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SKETCHES

SPAIN.

BY
CAPT. S. S. COOMBS
P. N.

VOL. I.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

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SKETCHES IN SPAIN.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

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SKETCHES IN SPAIN

DURING

THE YEARS 1829, 30, 31, & 32;

CONTAINING

NOTICES OF SOME DISTRICTS VERY LITTLE KNOWN;

OF THE

MANNERS OF THE PEOPLE,

GOVERNMENT, RECENT CHANGES,

COMMERCE,

FINE ARTS, AND NATURAL HISTORY.

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

BY

CAPTAIN S. S. COOK, R.N. K.T.S. F.G.S.



Donativo de Sr. Conde de
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TO

THE RIGHT HONORABLE

ALGERNON LORD PRUDHOE,



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THE AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION.

THESE sketches are a summary or digest of observations made during a residence of nearly three years in Spain, with the exception of a few weeks during the heats. Some of the various subjects were originally objects of enquiry, and others offered themselves as acquaintance with the country gave increased facilities of examination. There will be found descriptive tours in various parts, some of which are very little known even to the natives, and have never been noticed by the travellers who have given accounts of the country, and have generally followed pretty nearly the same track with each other.

An analysis of the mode of governing, which is very little known out of Spain, and the strange composition of different branches of the government. The military and civil branches of administration, the clergy and monks, and ecclesiastical establishment, and revenues. The manners of the people. The robbers, and system pursued by that race of people. The commerce and revenue, with an ac-

count of some curious manners of raising the revenue, closely connected with the modes used in the East. An account of the marbles, wines, horses, and mines, in their economical point of view.

There is a descriptive sketch of the rise, progress, decay, and revival of the architecture, with notices of the best architects. The sculpture is arranged, and an historical account given of its progress, from the earliest time up to the present, with notices of the sites where the best works of each author are to be found. A similar notice of the painters, on the same plan, giving a complete sketch of all the schools in both branches, in which scarcely a good member of either is wanting.

The last division of the work treats of natural history. In it will be found, an account of the forests of Spain, including the Pyrenees, and a notice of the natural tree vegetation throughout the country, with their zones or degrees of elevation, and some species either new or very little known.

A short summary of the ornithology, and a notice of the species which came under notice, of which there is none to be met with. The conclusion is a general view of the geological structure of the greater part of Spain, a great deal of which is new, or only imperfectly known. The chapters on forests and geology have illustrative plans to facilitate their explanation.

These subjects are treated distinctly, so as to condense and bring them separately under the view of the reader,

without travelling backwards and forwards, unconnectedly, as he must have otherwise done. For example, at Granada, there is General Description, Architecture, Painting, Sculpture, Geology, and some other miscellaneous information. In treating these subjects seriatim, they would be mixed up with similar articles in several other places, and the whole made less intelligible than by the present plan. The utmost care has been taken to condense and concentrate; otherwise, it is clear, the work would have been very much extended, which it has been the object to avoid.

It need not be remarked to any one who has sought for information respecting this country, how complete a blank it is in most of the branches treated of. This reason only has induced the offering these notices, which may, it is to be hoped, guide the enquiries of those who seek for it, until better or more ample descriptions are found; the work being exactly as it is named, and not at all intended as general essays or regular disquisitions.

The author has been guided in his enquiries solely by native authorities, either in written documents or in oral information, which may be obtained in considerable quantity by those who take time to acquire the language and live with the people, who are the most communicative and intelligent in the world, when once acquainted with them, and the most disposed to forward the views of those who may seek for information, of any of the nations of Europe who have successively passed under his observation. The obligations conferred in this manner, and in a series

of the greatest kindness in the power of a humane and most polished people to pay to a stranger who had no other claim on them than the judging impartially on the subjects relating to the country, are more than he can repay, and must for ever claim his warmest gratitude.

It is needless to observe that the inaccuracies of the statements in circulation respecting this country are very great. The more amusing and best written of the books, published of late, swarm in errors, as to their *facts*, although sufficiently pleasing in the manner of writing. The French and we are equally to blame in this, and it is to be the more regretted as both countries have had very extensive dealings with Spain.

Every article is written absolutely as the subject presented itself to the writer. Not a piece of sculpture, painting, or any other is mentioned but what has been examined, unless where otherwise stated, or, as in some places, it was necessary to fill up blanks, or round the information. These cases are rare, and are always stated; the author being responsible for all the errors contained in the work.

A number of these subjects may be thought foreign to the professional habits of a naval officer. To this it is only necessary to observe, that every one is master of his own time, and of the leisure so plentifully afforded in these times to those who are without interest. The greater part of the writer's life has been passed in the countries where some of these subjects only can be studied, and his ac-

quaintance with the country in question dates from his earliest youth, when the language and manners of the country became familiar to him. In other respects, had there been the means, the longest chapter in the book would have been devoted to professional subjects. That is no longer possible: these days have seen the annihilation of the mighty engine which once threatened the world, and many of the actors in these catastrophes are living. There are no longer materials for writing on the majestic navy of Spain, which has followed the fate of so many of her machines of power and greatness.

Besides the persons enumerated in the work, and a vast number of others in Spain, the author has to express his acknowledgments to Mr. Lindley, secretary to the Horticultural Society, for the names of some oaks; and to Mr. Lonsdale, secretary to the Geological Society, for those of some fossils with which he was unacquainted. It is needless to observe, that there is nothing invidious meant in the comparison between the countries occasionally mentioned; those of France and England were selected as the most advanced, in order to show their relative situation with a country so unfortunate as to government, and the circumstances of late years, as Spain has been. Every individual mentioned or alluded to, is so merely in his public capacity, and as belonging, in some degree, to history; as are all the transactions referred to.

The delay in publication of these sketches, has enabled that part relating to the recent changes to be brought up

to a comparatively recent period. The government which is depicted as ruling at the time these observations were made, cannot be admired by any Englishman; but it is due to justice to say, that the author had no personal ground of complaint against them. In all his dealings with them, they behaved as became the head of a great and polished people. The mutual obligations of protection on the one hand, and of respect and obedience to the laws and customs of the country on the other, being reciprocally performed, they parted in peace. The only alteration made, in consequence of the delay of publication, besides the notes on recent changes, is the substitution in a few places of *was* for *is*, to denote the alterations consequent on the fall of the ministry of Calomarde. It might otherwise have appeared to those unacquainted with the country, that several objectionable parts of that time still existed.

In examining the details of society and government in this singular country, the reader has to bear in mind that there is no inconsiderable mass of contradictions; of anomalies and paradoxes; of intelligence on the part of the people, with stupidity on that of the governors; of freedom and of slavery; of rudeness bordering on savage life, with the highest civilization. The jarring operation of these causes and combinations give the interest to this country which most people feel, but none can truly appreciate without having witnessed them. The inestimable advantage of the varied pursuits of which these sketches are the outline, was to show the people, as under no other circumstances they

could have been seen to the same degree ; from high to low, through every rank and class of society. It is needless to remark the advantage of varying the studies in a country like this, where every portion has its share of interest, and the most wild and dreary regions furnish their quota of information or amusement.

The history of the transactions of the French in Spain, of course, alludes to times past, and not to the present. It would be impossible to form any idea of the true state and prospects of the Peninsula, without touching on them. It would be uncandid not to state that the most of these dealings are not the subject of his admiration. They are however past, it is to be hoped, for ever, and his individual sentiments are, that the peace of Europe, and the gradual amelioration of the governments in the western part of it, are inseparably connected with the maintenance of the good understanding at present existing between France and England.

So far from its reflecting on the present order of things in France, his conviction is, that the last invasion of Spain is one of many other acts, which lessen the regret every one would naturally feel for the fall of the elder branch of the Bourbons, whose followers, were a restoration practicable, would, at no distant period, infallibly cause a similar catastrophe to recur.

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SKETCHES IN SPAIN.

CHAPTER I.

From Madrid to Cordova, Granada, Malaga, Ronda, and Seville.

