

on account of them, and these were represented to them as people unaccustomed to the luxuries of life, hardened by privation and fatigue, in short—the Arabs and Berbers. When the Greeks heard of this prognostic they were struck with fear, and trembled for their populated island; they agreed upon constructing immediately a talisman that should avert their impending ruin, and by its power keep off the two nations mentioned in the prophecy, to which effect they began consulting the stars for a time and place fit for their undertaking. In the meanwhile, whenever some of the scattered tribes of Berbers inhabiting along the northern coast of Africa happened to approach the sea shore, being thus separated only from Andalus by a narrow channel, the fears and consternation of the Greeks would increase, they would fly in all directions for fear of the threatened invasion, and their dread of the Berbers waxed so great that it was instilled into their nature, and became in after times a prominent feature in their character. On the other side, the Berbers having been made acquainted with this ill-will and hatred of the people of Andalus towards them, hated and envied them the more, this being in a certain measure the reason why even a long time afterwards a Berber could scarcely be found who did not most cordially hate an Andalusian, and *vice versa*, only that Berbers being more in want of Andalusians than these are of them, owing to certain necessaries not to be procured in Africa, and which are imported from Andalus, a communication has necessarily existed between the people of both countries. But to return.

There was in the west of Andalus a Grecian king, who reigned over an island called the island of Kádis (Cadiz). This king had a daughter of incomparable beauty, whom the other kings of Andalus,—for that country was then ruled by several kings; each having estates not extending over more than one or two cities,—sought in marriage. Each of these kings sent accordingly his messengers to Cadiz, and asked for the hand of the beautiful daughter. Her father, however, unwilling to choose among so many pretenders, lest by favouring one he should offend the others, was very much perplexed, and sent for his daughter to acquaint her with the state of his mind. Now it happened that the daughter of this king was possessed of much wisdom as well as beauty, for among the Greeks both men and women were born with a natural instinct for science; this having led to that common saying, that “science came down from heaven and lodged itself in three different parts of man’s body; in the brains amongst the Greeks, in the hands amongst the Chinese, and in the tongue among the Arabs.” This daughter, then, having heard the whole of the case, said to her father, “Only do what I will tell thee, and do not trouble thyself any more about this matter.”—“What is thy advice then?”—“That to those who solicit my hand thou shouldst answer, that I will give the

“ preference to him only who proves himself a sage king ;” and her father accordingly dispatched messengers to the neighbouring kingdoms to acquaint the royal suitors with his daughter’s determination. When the lovers read the letters containing the princess’s intentions, many who could not lay any claim to science immediately desisted from their courtship ; two kings only being found among her numerous admirers who professed themselves sages, and who immediately answered his letters, each saying of himself, “ I am a sage king.” When the father got these letters, he sent for his daughter, and, informing her of their contents, “ See,” said he, “ we are still in the same difficulty as before ; for here are two kings who “ both call themselves sages, and if I choose one I shall make an enemy of the “ other. What dost thou propose to do in such a difficulty ? ” The daughter replied, “ I will impose a task upon both kings, and whichever of the two executes “ it best, he shall be my husband.”—“ And pray, what is it ? ”—“ We want in “ this town a wheel to draw up water ; I will ask one of them to make me one that “ shall be moved by fresh running water coming from yonder land ; and I will “ intrust the other with the construction of a talisman or charm to preserve this “ island from the invasions of the Berbers.”

The king was delighted with the plan suggested by his daughter, and, without bestowing any more consideration on the subject, wrote to both the princes, making them acquainted with his daughter’s ultimate determination ; and each having agreed to undergo the intended trial, they set to work as soon as possible. The king to whose lot it had fallen to construct the hydraulic machine ³⁸ erected an immense building, with large stones placed one upon the top of another, in that part of the salt sea which separates the island of Andalus from the continent, and in the spot known by the name of Strait of Ceuta.³⁹ This arched building, which was built entirely of free-stone, the interstices of which were filled by the architect with some cement of his own composition, connected the island of Cadiz with the main land. Traces of this work are still visible in that part of the sea which divides Ceuta from Algesiras,⁴⁰ but the greatest part of the inhabitants of Andalus assign it another origin, as I have already explained elsewhere ; they suppose it to be the remains of a bridge which Alexander ordered to be constructed between Ceuta and Algesiras : but God only knows which of the two reports is the true one, although I find the last of the two more generally believed. However, when the architect had finished his work of stone, he conducted fresh water from the top of a high mountain on the continent to the island, and making it afterwards all fall into a basin, he caused it to rise again in Andalus by means of a wheel.⁴¹

As to the other king, whose task was the construction of the magic spell, he first consulted the skies in quest of a proper and fit time to commence its fabrication ;

and when he had discovered it, he began to build a square edifice. The materials were of white stone, and the place chosen for its erection a sandy desert on the sea shore. In order to give sufficient solidity to the building, the architect sunk the foundations as deep into the earth as the building itself rose above the surface; and when he had completed it, he placed on the top a statue of melted copper and iron, mixed together by dint of his science, to which he further gave the look and appearance of a Berber, with a long beard; his hair, which was exceedingly coarse, stood upright on his head, and he had besides a tuft hanging over his forehead.⁴² His garment consisted of a tunic, the ends of which he held on the left arm; he wore sandals on his feet, and the most extraordinary thing about him was that, although the dimensions of the figure were excessive, and he stood up in the air at a distance of more than sixty or seventy cubits, no other support was seen but the natural one at his feet, which were at most one cubit in circumference. He had his right arm extended, and in his hand were visible some keys with a padlock;⁴³ with his right hand he pointed towards the sea, as if he were saying, "No one is to pass this way;" and such was the magic virtue contained in this figure, that as long as it kept its place, and held the keys in its hand, no ship from Barbary could ever sail into the strait, on account of its stormy and fearful waters.⁴⁴

However, each of the kings worked with uncommon activity at his task, hoping that whichever of the two accomplished his first stood a good chance of gaining the heart of the princess. The constructor of the aqueduct was the first to finish his, for he contrived so as to keep it secret from the other, in hopes that if he did his work first, the talisman would not be completed, and the victory would remain to him: and so it happened, for he measured his time so well, that on the very same day on which his rival's work was to be accomplished water began to run in the island, and the wheel to move; and when the news of his success reached his competitor, who was then on the top of the monument giving the last polish to the face of the figure, which was gilt, he took it so much to heart that he threw himself down, and fell dead at the foot of the tower; by which means the other prince, freed from his rival, became the master of the lady, of the wheel, and of the charm.

