

“ Sahl died a Moslem.” The same author (Ibn Rashíd) quotes the following anecdote, which he says he read in a certain literary work in the West, and which would tend to prove that Ibn Sahl was really a Moslem. Ibn Sahl once received in his house a company of literary men, and, the conversation happening to turn on his religion, one of the party ventured to ask him whether he was really a Moslem in heart, as he professed to be, or only affected it, upon which he is said to have answered—

“ For men are the things apparent, for God only what is concealed.”⁹¹

As a further proof of Ibn Sahl's conversion, the following two verses of his are adduced :

“ I am content with Moses for the sake of Mohammed ; I am now in the right path, but had it not been for Allah I should never have been directed.

“ What has made me change my mind is this, that I saw the law of Moses was wanting in a Mohammed.”⁹²

However, as we have already stated, there are not wanting authors who assert that Ibn Sahl's conversion was a feigned one, and that he never abandoned the Jewish creed. Ar-rá'íi⁹³ (may God show him mercy !) says, “ I was told by the Sheikh Abú-l-hasan 'Alí Ibn Sama't Al-andalusí,—‘ there are two things in this world to which I give no faith,—one is the conversion of Ibn Sahl, the other Az-zamakhsharí's repentance for having joined the Mo'tazelites.’ But,” observes Ar-rá'íi, “ I have better authority not to coincide in this author's opinions : as to Ibn Sahl's conversion, because, according to all received opinions on the subject, I am inclined to believe it was a sincere one ; and as to Az-zamakhsharí's repentance from the heresy of the Mo'tazelites, because I myself saw in the East a legal document stating that Az-zamakhsharí⁹⁴ had abjured the religious errors of that sect.”

Al-'azz,⁹⁵ who wrote Ibn Sahl's life, inclines to the contrary opinion, and thinks that there are sufficient proofs to believe he was a Moslem ; but God only knows the truth of the case. One thing however is certain, namely, that Ibn Sahl was one of the best poets of his time, as the collection of his poems sufficiently testifies. He lived at Seville, where he was one of the elders of his tribe, and attended the lessons of Abú 'Alí Ash-shalúbín, Ibnu-d-dabbágh,⁹⁶ and others. They say that a western Arab, having been once asked the cause why Ibn Sahl could write in so tender a strain, gave the following answer—“ Because he unites two humilities, the humility of the lover and that of the Jew.”

According to Abú Hayyán, Ibn Sahl perished in a sea voyage ; the vessel in which he was embarked meeting with a tempest he was drowned with all the rest of the crew. This happened in the year six hundred and forty-nine, and Ibn

Sahl was then forty years old or thereabouts. When the event became known in Seville, another Jewish poet is said to have remarked very happily, alluding to Ibn Sahl's drowning, that "the pearl had only returned to its shell."

Ibráhím Ibnu-l-fakhhár Al-yahúdí is another famous poet. He lived among the Christians, and in the service of Alfonso, king of Toledo, with whom he rose high in favour, so as to be appointed by him his ambassador to the court of a Moslem Sultán in the West. In the opinion of all his contemporaries he was an elegant prose writer, and a very good poet. Ibnu Sa'íd, who mentions him, has handed down to us some of his verses, among which are the following, which he wrote in praise of his master Alfonso (may God annihilate him!)—

"The court of Alfonso has always the appearance of a house prepared for nuptials.

"And the leaving of sandals at the door would persuade thee that thou wast in Jerusalem."⁹⁷

The following anecdote is told of this Jew, who related it to the author from whose writings we now borrow it. "I once went on a message from my master to the Khalif Al-mustanser,⁹⁸ and when I went to present my credentials to the Wizír I found him sitting in one of the gardens of the palace, a charming spot, of the greatest beauty and luxuriance, resembling in every respect a paradise, only that the gate-keeper was the ugliest and most disgusting creature I had ever seen in my life. When the Wizír asked me afterwards what I thought of the garden, I said to him, 'I would undoubtedly compare it to paradise, were it not for one circumstance, which is that its gate, I am told, is guarded by Redwán, and here I see Málik.' The Wizír laughed heartily, and proceeded to acquaint the Khalif with my answer. He then brought me the following reply,—'Tell the Jew that such was my intention in choosing my gate-keeper; for had he been Redwán, he would undoubtedly have sent him back, saying—Go away, this is not a place for those of thy religion to enter;—while Málik, not knowing what is behind him, and thinking he keeps the gate of hell, allowed him to pass without resistance.' When the Wizír communicated to me the Sultán's answer," continues the Jew, "I could not refrain from saying, 'Well, God only knows who those are who will enter paradise.'"

Another famous Jew, whose name was Elias Ibn Al-mudawwar, a native of Ronda, is mentioned by various historians; he was an eminent physician, and a good poet. The following two verses, which he addressed to another Jew, are much commended. The occasion of his writing them was as follows. There was in the same city of Ronda where Elias practised medicine another eminent Jewish physician, and, as is often the case among people of the same profession, they were jealous of each

other, and were continually disputing and quarrelling. Their common friends often interposed, and, by becoming the mediators in their quarrels, succeeded in making them friends; but at the first opportunity they broke out again, and the whole city of Ronda was made the scene of their squabbles. At last, Elias having become, by some means or other, the master of a certain secret concerning his antagonist, which might, if made public, seriously affect his reputation as a physician, and prevent the people from employing him, he wrote to his rival the following distich:

“Do not blame me (if I accuse thee), and let my excuse be the rivalry
“which ought to exist between people of the same profession.

“Look at the sun and moon when they illumine our globe; from their
“constant labours and rival courses light is produced.”⁹⁹

meaning, as they were both labouring to diffuse the rays of science, it was necessary that there should exist between them mutual jealousy and division, in order that through their mutual efforts to surpass one another, and by their pursuing different courses, the cause of science might be benefited;—in the same manner as the sun and moon, by following opposite roads, illumine the world: the moon shining at night, and the sun by day-time; but the eclipse being produced the moment they tried to approach each other.

A Jewish poetess, named Kasmúnah, daughter of Isma'íl the Jew, is also counted among the bright geniuses of that nation. Her father, who was himself a man of considerable learning and a good poet, had bestowed the greatest care on her education, and imparted to her all the science which he himself possessed. He used to compose part of an ode and then give it to her to finish. He once said to her,—“Tell me who is

“The master of beauty, who fights and vanquishes those who oppose him,
“and yet whose trespasses are excused?”

