enced such a feeling of delight, that I could have thrown my arms around his neck. He was Antonio Gamero, the author of the much esteemed history of Toledo. We passed the evening together; I asked him about a hundred things; he told me of a thousand; and read me several fine pages from his book, which gave me a greater knowledge of Toledo than I should have acquired after a month's sojourn there.

The city is poor, or more than poor, it is dead; the rich people have abandoned it to go and live at Madrid; the men of genius have followed the lead of the rich; there is no commerce; the manufacture of Toledo blades (the only industry which flourishes) provides maintenance for some hundreds of families, but it is not sufficient for the entire city; popular education has fallen away; and the people are inert and miserable. Yet they have not lost their beautiful ancient characteristics. Like all the people of the great decayed cities, they are proud and chivalrous; abhor base actions; mete out justice with their own hand, when they can, to assassins and thieves; and although Zorilla, in one of his ballads, has called them, without any metaphor, an imbecile people, this is not the case, for they are both wide awake and bold. They share the gravity of the Spaniards of the north, and the vivacity of those of the south; and hold their own place between the Castilian and the Andalusian. Spanish is spoken by them with great taste and with a greater variety of accent than by the people of Madrid, and with less carelessness than by the people of Cordova and Seville. Poetry and music they worship; and they are proud to enumerate among their great men the gentle Garcilaso della Vega, the reformer of Spanish

poetry, and the clever Francis de Rojas, the author of *Garcia del Castañar;* and they are delighted to see artists and savants from all the countries in the world gather within the walls of their city to study the history of their nations and the monuments of their civilizations. No matter, however, what its people may be, Toledo is dead; the city of Wamba, Alphonso the brave, and Padilla, is now only a tomb. From the time Philip II removed his capital, it has been declining, is declining still, and is consuming itself little by little, alone on the summit of its sad mountain, like a skeleton abandoned upon a rock in the midst of the waves of the sea.

I returned to the hotel just before midnight. The moon was shining; and on moonlight nights, although the rays of that silvery orb do not penetrate into the little narrow streets, the lamps are not lighted, so I was obliged to walk, feeling my way almost as a thief would do when committing a burglary. With my head full, as it was, of fantastic ballads, in which the streets of Toledo are described as being filled at night with cavaliers enveloped in their mantles, who sing under the windows of the fair sex, fight, kill each other, place ladders up against palace and abduct the young girls, I might have imagined that I should hear the sounds of guitars, the clashing of swords, and the cries of dying people. Nothing of the sort; the streets were silent and deserted, the windows dark; and I barely heard from time to time, at the corners and cross-roads, some light rustle or fugitive whisper, so that one could not tell exactly from what direction they came. I reached the hotel without having abducted any young Toledan, which might have caused to me unpleasantness, but also without re-

ceiving any holes in my body, a circumstance certainly rather consoling.

The following morning I visited the hospital of the San Cruz; the church of *Nuestra Señora del Transito,* an ancient synagogue ; the remains of an amphitheatre and of a naumachy of the time of the Romans ; and the famous manufactory of arms, where I purchased a beautiful dagger with silvered handle and arabesqued blade, that I have this moment on my table, and which, when I close my eyes and seize it, makes me feel that I am still there, in the court-yard of the factory, a mile from Toledo, under a mid-day sun, among a crowd of soldiers, and in a cloud of cigarette smoke. I remember that on returning to Toledo on foot, while I was crossing a plain solitary as a desert and silent as a catacomb, a formidable voice shouted :

"Out with the stranger!"

The voice came from the city ; I stopped, I was the stranger, that cry was directed against me, I was startled, and the solitude and silence of the place increased my fright. I went on, and the voice shouted again :

"Out with the stranger!"

"Is it a dream?" I exclaimed, stopping again, "or am I awake? Who is it that is shouting? and wherefore?"

I resumed my walk, and a third time came the voice :

"Out with the stranger!"

I stopped the third time, and while I glanced around me quite uneasily, I saw a boy seated on the ground, who looked laughingly at me and said :

"*It is an insane person who thinks he is living in the time of the War of the Independence ; there is the Insane Asylum.*"

He pointed out the asylum, on a height, among the most distant houses of Toledo, and I drew a long breath which would have extinguished a torch.

That evening I left Toledo, with the regret of not having had time enough to see and see again all that is antique and noteworthy there; this regret was mitigated, however, by the ardent desire I had to reach Andalusia, which gave me no peace. How long a time I had Toledo before my eyes; how long I saw and dreamed of those steep rocks, enormous walls, those dreary streets, and the fantastic appearance of that mediæval city! To-day, even, I often revive the picture with a sad pleasure and severe melancholy, and this picture leads my mind back to a thousand strange thoughts of remote times and marvellous occurrences.

CHAPTER VIII.

CORDOVA.