I entered Spain by Bayonne, in October, 1829; and after examining the capital, the *sitios*, or royal residences, and other objects in the neighbourhood, set out for Cordova by the diligence. We took up a part of the escort outside of Madrid, these people not being allowed to enter the gates; and as we crossed *La Mancha*, the number was increased by horsemen, until it presented a formidable appearance. Amongst the equestrians, who carried each two carabines, a sabre, pistols and other arms, rode the famous Polynario, who, like most of the others, was a reclaimed bandit. The portion of them who sat on the roof had spare muskets, ranged and pointed in such a manner, that any traveller looking out of the windows would, in case of their going off accidentally, have been placed in imminent danger.

At Andujar, whilst the other passengers were retiring to avail themselves of the short period allotted to repose in these vehicles, I strolled out to enjoy the first delicious night of Andalusia. On returning, I found all the guards spread and snoring in the *patio*, into which the rooms

opened in the oriental manner, each with his whole assortment of arms about his person, ready for the early start of morning. Their Salvator-like figures (they were splendid men), with the bright moonlight, had a striking and picturesque effect.

No place, even in this country, where there are so many memorials of the decay of ancient grandeur, is more calculated to dissipate any favourable anticipation than the celebrated city of Cordova. The streets are narrow and ill paved, convents in great numbers, the beggars in still increasing ratio. Besides innumerable stragglers, a flying detachment, of about fifty, moved from place to place, as it suited their basking in the sun, or supplies were expected.

The only remains of industry and art for which the city was so celebrated in the time of the Moors, are the trades of silversmiths and leather-dressers; vast numbers of boots and shoes are sent to the capital. The inn was wretched, and there was no *café* or place of amusement of any kind. The *realistas*, or royalist volunteers, a corps got up in opposition to the constitutional or national guards, and generally composed of the lowest rabble, were in great force in this place, which is celebrated for its adherence to the doctrines of pure royalism, and has a superabundance of the class which is generally enrolled in that body. The cathedral * has been so often described, that a detail of it is unnecessary; even in its altered state, it is undoubtedly the greatest architectural curiosity in Europe; the effect on entering, the intersections of twenty-nine rows of columns, with nineteen others, the dim light just sufficient to shadow the distances, the strange effect of these colonnades over an extent of 600 feet by 400, and with the height of only 30, cannot be described, and stands unequalled. In the

* For the paintings in the cathedral, &c. see School of Cordova.

time of the Mahometans, it must have been prodigiously greater; the entrance to the *patio*, or enclosure which is in front, was not in the centre, as described in the books, but considerably on one side, no doubt to give greater effect to the dark wood of columns which presented itself to the spectator on crossing the holy threshold. The original gateway, with its brazen gates, remains, although crowned by a noble but misplaced tower and belfry. The intercolumniations on the outside are filled up, and converted into chapels; instead of the flat and uniform roof which overspread it, and increased the effect by its dark colour, the colonnades are now surmounted by whitewashed *bovedas*, or arches, which contribute only to show the defects of the proportions which the darkness before concealed. Many lanterns and cupolas have been opened throughout, and add still more to the departure from the views of the Moorish architects; these evils are however trifling, and might be easily remedied; the fatal error was the building the choir which occupies the centre. This is a Gothic church, reared amidst the forest of columns, to serve as a place for the *Cabildo* to celebrate their ceremonies. In its original state certainly it was not suited to christian worship, much less to the pompous ceremonial of the Spanish Church; but the choir might have been built in the *patio* where there is ample room, and this extraordinary and wonderful production of the Arabs left untouched to serve as cloisters or adjuncts. During the alteration of the building, which did not take place until some centuries after the conquest, a dispute arose between the authorities; the *Ayuntamiento*, or corporation of the city, denying the right of the *Cabildo*, or chapter, to make such arrangements. It was referred when too late to Charles the Fifth, who was unfortunately absent in some other part of his dominions; and before his answer was obtained, which conveyed a severe censure to the

parties, the mischief was done. Otherwise the admirer of Moorish antiquity would not have had to deplore the injury done to one of its most curious specimens. With the assistance of a workman, I ascended the roof, and found a part of the original woodwork, most of which has been replaced by pine, in consequence of decay from the penetrating of the water through the tiles, which are laid too horizontally. The under part, which was seen from the mosque and formed the ceiling, was unpainted, the side of each plank being slightly carved on the edges, and it has now the colour of old oak or chestnut. This is the *alerce* of the old writers, which has hitherto baffled inquiry as to the tree which produced it; it is resinous and fine grained, quite unlike the various pines which I subsequently found formed the woodwork of the Alhambra, the Alcazar of Seville, and other Moorish works, or that of any pine I am acquainted with. There are traditions of its growing in the neighbourhood, but no tree answering the description is to be heard of; nor have I found it in any botanical work. The decisive proof of its not being an indigenous tree, is its not being mentioned in the curious book of Arab agriculture, written by a Moor of Seville, in the 12th century, and translated by Banqueri. He dedicates a large portion of his book to the enumeration of trees and shrubs, describing their qualities, modes of culture, even to transplanting large trees, and knew as well as the professors of the present day the mode of effecting it, the consequences of moving trees from bad to good soil, or the reverse; that some sorts bore the meddling with their roots better than others, and most other arcana of the art, which are believed to be modern discoveries. He names various sorts of pines, but never mentions or alludes to the *alerce*, which it is certain he must have known had it been indigenous or even cultivated. The subject is well worth inquiry, as few woods are known

capable of resisting, as this has done, the effects of a period of nine centuries; the specimen I speak of being perfectly uninjured.* The roof is composed of a number of parallel parts, each about the width of a common house, and separated by gutters of solid lead, and of great weight, cast in moulds, as the Moors were ignorant of the art of rolling metal. It is supposed to have been brought from the mines of Linares. The tiles are large and very light, being laid alternately over and under; a defective mode still general in Spain, which only imperfectly excludes the water, unless the pitch be very high. To this construction is owing the destruction of the timber below, and it is the idle excuse for the barbarous innovation of the *bovedas*.

The country around has the bare and uninteresting appearance so usual in Spain; it is, however, improving; plantations of olives are daily making, and if they persevere, in a few years the whole line of the Guadalquivir will be covered with them. They improve the appearance of the landscape, their produce is extremely valuable, and the corn and pasture land under them is benefited instead of being injured by their shade. A great deal of this planting is owing to an excellent law, or prescriptive custom, by which the inhabitants of places have a right to plant any

* Since my return to England I have been shown a communication made to the Horticultural Society by Mr. Drummond, Consul at Tangier, who had been engaged in investigating the species which has received the name of *alerce* in Spain. It appears quite clear from his account, that this tree is the *Thuja articulata*, which grows in the mountains of Barbary, and of which a large plank had been sent from Tangier, and may be seen in Regent-street. It is well worth the attention of those engaged in procuring timber for the navy and for other purposes requiring durability.

I have subsequently made every enquiry and consulted every authority, without finding a trace of the existence of this tree in Spain. It is extremely probable, that in a work of such sanctity as a mosque, intended to be second only to that of Mecca, wood, known by that ingenious people to be so durable, should be transported from Africa for the purpose.

portion of the common lands, which then becomes the property of the individual.

The immense value of these olive grounds, probably the most productive in Europe, is diminished by the miserable mode of making the oil, owing to a privilege possessed by the lords of manors of grinding at their own mills, which are often inadequate to the purpose. The consequence is, the olives lie in heaps for weeks, and the produce acquires the rancid flavour which unfits it for any taste but that of the natives. An individual at Seville, who resided some time in Tuscany, studied their mode of making the oil, and adopted it with complete success; producing samples equal to those of the Arno. Use, which is sovereign everywhere, but especially in Spain, operated against him, and the people unanimously declared they would not eat his oil unless it could be sold at the price of the inferior sort they had always been accustomed to.

From Cordova I went to Ecija, which stands in a hollow on the Xenil, above its confluence with the Guadalquivir. It is surrounded by an amphitheatre of rising ground, owing to which, and the want of ventilation, it is reputed to be the hottest place in Spain. This intense heat is necessary for its salubrity, for in a cool season *tercianas*, or agues, prevail; this is by no means uncommon in this country, the cause apparently being, that the extreme heat and dryness of the atmosphere causes the evaporation to be complete, carrying off the miasmata. It is quite a Moorish place, the lower class of inhabitants being of pure blood; it is of considerable extent, but of little commerce or industry, and celebrated for the robbers it has always produced. There are many curious towers, ornamented with paintings and *azulejos*, or coloured tiles.

