is a good year since he had his last draught.'

"'By Santiago,' said I, 'that beats even the camels that I have seen in Africa. But come, you seem to be something of a soldier, will you sit down and take part of a soldier's fare?' In fact I felt the want of a companion in this lonely place, and was willing to put up with an infidel. Besides, as your excellency well knows, a soldier is never very particular about the faith of his company, and soldiers of all countries are comrades on peaceable ground."

The governor again nodded assent.

"Well, as I was saying, I invited him to share my supper, such as it was, for I could do no less in common hospitality. 'I have no time to pause for meat or drink,' said he, 'I have a long journey to make before morning.'

“In which direction,” said I.

“Andalusia,” said he.

“Exactly my route,” said I, “so, as you won’t stop and eat with me, perhaps you will let me mount and ride with you. I see your horse is of a powerful frame, I’ll warrant he’ll carry double.”

“Agreed,” said the trooper; and it would not have been civil and soldier-like to refuse, especially as I had offered to share my supper with him. So up he mounted, and up I mounted behind him.

“Hold fast,” said he, “my steed goes like the wind.”

“Never fear me,” said I, and so off we set.

“From a walk the horse soon passed to a trot, from a trot to a gallop, and from a gallop to a harum-scarum scamper. It seemed as if rocks, trees, houses, every thing, flew hurry-scurry behind us.

“What town is this?” said I.

“Segovia,” said he; and before the word was out of his mouth, the towers of Segovia were out of sight. We swept up the Guadarama mountains, and down by the Escorial; and we skirted the walls of Madrid, and we scoured away across the plains of La Mancha. In this way we went up hill and down dale, by towers and cities, all buried in deep sleep, and across mountains, and plains, and rivers, just glimmering in the starlight.

“To make a long story short, and not to fatigue your excellency, the trooper suddenly pulled up on the side of a mountain. ‘Here we are,’ said he, ‘at the end of our journey.’ I looked about, but could see no signs of habitation; nothing but the mouth of a cavern. While I looked I saw multitudes of people in Moorish dresses, some on horseback, some on foot, arriving as if borne by the wind from all points of the compass, and hurrying into the mouth of the cavern, like bees into a hive. Before I could ask a question, the trooper struck his long Moorish spurs into the horse’s flanks and dashed in with the throng. We passed along a steep winding way, that descended into the very bowels of the mountain. As we pushed on, a light began to glimmer up, by little and little, like the first glimmerings of day, but what caused it I could not discern. It grew stronger and stronger, and enabled

me to see every thing around. I now noticed, as we passed along, great caverns, opening to the right and left, like halls in an arsenal. In some there were shields, and helmets, and cuirasses, and lances, and cimeters, hanging against the wall; in others there were great heaps of warlike munitions, and camp equipage lying upon the ground.

“It would have done your excellency’s heart good, being an old soldier, to have seen such grand provision for war. Then, in other caverns, there were long rows of horsemen armed to the teeth, with lances raised and banners unfurled all ready for the field; but they all sat motionless in their saddles like so many statues. In other halls were warriors sleeping on the ground beside their horses, and foot soldiers in groups ready to fall into the ranks. All were in old-fashioned Moorish dresses and armour.

“Well, your excellency, to cut a long story short, we at length entered an immense cavern, or I may say palace, of grotto work, the walls of which seemed to be veined with gold and silver, and to sparkle with diamonds and sapphires and all kinds of precious stones. At the upper end sat a Moorish king on a golden throne, with his nobles on each side, and a guard of African blacks with drawn cimeters. All the crowd that continued to flock in, and amounted to thousands and thousands, passed one by one before his throne, each paying homage as he passed. Some of the multitude were dressed in magnificent robes, without stain or blemish, and sparkling with jewels; others in burnished and enamelled armour; while others were in mouldered and mildewed garments, and in armour all battered and dented and covered with rust.

“I had hitherto held my tongue, for your excellency well knows, it is not for a soldier to ask many questions when on duty, but I could keep silent no longer.

“‘Pr’ythee, comrade,’ said I, ‘what is the meaning of all this?’

“‘This,’ said the trooper, ‘is a great and fearful mystery. Know, O Christian, that you see before you the court and army of Boabdil, the last king of Granada.’

“‘What is this you tell me?’ cried I.

'Boabdil and his court were exiled from the land hundreds of years ago, and all died in Africa.'

"'So it is recorded in your lying chronicles,' replied the Moor, 'but know that Boabdil and the warriors who made the last struggle for Granada were all shut up in the mountain by powerful enchantment. As for the king and army that marched forth from Granada at the time of the surrender, they were a mere phantom train of spirits and demons, permitted to assume those shapes to deceive the Christian sovereigns. And furthermore let me tell you, friend, that all Spain is a country under the power of enchantment. There is not a mountain cave, not a lonely watchtower in the plains, nor ruined castle on the hills, but has some spellbound warriors sleeping from age to age within its vaults, until the sins are expiated for which Allah permitted the dominion to pass for a time out of the hands of the faithful. Once every year, on the eve of St. John, they are released from enchantment, from sunset to sunrise, and permitted to repair here to pay homage to their sovereign! and the crowds which you behold swarming into the cavern are Moslem warriors from their haunts in all parts of Spain. For my own part, you saw the ruined tower of the bridge in Old Castile, where I have now wintered and summered for many hundred years, and where I must be back again by daybreak. As to the battalions of horse and foot which you behold drawn up in array in the neighbouring caverns, they are spellbound warriors of Granada. It is written in the book of fate, that when the enchantment is broken, Boabdil will descend from the mountain at the head of this army, resume his throne in the Alhambra and his sway of Granada, and gathering together the enchanted warriors from all parts of Spain, will reconquer the Peninsula and restore it to Moslem rule.'

"'And when shall this happen?' said I.

"'Allah alone knows: we had hoped the day of deliverance was at hand; but there reigns at present a vigilant governor in the Alhambra, a staunch old soldier, well known as Governor Manco. While such a warrior holds command of the

very outpost, and stands ready to check the irruption from the mountain, I fear Boabdil and his soldiery must be content to rest upon their arms.'

Here the governor raised himself somewhat perpendicularly, adjusted his sword, and twirled up his mustachios.

"To make a long story short, and not to fatigue your excellency, the trooper, having given me this account, dismounted from his steed.

"'Tarry here,' said he, 'and guard my steed while I go and bow the knee to Boabdil.' So saying, he strode away among the throng that pressed forward to the throne.

"'What's to be done?' thought I, when thus left to myself; 'shall I wait here until this infidel returns to whisk me off on his goblin steed, the Lord knows where; or shall I make the most of my time and beat a retreat from this hobgoblin community?' A soldier's mind is soon made up, as your excellency well knows. As to the horse, he belonged to an avowed enemy of the faith and the realm, and was a fair prize according to the rules of war. So hoisting myself from the crupper into the saddle, I turned the reins, struck the Moorish stirrups into the sides of the steed, and put him to make the best of his way out of the passage by which he had entered. As we scoured by the halls where the Moslem horsemen sat in motionless battalions, I thought I heard the clang of armour and a hollow murmur of voices. I gave the steed another taste of the stirrups, and doubled my speed. There was now a sound behind me like a rushing blast; I heard the clatter of a thousand hoofs; a countless throng overtook me. I was borne along in the press, and hurled forth from the mouth of the cavern, while thousands of shadowy forms were swept off in every direction by the four winds of heaven.

"In the whirl and confusion of the scene I was thrown senseless to the earth. When I came to myself I was lying on the brow of a hill with the Arabian steed standing beside me; for, in falling, my arm had slipped within the bridle, which, I presume, prevented his whisking off to Old Castile.

"Your excellency may easily judge of

my surprise on looking round, to behold hedges of aloes and Indian figs and other proofs of a southern climate, and to see a great city below me, with towers, and palaces, and a grand cathedral.

