

CHAPTER 1

THE SPANISH MUSLIMS PREVIOUS TO THE WAR OF GRANADA

Conquest of Spain by the Muslims. — Cordoban Empire. — High Civilization and Prosperity. — Its Dismemberment. — Kingdom of Granada. — Luxurious and Chivalrous Character. — Literature of the Spanish Muslims. — Progress in Science. — Historical Merits. — Useful Discoveries. — Poetry and Romance. — Influence on the Christian Spanish.

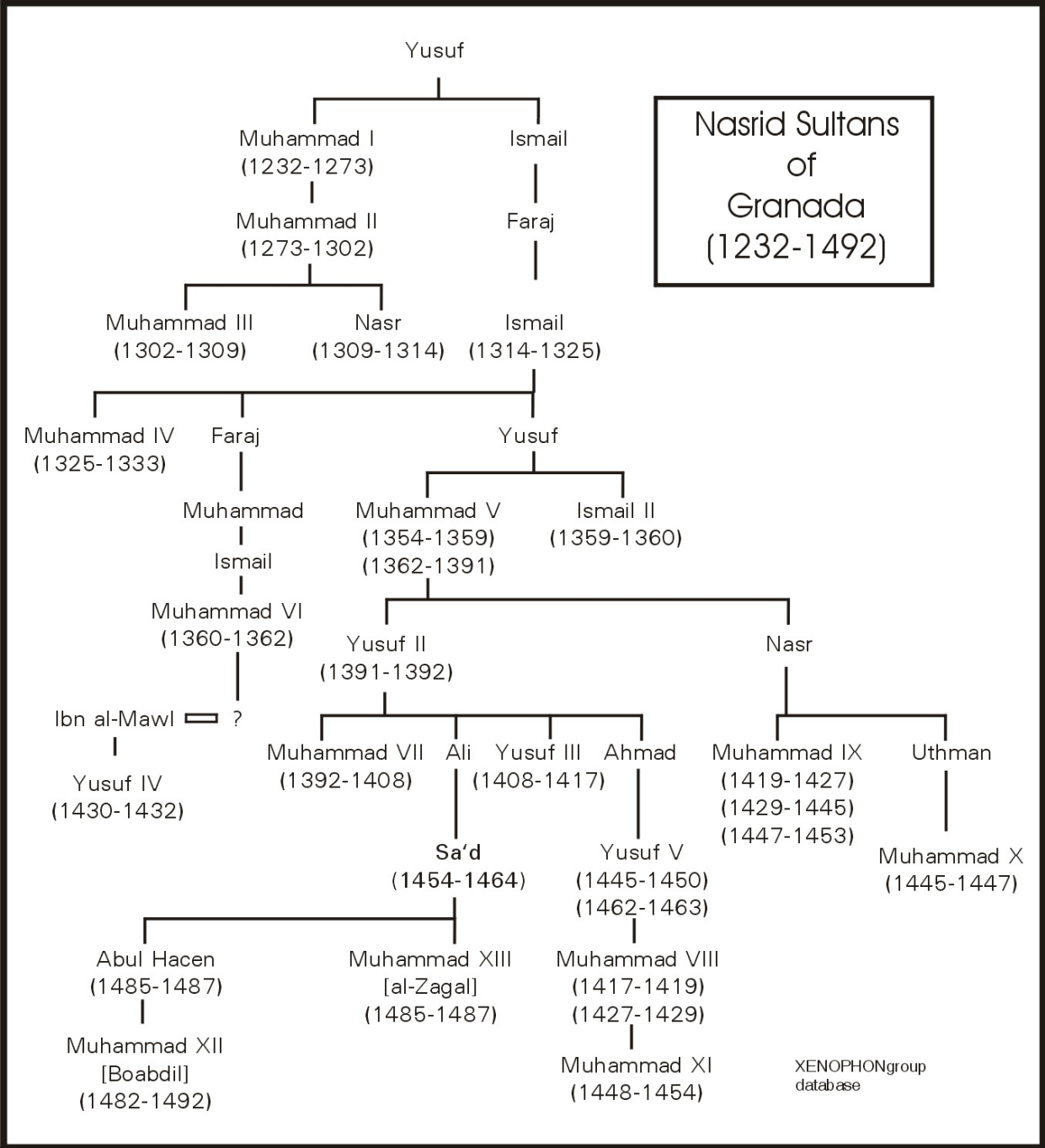
We have now arrived at the commencement of the famous war of Granada, which terminated in the subversion of the Islamic empire in Spain, after it had subsisted for nearly eight centuries, and with the consequent restoration to the Castilian crown of the fairest portion of its ancient domain. In order to [reach] a better understanding of the character of the Spanish Muslims, or Moors, who exercised an important influence on that of their Christian neighbours, the present chapter will be devoted to a consideration of their previous history in the Peninsula, where they probably reached a higher degree of civilization than in any other part of the world.¹

It is not necessary to dwell upon the causes of the brilliant successes of Islam at its outset: the dexterity with which, unlike all other religions, it was raised upon, not against the principles and prejudices of preceding sects; the military spirit and discipline, which it established among all classes, so that the multifarious nations who embraced it, assumed the appearance of one vast, well-ordered camp;² the union of ecclesiastical with civil authority intrusted to the caliphs, which enabled them to control opinions, as absolutely as the Roman pontiffs in their most despotic hour;³ or lastly, the peculiar adaptation of the doctrines of Muhammad to the character of the wild tribes among whom they were preached.⁴ It is sufficient to say, that these latter, within a century after the coming of their apostle, having succeeded in establishing their religion over vast regions in Asia, and on the northern shores of Africa, arrived before the Strait of Gibraltar, which, though a temporary, were destined to prove an ineffectual bulwark for Christendom.

The causes which have been currently assigned for the invasion and conquest of Spain, even by the most credible modern historians, have scarcely any foundation in contemporary records. The true causes are to be found in the rich spoils offered by the Gothic monarchy, and in the thirst of enterprise in the Saracens, which their long uninterrupted career of victory seems to have sharpened, rather than satisfied.⁵ The fatal battle, which terminated with the slaughter of King Rodrigo [Roderic] and the flower of his nobility, was fought in the summer of 711, on a plain washed by the Guadalete near Jerez, about two leagues distant from Cádiz.⁶ The Goths appear never to have afterward rallied under one head, but their broken detachments made many a gallant stand in such strong positions as were afforded throughout the kingdom; so that nearly three years elapsed before the final achievement of the conquest. The policy of the conquerors, after making the requisite allowance for the evils necessarily attending such an invasion,⁷ may be considered liberal. Such of the Christians, as chose, were permitted to remain in the conquered territory in undisturbed possession of their property. They were allowed to worship in their own way to be governed, within prescribed limits, by their own laws; to fill certain civil offices, and serve in the army; their women were invited to intermarry with the conquerors;⁸ and, in short, they were condemned to no other legal badge of servitude than the payment of somewhat heavier imposts than those exacted from their Muslim brethren. It is true the Christians were occasionally exposed to suffering from the caprices of despotism, and, it may be added, of popular fanaticism.⁹ But, on the whole, their condition may sustain an advantageous comparison with that of any Christian people under the Muslim dominion of later times, and affords a striking contrast with that of our Saxon ancestors after the Norman conquest, which suggests an obvious parallel in many of its circumstances to the Saracen.¹⁰

After the further progress of the Muslims in Europe had been checked by the memorable defeat at Tours [or Poitiers (732) —ED], their energies, no longer allowed to expand in the career of conquest, recoiled on themselves, and speedily produced the dismemberment of their overgrown empire. Spain was the first of the provinces, which fell off. The Umayyad family, under whom this revolution was effected, continued to occupy the throne as independent princes, from the middle of the eighth to the close of the eleventh century, a period which forms the most honourable portion of the Islamic annals.

The new government was modelled on the eastern caliphate. Freedom shows itself under a variety of forms; while despotism, at least in the institutions founded on the Koran, seems to wear but one. The sovereign was the depository of all power, the fountain of honour, the sole arbiter of life and fortune. He styled himself 'Commander of the Faithful', and, like the caliphs of the east, assumed an entire spiritual as well as temporal supremacy. The country was distributed into six *capitnias* or provinces, each under the administration of a



wali, or governor, with subordinate officers, to whom was intrusted a more immediate jurisdiction over the principal cities. The immense authority and pretensions of these petty satraps became a fruitful source of rebellion in later times. The caliph administered the government with the advice of his *mexuar*, or council of state, composed of his principal *cadis* and *hajibs*, or secretaries. The office of prime minister, or chief *hajib*, corresponded, in the nature and variety of its functions, with that of a Turkish grand vizier. The caliph reserved to himself the right of selecting his successor from among his numerous progeny; and this adoption was immediately ratified by an oath of allegiance to the heir apparent from the principal officers of state.¹¹

The princes of the blood, instead of being condemned, as in Turkey, to waste their youth in the seclusion of the harem, were intrusted to the care of learned men, to be instructed in the duties befitting their station. They were encouraged to visit the academies, which were particularly celebrated in Córdoba, where they mingled in disputation, and frequently carried away the prizes of poetry and eloquence. Their riper years exhibited such fruits as were to be expected from their early education. The Umayyads need not shrink from a comparison with any other dynasty of equal length in modern Europe. Many of them amused their leisure with poetical composition, of which numerous examples are preserved in Condé's History, and some left elaborate works of learning, which have maintained a permanent reputation with Arabian scholars. Their long reigns, the first ten of which embrace a period of two centuries and a half, their peaceful deaths, and unbroken line of succession in the same family for so many years, show that their authority must have been founded in the affections of their subjects. Indeed, they seem, with one or two exceptions, to have ruled over them with a truly patriarchal sway; and, on the event of their deaths the people, bathed in tears, are described as accompanying their relics to the tomb, where the ceremony was concluded with a public eulogy on the virtues of the deceased, by his son and successor. This pleasing moral picture affords a strong contrast to the sanguinary scenes which so often attend the transmission of the sceptre from one generation to another, among the nations of the east.¹²

The Spanish caliphs supported a large military force, frequently keeping two or three large armies in the field at the same time. The flower of these forces was a body guard, gradually raised to twelve thousand men, one third of them Christians, superbly equipped, and officered by members of the royal family. Their feuds with the eastern caliphs and the Barbary pirates required them also to maintain a respectable navy, which was fitted out from the numerous dockyards, that lined the coast from Cádiz to Tarragona.