The author from whom the preceding narrative is borrowed does not acquaint us in what manner the spell acted against Africans, nor how its virtue came to be impaired, but we here subjoin another writer's version of this story.

In times of old the Greek kings who reigned in Andalus were terribly afraid of an invasion on the part of the Berbers, on account of the prophecy that we have recorded. To avoid this they constructed different spells, and, among others, one which they put inside a marble urn and placed in a palace at Toledo: in order

to ensure its custody and preservation they placed a padlock on the gate of the palace, leaving instructions for every succeeding king to do the same. This injunction having been faithfully complied with, it came to pass that after the lapse of a great many years twenty-seven padlocks were appended to the gate of the building,—that number of kings having reigned in Andalus, each of whom had put his padlock as ordained. Some time previous to the invasion of the Arabs, which, as is well known, was the cause of the overthrow of the Gothic dynasty and of the entire conquest of Andalus, a king of the Goths, Roderic by name,⁴⁵ ascended the throne. Now this king, being young and fond of adventure, once assembled his Wizírs, great officers of the state, and members of his council, and spoke to them thus:—“ I have been thinking a long time about this house with its seven-and-twenty padlocks, and I am determined to have it opened, that I may see what it contains, for I am sure it is a mere jest.” “ It may be so, O King !” answered one of the Wizírs ; “ but honesty, prudence, and policy demand that thou shouldst not do it ; and that, following the example of thy father, of thy grandfather, and of thy ancestors,—none of whom ever wished to dive into this mystery,—thou shouldst add a new padlock to the gate.” When the Wizír had done speaking, Roderic replied,—“ No : I am led by an irresistible impulse, and nothing shall make me change my resolution. I have an ardent wish to penetrate this mystery, and my curiosity must be satisfied.” “ O King ! answered the Wizírs, “ if thou doest it under a belief that treasures are concealed in it, let us hear thy estimation of them, and we will collect the sum among ourselves and deposit it in thy royal treasure, rather than see ourselves and thee exposed to frightful calamities and misery.” But Roderic being a man of undaunted spirit, stout of heart, and strong of determination, was not easily persuaded. He remained deaf to the entreaties of his counsellors and proceeded immediately towards the palace, and when he arrived at the gate, which, as we have already observed, was furnished with several locks, each of them having its key hanging to it, the gate was thrown open, and nothing else was to be seen but a large table made of gold and silver and set with precious stones, upon which was to be read the following inscription :—“ This is the table of Suleymán, son of Dáúd, (upon whom be peace !)” Another object, besides the table, was to be seen in another apartment of the palace, provided also with a very strong padlock, which being removed allowed Roderic to look into it. But what was his astonishment on entering the apartment when nothing was to be seen but the urn, and inside it a roll of parchment and a picture representing in the brightest colours several horsemen looking like Arabs, dressed in skins of animals, and having, instead of turbans, locks of coarse hair ; they were mounted on fleet Arabian steeds, bright scimitars

hung by their sides, and their right hands were armed with spears. Roderic ordered his attendants to unroll the parchment, when lo! what did he see but the following inscription written in large letters upon it :—“ Whenever this asylum is violated, and “ the spell contained in this urn broken, the people painted on this urn shall invade “ Andalus, overturn the throne of its kings, and subdue the whole country.”⁴⁶ They say that when Roderic read this fatal prognostic he repented of what he had done, and was impressed with a strong belief of his impending ruin. He was not mistaken, for tidings soon reached him of an army of Arabs, which the emperor of the East sent against him.

This is the enchanted palace and the picture to which Roderic is said to have alluded afterwards, on the day of the battle of Guadalete, when, as he was advancing upon the Moslems, he saw for the first time before his eyes the very men whose representations were upon the parchment. Of this more will be said hereafter. But whether this account is a true one or not, God only knows, for we find it related in various ways by the historians, as we shall have further occasion to observe when we come to treat about the famous table of Suleymán and other particulars connected with this case, and that we shall do by taking our information from the best and purest sources. As to the other story, namely, that of the sage king making a contrivance to bring sweet water from Africa into Andalus, it is scarcely credible, for Andalus happens just to be one of the countries most abounding in waters and rivers ; and therefore we do not see the necessity of bringing water from the opposite shore, unless, as some pretend, the princess only did it to puzzle her admirer and try his skill by imposing upon him this extraordinary and most difficult task. But I again repeat, God only knows ; for he is the creator and master of all science!

CHAPTER II.

Ilyán goes to see Músa—Makes a successful incursion—Músa acquaints Al-walíd with the victory—Sends Taríf Abú Zar'ah—His landing at Tarifa—Músa sends Tárík Ibn Zeyád—He lands at Gibraltar—Is attacked by Theodimir—Roderic hastens to the defence of his kingdom—Arrives in Cordova—Writes to the sons of Wittiza—Tárík sends to Africa for reinforcements—Discontent of the Gothic nobles—Treason of the sons of Wittiza—Roderic encamps on the banks of the Guadalete—Tárík addresses his men—Battle of Guadalete—Roderic's fate—Taking of Sidonia, Carmona, and Ezija.