And she replied, almost immediately,

“The sun, which imparts its light to the minor constellations, and whose
“face after this appears quite dark.”¹⁰⁰

But having proceeded so far in our endeavours to prove the aptitude and talents of the Andalusians for poetry, we should be guilty of negligence if, before terminating this chapter, we did not say a few words about the wives and daughters of the Moslems who made themselves conspicuous by their talents, and who showed their wit and eloquence in elaborate and ingenious poems.

Ummu-l-sa'd, daughter of 'A'ssem Al-himyari, a native of Cordova, was learned in sacred traditions, which she held from her father, her grandfather, and others. According to Ibnu-l-abbár, who has devoted an article to her in his biographical dictionary entitled *At-tekmilah*¹⁰¹ (supplement), she was better known by the sur-

Arab wome
excelling in
poetry.

name of As-sa'dúnah. Among the numerous poetical compositions which we find ascribed to her the following distich deserves particular mention :

“ Men generally court the friendship of strangers, and avoid any intercourse
“ with their own relations ;

“ For relatives are like scorpions, or worse than they.”¹⁰²

The Khattíb Ibn Marzúk, by whom this distich has been preserved, attributes it to the above-mentioned poetess ; we have seen it quoted elsewhere as the composition of Ibn 'Omayd. But God only is all-knowing.

Hasanah Al-yatímah, daughter of Abú-l-hoseyn the poet, and Ummu-l-'olá, daughter of Yúsuf, were also two famous poetesses. The latter is mentioned by the author of the *Al-mugh'rab*, who speaks of her as a native of Guadalaxara, and as having flourished in the sixth century of the Hijra. Some of her verses may be seen in the said work.

Ummatu-l-'azíz Ash-sherífiyyah was, as her name sufficiently indicates, of the posterity of Hasan, son of 'Alí Ibn Abí Tálíb. The Háfedh Abú-l-khattáb Ibn Dih'yah, who was a descendant of hers, has preserved to us in his *Kitábu-l-muttreb min ash'ári-l-maghreb*¹⁰³ (the book exhibiting songs extracted from the works of western poets), some of her verses, which are sufficient to rank her among the eminent poets of her time.

Al-ghosániyyah,¹⁰⁴ a native of Bejénah, a considerable and famous district in the province of Almeria, is likewise counted among the poets who flourished in the fifth century of the Hijra.

Al-'arúdiyyah,¹⁰⁵ a freed slave-girl belonging to Abú-l-mutref 'Abdu-r-rahmán Ibn Ghalbún the Kátib, was another distinguished female. She lived at Valencia, where she was taught by her master grammar and rhetoric, in both which branches of knowledge she soon made such progress as to surpass her teacher. She also shone in prosody, and learnt by heart and wrote commentaries on the *Al-kámil* of Al-mubarrad, and on the *An-nawádir* of Al-kálí. Abú Dáúd Suleymán Ibn Najáh says, “ I read under her direction the two above-mentioned commentaries, “ and learnt from her the science of prosody. She died at Denia, some time after “ her master's death, in the year four hundred and fifty of the Hijra, or there- “ abouts.” (May God show her mercy !)

Hafsah 'Ar-rakúniyyah, daughter of Al-hájí Ar-rakúní, was equally renowned for her beauty, her talents, her nobility, and her wealth. A notice of this famous poetess, as well as a selection from her verses, occurs in the work of Al-maláhi. The following, which she is said to have uttered extempore in the presence of the Prince of the believers 'Abdu-l-múmen Ibn 'Alí when about asking him for a favour, are justly commended :

“ O master of men ! O thou whose gracious favours the people anxiously
and confidently expect !

“ Grant me a diploma, which may be a promise to thy subjects ;

“ One upon which thy right hand has traced—‘ Praise be to God, the only
“ one.’ ” ¹⁰⁶

The poetess here alludes to certain signs of royalty introduced by the Sultáns of the dynasty called Al-muwáhedún (Almohades), and which consisted in writing at the top of their dispatches, with a thick pen and in very large characters, “ Praise be to God, the only one.”

With this Hafsa the Wizír Abú Ja’far Ahmed Ibn ‘Abdi-l-málik Ibn Sa’id Al-’ansí ¹⁰⁷ lived on terms of the greatest friendship and intimacy. They were continually addressing to each other epistles and verses, and their mutual answers can only be compared to the language of doves. We learn from Abú-l-hasan ‘Alí Ibn Músa Ibn Sa’id, the author of the *Al-mugh’rab*,—a work to which we owe ourselves very much indebted for our information,—and who was the descendant of this Abú Ja’far, that he heard his father say, “ I know not among the Bení Sa’id of any poet like him ; or rather, I know not among my countrymen of any who ever surpassed Abú Ja’far in poetical composition.” Some account of this noble Wizír, extracted from the work of his descendant Ibnu Sa’id, will not, we hope, be deemed superfluous.

Abú Ja’far was the son of ‘Abdu-l-málik Ibn Sa’id, Lord of Kal’at-Yahseb, a place not far from Granada, and the scene of the adventure which we have related in a former part of this book as having happened to the famous poet and historian Ibnu-l-hijari. At the arrival of the Bení ‘Abdi-l-múmen in Andalus, ‘Abdu-l-málik, who had embraced the opposite party (that of the Almoravides), took an active part in the contest, and managed to maintain himself independent in his little dominions. His son, Abú Ja’far, he appointed to be his Náyib or lieutenant, that he might aid him in the perilous duties of the administration, and in the defence of his state. However, Abú Ja’far, who knew how to handle the pen better than the sword, soon perceived his own inability to meet the exigencies of the charge, and begged his father to exonerate him from it and appoint another in his stead. This request ‘Abdu-l-málik refused to grant, but his son, not being able to bear any longer the important duties attached to his situation, deserted him, and left public affairs in order to enter into private life, after having written to his father a beautiful epistle in verse, in which he expatiated at full length upon the comforts and advantages of private life. They say that when ‘Abdu-l-málik read his son’s epistle, he exclaimed, “ Well, I shall not go against his will, for God Almighty does not permit that men should succeed in things for which they feel no inclina-

“ tion.” After this he wrote on the back of the letter, “ We send thee our
 “ benediction, and grant thee permission and full liberty to occupy thyself in such
 “ pursuits as answer best thy inclination.”

