

seeing that he could not reduce them, Mugheyth began to grow impatient and melancholy, and thought of devising some stratagem that might make him master of the fortress. He then called before him one of his black slaves, whose name was Rabáh,¹⁰ a man of tried courage and fortitude, and directed him to hide himself at night in a garden covered with trees¹¹ that lay close to the church, to try if he could not by chance lay hold of some barbarian, who might inform him of the state of the garrison. The black man did as he was ordered, but being a stupid fellow he soon committed himself; for as it was then the season for the trees to bear fruit, and the place was covered with them, he mounted one in order to gather some fruit, and eat of it. While he was thus perched in the tree he was discovered by the people of the church, who, coming to the spot, made him get down, and having secured him took him prisoner inside. Great was the fright, and at the same time the astonishment, which the sight of the black man caused to the Christians, for they had never seen a man of his colour before; they surrounded him on every side, they gazed at him with astonishment, and thinking he was painted or dyed with some substance that made him look black, they rushed along, he in the midst of them, towards the subterranean conduit by means of which the garrison was supplied with water; and there they began washing and scraping him with water and a hard brush¹² till the black man, unable to endure the operation any longer, begged them to desist, and explained to them that he was a human creature like themselves; which being understood by them they left off washing him, although they still continued to stare at him as a thing they had never seen before. However, after seven days' imprisonment, during which the Christians never ceased coming round him and looking at him, the Almighty permitted that one night this black man should effect his escape, and arrive safe at the camp of the Amír Mugheyth, to whom he related his adventures, informing him at the same time of the result of his observations, as well as of the direction of the subterranean conduit which supplied the garrison with water. Immediately after Mugheyth summoned before him some expert people, who looked for the conduit in the place pointed out by the black man, and, having found it, succeeded in stopping it; the church was from that moment deprived of water, and its garrison doomed to death.

Notwithstanding this loss, and that the besieged had no hopes of deliverance, they were so obstinate that when safety was offered to them upon condition either of embracing the Mohammedan religion, or paying tribute, they refused to surrender, and the church being set on fire they all perished in the flames. This was the cause of the spot being called ever since *Kentsatu-l-harakí* (the church of the burning),¹³ as likewise of the great veneration in which it has always been held by the Christians, on account of the courage and endurance displayed in the cause

Takes the
governor
prisoner.

of their religion by the people who died in it. Their commander, however, did not share their fate, for, when he perceived that the case was desperate, and saw that he and his followers were doomed to certain death, he abandoned his comrades to their fate and escaped towards Toledo. But Mugheyth, being informed of it, galloped off immediately in pursuit of him, and overtook him near the village of Talavera.¹⁴ They say that the barbarian rode a black steed,¹⁵ a noble and swift animal, and that when he saw Mugheyth close at his heels he was terrified and spurred his horse, but the beast gave a start and threw him down. When Mugheyth came up he found him stunned by the fall and lying on his shield as if he were dead, seeing which he took possession of his arms and made him prisoner.

This feat of arms of Mugheyth is differently related by the historians. They all agree, it is true, in the taking of the church after a considerable resistance, and the flight and capture of the governor, but some relate this event as having happened before, not after, the reduction of the fortified church, and say that after taking the governor prisoner Mugheyth invested the building where the Christians had taken refuge, and, having reduced it, put every one of them to the sword: the same historians asserting that the church was called ever since *Ken'satu-l-asra'i* (the church of the captives). Be this as it may, certain it is that Mugheyth made the governor of Cordova prisoner, and spared his life with the intention of presenting him to the Khalif Al-walid on his return to the East, this Christian being the only captive of the royal blood of the Goths taken at the time of the conquest, the rest having either surrendered on terms which secured them their liberty or escaped to Galicia. However, as we shall presently see, Mugheyth was not able to accomplish his purpose, for some time afterwards a dispute having arisen between him and Músa as to whose province it was to present the royal captive to the Khalif, the latter, seeing that he could not prevail upon Mugheyth to relinquish his prize, slew the Gothic slave in the very presence of his master.

After the taking of Cordova, Mugheyth assembled all the Jews in the city and left them in charge of it, trusting them in preference to the Christians, on account of their hatred and animosity towards the latter. He then fixed his abode in the palace, and left the rest of the town to be inhabited by the Moslems.

Malaga and
Granada taken
by Tárik's
lieutenants.

In the meanwhile the forces that proceeded against Malaga¹⁶ took possession of that town, the barbarians flying for refuge to the neighbouring mountains. After this they joined the army dispatched to Elvira, and laying siege to its city, Ghar-náttah,¹⁷ took it by storm. The citadel of this latter place they intrusted to the care of the Jews, and this practice became almost general in the succeeding years; for whenever the Moslems conquered a town, it was left in custody of the Jews, with only a few Moslems, the rest of the army proceeding to new conquests,

and where Jews were deficient a proportionally greater body of Moslems was left in charge.¹⁸ This plan was equally adopted with regard to the district of Rayah, to which Malaga belonged.

After the subjection of these two cities, the army proceeded on to Tudmír, a country so called after its king (Theodomir), and the citadel of which was Ouriwwélah (Orihuela),¹⁹ a place renowned for its strength. This King Tudmír (Theodomir) was a man of great experience and judgment, who for a length of time defended his states valiantly.²⁰ But at last, having ventured a battle in the open country, he was completely defeated, and most of his men slain, himself and a few followers only succeeding in gaining Orihuela. When safe inside the town, he ordered the women to let their hair loose, to arm themselves with bows, and to appear on the walls as if they were so many warriors prepared for battle, he himself, with his scanty followers, standing in front, with a view to deceive the Moslems with regard to the real strength of the garrison. In this stratagem he succeeded, for the Moslems, overrating his forces by the numbers they saw on the walls, offered him peace, and Theodomir, feigning to accept of it, repaired in disguise to the camp of the Moslems; and there, as if he were a deputy from his own people, he first treated for the security of the inhabitants, and afterwards for his own. When he had brought the Moslems to grant him the terms which he wished for, he made himself known to them, giving as an excuse for his stratagem the great love he had for his subjects, and his ardent wish of obtaining for them a favourable capitulation. He then guided them into the town, according to the treaty agreed upon, but when the Moslems saw that there were in it only women and children, they were very much ashamed of themselves, and mortified at having been deceived. They, however, observed faithfully the terms of the treaty, as it was their custom to do on every occasion; so that the district of Tudmír, by the artifice of its king, was freed from the invasions of the Moslems, and the whole of its towns and villages were comprised in the same capitulation. The Moslems wrote to Tárik, apprising him of the surrender of that district, and a small portion of the army remaining in the capital of the country, the rest proceeded to Toledo to join in the siege of that city.²¹

