

“ idol, that it was a short stick, of about twelve spans in length, having at the
“ end some teeth like a curry-comb. Who was the builder of this tower, with
“ the idol on the top, does not sufficiently appear. Mes’údí, in his ‘ Golden
“ Meadows,’⁸ attributes its construction to Al-jabbár,⁹ the same who built the
“ seven idols in the country of Zinj, which are one in sight of the other: but
“ the most probable opinion seems to be that it was built by some of the ancient
“ kings of Andalus to serve as a guide to navigators, from the fact of the idol
“ having his left arm extended towards the Bahru-z-zokák (straits), and pointing
“ to the mouth, as if he was showing the way. There were not wanting people
“ who thought this idol to be made of pure gold; for whenever the rising or
“ setting sun fell on the statue it sent forth rays of light, and shone in the
“ brightest hues, like the collar of a ring-dove, blue being the colour which
“ prevailed. Thus placed on the top of the tower the idol was like a signal for
“ the Moslem navigators to go in and out of the Ocean, and whoever wanted to
“ sail from any port in the Mediterranean to places in Al-maghreb, such as Lisbon,
“ and others, had only to approach the tower, and then put up the sails, and
“ make for the port whither they wished to go, whether Salé, Anfa,¹⁰ or any
“ other in the western coast of Africa. When in after times this idol was pulled
“ down, it ceased of course to be a signal for navigators: its demolition happened
“ thus. In the year 540 (A. D. 1145-6), at the beginning of the second civil war,
“ ’Alí Ibn ’Isa Ibn Maymún,¹¹ who was Admiral of the Fleet, revolted at Cadiz, and
“ declared himself independent. Having heard the inhabitants say that the idol on
“ the top of the tower was made of pure gold, his cupidity was raised, and he gave
“ orders for its immediate removal. The statue was accordingly brought down by
“ dint of great exertions, and when on the ground was found to be made of brass,
“ covered only with a thin coat of gold, which, when removed, produced twelve
“ thousand gold dinárs. It is a general opinion among Andalusian and African
“ Moslems that this idol exercised a sort of spell over the sea, but that the charm
“ ceased the moment it was thrown down. They account for it in the following
“ manner. There used once to be in the Ocean some large vessels which the
“ Andalusians call *karákir*,¹² provided with a square sail in front, and another
“ behind; they were manned by a nation called *Majús*, people of great strength,
“ determination, and much practice in navigation, and who at their landing on the
“ coasts destroyed every thing with fire and sword, and committed unheard-of
“ ravages and cruelties, so that at their appearance the inhabitants fled with their
“ valuables to the mountains, and the whole coast was depopulated. The in-
“ vasions of these barbarians were periodical—they took place every six or seven
“ years; the number of their vessels was never less than forty, it sometimes

“ amounted to a hundred ;¹³ they devoured any one they found on the sea. The tower that I have described was known to them, and, following the direction pointed at by the idol, they were enabled to make at all times for the mouth of the straits, and enter the Mediterranean, ravage the coasts of Andalus, and the islands close to it, sometimes carrying their depredations as far as the coasts of Syria. But when the idol was destroyed by the command of 'Alí Ibn Maymún, as I have already stated, no more was heard of these people, nor were their *karákir* (vessels) seen in these seas, with the exception of two that were wrecked on the coast, one at *Mersu-l-Majús* (the port of the Majús),¹⁴ and the other close to the promontory of Al-aghar.”

Pit of Cabra.

Among the wonders of Andalus one is the pit of Kabrah (Cabra), which, in the opinion of Ar-rází, who mentions it, is one of the gates of the winds. It is to be seen at some distance from Cabra,¹⁵ and whatever efforts have been made to find the bottom of it have proved ineffectual.

Iron pot at Kal'atu-Aurád.

Ibnu Sa'íd also mentions a mountain in the neighbourhood of *Kal'atu-Aurád*¹⁶ where, says he, is a rock with a wide gap, and within it an iron pot hanging by a chain. Whoever goes to the spot will see it, his hands will touch it, but all his attempts to take it out will be fruitless ; for no sooner will his hands come in contact with it than the pot will sink in the cavity of the rock and disappear ; however, if the person desists from his undertaking it will return to its former position. This is related by Ibnu Sa'íd on the authority of Ibnu Bashkúwál, who, among some ancient traditions, and other wonderful stories, concerning Andalus, mentions the following :

“ It has been related to us on the authority of a traditionist, who had it from Seyf, that 'Othmán Ibn 'Affán said ‘ that the conquest of Constantínyeh (Constantinople) would be made from Andalus.’ Perhaps he meant Rome instead of Constantinople, but God is all-knowing.”

Such are the words of Ibnu Bashkúwál ; but this point requires elucidation. The tradition to which that illustrious writer alludes stands thus. 'Othmán is said to have sent an army from Cairwán to the conquest of Andalus, and to have written to the generals who were to command the expedition : “ Know ye how the conquest of Constantinople shall be made, passing first through Andalus ; so, if ye quickly subdue those regions whither ye are bound, ye shall participate of the favours of God.” Such is the tradition ; but let the responsibility of it lie on its preservers, for as to us, we wish to be considered entirely pure and free from it ; for although it be true that it has been adopted and repeated by Ibnu Bashkúwál, by Ibnu Sa'íd, and other respectable writers, yet we cannot give credit to it, for it is not only improbable, but entirely devoid of foundation. For at what

time, we ask, did 'Othmán send troops from Africa to conquer Andalus; when it is evident, nay, it rests on incontrovertible proofs, that the Arabs never invaded Andalus until the times of Al-walíd, and that Cairwán, the city from whence the expedition is said to have departed, was not built until twelve¹⁷ years after the death of that Khalif? However, let not these objections of ours be taken as uttered in contempt of the authors of the tradition: we merely state them as a proof of our ardent wish to warn our readers against error, and to assist them in the investigation of truth.