Ilyán goes to see Músa.

No sooner did Ilyán, the Lord of Ceuta, arrive safely in his dominions, than he went to see the Amír Músa Ibn Nosseyr, and proposed to him the conquest of Andalus, which he described as a country of great excellence and blessings; he told him that it was a land abounding in productions of all kinds, rich in grain of all sorts, plentiful in waters renowned for their sweetness and clearness; he proceeded afterwards to draw the picture of the inhabitants, whom he affirmed to be enervated by long peace, and destitute of arms.¹ This account awakened the ambition of the Amír, who, after a mature deliberation on the proposition made to him, came to the following agreement with Ilyán,—that he should desert the cause which he was then defending² and pass over to the Moslems, and that by way of proving his enmity towards his own countrymen, professing the same religion as himself, he should first of all make an incursion into their country. This Ilyán immediately put into execution, and, collecting some troops in the districts subject to his rule, he embarked in two vessels and landed on the coast of Algesiras,³ whence he overran the country, and after killing and making a number of captives he and his companions returned safe to Africa, loaded with spoil, on the following day.

Makes a successful incursion.

No sooner did the news of this first expedition, which took place at the close of the year ninety,⁴ become known in Africa, than a great many Moslems flocked under the banners of Ilyán and trusted him. As for the Amír Músa, he wrote immediately to the Khalif Al-walíd, informing him of what Ilyán proposed to him to undertake against Andalus, and asking his leave to try the conquest,⁵ and the answer of the Khalif was conceived in the following terms:—"Let

Músa acquaints Al-walíd with the victory.

“ the country be first explored by light troops, to overrun it and bring thee
 “ news of what it contains ; be prudent, and do not allow the Moslems to be
 “ lost in an ocean of dangers and horrors.” To which Músa replied, “ It is
 “ not an ocean, but only a narrow channel, whose shores are every where distinct
 “ to the eye.” “ Never mind,” answered Al-walíd ; “ even if it be so, let the
 “ country be first explored.”⁶

Accordingly Músa sent a freedman of his, a Berber, whose name was Taríf Abú Zar'ah,⁷ with four hundred foot and one hundred horsemen,⁸ with instructions to make an incursion into Andalus. Taríf and his small army embarked in four vessels, and landed on an island situated opposite to another island⁹ close to Andalus, and known by the name of *Jezrah Al-khadhrá* (the green island), where the Arabs of the present days keep their ships and their naval stores,¹⁰ it being their principal port to cross over to Africa. In this island, which has since taken the name of Taríf, on account of his landing on it,¹¹ the Berber general stayed a whole day, until all his men were with him,¹² he then moved on and made several inroads into the main land, which produced a rich spoil and several captives, who were so handsome that Músa and his companions had never seen the like of them.¹³ This took place in the month of Ramadhán of the year ninety-one (Aug.-Sept. A. D. 710),¹⁴ and when it was made known every one wished to go to Andalus.

The number of troops that accompanied Taríf in this expedition is not satisfactorily ascertained. Some authors make it amount to one thousand men ; others give him only half that number, as above stated. But we must observe that the whole of these accounts are very doubtful, since there are not wanting historians who make Taríf a different person from Abú Zar'ah, as these words of one of them seem to purport. “ Taríf returned from this expedition loaded with spoil, and “ bringing a great number of captives ; another incursion was made by a Sheikh “ of the Berbers, whose name was Abú Zar'ah,¹⁵ who landed with one thousand “ men of his nation on the island of Algesiras, and finding that the inhabitants “ had deserted the island he set fire to their houses and fields, and burnt also “ a church¹⁶ very much venerated amongst them. He then put to the sword such “ of its inhabitants as he met, and, making a few prisoners, returned safe to “ Africa.”

But we believe the former account to be the most credible, since it is confirmed by Ar-rázi¹⁷ and other historians, who make these two captains to be one and the same person, and call him Abú Zar'ah Taríf Ibn Málík Al-mugháferí,¹⁸ for such were his name and patronymic.

But to proceed. Ilyán went a second time to Músa Ibn Nosseyr, and apprised him of the happy result of the inroad he had made in Andalus, as well as

that of Taríf Abú Zar'ah,¹⁹ and how they had both been crowned with success. He at the same time instigated him to undertake the conquest of the country more at large: he told him what captives they had brought him, and the good tidings about the fertility and wealth of the land. When Músa heard of it he praised God for the victory he had granted his servants, and strengthened himself in his intention of invading Andalus; to this effect he called a freed slave of his, to whom he had on different occasions intrusted important commands in his armies, and whose name was Tárík Ibn Zeyád Ibn 'Abdillah, a native of Hamdán, in Persia, although some pretend that he was not a freedman of Músa Ibn Nosseyr, but a free-born man of the tribe of Sadf,²⁰ while others make him a *mauli*²¹ of Lahm. It is even asserted that some of his posterity who lived in Andalus rejected with indignation the supposition of their ancestor having ever been a liberated slave of Músa Ibn Nosseyr. Some authors, and they are the greatest number, say that he was a Berber, but, as we intend to form a separate article about Tárík, we shall leave the discussion of this and other points for another place, confining ourselves at present to the relation of the historical events as we find them recorded by the best Andalusian writers.

Músa sends
Tárík.