ON reaching Castillejo I was obliged to wait until midnight for the train for Andalusia; I dined on hard-boiled eggs, and oranges, with a little Val de Peñas wine, murmured the poetry of Espronceda, chatted a trifle with the custom-house officer (who, by the way, made me a profession of his political faith: Amadeus, liberty, increase of salary of the custom-house officers, etc.), until I heard the desired whistle, when I got into a railway carriage filled with women, boys, civil guards, cushions, and wraps; and away we went at a speed unusual on Spanish railways. The night was very beautiful; my travelling companions talked of bulls and Carlists; a beautiful girl, whom more than one devoured with his eyes, pretended to sleep in order to excite our fancy with a sample of her nocturnal attitudes; some were making *cigarritos*, some peeling oranges, and others humming arias of *Zarzuela*. Nevertheless, I fell asleep after a few moments. I think I had already dreamed of the Mosque of Cordova and the Alcazar of Seville, when I was awakened by a hoarse cry:

"*Daggers!*"

"Daggers? In heaven's name! For whom?'

Before I saw who had shouted, a long sharp blade

gleamed before my eyes, and the unknown person asked :

"*Do you like it?*"

One must really confess that there are more agreeable ways of being waked. I looked at my travelling companions with an expression of stupor which made them all burst out into a hearty laugh. Then I was told that at every railway station there were these vendors of knives and daggers, who offered travellers their wares just as newspapers and refreshments are offered with us. Reassured as to my life, I bought (for five lire) my scarecrow, which was a beautiful dagger suitable for the tyrant of a tragedy, with its chased handle, an inscription on the blade, and an embroidered velvet sheath ; and I put it in my pocket, thinking that it would be quite useful to me in Italy in settling any questions with my publishers. The vendor must have had fifty of them in a great red sash which was fastened around his waist. Other travellers bought them too ; the civil guards complimented one of my neighbors on his capital selection ; the boys cried :

"Give me one too!"—and their mammas replied:

"We will buy a longer one some other time."

"O blessed Spain!" I exclaimed, as I thought, with disgust, of our barbarous laws which prohibit the innocent amusement of a little sharp steel.

We crossed the Mancha, the celebrated Mancha, the immortal theatre of the adventures of Don Quixote. It is just as I imagined it. There are broad bare plains, long tracts of sandy earth, some wind-mills, a few miserable villages, solitary paths, and wretched, abandoned houses. On seeing those places, I experienced a feeling of melancholy which the perusal of Cervantes' book always rouses ; and

I repeated to myself what I always say in reading it: "This man cannot make one laugh, or if he does, under the smile the tears spring up." Don Quixote is a sad and solemn character; his mania is a lament; his life is the history of the dreams, illusions, disappointments, and aberrations of us all; the struggle of reason with the imagination, of the true with the false, the ideal with the real! We all have something of Don Quixote about us; we all take windmills for giants; are all spurred upward, from time to time, by an impulse of enthusiasm, and driven back by a laugh of disdain; are all a mixture of the sublime and the ridiculous; and feel, with profound bitterness, the perpetual contrast between the greatness of our aspirations and the weakness of our powers. O beautiful, childish, and youthful dreams, generous proposals to consecrate our lives to the defense of virtue and justice, cherished fancies of confronted dangers, daring struggles, magnanimous exploits, and lofty loves, which have fallen, one by one, like the leaves of flowers, on the narrow, monotonous path of life, how you have been revivified, and what charming thoughts and profound instruction we have derived from you, O generous and unfortunate cavalier of sad figure!

At dawn we reached Argasamilla, where Don Quixote was born and died, and where poor Cervantes, the collector of the Grand Priory of San Juan, was arrested, in the name of the special magistrate of Consuegra, by irascible debtors, and kept a prisoner in a house that, as they say, is still in existence, and in which he is said to have conceived the idea of his romance. We passed the village of the Val de Peñas, that gives its name to one of the most delicious wines of Spain, a wine black, sparkling, and exhilarating (and

the only one, perhaps, which permits to the stranger from the North the copious libations to which he is accustomed at meals), and finally reached Santa Cruz de Tudela, a village famous for its manufactories of *navajas* (knives and razors), near which the road begins to ascend gradually toward the mountain.

The sun had risen, the women and children had left the carriage, and peasants, officers, and toreros, who were going to Seville, had taken their places. There was in that restricted space a variety of dress that would not be seen with us even on a market day. There were the pointed hats of the peasants of the Sierra Morena, the red trowsers of the soldiers, great *sombreros* of the *picadores*, the shawls of the gypsies, the *mantas* of Catalans, the Toledo blades hung on the walls, and capes, sashes, and trinkets of all the colors of a harlequin.

The train moved on among the rocks of the Sierra Morena, which separates the valley of the Guadiana from that of the Guadalquiver, made famous by the songs of poets and the exploits of brigands. The road runs, from time to time, between two walls of stone cut into points, and so high, that in order to see their tops it is necessary to put one's head entirely out of the window, and turn the face upward as if to look at the roof of the carriage. At some points the rocks are farther away, and rise one above the other; the first in the shape of enormous broken boulders, and the last upright, slender, and like bold towers raised upon measureless bastions. In the centre, there is a pile of rocks, cut like teeth, ladders, crests, and dwarfs, some almost suspended in the air, others separated by deep caverns and frightful precipices, which present a confusion of strange

forms, fantastic outlines of buildings, gigantic figures and ruins, and offer at every step a thousand shapes and unexpected aspects ; and on that infinite variety of forms there is as great a variety of colors, shades, rays, and floods of light. For a long distance on the right, the left, and above, nothing is to be seen but stone, without a house, a path, or a particle of earth where a man could plant his foot ; and as one goes on, the rocks, caverns, precipices, and every thing, in fact, become broader, deeper, and loftier, until the highest point of the Sierra is reached, where the sovereign majesty of the spectacle draws forth an exclamation of surprise.