'Abdu-l-málik could not long maintain his independence ; all the Andalusian chiefs having submitted to the Bení 'Abdi-l-múmen, he was himself constrained to acknowledge them as masters, and tender the oath of allegiance, owing to which he not only retained the government of Kal'at-Yahseb, but rose high in favour with the Sultáns of that dynasty. In the meanwhile Abú Sa'íd Ibn 'Abdi-l-múmen was appointed to be governor of Granada, and being in want of a secretary he began to inquire among the inhabitants for a person fit for the place. He was told that Abú Ja'far was the man most suitable, from his learning, his talents, and ability, to discharge the duties of Kátib ; he accordingly sent for him and declared to him his intention to invest him with that charge. Abú Ja'far refused, as he had done on a previous occasion, and begged to be left in private life, but on Abú Sa'íd insisting strongly he was compelled to accept it. However, he did not exercise his functions long. As he was one day entertaining a party of friends at his house, the conversation, amidst wine and mirth, turned upon hunting, a pastime of which Abú Ja'far was passionately fond ; a party was accordingly arranged for the next day, and, having provided themselves with all necessaries, Abú Ja'far and his friends started on their expedition. It happened to be a very cold and cloudy day, and, the cold increasing, the hunters thought fit to shelter themselves in the hut of a watchman who was guarding vines.¹⁰⁸ They lighted a good fire, dressed some of their game, and began to eat with good appetite, and drink abundantly after it. Abú Ja'far especially helped himself to so much liquor that he was quite intoxicated, and putting aside all reserve he began to divulge the secrets of his heart, and to describe the pleasures he had enjoyed that day in the following eloquent strain :

“ This has been a day spent in pleasure and sport ; a day in which the
 “ atmosphere shone brightly, charged with the amber of the clouds ;—

“ A day which (after contributing to our amusement) left us enough evening
 “ and sufficient wine to induce us to spend it in the midst of revelling and
 “ mirth.

“ After riding and sporting all the morning we perceived that the day was
 “ not entirely gone, and yet we were all fatigued and broken down by the
 “ jolting trot of our steeds.

“ Our sport too had been abundant, for with grey-coloured hawks we chased
 “ and brought down numerous birds, whose death our pleasures required,
 “ although their throats might lament under the knife.

“ So when the last rays of the sun began to spread a deep red tint over the horizon, and the fight between obscurity and light commenced, victory hanging for some time uncertain,—when every man and beast belonging to our party had been assembled,—

“ Wishing to give our empty stomachs a share in the spoil, and to begin afterwards a new chase of mirth and pleasure,—the cold, too, increasing and becoming more and more piercing,—

“ We bent our steps to the hut of a watchman, placed in the centre of a vineyard and surrounded by its sweetness, and provided with a blazing fire, which proved our salvation from the rigour of the weather.

“ I gave him a gold piece, and told him,—Go to the neighbouring village and buy us provisions, heed not the price,

“ And say to the seller that thou hast seen me tied down in the service of my master, more cruelly than the bird in the cage of the fowler.

“ And yet I only follow my inclination. Do I look like one who is subject to a Lord? do I look like one who is deprived of liberty?”¹⁰⁹

There happened to be among the company a man who, although he professed to be Abú Ja'far's friend, was, nevertheless, his secret enemy, and who, learning by heart the last two verses, went the next day to the governor and repeated them to him. Abú Sa'id immediately removed Abú Ja'far from his place, and conferred it on another learned man. Things, however, did not stop there: Abú Ja'far having once said to Hafsah the poetess, “Do not love that black man, and I engage to buy thee ten better than he in the black slave-market,” meaning the governor, who was of so dark a complexion as almost to resemble a negro, the words were again reported to Abú Sa'id, who, however much he might have resented the outrage, did not at first give vent to his passion, but concealed it in his heart, waiting for a favourable opportunity. This, however, soon presented itself, for Abú Ja'far's brother, 'Abdu-r-rahmán, son of 'Abdu-l-málik Ibn Sa'id, having taken part with the rebels, and quitted Granada in order to join the troops under the command of Ibn Mardanish, who had been proclaimed in the east of Andalus, Abú Ja'far was arrested by the governor's orders, thrown into a dungeon, and soon afterwards beheaded at Malaga, then the place of his residence. But to return to our account of the Andalusian poetesses.

Another poetess named Hafsah, daughter of Hamdún, and a native of Guadalaxara, is mentioned by Ibnu Sa'id among his illustrious characters of the fourth century of the Hijra. She is also much praised by Ibnu-l-abbár, who sets her down as a very clever poetess, and by Ibn Faraj, the author of the *Al-hadáyik*¹¹⁰ (orchards), who quotes some of her verses.

Zeynab Al-murabiyah,¹¹¹ and Hamdah, whom others call Hamdúnah, were the daughters of Zeyád, a native of Guadix. They are mentioned by several authors, as Al-maláhí, Abú-l-kásim, Al-barák, and others. Ibnu Sa'íd says that they were born at Granada, but agrees with the former writers in fixing the city of Guadix as their residence. Both were famous for their wit, their literary accomplishments, and their talents for poetry. The former, especially, was deeply versed in various branches of literature; she wrote and copied many works, which, in the opinion of Ibnu Sa'íd, who says he saw some of them, were written in a masterly style. Zeynab died in the year four hundred of the Hijra; she never would consent to be married, although she had numerous proposals. She lived for some time at Cordova, where she used to frequent the house of Al-mudhfer, son of Al-mansúr Ibn Abí 'A'mir, in whose praise she composed several verses.

Mariam,¹¹² daughter of Abú Ya'kúb Al-ansárí, inhabited Seville, of which place she was a native, although other writers say that the city of Silves was the place of her birth. Ibn Dih'yah, who mentions her in his *Al-muttreb*, says that she was a learned and very accomplished woman, and that she taught rhetoric, poetry, and literature, which, united to her piety, her good morals, her virtues, and amiable disposition, gained her the affection of her sex, and gave her many pupils; she lived to an old age, and died after the year four hundred of the Hijra. Al-homaydí has likewise given an account of this poetess, and quoted some of her verses.

Asmá Al-'ámeriyah was also a native of Seville, where she resided and made herself conspicuous among the learned by her talents. She addressed to 'Abdu-l-múmen Ibn 'Alí a *risdleh*, in which, after stating minutely her genealogy, and her claims to a descent from Ibn Abí 'A'mir, she proceeded to beg the favour of being exempt from the payment of taxes, and having soldiers quartered upon her. There was at the end of the *risdleh* an ode which began thus:

“ O Prince of the believers! O our magnificent Lord! we wish thee
 “ prosperity. May the Almighty give victory to thy arms!