To this Tárík, therefore, whether a liberated slave of Músa, or a freeman of the tribe of Sadf, the Arabian governor of Africa committed the important trust of conquering the kingdom of Andalus, for which end he gave him the command of an army of seven thousand men, chiefly Berbers and slaves, very few only being genuine Arabs. To accompany and guide Tárík in this expedition Músa again sent Ilyán, who provided four vessels from the ports under his command, the only places on the coast where vessels were at that time built. Every thing being got ready, a division of the army crossed that arm of the sea which divides Andalus from Africa, and landed with Tárík at the foot of the mountain which afterwards received his name, on a Saturday, in the month of Sha'bán of the year ninety-two (July, 711), answering to the month of *Agosht* (August),²² and the four vessels were sent back, and crossed and recrossed until the rest of Tárík's men were safely put on shore.

He lands at
Gibraltar.

It is otherwise said that Tárík landed on the twenty-fourth of Rejeb (19th June, 711), in the same year. Another account makes the number of men embarked on this occasion amount to twelve thousand, all but sixteen, a number consisting almost entirely of Berbers, there being but few Arabs amongst them; but the same writer agrees that Ilyán transported this force at various times²³ to the coast of Andalus in merchant vessels, (whence collected it is not known,) and that Tárík was the last man on board.²⁴

Various historians have recorded two circumstances concerning Tárík's passage and his landing on the coast of Andalus, which we consider worthy of being transcribed. They say that while he was sailing across that arm of the sea which

separates Africa from Andalus he saw in a dream²⁵ the prophet Mohammed, surrounded by Arabs of the *Muhajirín*²⁶ and *Anssár*, who with unsheathed swords and bended bows stood close by him, and that he heard the Prophet say, "Take courage, O Tárik! and accomplish what thou art destined to perform;" and that having looked round him he saw the messenger of God, (upon whom be the peace and salutation of his Lord!) who with his companions was entering Andalus. Tárik then awoke from his sleep, and, delighted with this good omen, hastened to communicate the miraculous circumstance to his followers, who were much pleased and strengthened. Tárik himself was so much struck by the apparition that from that moment he never doubted of victory.

The same writers have preserved another anecdote, which sufficiently proves the mediation of the Almighty in permitting that the conquest of Andalus should be achieved by Tárik. Directly after his landing on the rock Músa's freedman brought his forces upon the plain, and began to overrun and lay waste the neighbouring country. While he was thus employed, an old woman from Algesiras²⁷ presented herself to him, and among other things told him what follows: "Thou must know, O stranger! that I had once a husband who had the knowledge of future events; and I have repeatedly heard him say to the people of this country that a foreign general would come to this island and subject it to his arms. He described him to me as a man of prominent forehead, and such, I see, is thine; he told me also that the individual designated by the prophecy would have a black mole covered with hair on his left shoulder. Now, if thou hast such a mark on thy body, thou art undoubtedly the person intended." When Tárik heard the old woman's reasoning, he immediately laid his shoulder bare, and the mark being found, as predicted, upon the left one, both he and his companions were filled with delight at the good omen.²⁸

Ibnu Hayyán's account does not materially differ from those of the historians from whom we have quoted. He agrees in saying that Ilyán, Lord of Ceuta, incited Músa Ibn Nosseyr to make the conquest of Andalus; and that this he did out of revenge, and moved by the personal enmity and hatred he had conceived against Roderic. He makes Tárik's army amount only to seven thousand,²⁹ mostly Berbers, which, he says, crossed in four vessels provided by Ilyán. According to his account Tárik landed on a Saturday, in the month of Sha'bán of the year ninety-two,³⁰ and the vessels that brought him and his men on shore were immediately sent back to Africa, and never ceased going backwards and forwards until the whole of the army was safely landed on the shores of Andalus.

On the other side, Ibnu Khaldún³¹ reckons the army under the orders of Tárik

at three hundred Arabs, and ten thousand Berbers. He says that before starting on his expedition Tárík divided his army into two corps, he himself taking the command of one, and placing the other under the immediate orders of Taríf An-naja'í.³² Tárík, with his men, landed at the foot of the rock now called *Jebalu-l-fatah* (the mountain of the entrance), and which then received his name, and was called *Jebal-Tárík* (the mountain of Tárík); while his companion Taríf landed on the island afterwards called after him *Jeztrah-Taríf* (the island of Taríf). In order to provide for the security of their respective armies, both generals selected, soon after their landing, a good encampment, which they surrounded with walls and trenches,³³ for no sooner had the news of their landing spread than the armies of the Goths began to march against them from all quarters.

The precise date of Tárík's invasion has been differently stated. Some historians, as Ibnu Khaldún, content themselves with giving the year, viz., ninety-two (beginning 28th October, 710); others have fixed the month and the day in which this memorable event is supposed to have taken place. Ibnu-l-khattáb places it on Monday, five days before the end of Rejeb (25th Rejeb) of the year ninety-two (20th June, 711); Ibnu Hayyán on a Saturday of the month of Sha'bán: others say on the twenty-fourth of Rejeb; Adh-dhobí on the eighth day of the same month. There are not wanting authors who place it at the beginning of the year ninety-three; but those who fix it in ninety-two are most in number. God only knows the truth of the case.³⁴

Is attacked by
Theodomir.

But, to continue our narrative, no sooner did Tárík set his foot in Andalus than he was attacked by a Goth named Tudmír (Theodomir), to whom Roderic had intrusted the defence of that frontier. Theodomir, who is the same general who afterwards gave his name to a province of Andalus, called *Belád Tudmír*³⁵ (the country of Theodomir), having tried, although in vain,³⁶ to stop the impetuous career of Tárík's men, dispatched immediately a messenger to his master, apprising him how Tárík and his followers had landed in Andalus. He also wrote him a letter, thus conceived:—"This our land has been invaded by people whose name, country, and origin are unknown to me. I cannot even tell thee whence they came,—whether they fell from the skies, or sprang from the earth."

Roderic hastens
to the defence
of his kingdom.