There the train stopped for a few moments, and all the travellers put their heads out of the window.

" Here," one person said to another, " Cardenio (one of the most notable personages in Don Quixote) leaped in his shirt from rock to rock in order to do penance for his sins."

" I would," continued the traveller, " that Sagasta were forced to do the same."

All laughed, and each began to look, on his own account, for some invidious politician, upon whom to inflict, in imagination, that species of punishment. One proposed Serrano, another Topete, and the rest others ; so that in a few moments (if their desires had been fulfilled) we should have seen the Sierra peopled with ministers, generals, and deputies in their shirts slipping from ledge to ledge, like the famous rock of Alexander Manzoni.

The train started again, the rocks disappeared, and the delicious valley of the Guadalquiver, the garden of Spain, the Eden of the Arabs, the paradise of poets and painters, the blessed Andalusia disclosed itself to my eyes. I feel again the tremor

of childish joy with which I dashed to the window, saying to myself, as I did so :

" Let me enjoy it !"

For a long distance the country offers no new aspect to the feverish curiosity of the tourist. At Vilches there is a vast plain, and beyond there, the open country of Tolosa, where Alphonso VIII, King of Castile, gained the celebrated victory *de las Navas* over the mussulman army. The sky was very clear, and in the distance one could see the mountains of the Sierra di Segura. Suddenly, there comes over me a sensation which seems to respond to a suppressed exclamation of surprise : the first aloes, with their thick leaves, the unexpected heralds of tropical vegetation, rise on both sides of the road. Beyond, the fields studded with flowers begin to appear. The first are studded, those which follow almost covered, then come vast stretches of ground entirely clothed with poppies, daisies, lilies, wild mushrooms, and ranunculuses, so that the country (as it presents itself to view) looks like a succession of immense purple, gold, and snowy-hued carpets. In the distance, among the trees, are innumerable blue, white, and yellow streaks, as far as the eye can reach ; and nearer, on the banks of the ditches, the elevations of ground, the slopes, and even on the edge of the road are flowers in beds, clumps, and clusters, one above the other, grouped in the form of great bouquets, and trembling on their stalks, which one can almost touch with his hand. Then there are fields white with great blades of grain, flanked by plantations of roses, orange groves, immense olive groves, and hillsides varied by a thousand shades of green, surmounted by ancient Moorish towers, scattered with many-colored houses; and between the one and

the other are white and slender bridges that cross rivulets hidden by the trees. On the horizon appear the snowy caps of the Sierra Nevada; under that white streak lie the undulating blue ones of the nearer mountains. The country becomes more varied and flourishing; Arjonilla lies in a grove of olives, whose boundary one cannot see; Pedro Abad, in the midst of a plain covered with vineyards and fruit-trees; Ventas di Alcolea, on the last hills of the Sierra Nevada, peopled with villas and gardens. We are approaching Cordova, the train flies along, we see little stations half hidden by trees and flowers, the wind carries the rose leaves into the carriages, great butterflies fly near the windows, a delicious perfume permeates the air, the travellers sing, we pass through an enchanted garden, the aloes, oranges, palms, and villas grow more frequent; and at last we hear a cry: "Here is Cordova!"

How many lovely pictures and grand recollections the sound of that name awakens in one's mind!

Cordova, the ancient pearl of the East, as the Arabian poets call it, the city of cities, Cordova of the thirty suburbs and three thousand mosques, which enclosed within her walls the greatest temple of Islam! Her fame extended throughout the East, and obscured the glory of ancient Damascus. The faithful came from the most remote regions of Asia to the banks of the Guadalquiver, to prostrate themselves in the marvellous Mihrab of her mosque, in the light of the thousand bronze lamps cast from the bells of the cathedrals of Spain. Hither flocked artists, savants, and poets, from every part of the Mahometan world, to her flourishing schools, immense libraries, and the magnificent courts of her Caliphs. Riches and beauty flowed in, attracted by the fame

of her splendor. From here they scattered, eager for knowledge, along the coasts of Africa, through the schools of Tunis, Cairo, Bagdad, Cufa, and even to India and China, in order to gather inspiration and records; and the poetry sung on the slopes of the Sierra Morena flew from lyre to lyre, as far as the vallies of the Caucasus, to excite the ardor for pilgrimages. The beautiful, powerful, and wise Cordova, crowned with three thousand villages, proudly raised her white minarets in the midst of orange groves, and spread around the valley a voluptuous atmosphere of joy and glory!

