

running streams, the limpid waters, the luxuriant gardens, the stately buildings for the household guards, the magnificent palaces for the high functionaries of State; the throng of soldiers, pages, and slaves, of all nations and religions, sumptuously attired in robes of silk and brocade, moving to and fro through its broad streets; or the crowd of judges, theologians, and poets, walking with becoming gravity through the magnificent halls and ample courts of the palace. The number of male servants in the palace has been estimated at thirteen thousand seven hundred and fifty, to whom the daily allowance of flesh meat, exclusive of fowls and fish, was thirteen thousand pounds; the number of women of various kinds and classes, comprising the harim of the Khalif, or waiting upon them, is said to have amounted to six thousand three hundred and fourteen. The Slav pages and eunuchs were three thousand three hundred and fifty, to whom thirteen thousand pounds of flesh meat were distributed daily, some receiving ten pounds each, and some less, according to their rank and station, exclusive of fowls, partridges, and birds of other sorts, game and fish. The daily allowance of bread for the fish in the pond of Ez-Zahrā was twelve thousand loaves, besides six measures of black pulse which were every day macerated in the waters. These and other particulars may be found at full length in the histories of the times, and recorded by orators and poets who have exhausted the mines of eloquence in their description; all who saw it owned that nothing similar to it could be found in the territories of Islam. Travellers from distant lands, men

of all ranks and professions in life, following various religions,—princes, ambassadors, merchants, pilgrims, theologians, and poets—all agreed that they had never seen in the course of their travels anything that could be compared to it. Indeed, had this palace possessed nothing more than the terrace of polished marble overhanging the matchless gardens, with the golden hall and the circular pavilion, and the works of art of every sort and description—had it nothing else to boast of but the masterly workmanship of the structure, the boldness of the design, the beauty of the proportions, the elegance of the ornaments, hangings, and decorations, whether of shining marble or glittering gold, the columns that seemed from their symmetry and smoothness as if they had been turned by lathes, the paintings that resembled the choicest landscapes, the artificial lake so solidly constructed, the cistern perpetually filled with clear and limpid water, and the amazing fountains, with figures of living beings—no imagination however fertile could have formed an idea of it. Praise be to God Most High for allowing His humble creatures to design and build such enchanting palaces as this, and who permitted them to inhabit them as a sort of recompense in this world, and in order that the faithful might be encouraged to follow the path of virtue, by the reflection that, delightful as were these pleasures, they were still far below those reserved for the true believer in the celestial Parádise!

In the palace of Ez-Zahrā the Khalif received the Queen of Navarre and Sancho, and gave audience to great persons of State. Here he sat to welcome the

ambassadors which the Greek Emperor sent to his court at Cordova :

“Having appointed Saturday the eleventh of the month of Rabi' el-Awwal, of the year 338 [A.D. 949], and fixed upon the vaulted hall in his palace of Ez-Zahrā as the place where he would receive their credentials, orders were issued to the high functionaries of State and to the commanders of the forces to prepare for the ceremony. The hall was beautifully decorated, and a throne glittering with gold and sparkling with gems was raised in the midst. On either hand of the throne stood the Khalif's sons ; next to them the vizirs, each in his post to the right and left ; then came the chamberlains, the sons of vizirs, the freedmen of the Khalif, and the officers of the household. The court of the palace was strewn with the richest carpets and most costly rugs, and silk awnings of the most gorgeous kind were thrown over the doors and arches. Presently the ambassadors entered the hall, and were struck with astonishment and awe at the magnificence displayed before them and the power of the Sultan before whom they stood. Then they advanced a few steps, and presented a letter of their master, Constantine, son of Leo, Lord of Constantinople, written in Greek upon blue paper in golden characters.”

Abd-er-Rahmān had ordered the most eloquent orator of the court to make a suitable speech upon the occasion ; but hardly had he begun to speak, when the splendour of the scene, and the solemn silence of the great ones there assembled, so overawed him, that his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth,

and he fell senseless on the floor. A second essayed to fill his place, but he had not got very far in his address when he too suddenly broke down.

So interested was the Great Khalif in building his new palace that he omitted to go to the mosque for three successive Fridays ; and when at last he made his appearance, the preacher threatened him with the pains of hell for his negligence.

Beautiful as were the palaces and gardens of Cordova, her claims to admiration in higher matters were no less strong. The mind was as lovely as the body. Her professors and teachers made her the centre of European culture ; students would come from all parts of Europe to study under her famous doctors, and even the nun Hroswitha, far away in her Saxon convent of Gaudersheim, when she told of the martyrdom of St. Eulogius, could not refrain from singing the praises of Cordova, "the brightest splendour of the world." Every branch of science was seriously studied there, and medicine received more and greater additions by the discoveries of the doctors and surgeons of Andalusia than it had gained during all the centuries that had elapsed since the days of Galen. Albucasis (or Abu-l-Kāsīm Khalaf, to give him his proper name) was a notable surgeon of the eleventh century, and some of his operations coincided with the present practice. Avenzoar (Ibn Zohr) a little later made numerous important medical and surgical discoveries. Ibn Beytar, the botanist, travelled all over the East to find medicinal herbs, on which he wrote an exhaustive treatise ; and Averroes, the philosopher, formed the chief link in the chain

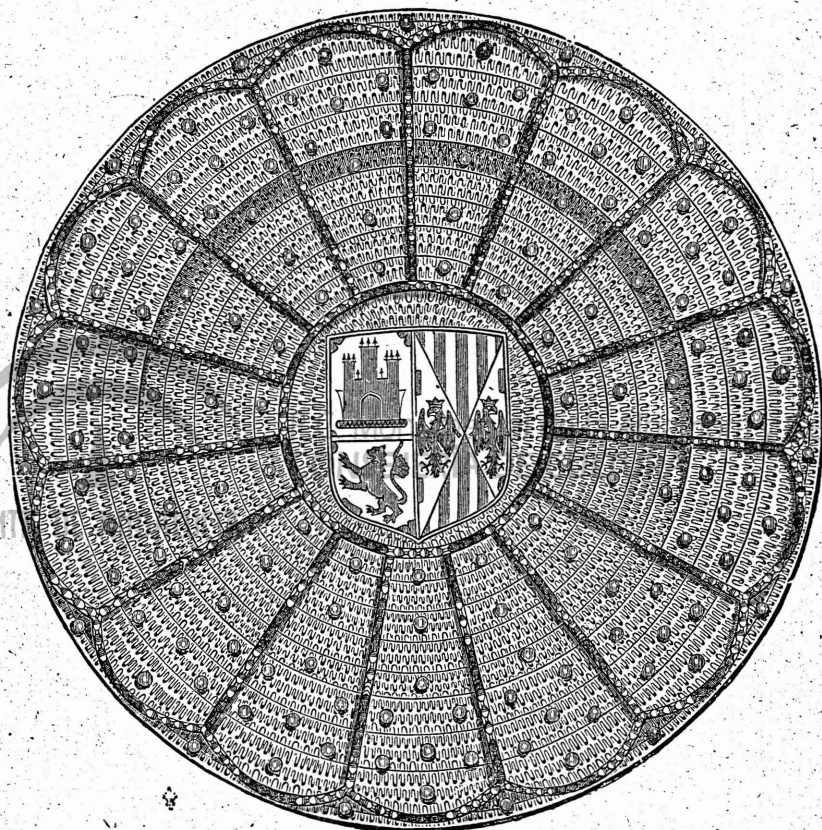


HISPANO-MORESCO VASE. (*Preserved at Granada.*)

which connects the philosophy of ancient Greece with that of mediæval Europe. Astronomy, geography, chemistry, natural history—all were studied with ardour at Cordova ; and as for the graces of literature, there never was a time in Europe when poetry became so much the speech of everybody, when people of all ranks composed those Arabic verses which perhaps suggested models for the ballads and canzonettes of the Spanish minstrels and the troubadours of Provence and Italy. No speech or address was complete without some scrap of verse, improvised on the spur of the moment by the speaker, or quoted by memory from some famous poet. The whole Moslem world seemed given over to the Muses ; Khalifs and boatmen turned verses, and sang of the loveliness of the cities of Andalusia, the murmur of her rivers, the beautiful nights beneath her tranquil stars, and the delights of love and wine, of jovial company and stolen meetings with the lady whose curving eyebrows had bewitched the singer.

