

the Moors seemed to be staked upon this single cast. But their condition was not yet so desperate as it appeared. For at this crisis a new state burst into existence, which shone forth awfully for two centuries, like an immense comet, and was destined to impose further and Herculean labours upon the over-confident Spaniards.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

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CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

APPENDIX

TO THE

THIRD BOOK.

NOTE (B). *Than the tygers, &c.*

THE history of Africa has exhibited through all ages little more than one dark and disgusting scene of indomitable ferocity. The reader, if possessed of tolerable humanity, shudders at the contemplation of any single page. And if he could divest himself of that pride which is unfortunately too much a bar to all improvement, that pride too inherent in our species, which induces man to confine every thing good and great exclusively to his own country, and to depreciate and undervalue others in proportion, he would be almost induced to think the world one great receptacle of tygers, and of these his own species the most ferocious.

Amidst the swarm of African Princes, Ibn Ishac of the tribe of the Agliabites deserves particularly to be pointed out to detestation. This savage not only murdered his eight brothers, but rendered his depravity still more notorious, if possible,

by murdering his own children. The mother of the monster contrived for some time by stratagem to screen sixteen of his daughters, by as many different mothers, from his fury, all of whom the inhuman father had ordered for execution. She began, however, not long after this event, to reflect upon what she had done, and to think it advisable to secure a pardon, for this her meritorious disobedience. She accordingly availed herself of an interval, when her son was lamenting the death of these daughters, to confess what she had done, and throw herself and those she had protected on his mercy.

The tyrant at first appeared softened by the communication. He ordered all his children into his presence, and caressed them with every mark of tenderness and affection. This scene so overcame his humane mother, who claimed the merit of it exclusively to herself, that, in the fullness of her joy, she retired to offer up her thanks to heaven for this miraculous alteration as she thought in the nature of her son. But behold! within an hour, a little hour after this affecting scene, while the tender parent was yet giving vent to the effusions of her gratitude; she was presented by the eunuchs with the heads of her sixteen grand-children.

Many similar traits, all equally attested by historians, might be given of this execrable Ishac. But what is unaccountable, and, if we were not persuaded "there is another and a better world," would be incredible, is, that this wretch was successful in all his wars, that he enjoyed a very long reign; and that, at last, he died quietly in his bed of one of the ordinary diseases incidental to old age.

But why dwell upon these antiquated excesses? Equal scenes of horror have been exhibited in our day by Muley Abdallah, the father of Sidi Mahomet, king of Morocco. This wretch attempting one day to cross a river was in danger of being drowned, but rescued from his fate by the fidelity of one of his slaves. The poor negroe was so pleased with his success that he could not conceal his transports in the presence of his master. Muley, who observed him, waited with the greatest composure till he recovered his usual tranquillity, then, drawing his sword, "Behold," he cried, "this vile Musul-
" man, who presumes to think that God has need of his assis-
" tance to prolong the life of a Cheriff." Saying this he coolly cut off the head of his preserver.

The same Muley had a trusty slave who had long served him, and to whom the savage seemed strongly attached. In one of his lucid intervals, he advised this slave to accept a present of two thousand drachmas, and withdraw from him entirely, lest, as he himself avowed, he might be tempted to treat him as he had done so many others. The faithful domestic refused the money, and falling at his feet, declared he would rather perish by the hand of his kind master, so he called him, than abandon his service. It is almost needless to add that he met the fate which his excessive credulity merited; within a few days after this affecting scene, without any apparent reason except his unaccountable thirst for blood, a thirst which regularly redoubled upon him at intervals, Muley dispatched his faithful slave with a blow of his musket, reminding him at the time, with the greatest composure, how injudiciously he had acted in slighting his advice.

NOTE (C). *Abenzoar*.

ABENZOAR, or Avenzoar, was descended from a noble family at Seville, in which city he practised with the greatest reputation as a physician. His father and grandfather had also followed this profession; and the large fortune he inherited from them, placed him above the necessity of practising for profit. He therefore took no fees either from the poor or from industrious mechanics, though he never declined them from princes or great men. He lived to a great age, enjoying good health to the last, and, as he began to practise between his twentieth and thirtieth year, he must certainly have had as much experience as any of his contemporaries. He published two treatises, on diet, and on pharmacy. This latter work was so much esteemed, that, in 1280, it was translated into Hebrew, and has been since translated from that language into Latin by Paravicinus, whose translation ran through many editions.

NOTE (D). *Averroes*.

AVERROES, son of the Judge of Cordova, was educated in Africa. He first translated Aristotle into the Arabian language, and thence into Latin, and his translation was for a long time the only one in use. His other works on the Globes, and the Res Medica, are still held in estimation among the learned. He was ranked, not without reason, among the first of the Arabian philosophers, a race of men rarely very

numerous where bigots or prophets predominate. Persons of this cast, like certain noxious trees, rarely permitting any salutary plants to prosper within the reach of their exhalations.