The taking of Malaga and Granada by Tárik's lieutenants has been called into question by some historians, who attribute it, together with that of Valencia, Denia, and other cities of the eastern district, to 'Abdu-l-a'la, one of Músa's sons, who landed in Andalus with his father some time after. Even the war made against Theodomir, and the treaty concluded with him, are by some postponed until the year ninety-four (beginning 6th October, 712). Ibnu-l-khattíb,²² in his history of Granada, says that Músa sent his son 'Abdu-l-a'la to Tudmír, then

to Granada, and lastly to Malaga, all which places he reduced in succession. But God only knows which of these is the true account, for there is so much discrepancy in the writings of ancient authors, that to choose among their contradictory accounts becomes a task of the greatest difficulty for the modern historian.²³

Siege and taking of Toledo by Tárik.

While these events were taking place, Tárik, according to Ibnu Hayyán, reached Toledo, the court and capital of the Gothic monarchy, and found it deserted, the inhabitants having fled and betaken themselves to a town dependent on it beyond the mountains.²⁴ Tárik collected together the Jews of the place,²⁵ and, leaving behind a body of his troops in charge of the city, marched with the remainder in pursuit of the fugitives. He took the road of Wáda-l-hijárah (the river of the stones);²⁶ he then came to a range of mountains, which he crossed at a pass named after himself (*Fej-Tárik*),²⁷ and arrived at Medínatu-l-máyidah (the city of the table), beyond the mountains, this city being so called from a table which Tárik found in it, and which is supposed to have belonged to Suleymán, son of Dáúd. The colour of it was green, and its sides and feet, the latter of which are represented as three hundred and sixty-five in number,²⁸ were made of solid emerald. Tárik took possession of this inestimable jewel, and proceeded to the city beyond the mountains in which the people had fortified themselves,²⁹ and where he also acquired many precious objects and considerable treasures, after which he did not push his conquests any further, but returned to Toledo in the year ninety-three³⁰ (beginning October, A. D. 711), although some authors are of opinion that he did not return this time, but, on the contrary, invaded the country of Galicia, and traversed it till he arrived as far as Astorga, which he subdued, as well as the neighbouring country, and then came back to Toledo. But God only knows which of these two opinions is the true one. It is even said that all these conquests were achieved by Tárik against the express injunctions of his master Músa Ibn Nosseyr, who, hearing of his success on the banks of the Guadalete, sent him orders not to advance any further into the country, but to stop where he was. Be this as it may, one thing is certain, namely, that Tárik went on subduing and conquering the country till the arrival of his master Músa Ibn Nosseyr, as we shall afterwards have occasion to relate.³¹

Spoils found by Tárik.

The spoils collected by Tárik in his expedition to Toledo are universally represented as almost innumerable, and as baffling all description by the richness of their materials, and their admirable workmanship. Besides the table of Suleymán before alluded to, and to which we shall return in the course of our narrative, a certain historian has preserved us a list of the precious objects found in the principal church at Toledo, namely, five-and-twenty gold crowns, one for each of the Gothic monarchs³² who had reigned over Andalus, (it being a custom of

that nation that each of their kings should deposit in that sacred spot a gold diadem, having his name, figure, and condition, the number of children he left, the length of his life, and that of his reign, engraven on it;) one-and-twenty copies of the Pentateuch, the Gospel, or the Psalms; the book of Abraham, and that of Moses; several other books containing secrets of nature and art, or treating about the manner of using plants, minerals, and living animals, beneficially for man; another which contained talismans of ancient Greek philosophers, and a collection of recipes of simples and elixirs; several gold vases filled with pearls, rubies, emeralds, topazes, and every description of precious stones; many lofty rooms filled with gold and tissue robes, and tunics of every variety of costly silk and satin, without counting gilt armour, richly set daggers and swords, bows, spears, and all sorts of offensive and defensive weapons. But to return to the main subject of our narrative.

According to Ibnu Hayyán and other historians, when Tárik had defeated the entire forces of the Gothic empire, with King Roderic at their head, on the banks of the Guadalete, he hastened to communicate to his master Músa Ibn Nosseyr the news of the signal victory which God Almighty had granted to his arms. But, instead of congratulating himself upon his freedman's success, the Arabian Amír grew jealous and spiteful, and, fearing lest, by prosecuting the conquest, Tárik should take all the spoil and the glory to himself, and leave none for him, sent Tárik a severe reprimand because he had attacked without his orders, together with an injunction not to move from where he was until he should join him. Accordingly, having made a few hasty preparations, he crossed over to Andalus, leaving his eldest son 'Abdullah to command at Cairwán in his stead, and, taking with him Habíb Ibn 'Abdah Al-fehrí, and three of his other sons, Merwán, 'Abdu-l-a'la, and 'Abdu-l-'azíz, landed on the coast of Andalus in the month of Ramadhán of the year ninety-three (August, A. D. 712), or, according to others, in the month of Rejeb of the same year (June, A. D. 712). The number of troops which Músa led to this expedition has been differently calculated; some say ten thousand men, others say eighteen,³³ others make their number still more considerable. Músa brought in his suite several noble Arabs of the best families of Yemen, and the countries subject to the Moslems. In their number came several of the *tábi's* (followers), as Hansh³⁴ Ibn 'Abdillah As-san'ání, 'Abdu-r-rahmán Ibn 'Abdillah Ibn Yezíd Al-bajelí, 'Abdu-r-rahmán Ibn Shamásah³⁵ Al-misrí, Abú-l-nadhar Hayyán Ibn Abí Hoblah,³⁶ a *mauli* of the Bení 'Abdi-d-dár; some add Jebel Ibn Hasanah³⁷ and others, to complete the number of twenty-five.