In the arts Andalusia was pre-eminent ; such buildings as the "City of the Fairest," or the mosque of Cordova, could not have been erected unless her workmen had been highly skilled in their handicrafts. Silk weaving was among the most cherished arts of Andalusia ; it is said that there were no less than one hundred and thirty thousand weavers in Cordova alone ; but Almeria had the greatest name for her silks and carpets. Pottery was carried to great perfection, and it was from the island of Majorca, where the potters had attained to the art of producing a ware shining with iridescent gold or copper lustre, that

The Italian pottery obtained its name of Majolica. Glass vessels, as well as others of brass and iron, were made at Almeria, and there are some beautiful specimens of delicate ivory carvings still in existence, which bear the names of great officers of the court of Cordova. These arts were no doubt imported from the East, but the Moorish workmen became apt pupils of their Byzantine, Persian, and Egyptian masters. Jewellery an interesting relic of the son of the Great Khalif is preserved on the high altar of the cathedral of Gerona; it is a casket, plated with silver gilt, and adorned with pearls, bearing an Arabic inscription invoking blessings upon the Prince of the Faithful, Hakam II., which reads rather curiously upon a Christian altar. The sword-hilts and jewels of the Moors were very elaborate, as the sword of Boabdil, the last King of Granada, shows. The Saracens were always renowned for their metal work, and even such small things as keys were beautifully ornamented. How exquisitely the Spanish Moors could chase bronze is proved by the engraving in chapter xi. of the beautiful mosque lamp which was made for Mohammed III. of Granada, and is still to be seen at Madrid. The delicacy of the open filigree work is only surpassed by similar work made at Damascus and Cairo. Over and over again we read the same Arabic inscription, the motto of the kings of Granada, "There is no conqueror but God." We have already spoken of the brass doors of the palaces of Cordova; and some remains of these are still to be seen in the Spanish cathedrals. Every one has heard of the Toledo sword-blades, and though the tempering of



HISPANO-MOESCO LUSTRED PLATE, WITH ARMS OF LEON, CASTILE,
AND ARAGON. (*In the South Kensington Museum.*)

steel is older in Spain than the invasion of the Arabs, the skill of the Toledo armourers was fostered by the Khalifs and Sultans of Cordova. Almeria, Seville, Murcia, and Granada were also famous places for armour and weapons. The will of Don Pedro in the fourteenth century runs: "I also endow my son with my Castilian sword, which I had made at Seville, ornamented with stones and gold." In arts, sciences, and civilization generally, the Moorish city of Cordova was indeed "the brightest splendour of the world."



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

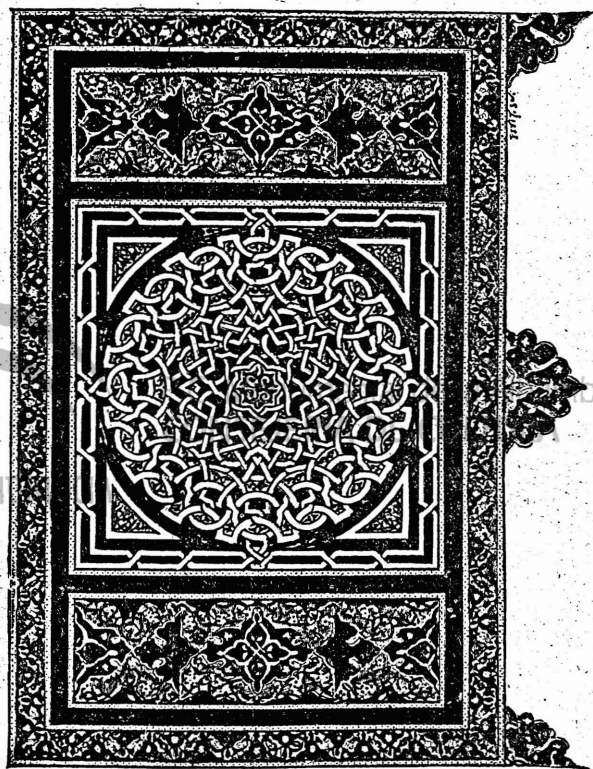
P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA



IX.

THE PRIME MINISTER.

ABD-ER-RAHMĀN III. was the last great Sultan of Cordova, of the family of the Omeyyads. His son, Hakam II., was a bookworm, and although bookworms are very useful in their proper place, they seldom make great rulers. A king cannot be too highly educated; he may know everything under the sun, and, like several of the Cordovan Sultans, he may employ his leisure in music and poetry; but he must not bury himself in his library, or care more for manuscripts than for campaigns, or prefer choice bookbinding to binding up the sore places of his subjects. Yet this was what Hakam did. He was not a weak man, or at all regardless of his great responsibilities; but he was too much absorbed in his studies to care about the glories of war; and his other delight, which consisted in building, was so far akin to his studious nature that it involved artistic tastes, which are often allied to those of literature. Hakam's peaceful, studious temperament did no great harm to the State. He was son enough of the Great Khalif to lead his armies against the Christians of Leon when they did not carry out their treaties; and so overwhelming was the awe that his father had inspired, so universal the



ANCIENT KORAN CASE. (*Escorial Library.*)

sentiment of his crushing power, that the Christian princes of the north submitted to Hakam's interference with their affairs, and one of them even came to Cordova, and with many abject genuflexions implored the aid of the Sultan to restore him to his throne. Peace was soon signed between all the parties, and Hakam had leisure to collect his famous library. He sent agents to all parts of the East to buy rare manuscripts, and bring them back to Cordova. His representatives were constantly searching the booksellers' shops at Cairo and Damascus and Baghdad for rare volumes for the Sultan's library. When the book was not to be bought at any price, he would have it copied; and sometimes he would even hear of a book which was only in the author's brain, and would send him a handsome present, and beg him to send the first copy to Cordova. By such means he gathered together no fewer than four hundred thousand books, and this at a time when printing was unknown, and every copy had to be painfully transcribed in the fine clear hand of the professional copyist. Not only did he possess all these volumes, but, unlike many collectors, he is said to have read them all, and even to have annotated them. So learned was he that his marginal notes were greatly prized by scholars of after times, and the destruction of a great part of his library by the Berbers was a serious loss to Arab literature.

It was possible for one successor of the Great Khalif to rest upon his father's laurels, and enjoy his studious tranquillity, while the enemy without was watching for an opportunity of renewing his attacks;

but two such sovereigns would undo the great work which Abd-er-Rahmān had accomplished, and bring the Cordovan empire tumbling down to the ground again. Hakam II. only reigned fourteen years, and his son, Hishām II., was a boy of twelve when he ascended the throne. What the young Sultan might have been, had he been allowed fair play, no one can say; but it is recorded that he exhibited many signs of intelligence and sound judgment in his childhood, and showed some promise of following in the brilliant steps of his grandfather. Hakam's easy-going scholar's rule had, however, deprived his son and successor of any chance of real power. While the student Sultan was anxiously collating a manuscript, or giving directions to a copyist or bookbinder, the great officers of the State were gradually attaining a degree of authority which Abd-er-Rahmān III. would have instantly checked. The ladies of the Sultan's harīm also began to exercise an influence upon the government of the country. Abd-er-Rahmān built a city to please his wife, but he would have been very much astonished if Ez-Zahrā had ventured to dictate to him who was to be the prefect of police. When Hakam died, however, the harīm influence was very strong, and the Sultana Aurora, mother of the young Khalif Hishām, was perhaps the most important person in the State. There was one, however, a favourite of hers, who was destined soon to become even more influential. This was a young man called Ibn-Aby-Amir, or the "Son of the Father of Amir," but whom (since this is rather a roundabout name) we shall call by the title he afterwards adopted, when he had won many victories over