The munificence of the Umayyads was most ostentatiously displayed in their public edifices, palaces, mosques, hospitals, and in the construction of commodious quays, fountains, bridges, and aqueducts, which, penetrating the sides

of the mountains, or sweeping on lofty arches across the valleys, rivalled in their proportions the monuments of ancient Rome. These works, which were scattered more or less over all the provinces, contributed especially to the embellishment of Córdoba, the capital of the empire. The delightful situation of this city in the midst of a cultivated plain washed by the waters of the Guadalquivir, made it very early the favourite residence of the Spanish Muslims, who loved to surround their houses, even in the cities, with groves and refreshing fountains, so delightful to the imagination of a wanderer of the desert.¹³ The public squares and private court-yards sparkled with *jets d'eau*, fed by copious streams from the Sierra Morena, which, besides supplying nine hundred public baths, were conducted into the interior of the edifices, where they diffused a grateful coolness over the sleeping-apartments of their luxurious inhabitants.¹⁴

Without adverting to that magnificent freak of the caliphs, the construction of the palace of Azahra, of which not a vestige now remains, we may form a sufficient notion of the taste and magnificence of this era from the remains of the far-famed mosque, now the cathedral of Córdoba. This building, which still covers more ground than any other church in Christendom, was esteemed the third in sanctity by the Muslim world, being inferior only to the Alaksa of Jerusalem and the temple of Mecca. Most of its ancient glories have indeed long since departed. The rich bronze which embossed its gates, the myriads of lamps which illuminated its aisles, have disappeared; and its interior roof of odoriferous and curiously carved wood has been cut up into guitars and snuff-boxes. But its thousand columns of variegated marble still remain; and its general dimensions, notwithstanding some loose assertions to the contrary, seem to be much the same as they were in the time of the Muslims. European critics, however, condemn its most elaborate beauties as 'heavy and barbarous'. Its celebrated portals are pronounced 'diminutive, and in very bad taste'. Its throng of pillars gives it the air of 'a park rather than a temple', and the whole is made still more incongruous by the unequal length of their shafts, being grotesquely compensated by a proportionate variation of size in their bases and capitals, rudely fashioned after the Corinthian order.¹⁵

But if all this gives us a contemptible idea of the taste of the Muslims at this period, which indeed, in architecture seems to have been far inferior to that of the later princes of Granada, we cannot but be astonished at the adequacy of their resources to carry such magnificent designs into execution. Their revenue, we are told in explanation, amounted to eight millions of *mitcales* of gold or nearly six millions sterling; a sum fifteen-fold greater than that which William the Conqueror, in the subsequent century, was able to extort from his subjects, with all the ingenuity of feudal exaction. The tone of exaggeration, which distinguishes the Asiatic writers, entitles them perhaps to little confidence in their numerical estimates. This immense wealth, however, is predicated of other Muslim princes of that age; and their vast superiority over the Christian states

of the north, in arts and effective industry, may well account for a corresponding superiority in their resources.

The revenue of the Cordoban sovereigns was derived from the fifth of the spoil taken in battle, an important item in an age of unintermitting war and rapine; from the enormous exaction of one tenth of the produce of commerce, husbandry flocks, and mines; from a capitation tax on Jews and Christians; and from certain tolls on the transportation of goods. They engaged in commerce on their own account, and drew from mines, which belonged to the crown, a conspicuous part of their income.¹⁶

Before the discovery of America, Spain was to the rest of Europe, what her colonies have since become, the great source of mineral wealth. The Carthaginians, and the Romans afterward, regularly drew from her large masses of the precious metals. Pliny, who resided some time in the country, relates that three of her provinces were said to have annually yielded the incredible quantity of sixty thousand pounds of gold.¹⁷ The Muslims with their usual activity penetrated into these arcana of wealth. Abundant traces of their labours are still to be met with along the barren ridge of mountains that covers the north of Andalusia; and the diligent Bowles has enumerated no less than five thousand of their excavations in the kingdom or district of Jaén.¹⁸

But the best mine of the caliphs was in the industry and sobriety of their subjects. The Muslim colonies have been properly classed among the agricultural. Their acquaintance with the science of husbandry is shown in their voluminous treatises on the subject, and in the monuments which they have everywhere left of their peculiar culture. The system of irrigation, which has so long fertilized the south of Spain, was derived from them. They introduced into the Peninsula various tropical plants and vegetables, whose cultivation has departed with them. Sugar, which the modern Spaniards have been obliged to import from foreign nations in large quantities annually for their domestic consumption, until within the last half [of the nineteenth] century when they have been supplied by their island of Cuba, constituted one of the principal exports of the Spanish Muslim. The silk manufacture was carried on by them extensively. The Nubian geographer [see author's comments at end of chapter], in the beginning of the twelfth century, enumerates six hundred villages in Jaén as engaged in it, at a time when it was known to the Europeans only from their circuitous traffic with the Greek empire. This together with fine fabrics of cotton and wool, formed the staple of an active commerce with the Levant, and especially with Constantinople, whence they were again diffused, by means of the caravans of the north, over the comparatively barbarous countries of Christendom.

The population kept pace with this general prosperity of the country. It would appear from a census instituted at Córdoba, at the close of the tenth century, that there were at that time in it six hundred temples and two hundred

thousand dwelling-houses; many of these latter being, probably, mere huts or cabins, and occupied by separate families. Without placing too much reliance on any numerical statements, however, we may give due weight to the inference of an intelligent writer, who remarks that their minute cultivation of the soil, the cheapness of their labour, their particular attention to the most nutritious esculents, many of them such as would be rejected by Europeans at this day, are indicative of a crowded population, like that, perhaps, which swarms over Japan or China, where the same economy is necessarily resorted to for the mere sustenance of life.¹⁹

Whatever consequence a nation may derive, in its own age, from physical resources, its intellectual development will form the subject of deepest interest to posterity. The most flourishing periods of both not infrequently coincide. Thus the reigns of Abd al-Rahman III (913–61), al-Hakam II (961–76), and the regency of al-Mansur (976–1002), embracing the latter half of the tenth century, during which the Spanish Muslims reached their highest political importance, may be regarded as the period of their highest civilization under the Umayyads; although the impulse then given carried them forward to still further advances, in the turbulent times which followed. This beneficent impulse is, above all, imputable to al-Hakam. He was one of those rare beings, who have employed the awful engine of despotism in promoting the happiness and intelligence of his species. In his elegant tastes, appetite for knowledge, and munificent patronage, he may be compared with the best of the Medici. He assembled the eminent scholars of his time, both natives and foreigners, at his court where he employed them in the most confidential offices. He converted his palace into an academy, making it the familiar resort of men of letters, at whose conferences he personally assisted in his intervals of leisure from public duty. He selected the most suitable persons for the composition of works on civil and natural history, requiring the prefects of his provinces and cities to furnish, as far as possible, the necessary intelligence. He was a diligent student, and left many of the volumes which he read, enriched with his commentaries. Above all, he was intent upon the acquisition of an extensive library. He invited illustrious foreigners to send him their works, and munificently recompensed them. No donative was so grateful to him as a book. He employed agents in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Persia, for collecting and transcribing the rarest manuscripts; and his vessels returned freighted with cargoes more precious than the spices of the east. In this way he amassed a magnificent collection, which was distributed, according to the subjects, in various apartments of his palace; and which, if we may credit the Muslim historians, amounted to six hundred thousand volumes.²⁰

If all this be thought to savour too much of eastern hyperbole, still it cannot be doubted that an amazing number of writers swarmed over the Peninsula at this period. Casiri's multifarious catalogue bears ample testimony to the

emulation, with which not only men, but even women of the highest rank devoted themselves to letters; the latter contending publicly for the prizes, not merely in eloquence and poetry, but in those recondite studies which have usually been reserved for the other sex. The prefects of the provinces, emulating their master, converted their courts into academies, and dispensed premiums to poets and philosophers. The stream of royal bounty awakened life in the remotest districts. But its effects were especially visible in the capital. Eighty free schools were opened in Córdoba. The circle of letters and science was publicly expounded by professors, whose reputation for wisdom attracted not only the scholars of Christian Spain, but of France, Italy, Germany, and the British Isles. For this period of brilliant illumination with the Muslims corresponds precisely with that of the deepest barbarism of Europe; when a library of three or four hundred volumes was a magnificent endowment for the richest monastery; when scarcely a 'priest south of the Thames', in the words of Alfred, 'could translate Latin into his mother tongue', when not a single philosopher, according to Tiraboschi, was to be met with in Italy, save only the French Pope Sylvester II, who drew his knowledge from the schools of the Spanish Muslims, and was esteemed a necromancer for his pains.²¹

Such is the glowing picture presented to us of Arabian scholarship, in the tenth and succeeding centuries, under a despotic government and a sensual religion; and, whatever judgment may be passed on the real value of their boasted literature, it cannot be denied that the nation exhibited a wonderful activity of intellect, and an apparatus for learning (if we are to admit their own statements) unrivalled in the best ages of antiquity.