Some time before Músa left Africa news reached him how Tárik, disobeying his orders, had penetrated far into the country, and had subdued either by himself or

Músa prepares
to cross over
to Andalus.

his lieutenants the principal cities of the land, amassing an immense spoil. He therefore determined to hasten to Andalus, and punish his freedman for advancing against his express orders. He sailed from Ceuta, and, avoiding the mountain where Tárik had landed, disembarked at a spot which was since called after him *Jebal-Músa*³⁸ (the mountain of Músa). Thence he proceeded to Algeiras, where he is said to have expressed his wish not to follow the same route which Tárik had taken. Some of Ilyán's people,³⁹ who served him as guides, then told him, "We will take thee a shorter road than his, and conduct thee to cities more populous and wealthy than those which he has conquered; cities, too, which no conqueror has yet subdued, but which, if such be God's will, will surrender to thee."

Delighted with this account Músa followed his guides, for the idea of having been outstripped by Tárik in the conquest annoyed him much. They led him along the coast of Shidhúnah (Sidonia),⁴⁰ which place he took by storm, the inhabitants imploring his mercy; thence he proceeded to Karmúnah (Carmona),⁴¹ the strongest city in Andalus, and the best calculated for defence against a besieging enemy, but he gained it through a stratagem which he devised. Ilyán's people entering it as if they were a small body of friends fleeing from the enemy, they approached it in the night, when, throwing the gates open, they admitted the Moslems, who rushed upon the guards, and made themselves masters of the town.⁴² Músa next proceeded to Seville, the largest and most important city of Andalus for its buildings and its ancient remains. It had been the capital of the country in ancient times, and remained such until the conquest of Andalus by the Goths, at which time these transferred the seat of government to Toledo, as we have observed elsewhere; still the heads of the church resided there,⁴³ and Seville was considered one of the principal cities in Andalus. Owing to this the city withstood for some time⁴⁴ the attacks of Músa, but at last that general entered it by force of arms, and the barbarians fled to Bájah (Beja). Músa collected the Jews in the citadel, and left a body of his own troops for the defence of the place, he himself passing on to Merida, which had also been formerly the seat of government under some of the kings of the country. This city was of considerable size and great strength; in it were the remains of palaces, temples of vast size and exquisite workmanship, and other public buildings. Músa laid siege to it, but the people, being brave and determined, repulsed the Moslems several times with great loss. Músa then had a war-engine⁴⁵ constructed, by means of which the Moslems approached one of the towers under cover, and began undermining the wall; but this also proved ineffectual, for no sooner had they begun to displace and remove the stones than they found themselves in an open space, a kind of work which the barbarians call in their language *Al-eshah néshah*:⁴⁶ having there laid down⁴⁷ their

pickaxes and other working instruments they were suddenly attacked by the enemy, who slew many Moslems under that machine, whence the spot where this deplorable event took place received the name of *Borju-sh-shohodá* (the tower of the martyrs). After this Músa offered to treat with the besieged on terms of peace; accordingly a deputation, composed of the principal inhabitants, came forth from the city to settle with him the conditions. Having obtained a safe conduct the deputies reached the camp of the Moslems, where Músa made use of the following stratagem to deceive and astonish them: he received them the first time with his white hair and beard both undressed. Not having agreed then, the deputies returned back to the city, and appeared again before him on the day before the feast of *Al-fitr*;⁴⁸ but what was their astonishment to behold his beard, which he had tinged with *hinna*,⁴⁹ dyed of deep red, resembling that of the branches of the *'arfaj*.⁵⁰ Again not having come to a perfect understanding, the deputies returned to the city, and when they came to visit Músa the next day, they were still more astonished to see his hair and beard entirely black, a circumstance which filled them with amazement, for the barbarians were totally unacquainted with the practice of staining and dressing the beard. When they went back to the city they said to their countrymen, "Know ye that we have "to fight a nation of prophets,⁵¹ who can change their appearance at pleasure, and "transform themselves into any shape they like. We have seen their king, who "was an old man, become a young one; so our advice is this, that we should "go to him and grant him his demands, for people like them we cannot resist."⁵² To this the people submitted, and peace was concluded with Músa on the following conditions, namely, that the property of all citizens slain during the siege, as well as that of those who had fled to Galicia, together with all the riches and ornaments of the churches, should be given up to the Moslems, but that to all others residing in the city at the time of the capitulation should be left the undisturbed possession of their property. Upon these terms the city surrendered on the day of the festival of *Al-fitr*, of the year ninety-four (beginning 6th October, 712).

In the meantime, and while Músa was occupied in the conquest of Merida, the inhabitants of Seville, assisted by those of Beja and Liblah (Niebla), revolted against the Moslems, and killed about eighty men belonging to the garrison; in consequence of which, after the surrender of Merida, Músa dispatched his son 'Abdu-l-'azíz with an army against the insurgents. He first marched to Seville, which he took, making great slaughter among its inhabitants; he then proceeded to Niebla, which he reduced also, and, after re-establishing his authority and upholding Islám in those districts, came back to Seville, where he fixed himself, making it the capital of the Mohammedan conquests.⁵³

Rebellion at
Seville.

Músa goes to Toledo.

About the end of the month of Shawwál⁵⁴ of the same year (ninety-four), Músa left Merida to go to Toledo, and when Tárík was informed of his arrival he went out to receive him with his principal officers, and met him in the district of Talavera. This is according to some historians, for others say that from Merida he proceeded to Galicia, which he entered by the mountain pass called *Fej-Tárík* (the pass of Tárík),⁵⁵ and traversed the whole of that country until he overtook Tárík, the leader of the van of his army, at Astorga. But the former account is the most probable, besides being adopted by the best writers. All agree, however, that Músa's reception of his freedman was both unnatural and unjust,—that he reprimanded him severely for advancing contrary to his orders into the heart of the country, and manifested in public all the envy and animosity he had conceived against him. They say, also, that the moment Tárík perceived his master he alighted from his horse, out of respect, and to do him honour, but that Músa struck him with his whip,⁵⁶ reproached him with his disobedience, and upbraided him before all the army for acting against his orders. He then took Tárík with him to Toledo, where he summoned him to produce all the spoil gained from the enemy at the taking of that town, and especially the famous table of Suleymán, son of Dáúd, for which he seemed to wish more eagerly than for any other article found at the time of the conquest.