“ When we rise to the superior regions of tradition, thy name and thy acts
 “ are the surest path to them.”¹¹³

Ummu-l-hiná, daughter of the Kádí Abú Mohammed 'Abdu-l-hakk Ibn 'Attiyyah,¹¹⁴ learnt divinity from her father, and was, besides, an excellent poetess. She lived at Almeria, and wrote several works on the mode of worshipping the Almighty.

Hind, a slave girl of Abú Mohammed 'Abdullah Ibn Moslemah Ash-shátebí (a native of Xátiva), is said to have excelled in poetry, music, and the lighter branches of literature. It is related of Abú 'A'mir Ibn Yank,¹¹⁵ that wishing once to hear Hind perform on the lute he addressed her in the following two verses, begging her to come to his house:

“ O Hind, dost thou feel any impediment in coming to me? palm wine is forbidden, 'tis true, but not the drinking of limpid waters.

“ The nightingale, after hearing thy performance, envies thee, and wishes to hear again the deep intonations of thy lute.”¹¹⁶

To which Hind replied, on the back of the letter,

“ O my Lord! may the Almighty prosper thee, and increase thy power and importance!

“ It is my intention to hasten to thy presence, and to be in my own person the bearer of my answer.”¹¹⁷

Ash-shelbiyyah is mentioned by Ibnu-l-abbár, who says, “ I do not recollect now what her name was, Ash-shelbiyyah¹¹⁸ being only her patronymic. All I know is that she was a very good poetess, as may be gathered from her writings, and especially from an epistle in verse which she addressed to the Sultán Ya'kúb Al-mansúr, complaining of a certain governor and collector of taxes in the city where she resided.”

Nazhún¹¹⁹ the Granadian is described by Ibnu Sa'id, who places her among the illustrious characters of the fifth century. She is likewise mentioned by Al-hijári, who portrays her in his *Al-mas'hab* as a female endowed with great tenderness of soul, and a very mild disposition; extraordinary talents for poetry, and a most wonderful memory. She wrote several poems, and made herself famous by the beauty and happiness of her similes.

Bahjah, a native of Cordova, and a friend of the famous Waládah, was equally renowned for her beauty and for her verses. She lived in great intimacy with Waládah,¹²⁰ the daughter of Al-mustakfi, King of Cordova, and profited by her lessons. But of this Waládah, who was herself the most eminent poetess of her time, as well as of Ramíkiyyah, 'Imád, Al-'abbádiyyah, and Buthínah, the three former wives, and the latter a daughter, of Al-mu'atamed Ibn 'Abbád, King of Seville, more will be said in the course of our narrative.

Having clearly shown the aptitude and talents of the inhabitants of Andalus, we shall now proceed in the next chapter to give, in the words of the historian Ibnu Sa'id, as faithful a sketch as we can of the productions of Andalusian genius in every department of science.

CHAPTER IV.

State of literature in Andalus—Epistle on the subject from Ibnu-r-rabīb At-temímí to Abú-l-mugheyrāh Ibn Hazm—Answer of Abú Mohammed Ibn Hazm—Traditions respecting Andalus—Review of the Andalusian literature—Theology and jurisprudence—Works on the sect of Málík—Commentaries on the Korán—Legal decisions founded on the Korán—Biography of the companions of the Prophet—Grammar and lexicography—Medicine—Philosophy—Poetry—History—Metaphysics.

WHAT follows is transcribed word for word from Ibnu Sa'íd. "I deem it opportune," says that accurate historian, "to give here an epistle written by Abú Mohammed Ibn Hazm the Háfedh, in which he records some of the excellences of the learned of Andalus. The occasion of his writing the said epistle was as follows. Abú 'Alí Al-hasan Ibn Mohammed Ibn Ahmed Ibn Ar-rabīb At-temímí Al-cairwání once wrote to Abú-l-mugheyrāh 'Abdu-l-wahháb Ibn Ahmed Ibn 'Abdi-r-rahmán Ibn Hazm an epistle in which he stated that the Andalusians were negligent in perpetuating the history of their country, the memory of their doctors, the virtues of their theologians, and the praiseworthy actions of their kings. The epistle ran thus :

Ibnu-r-rabīb's
epistle.

" ' O our Lord ! O thou most beloved among our intimate friends ! may the Almighty God write down for thee prosperity and happiness ! may He continue thee in power and command ! may He help and assist thee, put thee in the right path whenever thou askest for direction, and enlighten thee whenever thou wishest to be instructed !

" ' The object of this our letter is that we some time ago began to think about thy country, and to consider how it was the abode of every excellence, the store of every good thing, the resort of every novelty, and the meeting-place of every advantage ; the end of the hopes of the desirous, and the scope of the wishes of the inquiring ; the great emporium of trade, where every merchandize found a purchaser, and every buyer the object of his wishes. All this we knew to be the case with thy country ; we knew also that the above-mentioned were not the

“ only advantages which thy native land could boast of, for it possessed many others,
“ such as the vast number of its learned men, the multitude of its authors, the shining
“ virtues of its Kings, and their laudable practices in the encouragement of science ;
“ their esteem for those who cultivated it, their honouring those whom science
“ honoured, and their extolling those whom learning extolled : nor was this confined
“ only to science, for the same conduct was observed by them towards military
“ men, distinguishing and raising in command those whom their valour and military
“ knowledge placed above others, and honouring those whom their intrepidity in
“ battle made honourable. By these means the coward became brave, the timid was
“ made bold,—the obscure, conspicuous,—the ignorant, learned,—the stammerer,
“ eloquent,—the inarticulate crier, a poet. The *Bogdth*¹ strove to imitate the eagle
“ in his flight, bats were enabled to see² by daylight, men gave their entire attention
“ to the cultivation of science, and the arts flourished through the general efforts
“ employed in them. All this we know to be true, but at the same time it must be
“ owned that your literary men are guilty of unpardonable negligence, and unac-
“ countable indolence, in perpetuating the records of their country ; since, instead of
“ collecting the excellences and advantages of their respective towns,—instead of
“ perpetuating in their books the memory of their cities, and transmitting to posterity
“ the actions of their Kings and Princes, Kátibs and Wizírs, Kádís and Ulemas,—
“ instead of leaving behind them accounts which might preserve for ever afterwards
“ the fame of their deeds, and eternize and renew their names through the lapse of
“ ages, and the course of nights and days,—instead of composing books which, like
“ the tongue of truth, might herald their virtues to future generations through the
“ succession of time,—they leave every merit and virtue in the most complete state
“ of oblivion. Yes, truth must be told ; although we admit that your learned men
“ shine like so many bright stars in the sciences, thou must own that every thing
“ belonging to them remains in the shade, does not come before the public, stands
“ firm on its pivot, and never goes astray. If they write a book, they are afraid of
“ being criticised or impugned ; and if they compile a work, they dare not show it,
“ lest people should be of a contrary opinion to their own ; so that they never do
“ write, or, if they do, it is as if they were carried off by the birds, or blown away
“ by the winds to an enormous distance.³ Not one among them pays the least
“ attention, or employs himself for one moment, in collecting the merits of his coun-
“ trymen, or suffers his attention to rest on the brilliant qualities of former Sultáns.
“ None will dip his pen to commemorate the actions of their Kátibs and Wizírs, or
“ blot a sheet of paper with the virtuous deeds of their Kádís and Ulemas ; and yet,
“ were they to let loose the padlocks of their mouths, and untie the bonds that