The indifference which Averroes affected for all religions, his own not excepted, drew upon him the vengeance not only of the priesthood, but of all denominations of fanatics, to whose malevolence he is said to have fallen a martyr. Articles of accusation were tendered against him to the Emperor Henry of Morocco. In consequence of this prosecution, he was condemned to do public penance at the gates of the Mosque, where he was exposed to the disgusting humiliation of receiving in his face the spittle of all those who came, or pretended to come, to pray for his conversion. To this sentence he resigned himself with the utmost composure, exclaiming all the while, with an energy superior to the mean and little insults of human malice, " Oh let me live and die with the temper of a philosopher." He was taken off at Morocco, anno 1206.

NOTE (E). *St. James and Calatrava.*

THE order of St. James of the Sword, as it is called, was instituted in 1170, in the reign of Ferdinand the Second, king of Leon and Galicia. It took its rise from the incursions of the Moors, and was intended to protect the pilgrims who were accustomed to resort to Compostella, to visit the sepulchre of St. James. The order was confirmed in 1175 by a Bull of Pope Alexander the Third. Don Pedro Ferdinand de

Fuentos Escalada was the first Grand Master. He died in 1184, after having governed the order thirteen years.

The habit of ceremony of the knights of St. James is a white mantle with a red Cross on the breast. This Cross has the form of a sword, powdered with fleurs de Lys along the pommel and handle. The knights in ordinary wear a medal with a red sword at the button hole. They made at first no other vows than those of conjugal chastity, poverty and obedience; but since 1652, they have added a fourth—to maintain and defend the immaculate Conception. This order had twenty-seven Commanderies assessed in Castile and Leon, which produced a revenue of two hundred and seventy two thousand ducats.

The order of Calatrava was instituted 1158, during the reign of Sancho the Third, under Raymond Fitero and David Velas, two monks, who made a vow to defend Calatrava, a city of New Castile, on the Guadiana, when the Moors threatened to besiege it. The king was so pleased with this vow, that he gave the city and its territory to Fitero and his order, and knighted them.

The knights wear a red Cross upon their habits. Pope Alexander the Third confirmed the institution. The title of Grand was in 1522 annexed to the Crown of Castile, and, from being elective, was made hereditary, by a Bull of Adrian the Sixth. The knights bear for arms the Cross of the order gules, in a field argent, with two entraves sable at the foot of the Cross. The habit of ceremony is a large white mantle,

having, on the left side, a red cross sprinkled with fleurs de Lys. Since the year 1540, at which time they obtained permission to marry, no other vows are exacted than those of obedience, poverty, and conjugal chastity.

NOTE (F). *Forces the iron chains, &c.*

IT was Sancho the Eighth, surnamed the Strong, who acquired such glory in this action: And it was in commemoration of his exploits on this day, (of the chains he forced through), that he assumed, in addition to the arms of Navarre, chains d'or upon a field gules.

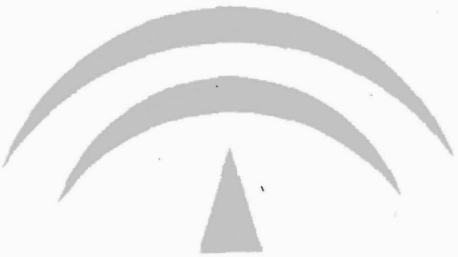
NOTE (G). *The paradise, &c.*

CORDOVA is commanded by a chain of mountains which preserve a perpetual verdure. The walls of this city are washed by the Guadalquivir. It was known to the ancients by the names of Corduba and Colonia patricia. The former site is filled up with half ruined buildings and the scattered reliques of its ancient mosque.

All who have written upon this city call it the Cradle of Genius. In the first ages after its foundation it had an university in which the sciences were cultivated. Under the Romans this university was celebrated for the study of philosophy, morality and eloquence, and even a great professorship was annexed to it; in their days we find among its best produc-

tions, the names of Gallio, Lucanus Acilius, ancestor of the poet of that name, Portius Ladro, Menalus, master of the elder Seneca, Seneca the historian, author of the history which passes under the name of Florus, Lucan the poet, and Seneca the tutor of Nero.

The Moors preserved to the university the reputation it had acquired under the Romans. Among their illustrious élèves we find Avenpace and Algazel, Ahalbohava and Ali Aben Ragel, Abenzual, surnamed the Sage, Albelmarcar, Abramo, Rashez, Almanzor and Aben Regid.



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BOOK THE FOURTH.



**FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE
FOURTEENTH CENTURY, TO THE TOTAL EXPULSION
OF THE MOORS FROM SPAIN.**



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ALHAMBRA 170

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

ORIGIN OF THE KINGDOM OF GRENADA.