I leave the train, cross a garden, look around me, I am alone; the travellers who were with me disappear here and there; I still hear the noise of a carriage which is rolling off; then all is quiet. It is midday, the sky is very clear, and the air suffocating. I see two white houses; it is the opening of a street; I enter, and go on. The street is narrow, the houses as small as the little villas on the slopes of artificial gardens, almost all one story in height, with windows a few feet from the ground, the roofs so low that one could almost touch them with a stick, and the walls very white. The street turns, I look, see no one, and hear neither step nor voice. I say to myself: "This must be an abandoned street!" and try another one, in which the houses are white, the windows closed, and there is nothing but silence and solitude around me. "Why, where am I?" I asked myself. I go on; the street, which is so narrow that a carriage could not pass, begins to wind; on the right and the left I see other deserted streets, white houses, and closed windows. My step resounds as if in a corridor. The whiteness of the walls is so vivid that even the reflection is trying, and I am

obliged to walk with my eyes half closed, for it really seems as if I were making my way through the snow. I reach a small square ; every thing is closed and no one is to be seen. At this point a vague feeling of melancholy seizes me, such as I have never experienced before ; a mixture of pleasure and sadness, similar to that which comes to children when, after a long run, they reach a lonely rural spot, and rejoice in their discovery, but with a certain trepidation lest they should be too far from home. Above many roofs rise the palm trees of inner gardens. O fantastic legends of Odalisk and Caliphs! On I go, from street to street, and square to square ; I begin to meet some people, but they pass and disappear like phantoms. All the streets resemble each other ; the houses have only three or four windows ; and not a spot, scrawl, or crack is to be seen on the walls, which are as smooth and white as a sheet of paper. From time to time I hear a whisper behind a blind, and see, almost at the same moment, a dark head, with a flower in the hair, appear and disappear. I look in at a door * * *

A *patio!* How shall I describe a *patio?* It is not a court, nor a garden, nor a room ; but it is all three things combined. Between the *patio* and the street there is a vestibule. On the four sides of the *patio* rise slender columns, which support, up to a level with the first floor, a species of gallery, enclosed in glass ; above the gallery is stretched a canvas, which shades the court. The vestibule is paved with marble, the door flanked by columns, surmounted by bas-reliefs, and closed by a slender iron gate of graceful design. At the end of the *patio*, in a line with the door, rises a statue ; in the centre there is a fountain ; and all around are scat-

tered chairs, work-tables, pictures, and vases of flowers. I run to another door; there is another *patio*, with its walls covered with ivy, and a number of niches holding little statues, busts, and urns. I look in at a third door; here is another *patio*, with its walls worked in mosaics, a palm in the centre, and a mass of flowers all around. I stop at a fourth door; after the *patio* there is another vestibule, after this a second *patio*, in which one sees other statues, columns, and fountains. All these rooms and gardens are so neat and clean that one could pass his hand over the walls and on the ground without leaving a trace; and they are fresh, odorous, and lighted by an uncertain light, which increases their beauty and mysterious appearance.

On I go, at random, from street to street. As I walk, my curiosity increases, and I quicken my pace. It seems impossible that a whole city can be like this; I am afraid of stumbling across some house or coming into some street that will remind me of other cities, and disturb my beautiful dream. But no, the dream lasts; for every thing is small, lovely, and mysterious. At every hundred steps I reach a deserted square, in which I stop and hold my breath; from time to time there appears a cross-road, and not a living soul is to be seen; every thing is white, the windows closed, and silence reigns on all sides. At each door there is a new spectacle; there are arches, columns, flowers, jets of water, and palms; a marvellous variety of design, tints, light, and perfume; here the odor of roses, there of oranges, farther on of pinks; and with this perfume a whiff of fresh air, and with the air a subdued sound of women's voices, the rustling of leaves, and the singing of birds. It is a sweet and varied harmony that,

without disturbing the silence of the streets, soothes the ear like the echo of distant music. Ah! it is not a dream! Madrid, Italy, Europe are indeed far away! Here one lives another life, and breathes the air of a different world, for I am in the East!

I remember that at a certain point I stopped in the middle of the street, and became suddenly aware, I know not how, that I was sad and anxious, and that in my heart there was an immense void, which neither pleasure nor surprise could fill. I felt an irresistible desire to enter those houses and gardens; to rend, as it were, the veil of mystery which surrounds the life of the unknown people who were there; to participate in that life; to seize some hand; and to fix my eyes on two pitying ones, and say: "I am a stranger, and alone; I too wish to be happy; let me remain among your flowers, let me enjoy all the secrets of your paradise, tell me who you are, how you live, smile on me, and sooth me, for my head is burning!" This sadness reached such a point that I said to myself: "I cannot stay in this city, for I am suffering here. I will go away!"

And I should, indeed, have left if I had not fortunately remembered that I had in my pocket a letter of introduction to two young men in Cordova, brothers of a friend of mine in Florence. I set aside the idea of leaving town, and went in search of them.

How they laughed when I told them the impression that Cordova had produced upon me! They proposed going instantly to see the cathedral; we passed through a little white street, and on we went.