“restrain their eloquence, we have no doubt but that they would find an open space
“for their speech, and that the roads of literature would be thrown free for their
“passage, although their performances might not be equally approved of by every
“school, and their opinions not followed by every lover of literature. One of them,
“for instance, will think of devoting himself to a given department of science, and
“of studying the works of the masters who preceded him in it ; but it is vain for him
“to collect all the spears of preferment, and to excel in his profession,—he may
“carry away the vase of Ibn Mokbil,⁴ or take possession of the pen of Ibn
“Moklah,⁵ or of the feather-notch of the arrow of Dagfal,⁶ or become a quinsy in
“the throat of Abú-l-'ameythal,⁷—the very moment he reaches the end of his exist-
“ence, the moment fate cuts the thread of his life, all memory of his actions and
“writings ceases, and his learning and science are buried along with him. Such is
“not the case with learned people of other countries, for by perpetuating their records
“they give to each author that share of celebrity to which he is justly entitled, and
“they write books by which they raise everlasting monuments to their fame. And
“if thou pretend to say that the same negligence of which we accuse the authors of
“thy country is to be found among those of ours, and that they also produce works
“which never reach the notice of the public, we will answer thee that the assertion
“is not a true one ; for this country being only separated from thine by an evening's
“sail, or as it were by a short march, if the wind were to blow to our shores the
“fame of your authors, or to carry hither the name of their writings, there is no
“doubt but that the voice would be listened to by the dead in their tombs, not to
“speak of those who are living in houses and palaces ; and they would graciously
“admit their performance, in the same manner as they received the collection of
“poems by Ahmed Ibn 'Abdi-r-rabihi which he entitled *Al-'ikd*, although, if truth
“be told, he is somewhat to be blamed for not having made the excellences of his
“country the chief topic of his book, and the noble actions of Kings the principal
“jewel in his necklace,⁸ for not having redoubled his efforts, and given all his
“diligence to the inquiry, but having, on the contrary, strained every nerve, and
“put in motion every joint, to produce—what?—a sword without edge ; and to do
“—what?—what his friends and companions had done before him : that is, to pass
“over in silence that which might concern them, and neglect to mention that which
“was most important, and might make them appear greater in the eyes of the world.
“This is all we have to say ; now, if thou shouldst have any thing to reply, if thou
“shouldst have any good reasons to state in return, or have in thy hands the means
“of solving this difficulty, pray acquaint us with it. Guide thy brother, and may
“God guide thee ! Direct thy brother, and may God direct thee ! We salute thee,
“—may the Almighty's mercy and benediction be with thee !

“ When the Wizír Abú Mohammed 'Alí Ibn Ahmed Ibn Sa'íd Ibn Hazm⁹ read this letter, he wrote the following answer :

“ ‘ Praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures, and his blessings be upon his servant and messenger Mohammed, as well as upon his companions, the honour-
 “ able, upon his wives, the mothers of the Moslems, and upon all his illustrious
 “ progeny, those of the good deeds ! O my brother ! O Abú Bekr ! Accept my
 “ salutation and greeting, as the salutation of a beloved brother who has been sepa-
 “ rated from thee during many long days and nights, and by thousands of miles and
 “ farsangs, and who, on reaching thy dwelling, should find thee preparing for
 “ migration and departure, and ready to grasp the staff of peregrination and travel.

Ibn Hazm's
reply.

“ ‘ When I stayed to consider thy words, when my hands had been stretched over
 “ the contents of thy letter, and my eyes had twice rambled over its details, I dis-
 “ covered, after some attentive consideration, that its substance was addressed by a
 “ certain writer among our African neighbours, and living in the city of Cairwán, to
 “ an Andalusian whose name and genealogy are nowhere mentioned.¹⁰

“ ‘ It is said in the letter that learned men born in this country, although they
 “ may have reached the highest summit of elevation in the various departments of
 “ science, and attained the most remote extremity in the different branches of
 “ learning, are nevertheless unprovided with sufficient talents and imagination to
 “ perpetuate the traditions of their country, the virtues and commendable actions of
 “ their Kings, the meritorious deeds of their Faquih, the inflexible justice of their
 “ Kádís, the eloquent productions of their writers, and the profound learning of
 “ their doctors and theologians. The letter even goes so far as to describe us as
 “ not having among us authors in the different sciences whose writings exist, and
 “ whose fame is transmitted to posterity ; for we are told that the moment these
 “ authors die their writings are forgotten, and their learning buried along with
 “ them ; and certainly, if what the writer of the letter tells us himself be true, it
 “ cannot be otherwise, for he informs us that the very moment any work of merit
 “ appears among us it is taken to Africa, and we become the object of continual
 “ visitation, and the aim of the repeated attacks of the learned on the opposite shore.

“ ‘ However, it was at a meeting crowded with all sorts of polite learning, and
 “ a sitting abounding in all kinds of science, at a palace inhabited by every ex-
 “ cellence, and a dwelling full of every description of elegance,—overflowing
 “ with the subtilities of thought and the brilliant bursts of the imagination ;—a
 “ house which is the abode of honour and glory, the repository of dignity and
 “ command, the halting-place and refuge of travellers struck with fear, and the
 “ meeting-place of the staffs of peregrination ; the habitation, in fine, of the illu-
 “ trious, honourable, and highly respected Káid, Abú 'Abdillah Kásim, Lord