I hired horses to proceed to Granada. We set out in company with the *Intendente*, who was proceeding to a

place in the same direction. The road was covered with his suite, and a wild escort, like Arabs, who accompanied him. We were indebted to this accident, from what I afterwards ascertained, for not meeting with a party of the *Niños* (children) *de Ecija*, as they were termed, who were robbing on the road at the time. The country is composed of dreary uplands of clay, with scattered *cortijos*, or farm buildings, for housing the produce.

I slept at Alameda, a large village at the foot of a *cerro*, or height; it is a meeting point to several roads, and the country about it is well cultivated. I was not called in the morning, according to orders, and on descending to inquire the cause, I found the horse I rode had been taken ill. A large party of *Majos* (the name given to the people who are above the lowest order, and wear the old national costume, and are generally found hanging about the *posadas* or such places) had assembled, and were in consultation. They had pronounced him to have *colico ventoso*, and were administering physic in a manner new to me, and which it is unnecessary to describe. The animal, which was a very good one, did not appear to be very ill, but I was unwilling to take him out, under such a judgment, and proposed that a mule should be hired at the joint expense of the master at Ecija and myself, to carry the baggage, whilst I took the guide's horse. I was ignorant of the law of Spain at the time, by which, in such cases, the man who furnishes animals for a journey is obliged to complete his contract. The liberality of my offer was, therefore, much applauded by the council, who undertook to mediate and fix a just price to all parties. An animal was accordingly provided, and we sat out for Loja, where we arrived in the evening.* The

* The horse recovered, and in the course of accidents became the property of Jose Maria, the famous robber, of whom notice will be given hereafter, and whose troop was mounted on the picked animals of his captures.

country is hilly and more interesting than that of the preceding day; we passed the rich Hoya, or basin of Archidona, which is a red marl to the depth, in places, of thirty feet. The *posada* at Loxa was full, and I lodged in the house of a family of which there were three daughters of eminent beauty. They were quite fair, a circumstance I afterwards found not uncommon in these mountains, and they assured me all their family, which lived in a neighbouring town, were equally so; they spoke excellent Castilian, with an accent quite different from that of Granada.

In the evening my guide had made acquaintance with a *cosario*, or carrier, of Antequera, who was going with his asses to Granada, and had privately arranged that we should travel together. Finding me averse to the proposal, from the delay it would cause, he manœuvred to delay our departure, and at a short distance we overtook his friend; when he immediately fell into the line. Amongst the passengers, was a lady of most prepossessing appearance, who was travelling to Granada, with her servant. She was riding an ass, like the rest, but was provided with pillows and other conveniences, and the *mayoral*, or chief of the caravan, walked by her side, guiding her palfrey and paying her the most respectful and assiduous attention. It rained heavily, and the *barro*, or clay, then saturated with water, was almost impassable for the animals. I would willingly have remained, and kept company with the party; but their pace made it impossible we should arrive that day at Granada. I therefore had no alternative but to dislodge my guide, who was perfectly at home and made every effort to remain; when every other plan had failed, he said his mule was knocked up and unable to proceed, and could never reach the capital that day; and endeavoured to prevail on one of the attendants of the *cosario* to back his assertion. At length I succeeded, and we continued our route. We met some *galeras*,

or covered waggons, which the mules were dragging through roads apparently impossible to be passed. In the afternoon, the weather cleared, and the Moorish city was seen in all its splendour, the Sierra Nevada towering above it to the right.

Whilst I was dining at the miserable *venta* of Santa Catalina, a young man arrived from Granada, well mounted, and dressed in the *majo*, or fancy national costume, in the utmost perfection. I presumed he came to meet and escort the lady, who was slowly following in the cavalcade I had left behind; an ancient practice still kept up in the south, to friends arriving or departing.

We passed through Santa Fé, where the army of the catholic kings, as they are termed, Ferdinand and Isabella, was encamped during the siege. It is now a miserable place, with a sumptuous modern church. In the evening I arrived at Granada. As the measures I had been obliged to resort to the preceding day, to separate my guide from the party, were not exactly in unison with the customs of Spain, and might appear harsh or unseasonable, I desired him, when he met the *cosario* on his return, to apologize and explain the reason, as the loss of time to me was of the greatest importance at that late period of the year.

The view of Granada, on the side of the Vega by which I approached it, is on the whole the best; it embraces the entire extent of a place, which in magnificence of exterior will not disappoint the most sanguine expectation. The length of the city, with its numerous spires and domes, from the suburb beyond the gate of Elvira on the east, to the bank of the Xenil, which incloses it to the west, crowned by the red towers of the Alhambra, with the numerous gardens and vineyards interspread, the rugged and broken range which conducts the eye to the eternal snow on the south, form an *ensemble* which scarcely requires the assistance of the ro-

mance attached to its history to heighten. On the western side, the Xenil issues from a lovely dell, which may be followed for some distance amidst vineyards, woods of olives, and mulberries. The Monachil, a stream of nearly equal force, giving or receiving its name from a village which is in a lovely and sequestered spot, seldom visited even by the natives of the city, joins its waters to the Xenil, above the *paseos*, or public walks, which are amongst the charms of Granada. Above Monachil is the shortest road to the Sierra Nevada, a wild and bare ridge separating its streams from those of the Xenil at their sources, until they unite in the plain below. After issuing from the gorge which the village occupies, the Monachil takes a sweep through a flat in front of the village of Azubia, the most beautiful of all those of the environs of the capital. It is seated on a rising ground, which is beautifully laid out in the style of Frascati, with gardens and country-houses, noble cypresses and other trees, and is a favourite retreat of the Granadinos. Part of the operations of the siege were carried on from it. Beyond, to the west, all is bleak and dreary waste.

On the eastern side of the city, outside the open space in front of the gate of Elvira, stretching along the rising grounds above the Vega, is the rich domain of the Cartuxa. A few friars, of the most absurd and useless order of the whole, have a tract like a paradise; it is divided into an upper and lower park, the upper division being surrounded by a lofty wall. In the present impoverished state of agriculture, it is estimated at 10,000 dollars, or 2000*l.* per annum; a large sum in Spain. Above this, by a long and continued ascent, you reach Viznar, the country palace of the Archbishop; the house is modern, but it perfectly recalls the idea of the Moorish style of country-houses. There is a garden in the oriental style, a spacious corridor or gallery for exercise, and a *mirador*, or look-out, which commands

an extensive view over the Vega, the Soto de Roma, and to the mountains of Loxa. It is full of pictures, but few are good. At a short distance from the palace, the copious stream which supplies the capital* with delicious water, gushes from the limestone. The rising grounds of which Viznar forms the summit, are covered with villages and hamlets enjoying delightful air amidst the most beautiful culture. The Vega, and country below Granada, notwithstanding its celebrity, is a poor and ungrateful soil; only constant irrigation and the most unintermitting labour produce a decent return. It is mostly a sandy loam, running into clay; the expense of culture is so great, that the corn of Old Castile can bear a double land carriage, besides the freight, and be sold in their market to advantage. As in the other parts of the south, the weeds are so rank that their rude implements are unequal to contend with them, and they plough round the *palmeto*, and even the *artemisias* and *passerina*, which are the curse of the soil. The population of the town is of a mixed character; much Jewish blood may be observed, and the dialect is a most corrupt one; but amongst the *labradores*, or farmers, and yeomanry who attend the markets, some noble specimens of the finest Moorish race may be observed. Their forms are broad, but light; a peculiar upright gait without stiffness; the arms are set back and carried with peculiar grace, and the right hand is constantly used in speaking, with dignity and ease. The eyes are rather sunk, and the sockets extremely large, with the eyebrows proportionate; an aquiline nose, with a bold and regular curve, and the mouth rather wide, with full but extremely flexible lips, uncovering the finest teeth in the world: these are the cha-

* The capital will be frequently used, in the Spanish mode; which applies it to the chief cities of the provinces. When Madrid is meant, it will be easily understood.

racteristics of the cast. The complexion is dark, and sometimes slightly tinged with a coppery hue, and they are without the profusion of hair which marks some of the other races of African descent.