THE rapid and brilliant successes of the Christian monarchs, but above all the taking of Cordova, spread general consternation among the Musulmans. When they beheld the cross displayed upon the minarets of the grand mosque, they abandoned themselves to despair, considering this profanation as nothing less than the subversion of their empire. Yet their situation was neither desperate nor irretrievable. They still possessed Seville, Murcia, and the little kingdom of Algarvez, and the coasts and ports in the South of Spain, and above all had an earnest of ample protection in the gigantic arm of Grenada*. But to them all these possessions now appeared no better than so much dust in the balance. Cordova, their holy city, the western rival of Meccha, had fallen into the hands of the unbelievers, and what ablution or what penance

* Note (A).

could cleanse them from the effects of this profane and deadly contamination?

Grenada at this period was governed by Mahomet Ebn Saïd of the tribe of Alhamar, originally from Caffa on the borders of the Red Sea. It is said, that Alhamar was by birth but a simple shepherd, who, having been accidentally present at a battle, became ever after impatient of the dull uniformity of the pastoral life, and was tempted to exchange his crook for the faulchion; to which exchange he owed his elevation to the throne. Incidents of this kind are not uncommon in history; but they frequently occurred among the Moors.

It is of little consequence to what source true greatness traces its origin, "to whom related, or by whom begot." Alhamar was assisted in his pretensions to the crown by a powerful auxiliary whom he had called in, in aid of his own merits. This was a kind of prophetic priest called a Santon, who most seasonably foretold that he was to be a king, and whose prediction, like many others, led to its own verification.

The new king, who was not inferior in talents to Benhoud, justly regarded himself as the last prop of the Musulman establishments in Spain. And the persecutions to which his countrymen had been exposed, and the dangers which seemed

daily to be threatening more immediately his own states, determined him to found a city, which might, in some degree, replace Cordova, and present a solid barrier to the impetuosity of the Christian incroachments, and he accordingly founded the city of Grenada.

This city is built upon two declivities at the foot of the Sierra Morena or Snowy Mountain, having the benefit of two rivers, one of which intersects and the other surrounds it. On the summit of these declivities Alhamar had erected two fortresses, one called Albazin, the other Alhambra in honour of the inhabitants of the Old Alhambra, who, as we have already stated, had betaken themselves thither after the loss of their proper city. This last town soon became a considerable city of itself, the original settlers having been recruited by fresh accessions of the Moors, whom Ferdinand expelled from Baëza, and of such as had forsaken Valencia, Cordova, and the other reduced places.

Being thus suddenly augmented by the adventitious acquisition of such an immense population, Grenada may be said to have burst forth in a state of complete maturity from its very birth. This city was upwards of three leagues in length. Its ramparts were flanked by 1030 towers, and the inhabitants no less brave than numerous, and thus all things seemingly conspired not only to promise permanence to her independency,

but to recommend and justify her pretensions to sovereignty. Her situation was both healthy and temperate, and perhaps one of the most luxuriant and delightful in the world, the whole circumjacent country conveying the idea of a perfect terrestrial paradise. The famous Vega or plain, which forms a kind of bason of about 20 leagues in length, by eight in breadth, is sheltered by the mountains of Elvira and Sierra Nuevada on the North, and on the other sides by an amphitheatre of lesser mountains, all decorated with mulberry trees, oranges, citrons, vines and olives. It is watered by five small rivers, and an infinitude of springs which serpentine along meadows of perpetual verdure; through groves of orange trees, fields of wheat and flax, plantations of the sugar cane, and forests of the stately oak.

All these productions, so varied, so delicious, and so valuable, required in this climate but little culture or trouble to bring them to perfection. The soil, a stranger to the forbidding inactivity of winter, is in a state of constant vegetation; and the winds that descend regularly from the mountains, as if expressly to qualify the sultry heats of the summer, and preserve a pleasing temperature, while they assist respiration and preserve health, protect and revive the flowers, with which Nature in her bounty has bedizened this her great master-piece. Vegetation is every where so active, that buds, blossoms, and fruits are seen upon the same tree at one and the same time,

as if contending for pre-eminence in gratitude, and striving which best should beautify the spot that produced them.

Is it not painful to reflect that it is here, in this celebrated Vega, which no description can embellish, no pencil faithfully represent—in which Nature seems to have exhausted all her choicest treasures for the gratification of man;—is it not, I ask, painful to reflect that it is on this very spot that more human blood has been unthankfully lavished than in any other of almost tenfold magnitude on our globe? Yes, it is here, it is here that for more than two centuries the most ferocious barbarities were practised by nation against nation, city against city, and man against man. Insomuch that there is not a corner in which the spirit of desolation has not rioted, in which whole harvests have not been destroyed in an instant, whole villages or towns reduced to ashes, and the soil alike manured with the mangled reliques of Moorish and Christian victims. Grenada, like hapless beauty, has been ruined by the transcendency of her own charms. Had she been less attractive, she had probably escaped contamination.