“ of Al-bónt,¹¹ that I first became acquainted with the tenour and contents of thy
 “ epistle. It was in the presence of that most worthy individual, the offspring
 “ of illustrious ancestors, who is esteemed in proportion to the high sources
 “ from which he holds his traditions, and the immensity of his learning, acquired in
 “ all departments of science; it was at his house, frequented by all those whose
 “ families do not sit opposite to them in their sleep, and whom their neighbours do
 “ not leave in peace; ¹² it was in that school of every knowledge, presided over by
 “ him whose virtues cannot well be called by their names, whose meritorious deeds
 “ will never be extolled to the height they deserve, and whose praiseworthy
 “ character and inclinations will never be eulogized in words sufficiently strong to
 “ convey an idea of them, but whose name alone is a praise and a recommendation,
 “ and whose simple mention is more than enough to accomplish what would require
 “ long commentaries with another,—it was there, I repeat, that I first fixed my
 “ consideration on the contents of thy letter. Then that noble Lord, (may God
 “ defer the end of his life, and continue him in his elevated position, in order that
 “ the poets who sing his praise may not be destitute of their best ornaments, nor
 “ the age be deprived of its principal jewel!) appeared desirous of writing a reply to
 “ thy letter, and expressed a wish of putting in evidence whatever valuable in-
 “ formation he possessed on the subject; but, unluckily, he either forgot it entirely
 “ in the midst of his important occupations, or put off its execution to an indefinite
 “ period; so that when I became certain that the person to whom thy letter is
 “ addressed was among the dead, and therefore that all reply on his part was
 “ impossible, *since the dead among us are not like those of thy country; they can*
 “ *neither hear nor answer;* when I heard that the tomb had become his habitation,
 “ (may God forgive him as well as me!) I undertook to write the present epistle in
 “ answer to thine, since a letter was put into my hands written by thee, and asking
 “ for an answer, and I had before my eyes an accusation which called for a defence.
 “ I have a last warning to give thee before I begin; on the arrival of my letter
 “ arrayed in the present form, bear in mind that my object was no other but that
 “ of conveying information on the bibliography of this country to all those who
 “ might need it, and to instruct those who might, like thee, be far from the sources
 “ of inquiry. To God the power in the times past, and in the times to come! so
 “ if thou art in the least instructed and enlightened by what I am going to state, I
 “ shall consider myself happy were I to have no other recompense but the fire of
 “ Hobahib.¹³

Traditions
 respecting
 Andalus.

“ “ If traditions respecting this country are wanted, we have Ahmed Ibn
 “ Mohammed Ar-rázi At-táríkhí’ (the historian), who wrote several works on the
 “ subject; and among others a very voluminous one wherein he described the

“ routes, ports, and principal cities of Andalus, the six armies or bodies of Arabs who
“ settled in it,¹⁴ the number of its provinces, the remarkable points of each of them,
“ the productions of the soil, and every thing else peculiar to this country and not
“ to be found in others; a very fine and most valuable work indeed. But were
“ there no other thing in favour of this country than the prophecy uttered by the
“ messenger of God when he announced that it would be subdued by his people,
“ and described the first conquerors, from whom we descend, as ‘angels in armour,’
“ —as appears in the sacred tradition that we hold from Taríf Abú Hamzah Ans Ibn
“ Málik,¹⁵ who had it from his great aunt Ummu-l-harám,¹⁶ daughter of Malhán,
“ and wife of Abú-l-walíd 'Obádah Ibnu-s-sámah, (may God pour his favours upon
“ them all!) which great aunt received it herself from the mouth of the Prophet,—
“ that alone would be sufficient to honour and distinguish this our country, and
“ make it superior to any other. For although I am aware that many doctors
“ have disputed the interpretation given to the said prophecy, and will continue to
“ do so, and are of opinion that the Prophet meant perhaps by it either the island
“ of Sicily or that of Akritis (Crete), although I know the objection will be raised
“ that there is no sufficient proof of what I advance, namely, that the Prophet
“ meant by his words Andalus and no other country, and that early traditions like
“ this ought not to be admitted and adopted by prudent people unless they be
“ accompanied by manifest and convincing evidence, quite disengaged from the
“ ambiguities of language, and resting upon the testimony of good and honourable
“ witnesses; I, nevertheless, persist in giving to the prophecy the aforesaid in-
“ terpretation, as the proofs, in my opinion, are conclusive. I state them, trusting
“ in God, whose help and assistance I implore.

“ ‘ It is well known to every Moslem how our Lord Mohammed was endowed with
“ the comprehensiveness of speech and the cream of delivery, and how God
“ Almighty permitted that whatever was revealed to him should be communicated
“ with the tongue of eloquence. It is likewise a matter of fact that a tradition
“ authenticated and handed down from witness to witness is in existence, purporting
“ that the Prophet said once, ‘that two bands from among his people would furrow
“ the spray of the seas, and make conquest after conquest,’ and that Ummu-l-harám
“ having asked him to beseech his Lord, the Almighty God, to make her one of
“ the number, he then announced to her that she would be one of the *first con-*
“ *querors*; and so she was, for she joined the naval expedition against Cyprus,
“ landed, fought on her mule, and died some time afterwards in the island, (may
“ God forgive her!) And certainly no other proof can be required of our Lord
“ Mohammed’s prophetic mission than this acquaintance with and prediction of
“ events before they happened. Now this conquest of Cyprus being the first naval

“ expedition in which the Moslems were engaged, it becomes evident that the
 “ warriors who subdued that island, and planted in it the banners of Islám, were
 “ the same whom the Lord’s messenger designated in his prophecy by that word
 “ *al-awalín* (the first conquerors), and that Ummu-l-harám being in their number,
 “ as the Prophet had predicted, she was entitled to be counted among the *first con-*
 “ *querors*. From the above-mentioned fact I draw an inference which admits of no
 “ contradiction ; for, owing to the eloquence and perspicuity of speech with which the
 “ Prophet was gifted by the Almighty, it must be concluded that when he men-
 “ tioned two different bands of his people, one of which he specified by calling it
 “ *the first*, there must necessarily follow another called *the second*. This is, indeed,
 “ a question which appertains to the rules of grammar, the construction of nouns,
 “ with their relatives, and the syntax of numbers, for it is an imperious rule of
 “ logic that a second should follow the first ; since the first is not the first but with
 “ relation to a second, nor the second such but with relation to a first, although the
 “ third need not be mentioned unless it be particularly required by the second. So
 “ when our Prophet (the Lord’s benediction and salutation be upon him !) an-
 “ nounced two bands of his people, and foretold two naval expeditions, one of
 “ which was called by him *al-awalín* (that of the first conquerors), that word
 “ must necessarily indicate the existence of another band called *akharín* (the
 “ others), and who with relation to the first would have been the second. And
 “ these are the people whom the Prophet announced would be the best of men,
 “ after the men of his own age, and the first of mankind in virtue and excellence,
 “ as well as in upholding the tenets of the religion revealed by him who is, and
 “ will for ever be, the best of men.

