

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

**G**RANADA, *December 1st.*—It was to the Cathedral we went first, on the morning after our arrival, reserving the Alhambra, which is some distance from the hotel, for the afternoon, when we should have more time to devote to this culminating object of our tour. The Cathedral, a handsome, half-Gothic, half-classical building of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, profusely ornamented with jasper, and precious marbles, is utterly deficient in solemnity and grandeur of appearance, and its glaring, white-washed interior would be infinitely improved by the introduction of good painted glass. It contrasts disadvantageously by its excess of light, which in summer must be quite overpowering, with every other Spanish Cathedral we saw, where the opposite extreme prevails; and in the awe-inspiring gloom, into which you suddenly emerge from the broad

sunshine, as at Toledo and Seville especially, painting, and sculpture, retablo, and alabaster tomb, present to the eye a perplexing, undistinguishable mass, in which beauty of detail, and distinctness of outline, are altogether lost in the surrounding twilight. I missed here the nearly-universal St. Christopher, which, in most Spanish Cathedrals, towers, a Colossus in fresco, near the transept-entrance, so as to be seen by all on going in, it being a popular belief, that no one, who looks at this Saint, can come the same day to an evil end.

We hurried onward to the *Capilla de los Reyes*, where Ferdinand and Isabella lie buried. This chapel, a very good specimen of Florid Gothic, adjoins the southern side of the Cathedral, and is one of the most interesting spots I ever visited. It is separated from its antechapel by the most superb *reja*; or screen of iron-work, we saw anywhere in Spain, the land (as I have already remarked, more than once), *par excellence*, for cunning workmanship in gold, silver, and all kinds of metal. The abundance of light is here a great advantage, as it reveals every portion of *El Maestro Bartolomé's* exquisite design, as well as the alabaster glories of the royal tombs, which fill up the whole

area between the screen, and the high-altar of the chapel. Passing onwards by a side-door, we stood above the vault, where the remains of Ferdinand, Isabella, and their daughter, the poor, insane Juana, with her husband, Philip of Burgundy, are entombed, while on either hand, a magnificent monument of noble dimensions, and superb execution, rises to the height of some five feet above the chapel floor. Each of these monuments, which are said to be the work of an Italian sculptor, has the form of an altar-tomb, with recumbent figures of a royal pair, life-sized, reposing on its horizontal surface. Descending into the vault below, we saw the four coffins, which, having been concealed during the French occupation of Granada, remain exactly in their original condition. They are perfectly plain, and almost rude in their construction, each bearing the initial of its occupant. Isabella's coffin is marked with the letter *Y*; for the Spaniards write the name of their greatest Queen, not as we do, but "Ysabel."

The leading idea of this chapel is the conquest of Granada, which is reproduced again and again, in every feature. On each side of the high-altar are some remarkable carvings in

wood, coloured, gilt, and draped in character, so as to be exact representations of the King and Queen in face, form, and costume, as they appeared at the taking of the city. That circumstance gives these carvings historical interest; nor is it unworthy of remark, that they are represented in an attitude, then beginning to go out of fashion in works of art, though no other could be more suitable, even to those powerful monarchs, who in the conquest of Granada were acknowledging the crowning event of their glorious reign—they are on their knees, devoutly giving thanks to Almighty God for the victory over the Moors. Their faces are precisely of that character, which convinces the beholder of their life-like truthfulness, veritable portraits in fact, and not mere creations of the imagination—Ferdinand heavy, and slow-minded, but resolute; Isabella calm, benevolent, and wise, with more comeliness than beauty.

The high-altar is panelled with carvings of the same date and description, illustrating the surrender of the Alhambra. Ford, a good judge of Art, and perfectly acquainted with all that Spain contains of greatest interest, remarks that few things in the whole land are more curious.



Isabella, on a white palfrey, rides between her husband, and Cardinal Mendoza. Boabdil comes forth on foot to meet them, and delivers up the key of the town, holding it by the wards. Behind the King and Queen appear the ladies of the court, knights, and soldiers; while the Christian captives, whom the surrender has just restored to freedom, march out, two and two, in long procession, a glad, and thankful company.

The carvings on the other side of the altar set forth the conversion of the Moors, who preferred Christianity with Granada, to Mahometanism without it. The artist may not have intended it, but nothing can be more dismal, and unhappy, than the countenances of these converts, as if the reception of Christianity had been to them anything but a privilege. Indeed, the manner in which they are taken to the font for baptism, gives one far more the idea of a flock of sheep being driven into the fold, than the voluntary act of free agents; while their number would lead one to fear, that adequate instruction and preparation must have been altogether impossible. The artist has, perhaps unconsciously, quite illustrated the general spirit (at least) of those "various modes—sometimes by blandishment, sometimes by rigour, sometimes exhorting,

sometimes entreating, sometimes hanging, sometimes burning—by which the hard hearts of the Infidels were subdued, and above fifty thousand coaxed, teased, and terrified into baptism.”\* Ford calls particular attention to the mufflers and leg-wrappers of the women, which are precisely of the same pattern as those still worn by the Moors of Tetuan.

I could not help thinking how much happier a country Spain, in all probability, would now be, had a different course been adopted towards her Moorish inhabitants. If, instead of having to make their choice between forsaking Mahometanism, and exile, they had been allowed to retain their old homes (with such precautions as might be deemed necessary to secure their peaceful submission to their new rulers), and their gradual conversion attempted with all the zeal, ability, and other appliances, which the Church of Spain had then the power to employ, the land would in that case have been spared the loss of her most industrious and intelligent inhabitants, and whole districts, once proverbial for good farming, and fertility, saved from their present unproductiveness, and lack of popu-

\* *Quarterly Review*, No. lxxxv. p. 78.

lation. As it was, the Spanish hierarchy imitated one of the worst principles of Mahometanism, and forced Christianity upon reluctant multitudes.

The deaf old verger, after giving us ample time for a careful examination of these most curious carvings, and setting a step-ladder, from the top of which we gained a better view of the royal tombs, next proceeded to draw forth, from some hidden receptacle, objects of still greater attractiveness, which had been bequeathed to this chapel by its founders. Among these were Isabella's sceptre, and missal—Ferdinand's sword, and crown—an exquisite Gothic pyx of gold, two feet high, covered with emblems of the Eucharist, and having the base of its pedestal hollowed out so as to contain a representation of the Last Supper, very similar in point of design (but on a greatly-reduced scale) to the famous one by Leonardo da Vinci, every part of it being executed in the most masterly manner—a small picture by Hemling, "The Adoration of the Magi," before which mass used to be said daily, during the siege of Granada—a viril (a species of monstrance) in gold, enamelled, and encircled by diamonds of large size—an embroidered cope, encrusted with gold to such a degree, that un-

supported it would almost stand upright, and covered with subjects from our Saviour's Life, the whole being (it is said) the production of the Queen's own hand, and presented by her to Cardinal Mendoza for the service of this chapel, in addition to two other similar vestments of even greater beauty, richness of colouring, and exquisite workmanship—and last, not least in point of interest, the identical standards used by the Christian army at the siege.

All these relics of the conquest of Granada are in excellent preservation, and as we examined them one by one in that quiet, antique-looking vestry, it seemed all but incredible that more than three centuries and a half had glided away since they were first laid up in their ponderous presses of chestnut-wood, so vividly did they recall the past, making us almost eye-witnesses of those momentous events, in which they had played their part.