"I descended the hill cautiously, leading my steed, for I was afraid to mount him again, lest he should play me some slippery trick. As I descended I met with your patrol, who let me into the secret that it was Granada that lay before me; and that I was actually under the walls of the Alhambra, the fortress of the redoubted Governor Manco, the terror of all enchanted Moslems. When I heard this, I determined at once to seek your excellency, to inform you of all that I had seen, and to warn you of the perils that surround and undermine you, that you may take measures in time to guard your fortress, and the kingdom itself, from this intestine army that lurks in the very bowels of the land."

"And prythee, friend, you who are a veteran campaigner, and have seen so much service," said the governor, "how would you advise me to proceed, in order to prevent this evil?"

"It is not for a humble private of the ranks," said the soldier modestly, "to pretend to instruct a commander of your excellency's sagacity; but it appears to me that your excellency might cause all the caves and entrances into the mountain to be walled up with solid mason work, so that Boabdil and his army might be completely corked up in their subterranean habitation. If the good father too," added the soldier, reverently bowing to the friar, and devoutly crossing himself, "would consecrate the barricades with his blessing, and put up a few crosses and relics and images of saints, I think they might withstand all the power of infidel enchantments."

"They doubtless would be of great avail," said the friar.

The governor now placed his arm a-kimbo with his hand resting on the hilt of his toledo, fixed his eye upon the soldier, and gently wagging his head from one side to the other,

"So, friend," said he, "then you really suppose I am to be gulled with this cock-and-bull story about enchanted mountains and enchanted Moors? Hark ye, culprit!

—not another word. An old soldier you may be, but you'll find you have an older soldier to deal with, and one not easily out-generalled. Ho! guards there! put this fellow in irons."

The demure handmaid would have put in a word in favour of the prisoner, but the governor silenced her with a look.

As they were pinioning the soldier, one of the guards felt something of bulk in his pocket, and drawing it forth, found a long leathern purse that appeared to be well filled. Holding it by one corner, he turned out the contents upon the table before the governor, and never did freebooter's bag make more gorgeous delivery. Out tumbled rings and jewels, and rosaries of pearls, and sparkling diamond crosses, and a profusion of ancient golden coin, some of which fell jingling to the floor, and rolled away to the uttermost part of the chamber.

For a time the functions of justice were suspended; there was a universal scramble after the glittering fugitives. The governor alone, who was imbued with true Spanish pride, maintained his stately decorum, though his eye betrayed a little anxiety until the last coin and jewel was restored to the sack.

The friar was not so calm; his whole face glowed like a furnace, and his eyes twinkled and flashed at sight of the rosaries and crosses.

"Sacriligious wretch that thou art!" exclaimed he; "what church or sanctuary hast thou been plundering of these sacred relics?"

"Neither one nor the other, holy father. If they be sacriligious spoils, they must have been taken in times long past, by the infidel trooper I have mentioned. I was just going to tell his excellency when he interrupted me, that on taking possession of the trooper's horse, I unhooked a leathern sack which hung at the saddlebow, and which I presume contained the plunder of his campaignings in days of old, when the Moors overran the country."

"Mighty well; at present you will make up your mind to take up your quarters in a chamber of the Vermilion Towers, which, though not under a magic spell, will hold you as safe as any cave of your enchanted Moors."



"Your excellency will do as you think proper," said the prisoner, coolly. "I shall be thankful to your excellency for any accommodation in the fortress." A soldier who has been in the wars, as your excellency well knows, is not particular about his lodgings: provided I have a snug dungeon and regular rations, I shall manage to make myself comfortable. I would only entreat that while your excellency is so careful about me, you would have an eye to your fortress, and think on the hint I dropped about stopping up the entrances to the mountain."

Here ended the scene. The prisoner was conducted to a strong dungeon in the Vermilion Towers, the Arabian steed was led to his excellency's stable, and the trooper's sack was deposited in his excellency's strong box. To the latter, it is true, the friar made some demur, questioning whether the sacred relics, which were evidently sacrilegious spoils, should not be placed in custody of the church; but as the governor was peremptory on the subject, and was absolute lord in the Alhambra, the friar discreetly dropped the discussion, but determined to convey intelligence of the fact to the church dignitaries in Granada.

To explain these prompt and rigid measures on the part of old Governor Manco, it is proper to observe, that about this time the Alpuxarra mountains in the neighbourhood of Granada were terribly infested by a gang of robbers, under the command of a daring chief, named Manuel Borasco, who were accustomed to prowl about the country, and even to enter the city in various disguises, to gain intelligence of the departure of convoys of merchandise, or travellers with well-lined purses, whom they took care to waylay in distant and solitary passes of their road. These repeated and daring outrages had awakened the attention of government, and the commanders of the various posts had received instructions to be on the alert and to take up all suspicious stragglers. Governor Manco was particularly zealous in consequence of the various stigmas that had been cast upon his fortress, and he now doubted not that he had entrapped some formidable desperado of this gang.

In the mean time the story took wind,

and became the talk, not merely of the fortress, but of the whole city of Granada. It was said that the noted robber, Manuel Borasco, the terror of the Alpuxarras, had fallen into the clutches of old Governor Manco, and been cooped up by him in a dungeon of the Vermilion Towers; and every one who had been robbed by him flocked to recognise the marauder. The Vermilion Towers, as is well known, stand apart from the Alhambra on a sister hill, separated from the main avenue. There were no outer walls, but a sentinel patrolled before the tower. The window of the chamber in which the soldier was confined, was strongly grated, and looked upon a small esplanade. Here the good folks of Granada repaired to gaze at him, as they would at a laughing hyena, grinning through the cage of a menagerie. Nobody, however, recognised him for Manuel Borasco, for that terrible robber was noted for a ferocious physiognomy, and had by no means the good-humoured squint of the prisoner. Visitors came not merely from the city, but from all parts of the country; but nobody knew him, and there began to be doubts in the minds of the common people whether there might not be some truth in his story. That Boabdil and his army were shut up in the mountain, was an old tradition which many of the ancient inhabitants had heard from their fathers. Numbers went up to the Mountain of the Sun, or rather of St. Elena, in search of the cave mentioned by the soldier; and saw and peeped into the deep dark pit, descending, no one knows how far, into the mountain, and which remains there to this day—the fabled entrance to the subterranean abode of Boabdil.

By degrees the soldier became popular with the common people. A freebooter of the mountains is by no means the opprobrious character in Spain that a robber is in any other country: on the contrary, he is a kind of chivalrous personage in the eyes of the lower classes. There is always a disposition, also, to cavil at the conduct of those in command, and many began to murmur at the high-handed measures of old Governor Manco, and to look upon the prisoner in the light of a martyr.

The soldier, moreover, was a merry, waggish fellow, that had a joke for every one who came near his window, and a soft speech for every female. He had procured an old guitar, also, and would sit by his window, and sing ballads and love ditties, to the delight of the women of the neighbourhood, who would assemble on the esplanade in the evenings and dance boleros to his music. Having trimmed off his rough beard, his sunburnt face found favour in the eyes of the fair, and the demure handmaid of the governor declared that his squint was perfectly irresistible. This kind-hearted damsel had from the first evinced a deep sympathy in his fortunes, and having in vain tried to mollify the governor, had set to work privately to mitigate the rigour of his dispensations. Every day she brought the prisoner some crumbs of comfort which had fallen from the governor's table, or been abstracted from his larder, together with, now and then, a consoling bottle of choice Val de Peñas, or rich Malaga.

While this petty treason was going on, in the very centre of the old governor's citadel, a storm of open war was brewing up among his external foes. The circumstance of a bag of gold and jewels having been found upon the person of the supposed robber, had been reported, with many exaggerations, in Granada. A question of territorial jurisdiction was immediately started by the governor's inveterate rival, the captain-general. He insisted that the prisoner had been captured without the precincts of the Alhambra, and within the rules of his authority. He demanded his body, therefore, and the *spolia opima* taken with him. Due information having been carried likewise by the friar to the grand inquisitor of the crosses and rosaries, and other relics contained in the bag, he claimed the culprit as having been guilty of sacrilege, and insisted that his plunder was due to the church, and his body to the next *auto da fé*. The feuds ran high, the governor was furious, and swore, rather than surrender his captive, he would hang him up within the Alhambra, as a spy caught within the purlieus of the fortress.

