

“ entitled *Kitábu-t-tafssili-l-azmání wa tasslíhi-l-abadáni* (the division of the
“ times and the benefiting of the bodies), in which he treats at large on the
“ influence of the moon on terrestrial bodies, and other matters connected with it ;
“ the task being accomplished in a manner which does the author the greatest
“ credit.

“ Mutref,⁵⁹ from Seville, is at present occupied in studies on that science, only
“ that being very much thwarted in it by his countrymen,—who have given him the
“ epithet of impious (*zindik*), merely because he devotes his hours of leisure to
“ these studies,—he never dares show his learning in public, but keeps it with the
“ greatest secrecy, hiding from the sight of all men whatever works he may have
“ written on that science.”

Thus ends Ibn Hazm's epistle on the literature and literary people of Andalus,
together with Ibnu Sa'id's addition to it. We shall now, with the favour of God,
whose assistance and protection we most humbly beseech and implore, proceed in
the next Book to enumerate in detail the wonders of Cordova, the capital of the
Mohammedan Empire in Andalus.



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

JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

Various descriptions of Cordova—Ancient history of the city—Etymology of its name—Size and extent of the city—Suburbs—Gates—Royal Palace—Pleasure-houses and gardens belonging to the Khalifs—Bridges on the Guadalquivir—Jurisdiction of Cordova—Revenue—Productions of the land round the city—Increase of Cordova during the administration of Al-mansúr.

THE present Book will contain, as we announced in our Preface, an account of the famous city of Cordova,—the seat of a mighty empire which subdued all its enemies,—and a description of its blessed mosque, built by the Bení Umeyyah, filled with all sorts of rarities, and ornamented with dazzling magnificence; together with some details on the sumptuous seats of *Medínatu-z-zahrá* and *Medínatu-z-záhirah*, the former the court of the Bení An-nássir, the latter the residence of the Bení Abí 'A'mir. It will likewise describe the pleasure-gardens and luxuriant fields in the neighbourhood, and give a minute account of their natural as well as artificial beauties; and, lastly, embrace the narrative of events which happened within its precincts: all being subjects of the greatest interest, which will fill with delight the hearts of the lovers of information, and remain deeply impressed on the minds of the acute and the intelligent.

Description of
Cordova.

Cordova is perhaps of all Mohammedan cities that which has been most fully described by natives as well as by foreign writers. The East and the West abound with accounts, some in prose, others in verse, in which the glories and magnificence of that splendid capital have been so minutely recorded as to expel from the imagination of the antiquarian all fear of their obliteration. An Eastern author, among others, gives us the following picture:—"Cordova," such are his words, "is the capital of Andalus, and the mother of its cities; the court of the Khalifs, and the seat of their empire. It was in ancient times the court of the infidel kings of Andalus, and afterwards became the residence of the Mohammedan sovereigns who succeeded them. It was the abode of science, the place of refuge

“ of *Sunnah* and tradition, and the dwelling of several among the *tábi's* (followers) and
“ disciples of the *tábi's*, some authors even going so far as to state that it was inha-
“ bited by more than one of the *as'háb* (companions) of the Prophet, (may the Lord's
“ favour be with them !) a point which has been seriously contested. Cordova is a
“ populous city, full of primitive buildings, enjoying a good temperature, abounding
“ with springs of the sweetest water, and surrounded on all sides by gardens, olive
“ plantations, villages, and castles. Numerous springs and winding brooks irrigate
“ and fertilize the neighbouring fields and farms, which in point of extent, careful
“ cultivation, and abundant produce, have nowhere their equal in the world.”

Ar-rází calls Cordova the mother of cities, the navel of Andalus, the court of the kingdom in ancient and modern times, during the ages of ignorance as well as during the period of Islám. Its river, he says, is the largest in all Andalus, and over it was thrown a bridge, which not only was the finest in that country, but which for its structure, beautiful design, and colossal dimensions, was reputed one of the wonders of the earth.

Another writer describes it as the largest city in all Andalus, and one which had no rival either in the East or the West in point of size, population, magnificence of buildings, width and cleanliness of the streets, spaciousness of markets, number and beauty of mosques, and quantity of baths and inns. Some of the native authors go so far as to state that in point of magnitude it approached Baghdád. But the report is no doubt exaggerated.

It is, says another, a fortified town, surrounded by massive and lofty stone walls, and has very fine streets. It was in times of old the court and residence of many infidel kings, whose palaces are still visible within the precincts of the walls. The inhabitants are famous for their courteous and polished manners, their superior intelligence, their exquisite taste and magnificence in their meals, drink, dress, and horses. There thou wouldst see doctors shining with all sorts of learning, lords distinguished by their virtues and generosity, warriors renowned for their expeditions into the country of the infidels, and officers experienced in all kinds of warfare. The Cordovans were further celebrated for the elegance and richness of their dress, their attention to religious duties, their strict observance of the hours of prayer, the high respect and veneration in which they held their great mosque, their aversion to wine and their destruction of wine-vases whenever they found any, their abhorrence of every illicit practice, their glory in nobility of descent and military enterprise, and their success in every department of the sciences.

The last-mentioned author says, “ Cordova, under the Sultáns of the family of
“ Umeyyah, became the tent of Islám, the place of refuge for the learned, the foun-
“ dation of the throne of the Bení Merwán, the place of resort of the noblest families

“ among the tribes of Ma’d and Yemen. To it came from all parts of the world
 “ students anxious to cultivate poetry, to study the sciences, or to be instructed
 “ in divinity or the law ; so that it became the meeting-place of the eminent in all
 “ matters, the abode of the learned, and the place of resort for the studious : its
 “ interior was always filled with the eminent and the noble of all countries, its
 “ literary men and soldiers were continually vying with each other to gain dis-
 “ tinction,¹ and its precincts never ceased to be the arena of the distinguished, the
 “ hippodrome of the foremost, the halting-place of the noble, and the repository of
 “ the true and virtuous. Cordova was to Andalus what the head is to the body, or
 “ what the breast is to the lion.”