the Christians—Almanzor, which means "the victorious by the grace of God." Almanzor started in life as an insignificant student at the university of Cordova, where his father was known as a learned lawyer of good but not influential family. The young man, however, had no intention of restricting his ambition to the modest elevation which his father had attained. While still a student he dreamed of power, and confidently predicted that one day he would be master of Andalusia; he even asked his schoolfellows—for they were little more than boys—what posts they would prefer to have when he came to power, and it is worth noticing that when that event came to pass he did not forget his promises. His career is an interesting example of what pluck, talent, and selfishness could do in a Moslem State, where the road to power was open to genius, however unpromising the beginnings. Almanzor, who was at first merely a professional letter-writer to the court servants, ingratiated himself with the Grand Chamberlain, who exercised the functions which would nowadays be held by a Prime Minister, and in due course he was appointed to some small offices about the court. Here his charm of manner and skilful flatteries gained him the favour of the ladies of the royal harim, and especially of Aurora, who fell in love with the brilliant young man. Step by step, by dint of paying his court to the princesses, and making them magnificent presents (for which he had sometimes to draw upon public funds), he rose to higher offices; and by the age of thirty-one he enjoyed a comfortable plurality of posts, including that of superintendent of the pro-

perty of the heir-apparent, a judgeship or two, and the office of commander of a division of the city guard. Everybody was charmed with his courtesy, his prodigal generosity, and the kindness with which he helped the unfortunate. He had already succeeded in attaching to himself a large number of persons, some of whom were of very high rank, when the death of the Khalif Hakam placed Aurora in a position of great importance, as mother of the boy Khalif, and gave Almanzor the opportunity he needed of making his power felt. The two worked together, and after establishing the child Hishām on the throne, which was only effected by the murder of a rival claimant, he quickly suppressed the conspiracy of the palace "Slavs," who would have nothing to say to the accession of Hishām. The head of the government was Mus-hafy, the chamberlain who had helped Almanzor to climb the first rung of the ladder of power; and his junior readily joined him in his policy. The repression of the Slavs, many of whom were now banished, made the two officials very popular with the people of Cordova, who cordially hated the foreign mercenaries. But this alliance was only for a time: as soon as he saw his way to get rid of the chamberlain, Almanzor was determined to do so without scruple. The first thing, however, was to increase his own popularity. An occasion immediately happened, which the young official boldly seized. The Christians were again becoming overweening on the northern marches, and the Chamberlain Mus-hafy, being no soldier, did not know how to cope with their aggressions. Almanzor, who had been a judge and

an inspector, was no more a soldier than the chamberlain; but he came of a sound old stock, and his ancestor had been one of the few Arabs who had accompanied Tārik and his Berbers in the first invasion of Spain. Without a moment's hesitation or self-distrust, he volunteered to lead the army against the Christians; and so successful was the raid he made upon Leon, and so liberal was his *largesse* to the soldiery, that he returned to Cordova, not only triumphant—a civilian general—but also the idol of the army.

A second campaign was undertaken against the Christians of the north, in which the generalship was really done by Ghālib, the commander of the frontier forces, a brave officer, whom Almanzor adroitly made his friend. Ghālib protested so warmly that the victories were the fruit of the young civilian's talents, and vaunted his sagacity so highly, that the court and people came to believe that there lay a military genius under the cloak of the ex-lawyer—as, indeed, there was. Strengthened by this series of successes, and by Ghālib's support, Almanzor next ousted the son of the chamberlain from the post of prefect of Cordova, and took his place; and so admirably did he exert his authority, that never had the city been so orderly or the law so justly administered. Even his own son was beaten, till he died, because he had transgressed. His father, like Junius Brutus, allowed no exceptions in the execution of the law. By this policy he added to his laurels; he had already won over the army and pleased the populace, and now he had won the favour of all law-abiding citizens. The time had come for a

great stroke of diplomacy. He played the chamberlain off against Ghālib so skilfully, that he widened the breach that already existed between the scarred man of arms and the nerveless clerk who held the functions of Prime Minister, and by inducing the former to throw over an engagement he was making with the chamberlain for an alliance between their families, and to give his daughter to Almanzor instead, he gave the last blow to the old minister. In 978, only two years after the death of Hakam, Almanzor had played his cards so ably, that he was in a position to accuse Mus-hafy of peculation—not without ample reason—and have him arrested, tried, and condemned. For five years the once powerful chamberlain led a wretched life at the heels of Almanzor, and then he died in prison, poisoned probably by his conqueror, in a state of utter destitution, covered only by an old tattered cloak of the jailor. Such was the fate of all who came between Almanzor and his ambition. The chamberlain, from the summit of glory and power, when thousands would come on bended knee to beg his favour, and when even an ex-king of Leon had sought humbly to kiss his hand, had been reduced to want and degradation by a young upstart whose insignificant origin had not crushed his genius.

That same day on which the chamberlain was disgraced, Almanzor stepped into his place. He was now at the height of power, and enjoyed the position of virtual ruler of all Mohammedan Spain. The government of Andalusia consisted of the Khalif in council; but Almanzor had buried the Khalif in his

seraglio; and as for the Council of Vizirs who should advise him concerning affairs of State, Almanzor virtually united it in his own person. From his palace in the suburbs he ruled the whole kingdom; letters and proclamations were issued in his name; he was prayed for from the pulpits and commemorated on the coinage; and he even wore robes of gold tissue woven with his name, such as kings only were wont to wear. He was not, however, safe from the attacks of his enemies. Ambition brings its own dangers, and those who have been trampled upon are apt to turn and avenge themselves. Such was the case with Almanzor. One of the "Slavs," whom he had summarily deposed when they were planning a change in the succession, made an attempt to assassinate him; but it failed, and its author, along with a number of influential persons who had abetted the conspiracy, were arrested, condemned, and crucified.

In Cordova Almanzor was now supreme, for the young Khalif showed no symptoms of rebelling against the tutelage to which he was subjected, and the queen of the harim, Aurora, was still the great minister's friend. One man only could pretend to any sort of equality with Almanzor, and this was Ghālib, his father-in-law. The army admired Almanzor, and wondered at his daring in taking the command of campaigns against the Christians without military experience; but they loved and adored Ghālib, as a type of the true warrior, bred to arms and unconquerable in personal prowess. Ghālib was therefore a formidable rival, and Ghālib must be removed. The Prime Minister set about this task

with his usual quiet determination. Whatever he undertook he carried out with the same immovable composure and iron will. A proof of his character was shown very strikingly one day, when he was seated with the Council of Vizirs, who formed the Cabinet of the Moorish government. They were discussing some public question, when a smell of burnt flesh rose in the chamber, and it was discovered that the minister's leg was being cauterized with red-hot iron while he was calmly debating the affairs of State! Such a man would find little difficulty in disposing of any obstacle—even General Ghālib. He laid his plans carefully, and they never failed. When his measures were a little too strong to be immediately approved by the people, he always had a plan ready for restoring the mob to acquiescence. Thus, when the revolt of several leading men had culminated in the attempted assassination already mentioned, he perceived that he had enemies among the theological and legal classes, and he lost no time in making his peace with them. Summoning a meeting of the chief doctrinal authorities, he asked them to make a list of those works on philosophy which they considered dangerous and heretical. The Moslems of Spain were famous for their rigid orthodoxy, and the philosophers received very harsh treatment from them. They soon decided upon what the Roman Catholic Church calls an "Index Expurgatorius," or list of condemned books, and Almanzor forthwith had the proscribed works publicly burnt. By this simple means, although really a man of broad views and perfectly tolerant of philosophical speculation, he succeeded in making

himself the champion of orthodoxy : the theologians conspired no more against him.²

A man so fertile in expedients would not find much difficulty in getting rid of Ghālib. He first began a series of army reforms, by which he reduced the influence of individual commanders and gained for himself the devotion which had previously been bestowed upon captains of divisions. This he accomplished by drawing his recruits from Africa and from among the Christians of the north, who were of course without any prejudice in favour of any particular Moslem leader, and soon became attached to Almanzor, when they understood his liberality, and were convinced by repeated proofs of his military genius. He was a stern commander, and had been known to cut a man's head off with the culprit's own sword, because the same weapon had been seen gleaming in the dressed ranks when it should have been in its scabbard. But while a martinet in matters of drill and discipline, he was a father to his soldiers so long as they fought well and maintained order. His influence was unbounded. Once, when he sat in camp and saw his men in panic, running in, with the Christians at their heels, he threw himself from his throne, flung his helmet away, and sat down in the dust. The soldiers understood the despairing gesture of their general, and, suddenly turning about, fell upon the Christians, routed them, and pursued them even into the streets of Leon. Moreover, no one could lead them to such vast stores of booty as the man who made more than fifty successful campaigns against the princes of the