When this news reached Roderic, who was then in the country of the Bashkans (Basques), making war in the territory of Banbilónah (Pamplona),³⁷ where serious disturbances had occurred, he guessed directly that the blow came from Ilyán. Sensible, however, of the importance of this attack made upon his dominions, he left what he had in hand, and, moving towards the south with the whole of his powerful army, arrived in Cordova, which is placed in the centre of Andalus. There he took up his abode in the royal castle, which the Arabs called after him Roderic's

Arrives in Cor-
dova.

castle, and which we have already described in another part of this book.³⁸ In this palace Roderic took up his residence for a few days, to await the arrival of the numerous troops which he had summoned from the different provinces of his kingdom.

They say that while he was staying in Cordova he wrote to the sons of Wittiza to come and join him against the common enemy ; for although it is true, as we have already related, that Roderic had usurped the throne of their father and persecuted the sons, yet he had spared their lives ;—since these two sons of Wittiza are the same who, when Tárík attacked the forces of King Roderic on the plains of Guadalete, near the sea, turned back and deserted their ranks, owing to a promise made them by Tárík to restore them to the throne of their father if they helped him against Roderic. However, when Roderic arrived in Cordova, the sons of Wittiza were busily engaged in some distant province collecting troops to march against the invaders, and he wrote to them to come and join him with their forces, in order to march together against the Arabs ; and, cautioning them against the inconvenience and danger of private feuds at that moment, engaged them to join him and attack the Arabs in one mass. The sons of Wittiza readily agreed to Roderic's proposition, and collecting all their forces came to meet him, and encamped not far from the village of Shakandah, on the opposite side of the river,³⁹ and on the south of the palace of Cordova. There they remained for some time, not daring to enter the capital or to trust Roderic, until at last, having ascertained the truth of the preparations, and seeing the army march out of the city and him with it, they entered Cordova, united their forces to his,⁴⁰ and marched with him against the enemy, although, as will be seen presently, they were already planning the treachery which they afterwards committed. Others say that the sons of Wittiza did not obey the summons sent them by the usurper Roderic ; on the contrary, that they joined Tárík with all their forces : but which of these reports is the true one God only knows. However, it seems to have been ascertained that all the princes of the Goths came to join Roderic in this expedition, although it is equally true that he was deserted by some of his noblemen on the field of battle. But much obscurity prevails in the writings of the historians who have recorded the events of those early times. Even the name of the Gothic monarch at the time of Tárík's invasion has been spelt in different ways, for we find it written thus,—*Rudheric*, and *Ludheric* ; although the latter is more commonly used. It is also stated that he was a descendant from *Isbahán* (Hispan) ;⁴¹ but this is contrary to the accounts of Ibnu Hayyán and others, who say that he was not of royal blood.

When Tárík received the news of the approach of Roderic's army, which is said to have amounted to nearly one hundred thousand men, provided with all kinds of weapons and military stores, he wrote to Músa for assistance, saying that he had

Writes to the sons of Wittiza.

Tárík sends to Africa for reinforcements.

taken Algesiras, a port of Andalus, thus becoming by its possession the master of the passage into that country; that he had subdued its districts as far as the bay; but that Roderic was now advancing against him with a force which it was not in his power to resist, except it was God Almighty's will that it should be so. Músa, who since Tárik's departure for this expedition had been employed in building ships, and had by this time collected a great many, sent by them a reinforcement of five thousand Moslems, which, added to the seven thousand of the first expedition, made the whole forces amount to twelve thousand⁴² men, eager for plunder and anxious for battle. Ilyán, Lord of Ceuta, who had become a tributary of the Moslems, was also sent with his army and the people of his states to accompany this expedition, and to guide it through the passes in the country, and gather intelligence for them.

Discontent of
the nobles.

In the meanwhile Roderic was drawing nearer to the Moslems, with all the forces of the barbarians, their lords, their knights, and their bishops;⁴³ but the hearts of the great people of the kingdom being against him, they used to see each other frequently, and in their private conversations they uttered their sentiments about Roderic in the following manner: "This wretch⁴⁴ has by force taken possession of the throne to which he is not justly entitled, for not only he does not belong to the royal family, but he was once one of our meanest menials;⁴⁵ we do not know how far he may carry his wicked intentions against us. There is no doubt but that Tárik's followers do not intend to settle in this country; their only wish is to fill their hands with spoil and then return. Let us then, as soon as the battle is engaged, give way, and leave the usurper alone to fight the strangers, who will soon deliver us from him; and, when they shall be gone, we can place on the throne him who most deserves it."⁴⁶ In these sentiments all agreed, and it was decided that the proposed plan should be put into execution; the two sons of Wittiza, whom Roderic had appointed to the command of the right and left wings of his army, being at the head of the conspiracy, in the hope of gaining the throne of their father.

Treason of the
sons of Wittiza.

When the armies drew nearer to each other, the princes began to spin the web of their treason; and for this purpose a messenger was sent by them to Tárik, informing him how Roderic, who had been a mere menial and servant to their father,⁴⁷ had, after his death, usurped the throne; that the princes had by no means relinquished their rights, and that they implored protection and security for themselves. They offered to desert, and pass over to Tárik with the troops under their command, on condition that the Arab general would, after subduing the whole of Andalus, secure to them all their father's possessions, amounting to three thousand valuable and chosen farms, the same that received after this the name of *Safáyá-l-*

molúk (the royal portion).⁴⁸ This offer Tárík accepted; and, having agreed to the conditions, on the next day the sons of Wittiza deserted the ranks of the Gothic army in the midst of battle, and passed over to Tárík, this being no doubt one of the principal causes of the conquest.

