

to receive them, and pour forth their grateful acknowledgments, while the two commanders, embracing each other in the presence of their united armies, pledged themselves to a mutual oblivion of all past grievances; thus affording to the nation the best possible earnest of future successes, in the voluntary extinction of a feud, which had desolated it for so many generations.

Notwithstanding the kindly feelings excited between the two armies, a dispute had wellnigh arisen respecting the division of the spoil, in which the duke's army claimed a share, as having contributed to secure the conquest which their more fortunate countrymen had effected. But these discontents were appeased, though with some difficulty, by their noble leader, who besought his men not to tarnish the laurels already won, by mingling a sordid avarice with the generous motives which had prompted them to the expedition. After the necessary time devoted to repose and refreshment, the combined armies proceeded to evacuate Alhama, and having left in garrison Don Diego Merlo, with a corps of troops of the hermandad, returned into their own territories.<sup>17</sup>

King Ferdinand, after receiving the reply of the duke of Medina Sidonia, had pressed forward his march by the way of Cordova, as far as Lucena, with the intention of throwing himself at all hazards into Alhama. He was not without much difficulty dissuaded from this by his nobles, who represented

The sovereigns at Cordova.

<sup>17</sup> Pulgar, Reyes Católicos, pp. 183 - 186. - Oviedo, Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial. 28.

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the temerity of the enterprise, and its incompetency to any good result, even should he succeed, with the small force of which he was master. On receiving intelligence that the siege was raised, he returned to Cordova, where he was joined by the queen towards the latter part of April. Isabella had been employed in making vigorous preparation for carrying on the war, by enforcing the requisite supplies, and summoning the crown vassals, and the principal nobility of the north, to hold themselves in readiness to join the royal standard in Andalusia. After this, she proceeded by rapid stages to Cordova, notwithstanding the state of pregnancy, in which she was then far advanced.

Alhama invested again by the Moors.

Here the sovereigns received the unwelcome information, that the king of Granada, on the retreat of the Spaniards, had again sat down before Alhama; having brought with him artillery, from the want of which he had suffered so much in the preceding siege. This news struck a damp into the hearts of the Castilians, many of whom recommended the total evacuation of a place, "which" they said, "was so near the capital that it must be perpetually exposed to sudden and dangerous assaults; while, from the difficulty of reaching it, it would cost the Castilians an incalculable waste of blood and treasure in its defence. It was experience of these evils, which had led to its abandonment in former days, when it had been recovered by the Spanish arms from the Saracens."

Isabella's firmness.

Isabella was far from being shaken by these arguments. "Glory," she said, "was not to be

won without danger. The present war was one of peculiar difficulties and danger, and these had been well calculated before entering upon it. The strong and central position of Alhama made it of the last importance, since it might be regarded as the key of the enemy's country. This was the first blow struck during the war, and honor and policy alike forbade them to adopt a measure, which could not fail to damp the ardor of the nation." This opinion of the queen, thus decisively expressed, determined the question, and kindled a spark of her own enthusiasm in the breasts of the most desponding.<sup>18</sup>

It was settled that the king should march to the relief of the besieged, taking with him the most ample supplies of forage and provisions, at the head of a force strong enough to compel the retreat of the Moorish monarch. This was effected without delay; and, Abul Hacen once more breaking up his camp on the rumor of Ferdinand's approach, the latter took possession of the city without opposition, on the 14th of May. The king was attended by a splendid train of his prelates and principal nobility; and he prepared with their aid to dedicate his new conquest to the service of the cross, with all the formalities of the Romish church.

Ferdinand  
raises the  
siege.

<sup>18</sup> Bernaldez, Reyes Católicos, MS., cap. 53, 54. — Pulgar states that Ferdinand took the more southern route of Antequera, where he received the tidings of the Moorish king's retreat. The discrepancy is of no great consequence; but

as Bernaldez, whom I have followed, lived in Andalusia, the theatre of action, he may be supposed to have had more accurate means of information. — Pulgar, Reyes Católicos, pp. 187, 188.