Exclusive of her much vaunted Vega, itself alone a source of fertility almost inexhaustible, Grenada contained fourteen large cities, and more than one hundred smaller ones, besides towns and villages without number. Its extent from Lorca to

Gibraltar, which was not taken from the Moors till some time after the period we are treating of, was more than eighty leagues. The width more than thirty, measuring from Cambal to the sea. Her mountains produced gold, silver, amethysts, granites, and all the marbles. Of these the Apulxares, the most distinguished, form a province of themselves, and furnished the Grenadian monarchs with treasures far more precious in the estimation of sound philosophy, than her collective mines. They furnished them with men, with men active and laborious, with expert farmers, with brave and indefatigable warriors. Finally, as the ports of Almeria, Malaga and Algeziras invited, and may be said to have commanded to a certain extent the trade of Europe and Africa, these ports were become almost exclusively the grand depository of the commerce of the two seas.

Such was Grenada!

Mahomet Al Hamar, who may be called the founder of this kingdom, tried various experiments to unite all the Musulmans in Spain under one sceptre. But the little province of Murcia*, that of Algarvez, governed by its native princes, and above all the great republic of Seville, refused his

* Note (B).

proffered policy. Each of these states was intent upon defending its independency, and yet all refused to unite with the only power that was really able to defend it. An infatuation which enabled the Spaniards to attack them separately, and crush the whole of them in succession!



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CHAPTER THE SECOND.

FALL OF SEVILLE.—REVENUES AND FORCES OF THE GRENADIAN SOVEREIGNS.

THOUGH Alhamar, at the commencement of his reign, gained many advantages over the Castilians, yet he could not turn them to any considerable account. On the contrary, the unsettled state of his kingdom, and the disturbances artfully fomented by the Castilians, forced him to submit to an humiliating peace. He agreed to do homage to Ferdinand for his crown, to pay him a certain annual tribute, to furnish him in war with a stipulated quota of troops, and, finally to deliver up the strong fortress of Jaën into the hands of his dangerous rival, as a pledge for the performance of his covenant.

The politic Ferdinand left Grenada thus in peace, that he might more successfully direct his arms against Seville, of which city he had long projected the conquest. The city had at this time become a kind of republic, governed by military

magistrates. Its position near the mouth of the Guadalquivir, its climate, and above all its known opulence, rendered it one of the most desirable acquisitions in all Spain.

Ferdinand was too well informed of the value of his prize to abandon it hastily. But as he foresaw a desperate resistance, he was careful, antecedent to the commencement of hostilities, to secure most of the strong posts in the neighbourhood, and to station a considerable fleet off the entrance of the Guadalquivir, expressly to convince the inhabitants, that they could have no prospect of relief from their African brethren.

Notwithstanding these precautions, the siege continued twelve full months. The inhabitants, who were numerous, defended themselves both bravely and with great skill, and though visited by famine and the horrors attendant upon it, would probably have frustrated all the efforts of their assailants, if Ferdinand had not availed himself of his recent treaty, to summon the King of Grenada to his assistance; a summons which this latter did not think fit to decline. His arrival sealed the doom of the city.* The inhabitants, who were now wholly at the mercy of the conqueror, were forced to accept such terms as he chose to dictate; and Alhamar

* Note (C).

returned to Grenada, with the painful humiliation of having conducted to the ruin of his countrymen, and the aggrandizement of his dangerous rival.

Ferdinand was more pious than politic in the use he made of this victory. He was satisfied to possess the casket, without adverting to the best treasure it contained, for he retained the city, but cast off the inhabitants; who, to the amount of one hundred thousand, betook themselves to Grenada, now become the last asylum of the Moors. Soon after the fall of Seville, Algarvez was reduced by the Portugueze monarch, and Murcia, whose interests should have been inseparable from those of Grenada, became an easy prey to the Castilians.

The treaty which had been concluded between Alhamar and Ferdinand, was carefully adhered to during the life of this latter. Mahomet, however, knew that he could not calculate upon any long continuance of harmony between the two nations, and had therefore wisely profited of this interval of tranquillity to compact and consolidate his power.

It is not easy to appreciate the revenues of the Grenadian monarch, or to ascertain the various sources from which these revenues were drawn, the value of Arabian money being, in our time, but imperfectly ascertained. The monarch, we know, was entitled to a seventh part of the product of the land,

and received on the herds and flocks in the same proportion. The royal domains consisted in many farms of great extent and value, and as agriculture had then obtained great perfection, and had a most fertile soil to exercise itself upon, we may reasonably suppose this species of revenue to have been wonderfully productive.