The captain-general threatened to send

a body of soldiers to transfer the prisoner from the Vermilion Towers to the city. The grand inquisitor was equally bent upon despatching a number of the familiars of the Holy Office. Word was brought late at night to the governor of these machinations. "Let them come," said he, "they'll find me beforehand with them; he must rise bright and early who would take in an old soldier." He accordingly issued orders to have the prisoner removed at daybreak, to the donjon-keep within the walls of the Alhambra. "And d'ye hear child?" said he to his demure handmaid, "tap at my door, and wake me before cock-crowing, that I may see to the matter myself."

The day dawned, the cock crowed, but nobody tapped at the door of the governor. The sun rose high above the mountain tops, and glittered in at his casement, ere the governor was wakened from his morning dreams by his veteran corporal, who stood before him with terror stamped upon his iron visage.

"He's off! he's gone!" cried the corporal, gasping for breath.

"Who's off—who's gone?"

"The soldier, the robber—the devil, for aught I know; his dungeon is empty, but the door locked; no one knows how he has escaped out of it."

"Who saw him last?"

"Your handmaid; she brought him his supper."

"Let her be called instantly."

Here was new matter of confusion. The chamber of the demure damsel was likewise empty, her bed had not been slept in: she had doubtless gone off with the culprit, as she had appeared, for some days past, to have frequent conversations with him.

This was wounding the old governor in a tender part, but he had scarce time to wince at it, when new misfortunes broke upon his view. On going into his cabinet he found his strong box open, the leather purse of the trooper abstracted, and with it, a couple of corpulent bags of doubloons.

But how and which way had the fugitives escaped? An old peasant who lived in a cottage by the roadside, leading up into the Sierra, declared that he had heard the tramp of a powerful steed

just before daybreak, passing up into the mountains. He had looked out at his casement, and could just distinguish a horseman, with a female seated before him.

"Search the stables!" cried Governor Manco. The stables were searched; all the horses were in their stalls, excepting the Arabian steed. In his place was a stout cudgel tied to the manger, and on it a label bearing these words, "A gift to Governor Manco, from an Old Soldier."

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LEGEND

OF THE

TWO DISCREET STATUES.

THERE lived once in a waste apartment of the Alhambra, a merry little fellow named Lope Sanchez, who worked in the gardens, and was as brisk and blithe as a grasshopper, singing all day long. He was the life and soul of the fortress; when his work was over, he would sit on one of the stone benches of the esplanade and strum his guitar, and sing long ditties about the Cid, and Bernard del Carpio, and Fernando del Pulgar, and other Spanish heroes, for the amusement of the old soldiers of the fortress, or would strike up a merrier tune, and set the girls dancing boleros and fandangos.

Like most little men, Lope Sanchez had a strapping buxom dame for a wife, who could almost have put him in her pocket; but he lacked the usual poor man's lot—instead of ten children he had but one. This was a little black-eyed girl about twelve years of age, named Sanchica, who was as merry as himself, and the delight of his heart. She played about him as he worked in the gardens, danced to his guitar as he sat in the shade, and ran as wild as a young fawn about the groves and alleys and ruined halls of the Alhambra.

It was now the eve of the blessed St. John, and the holiday loving gossips of the Alhambra, men, women, and children, went up at night to the Mountain of the Sun, which rises above the Generalife, to keep their midsummer vigil on

its level summit. It was a bright moonlight night, and all the mountains were gray and silvery, and the city, with its domes and spires, lay in shadows below, and the Vega was like a fairy land, with haunted streams gleaming among its dusky groves. On the highest part of the mountain they lit up a bonfire, according to an old custom of the country handed down from the Moors. The inhabitants of the surrounding country were keeping a similar vigil, and bonfires, here and there in the Vega, and along the folds of the mountains, blazed up palely in the moonlight.

The evening was gayly passed in dancing to the guitar of Lope Sanchez, who was never so joyous as when on a holiday revel of the kind. While the dance was going on, the little Sanchica with some of her playmates sported among the ruins of an old Moorish fort that crowns the mountain, when in gathering pebbles in the fosse, she found a small hand curiously carved of jet, the fingers closed, and the thumb firmly clasped upon them. Overjoyed with her good fortune, she ran to her mother with her prize. It immediately became a subject of sage speculation, and was eyed by some with superstitious distrust. "Throw it away," said one; "it's Moorish—depend upon it there's mischief and witchcraft in it." "By no means," said another; "you may sell it for something to the jewellers of the Zacatin." In the midst of this discussion an old tawny soldier drew near, who had served in Africa, and was as swarthy as a Moor. He examined the hand with a knowing look. "I have seen things of this kind," said he, "among the Moors of Barbary. It is a great virtue to guard against the evil eye, and all kinds of spells and enchantments. I give you joy, friend Lope, this bodes good luck to your child."

Upon hearing this, the wife of Lope Sanchez tied the little hand of jet to a riband, and hung it round the neck of her daughter.

The sight of this talisman called up all the favourite superstitions about the Moors. The dance was neglected, and they sat in groups on the ground, telling old legendary tales handed down from

their ancestors. Some of their stories turned upon the wonders of the very mountain upon which they were seated, which is a famous hobgoblin region. One ancient crone gave a long account of the subterranean palace in the bowels of that mountain, where Boabdil and all his Moslem court are said to remain enchanted. "Among yonder ruins," said she, pointing to some crumbling walls and mounds of earth on a distant part of the mountain, "there is a deep black pit that goes down into the very heart of the mountain. For all the money in Granada I would not look down into it. Once upon a time a poor man of the Alhambra, who tended goats upon this mountain, scrambled down into that pit after a kid that had fallen in. He came out again all wild and staring, and told such things of what he had seen, that every one thought his brain was turned. He raved for a day or two about the hobgoblin Moors that had pursued him in the cavern, and could hardly be persuaded to drive his goats up again to the mountain. He did so at last, but, poor man, he never came down again. The neighbours found his goats browsing about the Moorish ruins, and his hat and mantle lying near the mouth of the pit, but he was never more heard of."

The little Sanchica listened with breathless attention to this story. She was of a curious nature, and felt immediately a great hankering to peep into this dangerous pit. Stealing away from her companions, she sought the distant ruins, and after groping for some time among them, came to a small hollow, or basin, near the brow of the mountain, where it swept steeply down into the valley of the Darro. In the centre of this basin yawned the mouth of the pit. Sanchica ventured to the verge and peeped in. All was black as pitch, and gave an idea of immeasurable depth. Her blood ran cold; she drew back, then peeped again, then would have run away, then took another peep—the very horror of the thing was delightful to her. At length she rolled a large stone and pushed it over the brink. For some time it fell in silence; then struck some rocky projection with a violent crash, then rebounded from side to side, rumbling and tumbling, with a noise

like thunder, then made a final splash into water, far, far below—and all was again silence.

The silence, however, did not long continue. It seemed as if something had been awakened within this dreary abyss. A murmuring sound gradually rose out of the pit, like the hum and buzz of a bee-hive. It grew louder and louder; there was the confusion of voices, as of a distant multitude, together with the faint din of arms, clash of cymbals, and clangour of trumpets, as if some army were marshalling for battle in the very bowels of the mountain.

The child drew off with silent awe, and hastened back to the place where she had left her parents and their companions. All were gone. The bonfire was expiring, and its last wreath of smoke curling up in the moonshine. The distant fires that had blazed along the mountains and in the Vega were all extinguished, and every thing seemed to have sunk to repose. Sanchica called her parents and some of her companions by name, but received no reply. She ran down the side of the mountain, and by the gardens of the Generalife, until she arrived in the alley of trees leading to the Alhambra, when she seated herself on a bench of a woody recess to recover breath. The bell from the watchtower of the Alhambra, tolled midnight. There was a deep tranquillity, as if all nature slept; excepting the low tinkling sound of an unseen stream that ran under the covert of the bushes. The breathing sweetness of the atmosphere was lulling her to sleep, when her eye was caught by something glittering at a distance, and to her surprise she beheld a long cavalcade of Moorish warriors pouring down the mountain side and along the leafy avenues. Some were armed with lance and shields; others with cimeters and battle-axes, and with polished cuirasses that flashed in the moonbeams. Their horses pranced proudly and champed upon their bits, but their tramp caused no more sound than if they had been shod with felt, and the riders were all as pale as death. Among them rode a beautiful lady, with a crowned head and long golden locks entwined with pearls. The housings of her palfrey were of a crimson velvet embroidered with gold, and swept

the earth; but she rode all disconsolate, with eyes ever fixed upon the ground.