“ “ This point once established, I may easily prove that the conquerors of Andalus
 “ were mentioned in the prophecy, since this country was the next which the
 “ Moslems attacked by sea, the naval expedition directed against Constantinople,
 “ and which was commanded by Hobeerah Al-fazárí, not having taken place until
 “ the reign of Suleymán Ibn ’Abdi-l-malek.¹⁷

“ “ As to the island of Sicily, it was not conquered until the year 212 of the Hijra
 “ (A.D. 827-8), in the first days of the reign of the Bení Aghlab, the expedition
 “ sailing from Africa at the command of Asad Ibnu-l-forát Al-kadí, the friend¹⁸ of
 “ Abú Yúsuf, who lived and died in the island.

“ “ Crete was never subdued by the Moslems until the year 203 of the Hijra
 “ (A.D. 818-9), when Abú Hafs ’Omar Ibn Sho’ayb, better known by the surname
 “ of Ibnu-l-ghalíth, a native of Betróh (Petroche), in the district of Fahsu-l-bolútt,
 “ near Cordova, attacked and conquered it at the head of an army of Cordovans,
 “ whom the Sultán Al-hakem had, after a rebellion, fought in several battles, and

“ ultimately expelled from his capital.¹⁹ The throne of the island remained for
 “ many years in the hands of the posterity of Ibnu-l-ghalíth, until, under the reign
 “ of the last prince of his dynasty, named 'Abdu-l-'azíz Ibnu Sho'ayb, it was
 “ attacked and reduced by Romanus,²⁰ son of Constantine, emperor of the Greeks,
 “ in the year 350 of the Hijra (A.D. 961-2).

“ ‘ In what respects the division of climates, Cordova, the place of my birth and
 “ the scene of my youth, is placed in the same climate with the city of *Sarra men*
 “ *rai*;²¹ we are therefore endowed with intelligence and acuteness of mind, which fall
 “ to the lot of the inhabitants of the fifth climate; and although the planets come
 “ to us only at their setting, after their rising in other countries, a circumstance
 “ which, in the opinion of those who are versed in the science of the influence of
 “ the stars over the human body, is rather a proof against the intellectual faculties
 “ of the inhabitants, yet this country has produced men who have left in the
 “ sciences as brilliant traces as those of most other countries. On the other hand,
 “ the elevation of one of her planets ninety degrees is a proof of the aptitude of her
 “ inhabitants for the sciences, and their high qualifications for them. This is
 “ indeed become manifest, and may be proved by several instances, for the Anda-
 “ lusians have always shown the greatest aptitude for the theological sciences, such
 “ as the reading and expounding of the Korán, tradition and canonical juris-
 “ prudence; they have exhibited the greatest subtilty and talent in grammar,
 “ poetry, rhetoric, philology, history, medicine, arithmetic, astrology,—leaving in
 “ every one of the said branches important works.

“ ‘ As to the imputation which the writer of the letter casts upon the learned of
 “ this country, namely, that they are guilty of neglecting to preserve the names,
 “ birth-places, and genealogies, of the individuals who have distinguished themselves
 “ by their acquirements in certain branches of learning, my answer is, that if the
 “ charge preferred against us be as stated, then the same reproach is to be addressed
 “ to most countries, and to most principal cities and large provinces. So, for
 “ instance, to begin with Cairwán, the birth-place of the writer who accuses us,
 “ I do not recollect having read any history of that city, save the account contained
 “ in the book entitled *Kitabu-l-mu'arrab fí akhbári-l-maghrebi*²² (the book of the
 “ speaker according to the rules of Arabic grammar on the history of the West),
 “ and with the exception of what may be found in the works of Mohammed Ibn
 “ Yúsuf Al-warrák,²³ who, as is well known, wrote for Al-mustanser-billah (whom
 “ may God forgive!) several books on the routes and kingdoms of Africa, on the
 “ history of its Kings, and their wars with those who rose against them. The same
 “ author wrote also the history of several African cities, as Tahart,²⁴ Wahrán
 “ (Oran), Túnis, Sigilmásah,²⁵ Nakúr,²⁶ Basrah,²⁷ describing the manners and

“ customs of their inhabitants ; all works of the greatest learning and merit. It
 “ must be stated that this Mohammed was an Andalusian by origin and by birth ;
 “ his parents were born at Guadalaxara, and he came to settle in Cordova, where
 “ he lived and died, and is buried. Had he been born in Cairwán no doubt he
 “ would have been adduced as a testimony against what I am endeavouring to
 “ prove, but, I repeat, he was a native of Guadalaxara, and domiciliated in Cordova.
 “ But it being my intention to enter at full length into the subject, and to investi-
 “ gate thoroughly the question raised by thee, I shall, with God’s favour, proceed
 “ to state my arguments.

“ ‘ It is well known that our most illustrious historians among our ancestors, as
 “ well as among our contemporaries, without one single exception, all, on the
 “ contrary, agreeing with me on the subject, have constantly designated authors
 “ and other learned men by the patronymic of the country of their residence,
 “ provided they did not quit it to travel to other lands, but settled and lived in it
 “ until the time of their death ; so, for instance, when our historians or traditionists
 “ mention those among the companions of the Prophet who are distinguished by
 “ the patronymic surname of *Kúfiyyún*, they will put at the head ’Alí Ibn Abí Tálib,
 “ Ibn Mas’úd,²⁸ and Khodheyfah.²⁹ ’Alí only lived at Kúfah for five years and
 “ some months, and although he had passed fifty-eight years and months of his
 “ life both at Mekka and at Medína, (may God preserve them both !) and had
 “ distinguished himself in both those cities, he is placed among the people of
 “ Kúfah. The same might be said of the two other less illustrious companions
 “ above mentioned. When they mention the people of Basrah they will begin with
 “ ’Ammar Ibn Hassín,³⁰ and Ans Ibn Málík ; Hishám Ibn ’A’mír,³¹ and Abú
 “ Bekrah ;³² although every one of these distinguished individuals was born, had
 “ resided, and spent most of his life in the Hejjáz, or in Tehámeh, or in the Táýef,³³
 “ his residence in the city whence his name is derived having been but insignificant
 “ compared with the time he had spent in other countries. The same might be said
 “ of the *Shamiyyún* (natives of Damascus) ; they will put the first in the list ’Ibádah
 “ Ibnu-s-sámah,³⁴ Abú-l-dirhá,³⁵ Abú ’Obeydah Ibnu-l-jarrah,³⁶ Mo’adh,³⁷ Mu’a-
 “ wiyah,³⁸ and others, who are in the same circumstances as the above-mentioned,
 “ not having been born nor having resided any length of time in the city of Damascus,
 “ whence their patronymics are derived. They will count among the *Misriyyún*
 “ (natives of Cairo) ’Amru Ibnu-l-’áss, and Kharíjah Ibn Khodáfah³⁹ Al-’abduwí,
 “ and among the *Mekiyyún* (natives of Mekka) ’Abdullah Ibn ’Abbás,⁴⁰ and ’Ab-
 “ dullah Ibn Zobeyr,⁴¹ who are precisely in the same case as the above-described.
 “ Now those among the learned who at different times have come to settle among
 “ us we have always treated with justice, since they are held by us in the estimation