The mosque of Cordova, which was changed into a church after the expulsion of the Arabs, but which is always a mosque, was built on the ruins of the

primitive cathedral, at a short distance from the banks of the Guadalquiver. Abdurrahman began the construction of it in the year 785 or 786. "Let us erect a mosque," he said, "which will surpass those of Bagdad, Damascus, and Jerusalem, and that shall be the largest temple of Islam, and the Mecca of the West." He began the work with great zeal; the Christian slaves brought the stones for the foundation from the ruins of the destroyed church. Abdurrahman worked, himself, one hour each day. The mosque, in the space of a few years, was built; the Caliphs who succeeded Abdurrahman embellished it, and after a century of nearly continuous labor the work was completed.

"Here we are," said one of my hosts, stopping suddenly before an immense edifice.

I fancied it was a fortress, but it proved to be, however, the wall that encircles the mosque; an old, embattled wall, in which were once opened twenty great bronze doors, surrounded by very beautiful arabesques and arched windows, supported by slender columns, now covered with a triple stratum of plaster. A turn around that boundary wall is a nice little walk to take after dinner; by this, one can judge of the size of the building.

The principal door of the boundary is at the west, on the spot where rose the minaret of Abdurrahman, on the point of which waved the Mahometan standard. We entered; I fancied that I should instantly see the interior of the mosque, and I found myself in a garden filled with oranges, cypresses, and palms, surrounded on three sides by a very light portico, and closed on the fourth side by the façade of the mosque. In the centre of this garden there was, in the time of the Arabs, the fountain for their ablu-

tions; and under the shade of these trees the faithful gathered before entering the temple. I stood for some moments looking around me, and inhaling the fresh and odorous air with a very keen sense of pleasure. My heart was beating at the thought that the famous mosque was near, and I felt myself impelled toward the door by intense curiosity, and restrained by a sort of childish trepidation.

"Let us enter," said my companions.

"One moment more," I replied; "let me enjoy the pleasure of anticipation."

Finally, I made a move, and without looking at the marvellous doors, which my companions pointed out, I entered.

What I may have done or said as I got inside, I do not know, but certainly some strange sound must have escaped me, or I must have made a curious gesture, for some people who were coming toward me at that moment began laughing, and turned back to look around, as if to try and discover what could have produced such a profound impression upon me.

Imagine a forest, fancy yourself in the thickest portion of it, and that you can see nothing but the trunks of trees. So, in this mosque, on whatever side you look, the eye loses itself among the columns. It is a forest of marble whose confines one cannot discover. You follow with your eye, one by one, the very long rows of columns that interlace at every step with numberless other rows, and you reach a semi-obscure background, in which other columns still seem to be gleaming. There are nineteen naves which extend in every direction, traversed by thirty-three others, supported (among them all) by more than nine hundred columns of porphyry, jasper,

breccia and marbles of every color. Each column upholds a small pilaster, and between them runs an arch, and a second one extends from pilaster to pilaster, the latter placed above the former, and both of them in the shape of a horseshoe; so that, in imagining the columns to be the trunks of so many trees, the arches represent the branches, and the similitude of the mosque to a forest is complete. The middle nave, much broader than the others, ends in front of the Maksura, which is the most sacred part of the temple, where the Koran was worshipped. Here, from the windows in the ceiling, falls a pale ray of light that illuminates a row of columns; there is a dark spot; farther on falls a second ray that lights another nave. It is impossible to express the feeling of mysterious surprise which that spectacle arouses in your soul. It is like the sudden revelation of an unknown religion, nature and life, which bears away your imagination to the delight of that paradise, full of love and voluptuousness, where the blessed, seated under the shade of leafy plane trees and thornless rose-bushes, drink from crystal vases the wine, sparkling like pearls, mixed by immortal children, and take their repose, in the arms of charming black-eyed virgins! All the pictures of eternal pleasure which the Koran promises to the faithful, present themselves to your mind bright, gleaming, and vivid, at the first sight of the mosque, and cause you a sweet momentary intoxication, which leaves in your heart an indescribable sort of melancholy! A brief tumult of the mind, and a spark of fire rushes through your veins, —such is the first sensation one experiences upon entering the cathedral of Cordova.

We began to wander from nave to nave, observ-

ing every thing minutely. How much variety there is in that edifice which at first sight seems so uniform! The proportions of the columns, the designs of the capitals, the forms of the arches change, one might say, at every step. The majority of the columns are old, and were taken from the Arabs of Northern Spain, Gaul, and Roman Africa, and some are said to have belonged to a temple of Janus, on the ruins of which was built the church that the Arabs destroyed in order to erect the mosque. Above several of the capitals one can still see traces of the crosses that were cut on them, and that the Arabs broke with their chisels. In some of the columns there are buried bits of curved iron, to which, it is said, the Arabs bound the Christians; and one, among others, is pointed out to which, according to tradition, a Christian was chained for many years, and during this time, he scratched with his nails a cross in the stone that the guides show with great veneration.