The table of Suleymán described.

We have already said something on this inestimable jewel, descriptions of which are to be met with in almost every book on the history or geography of Andalus. These, however, are not all alike, since by some the materials of the table are said to be pure gold, by others green emerald. Some describe it as being made of gold and silver, and having round it a row of pearls, another of rubies, and a third of emeralds, and being, besides, strewed with innumerable precious gems; others make its substance to be solid emerald, and pretend that it had three hundred and sixty-five feet; others again say that it was all set with a variety of precious stones, and incrustated with all sorts of aromatic woods, and that the whole was covered with inscriptions in Greek. But as that trustworthy and accurate historian, Ibnu Hayyán, has preserved a description of this table, as well as an account of its origin, we shall refer to him.

His words are as follow:—"The celebrated table which Tárík found at Toledo, although attributed to Suleymán, and named after him, never belonged to that Prophet, according to the barbarian authors, who give it the following origin. They say that in the time of their ancient kings it was customary amongst them for every man of estimation and wealth⁵⁷ to bequeath, before dying, some of his property to the churches. From the money so collected the priests caused tables to be made of pure gold and silver, besides thrones and huge stands,⁵⁸

“ for the priests, deacons, and attendants to carry the gospels when taken out at
“ public processions, or to ornament the altars⁵⁹ on great festivals. By means of
“ such bequests this table was wrought at Toledo, and was afterwards emulously in-
“ creased and embellished by each succeeding monarch, the last trying always to sur-
“ pass his predecessors in magnificence, until it became the most splendid and costly
“ jewel that ever was made for such a purpose, and acquired great celebrity. The
“ fabric was of pure gold, set with the most precious pearls, rubies, and emeralds ;
“ around it was a row of each of those valuable stones, and the whole table was
“ besides covered with jewels so large and bright that never did human eye behold
“ any thing comparable to it. Toledo being the capital of the kingdom, there was
“ no jewel, however costly, no article, however precious, which could not be pro-
“ cured in it ; this and other causes concurred to ornament and embellish that
“ inestimable object. When the Moslems entered Toledo it was found on the great
“ altar of their principal church, and the fact of such a treasure having been
“ discovered soon became public and notorious.”⁶⁰

Tárik soon perceived by the haste that his master Músa made to come from Africa, and his eagerness to demand from him the spoils acquired, that he was devoured by envy ; he, accordingly, decided upon taking away one of the legs of the table, which he kept concealed, and which afterwards became, as we shall see, his principal argument against Músa, when in the presence of the Khalif the latter disputed with him the possession of this jewel, which he pretended to have found himself.

Arrived in Toledo, Músa asked Tárik to produce the table of Suleymán, and the order being instantly obeyed, it was brought to the presence of the Arabian general, who, seeing it with only three feet instead of four,⁶¹ immediately questioned Tárik respecting it. Tárik answered, that he had found it thus ; upon which Músa caused a foot of pure gold, handsomer than which none could be procured, to be wrought ; and notwithstanding its great disparity, (the other three being made of emerald,) to be fixed to the table, which he laid carefully up until he should present it himself to the Khalif Al-walíd as the fruit of the Andalusian conquest.

After this Músa is represented as having cast Tárik into prison, and as meditating his death, which he would have accomplished had not a messenger of the Khalif arrived in Andalus with orders to set him at liberty, and restore him to the command of the troops. However, it appears by Ibnu Hayyán's narrative that he soon restored to him his confidence and friendship ; when, uniting their forces, they both proceeded to new conquests, and speedily subdued the remainder of Andalus.

CHAPTER IV.

Músa's reconciliation with Tárik—They invade France—Arrival of Mugheyth with a message from the Khalif—Galicia and Asturias invaded—A second message from Al-wálid—Músa departs for the East—Leaves Africa for Syria—Arrives in Damascus—Falls into disgrace—Is imprisoned and fined—His death—Opinions concerning his family and origin—His character.

Músa's reconciliation with Tárik.

AFTER this Músa seemed reconciled to Tárik, treated him with affability and kindness, and confirmed him in the command of the van of the army. He then gave him orders to march before him with his division, Músa himself following him with the main body of the troops. Taking the route of *Ath-thagheru-l-a'li* (Aragon), they subdued Saragossa and its districts, and continued to penetrate far into the country,¹ Tárik preceding him, and not passing a place without reducing it, and getting possession of its wealth, for God Almighty had struck with terror the hearts of the infidels, and no one came before him but to ask for peace. Músa followed the track of Tárik, achieving the conquests begun by him, and confirming to the inhabitants the conditions agreed upon by his lieutenant. When the whole of that country had been subdued, such of the Moslems as consulted their safety were of opinion that they should return, while others, and they were the greater number, eagerly desired to penetrate into the land of the Franks. Accordingly Músa, after devoting some time to make the necessary selection of those who volunteered to go with him from those who preferred remaining, proceeded with the rest to the country of the Franks, a land where the Moslems after them never ceased making conquests, gaining spoil, storming cities or granting them peace on the usual terms, till they reached the river Rodhanoh (Rhone), which was the furthest limit of their conquests and incursions in the country of the barbarians. Indeed, the bands which Tárik had led to Andalus subdued also the country of Afranj, and made themselves the masters of the two cities of Barcelona and Narbonne, of the rock of Abeniún² (Avignon), and of the fortress of Lúdhún (Lyons), on the banks of the Rhone, the Moslems advancing far into the country and separating themselves considerably from the shore by which they had penetrated. The distance between Narbonne, in the country of Afranj, and Cordova is, according to some,

They invade France.

three hundred and thirty-five farsangs, according to others, three hundred and fifty.³

How far Músa pushed his conquests into the land of the Franks is not explicitly related by the historians of Andalus. Some say that after the taking of Saragossa he went eastwards into the country of the Franks,⁴ subduing on his passage Gerona, Calahorra, Tarragona, Barcelona, and other principal cities of those districts. Others say that he penetrated as far as Narbonne and Carcassonne, both of which he subdued. They relate that on his way to one of those cities he crossed a great desert, where he saw the ruins⁵ of ancient buildings scattered on the ground, and among them a colossal monument, like a column, rising high into the air, bearing the following inscriptions engraven in Arabic characters on the stone. "O sons of Isma'íl, hither you will arrive, hence you must "return;" and on the other side, "for if you go beyond this stone you will return "to your country to make war upon one another, and consume your forces by dissensions and civil war."⁶ Músa was terrified at the mysterious meaning of these expressions; he called his men together, and consulted them as to whether they should go back or advance beyond the column; the opinions were divided, but the greater part wishing to return, Músa followed their advice, and retreated with his army into Andalus, after having seen enough of the country to judge of the boundless plains that lay before him.