Roderic arrived on the banks of the Guadalete (*Wáddi-Lek*)⁴⁹ with a formidable army, which most historians compute at one hundred thousand cavalry; ⁵⁰ although Ibnu Khaldún makes it amount to forty thousand men only. Roderic brought all his treasures and military stores in carts: he himself came in a litter, placed between two mules, having over his head an awning⁵¹ richly set with pearls, rubies, and emeralds. On the approach of this formidable tempest the Moslems did not lose courage, but prepared to meet their adversary. Tárík assembled his men, comforted them by his words, and after rendering the due praises to the Almighty God, and returning thanks for what had already been accomplished, proceeded to implore his mighty help for the future. He then encouraged the Moslems, and kindled their enthusiasm with the following address.—“ Whither can you fly,—the enemy Roderic encamps on the banks of the Guadalete.
“ is in your front, the sea at your back? By Allah! there is no salvation for you Tárík's address to his men.
“ but in your courage and perseverance.⁵² Consider your situation;—here you are
“ on this island like so many orphans cast upon the world; you will soon be met
“ by a powerful enemy, surrounding you on all sides like the infuriated billows of a
“ tempestuous sea, and sending against you his countless warriors, drowned⁵³ in
“ steel, and provided with every store and description of arms. What can you
“ oppose to them? You have no other weapons than your swords, no provisions
“ but those that you may snatch from the hands of your enemies; you must there-
“ fore attack them immediately, or otherwise your wants will increase, the
“ gales of victory may no longer blow in your favour, and perchance the fear that
“ lurks in the hearts of your enemies may be changed into indomitable courage.
“ Banish all fear from your hearts, trust that victory shall be ours, and that the
“ barbarian king will not be able to withstand the shock of our arms. Here he
“ comes to make us the masters of his cities and castles, and to deliver into our
“ hands his countless treasures; and if you only seize the opportunity now pre-
“ sented, it may perhaps be the means of your becoming the owners of them,
“ besides saving yourselves from certain death. Do not think that I impose
“ upon you a task from which I shrink myself, or that I try to conceal from you
“ the dangers attending this our expedition. No: you have certainly a great deal
“ to encounter, but know that if you only suffer for awhile, you will reap in the end
“ an abundant harvest of pleasures and enjoyments. And do not imagine that
“ while I speak to you I mean not to act as I speak, for as my interest in this affair
“ is greater, so will my behaviour on this occasion surpass yours. You must have

" heard numerous accounts of this island, you must know how the Grecian
 " maidens, as handsome as Huris, their necks glittering with innumerable pearls
 " and jewels, their bodies clothed with tunics of costly silks sprinkled with gold,
 " are waiting your arrival, reclining on soft couches in the sumptuous palaces of
 " crowned lords and princes. You know well that the Khalif 'Abdu-l-malek
 " Ibnu-l-walíd has chosen you, like so many heroes, from among the brave; you
 " know that the great lords⁵⁴ of this island are willing to make you their sons and
 " brethren by marriage, if you only rush on like so many brave men to the fight,
 " and behave like true champions and valiant knights; you know that the recom-
 " penses of God await you if you are prepared to uphold his words, and proclaim
 " his religion in this island; and, lastly, that all the spoil shall be yours, and of
 " such Moslems as may be with you. Bear in mind that God Almighty will select,
 " according to this promise, those that distinguish themselves most among you,
 " and grant them due reward, both in this world and in the future; and know
 " likewise that I shall be the first to set you the example, and to put in practice
 " what I recommend you to do; for it is my intention, on the meeting of the two
 " hosts, to attack the Christian tyrant⁵⁵ Roderic and kill him with my own
 " hand, if God be pleased. When you see me bearing against him, charge along
 " with me; if I kill him, the victory is ours; if I am killed before I reach him, do
 " not trouble yourselves about me, but fight as if I were still alive and among you,
 " and follow up my purpose; for the moment they see their king fall, these bar-
 " barians are sure to disperse. If, however, I should be killed, after inflicting death
 " upon their king, appoint a man from among you who unites both courage
 " and experience, and may command you in this emergency, and follow up the
 " success. If you attend to my instructions, we are sure of the victory."

When Tárík had thus addressed his soldiers, and exhorted them to fight with
 courage, and to face the dangers of war with a stout heart,—when he had thus
 recommended them to make a simultaneous attack upon Roderic's men, and
 promised them abundant reward if they routed their enemies,—their countenances
 were suddenly expanded with joy, their hopes were strengthened, the gales of
 victory began to blow on their side, and they all unanimously answered him—“ We
 “ are ready to follow thee, O Tárík! we shall all, to one man, stand by thee, and
 “ fight for thee; nor could we avoid it were we otherwise disposed—victory is our
 “ only hope of salvation.”⁵⁶

Battle of Gua-
 dalete.

After this Tárík mounted his horse, and his men did the same; and they all
 passed that night in constant watch for fear of the enemy. On the following
 morning, when day dawned, both armies prepared for battle; each general formed
 his cavalry and his infantry, and, the signal being given, the armies met with a

shock similar to that of two mountains dashing against each other. King Roderic came borne on a throne, and having over his head an awning⁵⁷ of variegated silk to guard him from the rays of the sun, surrounded by warriors cased in bright steel, with fluttering pennons, and a profusion of banners and standards. Tárik's men were differently arrayed; their breasts were covered with mail armour, they wore white turbans on their heads, the Arabian bow⁵⁸ slung across their backs, their swords suspended to their girdles, and their long spears firmly grasped in their hands. They say that when the two armies were advancing upon each other, and the eyes of Roderic fell upon the men in the first ranks, he was horror-struck, and was heard to exclaim,—“By the faith of the Messiah! These are the “very men I saw painted on the scroll found in the mansion of science at Toledo,” and from that moment fear entered his heart; and when Tárik perceived Roderic he said to his followers, “This is the King of the Christians,”⁵⁹ and he charged with his men, the warriors who surrounded Roderic being on all sides scattered and dispersed; seeing which, Tárik plunged into the ranks of the enemy until he reached the king, and wounded him with his sword on the head and killed him on his throne;⁶⁰ and when Roderic's men saw their king fall and his body guard dispersed, the rout became general and victory remained to the Moslems. The rout of the Christians was complete, for instead of rallying on one spot they fled in all directions, and, their panic being communicated to their countrymen, cities opened their gates, and castles surrendered without resistance, &c. The preceding account we have borrowed from a writer of great note, but we deem it necessary to warn the readers that the assertion that Roderic died by the hands of Tárik has been contradicted by several historians, since his body, although diligently sought on the field of battle, could nowhere be found; but of this more will be said in the course of our narrative. We shall proceed to recount in detail that memorable battle, when Almighty God was pleased to put King Roderic's army to flight, and grant the Moslems a most complete victory.