The interior of the city presents its Moorish character unaltered. It forms three great divisions; that of the west is bounded by the Xenil, and covers the straggling heights on the western side of the Alhambra, from which it is separated by gardens and vineyards, and terminates on the banks of the Darro to the east. The larger division is that which covers the flat ground along the Carrera del Darro, the Zacatin, and district to the Puerta de Elvira, and the extensive range of the more modern part of the city which lies between the upper districts and the Vega. The third is the Moorish quarter of the Albaycin, and a straggling district beyond it ending above the Puerto de Elvira. The extent of the city is thus very considerable; on the upper side, the Moorish walls are nearly entire, and many gates remain. Its greatest length is from east to west, along the base of the mountain. The Darro cuts nearly the centre of this line, emerging from a bold and picturesque gorge, above which is the Alhambra and Generalife. The stream is scanty in ordinary times, but it is of great use in cleansing the most thickly inhabited part of the city; it is scarcely seen, being covered by buildings and bridges, in the style of those of Venice. Below, its course is through the Carrera del Darro, an open space, now made into a promenade, which joining that of the Xenil near the junction of their streams, forms walks and rides of unrivalled beauty. The Xenil is at all times a copious stream; from its banks the Sierra Nevada is seen terminating the view, and giving freshness to the scene in every season. Near the Carrera del Darro is an open square, on which is an excellent theatre, with an opera company now struggling

for existence, owing to the decline of interest in the drama over all Spain. There is also a spacious and good *fonda*, or inn, belonging to a company who employ a manager and divide the profits; a plan which I found not uncommon in Spain, and to which are owing many of the best of these establishments.

Parallel to the course of the Darro, is the Zacatin, a narrow street of shops, which only requires to be covered in to form a complete oriental Bazaar. The lower end commences from the Vivarrambla, the open square so celebrated in the history of the place. At the upper end is the Plaza Nueva, a square which contains the Chancery and residence of the Captain General. On the right of it is the Calle de los Gomeles, a narrow street, which is the main road to the Alhambra. On the left, a long and tolerable street leads to the Puerta de Elvira, which retains its name, but has been rebuilt. Outside is an open space, where is the Plaza de Toros, and from which some of the principal roads commence. In the two upper divisions, little alteration has been made, house succeeding house, the streets being as in the time of the Moslems. In the lower part, modern buildings and wide and regular streets are found, and the principal churches have been built.

The cathedral is a magnificent structure, founded on the side of the principal mosque, which it is to be regretted the zeal of the captors did not allow to remain. It contains many valuable specimens of the arts.* The principal works, in painting and sculpture, are by Cano, Spagnoletto, Juan de Sevilla, Risueño, Bocanegra, Siloe, Torrigiani, Cano in both branches, Vigarny, and Mena. All these works, which will be mentioned under the heads of their respective artists, were left by the French; a valuable picture of Moya

* See Schools of Sculpture and Painting of Granada, and Chapter of Marbles.

being the only one missing. The architecture of the cathedral will be particularly described under that head. A splendid chapel, dedicated to St. Miguel, contains the tomb of a late archbishop, executed at the end of the last century with equal taste and magnificence. The splendid convent of Geronymites, where Gonzalvo de Cordova is interred, a foundation of the same royal hands as the cathedral, is the most sumptuous of the various monastic establishments. The church contains celebrated sculpture of Navas and Becerra.* The others are of great extent, but have little to boast of architectural skill or beauty; that of St. Francisco was thrown down either by the French, or in the time of the constitution, but has, since the fall of the *sistema*, as it is termed, risen from its ruins as by enchantment; for these good fathers, who are mendicants by profession, and are forbidden by their founder to possess money or goods, have found the means of expending a sum I have heard estimated at a million of reals. One side of their edifice I paced was near 700 feet of solid masonry, and proportionably high. This huge barrack was quite full, but the church was still unfinished, their quarters being the first object of completion. I went to the Angel, a female convent once full of the finest paintings and statues. I found it in the act of being rebuilt; and addressing myself to an old man, in the hope that some fragments might yet remain, he said, "When you are at Paris, ask general Sebastiani, who can probably inform you where they are; there are none here."

The wall of the Alhambra, which is mentioned by Swinburne, and is traditionally said to be the work of the Phœnicians, is a long line on the left, soon after passing the entrance. Some improver has plastered it over with rough cast, and whitewashed it; a piece, however, is broken

* See the Notes on these articles.

off, and enables the work to be seen. It is certainly of great antiquity, and different from any work, either Moorish or Roman, I have ever seen. It is composed of long thin courses of the grey sandstone of the Vega, which the Moors never seem to have used, and the interstices are filled with fragments of ancient brick, probably introduced in repairs of more modern date. Some of the other parts of the fortress which came under my observation, differ from those which are known to be the work of the Moors. They are generally of solid and excellent brick, resembling the common Roman work, which they appear to have imitated.

The Palace of Charles the Fifth is still occupied as a powder magazine; it is without conductors, and a single flash of lightning would annihilate the remains of this interesting building, and probably the whole of the Alhambra.

The dreadful rents in the tower of Comares and other parts, were owing to an accident of this kind, early in the sixteenth century, and not to earthquakes, as generally supposed, although they may have widened the rents. The French occupancy was productive of serious injury to this place. The beautiful pavement of the outer court, which is of Macael marble, was broken to pieces, by its being made the receptacle for the firewood of the soldiers. They demolished the Silla del Moro, where Boabdil used to retire, on the height above, to construct a redoubt. They blew up the upper end of the fortress, with the tower by which the Rey Chico left the place; acts of useless destruction, as the whole of that end is commanded within pistol shot, and is quite untenable as a military position; and only proves, amongst thousands of other examples, that in those times the protection of arts and antiquities was quite a secondary object, and that nothing was in reality attended to but the military views of the chiefs, who were ready to

sacrifice any object to the contingent possibility of the defence of a post, however insignificant:

On the outskirts of Granada, both within and without the walls, are gardens and vast quantities of *cactus*, the fruit of which in summer affords salutary food to the poorer classes. Amongst their tangled foliage are numerous Troglodyte habitations, the residence of a dark and swarthy race, a mixture of gypsy and the poorer tribe of Moors. I had repeated dealings with these poor people, in ranging about; their appearance is not inviting, but I found them invariably obliging, and even polished in their manners. They form a considerable item in the population, although when housed they are nearly invisible.

This place, to us so replete with interest, is gradually decaying; its present support proceeds, in a great measure, from the chancery, or *audiencia*, a court of great power, the jurisdiction extending to Cuenca, and, I believe, meeting that of Valladolid. This is so great an evil, that it is thought of dividing it; in which case it will be a death-blow to Granada, the number of persons who are compelled to reside during their interminable lawsuits forming an article of the prosperity of the town.

It has also serious disadvantages in the want of communication, which are, however, now in the course of being remedied, as will be mentioned under the head of roads. There are some old and good families resident, and considerable industry in the town, in manufacture of leather and other articles.