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After the ceremony of purification, the three principal mosques of the city were consecrated by the cardinal of Spain, as temples of Christian worship. Bells, crosses, a sumptuous service of plate, and other sacred utensils, were liberally furnished by the queen; and the principal church of Santa Maria de la Encarnacion long exhibited a covering of the altar, richly embroidered by her own hands. Isabella lost no opportunity of manifesting, that she had entered into the war, less from motives of ambition, than of zeal for the exaltation of the true faith. After the completion of these ceremonies, Ferdinand, having strengthened the garrison with new recruits under the command of Portocarrero, lord of Palma, and victualled it with three months' provisions, prepared for a foray into the vega of Granada. This he executed in the true spirit of that merciless warfare, so repugnant to the more civilized usage of later times, not only by sweeping away the green, unripened crops, but by cutting down the trees, and eradicating the vines; and then, without so much as having broken a lance in the expedition, returned in triumph to Cordova.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Oviedo, *Quincuagenas*, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial. 28. — Bernaldez, *Reyes Católicos*, MS., cap. 54, 55. — Lebrija, *Rerum Gestarum Decades*, lib. 1, cap. 6. — Conde, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, cap. 34. — Salazar de Mendoza, *Crón. del Gran Cardenal*, pp. 180, 181. — Marmol, *Rebellion de Moriscos*, lib. 1, cap. 12.

During this second siege, a body of Moorish knights to the number of forty, succeeded in scaling the

walls of the city in the night, and had nearly reached the gates with the intention of throwing them open to their countrymen, when they were overpowered, after a desperate resistance, by the Christians, who acquired a rich booty, as many of them were persons of rank. There is considerable variation in the authorities, in regard to the date of Ferdinand's occupation of Alhama. I have been guided, as before, by Bernaldez.

Isabella in the mean while was engaged in active measures for prosecuting the war. She issued orders to the various cities of Castile and Leon, as far as the borders of Biscay and Guipuscoa, prescribing the *repartimiento*, or subsidy of provisions, and the quota of troops, to be furnished by each district respectively, together with an adequate supply of ammunition and artillery. The whole were to be in readiness before Loja, by the 1st of July; when Ferdinand was to take the field in person at the head of his chivalry, and besiege that strong post. As advices were received, that the Moors of Granada were making efforts to obtain the coöperation of their African brethren in support of the Mahometan empire in Spain, the queen caused a fleet to be manned under the command of her two best admirals, with instructions to sweep the Mediterranean as far as the Straits of Gibraltar, and thus effectually cut off all communication with the Barbary coast.<sup>20</sup>

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IX.

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 Vigorous  
measures of  
the queen.

<sup>20</sup> Pulgar, Reyes Católicos, pp. 188, 189.

## CHAPTER X.

WAR OF GRANADA.—UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT ON LOJA.—  
DEFEAT IN THE AXARQUIA.

1482—1483.

Unsuccessful Attempt on Loja. — Revolution in Granada. — Expedition to the Axarquia. — Military Array. — Moorish Preparations. — Bloody Conflict among the Mountains. — The Spaniards force a Passage. — The Marquis of Cadiz escapes.

PART

I.

Siege of  
Loja.

LOJA stands not many leagues from Alhama, on the banks of the Xenil, which rolls its clear current through a valley luxuriant with vineyards and olive-gardens; but the city is deeply intrenched among hills of so rugged an aspect, that it has been led not inappropriately to assume as the motto on its arms, "A flower among thorns." Under the Moors, it was defended by a strong fortress, while the Xenil, circumscribing it like a deep moat upon the south, formed an excellent rampart against the approaches of a besieging army; since the river was fordable only in one place, and traversed by a single bridge, which might be easily commanded by the city. In addition to these advantages, the king of Granada, taking warning from the fate of Alhama, had strengthened its garrison with three thousand of his choicest troops, under the command

of a skilful and experienced warrior, named Ali Atar.<sup>1</sup> CHAPTER  
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In the mean while, the efforts of the Spanish sovereigns to procure supplies adequate to the undertaking against Loja, had not been crowned with success. The cities and districts, of which the requisitions had been made, had discovered the tardiness usual in such unwieldy bodies, and their interest, moreover, was considerably impaired by their distance from the theatre of action. Ferdinand on mustering his army, towards the latter part of June, found that it did not exceed four thousand horse and twelve thousand, or indeed, according to some accounts, eight thousand foot; most of them raw militia, who, poorly provided with military stores and artillery, formed a force obviously inadequate to the magnitude of his enterprise. Some of his counsellors would have persuaded him, from these considerations, to turn his arms against some weaker and more assailable point than Loja. But Ferdinand burned with a desire for distinction in the new war, and suffered his ardor for once to get the better of his prudence. The distrust felt by the leaders seems to have infected the lower ranks, who drew the most unfavorable prognostics from the dejected mien of those who bore the royal standard to the cathedral of Cordova, in order to receive the benediction of the church before entering on the expedition.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Estrada, Poblacion de España, tom. ii. pp. 242, 243. — Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 317. — Car-

donne, Hist. d'Afrique et d'Espagne, tom. iii. p. 261.