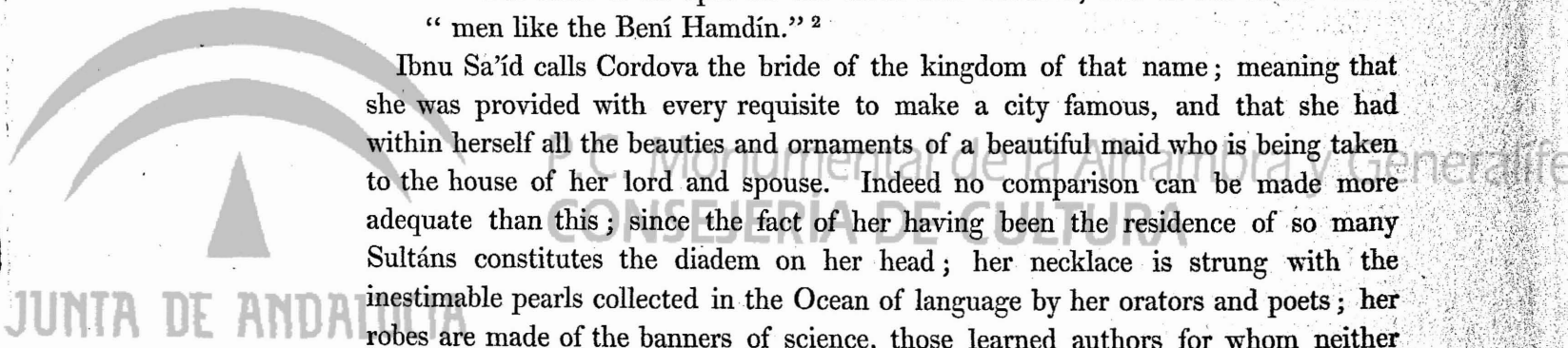
A poet has written on Cordova the following distich, which is not altogether devoid of merit :

“ Do not talk of the court of Baghdád and its glittering magnificence, do
 “ not praise Persia and China and their manifold advantages,
 “ For there is no spot on the earth like Cordova, nor in the whole world
 “ men like the Bení Hamdín.”²

Ibnu Sa’íd calls Cordova the bride of the kingdom of that name ; meaning that she was provided with every requisite to make a city famous, and that she had within herself all the beauties and ornaments of a beautiful maid who is being taken to the house of her lord and spouse. Indeed no comparison can be made more adequate than this ; since the fact of her having been the residence of so many Sultáns constitutes the diadem on her head ; her necklace is strung with the inestimable pearls collected in the Ocean of language by her orators and poets ; her robes are made of the banners of science, those learned authors for whom neither prose nor verse had any limits, and whose praises it is not prudent to let loose ; and, lastly, the masters in all arts and trades form the skirt of her gown. After this Ibnu Sa’íd gives a sort of argument of his work, from which we shall proceed to quote, taking care to introduce accounts from other writers in order that information may spring from comparison.

There are various opinions among historians as to who was the founder of Cordova. Some, as Ibnu Hayyán, Ar-rázi, Al-hijári, say that it was built by Octavius, the second Cæsar of Rome, who conquered the whole earth, and lined with copper the bed of the Tiber ; the same emperor from whom the Roman Æra, which began thirty-eight years before the birth of the Messiah, is computed. To this monarch, who, in the opinion of the above-mentioned authors, was the builder of the great bridge in Cordova, is the foundation of that city ascribed, together with that of other places equally important ; such as Merida, Seville, and Saragossa.³ Al-hijári, however, is of opinion that these three cities, as well as Cordova, owed

Ancient
history.



their foundation to the lieutenants of that king, and not to himself; for having sent to Andalus four of his principal officers, he gave them instructions to divide the country into four provinces, to take the command of the armies stationed in them, and to build each a city which should be the capital of the province placed under his charge; and that the lieutenants, having done what they were ordered to do, each built a city to which he gave his name. Such is the account given by Al-hijári, who is no doubt mistaken, since the four above-mentioned cities do not derive their names, as he says, from their founders, but from the localities in which they stand, or the quality of the ground on which they were built, and other circumstances quite independent of the names of their governors or founders.

However, towards the end of the Roman empire, Cordova became the capital of the sons of 'Ayssu,⁴ son of Is'hák, son of Ibráhím, (on whom be peace!) another nation of Romans, who conquered Andalus and settled in it, keeping possession of the country until they themselves were subdued by the Goths, the sons of Yáfeth, in whose hands was the empire when the Moslems invaded Andalus. During the reign of the monarchs of Gothic descent, Cordova cannot be said to have been the capital of Andalus; for although it served as a place of temporary residence to some of their kings, it was not, properly speaking, the court of the empire. By the establishment of Islám in it, its importance increased; it became the capital of the Mohammedan empire, and the citadel of the family of Merwán, so that Seville and Toledo were soon obliged to acknowledge its pre-eminence. God Almighty does what he pleases, for he is the master of all things, and in his hands are power and command. There is no God but Him, the great! the high!

Respecting the name of Cordova, Abú 'Obeyd Al-bekrí tells us, that according to Gothic pronunciation it ought to be written with a *dha* with a point over it, thus, *Kordhobah*. Al-hijári writes it with a *tta* and a *dhamma*, *Korttubah*; but Eastern writers in general have corrupted the pronunciation of this word, as they have done with many others, by substituting a *kesrah* for the *dhamma*, and writing it thus, *Korttebah*. As to the etymology of the word *Korttubah*, we find in the *Forjatu-l-anfus*, by Ibnu Ghálib, that it is a Greek word, meaning in that language *Al-kolúbul-mashkilah*, that is, doubtful hearts.⁵ Ibnu Sa'id agrees with these authors as to the manner in which the word *Kordhubah* is to be spelt, but he entertains quite a different opinion as to the origin of the city, which he says was founded by the 'Amalekites (Carthaginians), and not by the Romans; he also gives a different etymology to that word, which he pretends means in Arabic *ajaru sákinaha* (reward of its inhabitants).⁶

Etymology of
its name.