Another of the wonders of Andalus we would pass over were it not that all the historians of that country mention it. It is an olive tree, which is said to blossom and produce fruit on a certain day of the solar year. But this is rather a proof of the difficult task an historian takes upon himself, and how easily authors as trustworthy and learned as Ibnu Sa'id may be led into error by the adoption of facts which they have not ascertained, or by transcribing the accounts of over-credulous writers. This phenomenon, which Ibnu Sa'id relates on the authority of people who are said to have witnessed it, is nothing more than the effects of light on an olive tree of the common species, as the author of the *Ja'rafiyah* tells us. We shall quote his words: "In this mountain (meaning that of Sholayr, in the neighbourhood of Granada,) is the famous olive tree of which people talk wonders. I happened once to pass by it early in the morning of the day of Pentecost, when all the inhabitants of those districts collect round it. I saw nothing on it to deserve attention; both its appearance and its fruit were the same as those of similar trees at that season of the year, only that, in proportion as the day advanced, the leaves looked of a bright green; at noon they looked white, as if the tree was covered with blossom, and later in the day, a little before sunset, they partook of a reddish hue. With the exception of this circumstance, which I believe to be common to every tree of the same species, I saw nothing wonderful either in the fruit, the branches, or the leaves of the tree."

Several authors, and amongst them the last-mentioned writer, describe most minutely two water-clocks which Abú-l-kásim Ibn 'Abdi-r-rahmán, known by the surname of Az-zarkál,¹⁸ built in Toledo, when he heard of the famous talisman which is in the city of Arín in India, and which Mes'údí describes as marking the time with a hand from sunset to sunrise. These clocks consisted of two basins, which filled with water or emptied according to the increasing or waning of the moon. Az-zarkál placed them in a house out of the city, to the south-west, and on the banks of the river Tajoh (Tagus), near to the spot called *Bábu-l-*

*dabbághín*¹⁹ (the gate of the tanners); their action was as follows. At the moment when the new moon appeared on the horizon water began to flow into the basins by means of subterranean pipes, so that there would be at day-break the fourth of a seventh part, and at the end of the day half a seventh part, of the water required to fill the basins. In this proportion the water would continue to flow until seven days and as many nights of the month were elapsed, when both basins would be half filled; the same process during the following seven days and nights would make the two basins quite full, at the same time that the moon was at its full. However, on the fifteenth night of the month, when the moon began to wane, the basins would also begin to lose every day and night half a seventh part of their water, until by the twenty-first of the month they would be half empty, and when the moon reached her twenty-ninth night not a drop of water would remain in them; it being worthy of remark that, should any one go to any of the basins when they were not filled, and pour water into them with a view to quicken its filling, the basins would immediately absorb the additional water, and retain no more than the just quantity; and, on the contrary, were any one to try, when they were nearly filled, to extract any or the whole of their water, the moment he raised his hands from the work the basins would pour out sufficient water to fill the vacuum in an instant. These clocks were undoubtedly a greater work of science than the Indian talisman, for this latter is placed in a country under the equinoctial line, where the days and nights are of the same length, while in Andalus, which is in the temperate zone, it does not happen thus. They remained for a long time in Toledo, until that city was taken by the Christians, (may God send confusion amongst them!) when the tyrant Al-fonsh²⁰ (Alfonso) felt a great curiosity to know how they were regulated, and caused one of them to be excavated, which being done the interior machinery was damaged, and the water ceased to flow into the basins. This happened in the year five hundred and twenty-eight of the Hijra (A. D. 1133-4).²¹ Others say that the cause of their being spoilt was Honeyn the Jew,²² he who conveyed all the baths of Andalus to Toledo in one day in the said year of five hundred and twenty-eight, and who predicted to Alfonso²³ that his son would conquer Cordova, as it happened. This accursed Jew, being anxious to discover the motion of the clocks, said once to Alfonso, "O king! were I to look at them in "the inside, and see how they are made, not only could I restore them to "their ancient state, but even construct two others still more wonderful, and "which would fill during the day and empty at night." Alfonso granted

him his request, and the Jew then had one opened ; but when he afterwards tried to restore it to its former state he was unable to accomplish what he had promised, and the machinery being damaged the works were stopped. The other basin, nevertheless, continued still to fill and empty in the same wonderful manner ; but God is all-knowing,—he knows the truth of the matter.



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

CHAPTER VII.

Anecdotes respecting Andalus—Population—Productions of the soil.

Anecdotes re-
specting An-
dalus.

WE have read in a certain book that when the *Amíru-l-moslemín* (Prince of the Moslems) 'Alí, son of the *Amíru-l-moslemín* Yúsef Ibn Táshfín Al-masúfí,¹ Sultán of Maghreb and Andalus, crossed the Straits, and landed in the latter country,—when he had traversed it in all directions, and observed its shape and configuration, he compared it to an eagle, making the city of Toledo the claws, *Kal'at-Rabáh* (Calatrava) the breast, Jaen the head, Granada the bill, and placing its two wings, the right far into the west, and the left in the east.

We have also read that the said Sultán and the Africans who formed his court were very much struck with the beauty of the prospect, the fertility of the land, the abundance of provisions, the mildness of the temperature, the magnificence of its buildings, and other advantages which make Andalus superior to any other country in the world, and that their admiration gave rise to many witty expressions and curious anecdotes in which the African histories abound; but unluckily the work in which we have read these and other particulars is not in our possession, as we have left it with the remainder of our library in the Al-maghreb (West), so we must content ourselves with quoting that which we know by heart, and fill up the deficiency with such works as we have been able to procure in this country.

Population.