The Muslim governments of that period rested on so unsound a basis, that the season of their greatest prosperity was often followed by precipitate decay. This had been the case with the eastern caliphate, and was now so with the western. During the life of al-Hakam II's successor, the empire of the Umayyads was broken up into a hundred petty principalities; and their magnificent capital of Córdoba, dwindling into a second-rate city, retained no other distinction than that of being the Mecca of Spain. These little states soon became a prey to all the evils arising out of a vicious constitution of government and religion. Almost every accession to the throne was contested by numerous competitors of the same family; and a succession of sovereigns, wearing on their brows but the semblance of a crown, came and departed, like the shadows of Macbeth. The motley tribes of Asiatics, of whom the Spanish Muslim population was composed, regarded each other with ill-disguised jealousy. The lawless, predatory habits, which no discipline could effectually control in an Arab, made them ever ready for revolt. The Muslim states, thus reduced in size and crippled by faction were unable to resist the Christian forces, which were pressing on them from the north. By the middle of the ninth century, the Christian Spanish had reached the Douro and the Ebro. By the close of the

eleventh, they had advanced their line of conquest, under the victorious banner of the Cid, to the Tajo. The swarms of Africans who invaded the Peninsula, during the two following centuries, gave substantial support to their Muslim brethren; and the cause of Christian Spain trembled in the balance for a moment on the memorable day of Navas de Tolosa [1212]. But the fortunate issue of that battle, in which, according to the lying letter of Alfonso IX [1188–1230], ‘one hundred and eighty-five thousand infidels perished, and only five and twenty Spaniards’, gave a permanent ascendancy to the Christian arms. The vigorous campaigns of Jaime I [‘the Conqueror’ (1213–76)], of Aragón, and of Ferdinand III [‘the Saint’ (c.1200–52)], of Castile, gradually stripped away the remaining territories of Valencia, Murcia, and Andalusia; so that, by the middle of the thirteenth century, the constantly contracting circle of the Moorish dominion had shrunk into the narrow limits of the province of Granada. Yet on this comparatively small point of their ancient domain, the Muslims erected a new kingdom of sufficient strength to resist, for more than two centuries, the united forces of the Spanish monarchies.

The Muslim territory of Granada contained, within a circuit of about one hundred and eighty leagues, all the physical resources of a great empire. Its broad valleys were intersected by mountains rich in mineral wealth, whose hardy population supplied the state with husbandmen and soldiers. Its pastures were fed by abundant fountains, and its coasts studded with commodious ports, the principal marts in the Mediterranean. In the midst, and crowning the whole, as with a diadem, rose the beautiful city of Granada. In the days of the Spanish Muslims it was encompassed by a wall, flanked by a thousand and thirty towers, with seven portals.²² Its population, according to a contemporary, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, amounted to two hundred thousand souls;²³ and various authors agree in attesting, that, at a later, it period could send forth fifty thousand warriors from its gates. This statement will not appear exaggerated, if we consider that the native population of the city was greatly swelled by the influx of the ancient inhabitants of the districts lately conquered by the Christian Spanish.

On the summit of one of the hills of the city was erected the royal fortress or palace of the Alhambra, which was capable of containing within its circuit forty thousand men.²⁴ The light and elegant architecture of this edifice, whose magnificent ruins still form the most interesting monument in Spain for the contemplation of the traveller, shows the great advancement of the art since the construction of the celebrated mosque of Córdoba. Its graceful porticoes and colonnades, its domes and ceilings, glowing with tints, which, in that transparent atmosphere, have lost nothing of their original brilliancy, its airy halls, so constructed as to admit the perfume of surrounding gardens and agreeable ventilation of the air, and its fountains, which still shed their coolness over its deserted courts, manifest at once the taste, opulence, and Sybarite luxury of its

proprietors. The streets are represented to have been narrow, many of the houses lofty, with turrets of curiously wrought larch or marble, and with cornices of shining metal, 'that glittered like stars through the dark foliage of the orange groves'; and the whole is compared to 'an enamelled vase, sparkling with hyacinths and emeralds'.²⁵ Such are the florid strains in which the Arabic writers fondly descant on the glories of Granada.

At the foot of this fabric of the *genii* [specially endowed region] lay the cultivated *vega*, or plain, so celebrated as the arena, for more than two centuries, of Muslim and Christian chivalry, every inch of whose soil may be said to have been fertilized with human blood. The Spanish Muslims exhausted on it all their powers of elaborate cultivation. They distributed the waters of the Genil [Xenil], which flowed through it, into a thousand channels for its more perfect irrigation. A constant succession of fruits and crops was obtained throughout the year. The products of the most opposite latitudes were transplanted there with success; and the hemp of the north grew luxuriant under the shadow of the vine and the olive. Silk furnished the principal staple of a traffic that was carried on through the ports of Almería and Málaga. The Italian cities, then rising into opulence, derived their principal skill in this elegant manufacture from the Spanish Muslims. Florence, in particular, imported large quantities of the raw material from them as late as the fifteenth century. The Genoese are mentioned as having mercantile establishments in Granada; and treaties of commerce were entered into with this nation, as well as with the crown of Aragón. Their ports swarmed with a motley contribution from 'Europe, Africa, and the Levant', so that 'Granada', in the words of the historian, 'became the common city of all nations'. 'The reputation citizens for trust-worthiness', says a Spanish writer, 'was such, that their bare word was more relied on, than a contract is now among us'; and he quotes the saying of a Catholic bishop, that 'Moorish works and Spanish faith were all that were necessary to make a good Christian'.²⁶

The revenue, which was computed at twelve hundred thousand ducats, was derived from similar, but, in some respects, heavier impositions than those of the caliphs of Córdoba. The crown, besides being possessed of valuable plantations in the *vega*, imposed the onerous tax of one seventh on all the agricultural produce of the kingdom. The precious metals were also obtained in considerable quantities, and the royal mint was noted for the purity and elegance of its coin.²⁷

The sovereigns of Granada were for the most part distinguished by liberal tastes. They freely dispensed revenues in the protection of letters, the construction sumptuous public works, and, above all, in the display courtly pomp, unrivalled by any of the princes of that period. Each day presented a succession of *fêtes* and tourneys, in which the knight seemed less ambitious of the hardy prowess of Christian chivalry, than of displaying his inimitable horsemanship, and his dexterity in the elegant pastimes peculiar to his nation. The people of

Granada, like those of ancient Rome, seem to have demanded a perpetual spectacle. Life was with them one long carnival, and the season of revelry was prolonged until the enemy was at the gate.

During the interval, which had elapsed since the decay of the Umayyads, the Christian Spanish had been gradually rising in civilization to the level of their Muslim enemies; and, while their increased consequence secured them from contempt, with which they had formerly been regarded by the Muslims, the latter, in their turn, had not so far sunk in the scale, as to have become the objects of the bigoted aversion, which was, in after days, so heartily visited on them by the Christian Spaniards. At this period, therefore, the two nations viewed each other with more liberality probably, than at any previous or succeeding time. Their respective monarchs conducted their mutual negotiations on a footing of perfect equality. We find several examples of Muslim sovereigns visiting in person the court of Castile. These civilities were reciprocated by the Christian princes. As late as 1463, Enríque IV [1425–74] had a personal interview with the king of Granada, in the dominions of the latter. The two monarchs held their conference under a splendid pavilion erected in the vega, before the gates of the city; and, after an exchange of presents, the Spanish sovereign was escorted to the frontiers by a body of Muslim cavaliers. These acts of courtesy relieve in some measure the ruder features of an almost uninterrupted warfare, that was necessarily kept up between the rival nations.²⁸

The Spanish Muslim and Christian knights were also in the habit of exchanging visits at the courts of their respective masters. The latter were wont to repair to Granada to settle their affairs of honour, by personal rencounter, in the presence of its sovereign. The disaffected nobles of Castile, among whom Mariana especially notices the Velas and the Castros, often sought an asylum there, and served under the Muslim banner. With this interchange of social courtesy between the two nations, it could not but happen that each should contract somewhat of the peculiarities natural to the other. The Spaniard acquired something of the gravity and magnificence of demeanour proper to the Muslim; and the latter relaxed his habitual reserve, and above all, the jealousy and gross sensuality which characterize the nations of the east.²⁹

Indeed, if we were to rely on the pictures presented to us in the Spanish ballads or *romances*, we should admit as unreserved an intercourse between the sexes to have existed among the Spanish Muslims, as with any other people of Europe. The Moorish lady is represented there as an undistinguished spectator of the public festivals; while her knight, bearing an embroidered mantle or scarf, or some other token of her favour, contends openly in her presence for the prize of valour, mingles with her in the graceful dance of the Zambra, or sighs away his soul in moonlight serenades under her balcony.³⁰

Other circumstances, especially the frescoes still extant on the walls of the Alhambra, may be cited as corroborative of the conclusions afforded by the

romances, implying a latitude in the privileges accorded to the sex, similar to that in Christian countries, and altogether alien from the genius of Islam.³¹ The chivalrous character ascribed to the Spanish Muslims appears, moreover, in perfect conformity to this. Thus some of their sovereigns, we are told, after the fatigues of the tournament, were wont to recreate their spirits with 'elegant poetry, and florid discourses of amorous and knightly history'. The ten qualities, enumerated as essential to a true knight, were 'piety, valour, courtesy, prowess, the gifts of poetry and eloquence, and dexterity in the management of the horse, the sword, lance, and bow'.³² The history of the Spanish Muslims, especially in the latter wars of Granada, furnishes repeated examples, not merely of the heroism, which distinguished the European chivalry of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but occasionally of a polished courtesy, that might have graced a Bayard or a Sidney. This combination of oriental magnificence and knightly prowess shed a ray of glory over the closing days of the Islamic empire in Spain, and served to conceal, though it could not correct, the vices which it possessed in common with all Muslim institutions.