I went to Malaga on horseback, by Alhama and Velez, which is the shortest line, and that frequented by the muleteers, who carry on an extensive traffic between these cities; the road for carriages being taken, for reasons I am ignorant of, through Colmenar far to the right. Nothing can be

more dreary than the country to Alhama. This town is at the edge of a deep ravine, and the situation is strong enough to account for its celebrity in ancient times, when it was considered the bulwark of Granada.*

Above Alhama I crossed the bare and bleak ridge of the western part of the Sierra de Tejada, which abounds in game and in plants; and descending, the country improved and rapidly assumed another aspect. A brilliant sun succeeded the fogs and cold which prevailed in the upland region to the north of the Sierra Nevada, the vegetation changed, and patches of sugar cane were seen. The appearance of the people of the hamlets and villages is quite different from those of the uplands, and they are reputed to be a sanguinary race, prone to assassination on the least provocation. Notwithstanding the great traffic on this road, it is very bad, and parts of it nearly impassable. Velez Malaga is a well built, rich, and substantial place, in a fertile and beautiful territory; from hence to Malaga is a carriage road, which it is inconceivable should have terminated there, and not been carried on farther. It is the shortest line to Granada, with no natural impediment to prevent a carriage road being made. The soil on the coast to Malaga is excellent, and it might be expected to resemble the Riviere of Genoa; there is not a village, or a country house, or scarcely a hamlet, and only the most scanty cultivation. The cathedral of Malaga is a magnificent structure, and kept

* The name is derived, I believe, from the warm baths in the vicinity, and, like nearly all those of the places around, was conferred by the Moors. The pronunciation of many of these names is difficult. I inquired of an old man on the road the name of a distant town; he said, with a peculiar emphasis, İLLÖRÄ; the accent being delivered with an intonation so clear, that no other but the Arab race could have produced it. Alora, they pronounce long. Alhendin has the accent on the last syllable. Cadiar, of which the a is sounded very full, and which appears an easy word, is very difficult to enounce properly.

in a style of neatness which cannot be excelled. It contains some admirable works of Mena, Michaeli, and of other artists: the architecture resembles that of Granada. The other churches contain little worthy notice; the streets are narrow, but the houses are clean and neat, abundant use being made of whitewash, as in most parts of the South. There is a beautiful Alameda, and the eastern beach serves for promenades of greater length. The heat in summer is excessive, but the climate is healthy, and many cases occur of extreme longevity. The complexions of the women are clear and brilliant, and for grace and beauty they have ever held the first rank in Andalusia. Both sexes are celebrated for what is termed *gracia*, or ready wit.

The Moorish forts of the Alcazaba and Gibralfaro are in ruins, and I could find little worth notice in examining them. There is a beautiful Moorish arch of marble remaining near the Alameda, in a part of the ancient *Atarrazanas*, or naval store-houses. The commerce of this place is decaying, the demand for the sweet wines, which were one of the principal articles of export, having almost ceased; it is now chiefly confined to the fruit trade. A few vessels arrive in the autumn, and carry off the produce of the crop, and during the remainder of the year trade is in a complete state of stagnation. The vessels which are sent from England are chiefly taken up at the out-ports, and the consular authority is constantly called on to repress the disorders and drunken quarrels of the masters and men, which are a national disgrace, being entirely confined to those of our own country.

Discussions were carrying on, which have been subsequently brought to a conclusion, respecting the right of sepulture to those who were not of the catholic communion; at length a grant of land has been made, and authority generally given in all places where the residences of British

merchants may make it advisable to apply for the establishment of regular cemeteries.

At a short distance from the city is one of the magnificent undertakings of Charles the Third, left unfinished, and recorded by the fortunes known to have been made by the individuals engaged in it. It is a bridge and aqueduct over the great river of Malaga, which flows at a league distant from the city; it is so far finished, that with timber it might be easily converted to use. The aqueduct, in making which a great expense was incurred, was rendered unavailing a few years afterwards by the public spirit of the bishop, who supplied the town, at his own expense, by a much shorter line. The only use of this enormous construction would be the communication of a few villages on the other side of the Vega; the road to Ronda and the interior making it unnecessary to pass the river in that part.

Malaga stands in a narrow nook at the foot of the mountains, which descend gradually to the sea. To the west is the Vega, which is watered by the great river of Malaga, as it is termed, which delivers a large body of water from the eastern end of the Serrania de Ronda. The soil is an excellent loam, quite different from the thirsty sand of the Vega of Granada; it lies under the level of the river, and of some minor streams, and might be easily converted to a garden; at present, it is exactly like the Campagna of Rome. It seems particularly suited to the growth of tobacco, and I am informed samples have been produced, equal to that of the Havannah.

In an angle beyond the river, backed by the chain which bounds the Vega to the west, is Churriana, a village resorted to in summer and autumn: a kind of Frascati to the Malagueñians. An individual has made a garden and grounds, of which the progress of a few years shows what might be effected with industry in this delicious climate.

I took horses to go to Ronda. After traversing the Vega, and crossing the river in a ferryboat, I ascended to Cartama, when I found that we were out of our road, owing to the ignorance of the guide, who was above asking questions to set himself right. The mistake, however, was of little consequence, for I saw the Roman remains at Cartama, and the beautiful country of Alhaurin, and Coin. These villages are on a rising ground above the river, and in beauty of situation and cultivation cannot be excelled. They afford a specimen of the whole country when possessed by the Moors, being surrounded by gardens with orange, lemon, and palm trees, and abounding in all the fine as well as the more common fruits. At Coin I visited a character of great intelligence and respectability, who had been during the time of the constitution "un homme à grands projets," his name figuring in various plans for the regeneration of his country. He was now dwindled to the superintendent of a nail manufactory, which a company were availing themselves of the abundant streams that water the place to establish; using the iron of Marbella, which is on the coast at a short distance.

From Coin I proceeded, after crossing the river, to a *puerto*, or pass, which closes in the Vega at the western end, and entering the Serrania de Ronda through a picturesque country, arrived at La Junquera. There was no *posada*, only a hovel without beds; but I obtained accommodation in the house of a respectable man who had been sergeant-major in the army of Romana and complained of the change of times. The population is composed wholly of *labradores*, or agricultural labourers, of all ranks. In the morning I descended to Borgo de Ronda, which stands in a deep vale, in a most picturesque situation, with a lofty mountain overhanging it to the north. From thence to Ronda the distance is about five leagues, by a dreadful road

through a wild district, without habitations or culture, until you approach the city, when you cross a plain covered with olives. Ronda is Tivoli on a grander scale; the temples are wanting, but there is a magnificent defile of 5 or 600 feet deep, and a splendid amphitheatre of mountains surrounds it on every side.

The new bridge, built in the end of the last century, over a chasm of 300 feet, would do honour to the Romans. Like so many other works in this country, it is wholly out of keeping, serving only for communication between the old and new town, which were already provided with one; whilst they have never thought of expending a real on the roads to the capital of the Serrania, which is almost inaccessible on every side. Below the bridge, the river forms cascades, and descends rapidly to the vale underneath, in which are the gardens and orchards that supply all the south part of the Peninsula with apples and pears, one of the staple branches of trade in the place.

The old town, or that of the Moors, occupies the left of the river, and is nearly surrounded by the ravine and precipices which encircle the other side. The Moorish citadel, crowned with battlements, which was blown up by the French without any necessity, for the place is quite indefensible, occupies a nook, forming the only convenient approach. It was so strong, that the Christians would never have taken it except by famine or stratagem. The garrison was drawn off by a feint on Malaga, managed with the consummate skill which marked the military operations of the generals of Ferdinand, and it was suddenly invested without a garrison, and obliged shortly to surrender.

The modern or new town is regularly laid out, and tolerably built, on the opposite side of the river. On this side is the *Paseo*, or public walk, on one side of which is a

mural precipice of several hundred feet, with beautiful views. The Plaza de Toros is near it, and the fights, which are considered there the best in Spain, are given during the great fair in May. There is a Maestranza, a corporation of nobility, it being one of the few places which have that privilege. This corporation was instituted for the absurd purpose of keeping the Castilian blood pure and uncontaminated from that of the Arabs. Many of the better families in these towns are descended from the officers and soldiers of Ferdinand, who, after the conquest, were settled there in order to secure the country against attempts of the Moors to reconquer it.

The district of which this city is the capital, and which bears the title of Serrania de Ronda, comprises thirty-five towns and villages, and is one of the most beautiful in Spain. The heats of this southern region, which lies in 36° and 37°, are tempered by the sea breezes and the cool air of the elevated ranges which form the greater part of its territory. The soil is good, the waters abundant, and the air pure and healthy. It has always produced excellent horses, and stock of all kinds. During the time of the Moors, the town was surrounded by noble forests, through which ranged numerous herds of animals; but in a century afterwards they were nearly destroyed, and arid and uncultivated wastes have replaced the sites of the greater part of them. The peasantry are beyond comparison the finest race in Spain, and the women, even in the larger towns of Andalusia, are celebrated for their beauty.