Ibnu Khaldún's words are as follows: "Having met his master, Músa Ibn "Nosseyr, Tárik resigned the command of his troops into his hands, and placed "himself under his immediate orders. Músa then completed the conquest of "Andalus, and, led by him, the Moslem armies reached as far as Barcelona in the "east, Narbonne in the north, and the idol of Çadiz in the west, subduing all the "intermediate provinces and gaining incredible spoil. It is confidently believed "that, elated with success, Músa conceived the project of returning to the East by "way of Constantinople; for which purpose he intended to march from Andalus "at the head of his brave troops, until, by making his way through the countless "Christian nations that inhabit the great continent, he should arrive at the court of "the eastern Khalifs. However, this design having reached the ears of Al-walíd, "who well knew the state of Mohammedan affairs in Andalus, and feared that if "Músa once communicated his intention to his army they would all follow him, he "dispatched to him a messenger to signify his displeasure, and to order him to "desist from his rash enterprise, and to appear alone, without his army, in the "Khalif's presence." So far Ibnu Khaldún.

Another historian says that Músa penetrated into the continent and reached as far as a city called Carcassonne, which is twenty-five days' march from Cordova;⁷

and that, having reduced it, he found in its principal church, called Santa Maria, seven columns of massive silver, the like of which no human eye ever beheld, and the circumference of which was such that a single man could not embrace them.⁸ But all these accounts are contradicted by other writers, who pretend that after approaching the Pyrenees, without invading the land of the Franks lying beyond those mountains, he returned and invaded Galicia. But let us hear Al-hijári in his *Mas'hab*.

“ God Almighty bestowed his favours on Músa Ibn Nosseyr in a manner that cannot be surpassed, since he vanquished the Christian kings, and dispersed their armies like the dust, till he penetrated into the continent by one of the gates in that chain of mountains that divides Andalus from Afranj: it is related that the Franks flocked immediately under the banners of their great king Károloh, (for such was the appellation of their kings,) ⁹ and said to him, ‘ What is the meaning of this our ignominy and shame, which will rest as a stigma on our posterity? We hear about these Arabs sprung from the East, and are informed of their conquests and of their arrival in the West, subduing the neighbouring kingdom of Andalus, notwithstanding the numerous armies and considerable resources of that empire; and yet these Arabs, we are told, are scanty in numbers, badly equipped and provided, and do not wear armour:’ and Károloh answered them, ‘ My opinion is that we should not oppose these people in their first irruption, for they resemble the mountain torrent, which surmounts every obstacle in its course; they are now in the height of prosperity, and, instead of being abated, their courage is only increased at the sight of the enemy; their proud hearts scorn the defence of a cuirass. Let them alone until their hands are well loaded with spoil, for when they have settled in this country and established their government, they will then vie for command, and fight with one another for the acquisition of it. That will be the time and occasion for our attacking them, and I doubt not but that we shall easily vanquish them:’ and by Allah so it was; for in the civil wars that soon afterwards broke out between the Syrians and the Beladís,¹⁰ the Berbers and the Arabs, the tribes sprung from Modhar, and those of Yemen, the Moslems divided into factions, made war upon each other, and lent each other assistance against the people of their own nation, their brethren in country and religion.”

It is also reported that Músa Ibn Nosseyr sent his son 'Abdu-l-a'la¹¹ against Tudmír, and also against Granada, Malaga, and the district of Raya, which cities he entirely subdued. On this occasion they tell the following adventure of 'Abdu-l-a'la at the siege of Malaga. They say that the governor of that city was a stupid man, and one who did not much care for the safety of the town. Not liking to endure the fatigues and privations of the siege, he used to go out to a garden of his,

where he retired to enjoy the pleasures of the country. This he did frequently, but without taking the necessary precautions of appointing scouts or stationary sentries on places commanding the country, so that he might be informed of 'Abdu-l-a'la's arrival. No sooner, therefore, was the Arabian Amír informed of this circumstance by his spies than he prepared an ambush for him, and concealing a small body of his best and most experienced horsemen near the walls of the garden where the governor was, these rushed at night upon the house, surprised him, and made him their prisoner. The Moslems afterwards took the city by storm, and collected considerable plunder.

Others, again, say that Músa was present at all these conquests, and that he was preparing to attack the land of the infidels,¹² the country of Galicia, when he was prevented by Mugheyth Ar-rúmí,¹³ who was the bearer of an order from his patron, the Khalif Al-walíd, enjoining Músa to cease his conquests, and, quitting Andalus, to return to the East with his messenger. This order put a stop to Músa's enterprises and marred his intention, for at that time not a single town remained in Andalus which was not subdued to the Arabs, if we except the country of Galicia.¹⁴ However, Músa had such an ardent wish to push his conquests in those parts that he prevailed on the envoy, by offering him the half of his own share of the spoils, to stop until he had accomplished his object, and accompany him a few days into the heart of the enemy's country. Mugheyth consented, and marched with him until he arrived at the frontiers of the enemy's territory¹⁵ and conquered the fortress of Bézú¹⁶ and the castle of Lúk (Lugo), where they stopped some time. From thence Músa sent forward some of his troops, who reached the rock of Beláy (Pelayo),¹⁷ on the shores of the Green Sea, destroying on their way all the churches, and breaking all the bells. The Christians surrendered every where, and asked humbly for peace, which was granted on condition of their paying tribute. The Arabs inhabited the towns deserted by the Christians; for whenever any of the invaders, whether an Arab or a Berber, received orders to settle in a spot, he not only approved of it, but established himself with his family in it without reluctance, by means of which the words of Islám spread far into the country, and the idolatry of the Christians was destroyed and annihilated.