Several authors who have described at large this famous engagement state that Tárik encamped near Roderic, towards the middle of the month of Ramadhán of the year ninety-two (Sept. A. D. 711),⁶¹ and although there is some difference as to the dates, all agree that the battle was fought on the banks of the Wádaleke (Guadalete),⁶² in the district of Shidhúnah.⁶³ They say also that while both armies were encamped in front of each other, the barbarian king, wishing to ascertain the exact amount of Tárik's forces, sent one of his men,⁶⁴ whose valour and strength he knew, and in whose fidelity he placed unbounded confidence, with instructions to penetrate into Tárik's camp and bring him an account of their number, arms, accoutrements, and vessels. The Christian proceeded to execute his commission, and

reached a small elevation whence he had a commanding view of the whole camp. However, he had not remained long in his place of observation before he was discovered by some Moslems, who pursued him, but the Christian fled before them and escaped through the swiftness of his horse. Arrived at the Christian camp he addressed Roderic in the following words. "These people, O King! are the same thou sawest painted on the scroll of the enchanted palace. Beware of them! for the greatest part of them have bound themselves by oath to reach thee or die in the attempt; they have set fire to their vessels,⁶⁵ to destroy their last hope of escape; they are encamped along the sea shore,⁶⁶ determined to die or to vanish, for they know well that there is not in this country a place whither they can fly." On hearing this account King Roderic was much disheartened, and he trembled with fear. However, the two armies engaged near the lake or gulf;⁶⁷ they fought resolutely on both sides till the right and left wings of Roderic's army, under the command of the sons of Wittiza, gave way.⁶⁸ The centre, in which Roderic was, still held firm for awhile, and made the fate of the battle uncertain for some time; they fled at last, and Roderic before them. From that moment the rout became general, and the Moslems followed with ardour the pursuit of the scattered bands, inflicting death wherever they went. Roderic disappeared in the midst of the battle, and no certain intelligence was afterwards received of him; it is true that some Moslems found his favourite steed,⁶⁹ a milk-white horse, bearing a saddle of gold with rubies, plunged in the mud of the river, as also one of his sandals, adorned with rubies and emeralds, but the other was never found; nor was Roderic, although diligently searched for, ever discovered either dead or alive, a circumstance which led the Moslems to believe that he perished in the stream; indeed there are not wanting authors who give it as certain that he died in this manner, and that, while trying to cross the stream, the weight of his armour⁷⁰ prevented him from struggling against the current, and he was drowned; but God only knows what became of him.⁷¹

According to Ar-rázi, the contest began on a Sunday, two days before the end of Ramadhán, and continued till Sunday, the fifth of Shawál, namely, eight whole days,⁷² at the end of which God Almighty was pleased to put the idolaters to flight and grant the victory to the Moslems; and he adds, that so great was the number of the Goths who perished in the battle, that for a long time after the victory the bones of the slain were to be seen covering the field of action.

They say also that the spoil found by the Moslems in the camp of the Christians surpassed all computation, for the princes and great men of the Goths who had fallen were distinguished by the rings of gold they wore on their fingers, those of an

inferior class by similar ornaments of silver, while those of the slaves were made of brass.⁷³ Tárík collected all the spoil and divided it into five shares or portions, when, after deducting one-fifth, he distributed the rest amongst nine thousand⁷⁴ Moslems, besides the slaves and followers.

When the people on the other side of the straits heard of this success of Tárík, and of the plentiful spoils he had acquired, they flocked to him from all quarters, and crossed the sea on every vessel or bark they could lay hold of. Tárík's army being so considerably reinforced, the Christians were obliged to shut themselves up in their castles and fortresses, and, quitting the flat country, betake themselves to their mountains. Tárík first marched against Sidonia,⁷⁵ which he besieged and took by force after the garrison had defended it some time. In this city Tárík found considerable spoil. From Sidonia he proceeded to Moror,⁷⁶ whence he turned towards Carmona,⁷⁷ and, passing by a fountain which afterwards received his name, he invested that city, which surrendered to him immediately, the inhabitants agreeing to pay tribute. He next encamped before *Ezija*, and besieged it. The inhabitants being numerous and brave, and having with them some remnants of Roderic's army, made at first a desperate defence; but after a severe battle, in which a great many Moslems were killed or wounded, it pleased Almighty God to grant them victory, and the idolaters were put to rout and dispersed. No battle was afterwards fought in which the Moslems had so much to suffer, for the Christians defended themselves with the utmost vigour and resolution, and great was the havoc which they made in the ranks of the faithful. However, the Almighty permitted that Tárík should notice the governor, a crafty man, much experienced in battle, leave the town and take, without attendants, the road to the river for the purpose of bathing. Tárík did not know who he was, but, judging by his arms and his steed, he thought he might be some person of distinction. No sooner was he aware of it, than, impelled by his adventurous humour, he took the same direction, repaired to the river, feigned a purpose similar to that of the barbarian, and, jumping into the water, made him his prisoner; he then conducted him to his camp, where the barbarian discovered himself, and said he was the governor of the city, upon which the Arab general granted him peace on the usual terms of paying tribute, and dismissed him free to return to the city, where, as soon as he was returned, he fulfilled his word by surrendering it to the Arabs.