² Dozy : *Hist. des Mus. d'Espagne*, livre iii. ch. vi.-xii.

north. The army thus formed of new levies became devoted to their master, and Ghālib and his veterans of the frontier were speedily beaten; Ghālib himself died in an engagement. One other leader, Ja'far, the Prince of Zāb, threatened the peace of Almanzor by his extreme popularity with the troops; and he was presently invited to the minister's hall, made very drunk, and assassinated on his way home. This was by no means a solitary instance of Almanzor's treachery and bloodguiltiness; such acts deprive him of the title of hero to which his many brilliant qualities almost attain, and it is impossible to like him. Yet, with all his sternness and unscrupulousness, Almanzor brought Andalusia to a pitch of glory such as even the great Khalif, Abd-er-Rahmān III, had hardly contemplated. While keeping such hostile factions as remained in Cordova tranquil and powerless; whilst conciliating the people by making splendid additions to the great mosque of Cordova, when he found that they were beginning to grow indignant at the seclusion in which their young Khalif was kept, and were listening to the insinuations of Aurora and the palace party, who had grown tired or jealous of Almanzor; whilst overawing the Khalif himself by his personal influence; whilst keeping a watchful eye, that nothing escaped, upon every department of the administration, and devoting no little time to the cultivation of literature and poetry—amid all these various employments, this indefatigable man waged triumphant war in Africa and spread the dominion of the Khalif along the Barbary coast; and twice a year, in spring and autumn, led his troops, as a matter of course,

against the Christians of Leon and Castile. Like a man of culture, he took his books along with his sword—his books were the poets who always accompanied his campaigns. Never was a general so constantly victorious. Supported by his hardy foreigners, and also by many Christians who were attracted by his pay and the sure prospect of booty, he carried fire and sword through the lands of the north. He captured Leon, and razed its massive walls and towers to the ground; he seized Barcelona; and, worst of all, he even ventured into the passes of Galicia, and levelled to the ground the splendid church of Santiago de Compostella, which was the focus of countless pilgrimages and almost formed the Kaaba of Europe. The shrine of St. James, however, where numerous miracles attested the presence of the saint's relics, was spared. It is said that when the conqueror entered the deserted city he found of all its inhabitants but a solitary monk, who still prayed before the holy shrine. "What doest thou here?" demanded Almanzor. "I am at my prayers," replied the old monk. His life was immediately spared, and a guard was set round the tomb to protect him and it from the violence of the soldiery, who proceeded to destroy everything else in the city. Almanzor well deserved his title of "Victorious," which was assumed after one of these campaigns. So long as his armies made their half-yearly expeditions, the Christian princes were paralysed, and Leon and the neighbouring country became a mere tributary province of the kingdom of Cordova. Castile, Barcelona, and Navarre were repeatedly defeated. He had taken the very

capitals — Leon, Pamplona, Barcelona, and even Santiago de Campostella. Once he had brought the King of Navarre to his knees simply because the uncompromising Minister learned that there remained one captive Moslem woman in his kingdom. She was instantly delivered up, and many apologies were tendered for the inadvertence. Another time Almanzor found himself and his army cut off by the Christians, who had occupied an impregnable position in his rear, and barred his return to Cordova. Nothing daunted, he ordered his troops to foray the country round about, and collect materials for sheds, and implements of husbandry. Soon the Christians, who dared not attack, but believed they held the Moslems in their grasp, perceived them deliberately setting up barracks, and contentedly tilling the soil and preparing for the various operations of agriculture. Their astonished inquiries were answered by the cool reply, "We do not think it is worth while to go home, as the next campaign will begin almost immediately; so we are making ourselves comfortable for the interval!" Filled with consternation at the prospect of a permanent Moslem occupation, the Christians not only abandoned their strong position and allowed the enemy to go scot free, laden with booty, but even supplied them with baggage mules to carry off the spoils!

Almanzor, however, though invincible by man, was not proof against death. After a last victorious campaign against Castile, he was seized with mortal illness, and died at Medinaceli. The relief of the Christians is expressed in the simple comment of the monkish annalist: "In 1002 died Almanzor, and was buried in hell."



X.

THE BERBERS IN POWER.

THE best constituted countries will occasionally fall into anarchy when the will that has guided them is removed ; and this is one of the strong arguments of those who hold that a State is best governed by the mass of its people. Keep a people in leading strings, it is said, and the moment the strings break, or are worn out, the people will not know where to go. The theory, however, is only a general statement of an obvious truth, and its application depends greatly upon the character of the people. Some nations seem always to need leading strings, and none has yet become absolutely independent of the guidance of a dominant mind ; nor would such independence be desirable, unless a dead level of mediocrity be our ideal of a State. Andalusia, at all events, could not dispense with her leaders ; and the instant her leader died, down fell the State. When "great Cæsar fell," then "I and you and all of us fell down," not so much for sympathy as incapacity. The multiplicity of mutually hostile parties and factions made anything resembling a settled constitution impossible in the dominion of the Moors. Only a strong hand could restrain the animosity of the opposing creeds

and races in Andalusia ; and those who have considered the character and history of Ireland, and the irreconcilable enmity which prevails between the north and the south in that island of factions, will allow that the Arabs were not the only people who found mixed races and religions impossible to govern with the smoothness of a homogeneous nation.

The history of Andalusia, so far as we have told it, has been a series of ups and downs. First we saw a magnificent raid, led by born soldiers, ending in an unexpected conquest. Hardly was the peninsula won, when the jealousies and divisions of the various elements that made up the invading host bade fair to destroy the harvest just reaped by the sword. Then the strong man, the born king, appeared in the person of the first Abd-er-Rahmān, and Andalusia once more became, outwardly, one dominion. "O King, live for ever!" was the conventional form of address to the Persian monarch, and one is tempted to think that its realization might be the solution of all political troubles, provided the right king was chosen for immortality. The first king of Andalusia was naturally not immortal ; and the consequence of his death was what always happens when a strong repressing force is withdrawn : the people fell again into civil war and anarchy. Yet again the God-gifted king came to rescue the nation. The Great Khalif imposed law and order throughout his dominions, beat back the invader, and trod the rebel under foot. For fifty years Andalusia was a paradise of peace and prosperity ; had the third Abd-er-Rahmān been immortal she might have been peaceful to this day, and we should

never have heard of the persecutions of Jews and Moors, of the terrible work of the Inquisition, or even (to come to very small things) the Carlists. It is a pity that such dreams cannot be true. But the Great Khalif had not left the country unprovided with a leader. A king had saved Spain twice, and now it was a prime minister who held the State together. Almanzor, the unconquerable minister, was able to make his masterful will felt to every corner of the peninsula ; but Almanzór, too, was mortal, and when he died, and (as the monk piously hoped) "was buried in hell," the land which owed him her prosperity and wealth, her perfect orderliness and security, became a prey to all the hostile forces which only his iron hand could repress. For eighty years Andalusia was torn to pieces by jealous chiefs, aggressive and quarrelsome tyrants, Moors, Arabs, Slavs, and Spaniards ; and though many of the old roots of dissension had been plucked up by time, and the jealousies that arose from memories of tribal glories were sometimes forgotten because men had lost their pedigrees, there were enough rivalries, personal, racial, and religious, to make Andalusia as much a hell upon earth as even the monkish chronicler could have desired for a burial-place for Almanzor.