Things were in this state, and Músa pushing on his conquests into the land of the Galicians, his hope of success strengthening every day, when a second envoy, whose name was Abú Nasr, arrived from Syria with orders to stop him in his victorious career, for the Khalif Al-walíd, seeing that his commands were not quickly obeyed, and that Mugheyth allowed Músa to protract his departure, had now sent this Abú Nasr with a letter upbraiding Músa, and enjoining him to return immediately, at

Arrival of
Mugheyth with
a message from
the Khalif.

Galicia and As-
turias invaded.

Second
message from
Al-walíd.

the same time directing his messenger to see his orders executed, and Músa on his way to Syria.¹⁸

Accordingly, in compliance with the Khalif's commands, Músa started, although with the greatest reluctance, from Lugo, in Galicia; and, passing through the gorge of the mountain called after his name *Fej-Músa* (the mountain pass of Músa), where he met Tárík returning from his expedition in Aragon, he began his march, together with such of the army as chose to return, (for many preferred remaining in the towns where they had settled and fixed their domicile,) and arrived at Seville, taking with him Tárík, as well as the two messengers, Mugheyth and Abú Nasr.

Músa's departure for the East.

Before his departure, however, Músa named his son 'Abdu-l-'azíz¹⁹ governor of Andalus, and decided that he should fix his residence in Seville, on account of the proximity of that city to the sea, and to that part of the coast where the troops coming from Africa usually landed; and having made this and other arrangements, having garrisoned the castles on the frontiers, and appointed generals to command the troops and carry on the war, he embarked for Africa on his way to the East in the month of Dhí-l-hajjah of the year ninety-four (Sept. A. D. 713), taking with him Tárík, who had stayed in Andalus three years and four months,²⁰ namely, one year before Músa's arrival, and two years and four months after his landing.²¹

After staying for some time at Cairwán, Músa prepared to march, leaving the government of Africa proper in the hands of his eldest son 'Abdullah, the conqueror of Mallorca,²² that of Maghreb (Western Africa) in those of 'Abdu-l-malek,²³ the youngest of his sons: intrusting to his son 'Abdu-l-a'la the command of the coast, with the garrisoning of Tangiers and other strong places, he moved on in the ensuing year (ninety-five), preceded by an immense number of waggons and camels carrying the immense booty and vast riches he had acquired, in which were comprised, besides the famous table, such a quantity of precious stones, silver and gold vases, and other valuable objects, as to surpass all computation by their number and baffle all description by their materials. He was also followed by thirty thousand captives taken in war, but with all this he was affected with melancholy and disappointment, which are said to have caused his death soon after, owing to his having been checked in his projects of conquest, since, as we have related elsewhere, some historians attribute to him the design of reducing such parts of the country as still remained in the hands of the Franks, and after this of invading the great land (continent), and arriving with his army in Syria; and this he is supposed to have planned with a view to establish, by the entire subjection of the intermediate countries, an open and direct communication with the East, that

the people of Andalus might in future receive reinforcements, or visit Syria, without having to cross the sea and encounter its dangers.

Músa left Africa for Syria in the year ninety-five of the Hijra (beginning Sept. 713), leaving the inhabitants of the towns and villages through which he passed in utter astonishment at the sight of the immense treasures and numberless curiosities, being part of the spoil made in Andalus, which preceded him in waggons. Leaves Africa for Syria.

They say that as he was journeying²⁴ towards Syria with his suite, he asked Mugheyth to deliver into his hands his prisoner, the Gothic nobleman, governor of Cordova, but this Mugheyth refused to do, answering, "Nobody shall present him to the Khalif but myself; he is my patron and master, and to him only will I make homage of my prisoner." Upon which Músa sprang upon the Goth and tore him out of the hands of Mugheyth. However, some of his friends having told him that if he arrived at court with his prisoner, Mugheyth would undoubtedly claim him before the Khalif, in which case the Goth would not contradict his assertion, he ordered him to be beheaded, and the sentence was immediately carried into execution. From this moment Mugheyth conceived a violent hatred against Músa, and contributed not a little to hurt him afterwards in the mind of the Khalif by supporting the charges brought against him by Tárík.

Whether Músa reached Damascus before or after the death of Al-walíd is a controverted fact amongst historians. Those who incline to the latter opinion pretend that Suleymán,²⁵ who succeeded his brother in the Khalifate, was ill disposed towards Músa, owing to charges and complaints laid against him by Tárík and Mugheyth, who, having preceded him at court, had informed the Khalif of his rapacity and injustice, and told him how he had appropriated to himself the famous table, and deprived Mugheyth of his noble captive. Músa was further accused of concealing a jewel more valuable than any that a king ever possessed since the conquest of Persia. Accordingly, when Músa arrived in Damascus he found Suleymán very much prejudiced against him; that monarch received him angrily, reprimanded him severely, and cast upon him several imputations and charges, which he tried to answer as well as he could. He then asked him to produce the table, which being done, Suleymán said to him, "Tárík pretends that it was he, not thou, who found it." "Certainly not," answered Músa, "if ever Tárík saw this table, it was in my possession and nowhere else." Then Tárík, addressing the Khalif, requested him to question Músa about the leg that was wanting, and on Músa's answering "that he had found it in that state, and that in order to supply the deficiency he had caused another leg to be made," Tárík triumphantly produced from under his tunic the identical one, which at once convinced Suleymán of the truth of Tárík's assertion and Músa's falsehood. This also led the Khalif to suppose that all the Arrives in Damascus.

other charges brought against him were equally correct; he therefore deprived him of all the riches he had acquired, and banished him to a distant province of his empire: others say that he imprisoned him, and ordered that he should be kept with the greatest vigilance;—that he also fined him very heavily, whereby he became so poor that he was obliged to beg for his subsistence among the Arabs, the tribe of Lakhm, to which he belonged, having contributed ninety thousand pieces of gold towards the payment of his fine, which is said to have amounted to two hundred thousand. Half of this enormous sum Músa paid down, but he failed in procuring the means of paying the rest, when, having excited the compassion of Ibnu-l-muhlib,²⁶ a favourite of Suleymán, that courtier interceded for him with the Khalif, who absolved Músa from the payment of the remainder and pardoned him, although he gave orders for the removal of 'Abdullah, his eldest son, from the government of Africa.