<sup>2</sup> Bernaldez, Reyes Católicos,

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Encampment before Loja.

Ferdinand, crossing the Xenil at Ecija, arrived again on its banks before Loja, on the 1st of July. The army encamped among the hills, whose deep ravines obstructed communication between its different quarters; while the level plains below were intersected by numerous canals, equally unfavorable to the manœuvres of the men-at-arms. The duke of Villa Hermosa, the king's brother, and captain-general of the hermandad, an officer of large experience, would have persuaded Ferdinand to attempt, by throwing bridges across the river lower down the stream, to approach the city on the other side. But his counsel was overruled by the Castilian officers, to whom the location of the camp had been intrusted, and who neglected, according to Zurita, to advise with the Andalusian chiefs, although far better instructed than themselves in Moorish warfare.<sup>3</sup>

Skirmish with the enemy.

A large detachment of the army was ordered to occupy a lofty eminence, at some distance, called the Heights of Albohacen, and to fortify it with such few pieces of ordnance as they had, with the view of annoying the city. This commission was intrusted to the marquises of Cadiz and Villena, and the grand master of Calatrava; which last nobleman had brought to the field about four hundred horse and a large body of infantry from the places belonging to his order in Andalusia. Before

MS., cap. 58. — Mariana, Hist. de España, tom. ii. pp. 249, 250. — Cardonne, Hist. d'Afrique et d'Espagne, tom. iii. pp. 259, 260.

<sup>3</sup> L. Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 173. — Pulgar, Reyes Católicos, p. 187. — Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 316, 317.



the intrenchment could be fully completed, Ali Atar, discerning the importance of this commanding station, made a sortie from the town, for the purpose of dislodging his enemies. The latter poured out from their works to encounter him; but the Moslem general, scarcely waiting to receive the shock, wheeled his squadrons round, and began a precipitate retreat. The Spaniards eagerly pursued; but, when they had been drawn to a sufficient distance from the redoubt, a party of Moorish *ginetes*, or light cavalry, who had crossed the river unobserved during the night and lain in ambush, after the wily fashion of Arabian tactics, darted from their place of concealment, and galloping into the deserted camp, plundered it of its contents, including the lombards, or small pieces of artillery, with which it was garnished. The Castilians, too late perceiving their error, halted from the pursuit, and returned with as much speed as possible to the defence of their camp. Ali Atar, turning also, hung close on their rear, so that, when the Christians arrived at the summit of the hill, they found themselves hemmed in between the two divisions of the Moorish army. A brisk action now ensued, and lasted nearly an hour; when the advance of reinforcements from the main body of the Spanish army, which had been delayed by distance and impediments on the road, compelled the Moors to a prompt but orderly retreat into their own city. The Christians sustained a heavy loss, particularly in the death of Rodrigo Tellez Giron, grand master of Calatrava. He was hit by two arrows, the last

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of which, penetrating the joints of his harness beneath his sword-arm, as he was in the act of raising it, inflicted on him a mortal wound, of which he expired in a few hours, says an old chronicler, after having confessed, and performed the last duties of a good and faithful Christian. Although scarcely twenty-four years of age, this cavalier had given proofs of such signal prowess, that he was esteemed one of the best knights of Castile; and his death threw a general gloom over the army.<sup>4</sup>

Ferdinand now became convinced of the unsuitableness of a position, which neither admitted of easy communication between the different quarters of his own camp, nor enabled him to intercept the supplies daily passing into that of his enemy. Other inconveniences also pressed on him. His men were so badly provided with the necessary utensils for dressing their food, that they were obliged either to devour it raw, or only half cooked. Most of them being new recruits, unaccustomed to the privations of war, and many exhausted by a wearisome length of march before joining the army, they began openly to murmur, and even to desert in great numbers. Ferdinand therefore resolved to fall back as far as Rio Frio, and await there patiently the arrival of such fresh reinforcements as might put him in condition to enforce a more rigorous blockade.

<sup>4</sup> Rades y Andrada, *Las Tres Ordenes*, fol. 80, 81. — L. Marineo, *Cosas Memorables*, fol. 173. — Lebrija, *Rerum Gestarum Decades*,

ii. lib. 1, cap. 7. — Conde, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, tom. iii. p. 214. — Carbajal, *Anales*, MS., año 1482.