Ibnu Sa'id (the mercy of God be upon him!) describes the kingdom of Cordova before all the rest in Andalus; for, says he, it was for many centuries the seat of government. The ancient kings of Andalus fixed in it the seat of their empire, and

never moved from it; then came the Bení Umeyyah, who also held their court in Cordova, although they did not stay in it all the year round, but divided their time between their pleasure-houses Medínatu-z-zahrá and Medínatu-z-záhirah. They chose to reside in Cordova in preference to any other city of Andalus, for its convenient situation and delightful temperature. It became in the course of time the meeting-place of the learned from all countries, and, owing to the power and splendour of the mighty dynasty that ruled over it, it contained more excellences than any other kingdom on the face of the earth.

But before proceeding in our account of Cordova we deem it necessary to acquaint the readers with the titles, divisions, and contents of the various chapters devoted by Ibnu Sa'id to the description of that city, and forming part of that great historical work which we have so often quoted in the course of our narrative, and to which we shall have still numerous opportunities of referring.

Ibnu Sa'id (may God show him mercy!) followed a plan of his own, and divided his history into three volumes or sections.⁷

The first bears the title of "the book of variegated leaves on the ornamental beauties of Andalus."

The second, which treats on the history of Sicily, he called "the book of barbarous cacophony on the beauties of the island of Sicily."

The third, which embraces the history of all the infidel nations inhabiting the great continent (of Europe), is entitled "the book of the extreme limit on the beauties of the great land (or continent of Europe)."

Each of these volumes he divided into several books, and these into numerous chapters.⁸ For instance, the first, which contained the description of Andalus, was composed of four books; the first entitled "ornaments of the bride on the description of the west of Andalus;" the second, "the lips of the beautiful dusky maid on the description of the central provinces of Andalus;" the third, "the book of familiarity and friendship on the description of eastern Andalus;" and the fourth, "the book of dubious lines on the geography and the history of those provinces which are in the hands of the worshippers of the crucified."

The second volume, which treated on the history of Sicily, he likewise divided into several books; and the same may be said of that which treats on the history of the great land (continent).

The first book of the first volume being that which contains the history of Cordova, and the provinces once subject to it, and likewise that which forms the present object of our narrative, we shall describe it more minutely. Its title is, as we have above stated, "the book of ornaments of the bride on the description of western Andalus." It is divided into seven chapters (each chapter being also divided into several paragraphs), the titles of which are as follow.⁹

- 1st. The book of the golden robes on the beauties of the kingdom of Cordova.
- 2nd. The book of the pure golden particles on the description of the kingdom of Seville.
- 3rd. The book of varnished deceits on the description of the kingdom of Malaga.
- 4th. The book of the horses on the beauties of the kingdom of Bathaliós (Badajoz).
- 5th. The book of the fresh new milk on the description of the kingdom of Shilb (Silves).
- 6th. The book of the illuminated preface on the description of the kingdom of Béjah (Beja).
- 7th. The book of enclosed gardens on the description of the kingdom of *Ulishibonah* (Lisbon).

In every one of these chapters the author relates all the particulars, whether historical or geographical, which he could collect respecting each province, (may God remunerate him amply for his trouble in illustrating the history of the Moslems!) In that concerning Cordova, for instance, he accumulated the most precious information on the size, extent, and population of that capital, on the magnificence and splendour of its mosques, palaces, and other public buildings, on the fertility and careful cultivation of the fields and lands in the neighbourhood, on the peculiarities and productions of the soil, and the like. He also divided the chapter exclusively consecrated to Cordova into eleven smaller divisions, each treating on one of the districts which acknowledged at one time the jurisdiction of Cordova. The 1st describes Cordova and the country about it;¹⁰ 2nd, *Bolkínah* (Porcuna); 3rd, *Al-kosseyr* (Alcozer); 4th, *Al-mudowár* (Almodovar del rio); 5th, *Moréd* (Morente?); 6th, *Astijah* (Ezija); 7th, *Gháfek*; 8th, *Koznah* (Cuzna); 9th, *Kabrah* (Cabra); 10th, *Astaba* (Estepa); 11th, *Al-yasénah* (Lucena).

Lastly, Ibnu Sa'id subdivided the chapter treating exclusively on the city of Cordova into four parts. Part 1, the description of Cordova; part 2, that of the city of Az-zahrá; part 3, that of the city of Az-záhirah; part 4, the description of the suburb called Shakandah, and the district of Waza'h.¹¹

The dimensions of Cordova have been differently stated, owing, no doubt, to the rapid increase of its population and buildings under the various Sultáns of the dynasty of Merwán, and to the heart-rending calamities and disasters by which it was afflicted under the reign of the last sovereigns of that house. Ibnu Sa'id, quoting Ash-shakandí's epistle, says that the city of Cordova, with the adjoining cities of Az-zahrá and Az-záhirah, covered at one time an extent of ground measuring ten miles in length, all which distance, adds that author, might be traversed at night by the light of lamps. The circumference of the walls of the

Size and extent
of the city.

city is stated at thirty thousand cubits,¹² and the extent, exclusive of the suburbs, is said to have been sixteen thousand cubits in length from south to north ; it is, moreover, said that the buildings of Cordova in the time of the Bení Umeyyah were continued to a distance of eight farsangs in length and of two in breadth, which makes twenty-four miles by six ; all this space being covered with palaces, mosques, gardens, and houses built along the banks of the Guadalquivir, the only river in Andalus to which the Arabs gave a name.¹³ Cordova is further described as a city which never ceased augmenting in size and increasing in splendour and importance from the occupation of it by the Moslems until the year four hundred of the Hijra (A. D. 1009-10), when, civil war breaking out in it, that mighty capital fell from its ancient splendour, went on gradually decaying and losing its former magnificence, until the moment of its final destruction in the month of Shawwál of the year six hundred and thirty-three of the Hijra (Sept. A. D. 1236), when it fell into the hands of the Christians.¹⁴

Another historian states the circumference of Cordova, namely, of that part only comprised within the walls, exclusive of the suburbs, at thirty-three thousand cubits, of which one thousand one hundred were covered by the royal palaces. Another says that Cordova was divided into five large districts or cities, separated one from another by a high and well fortified wall, and that all these put together measured three miles in length and one in width.