I was miserably lodged in the best *posada* of the place, and had to find my way to my room through a dungeon, filled with innumerable asses and mules, which arrived daily with cargoes of fruit, on their way to various points of Lower Andalusia.

The autumnal rains had fallen, and the clayey grounds, which occur in all parts of the south of Spain, were so saturated, that the *barro*, as it is termed, had assumed a tenacious consistency, exactly fitted to admit and to retain a horse's foot; practice alone, with the use of a peculiar step, enables these animals to travel through it in this state. As the route to Seville passes through a good deal of this sort of ground, and the streams were now swollen, it was an object to secure good horses for the journey. There was considerable difficulty in this, the distresses of the times having almost entirely put a stop to the breeding of good horses, which abounded before the war of independence. Only a few miserable animals, such as are employed in the suburbs in carrying about manure and garden produce, on *sayas*, or grass panniers, were to be found. At length I engaged with a man of the greatest respectability in his line, named Jose Zaffran, who had an excellent horse, and promised to accompany me himself. In the evening he requested I would defer my departure for a few hours, as the horse he was to ride himself had not arrived. The next evening I found he had altered the plan, and appointed his *mozo*, or servant, to accompany me. I reminded him of his promise, adding that having a respectable attendant, in a country at all times so insecure as the neighbourhood of Ronda, was one of my reasons for engaging with him. He instantly complied, confessing that his reluctance had only been caused by the non arrival of his own horse, and that he was ashamed to ride to Seville on the sorry animal he should be obliged to hire to fulfil his agreement with me.

After passing a beautiful defile, we came to the Cuesta de la Viña, a rapid and bad descent, made extremely difficult to the horses by the tenacity of the *barro*, from which they could scarcely extricate their feet. Below this, we overtook the *cosario*, or trading carrier, of Grazalema, who

was proceeding with a file of asses to Seville. My guide immediately pushed on to join them, and as I had ascertained by experience the utter inutility of contending with their social disposition, and their excessive fondness for travelling in company, I compromised the matter, and allowed him to fall in. After a short ride with them, he was satisfied, and came out, having made acquaintance with the whole party. Amongst them was a young lady, who was threading the wilds of this country in the middle of December, riding on an ass, gaily dressed in white muslin, with a straw hat and green veil. She was on the way to Seville, to be married to a man employed in some office there, which prevented his leaving the place.

The rapid mode in which these acquaintances are made, is one of the characteristic features of the manners of the country, but especially of the Moorish Spain. The process, which I have often watched, is this: the usual salutation of "Dios guarde a. v." is exchanged in a low voice. One or other of the parties immediately, without preface or question being asked, begins, "We are from such a place, and are going to such another," with any other details; he is repaid in kind, and in an instant they are as well acquainted as if they had been known to each other for years, relating every thing about their concerns with candour and openness. All this flows spontaneously; no impertinent questions or observations are ever thought of, or would be tolerated. The next time they meet on the footing of old friends. The only exception to the interrogatory etiquette to be made, is their habit of asking strangers from what town or place they are; a subject of intense curiosity with these people. It is certainly of Arab origin, and similar to the habit of the tribes meeting in the desert. Strangers to the customs of Spain should be on their guard when they are questioned. It is the reverse of Spanish manners, and

either proceeds from some bad motive, or from the under breeding of the party. It is, however, of rare occurrence.

If the traveller has a *mozo* of any address, by sacrificing a little time, he may ascertain the history of every person he meets with on the road, and the characters who figure in the train of a *cosario* will often afford interest and amusement. Of course his own history is related in return, often with various amplifications. The extreme loquacity and communicativeness of these people, the timidity which is common to most of them, as well as the universal habit of never travelling alone, excepting from absolute necessity, are the causes of the pertinacity I found generally amongst them on this point.

This habit is extremely inconvenient, from the delay caused by it. In the evenings they frequently go through all the *posadas*, to ascertain who is travelling the same road, and make private arrangements unknown to their masters. When they are ignorant of your habits, they frequently come to boast of what they have done. My companion was so eager to join the new company, that he forgot our dinner, and on enquiring I found we had passed the village intended for our halt, which was off the road, and that we should not be able to stop for some time. We passed at the foot of Zahara, so celebrated in Moorish history, and a place of great strength on a height with the town grouped at the foot of a pyramidal rock on which are the ruins of the citadel. We coasted along the banks of the Guadalete, occasionally crossing it; a beautiful stream, now watering a desert; we saw some herds of bulls, which at a certain age are kept apart from the other descriptions of cattle, and passed nearer to one set than would have been safe in the spring; but at this season, which had succeeded the long drought termed by the Spaniards their Lent, during which their pastures are completely dried up, they are more quiet.

We dined at Puerto Serrano, a large village so termed from its situation at the first gorges of the Serrania. I had determined in sleeping at Coronil. My guide having arranged his plans to stop at Montellano, a league short of it, I suspected in consequence of a private agreement with the *cosario*, in order that we might travel together the next day, accordingly manœuvred to lose time, by loitering behind, and giving various reasons for preferring the place of his own selection. At last, when we were passing Montellano, as I took the road to go on, instead of following me, he made a bolt and rode straight into the *posada*; I paid no attention, but continued my route, and he was obliged to come out amidst a roar of laughter from various *majos* who were lounging about the place, and saw the transaction. This ridicule was a severe trial for an Andaluz; he rode up to me extremely disconcerted, but he said he had no objection to go on, if I wished it; only that if any thing occurred on the road, as it would be dark before our arrival, I must take the blame on myself. We arrived at Coronil after dark, and found another *cosario*, with whom my guide arranged we should go on together next morning.

In order to avoid discussion, I agreed that, as we were to start at an early hour, we should remain in company until daylight. When that arrived, he was unwilling to separate from his partner, and I was forced to ride on. When I reached Utrera, he was far behind; and on waiting for his arrival, I found him in a state of extreme agitation, between fear and vexation at being foiled in his scheme, and his pride hurt at his suggestion not being followed. He urged the insecurity of the road, and begged hard to be allowed to pass the *pinar*, or pine forest, through which the horse road passes, in company with the *cosario*; but we proceeded, and arrived without accident at Seville.

At the foot of the Serrania, is a train of low hills, covered

with arbutus, lentiscus, alaternus, and other evergreens. This is succeeded by open corn lands, which extend to Utrera. The territory about this town is productive, and the place is substantial and well built, and reputed to be wealthy. Below, towards the Delta of the Guadalquivir, are vast marshes, where numerous herds of cattle are bred, and some of the finest bulls are turned out. Between Utrera and Seville, the old road passes through forest and uncultivated grounds.

The villages in the low country are better built and neater than those in the hills; but the inhabitants have a sullen and distrustful manner, and unhealthy appearance, quite different from those of the Serrania.



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

CHAPTER II.

Madrid to Granada, by Murcia and Almeria, and the Alpujarras.

I left Madrid by the diligence of Valencia, intending to go by the coast through Murcia and the southern part of Andalusia and the Alpujarras to Granada. After crossing the dreary plains of La Mancha, I descended by the Puerto de Almanza to the Venta del Conde, a new and spacious *posada*, recently built, like many others, for the purpose of improving the accommodation on the great roads. I hired a mule, and proceeded by a lovely tract, cultivated like the Val d'Arno, to San Felipe or Xativa of the Moors.

The castle, which is one of the finest ruins in Spain, crowns the straggling summits of the last eminences of the great range, which suddenly breaks off to the west of the Xucar, and is succeeded by the beautiful *huerta*, or garden, of Valencia. The town is a miniature of the capital, with lofty and well built houses, many of them ornamented on the outside and having narrow streets. It contains no objects of art, but has the honour of being the birth-place of Ribera (Spagnoletto).