We reached the Maksura, which is the most complete and marvellous work of Arabian art in the tenth century. In front of it are contiguous chapels, with roofs formed of indented arches, and the walls covered with superb mosaics representing groups of flowers and sentences from the Koran. At the back of the middle chapel, is the principal *mihrab*, the sacred place where the spirit of God rested. It is a niche with an octagonal base closed at the top by a colossal marble shell. In the *mihrab* was deposited the Koran, written by the hand of the Caliph Othman, covered with gold, studded with pearls, and nailed above a chair made of aloe wood; and it was around this that the thousands of pilgrims came to make seven turns on their knees. On approaching

the wall I felt the pavement giving way under me; the marble was hollowed out!

On coming out of the niche, I stopped for a long time to look at the ceiling and walls of the principal chapel, the only part of the mosque that is quite intact. It is a dazzling gleam of crystals of a thousand colors, a network of arabesques, which puzzles the mind, and a complication of bas-reliefs, gildings, ornaments, minutiæ of design and coloring, of a delicacy, grace, and perfection sufficient to drive the most patient painter distracted. It is impossible to retain any of that pretentious work in the mind. You might turn a hundred times to look at it, and it would only seem to you, in thinking it over, a mingling of blue, red, green, gilded, and luminous points, or a very intricate embroidery changing continually, with the greatest rapidity, both design and coloring. Only from the fiery and indefatigable imagination of the Arabs could such a perfect miracle of art emanate.

We began to wander about the mosque again, looking here and there on the walls, at the arabesques of the old doors, which are being discovered from time to time under the detestable whitewash of the Christians. My companions looked at me, laughed, and murmured something to each other.

"Have you not noticed it yet?" one of them asked me.

"What?"

They looked at each other and smiled again.

"Do you think you have seen all the mosque?" began one of my companions.

"Why, certainly I do," I replied, looking around me.

"Well, then," said the first, "you have not seen it

all; and that which remains to be seen is nothing less than a church."

"A church!" I exclaimed, with surprise; "but where is it?"

"Look," replied the other, pointing, "it is in the very centre of the mosque."

"Heavens!" and I had never seen it at all.

One can judge of the size of the mosque from this fact. We went to see the church, which is beautiful and very rich, with a magnificent high altar, and a choir worthy of a place beside those of Burgos and Toledo; but like all things that are out of place, it arouses one's anger rather than admiration. Without this church the general appearance of the mosque would have been much better. The same Charles V, who gave the chapter permission to erect it, repented when he saw the Mahometan temple for the first time. Beside the church is a sort of Arabian chapel, admirably preserved, and rich in mosaics, not less varied and superb than those of the Maksura, in which it is said the ministers of the religion gathered to discuss the book of the prophet.

Such is the mosque of to-day, but what must it have been in the time of the Arabs? It was not surrounded by a wall; but open, so that one could catch a glimpse of the garden from every part of it; and from the garden one could see to the end of the long naves, and the air was permeated even under the Maksura with the fragrance of oranges and flowers. The columns, which now number less than a thousand, were then one thousand four hundred; the ceiling was of cedar wood and larch, sculptured and enamelled in the finest manner; the walls were trimmed with marble; the light of eight hundred lamps, filled with perfumed oil, made all the crystals

in the mosaics gleam, and produced on the pavement, arches, and walls a marvellous play of color and reflection. "A sea of splendors," sang a poet, "filled this mysterious recess; the ambient air was impregnated with aromas and harmonies, and the thoughts of the faithful wandered and lost themselves in the labyrinth of columns which gleamed like lances in the sunshine."

Frederick Schack, the author of a fine work entitled, *The Poetry and Art of the Arabs in Spain and Sicily*, gave a description of the mosque on a solemn fête day, which presents a very vivid idea of Mahometan worship, and completes the picture of the monument.

On both sides of the almimbar or pulpit wave two standards to signify that Islam has triumphed over Judaism and Christianity, and that the Koran has conquered the Old and New Testaments. The *almnedani* climb upon the gallery of the high minaret and intone the *selam* or salutation to the prophet. Then the naves of the mosque fill with believers, who, clothed in white and wearing a festive aspect, gather for the oration. In a few moments, throughout the edifice nothing is to be seen but kneeling people. By the secret way which joins the temple to the alcazar, comes the caliph, who goes and seats himself in his elevated place. A reader of the Koran reads a Sura on the reading-desk of the tribune. The voice of the *muccin* sounds again, inviting people to the noonday prayers. All the faithful rise and murmur their prayers, making obeisances. A servant of the mosque opens the doors of the pulpit and seizes a sword, with which, turning toward Mecca, he admonishes all to praise Mahommed, while the prophet's name is being celebrated from the tribune by the

singing of the *mubaliges*. After this the preacher ascends the pulpit, taking from the hand of the servant the sword, which recalls and symbolizes the subjection of Spain to the power of Islam. It is the day on which *Djihad*, or the holy war, is to be proclaimed, the call for all able-bodied men to descend into the battle field against the Christians. The multitude listen with silent devotion to the discourse (woven from the heads of the Koran), which begins like this:

"Praised be God, who has increased the glory of Islam, thanks to the sword of the Champion of the Faith, and who, in his holy book, has promised aid and victory to the believer.

"Allah scatters his benefits over the world.

"If he did not impel men to dash armed against each other the earth would be lost.