We were highly amused with the number and size of the old-fashioned mirrors let into the panelling of the vestry walls for the use of the Cathedral canons, each dignitary having a separate glass for his own special benefit. Every one, initiated into the mysteries of a vestry, is aware that a certain amount of looking-glass

forms an indispensable item of its furniture. But, until I saw the vestries of Burgos and Granada, I always fancied four or five inches of that useful article were quite sufficient for every clerical purpose. It is never, however, too late to learn, and the most interesting piece of original information, respecting the Church in Spain, I was able to pick up, in our whole progress from Bayonne to Gibraltar, consists in the fact, that a cathedral canon cannot don his ecclesiastical vestments without the aid of as much looking-glass as would suffice for the dressing-table of most ladies!

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife  
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA



JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

**B**EFORE setting off for the Alhambra, I must crave permission to introduce our guide and *commissionnaire*, Ximenes, who excited our interest, not only as being a member of the same family as the great Cardinal, but still more as the son of Mateo Ximenes, whom Washington Irving has handed down to immortality in his delightful "Tales of the Alhambra."

Ximenes is the best *lacquais de place* I ever saw, being not only attentive, and obliging, intelligent, and well-mannered, but—a very rare quality in that fraternity—not in the least degree officious, and he shows you exactly what you want to see, without boring you with the twaddle most guides delight in. Our hotel was the Victoria, a name which, repeated in the

Calle de la Victoria, seems intended to be an additional memorial of the conquest of Granada. It is well situated at the northern extremity of the Alameda, and from its front windows commands a good view of the Sierra Nevada, draped in its mantle of snow. The situation is, however, better adapted for summer than winter, as it loses the sun before noon, and our rooms, being totally unprovided with grates, or any sort of fire-place, were miserably cold.

On our way to the Alhambra, we had to traverse some of the oldest quarters of the town, where picturesque streets and dirty alleys, lining each bank of the Darro—a brawling mountain-stream, that intersects the whole length of Granada—are crowded together within the gorge of a narrow ravine, dominated by the towers of the fortress.

Emerging, at length, by the Calle de los Gomeles, and crossing a spacious plaza, we entered the classic regions of the Alhambra by Charles V.'s heavy gateway. The dense grove of elms, over which, to our right, peered the ruddy forms of the *Torres Bermejas*, the walks that opened out in serpentine curves, and the situation, a steep hill overhanging the town, combined to recall Heidelberg; but giving our-



selves no leisure to dwell on the outskirts; we hurried forwards to the Gate of Justice, a massive tower of *tapia*, where trials used to be held, with a large open hand cut deep into the keystone of the arch, under which we passed, while, further on in the same building, a key occupies a similar position over another portal. Hastening onwards through a narrow passage in the open air, we came upon a spacious esplanade, *Plaza de los Algibes*, the Place of the Cisterns, so called from two great reservoirs, cut out of the solid rock, by which it is underlaid, having the *Torre del Vino*, with its elegant Moorish arch, on our right. The most conspicuous object, however, that met the eye, is the last one would either expect or desire to see in such a spot. For just at the moment when the mind is attuned to the contemplation of some of the lightest and most graceful architecture in the world, and you are eager to experience the sensations of a first impression, there, straight before you, on the choicest site in the whole circuit of the fortress, rises Charles V.'s unfinished palace, a building that in solidity and massiveness almost rivals the most ponderous constructions of Vanburgh. Anywhere else you

might feel disposed to admire its stately form and costly materials; but intruded here, and built (it is said) even upon the foundations of the Moorish winter-palace, pulled down to make way for it, it is nothing better than an insolent barbarism, unworthy such a man as Charles. Nor is one's vexation lessened on finding that it was never finished, in consequence of repeated earthquakes, which took place during its erection, and now the roofless, naked walls stare at each other in blank vacancy. I was very glad we had made our pilgrimage to Yuste before going to Granada; for I could never have enjoyed the same pleasure in visiting Charles's last retreat, after seeing the havoc he committed at the Alhambra.

Every one has noticed the extremely plain, indeed almost shabby, exterior of the Alhambra, especially when viewed in juxtaposition with the highly-decorated façade of Charles's palace. The motive for such plainness is not to be ascribed so much to a desire of producing the greatest possible contrast between its external simplicity, and internal gorgeousness, as to the purpose of averting the evil eye, of which Southern, and Eastern nations have at all times felt so universal a dread. At any rate, a most charming

artistic effect is the result, and from a narrow passage frowned upon by the offices of the neighbour-palace, and with nothing before the eye but the common-place *tapia* walls of the Alhambra, you step at once by a most unpretending little door into the full beauty of that fairy creation, consecrated at once by the associations of Poetry, Art, and History.

We are now in the Alberca. A long marble tank, 130 feet by 30, bordered by parterres of roses, rows of orange trees, and myrtles, with multitudes of gold and silver fish darting to and fro in its glassy waters, fills the whole length of its central area. The two longer walls of this court, which on their lower surface are perfectly devoid of ornamentation, are pierced above by a row of most graceful Moorish windows, opening towards the tank, and looking in that quiet spot, so fraught with a sense of repose and retirement, as if they belonged to a cluster of conventual cells. One end of the Alberca terminates in a most beautiful double arcade; at the other rises the tower of Comares, which, though not attaining an elevation of more than 75 feet by 37, still presents a very imposing appearance as it lifts itself above the surrounding buildings, so light in their

construction, so graceful in their proportions. Within its walls stands the Hall of the Ambassadors, the largest, and one of the most sumptuous apartments in the whole palace, used for the reception of envoys from foreign Powers.

It was here, that, in 1478, Don Juan de Vera delivered to Muley Aben Hassan Ferdinand's demand of the tribute paid by preceding kings of Granada to the Castilian sovereigns—the prelude to the final overthrow of the Moorish power in Spain.

It is a noble room, 35 feet square by 60 in height, crowned by a vaulted roof of *alerce* wood of extreme beauty, and illuminated in gold, red, and blue. The walls are richly stuccoed, and adorned with arabesques of great elegance. In fact, it would seem as if the artist had determined to lavish upon its ornamentation all the resources of Moorish art and taste, for the sake of producing a powerful impression on the minds of the strangers, for whose reception it was destined.

Its situation is unrivalled. As you stand in the deeply-recessed windows, to which the enormous thickness of the walls gives almost the space of small chambers, you command one of the most enchanting prospects in the world, revealing at one glance the fertile bosom of the

Vega, bounded by its amphitheatre of mountains, and the crowded streets of the Albaicin, with its impending terraces of flower-garden, and vineyard; while right opposite, on breezy heights, that overtop Alhambra itself, rise the gleaming walls of the Generalife, surrounded by shady alleys of box-tree, poplar, and cypress.

In its original beauty, and in the hours of early summer, the Hall of the Ambassadors must have been a Moslem paradise, amid the teeming luxuriance of that semi-tropical vegetation, being so contrived, that while a constant current of air breathes freshness through the apartment from the windows, that pierce its three sides, yet by partitions of most elegant lattice-work the sunshine can be tempered into a gentle twilight.

Our visit, however, was not so happily timed, and the bleak winds, and darksome skies of December forbade our indulgence in dreams of the imagination, and urged us onward still.

Re-entering the court of the Alberca, we hastened towards the Court of Lions, the central shrine of this sanctuary of Moorish art.

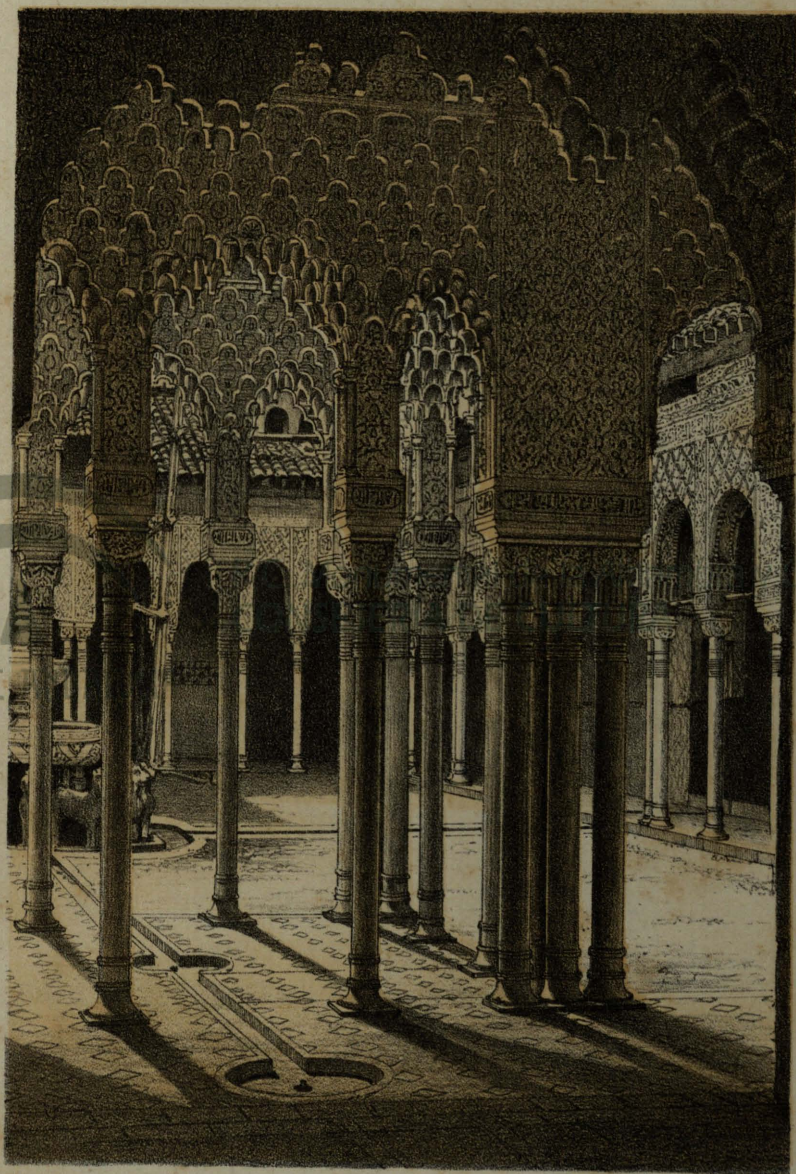
Many persons, forgetting that luxury, not grandeur, is the leading idea of the Alhambra, are disappointed with the dimensions of this court, as if they expected its size to be proportionate

to its fame. To us its actual appearance exactly coincided with our anticipations, and we now enjoyed the intense satisfaction of realizing an almost life-long idea.

The Court of Lions, an oblong of 115 feet by 66 from wall to wall, is divided into two portions, of which the central and far larger division is open to the sky, while the rest consists of a cloister-like arcade, running round the four sides, and supported by more than a hundred columns, of most graceful, fairy-like form, in white alabaster. At each end two projections, constructed somewhat like a covered balcony, are thrown out a few feet, so as to present a very pleasing break in the general outline, when you stand in the centre of the court beside the Fountain of Lions; while within the cloister, each of the deep recesses, gained by the projection, forms a delicious nook, where, in olden time, many a summer hour was whiled away, amid the luxurious repose of couches and ottomans, by the song of the minstrel, and the romance of the story-teller.

When you have mastered the first impression, you observe, that the columns on which the arcade rests, are alternately single and in pairs, with capitals of very graceful pattern, and the





BIBLIOTECA DE LA ALHAMBRA

COURT OF LIONS. ALHAMBRA.



walls of the cloister covered with tiles of blue and yellow porcelain, the favourite panelling of the Moors.

I longed to do something for the benefit of the far-famed Fountain of Lions, which, in its present dilapidation and uselessness, mars one's enjoyment of the scene; nor have the lions sufficient character to bear their reverse of fortune with dignity. Indeed, despite every prepossession in their favour, a candid spectator, with the smallest bias towards matter-of-fact, must acknowledge that they are somewhat mangy-looking animals, such as exist, it is to be hoped, only in the regions of heraldry.

Fergusson assigns to this court the date of 1325-1333, while the comparative plainness of the Alberca claims an earlier period.

Turning to the right we next enter the Hall of the Abencerrages, with its exquisite honey-combed roof, and central fountain. It was here (according to tradition) that Boabdil massacred thirty-six members of the family, from which the apartment derives its title, and is not the deed incontestably proved by the blood-stains, which sully the purity of the marble floor, as the guides point out with a positiveness of belief, perfectly refreshing in this incredulous age?

Formerly, all persons, guides and their employers alike, enjoyed the satisfaction of believing that those ruddy stains were a perpetual memorial of the bloody event. But one unlucky day, somebody, utterly destitute of romantic feeling and reverence for the *religio loci*, discovered that a tradition, claiming an antiquity of three centuries and a half, had no better foundation, than gross ignorance of chemistry, and, in the language of Cyclopædias, those time-honoured stains "are nothing else but the deposit of water, impregnated with iron, upon the white stone"!!

Since that fatal hour, no educated person dares to indulge in the luxury of the ancient belief, not even under the protection of the gallant appeal made by Ford in its behalf. Romance is powerless to contend with science in the work-a-day nineteenth century.

Exactly opposite, on the other side of the court, is "The Hall of the Two Sisters," so called from two enormous slabs of Macael marble, without flaw or stain, twins in form and colour, which are let into the pavement. This is perhaps the most beautiful portion of the Alhambra, and in its exuberance of ornamentation, richness and variety of colouring,

and manifold combination of every line that can produce beauty and grace, it is simply beyond description. The proportions are so graceful, the colours so bright and gay, yet subdued into such exquisite harmony, that soothes while it enchants the eye, and every portion down to the tiles, which form a paneling some three feet above the floor, bears the stamp of such refined taste, and infinite inventiveness, that one looks around with a sort of despairing wonderment, unable either to classify the various objects challenging admiration on every side, or to carry off anything more distinct than a dream-like recollection, in which every element of decoration is combined, until it forms a bewildering chaos of beauty.

Fergusson calls it "the most varied, and elegant apartment in the whole palace." The walls of all these are ornamented with geometric and flowing patterns, of very great beauty and richness, and applied with unexceptionable taste for such a decoration; but it is on the roofs and larger arcades, that the fatal facility of plaster becomes more apparent. Instead of the simple curves of the dome, the roofs are made up of honeycombed, or stalactite patterns, which look more like natural rock-work than the forms of

an art, which should be always, more or less, formal, and comprehensible at a glance, at least in their greater lines, and divisions. There is perhaps no instance where a Saracenic architect has so nearly approached the limits of good taste as here, and it requires all the counter-vailing elements of situation, and comparison with other objects, to redeem it from the charge of having exceeded them." \*

We were greatly struck with the highly-decorated saloon, called *Sala de Justicia*, to which the date of 1460 is assigned. Ten bearded Moors, in the costume of that day, are represented sitting in council, a feature which has suggested the name of the apartment.

A number of subjects, boar-hunting, tournaments, ladies fair and gallant knights, both Christian and Moslem, birds and beasts, make up a most curious work, reminding the spectator (as Ford suggests) of some antique illuminated manuscript. It is well worth careful study, and interested me exceedingly, as being a style of decoration I had not expected to find in the Alhambra.

One of the most enjoyable spots in the whole palace is the alcove overlooking the garden of

\* Fergusson's Handbook of Architecture, p. 463.

*Linderaja* with its marble fountain surrounded by roses, myrtles, and orange-trees, from one of which Ximenes plucked some golden fruit, and presented to each of us as a *souvenir* of the Alhambra. On this alcove, called *Tocador de la Reina*, every resource and combination of Moorish art was exhausted, to make it worthy of its destination as the *boudoir* of the reigning Sultana; though even here one is reminded of Charles V.'s barbarism by the hideous brick buildings he erected, which rise in unmitigated ugliness on the opposite side of the garden.

It were endless to describe all the various courts, balconies, galleries, and baths, contained within the circuit of the Alhambra. The Mosque alone, with its exquisite niche, where the Koran was deposited, would long detain an archæologist, even in spite of the cruel treatment it experienced from Charles, who here perpetrated precisely the same offence against good taste, for which he gave the Dean and Chapter of Cordova a scolding they richly deserved on account of their stupid alterations in that unique Cathedral.

Many visitors to the Alhambra have expressed disappointment with its size, so much smaller than their imagination had sketched out. We, on the contrary, were quite surprised to find so

much still in existence, after the ill-usage it has undergone from foreigner and native ever since it was surrendered by the Moors; not to mention the earthquakes occurring so frequently at Granada, against which nothing has proved so effectual a protection, as its own lightness of construction. Of late the Spanish Government has begun to pay some attention to its condition, and the spirit of restoration, which is one of the most cheering signs of the present century, has actually penetrated the Peninsula, and although a genuine Spaniard still considers (as we observed) Charles's heavy structure the fairest ornament of the Alhambra, yet now, I am thankful to say, necessary repairs have been effected, and a gradual restoration, carried out with excellent taste and exact fidelity, is going on, to be eventually extended, let us hope, in these days of Spain's increasing prosperity, to the entire building.

No description I have ever read can be compared for a moment with Washington Irving's "Tales of the Alhambra," a work overflowing with the romantic inspirations of the spot—no mere crude result of a few hurried visits, but the mature production of a lengthened residence within its walls, set forth with all the grace and spirit of a consummate master in the art of

telling a story. In that charming book the last stronghold of Moorish power in Spain is seen under every aspect: at one moment it appears restored to all the freshness of its antique splendour; the magic power of poetry re-peoples its courts with ladies fair, and gallant knights; the song of the minstrel, and the clank of arms are heard once more, as in days of old. At another you see it as it now is, "with its halls waste, and solitary; the owl hoots from its battlements, the hawk builds in its warrior-towers, and bats flit about its royal chambers."

On leaving the Alhambra, we re-crossed the esplanade, through which we had approached it, and ascended the *Torre de la Vela*, so called because (as Ford states) "on this watch-tower hangs a silver-tongued bell, which, struck by the warder at certain times, is the primitive clock that gives notice to the irrigators below." On still evenings it can be heard at Loja, thirty miles off. We had stayed in the Alhambra till near sunset, and on mounting the flight of steps leading to the summit of the tower suddenly found ourselves looking upon a panorama of surpassing interest and beauty.

To our left towered the vast mass of the Sierra Nevada, clothed half-way down with a



vesture of newly-fallen snow. Its sides are seamed and furrowed with ravines, where, even in the intensest heats of summer, glaciers, and beds of snow lie unmelted, a never-empty storehouse of Granada's most necessary luxury. The first blush of sunset was just beginning to shed its rosy tints over that broad expanse of virgin white, recalling for the moment some very different scene among the Alps of Switzerland or Savoy, while Granada at our feet seemed transmuted into gold, and such a flood of sunshine came streaming, in slanting columns from the western sky, that we could scarcely discern the long line of brown hills, from which Boabdil cast his farewell look on beloved Granada—the well-known "Last Sigh of the Moor."

Directly under the sinking sun lay Loja, our next destination, where a gap breaks in upon the mountain-line, and the eye paused in its survey upon the heights above Puerto Lope, the pass by which the Christian armies used to pour down upon the Vega. Those heights we regarded with peculiar interest, because it was from their crest we gained our first view of Granada, and in that transparent atmosphere we could now trace our route, step by step, along the sunburnt slopes, almost down to the famous

bridge of Pinos, which the bleak and barren rocks of Elvira, projecting like a promontory into the plain, just concealed from sight.

In the centre of the panorama, encircled by an amphitheatre of mountains (some of which exhibit outlines of singular boldness, and variety), and occupying the bed of a dried-up lake, more than seventy miles in circumference, lies the renowned Vega, a plain of almost fabulous fertility, where the broad acres clothed at the moment with the emerald-green of young wheat, look more like gardens, than corn-fields; and as the streamlets, with which the plain is intersected in every direction, glisten like threads of silver in the sunshine, it is hard to convince an inexperienced spectator, that instead of gazing at a great sweep of water-meadows, as he would be tempted to fancy, he has really before him the novel spectacle of irrigated wheat-land, which, even under the disadvantages of Spanish cultivation, yields an average harvest of fifty bushels an acre! Such, however, is the fact. As soon as the grain is sown, water is turned on till the young blade appears, and thus a great impulse is given to its growth. It is this system of irrigation, invented by the Moors, and still maintained with a certain amount of efficiency, that

has given the Vega of Granada its proverbial productiveness. Wherever a channel conducts the life-giving stream, there is found an inexhaustible power of growth, and vegetation; one crop is hardly off the ground, before another has started into being, and the earth seems never weary of bearing. But pass the boundary, and enter the spots where water does not penetrate, all is changed at once. On your right you have an Eden, on your left a waste, barren as the sea-shore, and like it covered with stones, and sand!

Few things at Granada strike the stranger so forcibly, as the abundant supply of the purest, and freshest water, not only in the lower regions of the town, where it can be conveyed with little difficulty, but in situations apparently inaccessible to a water-course. The heights of Albaicin, a picturesque suburb overhanging the Darro, are excavated here and there, with subterranean tanks, containing an almost unlimited supply of water. In fact, the Moors of old seem to have considered good water as necessary to their existence as vital air, and the ingenious contrivances, and appliances employed by them for obtaining it, might be studied by modern engineers with every advantage to the health, and comfort of our great towns.

Before leaving the tower, let us notice the spot, where the Christian standard was first hoisted, when Ferdinand, and Isabella took formal possession of the Alhambra, January 2nd, 1492. It is close to the bell already spoken of, as regulating the irrigation of the Vega. Once every year, on the anniversary of the surrender, that bell is rung for a different purpose. Crowds of peasants then ascend the tower, and every unmarried woman in want of a husband (the majority of the sex, according to the uncharitable assumption of the multitude) strikes the bell, as a means conducive to the attainment of her wishes, and the one who makes most noise (a somewhat ominous preparation for matrimony) is supposed to insure herself the best partner.

Ford, in describing the Hall of the Abencerrages, exclaims, "Alas! that boudoirs made for life, and love, should witness scenes of hatred and death!"—a sentiment we could not help extending to the whole circuit of the palace, on hearing from the servants what they witnessed that afternoon in the elm-grove below the Alhambra, while returning to the hotel.

Purkiss, Swainson, and Elfick, with the two muleteers, Marcos and Tomas, had chanced to

come up the Torre de la Vela, while we were there, and they remained some time after us, for the fuller enjoyment of an opera-glass we had left for their use, which enabled them, like ourselves, to trace out the route we had traversed in descending from Puerto Lope. On descending, and passing through the Gate of Justice, they observed about forty yards off, in one of the sidewalks of the elm-grove, three men, two being together, while the third, mounted on a donkey, was a short distance apart. There, and then, in broad daylight, within sight of houses, and close to a great city, they saw one of the two men go up to the third, who was unarmed, and almost helpless from intoxication, and attack him with murderous ferocity. The ruffian had in his hand one of the formidable knives universally worn by the Spanish peasantry, and with this he first cut a great gash all down one side of the poor man's face, and then stabbed him again and again, in the chest, until blood streamed from mouth, and nostrils at every breath, and he sank to the ground wallowing in gore. The assassin, having coolly wiped his knife on his trousers, much in the same way as a butcher after killing a beast, walked off with a smile on his face, proud (apparently) of what

he had done, leaving his victim in the agonies of death.

With the natural impulse of Englishmen, Swainson, and Elfick, as soon as they had recovered from the first shock of horror, with which so hideous a sight had electrified them, were rushing forward to render assistance to the poor man, but were so earnestly entreated, nay almost compelled, to desist from their purpose by several bystanders, Purkiss among the number, who knew only too well the state of Spanish criminal law, that they were fain to submit, and as the poor murdered man was fast passing out of the reach of human aid, they all hurried away together, knowing they might be detained for months, in case they were found on the spot.

Such atrocities are of almost daily occurrence in many parts of Spain, and, as we understood, the state of Spanish law is calculated to render punishment next to impossible. For the first thing Government does, is to seize the property of the murdered person, and apply it to the prosecution of the murderer, and thus, in the case of a married man, absolute ruin is often inflicted on his widow.

Scenes of bloodshed and violence frequently

occur, as is well known, in other southern countries, where man's temperament is so much more inflammable, than in cooler regions. But the most shocking characteristic of such occurrences in Spain, is the utter unconcern, and *absence of remorse*, as if the murder of a fellow-Christian were a matter requiring no more sorrow and repentance, than the death of a sheep, or a pig! Many persons (and I think with good reason) have ascribed this lamentable defect in the national character to the brutalizing influence of the bull-ring; while Ford, who, strange to say, is a staunch advocate for that sport, insists, on the contrary, that it is the effect, and not the cause of the Spaniard's inbred cruelty. They were cruel, he asserts, long before the bull-fight was ever introduced, as we learn from classic authors, and its introduction has made them no worse.

But does not such a line of argument utterly ignore all the humanizing influences Christianity ought to bring in its train? Surely that religion, which is to elevate and purify fallen man, and make him partaker of the Divine Nature, must also contain within itself the means of fulfilling its secondary office, to soften and humanize the ingrained ferocity of mankind!



If it cannot discharge with success its inferior mission, must it not fail still more signally to attain its higher purpose?

For my own part, little as I have seen of Spain, and hasty as may be the conclusions I have formed on the subject, it seems to me impossible to disconnect the indifference to human life, so commonly exhibited by Spaniards, from the revolting scenes of the bull-ring, where the nation learns to take delight in bloodshed, and some of the noblest animals God has bestowed on mankind are tortured to death for the amusement of the multitude.

And this takes place, we should remember, not now and then, in one or two of the largest towns, but frequently, during the space of half the year, in all parts of the country, upon a wholesale scale. The bull-fight we saw at Madrid was the eighteenth, and last of the season. On that occasion, eight bulls, and fifteen horses were killed, such being the ordinary amount of slaughter whenever a *Fiesta de Toros* is celebrated. This would give for Madrid alone a yearly average of 144 bulls, and 270 horses, slain in cold blood for the entertainment of Christian men and women. It is true, the horses are reprieved from the knackers to fur-

nish sport in the bull-ring; but that fact in no degree neutralizes the injurious influences exercised upon the spectators by such wanton effusion of blood.

Nor should it be forgotten that these exhibitions occur periodically *all over the country*, from San Sebastian to Gibraltar, and towns of 5000 inhabitants, especially in Andalusia, the headquarters of Tauromachy, are rarely without their *Plaza de Toros*, which is generally the largest and best-cared-for building in the place.

So that, in fact, Spain is deluged with blood every year from end to end, merely for man's amusement, and the more horrible the incidents of the spectacle, the greater the zest and delight with which it is witnessed. The only wonder to me is—not that the Spaniards should be what they are—but that they still retain so many fine qualities, and are not as a nation utterly demoralized.

It is a mere idle retort to remind an Englishman of his national prize-fight. The actors there are voluntary agents, and if they choose to pommel each other to pieces, we can only say it is a misfortune they have not different ideas respecting man's work upon earth, than to use their hands in marring "the human face divine."

The English prize-fight is happily no longer within the pale of the law, and, with the exception of the late encounter, when national feeling was accidentally enlisted, no respectable person would be seen in the ring at the present day.

Whereas in Spain, all classes, from the highest to the lowest, men and women alike, take their place at the bull-fight, as regularly as at opera or play. Ford, in his "Gatherings from Spain," p. 297, remarks, "What public meetings and dinners are to Britons, reviews and razzias to Gauls, mass or music to Italians, is this one and absorbing bull-fight to Spaniards of all ranks, sexes, ages." Nay, even the clergy are carried away by the national impulse, according to the same author. "At Seville, a choice box in the shade, and to the right of the president, is allotted as the seat of honour to the canons of the Cathedral, who attend in their clerical costume; and such days are fixed upon for the bull-fight as will not, by a long church-service, prevent their coming. The clergy of Spain have always been the most uncompromising enemies of the stage, where they never go; yet neither the cruelty nor profligacy of the amphitheatre has ever aroused their zeal . . . . .

The Spanish clergy pay due deference to bulls, both papal, and quadruped; they dislike being touched on this subject, and generally reply, '*Es costumbre*'—'It is the custom;,' '*Siempre se ha practicado asi*'—'It has always been done so;,' or, '*Son cosas de España*'—'They are things of Spain;,'—the usual answer given as to everything, which appears incomprehensible to strangers, and which they either cannot account for, or do not choose. In vain did St. Isidore write a chapter against the amphitheatre—his *chapter* minds him not; in vain did Alphonso the Wise forbid their attendance. The sacrifice of the bull has always been mixed up with the religion of old Rome, and of old and modern Spain, where it is classed among acts of charity, since it supports the sick and wounded; therefore all the sable countrymen of Loyola hold to the Jesuitical doctrine, that the end justifies the means."—*Ibid.* p. 299.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

**T**HE Victoria, with a little more capital, might be made an excellent hotel, and after the rough quarters we had found at Casa Lope, and other halting-places between Cordova and Granada, its good beds and cheerful rooms were quite a luxury. The people of the house were most attentive, and our sole complaint was, that Pepe the waiter, who always looked to me like "the fat boy" in "Pickwick" grown up, *would* eat garlic to such a degree, that his presence at meals was quite intolerable, being only one remove from having to eat that abominable esculent ourselves. At last, after enduring the odours, which surrounded his person like a halo, for a couple of days, we induced him (being a very good-natured creature) to go into the garden before our meals, and there eat sufficient parsley (an admirable deodorizer) to neutralize

at least, if not effectually remove, the objectionable smell.

December is by no means the time to *enjoy* Granada, for its position among the spurs and ravines of the Sierra Nevada, combined with its northern aspect, and elevation 2445 feet above the sea, make it far from agreeable to winter-visitors. During the four days of our sojourn there, the fountains, with which it abounds, were glazed every morning with ice of some thickness, and it was so very cold in-doors, that we might well be said more to exist than to live, glad indeed to avail ourselves of paletots, plaids, and other wraps, but cold in spite of them all. Nor, what was worse, could the utmost fervour of our imagination conjure up warmth enough to diffuse around the Alhambra such an atmosphere, as would recall the luxury and enjoyment of its summer-hours.

Let all, who have the power to choose, go to Granada when the song of the nightingale, and the fragrance of the orange-blossom, fill its groves with melody, and sweetness; when the eye, penetrating the foliage of its elm-planted Alameda, rests on the dazzling crest of Mulahacen with a sense of refreshment, to which the contrast of green leaves, and summer-snow lends



an unwonted charm ; when day is Elysium, and night a Dream-land of romance, illumined by the warm beams of a southern moon ; when the Alhambra assumes a garb of beauty, to which, amid the glare of noon, its courts and bowers are strangers, when, according to Irving's poetical description, "Every rent, and chasm of time, every mouldering tint, and weather-stain, disappears. The marble resumes its original whiteness ; the long colonnades brighten in the moonbeams ; the halls are illuminated with a softened radiance, until the whole edifice reminds one of the enchanted palace of some Arabian tale."

Is it surprising, then, that Boabdil should have wept on losing such a paradise, even though, as he looked on Granada for the last time from the mountain-slopes, he beheld it in its wintry aspect ; a circumstance which it pleases one to think may have tended in some small degree to alleviate his wretchedness ? Or can we wonder, that the Moors of Tetuan, down to the present hour, should cling, with the tenacity of an hereditary affection, to the hope of recovering what their forefathers lost, and retain, as they are said to do, the ancient maps and deeds, of the estates and gardens of their ancestors at Granada, and even the very keys of their houses ;

holding them as proofs of their claims, to be made good when the day of restoration comes round?

It had been our intention to leave Granada on Saturday, December 3rd, to insure our reaching Gibraltar in good time for the Peninsular and Oriental Company's next boat to England, due on the 13th. But the first thing we heard of on Friday morning was the dangerous illness of Lord Portarlington's horse from violent inflammation; Marcos and Tomas were with him all night, and he had been bled so copiously that moving him, for two days at least, was quite out of the question; though the veterinary surgeon thought, that with care he might then accomplish the journey, carrying nothing but his own weight.

We were all very sorry to hear this intelligence, for in an expedition like ours, travelling with the same animals day after day for weeks, one soon learns to take an interest in each, and every mule, and donkey even, is regarded with a friendly eye. I had peculiar cause for liking Barbarossa, as I used to call the now-ailing horse. He had not only been the means, by his uncommon steadiness, of saving me from extreme danger, but had carried me most pleasantly some

three hundred miles. Indeed he had but one fault—on no occasion would he behave with common civility to Mr. Sykes's horse, which had never, as far as we were aware, given him the smallest cause of offence. He was, however, in this respect only imitating the example of his betters, there being many a biped, whose antipathies seem to derive an additional degree of acerbity from the circumstance, that they are altogether groundless and unreasonable. This failing used to give us a world of trouble, for it required unceasing vigilance to keep the peace between them. The moment Barbarossa came within a few yards of his *bête noire*, he would make the most hostile demonstrations, neighing defiance, opening his mouth, as if he were about to swallow him up, rearing, striking out with his fore-feet—behaving, in short, more like a horse in a state of insanity, than the good-tempered creature he was in his calmer moments. Fortunately, Mr. Sykes's horse had seen a good deal of the world, having belonged to the proprietor of some livery stables at Madrid, and the good temper, and forbearance, with which he behaved on these trying occasions, were beyond praise; all the quarrelling was on one side, and as a natural consequence it soon came to an end, to break

out again on the first opportunity. This delay gave us two more days at Granada, enabling us to see more and more of the Alhambra, as well as to pay a visit to the *Generalife*, where we had not yet been. We had good reason to congratulate ourselves on our good fortune in being at such a place as Granada, and not, as might easily have happened, in some wretched way-side posada, or dull country-town.

It was on a bright sunshiny afternoon, that descending from the Alhambra by one of its dilapidated portals, called *Puerta del Pico*, and crossing a deep ravine, which separates its site from the *Sierra del Sol*, we gradually attained the breezy heights, and long-drawn arcades, of the *Generalife*, the summer-palace of the Moorish Kings. Its situation is far more striking than that of the Alhambra, and the prospect it commands is of the most varied description—here a craggy defile, where the poplar lifts its head (now golden with the hues of autumn), as if it strove to overtop the steep, to whose shelter it owes its unwonted growth; and the brawling brook leaps from rock to rock, hastening to reach the plain—there the teeming suburb of Albaicin, with its cool Alameda overhanging, like a terrace, the torrent stream of

the Darro, while further on, the rich, cream-white mass of the Cathedral, and slender tower of San Jeronimo, catch the eye ere it finally rests on the verdurous expanse of the Vega, and the dark-brown mountains of Elvira, and Puerto Lope.

As the Moor left it, the Generalife must have been a delicious retreat, where Art had turned to hourly use whatever Nature ministers to bodily enjoyment. Water, the great luxury of such a climate, was everywhere. It soothed the ear with the plashing fall of fountains; it cooled the air with jets thrown upwards to an enormous height, to descend again in spray upon myrtle, and rose; it murmured a pleasant sound in cascades; nay, the very balusters, linking one sweep of terrace to another, were converted into runnels, where a never-ceasing rill trickled over its marble bed.

The villa itself is scarcely worth entering, having been sadly marred, since the days of Boabdil, by the introduction of features utterly at variance with its original character, which give it almost a cockney air. We passed out by a garden-door upon the mountain-side towards the *Silla del Moro*, "the Seat of the Moor," so called, because Boabdil is said to have retired

to this spot during a popular outbreak, and "remained all day seated on the rocky summit, looking mournfully down on his factious city."

Nothing can be more abrupt than the transition from the Generalife, with its blooming gardens, and groves of cypress, and myrtle, to the parched slopes along which we continued our walk, where hardly a blade of stunted grass can find root. So is it usually in Southern Spain; cultivation, and abundance of water will convert the wilderness into an Eden; and the desert and the garden are ever side by side.

We extended our walk to some distance, along mountain paths, while the sun was sinking into his couch of saffron and purple, over the defile of Loja, and it was twilight before we finished our circuit by re-entering the precincts of the Alhambra at the *Siete Suelos*, where, with an ever-watchful regard to the interests of the commissariat, we purchased some *jamonés dulces de las Alpujarras*, sweet hams of Trevelez in the Alpujarras range, from a very good-humoured woman, of whose comestibles Ximenes gave a highly-favourable report.

One morning we went to the Church of San Jeronimo, the burial-place of the Great Captain, Gonsalvo de Cordova. It was designed by



Diego de Siloe, son of El Maestro Gil, the artist to whose genius the convent of Miraflores owes its unequalled tomb and retablo. At present, when Spaniard and Frenchman have done their worst to deface its beauty, one can hardly judge of its original condition. Like the Cathedral, it greatly needs the solemnizing effect of painted glass, being flooded with excessive light, and the unusual span of its arches increases this defect. The most interesting objects, now left within its walls, are the life-sized effigies of Gonsalvo, and his wife, placed in the posture of prayer, on each side of the high altar, several feet above the floor. These have quite the look of authentic portraits. Ford states, that at the suppression of the convents in 1836, when the popular feeling was not, as in England at the Reformation, *with* the monks, a mob broke into this church, and destroyed everything in the most wanton manner. Even the bones of the Great Captain, the only eminent general Spain ever produced, as well as the remains of his wife, were dug up and scattered to the winds by the hands of their own countrymen! The rest of the convent is now converted into a cavalry-barrack.

Many of the old Moorish houses still exist,

though in sadly-altered circumstances. One called the *Casa Chapis*, with its *patio*, and wooden galleries, stands charmingly situated on the brow of Albaicin, fronting the Alhambra; while the *Casa del Carbon*, so well known from its Saracenic arch, which has long served manuals and glossaries of architecture with a stereotyped specimen of the Moorish style, was repeatedly passed by us, on our way towards the upper town. It is said to have been built as early as 1070 A.D., and in after-ages was used as a royal mews. Nothing can be more deplorable and filthy, than its present condition, degraded into the habitation of charcoal-burners (whence its modern name), and other members of the "great unwashed" fraternity. One may hope something will be done to rescue it from the neglect into which it has fallen, especially as, in addition to the restorations carried on at the Alhambra, a very pretty Moorish arcade standing at right angles with the *Zacatin* (the street of the silversmiths), and having a row of shops on each side, which from their tiny dimensions look almost like children's playthings, is now undergoing the same process.

Mr. Sykes wished to meet with some specimens of the illuminated wood-carvings, so gene-

rally introduced into the retablos and monumental remains of Spain, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and directed Ximenes to make inquiries at the different curiosity-shops of the town for that purpose. Ximenes was always anxious to please, and set about the commission with his usual alacrity and good-nature; but not being blessed with a very discriminating knowledge of Art, the result of his investigations was by no means satisfactory. He seemed to think anything in the shape of carved wood, with paint upon it, would do. As a natural consequence, the lobby of the hotel frequently exhibited a very miscellaneous collection of the wood-carver's handicraft, brought there for inspection; and one day, on returning from a walk, I found Pepe, and the chamber-maid, standing in an attitude of intense admiration, amounting almost to a minor species of image-worship, before a chubby-faced infant, in wood, with a high colour and brown drapery, having very much the same type and expression of countenance, as the cherubs and seraphs, with which the churchwardens of the last century used to adorn the altar-pieces of our Parish-churches.

Much has been said of the disagreeable

effects produced upon travellers in Spain by the water, and the length of time required for acclimatizing the system to the free use of an element, so necessary in that thirsty land. To some constitutions it is almost dangerous to drink copiously, as one would be tempted to do in hot weather; and although, from the comparatively low temperature prevailing during the whole of our stay in the country, we were not exposed to this temptation, yet even the little we drank was generally followed by unpleasant consequences. Nor, singular to say, did the disagreeable effects pass off, after we had been some weeks in Spain (as might have been expected), but continued to be quite as powerful at Cordova, and Granada, as at Burgos, and Madrid. This circumstance forms another of the numerous objections to a summer tour (at least in the southern portions of the Peninsula), as during that season travellers on horseback must suffer greatly from thirst, without being able to satisfy it with the same impunity as the natives, who are immense water-drinkers, and can quaff quart after quart, without fear of dysentery, or any other disorder.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

ON Monday morning, December 5th, we bade farewell to Granada. Purkiss and the muleteers had started the preceding afternoon, to lighten as much as possible the journey to the poor sick horse, which having regained a little of his strength would now (we hoped) be able to reach Gibraltar by easy stages.

Finding the route across the Vega to Loja ran through a featureless expanse of irrigated corn-land, Lord Portarlington engaged a carriage, which took us there comfortably in about six hours. This *trajet* recalled the days of the old Coquette, (which by the way had been sent back from Madrid, reaching the frontier at Irun only just in time to save the deposit-money,) and our posting adventures through the plains of Castille. Mr. Sykes, faithful to the saddle, made the journey on horseback, so that the dis-

tance he rode exceeded that ridden by us, on the whole journey between Toledo and Gibraltar, about thirty miles.

It was a lovely day, and the change of temperature, as we descended into the bosom of the Vega, and receded further from the snow-clad mountains, was exceedingly pleasant, after the chilly hours spent at Granada. We passed through Santa Fé, the town built by Ferdinand and Isabella during the siege, when their camp had been destroyed by fire. I think I never saw so hideous a place. Its form is a square, fenced all round by tapia-walls with four gates, and looking like nothing so much as a vast sheep-pen. It is utterly unworthy to be visited by those whose route does not lie in that direction. The Church too is a monster of ugliness; and all within sight of exquisite Alhambra! Santa Fé is verily the Nemesis of outraged Moorish Art in Spain.

It is only near Loja, that the country, broken up into mountain and valley, and watered by the crystal Xenil, becomes interesting. Much of the plain after Lachar is a mere waste of sand and stones, where nothing will grow for want of water. Loja itself stands in a most picturesque site, commanding the pass through which the



Xenil descends into the lower country; on its way to join the Guadalquivir. Perched upon an overhanging rock, the old Castle, which in Moorish days was a post of importance, dominates the town; below flows the river, with its broken, well-wooded banks; a precipitous rampart of mountain, walls in the defile from the north; while to the south-east, far away beyond the extreme confines of the Vega, rises the vast mass of the Sierra Nevada.

It was a great satisfaction to find on arriving, that the poor horse had accomplished the journey from Granada very tolerably, under the charge of faithful Marcos, who led him carefully the whole distance. He was, however, still unfit for work; another horse therefore was engaged at Loja, to go all the way to Gibraltar, and as his master, a very sinister-looking, elderly man, accompanied us, for the purpose of bringing him back, our party now amounted to nine.

By way of change, I undertook to ride the new horse, transferring to Lord Portarlington (who had quite taken a fancy to him) the trusty old hack from Toledo, belonging to Marcos. His master used to declare he was only eight years old; but he looked more like eighteen, and in addition to some admirable qualities as a

roadster, had a peculiar faculty for spying out of the corner of each eye, which gave him a most grotesque appearance, leading a bystander to fancy his temper was none of the best, a conclusion belied by his behaviour on every occasion; and he became to us a standing caution not to rely too implicitly upon the deductions of physiognomy in the interpretation of character.

The hack hired at Loja, which I rode all the rest of the journey, proved to be a beast of very different disposition. He began by kicking up behind on the smallest provocation, a trick which made him by no means pleasant to follow. In a day or two he developed another quality more immediately affecting myself. Whenever I mounted he contrived, with the perverse ingenuity of vice, to kick at me with his near hind leg, and as the stirrup-irons (if such I may call them, being of bronze) were very small and narrow, of a queer, old-fashioned shape, it was no easy matter to get into the saddle. *Then* it was *my* turn, and I used to give him more than he quite relished of a box-wood plant which I had cut out of the untrimmed parterres in the Emperor's garden at Yuste, and carried ever since as a riding-switch. I must, however, do the poor beast the justice to add, that when once

mounted, a better hack could not easily be found. From his great length of pastern, a characteristic exhibited by most well-bred horses in Andalusia, his action was peculiarly smooth, and pleasant, and his canter easy as the motion of a rocking-chair; while his powers of endurance may be conceived, when I mention, that our last ride, from La Himera to Gibraltar, extended over a whole day and night, consecutively, beginning at 7.30 A.M. on Saturday, and ending about 9 A.M. on the morrow, relieved by only three halts, which, in all, scarcely amounted to five hours; and yet he carried me into Gibraltar as fresh, as if such protracted fatigue were mere play to him.

During our stay at Granada there had been continual hoar-frosts, which, except on one occasion, were not followed by rain, as would commonly be the case in England. Still the weather was very unsettled, when we left Loja, December 6th, there was every indication of a change, while icy piercing blasts, came streaming down in capricious gusts (fortunately to our backs) from the snow-fields of the Sierra Nevada. The country was very pleasant to ride through, many parts being highly picturesque, level sweeps of valley between bold, craggy hills, with an occa-

sional strip of finely-timbered woodland and forest, the very spot for a novelist to locate a troop of brigands, not to mention sparkling trout-streams, which meandered in graceful curves through meadows green with the fresh pasture of autumn, and imparted life and brightness to the scene.

The poor sick horse had started with us from Loja, and for several hours he managed to get on tolerably. But soon after mid-day he flagged so much, that we were obliged to leave him at a lone Venta, standing on the brink of a moorland brook, where we made our noon-tide halt, with Marcos to take care of him. We all did our best, before starting, to make him comfortable in the most sheltered corner of the stable, where the host's cow was quietly ruminating, with little thought of so summary an ejection from her warm bed, to make room for a sick stranger. We left the poor horse with sad misgivings (only too speedily to be verified), for he looked in miserable plight, and we never saw him again! For though Marcos managed to get him on, "with painful steps and slow," as far as Archidona, a distance of about two leagues, the same evening, and there placed him under the care of a veterinary surgeon (who from some

misapprehension had not gone to the Venta according to the directions left at his house, as we passed through the village); yet his illness returned upon him subsequently with such violence, that he had no power to rally, and died the next day.

Little did we imagine, when he started from Toledo full of life, and vigour, carrying himself proudly with arched neck, and flashing eye, while his coat shone lustrous as satin, that after all, his youth and beauty were only leading him so soon to a grave by the wayside! while my old hack, on whose thinly-covered ribs, and ill-tended hide, he looked down with proud disdain, as an "old fogey," antique enough to be his grandsire, would bravely reach the end of that long journey, to earn hereafter, as I venture to hope he is now doing, hard *pesetas* for his master, Marcos Rabosos, at least six days in every week, up and down the steep streets of venerable Toledo.

Poor Barbarossa! he deserved a better fate than to become food for the ravens, that nestle in the rocks of Archidona. Six weeks before he had cost £40, and was worth it all.

Archidona is a long straggling village, built on a steep slope, and paved exactly according to

the natural formation of the ground, without the least attempt to lay the pavement on an even surface; so that besides the declivity running along its whole length, which in places is excessively abrupt, another slope crosses the street, and between the two it became really quite a business, even after all our experience of Spanish ups and downs, to ride through the place without breaking our horses' knees.

Immediately above the village a group of rocks, remarkable for form and outline, rises in sheer precipices to an elevation of 1800 or 2000 feet; and as we viewed them from the plain below, (one of the dried-up lake-beds constantly occurring in this part of Andalusia,) the effect was uncommonly striking, nor does the spot need the tradition of having once been the scene of a "Lover's Leap," to give it interest in the eyes of travellers. Again and again did we turn round to gaze at those rocks, which from some points assumed an aspect very successfully recalling, on a reduced scale, the vast obelisk of Mont Cervin, until darkness fell upon the earth, just as we entered a fine pass, the features of which were more suggested than fully revealed, by the faint beams of a middle-aged moon.



To our right we made out the broken outline of a mountain, and through the ravine at our feet a brawling torrent sped downwards towards the plain, while the owl and night-jar were heard but not seen, as they flitted around us with noiseless wings, in quest of food, uttering their plaintive cry.

There is, I always think, a peculiar charm in a ride by night. So many things never observed during day-hours—atmospheric effects unseen at other times, the ghostly form of lunar rainbow, the flashing shoot of falling star, and the fitful glories of the Aurora Borealis—added to the transient sounds of animal life, the distant baying of a house-dog, or short, sharp, bark of a fox—the silence, and sensation of general repose—besides that special characteristic of a Spanish night-scene—the shepherds' watch-fires, fitfully flashing up against an inky sky—all these combine to invest a ride or drive, after dark, with peculiar interest ; and our hours of nightly travel introduced us occasionally to some of the most striking incidents of the whole expedition.

## CHAPTER XL.

**I**T was nearly nine before we reached Antequera, entering the town by a muddy lane, that sorely taxed the nerve and strength of our tired donkeys. We were fortunate enough to find a very respectable cleanly posada, almost worthy to be dignified with the more honourable title of *Fonda*, except that it had no larder. The people of the house, accustomed to early travellers (for in Spain most wayfarers contrive to reach their destination by sunset, and we very rarely encountered any one on the road after night-fall), had settled down into the dull and peevish somnolency that precedes bed-time, so that it was no easy matter to rouse them to even a moderate amount of wakefulness.

Antequera is a town of considerable size, having a population of 16,000, with apparently a considerable amount of traffic; for though

the inn was quite an extensive building, they could only give us two rooms, one long and large, which having first done duty as a *salle-à-manger*, then served two of us for a bed-chamber.

While we were at dinner, a very respectable matron came in to inform us, that the inn could supply different sorts of wines and liqueurs, and even champagne (the most popular of all foreign wines in Spain) would be forthcoming at our call! Such an announcement in any other land would be quite superfluous; but in Spain, where it is the exception, and not the rule, for inns to furnish travellers with anything edible or potable, this information was quite a surprise. We naturally took it for granted that this matron must be the landlady, and looked upon the interest she exhibited in our comfort as a remarkable contrast to our general experience of posada-folk. It turned out, however, that her attentions were prompted by genuine good-nature, as she really had nothing to do with the house, being the wife of a French dentist staying there at the moment; and having noticed, that the belongings of the establishment, with the usual *insouciance* of Spaniards, left us entirely to our own devices, she very kindly tried to make up in various ways; while

the husband, who, from his professional wanderings up and down, was thoroughly acquainted with the country, gave us some very useful information, respecting our route to Gibraltar.

Next morning, as I passed their room, the lady appeared at the door, and with a most benign expression of countenance, and considerable amount of pantomimic action, invited me to walk in. A lady's bidding being of course at all times a mandate of unquestionable potency, I entered in meek obedience to her behest, wondering what on earth she could want with me; and on the threshold found myself confronted by a complete set of artificial teeth, which she thrust forward in startling proximity to my very nose, her whole countenance irradiated by an expression of intense delight and satisfaction, as if the ghastly spectacle to which she had so abruptly introduced me, were not only a triumph of her goodman's professional skill (a position I was quite willing to concede without dispute), but an object of admiration also to all the world! I fear my face scarcely reciprocated the expression that beamed in every line of hers, "dental surgery" being precisely one of those departments of Art, in which no one feels the remotest interest, until