I took mules to Alicante, sleeping the first day at Alcoy, a town situated on a narrow ridge upon a slope, in the midst of a picturesque and beautiful country. The site is confined, and it presents the unusual appearance in Spain of a

place bursting its limits, being covered with building materials, with new edifices, and swarming with artificers of all kinds. This is caused by its being the seat of manufactures of paper and of woollens, both being now in a state of great and increasing activity. The situation for a place of trade is excellent; as it commands, by roads now making, an easy communication with the sea, with Madrid, Valencia, Alicante and Murcia; it is in fact a key to this part of the country, and possesses abundant water. The southern side of the valley is bounded by a lofty range, celebrated from early times for the variety and beauty of its plants, especially those used in medicine. Here the Moorish hakims resorted to recruit their simple stores, long after the conquest by the Christians, and a few came annually until late in the last century, when the last feeble bond which connected this beautiful region with Africa may be said to have been broken. The race in this part is entirely Moorish; the women are celebrated for their beauty, the climate being healthy, and the air and waters pure. The road to Madrid was at present suspended, for want of funds. The government, as I understood, had taken advantage of the necessity, to propose an unjust and most impolitic tax of entry on the wools used in the rising manufactures, which required fostering care instead of restrictions.

We started in the morning; my guide, who was a young man of twenty-two, apparently fit to go over the world, soon stopped and began to show signs of alarm; he pointed out some loungers, who were taking the morning sun upon a heap of timber, whom he declared he had seen the evening before at the other gate, and that he was satisfied they intended to waylay and rob us. I made some observations, and we proceeded. Soon afterwards, he descried a few men at a distance, travelling on foot by a parallel direction to that we were following, and scaling the rocks with great

agility; these he was convinced were the same, and no efforts could persuade him to the contrary. I saw the caps they wore were different, being the long red ones of the east of Valencia, instead of the small Moorish cap of this district. I tried reason, persuasion, and ridicule in vain. The only argument I found had any effect, was reminding him that he had engaged to accompany me to Alicante, and that he ought not to have done so, if he was unequal to it; this, however, had only a momentary effect, and he soon relapsed. At length his imagination fairly overpowered him, and he became the living image of fear. He was so unsophisticated, and so free from any attempt to conceal it, that he was only apprehensive I was incredulous; and coming over to me, begged I would put my hand on his heart, and I would be satisfied it had ceased to beat. His ideas were less wild and poetic than those of the Bohemian Claudio; he was afraid we should be skinned, always returning with "Pero si nos quitan el pellejo." At last he was unable to move above a few paces, when he halted and the same operation was to be gone over again. I was seriously considering what it was best to do, the district being extremely insecure, when a grim character, a perfect Bedouin, rode up, coming in the opposite direction; he was an elderly man, with a grisly beard and a keen eye, a very small hat, in form like a turban, and his *capa* (cloak) folded over his mouth. There were the unusual number of three muskets appended to his saddle, the muzzles projecting from beneath. As he must have crossed near the line of the supposed robbers, I desired the guide to consult him, and satisfy himself. As I conjectured, they had not escaped being scanned by his experienced eye; but pausing with the air of a professor, and determined not to give a hasty opinion, turning round and snuffing up in the direction they had gone, he said very deliberately, "A mi no me parecen ladrones, son de la huerta;" meaning

that they were of the neighbourhood of Valencia. The young man was then satisfied, and observing that I had more to lose than he had, for in fact he had only a shirt and trowsers, making a desperate effort, we proceeded—parting with the Arab, who I supposed, for I asked him no questions, either carried money or was afraid of assassination, which is too common in this part of the country. The villages on this road are generally bad and miserable, tenanted by smugglers and other characters of the same description. The people wear the most pure Moorish costume probably to be found in Spain.

We reached Alicante without accident, passing by the beautiful defile of Xixona, where is a fine Moorish castle, and gardens producing great quantities of fruit. I remained there to examine its geology, which is extremely interesting. This district is cursed with an aridity, which prevents its being one of the most productive spots in Europe. An establishment, to the east of the city, which I visited, and where an individual had introduced some of the Valencian modes of culture, irrigation and artificial grasses, exhibited lucerne, which yielded, they assured me, twelve cuttings in the year. This plant was certainly known, and most probably introduced, by the Moors.

The castle was commanded by a Spaniard of the ancient race, so jealous that it was understood he would not obey an order from Madrid to show it; the absurdity of this species of jealousy is evident enough, as there is no difficulty in seeing all the defences which interest those who might wish for information about attacking it, without having the trouble of procuring permission. In geologizing, I was close to the advanced sentry for a considerable time, without being seen, and could have sketched all the front with the greatest ease. The rock is extremely friable, and easy

for mining, as proved in the celebrated siege. A strong line of regular works was added, during the war of independence, which prevented it from being attacked; but before it was completed, a party of cavalry from Valencia summoned the castle in the bravado manner so well known in the French army, and was very near being successful.

I hired a *tartana*, or tilted cart, finding a difficulty in obtaining horses to go along the coast to Torre Vieja, the scene of the great earthquake of 1829, and thence to Murcia. The coast is flat and almost uncultivated, but the *salsola*, the plants which produce the barilla, and the liquorice plant give a botanical interest to it. Guarda de Mar is a miserable place, near the mouth of the Segura, and was nearly destroyed by the earthquake. The river, excepting in time of floods, discharges a scanty portion of water, most of it being consumed by the *acequias*, or canals of irrigation, of the vale of Murcia.

Torre Vieja stands, or rather stood, on a low table of rock, between the sea and an extensive salt lagune. It was now a heap of ruins, the only edifices remaining being the windmills outside the town, which their low and circular form enabled to resist the destructive shocks that destroyed every other edifice; rich and poor, great and small were involved in one common ruin. The streets, which were regular and wide, were with difficulty to be made out. The shock came on at *oracion*, just after dusk, without the slightest notice or atmospheric alteration, with an undulating motion from west to east, and in a few seconds the whole mischief was done; about thirty lives were lost, principally people passing through the streets, by the fall of the opposite houses. The *cura*,* his aged mother, and

* The *cura*, in Spain, is the rector or vicar, and head of the parish.

female servant were amongst the number, as they were endeavouring to escape from their house. The population was about 2,500, the place neat and well built; the inhabitants were now huddled around the outskirts, in temporary habitations. As the shocks still continued, it was thought unsafe to commence rebuilding. I was accosted by a respectable man, who offered to conduct me round the place, and pointed out the localities. Amongst the rest, he showed me the ruins of his own house, making no complaint or allusion to his misfortune; when he had finished, he conducted me to his habitation, which was a hut, chiefly composed of palm branches; it was so small, that entering it was out of the question, but he offered it to me, with brandy or any thing he possessed, with the noble, unaffected and inimitable ease quite peculiar to this people. The women of the better classes, some of whom were very good looking, were working indefatigably at the tambour, and other domestic works of Moorish Spain; moving their heads out of the low windows, till the retreat of the last rays of light compelled them to desist.

I slept in a cabin, in the place which represented the *posada*, with a clean bed spread on the floor; the slight rafters were lashed to the wall with rope, to prevent accidents, and the people, whose kindness and attention could not be exceeded, assured me I had nothing to apprehend, should a shock occur during the night. When I arose at the dawn of day, the women were performing with characteristic cheerfulness the offices servants would have done for them in better times, sweeping their humble *verandas*, and the fronts of their houses, in loose attire, as they had risen from their couches, their long hair (which, if it be the glory of women, is doubly that of the Spanish portion of them) streaming in the wind, and falling below their waists. The whole place was the picture of unaffected,

cheerful resignation. Not a beggar was to be seen, nor a complaint or murmur heard amongst them.*

The salt lake, to which *Torre Vieja* owes its support, is about three leagues, or thirteen miles, in circumference; it appears to be supplied by salt springs. The quantity they furnish varies; when there is not sufficient, they admit the sea water, by means of a sluice. During the dry season, evaporation takes place in proportion to the heat, and in the autumn a crust, of from three to eight inches, is formed over the vast surface; it is broken up, and carted away in the manner of ice, the labour being the whole expense. The profit to government, it being a royal monopoly, would be very great if the system were different; but the duties now amount to a prohibition for the internal consumption, and the foreign trade, which was formerly considerable, is diminished.