The government of Granada was not administered with the same tranquillity as that of Córdoba. Revolutions were perpetually occurring, which may be traced sometimes to the tyranny of the prince, but more frequently to the factions of the seraglio, the soldiery, or the licentious populace of the capital. The latter, indeed, more volatile than the sands of the deserts from which they originally sprung, were driven by every gust of passion into the most frightful excesses, deposing and even assassinating their monarchs, violating their palaces, and scattering abroad their beautiful collections and libraries; while the kingdom, unlike that of Córdoba, was so contracted in its extent, that every convulsion of the capital was felt to its farthest extremities. Still, however, it held out, almost miraculously, against the Christian arms, and the storms that beat upon it incessantly, for more than two centuries, scarcely wore away any thing from its original limits.

Several circumstances may be pointed out as enabling Granada to maintain this protracted resistance. Its concentrated population furnished such abundant supplies of soldiers, that its sovereigns could bring into the field an army of a hundred thousand men.³³ Many of these were drawn from the regions of the Alpujarras [Alpuxarras], whose rugged inhabitants had not been corrupted by the soft effeminacy of the plains. The ranks were occasionally recruited, moreover, from the warlike tribes of Africa. The Muslims of Granada are praised by their enemies for their skill with the cross-bow, to the use of which they were trained from childhood.³⁴ But their strength lay chiefly in their cavalry. Their spacious vegas afforded an ample field for the display of their matchless horsemanship; while the face of the country, intersected by mountains and intricate defiles, gave a manifest advantage to the Arabian light-horse over the steel-clad cavalry of the Christians, and was particularly suited to the

wild *guerrilla* warfare, in which the Granadans so much excelled. During the long hostilities of the country, almost every city had been converted into a fortress. The number of these fortified places in the territory of Granada was ten times as great as is now to be found throughout the whole Peninsula.³⁵ Lastly, in addition to these means of defence, may be mentioned their early acquaintance with gunpowder, which, like the Greek fire of Constantinople, contributed perhaps in some degree to prolong their precarious existence beyond its natural term.

But after all, the strength of Granada, like that of Constantinople, lay less in its own resources than in the weakness of its enemies, who, distracted by the feuds of a turbulent aristocracy, especially during the long minorities with which Castile was afflicted, perhaps more than any other nation in Europe, seemed to be more remote from the conquest of Granada at the death of Enríque IV, than at that of St. Ferdinand in the thirteenth century. Before entering on the achievement of this conquest by Ferdinand and Isabella, it may not be amiss to notice the probable influence exerted by the Spanish Muslims on European civilization.

Notwithstanding the high advances made by the Muslims in almost every branch of learning, and the liberal import of certain sayings ascribed to Muhammad, the spirit of his religion was eminently unfavourable to letters. The Koran, whatever be the merit of its literary execution, does not, we believe, contain a single precept in favour of general science.³⁶ Indeed during the first century after its promulgation, almost as little attention was bestowed upon this by the Muslims, as in their 'days of ignorance', as the period is stigmatized which preceded the advent of their apostle.³⁷ But, after the nation had reposed from its tumultuous military career, the taste for elegant pleasures, which naturally results from opulence and leisure, began to flow in upon it. It entered upon this new field with all its characteristic enthusiasm, and seemed ambitious of attaining the same preeminence in science, that it had already reached in arms.

It was at the commencement of this period of intellectual fermentation, that the last of the Umayyads, escaping into Spain, established there the kingdom of Córdoba, and imported along with him the fondness for luxury and letters, that had begun to display itself in the capitals of the east. His munificent spirit descended upon his successors; and on the breaking up of the empire, the various capitals, Sevilla, Murcia, Málaga, Granada, and others, which rose upon its ruins, became the centres of so many intellectual systems, that continued to emit a steady lustre through the clouds and darkness of succeeding centuries. The period of this literary civilization, reached far into the fourteenth century, and thus, embracing an interval of six hundred years, may be said to have exceeded in duration that of any other literature ancient or modern.

There were several auspicious circumstances in the condition of the Spanish

Muslims, which distinguished them from their Muslim brethren. The temperate climate of Spain was far more propitious to robustness and elasticity of intellect than the sultry regions of Arabia and Africa. Its long line of coast and convenient havens opened to an enlarged commerce. Its numbers of rival states encouraged a generous emulation, like that which glowed in ancient Greece and modern Italy; and was infinitely more favourable to the development of the mental powers than the far-extended and sluggish empires of Asia. Lastly, a familiar intercourse with the Europeans served to mitigate in the Spanish Muslims some of the more degrading superstitions incident to their religion, and to impart to them nobler ideas of the independence and moral dignity of man, than are to be found in the slaves of eastern despotism.

Under these favourable circumstances, provisions for education were liberally multiplied, colleges, academies, and gymnasiums springing up spontaneously, as it were, not merely in the principal cities, but in the most obscure villages of the country. No less than fifty of these colleges or schools could be discerned scattered over the suburbs and populous plains of Granada. Seventy public libraries are enumerated in Spain by a contemporary, at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Every place of note seems to have furnished materials for a literary history. The copious catalogues of writers, still extant in the Escorial, show how extensively the cultivation of science was pursued, even through its minutest subdivisions; while a biographical notice of blind men, eminent for their scholarship in Spain, proves how far the general avidity for knowledge triumphed over the most discouraging obstacles of nature.³⁸

The Spanish Muslims emulated their countrymen of the east in their devotion to natural and mathematical science. They penetrated into the remotest regions of Africa and Asia, transmitting an exact account of their proceedings to the national academies. They contributed to astronomical knowledge by the number and accuracy of their observations, and by the improvement of instruments and the erection of observatories, of which the noble tower of Sevilla is one of the earliest examples. They furnished their full proportion in the department of history, which, according to an Arabic author cited by D'Herbelot, could boast of thirteen hundred writers. The treatises on logic and metaphysics amount to one ninth of the surviving treasures of the Escorial; and, to conclude this summary of naked details, some of their scholars appear to have entered upon as various a field of philosophical inquiry, as would be crowded into a modern encyclopedia.³⁹

The results, it must be confessed, do not appear to have corresponded with this magnificent apparatus and unrivalled activity of research. The mind of the Muslims was distinguished by the most opposite characteristics, which sometimes, indeed, served to neutralize each other. An acute and subtle perception was often clouded by mysticism and abstraction. They combined a habit of classification and generalization, with a marvellous fondness for detail; a

vivacious fancy with a patience of application, that a German of our day might envy; and, while in fiction they launched boldly into originality, indeed extravagance, they were content in philosophy to tread servilely in the track of their ancient masters. They derived their science from versions of the Greek philosophers; but, as their previous discipline had not prepared them for its reception, they were oppressed rather than stimulated by the weight of the inheritance. They possessed an indefinite power of accumulation, but they rarely ascended to general principles, or struck out new and important truths; at least, this is certain in regard to their metaphysical labours.

Hence Aristotle, who taught them to arrange what they had already acquired, rather than to advance to new discoveries, became the god of their idolatry. They piled commentary on commentary, and, in their blind admiration of his system, may be almost said to have been more of Peripatetics than the Stagirite himself. The Cordoban Averroes was the most eminent of his Muslim commentators, and undoubtedly contributed more than any other individual to establish the authority of Aristotle over the reason of mankind for so many ages. Yet his various illustrations have served, in the opinion of European critics, to darken rather than dissipate the ambiguities of his original, and have even led to the confident assertion that he was wholly unacquainted with the Greek language.⁴⁰

The Muslims gave an entirely new face to pharmacy and chemistry. They introduced a great variety of salutary medicaments into Europe. The Spanish Muslims, in particular, are commended by Sprengel above their brethren for their observations on the practice of medicine.⁴¹ But whatever real knowledge they possessed was corrupted by their inveterate propensity for mystical and occult science. They too often exhausted both health and fortune in fruitless researches after the elixir of life and the philosopher's stone. Their medical prescriptions were regulated by the aspect of the stars. Their physics were debased by magic, their chemistry degenerated into alchemy, their astronomy into astrology.