The suburbs are said to have been twenty-one in number, each of them provided with mosques, markets, and baths for the use of its inhabitants ; so that the people of one had no occasion to repair to the other, either for religious purposes or to buy the necessaries of life. Ibnu Bashkúwál, who has given us a description of Cordova during its greatest prosperity, and when the influx of population was at its height, has preserved the names of the suburbs which once were joined to Cordova. Two lay to the south, on the opposite bank of the river, and their names were *Shakandah* and *Munyat-'A'jab* (the garden of the wonders). Nine to the west, namely, *Hawánítu-r-ríhán* (the shops of the sellers of sweet basil),¹⁵ *Rabadh-ar-rakkáklín* (the suburb of the bakers), *Mesjidu-l-kahfi* (the mosque of the cave), *Balátt Mugheythi* (the palace of Mugheyth), *Mesjidu-sh-shakáí* (the mosque of misfortune), *Hamámu-l-anbíri* (the baths of Al-anbíri),¹⁶ *Mesjidu-s-sorrúr* (the mosque of rejoicings), *Mesjidu-r-raudhah*¹⁷ (the mosque of the garden), and *As-sojunu-l-kadím* (the old prison). Three to the north, *Bábu-l-yahúd* (the gate of the Jews), *Mesjid Umm-moslemah* (the mosque of Umm Moslemah), and the *Rissáfah*. The seven remaining lay to the east ; their names were *Salár*,¹⁸ *Farán Barbal*, *Al-borj*, *Munyat-'Abdillah* (the garden of 'Abdallah), *Munyat-l-mugheyrah* (the garden of Mugheyrah), *Az-záhirah*, and *Medínatu-l-'atíkah* (the old city).

Number of
suburbs it
contained.

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In the midst of the city, and surrounded by these suburbs, stood the *Kassábah* (citadel) of Cordova, which was fortified and defended by high walls, although the suburbs were not so; but during the civil wars a ditch was dug round the suburbs, and the whole enclosed within high and strong walls raised at the same time. The circumference of this wall, according to Ibnu Sa'id, was twenty-four miles, including Shakandah, which, being an ancient walled town, was also comprised within the limits of the fortifications of Cordova.

The gates of Cordova were seven in number, according to Ibnu Bashkúwál. ^{Gates.}
 1st. The gate of the bridge (*Bábu-l-kantarah*), also called *Bábu-l-wádi*, or gate of the river. 2nd. *Bábu-l-jezrati-l-khadhrá* (the gate of Algesiras), also leading to the river. Both these gates looked to the south. 3rdly. *Bábu-l-hadí* (the iron gate), named also *Báb Sarakosta* (gate of Saragossa), *Báb Ibn 'Abdi-l-jabbár* (the gate of the son of 'Abdi-l-jabbár); also called gate of Toledo, and gate of the Christian (*Bábu-r-rúmiyyah*). At the latter-mentioned gate was the junction of the causeways built by the Romans, to which we have alluded in another part of this work, and which we have said made the circuit of the earth, coming from Cadiz, Carmona, passing by Cordova, and then going to Rome through Saragossa, Tarragona, Narbonne, and the great continent.¹⁹ 4th. The gate of Talavera, which was also called gate of Leon. 5th. The gate of 'A'mir the Korayshite, opposite to the cemetery of that name. 6th. *Bábu-l-júz* (or the gate of the walnuts), also known by the name of gate of Badajoz. 7th, and last, *Bábu-l-'áttarín* (the gate of the druggists), commonly called the gate of Seville. There was still another gate, formerly called *Bábu-l-yahúd* (the gate of the Jews), but good Moslems having objected to the name, it was named *Bábu-l-hodí* (the gate of direction). The poet Abú 'A'mir Ibn Shohayd wrote on this gate the following distich:

"They saw near to the gate of the Jews the star of Abú-l-hasan darken
 "and vanish.

"When the Jews saw him commanding over their gate, they took him for
 "Joseph."²⁰

The same historian, describing the royal palace of Cordova, says that it was an ^{The Royal Palace.} ancient building inhabited in former days by the infidel Sultáns who had ruled over the country since the time of Moses.²¹ The interior of it, as well as the adjoining buildings, was full of primeval constructions, and wonderful remains of the Greeks, Romans, and Goths,²² and other nations now extinct, and the interior apartments were so magnificently decorated as to dazzle with the beauty of their ornaments the eyes of the beholders. This palace the Khalifs of the house of Merwán chose for their residence, and tried to ornament and embellish by all possible means, adding new rooms, and filling them with elegant rarities. But this was not the only

improvement which the sovereigns of that family made in their capital, for, as we shall observe hereafter, they left every where in Cordova traces of their wise administration,—planting delicious gardens, supplying the city with water brought from the distant mountains, called the mountains of Cordova,²³ and furnishing their capital with abundance of provisions of all sorts. The water thus brought from the mountains was conveyed to this palace, and thence distributed into every corner and quarter of the city by means of leaden pipes, from which it flowed into basins of different shapes, made of the purest gold, the finest silver, or plated brass, as well as into vast lakes, curious tanks, and amazing reservoirs,²⁴ and fountains of Grecian marble beautifully carved. In this palace, too, was an astonishing *jet d'eau* which raised the water to a considerable height, and the like of which was nowhere to be seen in the East or West.

The palace here described by Ibnu Bashkúwál must be the same which some early writers designate under the name of *Balátt Rudherik*, (the palace of Roderic;) not that this king built it, but when the Arabs defeated him, and conquered his kingdom, knowing that whenever he came to Cordova he took up his abode in it, they called it by his name. By whom it was built is not ascertained; the most current opinion among the natives was that one of their ancient kings²⁵ who resided in the fortress of Almodovar, below Cordova, was the builder of it, and this they relate in the following manner. They say that as this king was one day hunting, he came to the spot where Cordova was afterwards built, which was then a dreary desert, the site now occupied by the palace being covered by an impervious thicket of brambles. Near this spot the king let fly a favourite hawk of his at a partridge, which, rising in the field afterwards called *Kudyat Abí 'Obeydah* (the hillock of Abú 'Obeydah), passed him, and alighted on the thicket. Thither the hawk flew in chase of the partridge, and the king followed in quest of his hawk, until, not seeing him appear, and fearing lest he should be entangled among the branches and unable to move, the king ordered the thicket to be cleared away that his hawk might be released. While his people were employed in cutting the underwood, behold! the top of a large and magnificent building was discovered by the workmen, a most amazing structure, all built with large blocks of stone joined together with molten lead. The king, who was an intelligent and enterprising man, immediately ordered an excavation to be made, and the building was speedily laid open in all its length and breadth; proceeding in their work they came to the foundations, which they found lying in the water, and resting upon a stratum of small pebbles, there introduced by art of old. When the king saw this, he exclaimed, "This is no doubt the work of some famous monarch, and I must have it rebuilt." Upon which he issued orders that the building should be

restored to its primitive state, which being done, and the place made habitable, he visited it as often as any of his royal castles; for whenever he made the tour of his province, or passed near it on his way to some military expedition, he always resided in it for some length of time. This induced many of his subjects to settle in the neighbourhood, and little by little the city of Cordova was built, and the palace which stood in the middle of it became the abode of the kings, his successors.