For six years after the Prime Minister's death, his son Muzaffar maintained the unity of the kingdom. Then followed the deluge of greedy adventurers, rival khalifs, and impudent pretenders. The Spaniards, who formed after all the bulk of the population in which they were merged, loved to be ruled by a king ; they liked a dynasty, and were proud of the

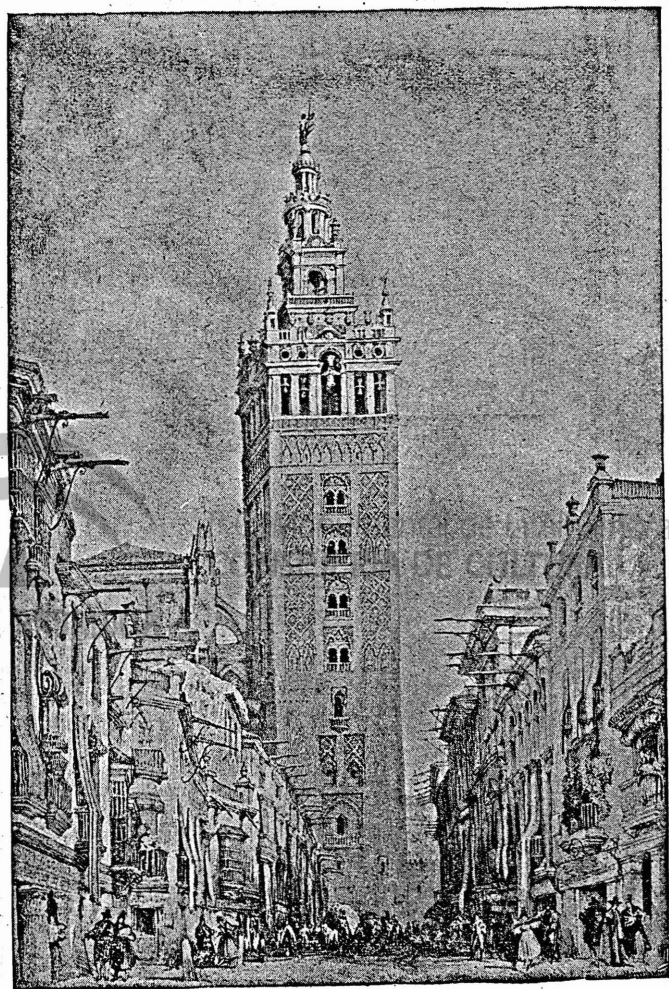
memories of the great Omeyyad house. The rule of a minister, however just and good, was not their idea of government ; the king must rule by himself. So they rebelled against the authority of a second son of Almanzor, who had provoked them by publicly putting in his claim to succeed to the throne, and they insisted on the Khalif taking the reins of State into his own weak hands. The unfortunate Hishām, thus suddenly dragged out of the seclusion of his harīm, where he had been a happy prisoner for thirty years, in vain implored the people not to demand impossibilities of him ; they would have him rule, and when it became clear to everybody that the feeble middle-aged man was as helpless as an infant, they made him abdicate, and set up another member of his family in his place. This was really the end of the Omeyyad dynasty of Andalusia. Khalif after khalif was set up for the next twenty years ; one was the puppet of the Cordovans, another was the puppet of the Slav guards ; a third was the puppet of the Berbers ; a fourth was a sort of figure-head to mask the ambition of the ruler of Seville ; but all were puppets of some faction, and had no vestige of real authority. The throne-room in the palace became the scene of murder after murder, as khalif succeeded khalif. One poor wretch hid himself in the oven of the bath-room, till he was discovered, dragged out, and butchered before the eyes of his successor, whose turn was not far off. Hishām II., the poor creature who had been kept in a state of perpetual infancy by Almanzor and the queen-mother Aurora, was forced to play his part in the raree-show. He was again set

up, and again pulled down ; and the silken chains of his imprisonment among the beauties of his harim were exchanged for the gloomy walls of a real dungeon. What became of him afterwards is unknown. His women said that he had contrived to escape, and had taken refuge in Asia, or at Mekka. The throne possessed few attractions for the miserable Khalif, who loved seclusion and pious duties ; and he must have known that his presence in Andalusia gave a rallying cry to ambitious partisans, and could only lead to further strife. It was natural that he should prefer to end his days in the exercise of devotion at the holy temple of Islam. An impostor, who closely resembled Hishām in person, set himself up as the Khalif at Seville, and was acknowledged as a convenient puppet by the powerful lord of that city ; but the real Hishām had disappeared for ever, and no one heard of him again.

How pitiful was the fate of the unhappy Omeyyads, who allowed the ferocious Moors, or Slavs, in turn, to use them as pieces on their chess-board, may be seen from what happened at the deposition of the third Hishām. By order of the chief men of the city, this mild and humane prince was dragged with his family to a dismal vault attached to the great mosque of Cordovā. Here, in total darkness, half frozen with the cold and damp, and poisoned by the foul air of the place, the wretched Khalif sat, holding his only child, a little girl, to his breast, while his wives hung round him in scanty clothing, weeping, shivering, and dishevelled. They had been long without food, and their inhuman jailers had left them

unnoticed for hours. The sheykhs then came to announce to Hishām the decision of the council which had been hastily summoned to debate upon his fate; but the poor Khalif, who was trying to restore a little warmth to the child in his arms, interrupted them: "Yes! yes! I will submit to their decision, whatever it is; but for God's sake get me some bread; this poor child is dying of hunger." The sheykhs were touched—they had not designed such torments—and the bread was brought. Then they began again: "Sire, they have determined that you shall be taken at daybreak to be imprisoned in such and such a fortress." "So be it," answered the Khalif; "I have only one favour to ask: permit us to have a lantern, for the darkness of this dismal place appals us." The lord spiritual and temporal of the Mussulmans of Spain had fallen to such straits that he had to beg for bread and a candle.

Such scenes as this were now frequent in Cordova. Each revolution brought its fresh crop of horrors. The people of Cordova, who had greatly increased in numbers, had also nourished those independent sentiments which the immense development of trade and manual industry, and the consequent creation of a prosperous artisan class, generally promote; and when they overturned Almanzor's dynasty, the mob broke out in the usual manner of mobs, and wreaked their vengeance by pillaging the beautiful palace which the great Minister had built in the neighbourhood of the capital for the use of himself and the government officials. When they had ransacked the priceless treasures of the palace, they abandoned it to



THE GIRALDA AT SEVILLE.

the flames. Massacres, plundering, and assassination went on unchecked for four days. Cordova became a shambles. Then the Berbers had their turn; the imperious Slav guards, who had won the cordial detestation of the people, were succeeded by the brutal Berbers, who rioted in the plunder of the city. Wherever these barbarians went, slaughter, fire, and outrage followed. Palace after palace was ransacked and burnt, and the lovely city of Ez-Zahrā, the delight of the Great Khalif, was captured by treachery, sacked, and set on fire, so that there remained of all the exquisite art that two khālifas had lavished upon its ornament nothing but a heap of blackened stones. Its garrison was put to the sword; its inhabitants fled for refuge to the mosque; but the Berbers had neither scruples nor bowels, and men, women, and children were butchered in the sacred precincts (1010).

While the capital was torn to pieces by savage bands of Slavs and Berbers, and was setting up one khalif after another, varying the family of Omeyya with that of Hammūd, or trying the effect of a governing town council, the provinces had long thrown off all allegiance to the central State. Every city or district had its own independent lord—so soon had the consolidating effects of Almanzor's rule disappeared. The Spaniards themselves enjoyed little of this sudden accession of small powers. They had to look on and lament, while foreigners divided their land among them. Berber generals fattened upon the South; the Slavs subdued the East; "the rest fell to parvenus or to the few noble families who had by some accident survived the blows which Abd-er-Rahmān III. and

Almanzor had dealt at the aristocracy. Cordova and Seville, the two most important cities of Andalus, had set up republics,"¹ in name, however, rather than fact; for the Moslem First Consul was a very close likeness of the Emperor. In the first half of the eleventh century some twenty independent dynasties came into power in as many towns or provinces, among which the Abbadites of Seville, the Hammūd family at Malaga and Algeciras, the Zirites at Granada, the Beny Hūd at Zaragoza, the Dhu-n-Nūn dynasty at Toledo, and the rulers of Valencia, Murcia, and Almeria, were the most important. Some of these dynasts were good rulers, most of them were sanguinary tyrants, but (curiously) not the less polished gentlemen, who delighted to do honour to learning and *belles lettres*, and made their courts the homes of poets and musicians. Mo'temid of Seville, for instance, was a prince of many accomplishments, yet he kept a garden of heads, cut off his enemies' shoulders, which he regarded with great pride and delight. As a whole, however, the country was a prey to disorder as intolerable and as dangerous as that which had prevailed when the Great Khalif came to the throne. It was not quite the same in character; for there was no great Christian rebellion like that of Ibn-Hāfsūn; but the anarchy was as universal, and the danger of a total collapse more imminent than ever.