Then succeeded a train of courtiers magnificently arrayed in robes and turbans of divers colours, and amidst them, on a cream-coloured charger, rode King Boabdil el Chico, in a royal mantle covered with jewels, and a crown sparkling with diamonds. The little Sanchica knew him by his yellow beard, and his resemblance to his portrait, which she had often seen in the picture-gallery of the Generalife. She gazed in wonder and admiration at this royal pageant, as it passed glistening among the trees; but though she knew these monarchs and courtiers and warriors, so pale and silent, were out of the common course of nature, and things of magic and enchantment, yet she looked on with a bold heart, such courage did she derive from the mystic talisman of the hand, which was suspended about her neck.

The cavalcade having passed by, she rose and followed. It continued on to the great Gate of Justice, which stood wide open; the old invalid sentinels on duty lay on the stone benches of the barbican, buried in profound and apparently charmed sleep, and the phantom pageant swept noiselessly by them with flaunting banner and triumphant state. Sanchica would have followed; but to her surprise she beheld an opening in the earth, within the barbican, leading down beneath the foundations of the tower. She entered for a little distance, and was encouraged to proceed by finding steps rudely hewn in the rock, and a vaulted passage here and there lit up by a silver lamp, which, while it gave light, diffused likewise a grateful fragrance. Venturing on, she came at last to a great hall, wrought out of the heart of the mountain, magnificently furnished in the Moorish style, and lighted up by silver and crystal lamps. Here, on an ottoman, sat an old man in Moorish dress, with a long white beard, nodding and dozing, with a staff in his hand, which seemed ever to be slipping from his grasp; while at a little distance sat a beautiful lady, in ancient Spanish dress, with a coronet all sparkling with diamonds, and her hair entwined with pearls, who was softly playing on a silver lyre. The little Sanchica now re-

collected a story she had heard among the old people of the Alhambra, concerning a Gothic princess confined in the centre of the mountain by an old Arabian magician, whom she kept bound up in magic sleep by the power of music.

The lady paused with surprise at seeing a mortal in that enchanted hall. "Is it the eve of the blessed St. John?" said she.

"It is," replied Sanchica.

"Then for one night the magic charm is suspended. Come hither, child, and fear not. I am a Christian like thyself, though bound here by enchantment. Touch my fetters with the talisman that hangs about thy neck, and for this night I shall be free."

So saying, she opened her robes and displayed a broad golden band round her waist, and a golden chain that fastened her to the ground. The child hesitated not to apply the little hand of jet to the golden band, and immediately the chain fell to the earth. At the sound the old man awoke and began to rub his eyes; but the lady ran her fingers over the chords of the lyre, and again he fell into a slumber and began to nod, and his staff to falter in his hand. "Now," said the lady, "touch his staff with the talismanic hand of jet." The child did so, and it fell from his grasp, and he sunk in a deep sleep on the ottoman. The lady gently laid the silver lyre on the ottoman, leaning it against the head of the sleeping magician; then touching the chords until they vibrated in his ear—"O potent spirit of harmony," said she, "continue thus to hold his senses in thralldom till the return of day. Now follow me, my child," continued she, "and thou shalt behold the Alhambra as it was in the days of its glory, for thou hast a magic talisman that reveals all enchantments." Sanchica followed the lady in silence. They passed up through the entrance of the cavern into the barbican of the Gate of Justice, and thence to the Plaza de los Algibes, or esplanade within the fortress. This was all filled with Moorish soldiery, horse and foot, marshalled in squadrons, with banners displayed. There were royal guards also at the portal, and rows of African blacks with drawn cimeters. No one spake a word, and Sanchica

passed on fearlessly after her conductress. Her astonishment increased on entering the royal palace, in which she had been reared. The broad moonshine lit up all the halls, courts, and gardens almost as brightly as if it were day, but revealed a far different scene from that to which she was accustomed. The walls of the apartment were no longer stained and rent by time. Instead of cobwebs, they were now hung with rich silks of Damascus, and the gildings and arabesque paintings were restored to their original brilliancy and freshness. The halls, instead of being naked and unfurnished, were set out with divans and ottomans of the rarest stuffs, embroidered with pearls and studded with precious gems, and all the fountains in the courts and gardens were playing.

The kitchens were again in full operation; cooks were busy preparing shadowy dishes, and roasting and boiling the phantoms of pullets and partridges; servants were hurrying to and fro with silver dishes heaped up with dainties, and arranging a delicious banquet. The Court of Lions was thronged with guards, and courtiers, and alfaquis, as in the old times of the Moors; and at the upper end, in the Saloon of Judgment, sat Boabdil on his throne, surrounded by his court, and swaying a shadowy sceptre for the night. Notwithstanding all this throng and seeming bustle, not a voice nor a footstep was to be heard; nothing interrupted the midnight silence but the splashing of the fountains. The little Sanchica followed her conductress in mute amazement about the palace, until they came to a portal opening to the vaulted passages beneath the great Tower of Comares. On each side of the portal sat the figure of a Nymph, wrought out of alabaster. Their heads were turned aside, and their regards fixed upon the same spot within the vault. The enchanted lady paused, and beckoned the child to her. "Here," said she, "is a great secret, which I will reveal to thee in reward for thy faith and courage. These discreet statues watch over a mighty treasure hidden in old times by a Moorish king. Tell thy father to search the spot on which their eyes are fixed, and he will find what will make him richer than any man in Granada.

Thy innocent hands alone, however, gifted as thou art also with the talisman, can remove the treasure. Bid thy father use it discreetly, and devote a part of it to the performance of daily masses for my deliverance from this unholy enchantment."

When the lady had spoken these words, she led the child onward to the little garden of Lindaraxa, which is hard by the vault of the statues. The moon trembled upon the waters of the solitary fountain in the centre of the garden, and shed a tender light upon the orange and citron trees. The beautiful lady plucked a branch of myrtle, and wreathed it round the head of the child. "Let this be a memento," said she, "of what I have revealed to thee, and a testimonial of its truth. My hour is come—I must return to the enchanted hall; follow me not, lest evil befall thee—farewell. Remember what I have said, and have masses performed for my deliverance." So saying, the lady entered a dark passage leading beneath the Tower of Comares, and was no longer seen.

The faint crowing of a cock was now heard from the cottages below the Alhambra, in the valley of the Darro, and a pale streak of light began to appear above the eastern mountains. A slight wind arose, there was a sound like the rustling of dry leaves through the courts and corridors, and door after door shut to with a jarring sound.

Sanchica returned to the scenes she had so lately beheld thronged with the shadowy multitude, but Boabdil and his phantom court were gone. The moon shone into empty halls and galleries stripped of their transient splendour, stained and dilapidated by time, and hung with cobwebs. The bat flitted about in the uncertain light, and the frog croaked from the fishpond.

Sanchica now made the best of her way to a remote staircase that led up to the humble apartment occupied by her family. The door as usual was open, for Lope Sanchez was too poor to need bolt or bar; she crept quietly to her pallet, and, putting the myrtle wreath beneath her pillow, soon fell asleep.

In the morning she related all that had befallen her to her father. Lope Sanchez,

however, treated the whole as a mere dream, and laughed at the child for her credulity. He went forth to his customary labours in the garden, but had not been there long when his little daughter came running to him almost breathless. "Father! father!" cried she, "behold the myrtle wreath which the Moorish lady bound round my head."

Lope Sanchez gazed with astonishment, for the stalk of the myrtle was of pure gold, and every leaf was a sparkling emerald! Being not much accustomed to precious stones, he was ignorant of the real value of the wreath, but he saw enough to convince him that it was something more substantial than the stuff that dreams are generally made of, and that at any rate the child had dreamt to some purpose. His first care was to enjoin the most absolute secrecy upon his daughter; in this respect, however, he was secure, for she had discretion far beyond her years or sex. He then repaired to the vault, where stood the statues of the two alabaster Nymphs. He remarked that their heads were turned from the portal, and that the regards of each were fixed upon the same point in the interior of the building. Lope Sanchez could not but admire this most discreet contrivance for guarding a secret. He drew a line from the eyes of the statues to the point of regard, made a private mark on the wall, and then retired.

All day, however, the mind of Lope Sanchez was distracted with a thousand cares. He could not help hovering within distant view of the two statues, and became nervous from the dread that the golden secret might be discovered. Every footstep that approached the place made him tremble. He would have given any thing could he but have turned the heads of the statues, forgetting that they had looked precisely in the same direction for some hundreds of years, without any person being the wiser.

"A plague upon them," he would say to himself, "they'll betray all; did ever mortal hear of such a mode of guarding a secret?" Then on hearing any one advance, he would steal off, as though his very lurking near the place would awaken suspicions. Then he would return cautiously, and peep from a distance

to see if every thing was secure, but the sight of the statues would again call forth his indignation. "Ay, there they stand," would he say, "always looking, and looking, and looking, just where they should not. Confound them! they are just like all their sex; if they have not tongues to tattle with, they'll be sure to do it with their eyes."

At length, to his relief, the long anxious day drew to a close. The sound of footsteps was no longer heard in the echoing halls of the Alhambra; the last stranger passed the threshold, the great portal was barred and bolted, and the bat and the frog, and the hooting owl, gradually resumed their nightly vocations in the deserted palace.

Lope Sanchez waited, however, until the night was far advanced, before he ventured with his little daughter to the hall of the two Nymphs. He found them looking as knowingly and mysteriously as ever at the secret place of deposit. "By your leaves, gentle ladies," thought Lope Sanchez, as he passed between them, "I will relieve you from this charge that must have set so heavy in your minds for the last two or three centuries." He accordingly went to work at the part of the wall which he had marked, and in a little while laid open a concealed recess, in which stood two great jars of porcelain. He attempted to draw them forth, but they were immovable, until touched by the innocent hand of his little daughter. With her aid he dislodged them from their niche, and found, to his great joy, that they were filled with pieces of Moorish gold, mingled with jewels and precious stones. Before daylight he managed to convey them to his chamber, and left the two guardian statues with their eyes fixed on the vacant wall.

Lope Sanchez had thus on a sudden become a rich man; but riches, as usual, brought a world of cares to which he had hitherto been a stranger. How was he to convey away his wealth with safety? How was he even to enter upon the enjoyment of it without awakening suspicion? Now too, for the first time in his life, the dread of robbers entered into his mind. He looked with terror at the insecurity of his habitation, and went to

work to barricado the doors and windows; yet after all his precautions he could not sleep soundly. His usual gaiety was at an end, he had no longer a joke or a song for his neighbours, and, in short, became the most miserable animal in the Alhambra. His old comrades remarked this alteration, pitied him heartily, and began to desert him; thinking he must be falling into want, and in danger of looking to them for assistance. Little did they suspect that his only calamity was riches.

The wife of Lope Sanchez shared his anxiety, but then she had ghostly comfort. We ought before this to have mentioned that Lope, being rather a light inconsiderate little man, his wife was accustomed, in all grave matters, to seek the counsel and ministry of her confessor Fray Simon, a sturdy broad-shouldered, blue-bearded, bullet-headed friar of the neighbouring convent of San Francisco, who was in fact the spiritual comforter of half the good wives of the neighbourhood. He was, moreover, in great esteem among divers sisterhoods of nuns; who requited him for his ghostly services by frequent presents of those little dainties and knickknacks manufactured in convents, such as delicate confections, sweet biscuits, and bottles of spiced cordials, found to be marvellous restoratives after fasts and vigils.

Fray Simon thrived in the exercise of his functions. His oily skin glistened in the sunshine as he toiled up the hill of the Alhambra on a sultry day. Yet notwithstanding his sleek condition, the knotted rope round his waist showed the austerity of his self-discipline; the multitude doffed their caps to him as a mirror of piety, and even the dogs scented the odour of sanctity that exhaled from his garments, and howled from their kennels as he passed.

Such was Fray Simon, the spiritual counsellor of the comely wife of Lope Sanchez; and as the father confessor is the domestic confidant of woman in humble life in Spain, he was soon made acquainted, in great secrecy, with the story of the hidden treasure.

The friar opened eyes and mouth and crossed himself a dozen times at the news. After a moment's pause, "Daughter of

my soul!" said he, "know that thy husband has committed a double sin—a sin against both state and church. The treasure he hath thus seized upon for himself, being found in the royal domains, belongs of course to the crown; but being infidel wealth, rescued as it were from the very fangs of Satan, should be devoted to the church. Still, however, the matter may be accommodated. Bring hither the myrtle wreath."

When the good father beheld it, his eyes twinkled more than ever with admiration of the size and beauty of the emeralds. "This," said he, "being the first fruits of this discovery, should be dedicated to pious purposes. I will hang it up as a votive offering before the image of San Francisco in our chapel, and will earnestly pray to him, this very night, that your husband be permitted to remain in quiet possession of your wealth."

The good dame was delighted to make her peace with heaven at so cheap a rate, and the friar, putting the wreath under his mantle, departed with saintly steps towards his convent.

When Lope Sanchez came home, his wife told him what had passed. He was excessively provoked, for he lacked his wife's devotion, and had for some time groaned in secret at the domestic visitations of the friar. "Woman," said he, "what hast thou done? thou hast put every thing at hazard by thy tattling."

"What!" cried the good woman, "would you forbid my disburthening my conscience to my confessor?"

"No, wife! confess as many of your own sins as you please; but as to this money-digging, it is a sin of my own, and my conscience is very easy under the weight of it."

There was no use, however, in complaining; the secret was told, and, like water spilled on the sand, was not again to be gathered. The only chance was, that the friar would be discreet.

The next day, while Lope Sanchez was abroad, there was a humble knocking at the door, and Fray Simon entered with meek and demure countenance.

"Daughter," said he, "I have prayed earnestly to San Francisco, and he has heard my prayer. In the dead of the night the saint appeared to me in a dream, but



with a frowning aspect. 'Why,' said he, 'dost thou pray to me to dispense with this treasure of the Gentiles, when thou seest the poverty of my chapel? Go to the house of Lope Sanchez, crave in my name a portion of the Moorish gold, to furnish two candlesticks for the main altar, and let him possess the residue in peace.'

When the good woman heard of this vision, she crossed herself with awe, and going to the secret place where Lope had hid the treasure, she filled a great leathern purse with pieces of Moorish gold, and gave it to the friar. The pious monk bestowed upon her, in return, benedictions enough, if paid by Heaven, to enrich her race to the latest posterity; then slipping the purse into the sleeve of his habit, he folded his hands upon his breast, and departed with an air of humble thankfulness.

When Lope Sanchez heard of this second donation to the church, he had well nigh lost his senses. "Unfortunate man," cried he, "what will become of me? I shall be robbed by piecemeal; I shall be ruined and brought to beggary!"

It was with the utmost difficulty that his wife could pacify him, by reminding him of the countless wealth that yet remained, and how considerate it was for San Francisco to rest contented with so very small a portion.

Unluckily, Fray Simon had a number of poor relations to be provided for, not to mention some half-dozen sturdy bullet-headed orphan children, and destitute foundlings that he had taken under his care. He repeated his visits, therefore, from day to day, with solicitations on behalf of Saint Dominic, Saint Andrew, Saint James, until poor Lope was driven to despair, and found that, unless he got out of the reach of this holy friar, he should have to make peace-offerings to every saint in the calendar. He determined, therefore, to pack up his remaining wealth, beat a secret retreat in the night, and make off to another part of the kingdom.

Full of his project, he bought a stout mule for the purpose, and tethered it in a gloomy vault underneath the Tower of the Seven Floors; the very place from whence the Belludo, or goblin horse with-

out a head, is said to issue forth at midnight, and to scour the streets of Granada, pursued by a pack of hell-hounds. Lope Sanchez had little faith in the story, but availed himself of the dread occasioned by it, knowing that no one would be likely to pry into the subterranean stable of the phantom steed. He sent off his family in the course of the day, with orders to wait for him at a distant village of the Vega. As the night advanced, he conveyed his treasure to the vault under the tower, and having loaded his mule, he led it forth, and cautiously descended the dusky avenue.

Honest Lope had taken his measures with the utmost secrecy, imparting them to no one but the faithful wife of his bosom. By some miraculous revelation, however, they became known to Fray Simon. The zealous friar beheld these infidel treasures on the point of slipping for ever out of his grasp, and determined to have one more dash at them for the benefit of the church and San Francisco. Accordingly, when the bells had rung for animas, and all the Alhambra was quiet, he stole out of his convent, and, descending through the Gate of Justice, concealed himself among the thickets of roses and laurels that border the great avenue. Here he remained, counting the quarters of hours as they were sounded on the bell of the watchtower, and listening to the dreary hootings of owls and the distant barking of dogs from the gipsy caverns.

At length he heard the tramp of hoofs, and, through the gloom of the overshadowing trees, imperfectly beheld a steed descending the avenue. The sturdy friar chuckled at the idea of the knowing turn he was about to serve honest Lope.

Tucking up the skirts of his habit, and wriggling like a cat watching a mouse, he waited until his prey was directly before him, when darting forth from his leafy covert, and putting one hand on the shoulder and the other on the crupper, he made a vault that would not have disgraced the most experienced master of equitation, and alighted well-forked astride the steed. "Aha!" said the sturdy friar, "we shall now see who best understands the game." He had scarce uttered the words when the mule began to kick, and

rear, and plunge, and then set off full speed down the hill. The friar attempted to check him, but in vain. He bounded from rock to rock, and bush to bush; the friar's habit was torn to ribbands and fluttered in the wind, his shaven poll received many a hard knock from the branches of the trees, and many a scratch from the brambles. To add to his terror and distress, he found a pack of seven hounds in full cry at his heels, and perceived too late, that he was actually mounted upon the terrible Belludo!

Away then they went, according to the ancient phrase, "pull devil, pull friar," down the great avenue, across the Plaza Nueva, along the Zacatin, around the Vivarrambla—never did huntsman and hound make a more furious run, or more infernal uproar. In vain did the friar invoke every saint in the calendar, and the Holy Virgin into the bargain; every time he mentioned a name of the kind, it was like a fresh application of the spur, and made the Belludo bound as high as a house. Through the remainder of the night was the unlucky Fray Simon carried hither and thither, and whither he would not, until every bone in his body ached, and he suffered a loss of leather too grievous to be mentioned. At length the crowing of a cock gave the signal of returning day. At the sound the goblin steed wheeled about, and galloped back for his tower. Again he scoured the Vivarrambla, the Zacatin, the Plaza Nueva, and the avenue of fountains, the seven dogs yelling, and barking, and leaping up, and snapping at the heels of the terrified friar. The first streak of day had just appeared as they reached the tower; here the goblin steed kicked up his heels, sent the friar a somerset through the air, plunged into the dark vault, followed by the infernal pack, and a profound silence succeeded to the late deafening clamour.

Was ever so diabolical a trick played off upon a holy friar? A peasant going to his labours at early dawn found the unfortunate Fray Simon lying under a fig-tree at the foot of the tower, but so bruised and bedevilled that he could neither speak nor move. He was conveyed with all care and tenderness to his cell, and the story went that he had been

waylaid and maltreated by robbers. A day or two elapsed before he recovered the use of his limbs; he consoled himself, in the mean time, with the thought that though the mule with the treasure had escaped him, he had previously had some rare pickings at the infidel spoils. His first care on being able to use his limbs, was to search beneath his pallet, where he had secreted the myrtle wreath and the leathern pouches of gold extracted from the piety of dame Sanchez. What was his dismay at finding the wreath, in effect, but a withered branch of myrtle, and the leathern pouches filled with sand and gravel?

Fray Simon, with all his chagrin, had the discretion to hold his tongue, for to betray the secret might draw on him the ridicule of the public, and the punishment of his superior: it was not until many years afterwards, on his death-bed, that he revealed to his confessor his nocturnal ride on the Belludo.

Nothing was heard of Lope Sanchez for a long time after his disappearance from the Alhambra. His memory was always cherished as that of a merry companion, though it was feared, from the care and melancholy observed in his conduct shortly before his mysterious departure, that poverty and distress had driven him to some extremity. Some years afterwards one of his old companions, an invalid soldier, being at Malaga, was knocked down and nearly run over by a coach and six. The carriage stopped; an old gentleman magnificently dressed, with a bag wig and sword, stepped out to assist the poor invalid. What was the astonishment of the latter to behold in this grand cavalier his old friend Lope Sanchez, who was actually celebrating the marriage of his daughter Sanchica with one of the first grandes in the land!

The carriage contained the bridal party. There was dame Sanchez, now grown as round as a barrel, and dressed out with feathers and jewels, and necklaces of pearls and necklaces of diamonds, and rings on every finger, and altogether a finery of apparel that had not been seen since the days of the Queen of Sheba. The little Sanchica had now grown to be a woman, and for

grace and beauty might have been mistaken for a duchess, if not a princess outright. The bridegroom sat beside her—rather a withered, spindle-shanked little man, but this only proved him to be of the true blood; a legitimate Spanish grandee being rarely above three cubits in stature. The match had been of the mother's making.

Riches had not spoiled the heart of honest Lope. He kept his old comrade with him for several days; feasted him like a king, took him to plays and bull-fights, and at length sent him away rejoicing, with a big bag of money for himself, and another to be distributed among his ancient messmates of the Alhambra.

Lope always gave out that a rich brother had died in America and left him heir to a copper mine; but the shrewd gossips of the Alhambra insist that his wealth was all derived from his having discovered the secret guarded by the two marble Nymphs of the Alhambra. It is remarked, that these very discreet statues continue, even unto the present day, with their eyes fixed most significantly on the same part of the wall; which leads many to suppose there is still some hidden treasure remaining there well worthy the attention of the enterprising traveller. Though others, and particularly all female visitors, regard them with great complacency, as lasting monuments of the fact that women can keep a secret.

## MUHAMED ABU ALAHMAR,

THE

### FOUNDER OF THE ALHAMBRA.

HAVING dealt so freely in the marvellous legends of the Alhambra, I feel as if bound to give the reader a few facts concerning its sober history, or rather the history of those magnificent princes, its founder and finisher, to whom the world is indebted for so beautiful and romantic an Oriental monument. To obtain these facts, I descended from the region of fancy and fable where every thing is liable to take an imaginative tint, and carried my researches among the dusty tomes of the old Jesuits' library in

the university. This once boasted repository of erudition is now a mere shadow of its former self, having been stript of its manuscripts and rarest works by the French, when masters of Granada. Still it contains, among many ponderous tomes of polemics of the Jesuit fathers, several curious tracts of Spanish literature; and above all, a number of those antiquated, dusty, parchment-bound chronicles, for which I have a peculiar veneration.

In this old library I have passed many delightful hours of quiet, undisturbed literary foraging, for the keys of the doors and book-cases were kindly entrusted to me, and I was left alone to rummage at my leisure—a rare indulgence in these sanctuaries of learning, which too often tantalize the thirsty student with the sight of sealed fountains of knowledge.

In the course of these visits I gleaned the following particulars concerning the historical characters in question.

The Moors of Granada regarded the Alhambra as a miracle of art, and had a tradition that the king who founded it dealt in magic, or, at least, was versed in alchemy, by means whereof he procured the immense sums of gold expended in its erection. A brief view of his reign will show the real secret of his wealth.

The name of this monarch, as inscribed on the walls of some of the apartments, was Abu Abd'allah (*i. e.* the father of Abdallah), but he is commonly known in the Moorish history as Muhamed Abu Alahmar (or Muhamed, son of Alahmar), or simply, Abu Alahmar, for the sake of brevity.