"Allah has ordered that the people be fought against until they know there is but one God.

"The flame of war will not be extinguished until the end of the world.

"The divine benediction will fall upon the mane of the war-horse until the day of judgment.

"Be you armed from head to foot, or only lightly armed, rise, and take your departure!

"O believers! What will become of you if, when you are called to battle, you remain with your face turned toward the ground?

"Do your prefer the life of this world to that of the future?

"Believe me: the gates of paradise stand in the shadow of the sword.

"He who dies in battle for the cause of God, washes with the blood he sheds all the stains of his sins.

"His body will not be washed like the other bodies, because in the day of judgment his wounds will send out a fragrance like musk.

"When the warriors shall present themselves at the gates of paradise, a voice from within will ask: 'What have you done during your life?'

"And they will reply: 'We have brandished the sword in the struggle for the cause of God.'

"Then the eternal gates will open and the warriors will enter forty years before the others.

"Up, then, O believers! Abandon women, children, brothers, and worldly possessions, and go forth to the holy war!

"And thou, O God, Lord of the present and future world, fight for the armies of those who recognize thy unity! Destroy the incredulous, idolaters, and enemies of thy holy faith! Overthrow their standards, and give them, with all they possess, as booty, to the Mussulmen!"

The preacher, when he has finished his discourse, exclaims, turning toward the congregation: "Ask of God!"—and prays in silence. All the faithful, touching the ground with their foreheads, follow his example. The *mubaliges* sing: "Amen! Amen, O Lord of all beings!" Like the intense heat that precedes the tempest, the enthusiasm of the multitude (restrained, up to this time, in a marvellous silence) breaks out in loud murmurs, which, rising like the waves of the sea, and inundating the temple, finally make the echo of a thousand united voices resound through the naves, chapels, and vaults in one single shout: "There is no God but Allah!"

The mosque of Cordova is still to-day, by universal consent, the most beautiful Mussulman temple, and one of the most wonderful monuments in the world.

When we left the mosque, a great portion of the hour of *siesta* had passed, which every one takes in the cities of Southern Spain, and which is quite necessary, on account of the insupportable heat; and the streets began to be peopled. "Alas!" I said to my companions, "how badly a high hat looks in the streets of Cordova! How have you the heart to fasten fashion plates to this beautiful oriental picture? Why don't you dress like the Arabs?" Dandies, workmen, and girls passed. I looked at them all with curiosity, hoping to find some of those fantastic figures which Doré pictured to us as the representatives of the Andalusian type; with that dark brown coloring, those thick lips, and great eyes. I met none of them however. On going toward the heart of the city, I saw the first Andalusian women, ladies, young ladies, and women of the people, almost all small, slender, well-made, some of them beautiful, many sympathetic, and the greater number, as in all other countries, neither fish, flesh, nor fowl. In their dress, with the exception of the so-called *mantilla*, there is no difference between the French women themselves and our own; they wear great masses of false hair, in braids, bunches, and long curls; and short petticoats, full ones and those with plaits; and shoes with heels like the points of daggers. The ancient Andalusian costume has disappeared from the city.

I thought that the streets would be crowded toward evening, but I only saw a few people, and these in the streets of the principal quarters of the town; the others were as deserted as during the hours of the *siesta*. It is just through these deserted streets that one ought to pass in order to enjoy Cordova at night. One sees the lights gleaming in the

patios; the pairs of lovers holding sweet converse in dark corners; the girls, for the most part, at the windows, with their hands carelessly hanging outside the gratings; and the young men near the wall, in sentimental attitudes, their eyes on the alert, but not sufficiently so to make them remove the hands from their lips, until they discover that some one is passing; and one hears the sound of guitars, the murmur of fountains, sighs, the laughter of children and mysterious rustlings.

The following morning, still disturbed by the oriental dreams of the night, I began wandering again about the city. It would take an entire volume to describe all that is worthy of note; for it is a veritable museum of Roman and Arabian antiquity. Here one finds a profusion of military columns, inscriptions in honor of the emperors, the remains of statues and bas-reliefs, six old gates; a large bridge over the Guadalquiver, of the time of Octavius Augustus, and reconstructed by the Arabs; ruins of towers and walls; houses which belonged to the Caliphs, and still retain the subterranean columns and arches of the bathing-rooms. In fact, on every side there are doors, vestibules, and staircases enough to delight a legion of archeologists.

Toward midday, in passing through a solitary street, I saw written on the wall of a house, near a Roman inscription: "*Casa de huespedes. Almuerzos y comidas;*" and in reading it I felt the cravings, as Giusti would say, of such a low appetite that I determined to gratify it in this little place, whatever it might be on which I had stumbled. I passed through a small door and found myself in a *patio.* It was a miserable *patio,* without marble or foundations, but as white as snow and as fresh as a garden. Not

seeing either table or chair, I feared that I had made a mistake in the door, and started to leave, when an old woman, who appeared from I know not where, stopped me.

"Can one have something to eat here?" I asked.

"Yes, sir."

"What have you?"

"Eggs, sausages, cutlets, peaches, oranges, and Malaga wine."