In the fruitful field of history, their success was even more equivocal. They seem to have been wholly destitute of the philosophical spirit, which gives life to this kind of composition. They were the disciples of fatalism and the subjects of a despotic government. Man appeared to them only in the contrasted aspects of slave and master. What could they know of the finer moral relations, or of the higher energies of the soul, which are developed only under free and beneficent institutions? Even could they have formed conceptions of these, how would they have dared to express them? Hence their histories are too often mere barren chronological details, or fulsome panegyrics on their princes, unenlivened by a single spark of philosophy or criticism.

Although the Spanish Muslims are not entitled to the credit of having wrought any important revolution in intellectual or moral science, they are

commended by a severe critic, as exhibiting in their writings ‘the germs of many theories, which have been reproduced as discoveries in later ages’,⁴² and they silently perfected several of those useful arts, which have had a sensible influence on the happiness and improvement of mankind. Algebra, and the higher mathematics, were taught in their schools, and thence diffused over Europe. The manufacture of paper, which, since the invention of printing, has contributed so essentially to the rapid circulation of knowledge, was derived through them. Casiri has discovered several manuscripts on cotton paper in the Escorial as early as 1009, and of linen paper of the date of 1106;⁴³ the origin of which latter fabric Tiraboschi has ascribed to a Italian of Trevigi, in the middle of the fourteenth century.⁴⁴ Lastly, the application of gunpowder to military science, which has wrought an equally important revolution, though of a more doubtful complexion, in the condition of society, was derived through the same channel.⁴⁵

The influence of the Spanish Muslims, however, is discernible not so much in the amount of knowledge, as in the impulse, which they communicated to the long dormant energies of Europe. Their invasion was coeval with the commencement of that night of darkness, which divides the modern from the ancient world. The soil had been impoverished by long, assiduous cultivation. The Muslims came like a torrent, sweeping down and obliterating even the landmarks of former civilization, but bringing with it a fertilizing principle, which, as the waters receded, gave new life and loveliness to the landscape. The writings of the Saracen were translated and diffused throughout Europe. Their schools were visited by disciples, who, roused from their lethargy, caught somewhat of the generous enthusiasm of their masters; and a healthful action was given to the European intellect, which, however ill directed at first, was thus prepared for the more judicious and successful efforts of later times.

It is comparatively easy to determine the value of the scientific labours of a people, for truth is the same in all languages; but the laws of taste differ so widely in different nations, that it requires a nicer discrimination to pronounce fairly upon such works as are regulated by them. Nothing is more common than to see the poetry of the east condemned as timid, over-refined, infected with meretricious ornament and conceits, and, in short, as every way contravening the principles of good taste. Few of the critics, who thus peremptorily condemn, are capable of reading a line of the original. The merit of poetry, however, consists so much in its literary execution, that a person, to pronounce upon it, should be intimately acquainted with the whole import of the idiom in which it is written. The style of poetry, indeed of all ornamental writing, whether prose or verse, in order to produce a proper effect, must be raised or relieved, as it were, upon the prevailing style of social intercourse. Even where this is highly figurative and impassioned, as with the Muslims, whose Arabic language is made up of metaphor, that of the poet must be still more so. Hence

the tone of elegant literature varies so widely in different countries, even in those of Europe, which approach the nearest to each other in their principles of taste, that it would be found extremely difficult to effect a close translation of the most admired specimens of eloquence from the language of one nation into that of any other. A page of Boccaccio or Bembo, for instance, done into literal English, would have an air of intolerable artifice and verbiage. The choicest morsels of Massillon, Bossuet, or the rhetorical Thomas, would savour marvellously of bombast; and how could we in any degree keep pace with the magnificent march of the Castilian! Yet surely we are not to impugn the taste of all these nations, who attach much more importance, and have paid (at least this is true of the French and Italian) much greater attention to the mere beauties of literary finish, than English writers.

Whatever may be the sins of the Muslims on this head, they are certainly not those of negligence. The Spanish Muslims, in particular, were noted for the purity and elegance of their idiom; insomuch that Casiri affects to determine the locality of an author by the superior refinement of his style. Their copious philological and rhetorical treatises, their arts of poetry, grammars, and rhyming dictionaries, show to what an excessive refinement they elaborated the art of composition. Academies, far more numerous than those of Italy, to which they subsequently served for a model, invited by their premiums frequent competitions in poetry and eloquence. To poetry, indeed, especially of the tender kind, the Spanish Muslims seem to have been as indiscriminately addicted as the Italians in the time of Petrarch; and there was scarcely a doctor in church or state, but at some time or other offered up his amorous incense on the altar of the muse.⁴⁶

With all this poetic feeling, however, the Muslims never availed themselves of the treasures of Grecian eloquence, which lay open before them. Not a poet or orator of any eminence in that language seems to have been translated by them.⁴⁷ The temperate tone of Attic composition appeared tame to the fervid conceptions of the east. Neither did they venture upon what in Europe are considered the higher walks of the art, the drama and the epic.⁴⁸ None of their writers in prose or verse shows much attention to the development or dissection of character. Their inspiration exhaled in lyrical effusions, in elegies, epigrams, and idylls. They sometimes, moreover, like the Italians, employed verse as the vehicle of instruction in the grave and recondite sciences. The general character of their poetry is bold, florid, impassioned, richly coloured with imagery, sparkling with conceits and metaphors, and occasionally breathing a deep tone of moral sensibility, as in some of the plaintive effusions ascribed by Condé to the royal poets of Córdoba. The compositions of the golden age of the Abbasids, and of the preceding period, do not seem to have been infected with the taint of exaggeration, so offensive to a European, which distinguishes the later productions in the decay of the empire.

Whatever be thought of the influence of the Arabic on European literature in general, there can be no reasonable doubt that it has been considerable on the Provençale and the Castilian. In the latter especially, so far from being confined to the vocabulary, or to external forms of composition, it seems to have penetrated deep into its spirit, and is plainly discernible in that affectation of stateliness and oriental hyperbole, which characterizes Spanish writers even at the present day; in the subtitles and conceits with which the ancient Castilian verse is so liberally bespangled; and in the relish for proverbs and prudential maxims, which is so general that it may be considered national.⁴⁹

A decided effect has been produced on the romantic literature of Europe by those tales of fairy enchantment, so characteristic of oriental genius, and in which it seems to have revelled with uncontrolled delight. These tales, which furnished the principal diversion of the East, were imported by the Muslims into Spain; and we find the monarchs of Córdoba solacing their leisure hours with listening to their *rawis*, or novelists, who sang to them

‘Of ladye-love and war, romance, and knightly worth.’⁵⁰

The same spirit, penetrating into France, stimulated the more sluggish inventions of the *trouvère*, and, at a later and more polished period, called forth the imperishable creations of the Italian muse.⁵¹

It is unfortunate for the Arabians, that their literature should be locked up in a character and idiom so difficult of access to European scholars. Their wild, imaginative poetry, scarcely capable of transfusion into a foreign tongue, is made known to us only through the medium of bald prose translation; while their scientific treatises have been done into Latin with an inaccuracy, which, to make use of a pun of Casiri's, merits the name of perversions rather than versions of the originals.⁵² How obviously inadequate, then, are our means of forming any just estimate of their merits!

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AUTHOR'S CHAPTER COMMENTS

Notwithstanding the history of the Muslims is so intimately connected with that of the Spaniards, that it may be justly said to form the reverse side of it, and notwithstanding the amplitude of authentic documents in the Arabic tongue to be found in the public libraries, the Castilian writers, even the most eminent, until the latter half of the last century, with an insensibility which can be imputed to nothing else but a spirit of religious bigotry, have been content to derive their narratives exclusively from national authorities. A fire occurred in the Escorial in 1671 and consumed more than three quarters of the magnificent collection of eastern manuscripts contained in its library. The Spanish government, taking some shame to itself, as it would appear, for its past

supineness, caused a copious catalogue of the surviving volumes, to the number of 1,850, to be compiled by the learned Casiri. The result was his celebrated work, *Bibliotheca Arabico—Hispana Escorialensis*, which appeared in the years 1760–70, and which would reflect credit from the splendour of its typographical execution on any press of the present day. This work, although censured by some later orientalists as hasty and superficial, must ever be highly valued as affording the only complete index to the rich repertory of Arabian manuscripts in the Escorial, and for the ample evidence which it exhibits of the science and mental culture of the Spanish Muslims. Several other native scholars, among whom Andres and Masdeu may be particularly noticed, have made extensive researches into the literary history of this people. Still their political history, so essential to a correct knowledge of the Spanish, was comparatively neglected, until Señor Condé, the late learned librarian of the Academy, who had given ample evidence of his oriental learning in his version and illustrations of the *Nubian Geographer*, and a Dissertation on Arabic Coins published in the fifth volume of the *Memoires of the Royal Academy of History*, compiled his works entitled *Historia de la Dominacion de los Arabes en España*. The first volume appeared in 1820. But unhappily the death of its author, occurring in the autumn of the same year, prevented the completion of his design. The two remaining volumes, however, were printed in the course of that and the following year from his own manuscripts; and although their comparative meagreness and confused chronology betray the want of the same paternal hand, they contain much interesting information. The relation of the conquest of Granada, especially, with which the work concludes, exhibits some important particulars in a totally different point of view from that in which they had been presented by the principal Spanish historians.