Ibnu Sa'íd, the author of the book entitled *Al-mugh'rab fí hokl-l-maghreb*² (the eloquent speaker on the ornamental beauties of the West), a work which we have had frequent occasion to quote, and which has been of the greatest assistance to us, when describing at large the population and agricultural resources of Andalus expresses himself in the following terms. “Were I called upon to give an adequate and just description of Andalus, I would say that it is a country surrounded by sea, “abounding in fruits and productions of all kinds, full of cities and towns, and so

“ thickly populated that if a traveller goes any distance through it he will find at
“ every step on his road hamlets, towns, farms, orchards, and cultivated fields, and
“ will never meet, as is more or less the case in other countries, with large tracts
“ of uncultivated land, or desert. This, united to the habits of the Andalusians,
“ who, instead of living together, as the Egyptians do, grouped in towns and
“ villages, prefer dwelling in cottages and rural establishments in the midst of
“ the fields, by the side of brooks, and on the declivities of mountains, gives
“ altogether to the country an aspect of comfort and prosperity which the tra-
“ veller will look for in vain elsewhere; their houses too, which they are
“ continually white-washing inside and out, look exceedingly well by the side of
“ the green trees, and, to use the words of the famous Wizír and poet Ibnu-l-
“ himárah³ in his description of Andalus—

‘ Its hamlets brightening among the trees look like so many pearls set in
‘ a bed of emeralds.’

“ And he was right, for if thou goest to Egypt after having staid any length of
“ time in Andalus, thou wilt be surprised to see the wretched appearance of the
“ Egyptian villages, placed as they are at great distances one from another, with
“ their narrow, badly constructed, ill-shaped houses, looking gloomy and dismal to
“ the eye. In Andalus, on the contrary, the traveller will find many districts
“ where large cities and populous towns almost touch each other, without counting
“ the numberless villages, hamlets, farms, castles, and towers which lie between.
“ So, for instance, going out of Seville, the first day’s march will take him to
“ *Sherish* (Xerez), a very handsome city, placed in the midst of a fertile territory,
“ and surrounded by villages; close to Xerez is Algesiras, and then comes Malaga,
“ one of the finest ports in the Mediterranean; and let not the reader suppose that
“ this excessive population is only to be met with in that particular district, for
“ the description is applicable, as well, to any other province of Andalus, this
“ being the reason why historians and geographers who have described this country
“ mention so many large cities and wealthy towns. Most of these are strongly
“ fortified, and surrounded with walls, as a protection against the incursions of the
“ enemy; some, even, will be found so strong by nature, or so well fortified by
“ art, as to have been besieged by the Christians during twenty years without
“ falling into their hands. This, indeed, is not so much owing to the strength of
“ their fortifications as to the undaunted courage of their defenders,—their aptitude
“ for all military exercises, to which they are trained from their infancy, and their
“ early and continual acquaintance with the perils and horrors of war, owing to
“ the proximity of the enemy with whom they are in perpetual hostility. To this
“ must be added the facility they possess of keeping their corn for several years in

“ subterranean granaries, owing to which any city might, if necessary, stand a
 “ siege of one hundred years; and what I state here concerning the strength of
 “ their cities is applicable not only to the prosperous times of Islám, but even
 “ to the present disastrous epoch; for although it is true that at the time I write
 “ the enemy of God has penetrated far into the heart of Andalus, and considerably
 “ diminished the dominions of the Moslems,⁴ yet there are still remaining in the
 “ hands of the true believers cities like Seville, Granada, Malaga, Almeria, and
 “ others, ruling over extensive and populous districts, full of cities and towns,
 “ and provided with sufficient strength to resist and defeat, with God’s help and
 “ assistance, all the attacks of the unbelievers.”

Alas! the bright hopes of this holy man have been blighted, and his good wishes frustrated, for God Almighty had decreed that the contrary should happen, and that the worshippers of the crucified should every where subdue and overpower his own servants. Such was the will of God—Him who can change sorrow into joy, and pain into delight—the high! the great! May He permit in his infinite wisdom that the words of Islám resound again in Andalus, and that its present inhabitants be annihilated and destroyed!

But to return to Ibnu Sa’id’s account. “ I shall conclude,” says that most elegant of writers, “ by stating one thing in praise of Andalus which will establish
 “ its fame much better than any thing else I can say. When I quitted it I
 “ travelled along the northern coast of Africa, and visited its great cities, such
 “ as *Marékash* (Morocco), Fez, and Ceuta; I afterwards went to Africa proper,
 “ and the neighbouring districts of the *Maghrebu-l-ausatt* (middle West), and saw
 “ Tehámah, Bejáyah, and Túnis; from thence I proceeded to Egypt, and resided
 “ in Alexandria, Cairo, and Fostát; I then went to Syria, and entered Damascus,
 “ Aleppo, and other intervening cities. Well, I must confess that in the course
 “ of my rambles I saw no country whatever which could be compared to Andalus
 “ either in beauty, fertility, abundance of water, or luxuriance of trees, with the
 “ exception of the environs of Fez in the *Maghrebu-l-aksá* (remote West), and the
 “ country round Damascus in Syria. Neither did I see in the East or West any city
 “ which could compete with those of Andalus in the size and solidity of its buildings,
 “ for nowhere could I find such magnificent edifices and public works as I saw in
 “ almost every city of Andalus, unless it be some of the works lately raised at
 “ Morocco by the Sultáns of the dynasty of the Bení ’Abdu-l-múmen, and perhaps
 “ one or two at Túnis, where all the houses are built of stone as in Alexandria,
 “ owing to the great quantity of ancient stones (dug out from the ruins), only
 “ that the streets of Túnis are not so well levelled or so broad as those of
 “ that city. Great buildings may also be found in Alexandria; Aleppo may

“ likewise be placed in the number of well-built cities, for the good design and
 “ interior accommodation of its houses, which are built of hard stone, but no-
 “ where did I find combined the elegance, the magnificence, the excellent distri-
 “ bution, of the houses all over Andalus.”