The crown revenues were further augmented by taxes on stamps, on sales, and on transfers of every kind. The sovereign, by a positive law, was declared the legitimate heir of every person who died intestate, and further entitled to a share in all inheritances. He had also very considerable mines of gold, silver and the precious stones; and, though the Moors were but imperfectly skilled in the working of mines, we know that Grenada was nevertheless the part of Europe in which both gold and silver most abounded. If we advert to various other products, particularly the traffic in beautiful silks, from which this kingdom by the convenience of its ports derived considerable benefits; and further call to mind the extraordinary activity, the industry, and characteristic sobriety of the Moors, these aggregate considerations must certainly impress no very humble notions of the opulence of the Grenadian sovereigns.

Their forces, I will not say in times of peace, for with such times they were rarely acquainted, amounted to one

hundred thousand effective men, and this number could on exigencies be doubled. The city alone furnished fifty thousand; but when called upon to act against the Spaniards, every man became a soldier. Difference of worship rendered these wars in a manner holy, and the rooted antipathy between the two nations, drew forth, in times of need, even the imperfect energies of infancy and age.

But independent of this auxiliary force, which could at best be but imperfectly disciplined, Grenada had always large bodies of horse distributed along her frontiers; but particularly on the sides of Jaën and Murcia, these points being most exposed to the depredations of the Spaniards. Each of these horsemen had a comfortable dwelling assigned him, with land sufficient to support his family and his horse. This mode of maintaining soldiers, was beneficial without being burthensome. And it was also extremely politic, since it attached these soldiers to their country, by giving them a kind of property they were interested in defending, and the defence of which they must know depended principally on themselves.

This cavalry must have proved extremely serviceable in an age when the art of war did not, as in our days, require large bodies of men to be incessantly assembled and collectively exercised. The men were mounted on Andalousian or

African horses, whose excellencies have been always acknowledged, which they managed with uncommon dexterity, and regarded indeed as companions. In a word, their cavalry had obtained even then the same reputation which we assign it at present.

These formidable squadrons were unrivalled in the velocity of their movements. At one and the same instant they would charge in a body, divide by troops, disperse, rally, fly and then rally again, and during any of these manœuvres pick up a lance or sabre from the ground on full gallop. Nothing in short in horsemanship could exceed their expertness. Their voices, their looks, their gestures, their very thoughts all seemed rivetted to their inestimable coursers; and these in fact constituted the principal strength of the Moorish battle.

Their infantry was of little or no estimation, and the places of defence committed to them in general, little better than mere mud walls surrounded by ditches, and therefore certainly incompetent to resist the attacks of the Spanish infantry, which began even then to be thought, what it afterwards proved itself to be under Gonsalvo the great captain.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

ALPHONSO THE SAGE.—ANECDOTE OF GARCÍAS GÓMEZ.

FERDINAND the Third, or, as he has been called, Saint Ferdinand, was succeeded on the throne of Castile by his son Alphonso the Sage*. On the accession of the new king, Mahomet presented himself at court, escorted by a splendid retinue, to renew the treaty of peace which had been entered into with his predecessor. He met with the most gracious reception, and obtained a remission of part of the tribute he had stipulated to pay, and thus far harmony seemed established between the two courts. But the prospect was too fair to be lasting. War was again renewed, and conducted with the usual inveteracy, but with this only difference, that the contending parties were now more equally balanced, and the chances became more doubtful.

In the course of this war we meet with an exploit which does no less honour to the liberality of the Moors, than the

* Note (D).

courage of the Christian hero, the immediate subject of it, and is therefore not undeserving a place in history. Garcias Gomez was governor of Xeres when that city was besieged by the Grenadians, and, during the siege, had lost the principal part of his garrison. Still, however, though himself stuck round with darts and covered with blood, he remained upon the ramparts, resisting almost singly all the attacks of the assailants. The Moors, who beheld with admiration this extraordinary display of courage, were so affected by it, that they determined with one accord to save, if possible, the life of the gallant Spaniard; and accordingly, by means of iron hooks, they actually succeeded and brought him off in his own despite. They detained him among them till his wounds were healed, treating him always with the greatest care and tenderness, and then, in acknowledgment of his high valour, loaded him with presents and returned him unransomed to his country.

Alhamar, although successful in many battles, could not protect Murcia against the arms of Alphonso, and was even forced, for the attainment of peace, to subject himself anew to his former tribute. But the treaty to this effect was scarcely signed, when his hopes were again revived by dissensions in Castile between Alphonso and some of the principal lords of his court, with his brother at their head. These malcontents withdrew themselves to Grenada, where they rendered very

seasonable service to Alhamar, in quelling a revolt which had been excited by the intrigues of the Spaniards. This was one of Alhamar's last exploits. He died shortly after at Grenada, bequeathing to his son, Mahomet the Second, the undisputed possession of a throne which had been acquired exclusively by his own valour and virtues.