The first volume, which may be considered as having received the last touches of its author, embraces a circumstantial narrative of the great Saracen invasion, of subsequent condition of Spain under the viceroys, and of the empire of the Umayyads; undoubtedly the most splendid portion of Arabic annals, but the one, unluckily, which had been most copiously illustrated in the popular work compiled by Cardonne from the oriental manuscripts in the Royal Library at Paris. But as this author has followed the Spanish and the oriental authorities, indiscriminately, no part of his book can be cited as a genuine Arabic version, except indeed the last sixty pages, comprising the conquest of Granada, which Cardonne professes in his Preface to have drawn exclusively from an Arabian manuscript. Condé, on the other hand, professes to have adhered to his originals with such scrupulous fidelity, that ‘the European reader may feel that he is perusing an Arabian author’, and certainly very strong internal evidence is afforded of the truth of this assertion, in the peculiar national and religious spirit which pervades the work, and in a certain florid gasconade of style, common with the oriental writers. It is this fidelity that constitutes the peculiar value of Condé's narrative. It is the first time that the Arabians, at least those of Spain, the part of the nation which reached the highest degree of refinement, have been allowed to speak for themselves. The history, or rather tissue of histories, embodied in the translation, is certainly conceived in no very philosophical spirit, and contains, as might be expected from an Asiatic pen, little for the edification of a European reader on subjects of policy and government. The narrative is, moreover, encumbered with frivolous details and a barren muster-roll of names and titles, which would better become a genealogical table than a history. But with every deduction, it must be allowed to exhibit a sufficiently clear view of the intricate conflicting relations of the petty principalities, which swarmed over the

Peninsula; and to furnish abundant evidence of a widespread intellectual improvement amid all the horrors of anarchy and a ferocious despotism. The work had already been translated or rather paraphrased into French. The necessity of an English version will doubtless be in great degree superseded by the *History of the Spanish Arabs*, preparing for the Cabinet Cyclopædia, by Mr. Southey, — a writer with whom few Castilian scholars will be willing to compare, even on their own ground; and who is, happily, not exposed to the national or religious prejudices, which can interfere with his rendering perfect justice to his subject. [Southey's English translation of Condé's *Dominion of the Arabs in Spain* appears not to have been published, but one by Mrs. J. Foster (London, 1854) is cited in the bibliography to this book. Prescott refers to Condé's *Nubian Geographer*, evidently the Arabic text of al-Idrisi. The famous Dutch Orientalist, Dozy, also worked on this text and published it in 1866 as part of his *Description de l'Afrique et l'Espagne*. See Dozy, *Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne*, translated by Francis Griffin Stokes, Frank Cass, London, 1972, p.xxiv. Dozy's criticism of Condé's work is addressed in Appendix B to this book.—ED]

NOTES

1. [Prescott's original note at this point merely referred to an earlier note in his large work of the *History of Ferdinand and Isabella*. The earlier note identified this chapter as the one where he would discuss in detail the Spanish Muslims. Prescott used the expression 'Spanish Arabs'. References to 'Arab' have been changed to 'Muslim' when the subject actually is the broader Islamic community, and not people of Arab ancestry. Of course, their language and literature was Arabic. —ED]
2. The Koran, in addition to the repeated assurances of Paradise to the martyr who falls in battle, contains the regulations of a precise military code. Military service in some shape or other is exacted from all. The terms to be prescribed to the enemy and the vanquished, the division of the spoil, the seasons of lawful truce, the conditions on which the comparatively small number of exempts are permitted to remain at home, are accurately defined. (Sale's Koran, chap. 2, 8, 9 *et alibi*.) When the *jihad*, or Muslim crusade, which, in its general design and immunities, bore a close resemblance to the Christian, was preached in the mosque, every true believer was bound to repair to the standard of his chief. 'The holy war', says one of the early Saracen generals, 'is the ladder of Paradise. The Apostle of God styled himself the son of the sword. He loved to repose in the shadow of banners and on the fields of battle.'
3. The successors, caliphs or vicars, as they were styled, of Muhammad, represented both his spiritual and temporal authority. Their offices involved almost equally ecclesiastical and military functions. It was their duty to lead the army in battle, and on the pilgrimage to Mecca. They were to preach a sermon, and offer up public prayers in the mosques every Friday. Many of their prerogatives resemble those assumed anciently by the popes. They conferred investitures on the Muslim princes by the symbol of a ring, a sword, or a standard. They complimented them with titles of 'defender of the faith', 'column of religion', and the like. The proudest potentate held the bridle of their mules, and paid his homage by touching their threshold with his forehead. The authority of the caliphs was in this manner founded on opinion no less than on power; and their ordinances, however frivolous or iniquitous in themselves, being enforced, as it were, by a divine sanction, became laws which it was sacrilege to disobey. See D'Herbelot, *Bibliothèque Orientale*, (La Haye, 1777–79,) voce *Khalifah*.
4. The character of the Arabs, before the introduction of Islam, like that of most rude nations, is to be gathered from their national songs and romances: the poems suspended at Mecca, familiar to us in the elegant version of Sir William Jones, and still more, the recent translation of 'Antar', a composition indeed of the age of al-Raschid, but wholly devoted to the primitive Bedouins, present us with a lively picture of their peculiar habits, which, notwithstanding the influence of a temporary civilization, may be thought to bear resemblance to those of their descendants at the present day.
5. Startling as it may be, there is scarcely a vestige of any of the particulars, circumstantially narrated by the national historians (Mariana, Zurita, Abarca, Moret, etc.) as the immediate causes of the supervision of Spain, to be found in the chronicles of the period. No intimation of the persecution, or of the treason of the two sons of Witiza is to be met with in any Spanish writer, as far as I know, until nearly two centuries after the conquest; none earlier than this, of the defection of Archbishop Oppas, during the fatal conflict near Jerez; and none, of the tragical amours of Rodrigo [Roderic] and the revenge of Count Julian, before the writers of the thirteenth century. Nothing indeed can be more than the original narratives of the invasion.

The continuation of the *Chronicon del Biclarense*, and the *Chronicon del Isidoro Pacense* or *de Beja*, which are contained in the voluminous collection of Florez, (*España Sagrada*, tom. vi and viii.) afford the only histories contemporary with the event. Condé is mistaken in his assertion (*Dominacion de los Arabes*, Pról. p.vii), that the work of Isidore de Beja was the only narrative written during that period. Spain had not the pen of a Bede or an Eginhart to describe the memorable catastrophe. But the few and meagre touches of the contemporary chroniclers have left ample scope for conjectural history, which had been most industriously improved.

The reports, according to Condé, (*Dominacion de los Arabs*, tom. i. p. 36) greedily circulated among the Saracens, of the magnificence and general prosperity of the Gothic monarchy, may sufficiently account for its invasion by an enemy flushed with uninterrupted conquests, and whose fanatical ambition was well illustrated by one of their own generals, who on reaching the western extremity of Africa, plunged his horse into the Atlantic, and sighed for other shores on which to plant the banners of Islam. See Cardonne, *Histoire de l'Afrique et de l'Espagne sous la Domination des Arabes*, (Paris, 1765) tom.i. p.37.

6. The laborious diligence of Masdeu may be thought to have settled the epoch, about which so much learned dust has been raised. The fourteenth volume of his *Historia Crítica de España y de la Cultura Española* (Madrid, 1783–1805) contains an accurate table, by which the minutest details of the Muslim lunar year are adjusted by those of the Christian era. The fall of Rodrigo on the field of battle is attested by both the domestic chroniclers of that period, as well as by the Saracens. (Incerti Auctoris Additio ad Joannem Biclarensein, apud Florez, *España Sagrada*, tom. vi. p.430. — Isidori Pacensis Episcopi Chronicon, apud Florez, *España Sagrada*, tom.viii. p.290.) The tales of the ivory and marble chariot, of the gallant steed Orelia and magnificent vestments of Rodrigo, discovered after the fight on the banks of the Guadalete [sic, now believed to have taken place on the banks of the Barbate —ED.], of his probable escape and subsequent seclusion among the mountains of Portugal, which have been thought worthy of Spanish history, have found a much more appropriate place in their romantic national ballads, as well as in the more elaborate productions of Scott and Southey.
7. 'Whatever curses,' says an eyewitness, whose meagre diction is quickened on this occasion into something like sublimity, 'whatever curses were denounced by the prophets of old against Jerusalem, whatever fell upon ancient Babylon, whatever miseries Rome inflicted upon the glorious company of the martyrs, all these were visited upon the once happy and prosperous, but now desolated Spain.' Pacensis Chronicon apud Florez, *España Sagrada*, tom.viii. p.292.
8. The frequency of this alliance may be inferred from the extraordinary, though, doubtless, extravagant statement cited by Zurita. The ambassadors of Jaime II, of Aragón, in 1311, represented to the sovereign pontiff, Clement V, that, of the 200,000 souls, which then composed the population of Granada, there were not more than 500 of pure Moorish descent. *Anales*, tom.iv. fol.314.
9. The famous persecutions of Córdoba under the reigns of Abd al-Rahman II, and his son, which, to judge from the tone of Castilian writers, might vie with those of Nero and Diocletian, are admitted by Morales (*Obras*, tom.X, p.74) to have occasioned the destruction of only forty individuals. Most of these unhappy fanatics solicited the crown of martyrdom, by an open violation of the Muslim laws and usages. The details are given by Florez, in the tenth volume of his collection.
10. Bleda, *Corónica de los Moros de España*, (Valencia, 1618), lib.2, cap.16, 17. — Cardonne, *Hist. d'Afrique et d'Espagne*, tom.i, pp.83 et seq. 179. — Condé, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, Pról., p.vii and tom.i, pp.29–54, 75, 87. — Morales, *Orbas*, tom.vi. pp. 407–417; tom.vii, pp.262–264. — Florez, *España Sagrada*, tom.X, pp.237–270. — Fuero Juzgo, Int. p.40.
11. Condé, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, part 2, cap. 1–46.
12. *Ibid. ubi supra*. — Masdeu, *Historia Crítica*, tom.xiii, pp.178, 187.
13. 'Aussi dès que vous approchez, en Europe ou en Asie, d'une terre possédée par les Musulmans, vous la reconnoissez de loin au riche et sombre voile de verdure qui toute gracieusement sur elle: — des arabes pour s'asseoir à leur ombre, des fontaines uillissantes pour rêver à leur bruit, du silence et des mosquées aux légers minarets, s'élevant à chaque pas du sein d'une terre pieuse.' Lamartine, *Voyage en Orient*, tome i, p.172.
14. Condé, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, tom.i, pp.199, 265, 284, 285, 417, 446, 447, et alibi. — Cardonne, *Hist. d'Afrique et d'Espagne*, tom.i, pp.227–30 et seq.