To this account of the population of Andalus by Ibnu Sa’id we think it proper to add what an anonymous writer says on the subject.

“ Andalus contains eighty cities of the first order, and upwards of three hundred
 “ of moderate size; as to its towns, villages, hamlets, castles, and towers, their
 “ number is so considerable that God only can count them. It is stated that the
 “ towns and villages on the banks of the Guadalquivir only amounted to no less
 “ than twelve thousand; ⁵ and Andalus is generally believed to be the only country
 “ in the world where a traveller meets with three, four, or even more cities in the
 “ course of a day’s ride; finding besides at every two parasangs springs of limpid
 “ water, and villages with markets and shops well provided with bread, fruit, meat,
 “ fish, cheese, and all sorts of provisions.”

The before-mentioned author (Ibnu Sa’id) says in another part of his work that Andalus far outstrips every other country in the world in the fertility of the land, which yields abundant crops of all kinds; in the delicacy of its fruits, the riches of its mines, the wonderful productions of nature, and the number of its manufactures. We shall now proceed to bestow on each of these topics such information as lies scattered in the authors that we have consulted.

Productions of
the soil.

Andalus has been compared by many authors to a terrestrial paradise; some even go so far as to advance that God, having forbidden the Christians the entrance into the celestial paradise, had given them instead one in this world; for indeed by what other name can we designate the countries which the Christians inhabit from the gulf of Constantinople down to the ocean of Andalus; since they are well known to be a perpetual paradise, wherein the acorn, the filbert, the nut, the chesnut, and other fruits of the northern climate, grow at the same time with the banana, the sugar cane, and others which are the productions of warmer countries alone? Andalus is the country which has been most favoured by God, and in point of fruits and other produce of the land even the most fertile regions of India cannot compete with it. The sugar cane grows in great luxuriance all along its southern coast, and in more temperate ⁶ regions the banana and other delicious fruits. In general, except dates, which do not thrive, all the fruits of other climates may be found in abundance, as well as many which are either scarce, or not produced at all, in other countries, such as the two species of figs called *Al-kúttí* and *Ash-sha’rí*, which grow in the neighbourhood of Seville, as we have stated elsewhere, and which Ibnu Sa’id says he never saw any where out of Andalus,

nor ever tasted after his departure from that country. The same might be said of the Malaga fig, or the raisins of Almuñecar, or those called *al-'aseh* (sweet as honey), the peaches, the apricots, the pomegranate called *Safari*,⁷ the walnuts, almonds, and several other fruits which grow in great perfection, and which we shall not stop to enumerate and describe for fear of making this our work too long.

Another of the productions for which Andalus is famous is its aromatic woods and roots; in this respect indeed it has often been compared to India, that privileged country of drugs and perfumes, which it resembles in some of its productions, as for instance the *mahleb*,⁸ that sweetest of all perfumes and choicest of drugs, which is only to be met with in India and in Andalus, and which, according to Ar-rázi, is found in great abundance in the western districts. Ibnu Ghálib, quoting the words of Al-mes'údí in his *Golden Meadows*, says that in Andalus are found five-and-twenty different perfumes or odoriferous substances, such as spikenard, clove, gillyflower, sandal wood, cinnamon, *Kassábu-dh-dharírah*,⁹ *mahleb*, and others, and that out of the five substances which are considered to be the principal ingredients of perfumes, viz. musk, camphor, aloe wood, saffron, and amber, the two last are found in great quantities in Andalus. Ar-rázi also, after describing some of the properties attributed to the *mahleb*, says that in the district of Dalayah (Dalia), which falls within the jurisdiction of the Alpuxarras, grows a root called *At-tólaj*,¹⁰ which yields not to the Indian aloes in fragranc; and which, he adds, grows in the crevices of rocks, and was collected for the use of Kheyrán, the Slavonian king of Almeria, who liked its smell exceedingly. *Kost*¹¹ (costum) and spikenard grow also in great abundance, and the gentian, which is exported to all parts of the world, is held in great estimation for the sweetness of its smell, and commands a very high price. Myrrh is found in great quantities in the neighbourhood of Calatayud; and various authors speak of a plant with which the mountains near Ossonoba¹² are covered, and which when burnt sends forth a smell similar to that of the aloe wood. This account is confirmed by Ibnu Sa'id, who says that there are in Andalus several mountains covered with odoriferous plants and shrubs, where if a fire be lighted the air becomes impregnated with a fragrant smell very much resembling that of burnt aloe wood, and that in the mountain of Sholayr, in that part which is nearest to Granada, grow many of the plants that are peculiar to India.

Respecting amber, it is found in great abundance all along the western coast of Andalus,¹³ especially at *Shidhúnah* (Sidonia), where it is particularly fine, and very much prized, owing to its good quality and its resistance when exposed to the fire. It is known in the East by the name of *Al-gharbí* (western), and according to Al-mes'údí one drachm of it sold in his time for several drachms of that

produced in other countries. But let us hear what Al-mes'údí himself says in his Golden Meadows. "The seas that wash the shores of Andalus, and especially the Mediterranean, abound in amber, which is exported to Egypt and to other countries. That which they use at Cordova comes from a place on the western coast called *Shantareyn* (Santarem), as also from *Shidónah* (Sidonia). One ounce of this amber is sold in Andalus for three gold mithcals—in Egypt it may be procured for twenty gold dinárs, although inferior in quality: the ounce used in Andalus is equal in weight to that of Baghdád. As to the pieces of amber which are now and then picked up on the coasts of Egypt, it is probable that they come from the Mediterranean, and are impelled there by the waves. Andalus abounds in mines of silver and quicksilver, which have not their equal any where in the world, either in the countries subject to the Moslems, or in those which the infidels occupy. It produces also ginger root, saffron, and several other aromatic roots, as well as five kinds of musk; aloes and camphor may also be procured, although they do not grow in the country, being imported in great quantities from India."