But to return to Ibnu Bashkúwál's description. "Among the gates of the palace,—those gates," says that historian, "which God Almighty opened for the redress of injuries, the help of the oppressed, and the dispensing of impartial judgments in all cases of law,—the principal is one which has a projecting balcony,²⁶ without its equal in the world. This gate, which gave entrance to the palace, was furnished with folding-doors covered with iron plates, to which was affixed a brass ring of exquisite workmanship, and representing a man with his mouth wide open. This extraordinary work of art, which took its rise at the lower part of the gate, and served at the same time as a bar to the gate and as a knocker, had in former times belonged to one of the gates of the city of Narbonne, in the country of the Franks; but when the Amír Mohammed²⁷ took that city from the Christians he had it removed and brought to Cordova, and placed on the principal gate of his palace. On a line with this, and looking to the south, there was another gate, called *Bábu-l-jennán* (the gate of the gardens); and opposite to it, on a platform overlooking the Guadalquivir, two mosques famous for their sanctity and the numerous miracles wrought in them, in either of which the Sultán Mohammed Ar-rádhí²⁸ used to sit to administer justice to his subjects, anxious to gain thereby the abundant rewards of the Almighty. A third, called *Bábu-l-wádhí* (the gate of the river), and a fourth, called *Báb Koriah* (the gate of Coria), opened to the north. There was a fifth and last gate, known by the name of *Bábu-l-jámi'* (the gate of the great mosque), because the Khalifs used in ancient times to go out of it whenever they visited the great mosque on Fridays, carpets being spread under their feet the whole of the way." However, most of these gates, Ibnu Bashkúwál tells us, were either destroyed or blocked up during the civil war under the reign of 'Abdu-l-jabbár.²⁹

Besides the royal palace here alluded to there were in and out of Cordova various houses and gardens, also built by the Sultáns and Khalifs of the house of Merwán for their habitation or their pleasure. We shall describe some of the most celebrated. Ibnu Sa'íd says, "I shall now proceed to the description of the pleasure-gardens and public promenades where the people of Cordova passed their leisure hours, or which they visited for the sake of recreation and amusement. Of these some belonged to the Sultán, others to wealthy citizens. Among

Pleasure-houses and gardens belonging to the Khalifs.

“ the former are counted to the north the palace of the Rissáfah, which 'Abdu-r-
 “ rahmán Ibn Mu'awiyeh built for himself in the beginning of his reign, and in
 “ which he used to reside most of his time. He also planted a most beautiful
 “ garden, to which he brought all kinds of rare and exotic plants and fine trees
 “ from every country, taking care to supply it with sufficient water for irrigation.
 “ His passion for flowers and plants went even so far as to induce him to send
 “ agents to Syria and other countries, with a commission to procure him all sorts
 “ of seeds and plants ; and, when brought to Andalus, these productions of distant
 “ regions and various climates failed not to take root, blossom, and bear fruit
 “ in the royal gardens, whence they afterwards spread all over the country.
 “ From this garden originates the pomegranate, called *Safari*,³⁰ which in point of
 “ flavour, smallness of seed, and abundance of juice, has not its equal in the
 “ world, and is superior to any other fruit growing in Andalus. The manner in
 “ which this fruit was introduced into the country, and the origin of its name, are
 “ thus related. They say that one of the agents sent by 'Abdu-r-rahmán to Syria,
 “ for the purpose of providing him with every exotic plant he could procure, sent
 “ him from Damascus, among other rarities, a sort of pomegranate, which being
 “ originally from the garden called *Rissáfah-Hishám* was, when planted in Andalus,
 “ known by the name of *Rissáfi*. Being proud of them, 'Abdu-r-rahmán boasted
 “ of the acquisition before his favourites, and proceeded to describe the nature
 “ and qualities of the tree, the flavour and colour of the fruit, and the manner
 “ in which it had been procured and sent to him. There happened to be among
 “ the company a man of the name of Safar Ibn 'Obeyd Al-kal'ái, one of the
 “ settlers from Al-urdán,³¹ and who is further represented as belonging to the
 “ Ansáris who bore the colours of the Prophet in battle, as well as those of the
 “ Khalífs of the house of Umeyyah. To this Safar the Sultán gave some of the
 “ fruit, and he, keeping the seed, sowed it some time afterwards in a village
 “ of the district of Raya, where he resided ; he nursed the tree, took care of it,
 “ lopped its branches, and when the tree came to bear fruit he selected the best
 “ pomegranate and repaired with it to court, where he presented himself to
 “ 'Abdu-r-rahmán. No sooner did the Sultán see the fruit, which so much
 “ resembled that of his gardens in colour and appearance, and the flavour of
 “ which was equally fine, than he was greatly astonished, and inquired from Safar
 “ how he had procured it. Safar then acquainted him with the circumstance,
 “ and 'Abdu-r-rahmán was so much pleased that he praised highly his industry,
 “ thanked him for his zeal, made him a considerable present, and ordered that
 “ more trees of the same kind should be planted in the Rissáfah as well as in
 “ other of his pleasure-gardens. Safar on his side augmented also his plantation,

“ distributed the seed among his friends, and the Andalusian gardeners began every where to cultivate this fruit, which is to this day the best kind of pomegranate that exists, and is still known by the name of its introducer, “ *Safari*.”³²