The road to Orihuela is uninteresting, but we passed the line of the earthquake, every building being levelled to the ground; a line of villages on the right, with Arab names, suffered most severely. Passing a picturesque and isolated mount, crowned by a Moorish fort, almost inaccessible, I arrived at Murcia. This vale is one of the finest monuments of the industry and skill of the Moors, whose descendants remain pure and unmixed. The irrigation, on which every thing depends, is conducted with consummate skill; the situation is one of the hottest in Spain, the *Huerta* being closed on every side, without sea or cool mountain breezes. In this vale the African character is not only preserved, but the blood is so pure, that the tribes the people descend from, in many instances, may

* I heard, about May, 1832, that the work of rebuilding had commenced; the shocks gradually diminished soon after the catastrophe, and when I was there, were no longer formidable; some nights, like that which I passed there, not exhibiting any.

be traced as at Algiers or Tunis. The cast of countenance is in general very different from that of the Andalusian Moors.

The city contains few objects of art; but the finest sculpture of Zarcillo, the last of the great Spanish school, is to be found there. The few painters who belong to it are ranged with the school of Valencia. The town is clean, and perfectly Moorish, with beautiful walks for summer and winter.

I examined the district, and then proceeded to Cartagena. This is one of the few places never attempted by the French in the war of independence, and I believe was never regularly taken in modern times. At the termination of the bay, which is formed by an opening between high ranges of limestone, stands the town on rising ground, flanked by lofty hills on each side, and having a low plain at the back; above this plain is a ridge of rocks, which constitutes the land barrier. It is so commanding that the engineers have thought it unnecessary to fortify much, and the land front is little more than a high curtain without outworks. The left or western flank covers the basin, and is protected by two very strong detached castles, built on pinnacles of the rock, and not commanded, which would be extremely difficult to get at. The masonry of the works of the town is indifferent, being of small blocks of brittle limestone, with very large joints. The right or eastern flank is covered by an advanced horn-work, which crowns a detached mass of rock and is probably the weak point. By destroying this work, and advancing batteries on the right, the whole land curtain would be seen, and the right front be quite open. The situation, the difficulty of the ground, which is mostly bare rock, the having the sea open, and being in constant communication with the English fleet, were sufficient reasons to prevent its being attacked; but besides these advantages, it was too far

from the base of operations and communications of any portion of the French armies capable of undertaking so extensive a siege in a country without resources for the purpose. The magnificent basin, capable of holding a fleet, with fifty feet water, now contained a corvette for sale, which no one would buy, and some convicts were heaving up the stern part of the San Pablo, about the last remnant of the navy of Spain. The splendid storehouses were empty, and the rope-walk unoccupied.

I sent to apprise the Consul of my arrival, intending to call afterwards; but received a message to say he was ill in bed; consequently, after examining the place I arranged to depart, and was retiring to the hotel, when an orderly came from the Governor to say, that if I did not wait on him, the gates would be closed on me in the morning; I accordingly repaired to his residence, and found him in state, ready to receive me. He commenced by saying, "I am surprised, Sir, that you, as a British officer, should not know better than to omit paying the respect due to me, by calling upon me." I attempted some defence, to which he paid little attention, but went on, "Sir, you did not even wait on your own Consul, but sent your card by a servant; these things are wrong; you ought to be aware that, as a stranger, I am your protector; and if you are in any scrape you will come to me to get you out of it;* how am I to do this if I am ignorant of your being in the place?" He delivered this with emphasis, and then paused. The place was full of aid-de-camps, secretaries and assistants, who had collected to see the scene. "Bien dicho," said the senior; which was repeated by all present, and I was condemned by acclamation. The good feeling was so manifest, that I felt little inclination to interrupt his triumph, and I was

* By the law of Spain, the captain general, or chief military authority, is the protector of strangers.

silent. He was satisfied, and said, very courteously, "You really, Sir, ought to have known better: you know if a Spanish officer travels in England he must wait on the Governor of every place he visits; why should you not do the same here?" I then took my leave. It was often remarked during the war that there was no land wind at Cartagena, and it was extremely difficult to get ships out; a rare occurrence in the Mediterranean, where it prevails almost universally. It was a serious disadvantage to a port of war before the invention of steam vessels. It may be owing to the gradual diffusion of temperature, in a region probably the most even in Europe as to climate, over the mountains, the plain at the back, and the adjoining sea, and the consequent want of the sudden refrigeration and transition, which are the cause of that phenomenon in other places. The district which includes the maritime parts of the kingdom of Murcia and the western portion of Valencia, with the eastern end of Andalusia beyond the influence of the Sierra Nevada, is the driest in Europe; it is sometimes nine or ten months without rain; the vapour is arrested far in the interior by the Sierra de Segura, which forms its barrier to the north.

It possesses unequalled advantages for agriculture, but there are no *pantanos*, or reservoirs, from the want of which nearly the whole country, excepting the vale of the Segura, is like an African desert. No place, excepting for the harbour, can be more unfit for a naval station. There is no resource whatever at hand, excepting the pine timber of the Sierra de Segura, which is only fit for inferior uses, and, like every thing in the navy of Spain, it resembled an exotic or forced plant, and has sunk as the enormous expenditure with which it was sustained has been withdrawn. The place is entirely decayed. I could not procure a horse, and was obliged to geologize on foot.

Being unable to hire animals to cross the mountains, I took a *tartana*, and proceeded by the carriage road to Almazarron, which is a large village in a valley, about a league from the sea, and enjoys a more temperate and healthy air than Cartagena. There was no *posada*, but I was hospitably lodged in the house of a young couple lately married, the husband being the son of the Director of the alum establishment. A hill at the back of the village, called St. Christobal, has for ages supplied the rock which furnishes the alum, and the *almagro*, or red earth, used in polishing mirrors and other uses. The rock, which is soft and easily broken, is toasted and then slaked; the alum is deposited in solution and evaporated, and the residue, after passing through water, is the *almagro*: it is, I believe, a silicate of iron. It is one of the great districts of *barilla*, and they were preparing to make carbonate of soda, of which they showed me excellent specimens. Fortunately there is little fuel wanted, the common shrubs sufficing for the kilns; otherwise they could not go on, as there is not a tree in the district, and a valuable iron mine is quite useless from that cause. The geology of this curious place will be mentioned under its head. I hired mules for Almeria, intending to proceed by Macael and Purchena. After crossing a wild and almost uncultivated tract, I arrived at the foot of the *lomo de vaca*, or cow's back, a curious ridge, the form of which has suggested its name, and which figures in the geological features of this part of Spain. Descending through an equally dreary tract, I reached Aguilas, a small town at the foot of a bold rock, on which is a castle; with a bay on each side, affording shelter as the east or west winds may prevail. The town was founded by Charles the Third, and is one of his many excellent plans. It communicates by a carriage road with Lorca, on the route from Granada to Murcia, and was intended as the seaport of the upper parts

of the kingdom of Murcia. It is regularly laid out, like his colonies, and well built with substantial edifices, but is now quite decayed. The next day I crossed the small plain of Aguilas, and came to a most dreary tract of slates, through which it was difficult to find the road; at last we came to a stand; a deep pool had been formed by a flood the preceding day between two rocks, and the guide being afraid to swim the mules, we had to clamber up, and with great difficulty turned it. After passing these defiles, we entered the great *delta* of the Almanzora, and crossing its wide bed reached Vera. In this day's route, or the preceding, there was not a *venta* and scarcely a house. I had been assured that Vera was a city, and that every thing was to be had there; I found it a straggling, poor, inhospitable place, with a wretched and dear *posada*, belonging to the Ayuntamiento, which is known all over the country for its miserable accommodation. The water is bad, being impregnated with nitre, and the country around dreary and unproductive. The next day I proceeded up the Almanzora, by a sandy country quite denuded of trees, save a narrow stripe along the river, by which the whole country might be turned into a garden. We passed some miserable villages in the most lovely situations. The road was chiefly by the wide and gravelly bed of the river. In the afternoon I came to Almanzora, the site of a favourite palace of the kings of Granada. It stood on a small eminence or knoll, the river washing the foot of it. A spacious *cortijo*, or country house with farm offices, built in the last century, now occupies the site, and not a Moorish fragment is left. Every tree has been carefully removed, and it is now in the midst of an open desert. The villages higher up are better built, but I could procure no wine, although the country is celebrated for it. We overtook a drove of asses, and ascertaining from the leader they belonged to Macael, as my