He was born in Arjoua, in the year of the Hegira 591, of the Christian era 1195, of the noble family of the Beni Nasar, or children of Nasar, and no expense was spared by his parents to fit him for the high station to which the opulence and dignity of his family entitled him. The Saracens of Spain were greatly advanced in civilization, every principal city was a seat of learning and the arts, so that it was easy to command the most enlightened instructors for a youth of rank and fortune. Abu Alahmar, when he arrived at manly years, was appointed alcaide or governor of Arjoua and Jaen, and gained great popularity by his benignity and justice.

Some years afterwards, on the death of Abu Hud, the Moorish power in Spain was broken into factions, and many places declared for Muhamed Abu Alahmar. Being of a sanguine spirit, and lofty ambition, he seized upon the occasion, made a circuit through the country, and was every where received with acclamations. It was in the year 1238, that he entered Granada amidst the enthusiastic shouts of the multitude. He was proclaimed king with every demonstration of joy, and soon became the head of the Moslems in Spain, being the first of the illustrious line of Beni Nasar, that had sat upon the throne. His reign was such as to render him a blessing to his subjects. He gave the command of his various cities to such as had distinguished themselves by valour and prudence, and who seemed most acceptable to the people. He organized a vigilant police, and established rigid rules for the administration of justice. The poor and the distressed always found ready admission to his presence, and he attended personally to their assistance and redress. He erected hospitals for the blind, the aged, and infirm, and all those incapable of labour, and visited them frequently; not on set days, with pomp and form, so as to give time for every thing to be put in order, and every abuse concealed, but suddenly and unexpectedly, informing himself, by actual observation and close inquiry, of the treatment of the sick, and the conduct of those appointed to administer to their relief. He founded schools and colleges, which he visited in the same manner, inspecting personally the instruction of the youth. He established butcheries and public ovens, that the people might be furnished with wholesome provisions at just and regular prices. He introduced abundant streams of water into the city, erecting baths and fountains, and constructing aqueducts and canals to irrigate and fertilize the Vega. By these means prosperity and abundance prevailed in this beautiful city, its gates were thronged with commerce, and its warehouses filled with luxuries and merchandise of every clime and country.

While Muhamed Abu Alahmar was ruling his fair domains thus wisely and prosperously, he was suddenly menaced

by the horrors of war. The Christians at that time, profiting by the dismemberment of the Moslem power, were rapidly regaining their ancient territories. James the Conqueror had subjected all Valencia, and Ferdinand the Saint was carrying his victorious arms into Andalusia. The latter invested the city of Jaen, and swore not to raise his camp until he had gained possession of the place. Muhamed Abu Alahmar was conscious of the insufficiency of his means to carry on a war with the potent sovereign of Castile. Taking a sudden resolution, therefore, he repaired privately to the Christian camp, and made his unexpected appearance in the presence of King Ferdinand. "In me," said he, "you behold Muhamed, king of Granada; I confide in your good faith, and put myself under your protection. Take all I possess, and receive me as your vassal." So saying, he knelt and kissed the king's hand in token of submission.

King Ferdinand was touched by this instance of confiding faith, and determined not to be outdone in generosity. He raised his late rival from the earth, and embraced him as a friend, nor would he accept the wealth he offered, but received him as a vassal, leaving him sovereign of his dominions, on condition of paying a yearly tribute, attending the Cortes as one of the nobles of the empire, and serving him in war with a certain number of horsemen.

It was not long after this that Muhamed was called upon for his military services, to aid King Ferdinand in his famous siege of Seville. The Moorish king sallied forth with five hundred chosen horsemen of Granada, than whom none in the world knew better how to manage the steed or wield the lance. It was a melancholy and humiliating service, however, for they had to draw the sword against their brethren of the faith.

Muhamed gained a melancholy distinction by his prowess in this renowned conquest, but more true honour by the humanity which he prevailed upon Ferdinand to introduce into the usages of war. When in 1248 the famous city of Seville surrendered to the Castilian monarch, Muhamed returned sad and full of care to his dominions. He saw the

gathering ills that menaced the Moslem cause; and uttered an ejaculation often used by him in moments of anxiety and trouble—"How straitened and wretched would be our life, if our hope were not so spacious and extensive!"

"Que angosta y miserable seria nuestra vida, sino fuera tan dilatada y espaciosa nuestra esperanza!"

When the melancholy conqueror approached his beloved Granada, the people thronged forth to see him with impatient joy; for they loved him as a benefactor. They had erected arches of triumph in honour of his martial exploits, and wherever he passed he was hailed with acclamations as *El Ghalib*, or the Conqueror. Muhamed shook his head when he heard the appellation. "*Wa la ghalib ila Allah!*" exclaimed he. (There is no conqueror but God!) From that time forward he adopted this exclamation as a motto.

He inscribed it on an oblique band across his escutcheon, and it continued to be the motto of his descendants.

Muhamed had purchased peace by submission to the Christian yoke; but he knew that where the elements were so discordant, and the motives for hostility so deep and ancient, it could not be secure or permanent. Acting therefore upon an old maxim, "Arm thyself in peace, and clothe thyself in summer," he improved the present interval of tranquillity by fortifying his dominions and replenishing his arsenals, and by promoting those useful arts which give wealth and real power to an empire. He gave premiums and privileges to the best artisans; improved the breed of horses and other domestic animals; encouraged husbandry; and increased the natural fertility of the soil two-fold by his protection, making the lovely valleys of his kingdom to bloom like gardens. He fostered also the growth and fabrication of silk, until the looms of Granada surpassed even those of Syria in the fineness and beauty of their productions. He moreover caused the mines of gold and silver and other metals, found in the mountainous regions of his dominions, to be diligently worked, and was the first king of Granada who struck money of gold and silver with his name, taking

great care that the coins should be skilfully executed.

It was about this time, towards the middle of the thirteenth century, and just after his return from the siege of Seville, that he commenced the splendid palace of the Alhambra; superintending the building of it in person, mingling frequently among the artists and workmen, and directing their labours.

Though thus magnificent in his works and great in his enterprises, he was simple in his person and moderate in his enjoyments. His dress was not merely void of splendour, but so plain as not to distinguish him from his subjects. His harem boasted but few beauties, and these he visited but seldom, though they were entertained with great magnificence. His wives were daughters of the principal nobles, and were treated by him as friends and rational companions. What is more, he managed to make them live as friends with one another. He passed much of his time in his gardens; especially in those of the Alhambra, which he had stored with the rarest plants and the most beautiful and aromatic flowers. Here he delighted himself in reading histories, or in causing them to be read and related to him, and sometimes, in intervals of leisure, employed himself in the instruction of his three sons, for whom he had provided the most learned and virtuous masters.

As he had frankly and voluntarily offered himself a tributary vassal to Ferdinand, so he always remained loyal to his word, giving him repeated proofs of fidelity and attachment. When that renowned monarch died in Seville, in 1254, Muhamed Abu Alahmar sent ambassadors to condole with his successor Alonso X., and with them a gallant train of a hundred Moorish cavaliers of distinguished rank, who were to attend, each bearing a lighted taper, round the bier, during the funeral ceremonies. This grand testimonial of respect was repeated by the Moslem monarch during the remainder of his life on each anniversary of the death of King Ferdinand el Santo, when the hundred Moorish knights repaired from Granada to Seville, and took their stations with lighted tapers in the centre of the sumptuous

cathedral round the cenatoph of the illustrious deceased.