Falls into
disgrace.

The historians who follow the former of the two opinions, namely, that Músa reached Damascus before the death of Al-walíd, relate that when Músa arrived in Syria the Khalif was indisposed, and that when Suleymán, who was the presumptive heir, heard of Músa's approach, he wrote requesting him to delay his entry into Damascus until his brother was dead and himself succeeded to his throne, that the rich spoils he brought with him might grace his inauguration, and give him popularity among his subjects, who had never seen or heard of such an accumulation of riches. This Músa refused to do, from motives of fidelity to his lawful sovereign, and, hastening his march, arrived in Damascus while Al-walíd was still alive, and delivered into his hands the fifth of all the spoil, the fruit of his conquests, besides immense treasure and countless wealth, and many valuable gifts, all the produce of the plunder collected in Andalus. However, Al-walíd died a very few days afterwards, and his successor, Suleymán, vented his rage against Músa, whom he caused to be imprisoned, and exposed to the sun till he was almost lifeless. He had him also very heavily fined, and wrote to his generals in Andalus to murder his son 'Abdu-l-'azíz, whom he had left to command in his name, as has before been said, and who, in his absence, collected together the scattered bands of the Arabs, fortified the frontiers, and contributed greatly to consolidate the conquest, by storming many towns which had escaped his father's eye.

Is imprisoned
and fined.

Of the two preceding accounts the latter is, in our opinion, entitled to most credit, since there can be no doubt that Músa was imprisoned and fined in the year ninety-six (beginning September, 714), at the beginning of which Al-walíd died; and therefore what Ibnu Hayyán says, that it was Suleymán Ibn 'Abdi-l-malek who disgraced and imprisoned Músa, is the true account, and not

that of Ibn Khallekán, who attributes that act to Al-walíd. But God only knows.

Al-hijárí, who is one of the authors who maintain that Músa was ill treated by Suleymán, says, in his *Mas'hab*, that Músa Ibn Nosseyr begged Yezíd Ibnu-l-muhlib,²⁷ who was a favourite with the commander of the faithful, Suleymán Ibn 'Abdi-l-malek, to intercede for him that he might be more lenient and better disposed towards him. "Very willingly," answered Yezíd; "let me only first put to thee a question which I desire thee to answer." "What is it?" said Músa. "I have often," replied Yezíd, "heard people speak of thy superior talents, thy great sagacity, and thy deep acquaintance with all the casualties of war, as well as with the sudden changes of fortune; how is it, then, that after conquering Andalus, and putting a boisterous sea between thee and these people, thou now comest to deliver thyself into their hands, like the man who blushed after he had gained his purpose, which had cost him much trouble, or like the man who got the skin, and, after tanning and preparing it with his own hands, gave it to his enemy. How is it, I repeat, that thou hast placed thy person in the hands of people who know nothing but thy good and thy evil?²⁸ Thou hadst become the master of treasures and riches, thou hadst subdued castles and cities, thou wast at the head of a numerous army, so that hadst thou only made a show of resistance thou wouldst not now find thy head in the hands of a man who has not the least regard or compassion for thee. Besides, how couldst thou forget that Suleymán was the presumptive heir to the empire, he having been designated by Al-walíd to be his successor, and that by his brother's serious illness this event was daily expected? Thou must have been ignorant of it, or else thou wouldst not have opposed his will and thrown thyself into his power, causing thy own ruin and perdition, and making thyself the mark of the hatred both of thy master and of thy slave (meaning Suleymán and Tárik). I may tell thee that it will be very difficult to persuade the Khalif to restore thee to his favour; however, I promise to do all in my power to obtain it."

Then Músa said, "O Ibnu-l-karam! This is not the moment for reproaches. Hast thou not heard it said, that when the occasion is propitious the fountain is dry?" "By addressing thee in this manner," replied Yezíd, "it is not my intention to offend or upbraid thee; my only wish is to gain a better knowledge of thy case, and see how matters stand between thee and Suleymán." "Hast thou not heard," said Músa, "of the lapwing that is enabled to see the water at a great depth under ground, and yet falls into the snare which is in sight of his eyes?"

After this Yezíd went to see Suleymán, and spoke to him in favour of Músa, but

the Khalif's answer was, that he had already considered the matter, and was decided to make an example by way of throwing terror among his subjects, and showing them that he was the arbiter both of their lives and fortunes. "However," continued the Khalif, "I grant you his life, but he shall not be quite absolved until he restores the treasures of which he has defrauded his God;" and he fined him heavily, as before related, owing to which Músa was reduced to such poverty that he was obliged, adds the author already quoted, to beg for his subsistence among the Arab tribes, and died in the greatest indigence and misery at Wáda-l-korá. It is also asserted, on the authority of one of his slaves,²⁹ who accompanied him in his state of poverty and indigence:—"I used to go round with the Amír Músa to the different tribes of Arabs, and beg from them our subsistence. Some gave us alms, others dismissed us; some, moved to pity, used to give us one or two dirhems, which caused great satisfaction to the Amír, for he stored them to add to the sum to be deposited in the hands of the officers intrusted with the receipt of his fine, in hopes of alleviating his sentence." Thus was he obliged to beg from door to door,—he who had seen the meanest soldiers of his army, at the time of the great conquest of Andalus, enter the palaces and temples, and throw away the gold with which they were overloaded, in order to seize only on pearls, rubies, and other precious stones. Praise be given to Him who distributes poverty and wealth as he chooses, and in whose hands are both exaltation and depression!