"Very well; bring me every thing you have."

She began by bringing the table and chair, and I sat down and waited. Suddenly I heard a door behind me open; I turned. Ye heavenly powers, what did I see! The most beautiful of all beautiful Andalusian women, not alone of those seen at Cordova, but of all those which I afterward saw at Seville, Cadiz, and Granada. She was an overwhelming sort of girl, who would make one take flight or commit any kind of a deviltry; and had one of those faces which made Guiseppe Baretti cry: "Oh poor me!" when he was travelling in Spain. She stood motionless for a few moments, with her eyes fastened upon me, as if to say: "Admire me;" then turned toward the kitchen and called: "Aunt, make haste!" which gave me the opportunity of thanking her in an embarassed way, and her the pretext of approaching me, and replying: "Oh, not at all," with such a lovely voice that I was forced to offer her a chair, which she accepted. She was a girl in the twenties, tall, straight as a palm, dark, and with two great eyes full of sweetness, and so moist and glistening that they seemed to have just been shedding tears. Her hair was very black and heavy, and she wore a rose in her braids. She looked like one of the Arabian virgins of the Usras tribe, who made people die from love.

She began the conversation herself.

"You are a stranger, sir, I think?"

"Yes."

"French?"

"Italian."

"Italian? Ah, a countryman of the king?"

"Yes."

"Do you know him, sir?"

"By sight."

"They say he is a good sort of fellow."

I made no reply; she began to laugh, and said:

"What are you looking at, sir?"

And continuing to laugh, she hid her foot which, in sitting down, she had put well forward, so that I could see it. Oh! there is not a woman in that country who does not know that the Andalusian feet are famous throughout the world.

I seized this opportunity to draw the conversation upon the fame of Andalusian women, and I expressed my admiration for them in the most enthusiastic terms in my vocabulary. She allowed me to say what I wished, looking all the time with the gravest attention at a crack in the table, then raised her head, and asked:

"How are the women in Italy?"

"Oh! they are beautiful in Italy too."

"They must be cold, however."

"Oh, no, indeed!" I hastened to reply, "but you know that in every country the women have an 'indescribable something' about them which is quite different from that of other countries, and among these 'indescribable somethings' that of the Andalusians is, perhaps, for the traveller whose hair is not gray, the most dangerous of all. There is a word which just expresses what I mean; if I could remember it, I should say: 'Señorita, you are the most—

"*Salada!*" (exclaimed the girl, covering her face with her hands).

"*Salada!* . . the most *salada* Andalusian in Cordova."

Salada, salted, is the word quite commonly in use in Andalusia when you wish to say of a woman that she is beautiful, graceful, lovely, languid, fiery, and any thing else in fact; a woman who possesses two lips that seem to say: "Drink me," and two eyes that force you to bite your lips to keep out of mischief.

The aunt brought me the eggs, cutlets, *chorizo* (sausage), and oranges, and the girl continued the conversation.

"You are an Italian, sir; have you seen the pope?"

"No; I regret to say that I have not."

"Is it possible? An Italian who has not seen the pope! Tell me, sir, why do you Italians treat him so badly?"

"Treat him badly? in what way?"

"Yes; they say that you have shut him up in a house, and that you throw stones at his windows."

"What nonsense! Don't believe it! There is not a shadow of truth in it, etc., etc."

"Have you seen Venice?"

"Venice,—oh, yes."

"Is it true that it is a city which floats on the water?"

Here she begged me to describe Venice, and tell her about the people of that strange city, how they are dressed, and what they do all day long. While I was talking, aside from the difficulty I had in expressing myself nicely, and trying to swallow a badly-cooked egg and very stale sausage, I was obliged to

see her draw nearer and nearer, perhaps without being aware of it, in order to hear better; to draw so near that I caught the perfume of the rose in her hair and the heat of her breath, and I had to make three efforts at a time to restrain myself: one with my head, the other with my stomach, and the third with both together when I heard her say every now and then: "How beautiful!" a compliment which referred to the grand canal, and which produced upon me the same effect that the sight of a bag of napoleons, swung under his nose by an impertinent banker, would do upon a beggar.

"Ah! Señorita!" I said at last, beginning to lose my patience, "what difference does it make in the end whether a city is beautiful or not? A person born in it takes no notice of it; nor the traveller either, for the matter of that. I arrived in Cordova yesterday; it is a beautiful place, no doubt, but, will you credit it? I have already forgotten every thing I have seen; I do not wish to see any thing else; in fact, I no longer know where I am. Palaces! mosques! they make me laugh! When there is a fire in your soul which is consuming you, do you go to a mosque to extinguish it? Pardon me, but will you kindly move a little farther away? When you are attacked by such a mania that you could crack plates with your teeth, would you go to look at a palace? Believe me, the life of a traveller is a very hard one! It is one of the hardest penances! It is a martyrdom! It is a * * * A prudent blow from her fan closed my mouth, which was going rather too fast with words and actions; so I attacked the cutlet.

"Poor fellow," the Andalusian murmured, laughing, after giving a glance around her; "are all the Italians as fiery as you?"