Mahomet assumed at his accession the title of Emir al Munemion. He seems to have adhered to his father's policy with respect to Castile. As Alphonso was aspiring at the imperial crown,* he was necessarily forced to make frequent voyages for the advancement of his pretensions: upon these occasions the Grenadian monarch did not fail to profit of his absence so far as to foment divisions in his kingdoms, under cover of which, he expected not only to release himself from his disgraceful tribute, but also to augment and strengthen his dominions. With this view he made a secret treaty with the king of Tunis, by which it was fixed that the strong fortresses of Jaën and Algeziras, should be delivered into his hands, on condition that he invaded Castile with a powerful army. Conformably to this treaty, Jacob arrived in Spain and effected a junction with his ally.

While the Musulman princes acted in concert they ob-

* Note (E).

tained many advantages over the Castilians. But their union was soon interrupted by the criminal rebellion of Sancho against his father. Mahomet on this occasion declared for the rebel son, and Alphonso being forsaken by his subjects, had no resource but to throw himself at the mercy of the King of Tunis, before whom he presented himself accordingly at Zehra. At this interview the Castilian offered the post of honor to his protector. "No," exclaimed the generous Moor, "this place, as long as you are unfortunate, is due to you. I come to render justice to an injured father, to assist him in chastising an ungrateful son, who, in return for the life he has received, is wickedly plotting to deprive his venerable benefactor both of his life and his crown. When this work is accomplished, and you become once more prosperous and powerful, I shall be then ready to enter the list against you, and contest anew your pretensions to the crown."

Alphonso had not magnanimity enough to confide in the person who made this declaration. He withdrew secretly from his court, and died shortly after of grief and disappointment, having previously made a will, by which, in due form, he affected to disinherit his guilty son. Vain ostentation! to think that the grave would give him the disposal of a kingdom, which, when living, he had not been able to recover! In defiance of the will, and the then prevalent dissensions in

Castile, Sancho* continued upon the throne. Mahomet however did not fail to turn these dissensions to his own benefit. He penetrated into Andalousia,† where he possessed himself of many posts of considerable strength, and signaling his reign by various victories, ended his career in a blaze of glory!

* Note (F).

† Note (G).



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CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

OF ALHAMBRA, AND GENERALIFFE.

AS Mahomet the Second was always friendly to the sciences, his court became particularly the asylum of poetry and philosophy. The Moors had distinguished themselves in many branches of science, but, above all, in astronomy, for which they were so highly celebrated, that, we are told, when Alphonso the Sage was composing his famous astronomical tables, he was materially assisted by some of the most learned of this nation. But exclusive of her excellence in this and other sciences, Grenada had certainly begun to rival Cordova* in arts, but particularly in architecture, her progress in which had been uncommonly rapid.

It was in the reign of Mahomet the Second, that the celebrated palace of Alhambra was begun; a palace which has

* Note (H).

particularly excited the admiration of all travellers, as it serves to prove the degree of perfection to which the Moors had carried the art, till then so little known to Europeans, of adjusting magnificence by the mirror of voluptuousness. As I am upon this topic, I trust I shall be excused from giving some detail of a structure, the contemplation of which conveys no little insight into the manners and customs of this people.

Alhambra was a vast fortress constructed upon one of the two hills which comprised the city of Grenada. This hill not only commands a complete view of the whole city, but an extensive and almost boundless landscape of the most beautiful country probably in the universe. It was in the middle of an esplanade on this spot that Mahomet constructed his superb palace.

Nothing known to us in architecture can give us any adequate idea of the architecture of the Moors. They piled up their buildings without the smallest regard to external shew, without symmetry, without order. Their whole attention was directed inwardly. Here they employed all their ingenuity. Here they exhausted their resources of taste and magnificence, endeavouring to blend all the refinements of luxury and elegance, with the lovelier fascinations of rural simplicity. Here, in spacious saloons lined with marble, paved or coated

with elegant china, and set off with sofas covered with the finest Persian carpeting, or decorated with the costliest stuffs in gold and silver, fountains were seen to play in various directions, the most precious perfumes were inhaled from vessels of the choicest workmanship, and all the apartments embalmed with the combined sweets of oranges, jasmins, myrtles, and other fragrant and odoriferous flowers!

To the first view of the traveller the palace of Alhambra presents scarcely any front. It is approached by delightful walks carried along the borders of rivulets, which wind through groves of flowers in various directions. The entrance is by a square tower called heretofore the Gate* of Judgment; a religious inscription, denoting that it was in this place the monarch dispensed justice, according to the ancient usage of the Hebrews and all the eastern nations. Many buildings adjacent to this have been since demolished to make room for a magnificent palace which was erected for Charles the Fifth, the description of which would be foreign to our purpose†.

On the north side of the above building we enter the apartments of the Moorish kings, where the traveller fancies himself transported, as if by magic, into the land of the fairies. The first court is an oblong square, surrounded by an arched

* Note (I).

† Note (K).

gallery, the walls and ceilings of which are covered with Mosaic, with festoons, with Arabesque paintings and different gildings and carvings in stucco. All the spaces are filled with passages from the Alcoran, or inscriptions like the following, which I select, as they give us some ideas of the figurative style of the Moors.

“ O Nazar, thou wast born upon the throne, and shinest
“ like the morning star, with thine own lustre !”

“ Thy arm is our rampart, thy justice our light. By
“ thy valour thou subduest those who give companions to
“ God. By thy bounty thou diffusest happiness among the
“ innumerable offspring of thy people. The stars of the
“ firmament shine upon thee with respect, the sun with
“ love, and the stately cedar, loftiest monarch of the forest,
“ is abased in thy presence, and again exalted by thy
“ power.”

In the middle of this court, which is paved with white marble, is a bason deep and wide enough for persons to swim in, which had the benefit of a constant supply of running water. This was called the Mescar, and served as a bath to the attendants of the court*.

From hence we pass to the celebrated Court of the Lions, which is a hall one hundred feet long by fifty wide. Round this hall there passes a gallery supported by a colonade of

* Note (L).

white marble, the pillars of which are ranked sometimes by twos, sometimes by threes in the row. They are small and of a whimsical taste, yet the eye of the spectator is pleased by their grace and lightness. The walls, and, above all, the cielings of this winding gallery are clothed with gold, lapis lazuli, azure or stucco, or adorned with silk worked in Arabesque figures with an elegance and nicety which our most skilful artists would perhaps be puzzled to imitate. In the midst of flower works, gems and other decorations, we meet with the following passages from the Alcoran, which every good Musulman is enjoined constantly to have in his mouth ;

“ God is great !”

“ God alone is conqueror !”

“ There is but one God !”

“ Heavenly gaiety, expansion of heart, and all
“ delights of the soul to the true believers.”

At the two extremities of this oblong square two cupolas are projected from fourteen to sixteen feet long, decorated with Mosaic. These are also supported upon marble pillars, and have fountains playing under them. In the centre of this is a cup of alabaster of about six feet diameter, supported by twelve lions over a vast bason of white marble. This cup, supposed to be modelled after the famous Sea of Brass in the temple of Solomon ; is surmounted by a smaller one, from whence issued a large sheaf of water, which, falling from one receptacle into the other, and from

thence into the larger bason, formed a kind of perpetual cascade, the volumes of which were still further augmented by streams incessantly discharged from the mouths of the lions.

This fountain, like all other parts of the palace, is adorned with inscriptions, the Moors taking always much delight in blending poetry with sculpture, in which, though their ideas are often far fetched, they are nevertheless always either pleasing or sublime. But we are so little acquainted with their manners and the genius and turn of their language, that we have no right, and it certainly is not fair, to criticise their works too severely. If this was allowable, would the verses composed in the Spanish part of Spain, or perhaps in Europe, at the same period, be entitled to better consideration, than those which are found in the Court of the Lions?

“ If, stranger, thou canst rightly prize
 “ These magic scenes that round thee rise
 “ Where Lions sport and waters flow,
 “ Due rev’rence to the founder show.
 “ The prodigies which greet the view,
 “ To mighty Mahomet are due.”

If free from sordid care and strife,
 You sigh for smoother scenes of life ;
 Appreciate the great master’s mind
 By the pure calm which here you find.
 But, though his gentle soul, like thine,
 Did to life’s peaceful tracts incline ;
 Whene’er provok’d by restless foes,
 The Lion’s fury in him rose.



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By justice arm'd, her champion went,
To scourge the proud and insolent.

These springs, that thus resplendent rear
Their glitt'ring tops, and play in air,
Then, to the tributary urn,
Augmentedly her gifts return,
Are faithful emblems of his mind,
For ever sportive, clear and kind.
When, like their show'rs, his subjects vied,
Who best should for his state provide,
Their tributes in his treasures laid,
Were sure of int'rest amply paid ;
With patriot warmth their wants he scan'd,
And crown'd them with a lib'ral hand.

Such is the purport of one of the inscriptions in the Alhambra, which I have hazarded to give in English with a trembling hand, sincerely regretting that I have no poetic friend to whom I can at present resort to do them justice.

From the Court of the Lions we enter three other halls, on the sides of which are the following inscriptions :

“ A long reign and the love and assistance of God to my
“ master.”

“ There is no other conqueror but God.”

At the entrance of the hall, which has this inscription, we find the following :

“ The garden that is before you gives you life. The
“ harmony of those thickets and their varied fragrancv en-
“ chants the soul. And thou, charming bason, which em-
“ bellishest it, thou shalt be compared to a monarch adorned
“ with his crowns, his golden chains and jewels.”

This inscription alludes to the gardens of Lindaraxa, which the windows of this hall commanded.

It is needless to enter into a minuter detail of the several parts of the Alhambra that are still distinguishable. In this quarter is the hall of audience. In that, are the baths of the King and Queen. The very chambers in which they reposed are to be seen at this day, with the places for the beds ; which were in recesses, alcoved with china, and having fountains playing near them.

The concert room has four raised galleries for the musicians, and a fountain which used to play into a bason of alabaster. The seats for the court were all decorated with tapestry. From the cabinet to which the Queen retired to prayers, or to the duties of the toilette, the view is picturesque and enchanting beyond all description. The cabinet, about six feet square, has, in one of the corners, a plate of marble pierced through with innumerable apertures, to admit the scents of the various perfumes which were burnt in a vault beneath. The windows, doors and spaces are all so disposed, that the sight feels itself relieved and cheered by the select lights in which

the different objects are presented to it, while the whole frame is constantly gratified and refreshed by a salutary and imperceptible circulation of air.

On quitting the Alhambra, we see on another lofty mountain the enchanting gardens of the Generaliffe, so called to signify the seat of music, dancing and love. The palace and gardens were made by a prince of the name of Omar, who was so passionately fond of music, that he used to retire to this place to deliver himself wholly to his favourite recreation.

To this palace, which was built much in the same style with the Alhambra, and distinguished by the same magnificence, the Kings and Queens of Grenada generally resorted in the spring.

Though the remains of the Generaliffe are now very imperfect, yet its picturesque situation, and the views it presents, always varying, always fascinating, are constant and impressive objects of admiration. Fountains, jets d'eau, and cascades rush out and present themselves under an infinity of forms. The garden was a kind of amphitheatre intersected by Mosaic terraces or green swards. It is still overlooked by some of those immense cypresses, which have, heretofore, afforded their grateful and accommodating shades to the Kings and Queens of Grenada. In their days, plantations of fruit

trees and flowery thickets were intermingled with sombre groves, with domes and splendid pavilions. In our day, little remains of the Generaliffe, which the hand of despotism, more remorseless than the hand of time, could ravish from it. Still it is the spot in the world that appeals most powerfully to the senses and to the heart.*

Among the scattered inscriptions in this palace, are to be found the following on a window in the first hall.

“ This window is intended to gratify the noble persons
 “ who may chance to visit this charming palace. The
 “ prospects from hence are transporting ; since, while they
 “ please the eye, they exalt the soul. Let us give thanks to
 “ God! The fountain you behold from hence is well
 “ recompensed for its services, for while it gives never
 “ ceasing delight to our King, it is enlivened and embel-
 “ lished by his presence.”

On quitting this hall we pass under some arches leading to a court, called the Court of the Lake, where are found the following inscriptions :

“ Charming palace, thou presentest thyself in full ma-
 “ jesty.”

“ Thy splendour equals thy extent.”

“ Thy light illumines all around thee.”

“ Thou art worthy all praise. Thy attire is divine.

* Note (M).

“ Thy gardens are decorated with flowers which repose
“ upon their branches to dispense around the fragrance
“ of their blossoms. When the leaves of thy thickets move,
“ they soothe thee with the softest music ; all around is one
“ scene of verdure, flourishing and full of harmony.”

“ Abulgali, thou best of kings ! Protector of the law and
“ of all true believers. Thou art the just object of my
“ veneration. May God protect thee and strengthen thy
“ hopes ! Thou ennoblest the humblest of his works !”

“ This apartment dedicated to thee, is so pure and so
“ strong that its duration must be as permanent as our
“ holy sect. It is the triumph of art and the prodigy of
“ perfection !”



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

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CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

MAHOMET THE THIRD.—DEATH OF THE TWO INFANTS.—
CANNON FIRST USED.—MELANCHOLY STATE OF EUROPE.

AFTER soaring with delight in the fairy regions of Alhambra and Generalife, it is with regret we find ourselves forced to descend to the dreary and forbidding haunts of the furies, to revisit scenes of human cruelty and desolation. Mahomet the Second was succeeded by his son Mahomet the Third, surnamed the Blind, who had to contend at once with his own subjects and with the Spaniards. His prime minister Farady had married his sister, and he was forced by his infirmity to commit himself to his guidance. Being a consummate general, Farady conducted the war against the Spaniards with tolerable success, and obtained at last an advantageous peace. But these services only drew upon him the hatred of the courtiers, who, because they envied his fortunes, thought themselves justified in projecting both his ruin and the ruin of his master. Of their intrigues, Ferdinand surnamed the Sum-