It is further related, that while Músa was escaping from the violence of the Khalif, and was in vain seeking an asylum among the Arabs, he found at last in Wáda-l-korá one of his ancient *maulis*, who, remembering his former engagements, shared his misfortunes with him, received him in his house, and fed him; until finding that Músa protracted his stay, and that his means were thereby exhausted, he determined upon delivering him into the hands of the officers of justice. Músa, however, guessing his intention, went up to him and addressed him in a very humble tone of voice, saying to him, "Wilt thou, O friend, betray me in this manner?" and the *mauli* replied, "Against fate there is no complaint. It is not I who betray thee, it is thy master, thy creator, he who gave thee sustenance, who now abandons thee." Upon which Músa raised his eyes, bathed in tears, to the sky, and humbly besought God to grant him his help and favour in his perilous situation. On the following day Músa delivered up his soul.

The author from whom the preceding is transcribed observes, "Whatever Músa's faults might have been, certainly he did not deserve so severe a chastisement. His conduct, and the territories he gained to Islám, ought to have moved the heart of Suleymán to pity. And doubtless his ordering 'Abdu-l-'azíz, whom Músa had left to command in Andalus, to be beheaded, and his head to be

“brought from the extreme western confines to be thrown at the feet of his wretched father, were crimes which God Almighty did not leave unpunished; they were afterwards visited on the head of Suleymán, who died in the flower of youth, and whose reign was attended with great commotion and strife.”

The preceding has been transcribed from Ibnu Hayyán, who borrowed his information from eastern sources; but we must observe that some historians, like Ibn Khallekán, assert that Suleymán restored Músa to his favour, and took him with him in his pilgrimage to Mekka in the year ninety-six.

They say that Suleymán once asked Músa what he had observed in his transactions and wars with the infidels. “What nations were they?” inquired the Khalif. “They are more than I can enumerate,” replied Músa. “Tell me then about the Greeks,³⁰ what sort of people are they?”—“They are lions behind the walls of their cities, eagles upon their horses, and women in their vessels. Whenever they see an opportunity they sieze it immediately, but if they are vanquished they fly to the tops of their mountains, being so swift that they scarcely see the land which they tread.”—“And the Berbers?”—“The Berbers are the people who most resemble the Arabs in activity, strength, courage, endurance, love of war, and hospitality, only that they are the most treacherous of men. They have no faith, and they keep no word.”—“Tell me about the Goths.”³¹—“The Goths are lords living in luxury and abundance, but champions who do not turn their backs to the enemy.”—“And the Franks, what are they?”—“They are people of great courage and enterprise; their numbers are considerable, and they are amply provided with weapons and military stores.”

However, upon the year of Músa's death there is but one opinion. According ^{Musa's death.} to Ibnu Hayyán, Ibnu Bashkúwál, and other historians, he died at Wáda-l-korá,³² in the year ninety-seven (beginning Sept. A. D. 715);³³ he was born in the year nineteen of the Hijra (beginning Jan. A. D. 640), during the Khalifate of 'Omar Ibnu-l-khattáb, and therefore was sixty years old when he took possession of the government of Africa in the year seventy-nine. His surname was Abú 'Abdi-rahmán.³⁴

As to his ancestors there are various opinions; some authors make him ^{Opinions about his family and origin.} the son of Nosseyr, son of Zeyd, of the tribe of Bekr; others of Nosseyr, son of 'Abdu-r-rahmán, son of Zeyd, of the same tribe. Ibn Khallekán, following Al-homaydí and other ancient historians, calls him Músa, son of Nosseyr, a *mauli*³⁵ of the tribe of Lakhm. Some go so far as to say that he was a Berber of mixed blood.

Those who incline to the former opinion say that his father, Nosseyr, drew his origin from those barbarians who, when defeated by Kháled Ibnu-l-walíd near 'Aynu-

n-namar, (the fountain of the panthers,) pretended to be hostages and descendants of Bekr Ibn Wayil.³⁶ Nosseyr became at the time the slave of 'Abdu-l-'azíz Ibn Merwán, of the family of Umeyyah, who in the course of time gave him liberty, and promoted his son Músa in the army, until he bestowed on him the government of Africa proper. But this is very far from being a settled opinion, for, as we have already observed, there are not wanting genealogists who make him a *mauli* of the tribe of Lakhm, and say that his father, Nosseyr, was captain of the guard³⁷ of the Khalif Mu'awiyah Ibn Abí Sufyán, and that when the latter made war against 'Alí, before the battle of Sefáyin, Nosseyr refused to accompany the expedition. Having been interrogated by Mu'awiyah as to the cause which prevented him from joining his army, and made him show himself so ungrateful for past favour, he is said to have answered, "It is not in my power to assist thee against one to whom I am more indebted than to thee." "And who is he?" replied Mu'awiyah. "God Almighty!" said Nosseyr. Hearing this Mu'awiyah turned his back upon him in great anger, but he is said to have afterwards asked God's pardon, and to have implored his mercy upon the deceased.

Be this as it may, in one thing we find all historians agree, namely, that Músa was a *mauli* of 'Abdu-l-'azíz Ibn Merwán, of the royal family of Umeyyah, and viceroy of Egypt and Africa in his brother 'Abdu-l-malek's name. It was he who gave him command in the army, promoted him, and appointed him at last to the government of Cairwán and the African conquests. When the Khalif Al-walíd married his niece Ummu-l-baneyn,³⁸ Músa was intrusted by her father 'Abdu-l-'azíz with the care of taking her to the house of her royal spouse; hence the high favour he always enjoyed with the Khalif, until, by his death, things were entirely changed.

There are not wanting historians, as Ibnu Bashkúwál and Ibnu-l-faradhí, who count Músa in the number of the *tábi's* (followers of the companions) of the Prophet, asserting that he preserved many of the traditions delivered by the individuals of that illustrious body, that he quoted Temím Ad-dárí³⁹ as his authority, and was himself quoted by Yezíd Ibn Masrúk Al-yahsebí. This Ibnu Bashkúwál affirms on the authority of Músa's own son,⁴⁰ who wrote a book with the following title, *Kitábu-l-aymati mina-l-musanafín* (a treatise on the principal authors of traditional collections), in which he collected particulars respecting the life of every one of them,—“a work,” observes Ibnu Bashkúwál, “which is justly considered as the key-stone of the history of this country, and one which is consulted and quoted by every student, whether young or old, whether noble or plebeian.”

His character.

All historians who have written the life of Músa agree in describing him as a man of undaunted courage, and great abilities; he was, they say, generous, mild, pious,