For the Christians of the north were now on the move. They saw their opportunity, and they made the most of it. Alfonso VI., who had united under

¹ Dozy, livre iii.

his sway the three kingdoms of the Asturias, Leon, and Castile, understood his part perfectly. He saw that he only had to allow the various Moslem princes rope enough, and they would proceed to hang themselves with the utmost expedition. These shortsighted tyrants, indeed, caring only for their petty individual power, and eagerly aiding in anything that could weaken their rivals, threw themselves at Alfonso's feet, and implored his assistance whenever they found themselves overmastered by a more powerful neighbour. Partly in consequence of acts of this kind, and partly in terror at the furious raids which the Castilians made throughout the country, even as far as the port of Cadiz, the Moslem States were almost all tributaries of the King of Castile, who took care to annually demand heavier and more heavy tribute, as the price of his friendship, in order to lay up stores for the great conquest which he had in mind. The north was poor, and with a fine irony he trusted to the immense contributions of his vassals among the Andalusian princes to provide the sinews of the war which should destroy them. Divided and jealous as were the Mohammedan dynasts, there was a limit to their patience. When Alfonso had bathed in the ocean by Hercules' Pillars, rejoicing that at last he had traversed all Spain and touched the watery border; when he had established a garrison of more than twelve thousand daring men in the fortress of Aledo, in the very midst of the Moslem territories, whence they ruthlessly emerged to harry the whole country and commit every sort of savage outrage; when Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar, "my Cid the

Challenger," had established himself in Valencia with his Castilians, and laid waste the neighbouring lands; when it became clear to every one that Alfonso meant nothing less than the reconquest of all Spain, and the extermination of all Moslems—then at last the Mohammedan princes awoke to their danger, and began to take measures for their defence. Helpless in themselves and, in spite of the common danger, despairing of any firm collected action among so many and such hostile factions, they took the only other course possible—they called in the aid of the foreigner. Some, indeed, foresaw dangers in such aid; but Mo'tamid, the King of Seville, silenced them: "Better be a camel-driver in African deserts," he said, "than a swineherd in Castile!" The power they required was not far off. A new Berber revolution had taken place in North Africa, and a sect of fanatics, called the marabouts or saints (*Almoravides*, as the Spaniards named them), had conquered the whole country from Algiers to Senegal. They were much the same sort of people as Tārik and his followers, and they were ready enough to cross the water and conquer the fertile provinces of Spain. They made it a favour, indeed, and evinced supreme indifference to the attractions of Andalusia; but they came, and it was easy to see that they meant to stay.

When the Almoravides first came over like a cloud of locusts to devour the country thus offered to their appetite, they found the way perfectly open. The mass of the people of Andalusia rejoiced to see once more a strong arm coming to repress the disorder which had destroyed their well-being ever since the

death of the great Almanzor ; the petty tyrants either had invited them or could not resist them, and were, at all events, glad to see the Castilians successfully repelled. The Almoravide king, Yūsuf, the son of Teshfin, after appropriating Algeciras, as a harbour and necessary basis of operations, marched unopposed through the provinces, and met Alfonso at Zallāka, or, as the Spaniards call it, Sacralias, near Badajoz, October 23, 1086. Alfonso, as he looked upon his own splendid army, exclaimed, " With men like these I would fight devils, angels, and ghosts ! " Nevertheless he resorted to a ruse to score a surprise over the joint forces of the Berbers and Andalusians ; but Yūsuf was not easily disconcerted. He took the Castilian army skilfully in front and rear, and, thus placed between two fires, in spite of the obstinate resistance which the tried warriors of Castile knew well how to offer, he crushed them utterly. Alfonso barely escaped with some five hundred horsemen. Many thousands of the best sword-arms in Castile lay stiff and nerveless on that fatal field.

After the victory, Yūsuf the Almoravide returned to Africa, leaving three thousand of his Berbers to help the Andalusians. He had promised to make no annexations, and, except in retaining the harbour of Algeciras, he had so far kept his word. The Andalusians were delighted with him ; they praised his valour and exulted over the saving of the land ; they admired his simple piety, which let him do nothing without the advice of his priests, and which had induced him to abolish all taxes in Spain except those few authorized by the Khalif Omar in the

earliest days of Islam. The upper classes, indeed, ridiculed his ignorance and rough manners; he could speak but little Arabic, and when the poets recited their charming verses in his honour he generally missed the point of the compliment—no slight offence to the polished and elegant Andalusians, who never forgot their poetry even when they were up to their knees in blood. Yūsuf was to them a mere barbarian. But their contempt for his education did not greatly matter; they could not do without his sword, and the vast mass of the people, thinking rather of comfort than culture, were ready to receive him joyfully as sovereign of Andalusia. In 1090 the King of Seville again prayed the Almoravide to come over and help him against the Christians, who were as bold as ever, and carried on a perpetual guerilla warfare from their stronghold of Aledo. He acceded, with assumed unwillingness, and this time he directed his attacks quite as much against the Andalusian princes as against the Christians of Castile. These foolish tyrants dinned into his ears innumerable complaints against each other, and mutually betrayed themselves to such an extent, that Yūsuf very soon had grounds for distrusting the whole body of them. He had on his side the people, and, above all, the priests. These soon absolved him from his promise not to annex Andalusia, and even went so far as to urge him that it was his duty, in God's name, to restore peace and happiness to the distracted land. Always under the influence of his spiritual advisers, and sufficiently prompted by his own ambition without any such external impetus, Yūsuf readily fell in with this view

and before the year 1090 was out he had begun the subjugation of Spain. He entered Granada in November, and distributed its wonderful treasures—its diamonds, pearls, rubies, and other precious jewels, its splendid ornaments of gold and silver, its crystal cups, and gorgeous carpets, its unheard-of riches of every sort—among his officers, who had never in their lives seen anything approaching such magnificence. Tarifa fell in December, and the next year saw the capture of Seville and many of the chief cities of Andalusia. An army sent by Alfonso, under the famous captain, Alvar Fañez, was defeated, and all the south lay at the feet of the Almoravides—save only Valencia, which no assault could carry so long as the Cid lived to direct the defence. In 1102, after the hero's death, Valencia succumbed, and now the whole of Mohammedan Spain, with the exception of Toledo, had become a province of the great African empire of the Almoravides.

The mass of the people had reason to be satisfied, for a time, with the result of their appeal to the foreigner. A minority, consisting of all the men of position and of education, were not so well pleased with the experiment. The reign of the Puritans had come, and without a Milton to soften its austerity. The poets and men of letters, who had thriven at the numerous little courts, where the most bloodthirsty despot had always a hearty and appreciative welcome for a man of genius, and would generally cap his verses with impromptu lines, were disgusted with the savage Berbers, who could not understand their refinements, and who, when they sometimes attempted to form

themselves upon the model of the cultivated tyrants who had preceded them, made so poor an imitation that it was impossible to help laughing. The free-thinkers and men of broad views saw nothing very encouraging in the accession to power of the fanatical priests who formed the 'Almoravides' advisers, and who were not only rabidly opposed to anything that savoured of philosophy, but read their Koran exclusively through the spectacles of a single commentator. The Jews and Christians soon discovered what the tolerance of the Almoravides was : they were cruelly persecuted, massacred, or else transported. The old noble families, the few that remained, and the remnants of the petty princes, were in despair when they saw the stranger, whom they had bidden to their aid, taking up his permanent station in their dominions, and recalled with terror the doings of similar hordes of Berbers in the latter days of the Cordovan Khalifate. But the mass of the people were glad enough to see the Almoravides staying in the land ; their lives and goods were at last safe, which had never been the case when the country was cut up into a number of separate principalities, few of which were strong enough to protect their subjects outside the castle gates ; the roads were free from the brigands who had made travelling impossible for many years, and the Christians, instead of pouncing upon unsuspecting villages and harrying the land, were driven back to their own territory, where a wholesome dread of the Berbers, and a long strife among themselves, kept them at a safe distance. Order and tranquillity reigned for the moment ; the

law was respected, and the people once more dreamed of wealth and happiness.