But to return to the palace of the Rissáfah, which 'Abdu-r-rahmán ornamented with costly magnificence, and to which he conveyed water from the distant mountains. We find that it was situate to the north of Cordova, and that when 'Abdu-r-rahmán built it he called it *Munyatu-r-rissáfah* (the pleasure-gardens of the Rissáfah),³³ after a palace of a similar name which his grandfather Hishám had built in Damascus. 'Abdu-r-rahmán was moreover exceedingly fond of it, and he used to dwell in it for the greatest part of the year, an inclination in which his grandfather Hishám had likewise considerably indulged. Nor was this the only palace built by 'Abdu-r-rahmán or his successors; there were besides in Cordova several royal villas remarkable either for the magnificence of their structure or their delightful situation. Of this number were “ the palace of the confluent ” (*Kasru-l-hájiri*);³⁴ “ the palace of the garden ” (*Kasru-r-raudhat*); “ the palace of the flowers ” (*Kasru-z-záhiru*); “ the palace of the lovers ” (*Kasru-l-ma'shúk*); “ the palace of the fortunate ” (*Kasru-l-mubárik*); “ the palace of Rustak ” (*Kasru-r-rustak*); “ the palace of contentment ” (*Kasru-s-sorrúr*); “ the palace of the diadem ” (*Kasru-t-táy*); and “ the palace of the novelties ” (*Kasru-l-badiyi*).

Without the city was the palace of Sídí Abú Yahya Ibn Abí Ya'kúb Ibn 'Abdi-l-múmen,³⁵ built on arches on the Guadalquivir. Its founder being once asked how he, who had such an aversion to the people of Cordova, could take delight in building this palace, replied, that knowing how soon a governor was forgotten by them after his removal unless he showed them proofs of power and authority, having their heads full of the splendour of the Khalifate during the dynasty of Merwán, he wished to leave behind him some memorial of his stay which would make the inhabitants remember him in spite of themselves.

Another palace called *Dimashk* is mentioned by Al-fat'h in his *Kaláyid*, when writing the life of the Wizír Ibn 'Ammár.³⁶ He describes it as a pleasure-house belonging to the Sultáns of the house of Merwán, the roofs of which were supported by beautiful marble columns, and the floors paved with mosaic of a thousand hues.

“ All palaces in the world are nothing when compared to that of Dimashk,
 “ for not only it has gardens filled with the most delicious fruits and sweet-smelling flowers,
 “ Beautiful prospects, and limpid running waters, clouds pregnant with
 “ aromatic dew, and lofty buildings ;

“ But its earth is always perfumed, for morning pours on it her grey amber
“ and night her black musk.”³⁷

Another pleasure-house in Cordova was *Al-mus'hafiyah*, so called from its proprietor the Wizír and Hájb Abú 'Othmán Ja'far Ibn 'Othmán Al-mus'hafí,³⁸ who held the situation of prime minister under the Sultán Al-hakem Al-mustanser-billah.

Munyat-Zubeyr was the name of another pleasure-house in the outskirts of Cordova, which Zubeyr Ibn 'Omar Al-mulaththam³⁹ built for himself during his government of that city. There were besides several other gardens and pleasure-houses in Cordova called *Munyat*; as, for instance, *Munyat-sorrúr* (the garden of contentment), of which mention has already been made, *Munyat-l-'amiriyah* (the garden of the Bení 'A'mir), and *Munyat-n-na'úrah*⁴⁰ (the garden of the water-wheel).

The poet Al-walíd Ibn Zeydún, in a poetical composition in which he enumerates the palaces, gardens, and places of recreation which existed in Cordova in his time, has preserved us the names of some, such as the *Kasru-l-fárisí* (the palace of the Persian),⁴¹ and *Merju-n-nadhír* (the golden meadow),⁴² a pleasure-garden in the outskirts of Cordova. There were, besides, various other villas, promenades, and plantations, for the use and recreation of the inhabitants. Of this number seem to have been *Merju-l-khor* (the meadow of the murmuring waters),⁴³ *Fahssu-s-sorrák* (the field of the thieves),⁴⁴ and *Fahssu-s-sudd* (the field of the dam),⁴⁵ all places which Ibnu Sa'íd mentions on the authority of his father. The latter, that author says, was the same as that known by the name of *Fahssu-l-aráhi* (the field of the mills), which is mentioned by Kásim Ibn 'Abúd Ar-riyáhi.⁴⁶

Bridges on the
Guadalquivir.

The river Guadalquivir is less at Cordova than at Seville, this being the reason why stone bridges were thrown over it at the former place, while the latter had none. This river has its origin in the mountains of Segura,⁴⁷ whence, dividing itself into two streams, one flows eastwards to Murcia, the other to Cordova and Seville. Ar-rázi, describing this river, says that it flows as placidly as a stream of milk, and that even when its waters are increased by rain it is, at Cordova, a most harmless river; not so at Seville, where it has often threatened destruction to the city, and death to the inhabitants. The same author describes the bridge at Cordova as one of the most magnificent structures in all Andalus. It consisted of seventeen arches, each arch being fifty spans in width, and the intermediate space between the arches being also fifty spans. According to Ibnu Hayyán it was built by As-samh Ibn Málík Al-khaulání, governor of Andalus; or, as the author of the *Minháju-l-fakr* says, by his successor 'Abdu-r-rahmán Ibn 'Obeydillah Al-gháfekí, at the instance of the Khalif 'Omar, son of 'Abdu-l-'azíz.⁴⁸ It was afterwards rebuilt and beautified by the Khalifs of the house of Merwán. However, the

opinion given by Ibnu Hayyán seems the most probable, namely, that there was an old bridge at the same place, built about two hundred years before the invasion of the Arabs; but its arches being broken down and its upper works demolished by time, only the foundations remaining, the governor As-samh ordered a new bridge to be built in the year one hundred and one of the Hijra (A. D. 719-20), on the still remaining piers of the former one. The length of this bridge is stated by Ibnu Hayyán at eight hundred cubits, and the breadth at twenty; the elevation was sixty cubits; it stood upon eighteen arches (one more than Ar-rází gave), and had besides sixteen turrets. The old bridge is said by Ibnu Hayyán, Ar-rází, and Al-hijári, to have been built by Octavius, the second Cæsar of Rome, as we have remarked elsewhere.