Muhamed Abu Alahmar retained his faculties and vigour to an advanced age. In his seventy-ninth year he took the field on horseback, accompanied by the flower of his chivalry, to resist an invasion of his territories. As the army sallied forth from Granada, one of the principal adalides, or guides, who rode in the advance, accidentally broke his lance against the arch of the gate. The councillors of the king, alarmed by this circumstance, which was considered an evil omen, entreated him to return. Their supplications were in vain. The king persisted, and at noontide the omen, say the Moorish chroniclers was fatally fulfilled. Muhamed was suddenly struck with illness, and had nearly fallen from his horse. He was placed on a litter, and borne back towards Granada, but his illness increased to such a degree that they were obliged to pitch his tent in the Vega. His physicians were filled with consternation, not knowing what remedy to prescribe. In a few hours he died, vomiting blood and in violent convulsions. The Castilian prince, Don Philip, brother of Alonso X., was by his side when he expired. His body was embalmed, enclosed in a silver coffin, and buried in the Alhambra in a sepulchre of precious marble, amidst the unfeigned lamentations of his subjects, who bewailed him as a parent.

Such was the enlightened patriot prince who founded the Alhambra, whose name remains emblazoned among its most delicate and graceful ornaments, and whose memory is calculated to inspire the loftiest associations in those who tread these fading scenes of his magnificence and glory. Though his undertakings were vast, and his expenditures immense, yet his treasury was always full; and this seeming contradiction gave rise to the story that he was versed in magic art, and possessed of the secret for transmuted baser metals into gold. Those who have attended to his domestic policy, as here set forth, will easily understand the natural magic and simple alchemy which made his ample treasury to overflow.

## YUSEF ABUL HAGIG,

THE

FINISHER OF THE ALHAMBRA.

BENEATH the governor's apartment in the Alhambra, is the royal mosque, where the Moorish monarchs performed their private devotions. Though consecrated as a Catholic chapel, it still bears traces of its Moslem origin; the Saracenic columns with their gilded capitals, and the latticed gallery for the females of the harem, may yet be seen, and the escutcheons of the Moorish kings are mingled on the walls with those of the Castilian sovereigns.

In this consecrated place perished the illustrious Yusef Abul Hagig, the high-minded prince who completed the Alhambra, and who for his virtues and endowments, deserves almost equal renown with its magnanimous founder. It is with pleasure I draw forth from the obscurity in which it has too long remained, the name of another of those princes of a departed and almost forgotten race, who reigned in elegance and splendour in Andalusia, when all Europe was in comparative barbarism.

Yusef Abul Hagig, (or, as it is sometimes written, Haxis) ascended the throne of Granada in the year 1333, and his personal appearance and mental qualities were such, as to win all hearts, and to awaken anticipations of a beneficent and prosperous reign. He was of a noble presence, and great bodily strength, united to manly beauty; his complexion was exceeding fair, and, according to the Arabian chroniclers, he heightened the gravity and majesty of his appearance by suffering his beard to grow to a dignified length, and dyeing it black. He had an excellent memory, well stored with science and erudition; he was of a lively genius, and accounted the best poet of his time, and his manners were gentle, affable, and urbane. Yusef possessed the courage common to all generous spirits, but his genius was more calculated for peace than war, and though obliged to take up arms repeatedly in his time, he was generally unfortunate. He carried the benignity of his nature into warfare, prohibiting all wanton cruelty,

and enjoining mercy and protection towards women and children, the aged and infirm, and all friars and persons of holy and recluse life. Among other ill-starred enterprises, he undertook a great campaign, in conjunction with the King of Morocco, against the kings of Castile and Portugal, but was defeated in the memorable battle of Salado; a disastrous reverse, which had nearly proved a death-blow to the Moslem power in Spain.

Yusef obtained a long truce after this defeat, during which time he devoted himself to the instruction of his people, and the improvement of their morals and manners. For this purpose he had established schools in all the villages, with simple and uniform systems of education; he obliged every hamlet of more than twelve houses to have a mosque, and prohibited various abuses and indecorums that had been introduced into the ceremonies of religion and the festivals and public amusements of the people. He attended vigilantly to the police of the city, establishing nocturnal guards and patrols, and superintending all municipal concerns. His attention was also directed towards finishing the great architectural works commenced by his predecessors, and erecting others on his own plans. The Alhambra, which had been founded by the good Abu Alahmar, was now completed. Yusef constructed the beautiful Gate of Justice, forming the grand entrance to the fortress, which he finished in 1348. He likewise adorned many of the courts and halls of the palace, as may be seen by the inscriptions on the walls, in which his name repeatedly occurs. He built also the noble Alcazar or citadel of Malaga, now unfortunately a mere mass of crumbling ruins, but which most probably exhibited in its interior, similar elegance and magnificence with the Alhambra.

The genius of a sovereign stamps a character upon his time. The nobles of Granada, imitating the elegant and graceful taste of Yusef, soon filled the city of Granada with magnificent palaces; the halls of which were paved with mosaic, the walls and ceilings wrought in fretwork, and delicately gilded and painted with azure, vermilion, and other brilliant

colours, or minutely inlaid with cedar and other precious woods; specimens of which have survived, in all their lustre, the lapse of several centuries. Many of the houses had fountains, which threw up jets of water to refresh and cool the air. They had lofty towers also, of wood or stone, curiously carved and ornamented, and covered with plates of metal that glittered in the sun. Such was the refined and delicate taste in architecture that prevailed among this elegant people: insomuch that to use the beautiful simile of an Arabian writer, "Granada in the days of Yusef was as a silver vase, filled with emeralds and jacynth's."

One anecdote will be sufficient to show the magnanimity of this generous prince. The long truce which had succeeded the battle of Salado was at an end, and every effort of Yusef to renew it was in vain. His deadly foe Alonso XI. of Castile took the field with great force, and laid siege to Gibraltar. Yusef reluctantly took up arms and sent troops to the relief of the place; when in the midst of his anxiety, he received tidings that his dreaded foe had suddenly fallen a victim to the plague. Instead of manifesting exultation on the occasion, Yusef called to mind the great qualities of the deceased, and was touched with a noble sorrow. "Alas!" cried he, "the world has lost one of its most excellent princes; a sovereign who knew how to honour merit, whether in friend or foe!"

The Spanish chroniclers themselves bear witness to this magnanimity. According to their accounts, the Moorish cavaliers partook of the sentiment of their king, and put on mourning for the death of Alonso. Even those of Gibraltar who had been so closely invested, when they knew that the hostile monarch lay dead in his camp, determined among themselves that no hostile movement should be made against the Christians. The day on which the camp was broken up, and the army departed bearing the corpse of Alonso, the Moors issued in multitudes from Gibraltar, and stood mute and melancholy, watching the mournful pageant. The same reverence for the deceased was observed by all the Moorish commanders on the frontiers, who suffered the funeral train to pass in safety, bearing the corpse

of the Christian sovereign from Gibraltar to Seville.\*

Yusef did not long survive the enemy he had so generously deplored. In the year 1354, as he was one day praying in the royal mosque of the Alhambra, a maniac rushed suddenly from behind and plunged a dagger in his side. The cries of the king brought his guards and courtiers to his assistance. They found him weltering in his blood, and in convulsions. He was borne to the royal apartments, but expired almost immediately. The murderer was cut to pieces, and his limbs burnt in public to gratify the fury of the populace.

\* "Y los Moros que estaban en la villa y castillo de Gibraltar, despues que sopieron que el Rey Don Alonso era muerto, ordenaron entre si que ninguno nca fuesse osado de fazer ningun movimiento contra los Christianos, nin mover pelea contra ellos, estovieron todos quedos, y dezian entre ellos que aquel dia muriera un noble rey y gran principe del mundo."

The body of the king was interred in a superb sepulchre of white marble, a long epitaph in letters of gold upon an azure ground recorded his virtues. "Here lies a king and a martyr, of an illustrious line, gentle, learned, and virtuous; renowned for the graces of his person and his manners, whose clemency, piety, and benevolence, were extolled throughout the kingdom of Granada. He was a great prince; an illustrious captain; a sharp sword of the Moslem; a valiant standard-bearer among the most potent monarchs," etc.

The mosque still remains which once resounded with the dying cries of Yusef, but the monument which recorded his virtues has long since disappeared. His name, however, remains inscribed among the ornaments of the Alhambra, and will be perpetuated in connexion with this renowned pile, which it was his pride and delight to beautify.

THE END.









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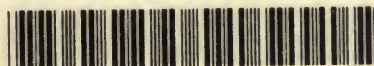
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