The dream was a delusion. There was no prosperity in store for the subjects of the Almoravides. What had happened to the Romans and the Goths now happened to the Berbers. They came to Spain hardy rough warriors, unused to ease or luxuries, delighting in feats of strength and prowess, filled with a fierce but simple zeal for their religion. They had not been long in the enjoyment of the fruits of their victory when all the demoralization which the soft luxuries of Capua brought upon the soldiers of Hannibal came also upon them. They lost their martial habits, their love of deeds of daring, their pleasure in enduring hardships in the brave way of war—they lost all their manliness with inconceivable rapidity. In twenty years there was no Berber army that could be trusted to repel the attacks of the Castilians; in its place was a disorganized crowd of sodden debauchees, miserable poltroons, who had drunk and fooled away their manhood's vigour and become slaves to all the appetites that make men cowards. Instead of preserving order, they had now become the disturbers of order; brigands, when they could pluck up courage to attack a peaceful traveller; thieves on all promising opportunities. The country was worse off than ever it had been, even under the petty tyrants. The enfeebled Berbers were at the beck and call of bad women and ambitious priests, and they would counterorder one day what they had commanded the day before. Such rulers do not rule for long. A great revolution was sapping the power

of the Almoravides in Africa, and the Castilians under Alfonso the Battler resumed their raids into Andalusia. In 1125 they harried the south for a whole year. In 1133 they burnt the very suburbs of Cordova, Seville, and Carmona, and sacked Xeres and set it in a blaze. The Christian forays now extended from Leon to the Straits of Gibraltar, yet the besotted government did nothing to meet the danger. Exasperated at its feebleness, the people finally rose in their wrath and drove their impotent rulers from the land.

"At last," says the Arab historian, "when the people of Andalus saw that the empire of the Almoravides was falling to pieces, they waited no longer, but, casting away the mask of dissimulation, broke out into open rebellion. Every petty governor, chief, or man of influence, who could command a few followers and had a castle to retire to in case of need, styled himself Sultan, and assumed the other insignia of royalty; and Andalus had as many kings as there were towns in it. Ibn-Hamdīn rose at Cordova, Ibn-Maymūn at Cadiz, Ibn-Kāsy and Ibn-Wezīr Seddaray held the west, Lamtūny Granada, Ibn-Mardanīsh, Valencia; some Andalusians, others Berbers. All, however, shortly disappeared before the banners of Abd-el-Mumin, who deprived every one of them of their dominions, and subjected the whole of Andalus to his rule." Abd-el-Mumin was the leader of the Almohades, who succeeded to the Almoravide power in Africa and Spain.

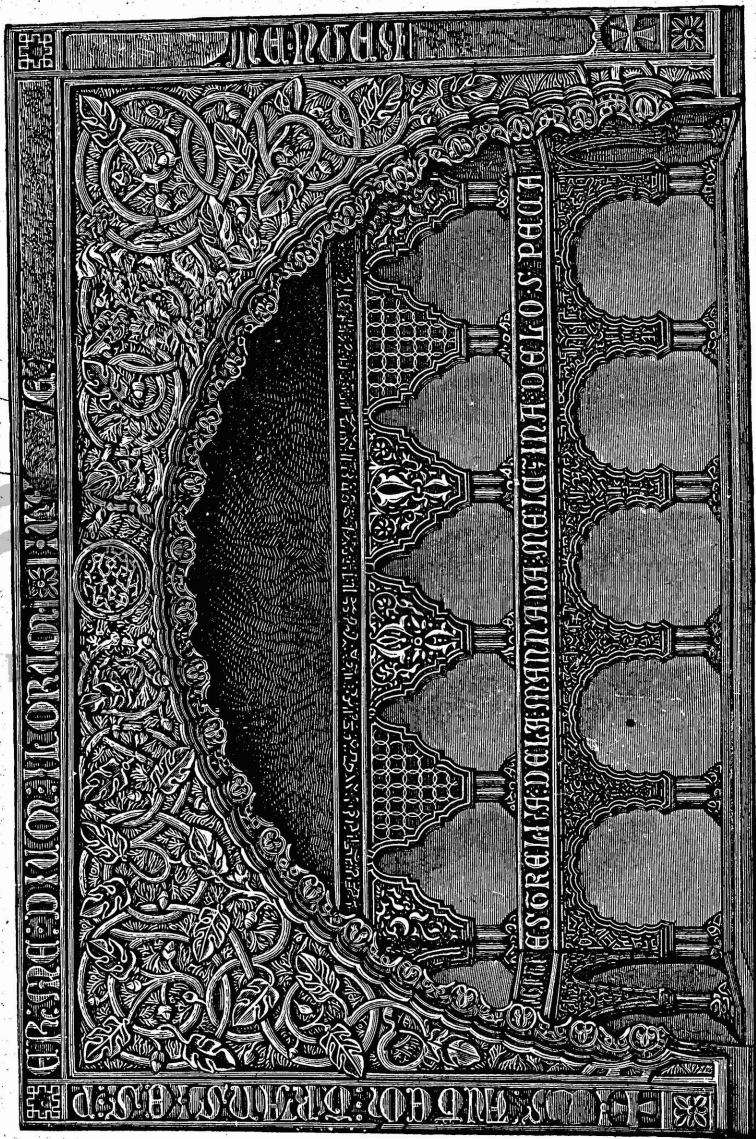


XI.

MY CID THE CHALLENGER.

IT is time to glance at the opponents of the Moors in the North. We have seen how Pelayo gathered together the remnant of the Goths in the inaccessible caves and fastnesses of the Asturian mountains; how this remnant soon advanced beyond its early boundaries, and, taking courage from the indifference or the disunion of the Berber tribes who were quartered on the frontiers of the Mohammedan dominions, gradually recovered most of the territory north of the Sierra de Guadarrama, and there established the kingdom of Leon and the county of Castile; while the separate kingdom of Navarre arose further east, beneath the Pyrenees. We have also seen how these Christian kingdoms were in a state of almost constant war with their Moorish neighbours, and might have been seriously dangerous but for the no less constant divisions which neutralized the various Christian States. So long as the kingdom of Cordova remained strong and undivided, while the Christians of Leon, Castile, and Navarre wasted their vigour in civil wars, the Moors were fully equal to the task of preserving their dominions. But when the kingdom of Cordova fell, and Andalusia became a prey to

petty dynasties, each of which thought first of its own interests, and then perhaps of the interests of the Mohammedan power at large, the Christians became more venturesome, and were enabled to wring from the Moors a considerable accession of territory. During the confusion of the eleventh century, when almost every city in Andalusia formed a State by itself, we have seen that the Christians scoured the land of the Moslems with their victorious armies, and exacted tribute from many of the most important Moorish princes. At this time Fernando the First had united the greater part of the north under his own sceptre. He had combined the conflicting provinces of Leon and Castile, and incorporated the Asturias and Galicia in his dominions. Fernando was undoubtedly the most powerful monarch in all Spain at this time; he had annexed Lormego, Viseu, and Coimbra in Portugal, and took tribute from the kings of Zaragoza, Toledo, Badajoz, and Seville; and though his imprudent division of his dominions among his three sons and two daughters involved the north in a series of civil wars after his death, Alfonso VI. "the Valiant" eventually succeeded in cementing the scattered fragments together again, and henceforward the progress of the Christian power in Spain was inevitable. It was only the immense bribes of the Mohammedan princes (who paid blackmail to a fabulous amount to buy off the Christians), and the armies of the Almoravides in the background, that prevented the entire reconquest of Andalusia by the Christians at this period of Moorish weakness. As it was, the Moors were in no sense their own masters;



BOTICA DE LOS TEMPLARIOS, TOLEDO.

JUNTA

they were harassed between the dread of Alfonso and the scarcely less alarming supremacy of their Almoravide ally ; and in the end they had to succumb to the latter. At this time we find the Christians interfering in most of the political affairs of the Mohammedan states ; Christian armies overrunning their territories and demanding heavy tribute for their goodwill ; and so complicated became the alliances between the two parties that many Christian mercenaries were to be found in the armies of the Moors, vigorously assisting in campaigns of devastation and sacrilege through Christian provinces, while Moors were ready to join the Castilians against their fellow-Moslems. It was, in short, a time of adventurers, of paid mercenaries, of men who fought for personal interest and profit, instead of for king and country.