The preceding has been transcribed from Al-mes'údí's work;¹⁴ for although he adds nothing new to what we have already stated, yet his account is not altogether devoid of interest. About the formation of amber very little is known; some authors, like Ibnu Sa'íd, believing it to be the saliva and excrements of marine monsters, while others, like Ibnu-l-hijári, say that it is a plant growing at the bottom of the sea.

Mines of gold, silver, and other metals, abound in Andalus; according to the author of the *Ja'rafiyah* there are three places from which, during the occupation of that country by the Moslems, gold was extracted in great quantities; one was the river *Daroh* (Darro), the other a spot on the western coast close to Lisbon and at the mouth of the *Tajoh* (Tagus), and a third in the river of Lerida, that which falls into the Ebro.¹⁵ According to Ibnu Sa'íd mines of all the seven known metals¹⁶ were to be found in the north and north-west of Andalus, in those countries which were in the hands of the infidels. "The richest gold mine in all Andalus," says that author, "is in the neighbourhood of the city of Santiago, the capital of Galicia. Silver is also very common; it may be procured near Tudmir, and in the mountains of Al-hamah,¹⁷ near Bejénah, and in the neighbourhood of *Kartash*,¹⁸ a town belonging to the district of Cordova. At Ossonoba¹⁹ are mines of tin, a metal very much resembling silver; it is also found in great abundance in the country of the Franks and at Liyón (Leon). The Pyrenees are likewise full of that metal as well as of quicksilver."

Mines of red and yellow ochre were also very abundant, and in a village close

to Vera, called *Baternah* (Paterna),²⁰ was found excellent tutty, which was used in giving colour to copper. Tutty was also met with in the mountains near Cordova, but inferior in quality to that of Paterna. In the neighbourhood of Tortosa were mines of collyrium, as good as that of Isfahán, and of which large quantities were annually exported; quicksilver abounded in the territory of Cordova, lead near Almeria, copper in the north, as also a kind of metal called *as-sofar*,²¹ which very much resembles gold; as to those of alum²² and iron, they were so numerous that it would be a difficult task to mention them all. The foregoing account of the mineral riches of Andalus has been for the most part extracted from the works of Ar-rázi.

Other writers assert that the primitive inhabitants of Andalus called every one of the seven known metals after the name of that planet which was known to exercise an influence over it,—for instance, they called lead, Saturn; tin, Jupiter; iron, Vulcan; gold, the Sun; copper, Venus; silver, the Moon; and quicksilver, Mercury.

A great variety of precious stones was likewise found in Andalus, according to the accounts of different writers: for instance, not far from a place called *Hadhratu-l-warikah*,²³ in the jurisdiction of Cordova, as likewise in the mountain of Shaheyrán,²⁴ to the east of Beyra (Vera), are mines of beryl.²⁵ Rubies may be found near the castle of Montemayór,²⁶ in the province of Malaga, only they are very small, which makes them very difficult to be worked. The golden marcasite, which has not its equal in the world, is extracted from the mountains of Ubeda,²⁷ and is exported to all distant countries on account of its beauty, as also another stone called *Al-ma'tisisá*,²⁸ and talc, which are found in great quantities. Pearls may be fished in the seas adjoining to Barcelona, but when they are large they are wanting in transparency and colour; as to the smaller kind, they are found in such abundance all along the coast of the Mediterranean, that at Vera, a sea-port in the jurisdiction of Almeria, eighty *arobes*²⁹ weight are often collected in less than a month's time.

In the district of Bejénah, not far from a deep valley called *Kariatu Násherah*,³⁰ there are quarries of a stone resembling the ruby, of various hues, and which stands the fire. The *magnetes* (load-stone), which is well known to possess the property of attracting iron, is found in great abundance in the district of Tudmir, and close to Lisbon there is a mountain so impregnated with the stone called *An-najádi*³¹ that the whole place looks at night as if it were illuminated with lanterns. The stone called *Ash-shádenah*³² abounds on a mountain in the neighbourhood of Cordova—its use in gilding is sufficiently known.³³ The stone called Jewish stone,³⁴ which is acknowledged by all the physicians to be the most

Precious
stones.

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efficacious remedy for pains in the kidneys and in the bladder, is dug out in the environs of *Hisnu-l-bónah*; and the territory round Lorca, a city belonging to the district of Tudmir, is full of mines of lapis-lazuli of the finest quality, which rare and precious article may also be found in other parts of Andalus.

We cannot pass in silence the spring of Liblah (Niebla), which pours out glass³⁵ of the best quality; nor a mountain in the neighbourhood of Toledo called *Jebalu-t-tafal*, where *tafal*,³⁶ surpassing in quality any other in the East or West, grows in prodigious quantity.

Andalus is equally rich in marbles, and stones for building. Ar-rázi says that Marbles. the mountains of Cordova abound in marbles of all sorts and colours, such as the purest white without any spot, and that having the colour of wine; the green is also to be found in the Alpuxarras in large blocks, from which columns are cut; and in the neighbourhood of Vega, a town depending on Granada, are several quarries of the most exquisite marbles, such as the spotted, the red, the yellow, and others. Almeria is famous for some small pebbles³⁷ (agates) which are found in its territory, and which are exported to distant countries, owing to their similarity to pearls, which they strongly resemble in brightness and transparency. In short, Andalus is, in the opinion of historians and geographers, the country which abounds most in marbles and jaspers, white, black, red, and of all colours.

If from the productions of nature, or the fruits of the soil, we pass to the animal Animals. kingdom, we shall find that Andalus contains a larger number of the animals useful to man, while it has fewer wild beasts, than any other country in the world; as a proof of what we advance we shall quote the words of Al-hijári in his *Al-mashab*. "Andalus," says that author, "abounds in antelopes, deer, zebras, oxen, and other quadrupeds common to other countries; but there are neither elephants nor giraffes, lions, tigers, nor other beasts of warmer countries; instead of these we have an animal peculiar to our country which we call *al-lúb*³⁸ (lupus), somewhat larger than a jackal,³⁹ but equally cruel and ferocious, and which, when instigated by hunger, attacks and devours men. The mules are strong and sure-footed, and the horses powerful and swift, and equally fit for sport and for battle, enduring fatigue and weight most admirably, since in time of war they will not only carry a cavalier armed cap-à-piè with all his provisions, but be themselves caparisoned and barbed in steel."

Birds of all sorts, whether small or of prey, are found in such quantities, that were we to stop to enumerate them we should protract this our narrative to an undue length; the same might be said of the fishes, and other monsters of the sea, especially of the Ocean, where many are to be found so prodigiously large that we are afraid even to guess at their dimensions lest we should still remain far from the truth.

Ibnu Sa'id tells us that he once saw one of these monsters, while on a sea voyage, and that it was so large that the crew of the vessel were trembling lest it should by a sudden jerk overturn the vessel. "We looked at it in amazement," says Ibnu Sa'id, "and were filled with horror and consternation, for a long time unable to utter a word, and expecting every moment to be drowned, for whenever the monster breathed it raised large columns of water to a height really surprising."

We find likewise in those authors who have written on the natural history of Andalus that frequent allusion is made to an amphibious quadruped, whose skin is used as a garment, and whose *scrotum* is reckoned to be a specific in several diseases. As the name of this animal is differently written, and there are besides many extraordinary circumstances attached to it, we shall transcribe here the words of the different writers who have mentioned it.

Ibnu-l-hijári, in the *Al-mashab*.—"The Andalusians make jackets of the skin of a certain amphibious quadruped called *al-wabrah*⁴⁰ (seal), whose skin is very much prized; they are found in great abundance on the shores of the Ocean, and in that part of Andalus which faces the island of Britannia. Thence they are brought to Saragossa, where the skins are dressed, and then made into jackets."

Ibnu Ghálib, mentioning these jackets, which he observes were also manufactured at Cordova, says "the skins here alluded to and called *samúr*⁴¹ are very much used in Cordova for jackets, but I am unable to say to what animal they belong, whether to some quadruped peculiar to that country, or to the *wabrah* (seal); in case of their being those of the latter animal, it is a well-known amphibious quadruped, very strong and muscular."

But the best account is that given by Hamíd Ibn Samjún⁴² the physician, in his work on the simples employed as remedies in medicine. It reads thus: "the seal is a quadruped whose *scrotum* is used as a remedy in several diseases; they abound in the Mediterranean, where they generally live in the water, although they often come on shore, and are pursued by huntsmen, who catch them, and after cutting off their *scrotum*, let them go. I have heard the people who practise this trade say that if one of these quadrupeds happens to fall a second time into their hands, he fails not to throw himself on his back, to show his pursuers that he no longer has the object of their wishes, upon which the men let him go unhurt."⁴³

Another author says that the remedy to which we allude is also called *jendu-bádastar*, from the animal's name, which is likewise *jendu-bádastar*;⁴⁴ that it is considered a great specific in all diseases originating from cold temperaments, on account of its being held by the physicians and naturalists as hot and dry in the fourth degree. Some say that in size this quadruped is like a hare, others

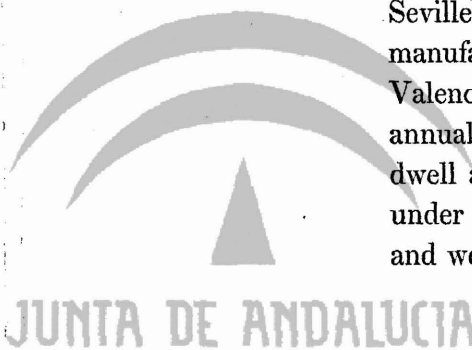
that he is somewhat smaller, and that his flesh has a better taste ; others again make him much larger,—but God only knows ; one thing is certain, that the skins of the *wabrah* (seal), or some other quadruped resembling it, were used as an article of dress, and much worn by Christians as well as Moslems.

But it is quite time that we should say a few words about the different manufactures that existed in Andalus, which are generally acknowledged to have reached the utmost degree of perfection, so much so that when an Andalusian begins upon this subject there is no end to his praises of his native land : we shall here slightly mention a few ; as, for instance, its manufactures of sashes,⁴⁵ which were famous all over the world for brilliancy of colours and fineness of texture ; its silver and gold tissues manufactured at Almeria, Malaga, and Murcia, with such perfection that when taken to Eastern countries the people were amazed and bewildered at the sight of them. Of the manufactures established at Almeria we have already spoken elsewhere, when we gave the description of that city ; we shall only add here, by way of supplement, that all the stuffs woven by its industrious inhabitants were at all times in great demand in the East and West, and that a very considerable trade was carried on in this, as well as in other products of their industry, both with Moslems and Christians. At Tentala, a town depending on Murcia, there were manufactures of carpets called *Tentali*,⁴⁶ which, when exported to the East, brought a very high price. Both Granada and Baza were famous for the manufacture of certain warm stuffs for winter called *Al-mulabbad*,⁴⁷—they were generally of woollen, stamped,⁴⁸ and dyed of the most beautiful and delicate colours. Murcia was likewise famous for the manufacture of coats of mail, breast-plates, and all sorts of steel armour, inlaid with gold ; saddles and horse-harness richly set in gold ; all kinds of instruments of brass and iron, as knives, scissors, and other trinkets, inlaid with gold, such as are used in weddings to present to the bride ; and, above all, weapons and other warlike instruments, which were so highly finished and wrought in such perfection as to dazzle with their brightness the eyes of the beholder.⁴⁹ All these articles, Ibnu Sa'id informs us, were exported to Africa and other more distant countries, where they were held in great estimation. Murcia was likewise renowned for the fabrication of glass and pottery, of both which materials they made large vases of the most exquisite and elegant shapes ; they manufactured also glazed pottery, and another kind which was washed over with gold. The manufactures of Malaga have already been described by us under the head of that city ; it was famous above all things for its glass and pottery, and for many articles of clothing.

We find also that there were in Andalus several manufactures of *al-mafssass*,⁵⁰ which is known in the East by the name of *al-foseyfasú* (mosaic), as well as of a sort

of tile called *az-zulaj*⁵¹ (azulejo), which they used in paving the floors of their houses. The *azulejos* were made of all sorts of gay colours, and very much resembled the *al-mafssass*; they were exported in great quantities to the East, and used instead of marble flags to make mosaic floors, to pave fountains, and other similar ornaments.

As to weapons and military stores of all kinds, such as shields, swords, spears, helmets, breast-plates, bows, arrows, saddles, bits, bridles, and all kinds of horse-trappings, the manufactures of Andalus exceeded those of any other country in the world; and according to Ibnu Sa'id (from whom the preceding narrative is abridged) that part of the country which was in the hands of the infidels was likewise famous for the manufacture of arms, so highly polished as to dazzle the eyes; amongst which he makes particular mention of certain sharp-edged, well-tempered swords, called *al-bordheliat*,⁵² from Bordhil (Bourdeaux), a city placed at the north-eastern extremity of Andalus. The same author speaks in the highest terms of the swords manufactured at Seville, and which, he says, were not inferior to those of India. Seville is likewise represented by him as a city of great trade, and where several manufactures of rich clothing and costly articles existed. The town of Xativa, near Valencia, was well known for its paper manufactures, of which a large quantity was annually exported to Maghreb, and to other parts of Africa. But we shall not dwell any longer on this topic, inasmuch as we have already given some details, under the head of those cities and districts where the objects were manufactured, and we may again occasionally allude to them in the course of this our narrative.



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CHAPTER VIII.

Government—Public functionaries—Wizír—Kátib—Sáhibu-l-ashghál—Sáhibu-sh-shartah—Mohtesib—
Ad-darábún, or night-watch—Revenues.

HAVING thus far sketched some of the peculiarities of Andalus, we shall now Government. proceed to say a few words on its government and institutions, as well as on the customs and manners of its inhabitants. Our narrative will be mostly borrowed from Ibnu Sa'íd, an author who has treated the question at large in his *Kitábu-l-mugh'rab*, in a chapter entitled "Shining stars in the just and impartial description of the eastern and western governments."¹ These are that author's words: "Andalus, which was conquered in the year 92 of the Hijra, continued for many years to be a dependency of the Eastern Khalifate, until it was snatched away from their hands by one of the surviving members of the family of Umeyyah, who, crossing over from Barba'ry, subdued the country, and formed therein an independent kingdom, which he transmitted to his posterity. During three centuries and a half, Andalus, governed by the princes of this dynasty, reached the utmost degree of power and prosperity, until civil war breaking out among its inhabitants, the Moslems, weakened by internal discord, became every where the prey of the artful Christians, and the territory of Islám was considerably reduced, so much so that at the present moment the worshippers of the crucified hold the greatest part of Andalus in their hands, and their country is divided into various powerful kingdoms, whose rulers assist each other whenever the Moslems attack their territories. This brings to my recollection the words of an eastern geographer who visited Andalus in the fourth century of the Hijra,² and during the prosperous times of the Cordovan Khalifate, I mean Ibnu Haukal An-nassíbi,³ who, describing Andalus, speaks in very unfavourable terms of its inhabitants. As his words require refutation I shall transcribe here the whole of the passage. 'Andalus,' he says, 'is an extensive island, a little less than a month's march in length, and twenty and odd days in width. It abounds in

“ rivers and springs, is covered with trees and plants of every description, and is
“ amply provided with every article which adds to the comforts of life ; slaves are
“ very fine, and may be procured for a small price on account of their abundance ;
“ owing, too, to the fertility of the land, which yields all sorts of grain, vegetables,
“ and fruit, as well as to the number and goodness of its pastures in which innu-
“ merable flocks of cattle graze, food is exceedingly abundant and cheap, and the
“ inhabitants are thereby plunged into indolence and sloth, letting mechanics and
“ men of the lowest ranks of society overpower them and conduct their affairs.
“ Owing to this it is really astonishing how the Island of Andalus still remains in
“ the hands of the Moslems, being, as they are, people of vicious habits and low
“ inclinations, narrow-minded, and entirely devoid of fortitude, courage, and the
“ military accomplishments necessary to meet face to face the formidable nations of
“ Christians who surround them on every side, and by whom they are continually
“ assailed.’⁴

“ Such are the words of Ibnu Haukal ; but, if truth be told, I am at a loss
“ to guess to whom they are applied. To my countrymen they certainly are
“ not ; or, if so, it is a horrible calumny, for if any people on the earth are famous
“ for their courage, their noble qualities, and good habits, it is the Moslems of
“ Andalus ; and indeed their readiness to fight the common enemy, their con-
“ stancy in upholding the holy tenets of their religion, and their endurance of
“ the hardships and privations of war, have become almost proverbial. So, as
“ far as this goes, Ibnu Haukal is decidedly in error, for as the proverb says,
“ ‘ the tongue of stammering is at times more eloquent than the tongue of
“ eloquence.’⁵ As to the other imputation, namely, their being devoid of all
“ sense, wisdom, and talent, either in the field or in administration, would to
“ God that the author’s judgment were correct, for then the ambition of the
“ chiefs would not have been raised, and the Moslems would not have turned
“ against each other’s breasts and dipped in each other’s blood those very
“ weapons which God Almighty put into their hands for the destruction and
“ annihilation of the infidel Christian. But, as it is, we ask—were those Sultáns
“ and Khalifs wanting in prudence and talents who governed this country for
“ upwards of five hundred years, and who administered its affairs in the midst
“ of foreign war and civil discord ? Were those fearless warriors deficient in
“ courage and military science who withstood on the frontiers of the Moslem
“ empire the frightful shock of the innumerable infidel nations who dwell within
“ and out of Andalus, whose extensive territories cover a surface of three months’
“ march, and all of whom ran to arms at a moment’s notice to defend the religion
“ of the crucified ? And if it be true that at the moment I write the Moslems

“ have been visited by the wrath of heaven, and that the Almighty has sent down
“ defeat and shame to their arms, are we to wonder at it at a time when the
“ Christians, proud of their success, have carried their arms as far as Syria
“ and Mesopotamia, have invaded the districts contiguous to the country which
“ is the meeting-place of the Moslems, and the cupola of Islám, committed all
“ sorts of ravages and depredations, conquered the city of Haleb (Aleppo) and
“ its environs, and done other deeds which are sufficiently declared in the
“ histories of the time?⁶ No, it is by no means to be wondered at, especially
“ when proper attention is paid to the manner in which the Andalusian Moslems
“ have come to their present state of weakness and degradation. The process
“ is this : the Christians will rush down from their mountains, or across the
“ plain, and make an incursion into the Moslem territory ; there they will
“ pounce upon a castle and seize it ; they will ravage the neighbouring country,
“ take the inhabitants captive, and then retire to their country with all the
“ plunder they have collected, leaving, nevertheless, strong garrisons in the
“ castles and towers captured by them. In the meanwhile the Moslem king
“ in whose dominions the inroad has been made, instead of attending to his
“ own interests and stopping the disease by applying cauterization, will be
“ waging war against his neighbours of the Moslems ; and these, instead of
“ defending the common cause, the cause of religion and truth,—instead of
“ assisting their brother, will confederate and ally to deprive him of whatever
“ dominions still remain in his hands. So, from a trifling evil at first, it will
“ grow into an irreparable calamity, and the Christians will advance farther
“ and farther until they subdue the whole of that country exposed to their
“ inroads, where, once established and fortified, they will direct their attacks
“ to another part of the Moslem territories, and carry on the same war of havoc
“ and destruction. Nothing of this, however, existed at the time when Ibnu
“ Haukal visited Andalus ; for although we are told by Ibnu Hayyán and
“ other writers that the Christians began as early as the reign of 'Abdu-r-
“ rahmán III. to grow powerful, and to annoy the Moslems on the frontiers,⁷
“ yet it is evident that until the breaking out of the civil wars, which raged
“ with uncommon violence throughout Andalus, the encroachments of the
“ barbarians on the extensive and unprotected frontiers of the Moslem empire
“ were but of little consequence.

“ But to return to our subject. During the first years after the conquest the
“ government of Andalus was vested in the hands of military commanders
“ appointed by the Viceroys of Africa, who were themselves named by the
“ Khalifs of Damascus. These governors united in their hands the command

“ of the armies and the civil power, but, being either removed as soon as
 “ named, or deposed by military insurrections, much confusion and disorder
 “ reigned at all times in the state, and the establishment and consolidation
 “ of the Moslem power in Andalus were thwarted in their progress at the
 “ very onset. It was not until the arrival of the Bení Umeyyah in Andalus
 “ that the fabric of Islám may be said to have rested on a solid foundation.
 “ When 'Abdu-r-rahmán Ibn Mu'awiyeh had conquered the country, when every
 “ rebel had submitted to him, when all his opponents had sworn allegiance to
 “ him, and his authority had been universally acknowledged, then his importance
 “ increased, his ambition spread wider, and both he and his successors displayed
 “ the greatest magnificence in their court, and about their persons and retinue,
 “ as likewise in the number of officers and great functionaries of the state. At
 “ first they contented themselves with the title of *Benú-l-khaláyif* (sons of
 “ the Khalifs),⁸ but in process of time, when the limits of their empire had
 “ been considerably extended by their conquests on the opposite land of Africa,
 “ they took the appellation of Khalifs and *Omará-l-múmenín* (Princes of the
 “ believers). It is generally known that the strength and solidity of their
 “ empire consisted principally in the policy pursued by these princes, the mag-
 “ nificence and splendour with which they surrounded their court, the reverential
 “ awe with which they inspired their subjects, the inexorable rigour with which they
 “ chastised every aggression on their rights, the impartiality of their judgments,
 “ their anxious solicitude in the observance of the civil law, their regard and
 “ attention to the learned, whose opinions they respected and followed, calling
 “ them to their sittings and admitting them to their councils, and many other
 “ brilliant qualities; in proof of which frequent anecdotes occur in the works
 “ of Ibnu Hayyán and other writers; as, for instance, that whenever a judge
 “ summoned the Khalif, his son, or any of his most beloved favourites, to appear
 “ in his presence as a witness in a judicial case, whoever was the individual
 “ summoned would attend in person—if the Khalif, out of respect for the law
 “ —and if a subject, for fear of incurring his master's displeasure.

“ But when this salutary awe and impartial justice had vanished, the decay
 “ of their empire began, and it was followed by a complete ruin. I have already
 “ observed that the princes of that dynasty were formerly styled *Omará-bnd-l-*
 “ *kholafá* (Amírs, sons of the Khalifs),⁹ but that in latter times they assumed
 “ the title of *Omará-l-múmenín* (Princes of the believers). This continued until
 “ the disastrous times of the civil war, when the surviving members of the
 “ royal family hated each other, and when those who had neither the nobility
 “ nor the qualities required to honour the Khalifate pretended to it and wished