The number of villages and towns appertaining to Cordova was almost innumerable, for at one time the jurisdiction of the capital extended over many populous and wealthy districts. Some cities of the first rank likewise acknowledged her authority; as Almodovar, distant sixteen miles; Mored, twenty-five; Alcozer, eighteen; Gháfek, two days' march; Ezija, thirty-six miles; Baena, two days' march; Estepa, thirty-six miles: the city of Ronda belonged also to Cordova, but it was afterwards annexed to that of Seville, to which city it stands nearer. There were, moreover, in the neighbourhood of Cordova no less than three thousand villages, provided with mosques, and having, besides, a divine (*mukallass*)⁴⁹ of known erudition, whose duty was to pronounce judgments on canon and civil law. Among the Andalusian Arabs none could aspire to wear the *kalass* who could not recite by heart most of the *Mowattá*, or who knew not ten thousand traditions respecting the Prophet, or were not perfectly conversant with the theological work entitled *Al-madúnah*.⁵⁰ It was the duty of the Kádís of villages in the neighbourhood of Cordova to come to town every Friday, and assist at public prayers with the Khalif in the great mosque; and when the prayers were over they all approached the Sultán, saluted him, and reported on the state of their respective towns.

Jurisdiction of
Cordova.

The revenues arising from Cordova and its district have been differently stated. Revenue. They are said by an eastern writer to have amounted, in the days of Al-hakem, son of Hishám, to one hundred and ten thousand and twenty dinárs, in specie, four thousand and seven hundred *mudd* of wheat and seven thousand seven hundred and forty-seven of barley, in kind; another writer estimates them at three million of dinárs at a medium, under the administration of Al-mansúr Ibn Abí 'A'mir. But this latter computation is undoubtedly erroneous,—the revenues collected from Cordova and its neighbourhood never rose to such a sum; the author must mean the total amount of taxes collected in the dominions of the Khalifs; but again he

is wrong, for these, as we have already remarked elsewhere, amounted to a more considerable sum. But God only is all-knowing.

Productions of
the soil.

One thing is certain, namely, that trade and agriculture flourished in this place during the reigns of the sons of Umeyyah in a degree which has scarcely been witnessed in any other city in the world; its market was always overstocked with the fruits of the land, the productions of every district, and the best of every country. No robe, however costly,—no drug, however scarce,—no jewel, however precious,—no rarity of distant and unknown lands, but was to be procured in the bazaars of Cordova, and found hundreds of purchasers. Situate as Cordova was in the midst of fertile lands watered by the Guadalquivir, and which yielded abundant crops, its inhabitants were at all times provided with the best food of all kinds, and that, too, at the cheapest possible rate. Ibnu Sa'íd calls the land about Cordova a favoured land, and mentions several minerals in which its territory abounded, such as pure silver in the district of *Kartash*,⁵¹ quicksilver and cinnabar in that of *Siddlisah*,⁵² and a great many other precious minerals. Another writer mentions a sort of stone called *sharankh*,⁵³ which is well known to possess the property of stopping the blood when applied to a wound, and which is said to have abounded in the territory of that city. Our author observes that mule-loads of it were annually exported to other countries, where it often fetched as high a price as five hundred dinárs the load, on account of its wonderful properties, which made it very much prized.

Limits of Cor-
dova under
Al-mansúr.

We have already said something elsewhere on the probable size and extent of Cordova during the times of its greatest prosperity; indeed it is ascertained that during the administration of the Hájib Al-mansúr such was the influx of population, that, what with the innumerable foreigners who came from all parts of the Mohammedan world to reside in it under the shade of his justice, and what with the motley tribes of Berbers which he called from Africa, and with whom he reduced to the last extremity the miserable relics of the Christian nations, the limits of Cordova were found insufficient to contain them all, and many had to live encamped under tents in the outskirts of the city. A trustworthy writer who was residing in Cordova at the time tells us,—“ I once counted all the houses⁵⁴ in the city and “ its suburbs, and found they amounted to two hundred thousand and seventy-
“ seven, including only in this number those of the common people, artisans, and
“ labourers; for the palaces of the nobles, Wizírs, officers of the royal household,
“ commanders of the troops, and other wealthy citizens, and the barracks, hos-
“ pitals, colleges, and other public buildings, amounted to sixty thousand and three
“ hundred, exclusive of wooden cabins,⁵⁵ inns, baths, and taverns.” The number
of shops⁵⁶ at this time is computed by the same author at eighty thousand four
hundred and fifty-five. Another writer states the number of markets to have been

four thousand and three hundred, and says that within the walls of the citadel there were upwards of four hundred and thirty houses belonging to officers of the royal household and public functionaries. The number of houses in the city and the suburbs belonging either to the common people or to respectable and wealthy citizens is computed by the same writer at one hundred and thirteen thousand, exclusive of the palaces inhabited by Wizírs, noblemen, and military commanders. But we have read somewhere else that the said number must only be applied to the times of the Sultáns of the Bení Lamtumnah (Almoravides) and the Almohades their successors, under whose reign the importance and splendour of Cordova were very much diminished, owing to the disastrous civil wars which raged through its territory; for, as we have remarked elsewhere, the number of houses occupied by officers of the state and noble and distinguished citizens amounted to sixty thousand and three hundred. The number of mosques in and without the capital is likewise stated with great discrepancy. An ancient writer states those that existed under 'Abdu-rahmán I. at four hundred and ninety; it is true that this number was prodigiously⁵⁷ increased in the course of time. The author of the *Kitábu-l-mesálek wa-l-memálek* states them likewise at four hundred and seventy-one. We have seen their number estimated even as high as eight hundred and thirty-seven,⁵⁸ but this must be an exaggeration; the baths in and without the city are by some said to have amounted to three hundred, by others they are computed at seven hundred. The suburbs also are said to have been twenty-eight in number,—others reduce them to twenty; but the number given by Ibnu Bashkúwál, that is, twenty-one, occurs more frequently in the writings of the time.