We should make a great mistake if we regarded the warriors of Leon and Castile as anything approaching an ideal of knightly honour and chivalry, and a still greater error would be to imagine them polished, cultivated gentlemen. The Christians of the north formed the most striking possible contrast to their Moorish rivals. The Arabs, rough tribesmen as they had been at their first arrival, had softened, by contact with the Andalusians and by their own natural disposition to enjoyment and luxury, into a highly civilized people, delighting in poetry and elegant literature, devoted to the pursuit of learning, and, above all, determined to enjoy life to the utmost. Their intellectual tastes were unusually fine and delicate ; they were moved by

emotions which could only be felt by men of taste and *savoir vivre*. They were romantic, imaginative, poetical, speculative, and would bestow on a well-turned épigram what would have sufficed to pay a regiment of soldiers. The most tyrannical and blood-thirsty among their despots was held in some contempt if he were not also something of a poet, or at least instinctively appreciative of polished wit and courtly eloquence. Music, oratory, as well as the severer pursuits of science, seemed to come naturally to this brilliant people; and they possessed in a high degree that quality of critical perception and delicate appreciation of the finer shades of expression which in the present day we associate with the French nation.

The Christians of the north were as unlike this as can well be conceived. Though descended from an older kingdom, the northern states had most of the qualities of new nations. They were rude and uncultivated; few of their princes possessed the elements of what could be called education, and they were too poor to indulge in the refined luxuries of the Moorish sovereigns. The Christians were simply rough warriors, as fond of fighting as even their Moslem antagonists, but even better prepared by their hard and necessarily self-denying lives for the endurance of long campaigns and the performance of desperate deeds of valour. They had no idea of the high standard of chivalrous conduct which poets afterwards infused into their histories; they were men of the sword, and little besides. Their poverty made them any man's servants; they sold their valour to him

who paid them best; they fought to get a livelihood. We have seen how the great minister Almanzor won his victories against Leon and took Santiago with the aid of a large contingent of the Leonese themselves, who perceived clearly enough on which side their fortunes were to be made. The history of the eleventh century in Spain is full of such examples of the employment of Christian *chevaliers d'industrie* by Moorish princes; but of these none has ever attained such celebrity as the Cid, the national hero of Spain.

The Cid's proper name was Rodrigo Diaz of Bivar, and he was called the *Cid* because that was the title which his Moorish followers naturally gave him. A Mohammedan gentleman is still addressed in Egypt and elsewhere by the title *Sid*, which is a corruption of the word *Seyyid*, meaning "master." The Cid, or "master," was also styled *Campeador*, which signifies "champion," or, more accurately, "challenger," because his exceeding prowess made him the natural challenger in those single combats which in Spanish wars commonly preceded a general engagement between two armies. A famous warrior would advance before the ranks, as Goliath of Gath stood forth before the armies of Israel, and challenge the opposing forces to send him out a champion; and none was more renowned for his triumphs in this manner of warfare than Rodrigo Diaz, "myo Cid el Campeador," as the old chronicler affectionately calls him. It is not easy to decide how much of the splendid history which has gathered round the exploits of the Cid is true. The Christian chroniclers stopped at nothing when they began to describe

their national hero; and the enthusiasm that did not shrink from relating how the King of Leon seized Paris, and conquered the French, Germans, Italians, and even the Persians, can be trusted still less when it sounds the glories of the beloved Cid. The Spanish ballads surround their hero with a saintly aureole of all the virtues, and forget that many of these virtues would not have been understood or appreciated by the Cid himself or his contemporaries in Castile. The Arabic writers are generally more trustworthy, but their judgment can hardly have been unbiassed when they spoke of a Christian who worked such misery to the Moslems of Valencia as did the famous Campeador. Yet even they call him a "miracle of God."

In this critical age we are frequently obliged to abandon with regret the most charming traditions of our childhood's histories; and the Cid has not been spared. A special book has been written by an eminent Orientalist to prove that the redoubtable Challenger was by no means the hero he was supposed to be; that he was treacherous and cruel, a violater of altars, and a breaker of his own good faith. Professor Dozy maintains that the romantic history of the Cid is a tissue of inventions, and he has written an account of "the real Cid" to counteract these misleading narratives. He finds his criticisms mainly on the Arabic historians, in whom, despite their national and religious bias, he places as blind a reliance as less learned people have placed in the *Chronicle of the Cid*. Yet it is surprising how trifling are the differences that can be detected between his "real Cid" and that romantic *Chronicle of the Cid*,

the substance of which was compiled by Alfonso the Learned only half a century after the Cid's death, and which Robert Southey translated into English in 1805 with such skill and charm of style that his version has ever since been almost as much a classic as the original. Every one can separate for himself the obviously legendary incidents in the delightful old *Chronicle* without any assistance from the Arabic historians, who deal chiefly with one period alone of the Cid's career; and the best popular account of the hero, in discriminating hands and with due allowances, is still Southey's fascinating *Chronicle*. The Cid of the *Chronicle* is not at all the same as the Cid of the Romances; and while we cheerfully abandon the latter immaculate personage, we may still believe in the former. Of course our Cid had his faults, and was guilty of not a few thoroughly indefensible acts. He was no very orthodox champion of the faith, for he fought as well for the Moors as for the Christians, and would as dispassionately rob a church as a mosque. But all this is clear enough to any one who reads the *Chronicle*, and it does not make the Cid anything but what he always was—a hero of the rude days of yore. If we are to limit our definition of heroism to characters that display all Christian virtues, long-suffering, gentleness, and pity, we shall have to dismiss most of our old friends. Achilles was not very gentle or compassionate when he dragged the body of Hector round the walls of Troy: but Achilles is the hero of the Iliad. Nine out of ten of the heroes of antiquity committed a host of acts which we moderns, with our superfine sensibilities;

call cruel, ungenerous, even dastardly. It is a pure perversion of history to apply latter-day codes of morality to the heroes of bygone ages. Let us admit that they are not all gold; and then let us delight in their great deeds, the mighty swing of their sword-arm, the crushing shock of their onset, their tall stature and flashing eyes as they ride to meet their foes. We do not expect them to be philosophers or strict advocates of the theories of political economy. We are quite satisfied with them as they are: heroes, —brave, gallant leaders of men.

The Cid was a real hero to the Spaniards: first, because he fought so magnificently, and that used once to be title enough to reverence; secondly, because, like the mythical Bernardo del Carpio and the real Fernando Gonzalez, he was the champion of Castile, and had bearded the King of Leon, and thus represented the immemorial jealousy which the Castilians entertained for the powerful neighbours who absorbed their province; and thirdly, because the minstrels forgot his long alliance with the Moors, or contrived to give it a disinterested aspect, and remembered him only as the great champion of the Christian people against the infidels. But, the very cause which specially commended him to the Castilians, his insubordination to King Alfonso, made him a less perfect hero to the writer of the *Cronica General*, from which the *Chronicle of the Cid* was extracted. That writer or compiler, Alfonso the Learned, King of Leon and Castile, could not approve the haughty independence of the Cid towards his own forerunner the sixth Alfonso. Hence in

Southey's version of the *Chronicle* (which is enriched with many extracts from the *Poem of the Cid* and other sources) we have a check upon the excessive adulation of the ballads and romances. There is no lack of details in the work which are anything but creditable to the Cid; but, nevertheless, the true heroic character, with all its faults and limitations, is well sustained, and the record forms a wonderfully interesting picture of a stirring time and the greatest figure among the Spanish chevaliers.

The story of the Cid would fill a volume by itself; all we can attempt here is to extract a few of the most striking passages of the *Chronicle*. The youth of the hero is, to a large extent, merged in myth; he first comes into historical documents in 1064, when, though scarcely more than twenty, he had already won his title of Challenger by a triumphant single combat with a knight of Navarre, and was soon afterwards appointed commander-in-chief of the forces of Castile. He helped Sancho of Castile to overcome his brother Alfonso of Leon, by a surprise which savoured strongly of treachery, but which passed for good strategy in those rough-and-ready times. After the murder of Sancho by Bellido, under the walls of Zamora, the Cid passed into the service of his successor, the very Alfonso whom he had before driven into exile. The king at first welcomed the invincible knight of Castile to his court, and married him to his own cousin; but jealous rivals poisoned his mind, already filled with the memory of past wrongs, against Rodrigo (or Ruy Diez, as he is styled in the *Chronicle*), and in 1081 the Cid was banished from his dominions. The *Chronicle* must tell the story of his farewells: