

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.

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 Gomerès, to his strong-hold in the Gibralfaro.

CHAPTER LXIII.

THE people of Malaga, being no longer overawed by Hamet el Zegri and his Gomerès, 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 mudaxares, 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 catapults, 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."

* Cura de los Palacios, cap. 84.

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 strong-hold for Moorish depredators, and the mart where most of the warriors captured in the Axarquia 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 signaling 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 those who had children: "Let those who live by the sword die by the sword," cried he, "but let us not follow their desperate councils. Who knows what sparks of

* Pulgar.

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 merchandises, 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 negociate 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 Mudaxares 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-à-piè, 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

* MS. Chron. of Valera.

† Cura de los Palacios.

the princess, 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*.

CHAPTER LXIV.

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 Gomeres, 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 hidalgo.*

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 stiff-necked 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."†

CHAPTER LXV.

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

* Cura de los Palacios, cap. 84. † Pulgar, Cronica.

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, 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 Incarnacion. 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 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 the 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

* Los renegados fueron acanavareados; y los conversos quemados: y estos fueron los cañas y luminarias mas alegres por la fiesta de la vitoria, para la piedad catholica de nuestros reyes. Abarca, Anales de Aragon, tom. ii. rey 30. c. 3.

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 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 watch-towers; 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 abode, 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 grey 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

* Pulgar.

riches; and, on arriving there, were overwhelmed with consternation at finding themselves captives. "Ferdinand," observed 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 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, of 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 LXVI.

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 Arragon; the watch-towers, 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 everywhere 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 sounding the angeles 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 short-sighted 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 reached into the centre of the kingdom. On the north-east 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 strong-hold of wealth and power. Its stern and rocky height, 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. Their 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 Arragon 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 apostasy 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 fé*'s, 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 a 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 apostasy, 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 LXVII.

"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 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

* Pulgar, part iii. cap. 100.

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 seacoast, 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 crossbowmen. 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 van-guard 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 re-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 Arragon, 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 Palermo; 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 ensconced in Baza, to be dislodged by anything 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 whole-

some 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 Fernández 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 LXVIII.

“WHILE the pious King Ferdinand,” observes Fray Antonio Agapida, “was humbling himself before the cross, a 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 strong-hold, 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 greyheaded warrior, scarred in many a battle, assumed the command, and made an obstinate defence. Neither the multitude of the enemy, 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 alcaide 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 stanch 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 strong-hold of Guadix.

The example of El Zagal roused his adherents to action. Two bold Moorish alcaides, Ali Altar and Yza Altar, 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 Purchena, 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 fled to arms. The Marquis of Cadiz suppressed, by timely vigilance, the rebellion of the mountain town of Gausen,uate 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 Arragon 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 tract 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."

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