“ which their merits deserve, and named after the countries where they were born.
 “ They have, it is true, against them all those who do not approve of their doctrines,
 “ but at the same time they have in their favour all their disciples, who take care to
 “ preserve and hand down to posterity every particular respecting their ancestors,
 “ birth-places, number of works they wrote, and so forth. But does the same thing
 “ happen with such among our countrymen as happen to quit this land and settle
 “ in foreign countries? No,—on the contrary, whenever any of our learned
 “ leave this their native country to settle in distant lands, no trace whatever is
 “ left of them, (may they be happy in the places of their residence!) I shall not,
 “ therefore, lay claim to Isma’íl Ibnu-l-kásim,⁴² neither shall we dispute about
 “ Mohammed Ibn Hání,⁴³ unless we put justice above all things, for justice is the
 “ thing I mostly aim at and desire; and my judgments,—independent of the
 “ respective merits of each author (which are not for the present moment),—shall
 “ be delivered with the greatest impartiality.

“ ‘ But to return to my arguments in favour of my proposition, namely, that the
 “ learned of other great cities have not been so anxious as they are described in
 “ collecting and preserving the traditions of their native countries. Baghdád is
 “ certainly the capital of the world, and the mine of every excellence; it is the city
 “ whose inhabitants have always been the first to unfurl the banners of knowledge,
 “ and to raise the standard of science; indeed their subtilty in all branches of
 “ learning, their gentle manners and amiable disposition, noble bearing, acuteness,
 “ wit, penetration, and talent, are deservedly praised. Basrah is the spring whence
 “ all the qualities above mentioned flow to the rest of the world, and yet I know of
 “ no other work on the history of this former city than that of Ahmed Ibn Abí
 “ Táhir,⁴⁴ for although there are other works written by literary men born in that
 “ city, none that I know has made the history of Baghdád the chief topic of his
 “ book. Neither do I know of any works descriptive of Basrah than that of ‘Omar
 “ Ibn Shabah, and that of a man of the tribe of Ar-rabi’, son of Zeyád,⁴⁵ and
 “ dedicated to Abú Sufián, which treats upon the topography and divisions of
 “ that city, and two more works by two of its inhabitants,—one of whom was
 “ named ‘Abdu-l-káhir, and bore the patronymic surname of Al-kúzí,—giving a
 “ description of the markets, streets, inns, and so forth, of Basrah. On the history
 “ of Kúfah I know of no other work than that of ‘Omar Ibn Abí Sheybah;⁴⁶ and as
 “ to the countries of Al-jebál, Khorassán, Tabaristán, Jorján, Karmán, Sejestán,
 “ and Sind, Rey, Armenia, Adhrabján, and many other populous and extensive
 “ provinces, I must own that I never saw, in the whole course of my life, one
 “ single work in which the history of those countries, the good actions of their
 “ kings, and the talents of their ulemas, poets, and physicians, were satisfactorily

“ treated of. In the mean-while, the people of this country were wishing most
 “ vehemently for a work that should contain a biographical account of the theo-
 “ logians of Baghdád, for all we know about them is that they were eminent for
 “ their learning, highly praised for their virtues, and much honoured and respected
 “ for their works: had a work on the subject been published, certainly it would
 “ have reached us, as that of Hamzah Ibnu-l-hasan Al-isfahání⁴⁷ on the history
 “ of Isfahán, and that of Al-maussilí⁴⁸ on the history of Maussil (Mosul), and
 “ many others on the history of Cairo that have been received and read in this
 “ country; in the same manner as we have become acquainted with various works
 “ written by foreign literati on the different departments of science,—such as the
 “ book of Abú-l-'abbás Mohammed Ibn 'Abdún Al-cairwání,⁴⁹ being a commentary
 “ on civil law, and an exposition of the doctrines of the Imám Sháfa'í,—such as the
 “ critique which the Kádí Ahmed Ibn Tálíb At-temímí⁵⁰ wrote against Abú
 “ Hanífeh, and those who followed his sect,—such as the works of Ibn 'Abdús,⁵¹
 “ and Mohammed Ibn Sahnún,⁵² and other useful books, which, nevertheless, have
 “ not acquired great celebrity for their authors.

“ ‘ In what respects this country I must own that nowhere is that universal
 “ proverb, ‘ Man always shuns the knowledge of his own people,’⁵³ so applicable
 “ as it is among us; and, as I recollect having read in the book of the gospels,
 “ Jesus (on whom be peace!) said, ‘ the Prophet shall not be destitute of honour,
 “ or protection, but in his own country:’⁵⁴ nothing is more true, and the saying
 “ can be tested by what happened to our own glorious Prophet with the Koray-
 “ shites, who, notwithstanding their mild disposition and gentle manners, their
 “ extreme forbearance, their quick intelligence, their veracity and honour, and
 “ many other qualities in which they surpassed every other people on earth,—
 “ notwithstanding they had received from the Almighty the most fertile valleys,
 “ and the best-watered meadows for their habitation,—notwithstanding God had
 “ distinguished Aus and Al-khazraj⁵⁵ by gifts which made them the most eminent
 “ of mankind,—treated the Prophet as is well known. God, indeed, gives to each
 “ race of men and to every country as he pleases; and it has fallen to the lot of
 “ the inhabitants of this country to be the most envious of men towards people
 “ who show learning, or who exhibit talents, or gain fame in any art or profession
 “ whatever. So, for instance, the Andalusians will always depreciate the works
 “ brought before them, they will find fault with the best passages, while they will
 “ praise and extol those that abound with errors, or are written in a mean and
 “ defective style; their envy and ill-will towards the author will last as long as he
 “ lives, and be double of what it is in other countries: if an author acquire fame
 “ by his writings, they will say that he is a literary thief, a plagiarist, a man who