However, the numbers as given by Ibnu Sa'íd, a writer on whom we place the most implicit trust and reliance, and who borrowed his information from Ibnu Hayyán and other historians who lived in the prosperous times of the Cordovan Khalifate, are the following: one hundred and thirteen thousand houses for the common people, besides half that number, or perhaps more, for the officers of the state, favourites of the court, military commanders, and the like.⁵⁹ The number of mosques at the period of its greatest splendour, namely, during the administration of the Wizír Ibn Abí 'A'mir, never exceeded seven hundred, nor the baths nine hundred;⁶⁰ but he owns having read in an ancient history that under 'Abdu-rahmán III. the city of Cordova was reported to contain three hundred thousand houses, and eight hundred and eighty-seven mosques, eighteen of which were within the limits of Shakandah; yet the number given by Al-bekrí (that is, four hundred and seventy-seven mosques,) is still far from any of those before stated. One thing, however, is certain, namely, that during the civil wars which broke out at the beginning of the fourth century of the Hijra, not only was a great part of these

buildings demolished, and whole streets deserted, but some of the suburbs were razed to the ground, and all traces of them disappeared for ever.

But it is full time that we should treat of the great mosque of Cordova, that magnificent building which has not its equal in the whole world, either in point of size, beauty of design, tasteful arrangement of its ornaments, or boldness of execution. This superb building has been so often and so elegantly described that we shall merely select, among the written accounts that exist of it, that which we deem indispensable for our narrative.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

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

CHAPTER II.

The great mosque of Cordova—Built on the site of a Christian temple—Begun by 'Abdu-r-rahmán—Continued by his successors—Its dimensions—Makssúrah—Mihráb—Copy of the Korán written by 'Othmán—Tower—Al-hakem's addition—Alms-houses—Al-mansúr's addition—Number of chandeliers in the mosque—Attendants.

THE great mosque of Cordova, as is well known, owes its erection to 'Abdu-r-rahmán Ad-dákhel, the first sovereign of the house of Umeyyah who reigned independently over Andalus. All historians agree in saying that the moment 'Abdu-r-rahmán saw himself free from rivals, and firmly established on his throne, he began the building of the royal palace,—that of the pleasure-house called Rissáfah, which we have before described,—and that of the great mosque. He died, however, without seeing the building completed, and bequeathed to his son and heir, Hishám, the care of the undertaking. Under this Sultán the building was, properly speaking, finished according to the original plan, but during the reign of the succeeding Sultáns and Khalifs, eight in number, who ruled over Andalus, it was considerably augmented and embellished.

The causes which led to the erection of this magnificent temple are thus related by the historian Ar-rázi. "The conquerors of Andalus imitated the conduct of 'Obeyd Ibnu-l-jerráh and Kháled Ibnu-l-walíd¹ in dividing with the Christians the churches of the subdued cities, agreeably to the advice of the Khalif 'Omar Ibnu-l-khattáb. So when Damascus was taken the principal temple of that city was divided, half of it remaining in the hands of the inhabitants for all purposes of their worship, while the other half was appropriated for the use of the Moslems, who converted it into a mosque; the same being done in every city which surrendered by capitulation. According to this maxim, when the Arabs took Cordova they divided with the Christians their principal church, which was within the city and close to the walls, and was known among them as the church of St. Vincent.² In the moiety allotted to them the Moslems built themselves a mosque for the prayers of the Friday, whilst the other half remained in the hands

The great mosque of Cordova.

Built on the site of a Christian temple.

“ of the Christians as the only place of worship allowed to them, since all other
 “ churches in and out of the city were immediately pulled down. The Moslems
 “ remained for a long time satisfied with what they possessed, until their number
 “ increasing daily, and Cordova becoming a very populous city, owing to the
 “ Arabian Amírs having taken up their abode in it and made it the seat of the
 “ government, the mosque proved to be too small to contain them all, and roof
 “ after roof³ was built in order to make it more roomy and spacious, until from the
 “ contiguity of these roofs one to another, the narrowness of the doors leading to it,
 “ and the great number of wooden pillars supporting each addition, which barred
 “ the passage, it became a matter of the greatest difficulty to penetrate into the
 “ interior of the mosque; besides, the roof of each successive addition being inferior
 “ to the preceding, that of the last was in fact so low as almost to touch the ground
 “ and to prevent the people from standing at ease under it.

Begun by 'Ab-
 du-r-rahmán.

“ The mosque, however, continued for a long time in this state, until the arrival
 “ of 'Abdu-r-rahmán, son of Mu'awiyeh, surnamed Ad-dákhel, who, having gained
 “ possession of Andalus, and made Cordova his capital, began seriously to think of
 “ enlarging the limits of the mosque. Accordingly he sent for the chiefs of the
 “ Christians, and proposed to purchase from them that part of the mosque which
 “ remained still in their hands, in order that he might add it to the Mohammedan
 “ place of worship. But notwithstanding the liberality of 'Abdu-r-rahmán, who
 “ offered them a very considerable sum of money, the Christians, relying on the
 “ capitulations of peace signed to them by the conquerors, would not agree to sell
 “ their part. However, after much negotiation, they agreed to relinquish their own
 “ half, on condition of being allowed to rebuild or repair another church outside the
 “ walls, which had been destroyed, and of holding it independently of the Moslems, and
 “ entirely consecrated to the worship of their God. This being granted by 'Abdu-r-
 “ rahmán, and the Christians having received the sum agreed upon, which a certain
 “ historian has stated at one hundred thousand dinárs, the Sultán proceeded in the
 “ year one hundred and sixty-eight⁴ of the Hijra (A. D. 784-5) to demolish the old
 “ place of worship, and to lay on it the foundations of the great mosque,⁵ which
 “ became one of the wonders of the world. In this building, which was carried
 “ on with incredible activity during his reign, 'Abdu-r-rahmán is said to have
 “ spent the sum of eighty thousand dinárs, derived from the fifth of the spoil.”
 However, as we have remarked elsewhere, the building was not completed
 until the days of his son Hishám, in the year one hundred and seventy-seven
 of the Hijra (A. D. 793-4).

The poet Dihyah Mohammed Ibn Mohammed Al-balúní⁶ has alluded to this
 in an excellent composition, of which we quote the following verses :