In the meanwhile God filled with terror and alarm the hearts of the idolaters, and their consternation was greatly increased when they saw Tárík penetrate far into their country; for, as we have said elsewhere, they were under a belief that his object in the attack was only to gain spoil and then return to his country. When, therefore, they saw Tárík advance to further conquests they were seized with despair,

and, abandoning the flat country, fled to the mountains, or betook themselves to their strong castles; a few only of the principal people repaired to the capital, Toledo, with the intention of holding out resistance within its walls. It is said that Tárík, too, endeavoured to increase the terror of the Christians by means of the following stratagem:—he directed his men to cook the flesh of the slain in presence of the Gothic captives in his camp, and when the flesh had thus been cooked in large copper vessels he ordered it to be cut up, as if it were to be distributed to his men for their meals; he after this allowed some of the captives to escape, that they might report to their countrymen what they had seen. And thus the stratagem produced the desired effect, since the report of the fugitives contributed in no small degree to increase the panic of the infidels.⁷⁸



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

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

CHAPTER III.

Tárik divides his army—Mugheyth besieges Cordova—Takes the governor prisoner—Malaga and Granada taken by Tárik's lieutenants—Theodomir attacked—Besieged in Orihuela—Capitulates—Siege and taking of Toledo by Tárik—Spoils found by Tárik—Músa prepares to cross over to Andalus—Rebellion at Séville—Músa goes to Toledo—The table of Suleymán described.

AFTER this they say that Ilyán addressed Tárik in the following words:—"Since Tárik divides his army.
 " thy enemies are panic-struck, and their armies dispersed, proceed to their capital,
 " and destroy them before they have time to collect their forces again. Take
 " expert guides from among my people; divide thy army into bodies, and send
 " them to different parts of the country, and, if thou follow my advice, thou wilt
 " thyself take a division of it and march towards Toledo, where their great men
 " are by this time assembled to deliberate upon their affairs, and unite under a
 " chief of their choosing."¹

Tárik assented immediately to the advice given by Ilyán, but, before leaving Ezija, Mugheyth besieges Cordova.
 he dispatched Mugheyth Ar-rúmí (the Greek), a freedman of the Sultán Al-walíd,
 son of 'Abdu-l-malek, with seven hundred horse; for the Moslems by this time
 were all, without exception, mounted on horses taken from the barbarians, and
 had even some remaining. Mugheyth's instructions were to attack Cordova, one
 of their principal cities. Tárik sent another division of his army against Malaga,
 and a third against Gharnattá,² the town of Al-bírah (Elvira), while he himself, at
 the head of the main body, hastened towards Toledo by way of Jaen: some authors
 pretend that Tárik himself went to Cordova,³ and not Mugheyth, but the former
 account is the most certain.

However, those who follow the first opinion relate the affair in the following
 manner. They say that Mugheyth's army, having arrived close to Cordova, en-
 camped in a forest of lofty pines⁴ on the bank⁵ of the river of Shakandah. Having
 soon after his arrival at the spot sent out his scouts⁶ to gain if possible a knowledge
 of the country, these soon returned with a shepherd, who, being interrogated about

Cordova, informed Mugheyth that the principal people of the city had quitted it and gone to Toledo, but that a governor had been left behind with a garrison of four hundred horsemen, besides the invalids and old soldiers.⁷ The shepherd being further questioned respecting the walls of the city said that they were strong and high, but that there was a breach in them, which he described. Accordingly, no sooner were the Moslems enveloped in the shadows of night than they set off towards the city, and approached its walls, where God Almighty opened to them the means of success, by sending a providential fall of hail, which prevented the stepping of the horses from being heard. The Moslems proceeded gently and unnoticed till they arrived on the banks of the river,⁸ which they crossed, finding themselves then at a distance of only thirty cubits, or perhaps less, from the walls. Owing to the squalls of rain, and the cold of the night, the sentries, neglecting their duties, were not on the walls keeping guard, a circumstance which allowed the Moslems to arrive unheard and unmolested at the foot of the battlements; they then attempted to scale the walls, but failed in their attempt by not finding a place to fix the ladders. In this difficulty they returned to the shepherd, and asked him to lead them to the breach he had mentioned; this the man did, but it was also found upon trial not to be of easy ascent. However, this was after some time obtained by means of a fig tree, growing close to the walls, the branches of which afforded the means of ascending. One of their strongest men mounted the tree, whence he succeeded in gaining the top of the breach. Mugheyth then unfolded his turban, and gave one end of it to the man, who by means of it succeeded in helping others on until a considerable number of Moslems gained the summit of the wall. Mugheyth, who remained on horseback at the foot of the battlements, then commanded the assailant party to rush upon the guard within the city. This order was quickly obeyed by the Moslems, who surprised and killed many of the garrison, and, breaking open the gate, let in Mugheyth and the rest of his men, who soon got possession of the city. This being done, Mugheyth, with his guides, hastened towards the palace of the governor, who, having received intelligence of the entry of the Moslems, fled with his guards, four hundred in number, and betook himself to a church situate at the west⁹ of the city, and fortified himself in it. As water was conveyed under ground to this church from a spring at the foot of a neighbouring mountain, the besieged defended themselves some time against Mugheyth, who nevertheless ruled in the city and its environs.

The same authors, namely, those who pretend that Tárík was not present at the taking of Cordova, and that this exploit was achieved singly by Mugheyth, state that this latter general, after writing to Tárík to apprise him of his victory, continued to besiege the Christians shut up in the church. After three months of siege,