15. Condé, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, tom.i, pp.211, 212, 226. — Swinburne, *Travels through Spain*, (London, 1787) let. 35. — Xerif Aletris, conocido por El Nubiense, *Descripcion de España*, con Traducccion y Notas de Condé, (Madrid, 1799) pp.161, 162. — Morales, *Obras*, tom.x, p.61. — Chenier, *Recherches Historiques sur les Maures, et Histoire de l'Empire de Maroc*, (Paris, 1787) tom.ii, p.312.
16. Condé, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, tom.i, pp.214, 228, 270, 611. — Masdeu, *Historia Crítica*, tom. xiii, p.118. — Cardonne, *Hist. d'Afrique et d'Espagne*, tom.i, pp.338–343. — Casiri quotes from an Arabic historian the conditions on which Abd al-Rahman I proffered his alliance to the Christian princes of Spain, viz the annual tribute of 10,000 ounces of gold, 10,000 pounds of silver, 10,000 horses, etc. The absurdity of this story, inconsiderately repeated by historians, if any argument were necessary to prove it, becomes sufficiently manifest from the fact, that the instrument is dated in the 142d year of the *Hegira*, being a little more than fifty years after the conquest. See *Bibliotheca, Arabico-Hispana Escorialensis*, (Matriti, 1760) tom.ii, p.104.
17. *Hist. Naturalis*, lib.33, cap. 4.
18. Introduction à l'*Histoire Naturelle de l'Espagne*, traduite par Flavigny, (Paris, 1776) p.411.
19. See a sensible essay by Abbé Correa de Serra on the husbandry of the Spanish Muslims, contained in tom.i, of *Archives Littéraires de l'Europe*, (Paris, 1804). — Masdeu, *Historia Crítica*, tom.xiii, pp.115, 117, 127, 131. — Condé, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, tom. i, cap. 44.—Casiri, *Bibliotheca Escorialensis*, tom.i, p.338.

An absurd story has been transcribed from Cardonne, with little hesitation, by almost every succeeding writer upon this subject. According to him (*Hist. d'Afrique et d'Espagne*, tom.i. p.338), 'the banks of the Guadalquivir were lined with no less than twelve thousand villages and hamlets'. The length of the river, not exceeding three hundred miles, would scarcely afford room for the same number of farm-houses. Condé's version of the Arabic passage represents twelve thousand hamlets, farms, and castles, to have 'been scattered over the regions watered by the Guadalquivir'; indicating by this indefinite statement nothing more than the extreme populousness of the province of Andalusia.
20. Casiri, *Bibliotheca Escorialensis*, tom.ii, pp.38, 202. — Condé, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, part.2, cap. 88.
21. *Storia della Letteratura Italiana*, (Roma, 1782–97) tom.iii, p.231. — Turner, *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, (London, 1820) vol.iii. p.137. — Andres, *Dell' Origine, de' Progressi e dello Stato Attuale d' Ogni Letteratura*, (Venezia, 1783) part.1, cap. 8, 9. — Casiri, *Bibliotheca Escorialensis*, tom.ii, p.149. — Masdeu, *Historia Crítica*, tom.xiii, pp.165, 171. — Condé, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, part.2, cap. 93. — Among the accomplished females of this period, Valadata, the daughter of the Caliph Muhammad, is celebrated as having frequently carried away the palm of eloquence in her discussions with the most learned academicians. Others again, with an intrepidity that might shame the degeneracy of a modern *blue*, plunged boldly into the studies of philosophy, history, and jurisprudence.
22. Garibay, *Compendio*, lib.39, cap. 3.
23. Zurita, *Anales*, lib.20, cap. 42.
24. L. Marineo, *Cosas Memorables*, fol. 169.
25. Condé, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, tom.ii, p. 147. — Casiri, *Bibliotheca Escorialensis*, tom. ii, pp.248 et seq. — Pedraza, *Antiguedad y Excelencias de Granada* (Madrid, 1608) lib.1. — Pedraza has collected the various etymologies of the term *Granada*, which some writers have traced to the fact of the city having been the spot where the *pomegranate* was first introduced from Africa; others to the large quantity of *grain* in which its vega abounded; others again to the resemblance which the city, divided into two hills thickly sprinkled with houses, bore to a half-opened pomegranate. (Lib.2, cap. 17) The arms of the city which were in part composed of a pomegranate, would seem to favour the derivation of its name from that of the fruit.
26. Pedraza, *Antiguedad de Granada*, fol. 101. — Denina, *Delle Rivoluzioni d'Italia* (Venezia, 1816). *Capmany y Montpalau, Memorias Históricas sobre la Marina, Comerico, y Artes de Barcelona*, (Madrid, 1779–92) tom.iii, p.218; tom.iv, pp.67 et seq. — Condé, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, tom.iii, cap.26. — The ambassador of the Emperor Frederic III, on his passage to the court of Lisbon in the middle of the fifteenth century, contrasts the superior cultivation, as well as general civilization, of Granada at this period with that of the other countries of Europe through which he had travelled. Sismondi, *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes du Moyen-Age* (Paris, 1818) tom.ix, p.405.

27. Casiri, *Bibliotheca Escurialensis*, tom.ii, pp.250–8. — The fifth volume of the royal Spanish Academy of History contains an erudite essay by Condé on Arabic money, principally with reference to that coined in Spain; pp.225–315.
28. A specification of a royal donative in that day may serve to show the martial spirit of the age. In one of these, made by the King of Granada to the Castilian sovereign, we find twenty noble steeds of the royal stud, reared on the banks of the Genil, with superb caparisons, and the same number of scimitars richly garnished with gold and jewels; and in another, mixed up with perfumes and cloth of gold, we meet with a litter of tame lions. (Condé, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, tom.iii, pp.163, 183.) This latter symbol of royalty appears to have been deemed peculiarly appropriate to the kings of León. Ferreras informs us that the ambassadors from France at the Castilian court, in 1434, were received by Juan II, with a full grown domesticated lion crouching at his feet. (*Hist. d'Espagne*, tom.vi, p.401.) The same taste appears still to exist in Turkey. Dr. Clarke, in his visit to Constantinople, met with one of these terrific pets, who used to follow his master, Hassan Pacha, about like a dog.
29. Condé, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, tom.iii, cap. 28. — Henriquez del Castillo (*Crónica*, cap. 138) gives an account of an intended duel between two Castilian nobles, in the presence of the king of Granada, as late as 1470. One of the parties, Don Alfonso de Aguilar, failing to keep his engagement, the other rode round the lists in triumph, with his adversary's portrait contemptuously fastened to the tail of his horse.
30. It must be admitted, that these ballads, as far as facts are concerned, are too inexact to furnish other than a very slippery foundation for history. The most beautiful portion perhaps of the Moorish ballads, for example, is taken up with the feuds of the Abencerrages in the later days of Granada. Yet this family, whose romantic story is still repeated to the traveller amid the ruins of the Alhambra, is scarcely noticed, as far as I am aware, by contemporary writers, foreign or domestic, and would seem to owe its chief celebrity to the apocryphal version of Ginés Perez de Hyta, whose 'Milesian tales', according to the severe sentence of Nic. Antonio, 'are fit only to amuse the lazy and the listless'. (*Bibliotheca Nova*, tom.i, p.536.)
- But although the Spanish ballads are not entitled to the credit of strict historical documents, they may yet perhaps be received in evidence of the prevailing character of the social relations of the age; a remark indeed predicable of most works of fiction, written by authors contemporary with the events they describe, and more especially so of that popular minstrelsy, which emanating from a simple, uncorrupted class, is less likely to swerve from the truth, than more ostentatious works of art. The long cohabitation of the Saracens with the Christians, (full evidence of which is afforded by Capmany, (*Mem. de Barcelona*, tom.iv., Apend. no.11) who quotes a document from the public archives of Catalonia, showing the great number of Saracens residing in Aragón even in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the most flourishing period of the Granadan empire) had enabled many of them confessedly to speak and write the Spanish language with purity and elegance. Some of the graceful little songs which are still chanted by the peasantry of Spain in their dances, to the accomplishment of the castanet, are referred by a competent critic (Condé, *De la Poesía Oriental*, MS) to an Arabian origin. There can be little hazard, therefore, in imputing much of this peculiar minstrelsy to the Arabians themselves, the contemporaries, and perhaps the eyewitnesses of the events they celebrate.
31. Casiri (*Bibliotheca Escurialensis*, tom.ii, p.250) has transcribed a passage from an Arabian author of the fourteenth century, inveighing bitterly against the luxury of the Moorish ladies, their gorgeous apparel and habits of expense, 'amounting almost to insanity', in a tone which may remind one of the similar philippic by his contemporary Dante, against his fair countrywomen of Florence. — Two ordinances of a king of Granada, cited by Condé in his History, prescribe the separation of the women from the men in the mosques; and prohibit their attendance on certain festivals, without the protection of their husbands or some near relative. — Their *femmes savantes*, as we have seen, were in the habit of conferring freely with men of letters, and of assisting in person at the academical *séances*. — And lastly, the frescoes alluded to in the text represent the presence of females at the tournaments, and the fortunate knight receiving the palm of victory from their hands.
32. Condé, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, tom.i, p.340; tom.iii, p.119.
33. Casiri, on Arabian authority, computes it at 200,000 men. *Bibliotheca Escurialensis*, tom.i, p.338.
34. Pulgar, *Reyes Católicos*, p.250.
35. *Mem. de la Acad. de Hist.*, tom.vi, p.169. — These ruined fortifications still thickly stud the border territories of Granada; and many an Andalusian mill, along the banks of the Guadaya and the Guadalquivir, retains its battlemented tower, which served for the defense of its inmates against the forays of the enemy.

36. D'Herbelot, (*Bib. Orientale*, tom.i,p.630) among other authentic traditions of Muhammad, quotes one as indicating his encouragement of letters, viz. 'That the ink of the doctors and the blood of the martyrs are of equal price.' M. Cœlsner (*Des Effets de la Religion de Mohammed*, Paris, 1810) has cited several others of the same liberal import. But such traditions cannot be received in evidence of the original of the prophet. They are rejected as apocryphal by the Persians and the whole sect of the Shiites and are entitled to little weight with a European.
37. When the Caliph al-Mamun [c.827] encouraged, by his example as well as patronage, a more enlightened policy, he was accused by the more orthodox Muslims of attempting to subvert the principles of their religion. See Pococke, *Spec. Hist. Arabum*. (Oxon, 1650) p.166.
38. Andres, *Letteratura*, part.1, cap. 8, 10. — Casiri, *Bibliotheca Escorialensis*, tom.ii, pp.71, 251, *et passim*.
39. Casiri mentions one of these universal geniuses, who published no less than a thousand and fifty treatises on the various topics of Ethics, History, Law, Medicine, etc. *Bibliotheca Escorialensis*, tom.ii, p.107. — See also tom.i, p.370; tom.ii, p.71 *et alibi*. — Zuñiga, *Annales de Sevilla*, p.22. — D'Herbelot, *Bib. Orientale*, voce *Tarikh*. — Masdeu, *Historia Crítica*, tom.xiii, pp.203, 205. — Andres, *Letteratura*, part 1, cap. 8.
40. Consult the sensible, though perhaps severe, remarks of Degerando on Arabian science. (*Hist. de la Philosophie*, tom.iv, cap. 24.) — The reader may also peruse with advantage a disquisition on Arabian metaphysics in Turner's *History of England* (vol.iv, pp.405–449. — Brucker, *Hist. Philosophiae*, tom.iii, p.105.) — Ludovicus Vives seems to have been the author of the imputation in the text. (Nic. Antonio, *Bibliotheca Vetus*, tom.ii, p.394). Averroes translated some of the philosophical works of Aristotle from the Greek into Arabic; a Latin version of which translation was afterwards made. Though D'Herbelot is mistaken (*Bib. Orientale*, art. *Roschd*) in saying that Averroes was the first to translate Aristotle into Arabic; as this had been done two centuries before, at least, by Honain and others in the ninth century, (see Casiri, *Bibliotheca Escorialensis*, tom.i, p.304.) and Bayle had shown that a Latin version of the Stagirite was used by the Europeans before the alleged period. See art. *Averroes*.
41. Sprengel, *Histoire de la Médecine*, traduite par Jourdan (Paris, 1815) tom.ii, pp.263 et seq.
42. Degerando, *Hist. de la Philosophie*, tom.iv, *ubi supra*.
43. *Bibliotheca Escorialensis*, tom.ii, p.9. — Andres, *Letteratura*, part.1, cap. 10.
44. *Letteratura Italiana*, tom.v, p.87.
45. The Battle of Crécy [1346] furnishes [one of] the earliest instance[s] on record of the use of artillery by the European Christians; although Du Cange, among several examples which he enumerates, has traced a distinct notice of its existence as far back as 1338. (*Glossarium ad Scriptores Mediæ et Infimæ Latinitatis*, (Paris, 1739) and Supplement (Paris, 1766) voce *Bombarda*.) The history of the Spanish Muslims carries it to a much earlier period. It was employed by the Nasrid king of Granada at the siege of Baza in 1312 and 1325. (Condé, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, tom.iii, cap. 18. — Casiri, *Bibliotheca Escorialensis*, tom.ii, p.7.) It is distinctly noticed in an Arabian treatise as ancient as 1249; and, finally, Castri quotes a passage from a Spanish author at the close of the eleventh century, (whose MS., according to Nic. Antonio, though familiar to scholars, lies still entombed in the dust of libraries,) which describes the use of artillery in a naval engagement of that period between the Muslims of Tunis and of Sevilla. Casiri, *Bibliotheca Escorialensis*, tom.ii, p.8. — Nic Antonio, *Bibliotheca Vetus*, tom.ii, p.12. [Some of the reported earliest uses of gunpowder artillery by the Spanish Muslims have been questioned. This is reviewed, with other military aspects, in Part I of the Introduction. —ED]
46. Petrarch complains in one of his letters from the country, that 'jurisconsults and divines, nay his own valet, had taken to rhyming; and he was afraid the very cattle might begin to low in verse'; *apud* De Sade, *Mémoires pour La Vie de Pétrarque*, tom.iii, p.243.
47. Andres, *Letteratura*, part.1, cap. 11. — Yet this popular assertion is contradicted by Reinesius, who states that both Homer and Pindar were translated into Arabic by the middle of the eighth century. See Fabricius, *Bibliotheca Græca* (Hamb, 1712–38) tom.xii, p.753.
48. Sir William Jones, *Traité sur la Poésie Orientale*, Sec. 2. — Sismondi says that Sir W. Jones is mistaken in citing the history of Timour by Ebn Arabschah, as an Arabic epic. (*Littérature du Midi*, tom.i, p.57.) It is Sismondi who is mistaken, since the English critic states that the Muslims have no heroic poem, and that

this poetical prose history is not accounted such even by the Muslims themselves.

49. It would require much more learning than I am fortified with, to enter into the merits of the question, which has been raised respecting the probable influence of the Arabian on the literature of Europe. A.W. Schlegel, in a work of little bulk, but much value in refuting with his usual vivacity, the extravagant theory of Andres, has been led to conclusions of an opposite nature, which may be thought perhaps scarcely less extravagant. (*Observations sur la Langue et la Littérature Provençales*, p.64.) It must indeed seem highly improbable that the Muslims, who, during the middle ages were so far superior in science and literary culture to the Europeans, could have resided so long in immediate contact with them, and in those very countries indeed which gave birth to the most cultivated poetry of that period, without exerting some perceptible influence upon it. Be this as it may, its influence on the Castilian cannot reasonably be disputed. This has been briefly traced by Condé in an 'Essay on Oriental Poetry', *Poesia Oriental*, whose publication he anticipates in the Preface to his *History of the Spanish Arabs*, but which still remains in manuscript. (The copy I have used is in the Library of Mr. George Ticknor.) He professes in this work to discern in the earlier Castilian poetry, in the *Cid*, the *Alexander*, in Berceo's, the arch priest of Hita's, and others of similar antiquity, most of the peculiarities and varieties of Arabic verse; the same cadences and number of syllables, the same intermixture of assonances and consonances, the double hemistich and prolonged repetition of the final rhyme. From the same source he derives much of the earlier rural minstrelsy of Spain, as well as the measure of its romances and seguidillas; and in the Preface to his *History*, he has ventured on the bold assertion, that the Castilian owes so much of its vocabulary to the Arabic, that it may be almost accounted a dialect of the latter. Condé's criticisms, however, must be quoted with reserve. His habitual studies had given him such a keen relish for oriental literature, that he was in a manner, *denaturalized* from his own.
50. Byron's beautiful line may seem almost a version of Condé's Spanish text, 'sucesos de armas y de amores con muy estraños lances y en elegante estilo.' — *Dominacion de los Arabes*, tom.i, p.457.
51. Sismondi, on his *Littérature du Midi* (tom.i, pp.267 et seq), and more fully in his *Républiques Italiennes* (tom. xvi, p.448 et seq), derives the jealousy of the sex, the ideas of honour, and the spirit of revenge, which distinguished the southern nations of Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, from the Arabians. Whatever be thought of the jealousy of the sex, it might have been supposed, that the principles of honour and the spirit of revenge might, without seeking further, find abundant precedent in the feudal habits and institutions of our European ancestors.
52. 'Quas perversiones potius, quam scrsiones meritò dixeris' *Bibliotheca Escorialensis*, tom.i, p.266.