

Alpujarras to the other ; the spirit of independence still lived in these mountain-fastnesses, and the inaccessible nature of the ground rendered the warfare difficult for the Castilian troops.

The greatest atrocities were perpetrated on both sides ; no decided advantage was obtained by either party ; and at length the state of the country roused the attention of the sovereign, who appointed Don John of Austria to command the troops. This brave and gallant prince, unwilling to risk tarnishing the laurels he had already won, was reluctant to take the field until the state of his forces was such as to promise him success. Much time was wasted, but eventually the rebellion was concluded by the expulsion of the Moriscos, and the busy villages and cultivated fields were shorn of their inhabitants, and the towns which had been teeming with life and industry were left deserted. A silence as of the desert came over the land, whence hundreds of thousands were driven forth at the command of a bigoted tyrant, and the country has not yet recovered from the loss it then sustained. Those skilful hands could not be soon replaced ; gardens relapsed into dreary wastes ; and the expulsion of the Moors and of the Jews, which deprived the country of her most enterprising inhabitants, was fatal to her future welfare.

The road to the Alpujarras is doubly interesting, as being the one taken by Boabdil when he left his home and kingdom for the last time. After crossing the vega and passing Alhendin, a village which played its part in the great drama enacted here, the road leads over one of the low hills which here form the boundary of the plain. On the summit, your guide tells you to look round, for this is the "Ultimo Suspiro del Moro,"—the last sigh of the Moor,—where Boabdil took his

farewell glance and turned away for ever from his peerless Granada. This view is so far remarkable, as being the point where you lose sight of the city. Everything in the direction of the town and vega is beautiful, while nothing can be more dreary than the view presented towards the Alpujarras ; no contrast can be greater. Nothing could be more unpromising than the country which lay before the Moorish king, as he passed over the ridge, and saw the desert extending before him, dreary as his own dark fate, with no ray of hope to brighten the future.

Padul lies in a richly cultivated valley, celebrated likewise for witnessing many a bloody fight. The range of the Sierra Nevada now rises on our left, and the valley of Durcal presents a beautiful gorge. A magnificent road is being constructed along here from Granada to Motril, which would be advantageous to the former as affording a direct communication with the sea coast. It is laid out on a stupendous plan, showing great engineering works and cuttings which would do honour to any railway ; all regardless of expense, as Spanish undertakings usually are at first : commenced on a scale of unnecessary grandeur, and of course left unfinished. In this instance, it is said that Málaga prevents the completion of it, fearing it might prove detrimental to her interests, and so there it remains. Works which might reflect credit on a line of railway are wasted on a road where nothing but strings of mules pass to and fro, conveying the fish from Motril to Granada, and the fruit which ripens on these southern shores some time before it does in the higher lands of the vega. The road crosses one stupendous gorge, a deep chasm in the sterile rocks, without a shrub on which to rest the eye, spanned by a single arch connecting the opposite sides of this rent

in the mountains. The heat was quite intense, and everything seemed on fire ; the *chicharras* making such a noise it was perfectly deafening.

The path now left the Motril road, which branched off to the sea coast, and through the openings of the distant hills we caught a glimpse of the blue expanse. The ride was tiresome, the heat overpowering ; and we were not sorry when turning round the brow of a hill we saw Lanjaron before us, lying on the slope of the mountain backed by the lofty range of the Sierra. Before the town, rose its old Moorish castle, perched on a steep rock rising from the valley below, on the opposite side precipitous cliffs bounding the landscape. A more enchanting view than this can be seldom seen, so many circumstances contribute to lend it such singular beauty. The lofty mountain slopes down as it were straight into the vale beneath, where every variety of vegetation which clothes the Sierra is seen at a glance. Above, the barren slaty rocks ; then waving fields of corn ; then vast forests of chesnuts, interspersed with the almond and the olive. Next comes the town with its white flat-roofed houses, below which the very declivities are clad with the productions of tropical climes ; the orange, the citron, and the pomegranate displaying their bright green foliage. The contrast in winter must be strange indeed between the sparkling fields of snow above, and the golden fruit of the trees below.

Lanjaron is a celebrated bathing-place, and is much resorted to by the Granadinos in summer ; its mineral waters were discovered in the last century, and many flock there during the bathing season. Were it in any other country it would be one of the most enchanting places in the world, for art would lend its assistance to complete and heighten the charms of nature ; but here



LANJARON.

Dickinson, Engr. III, New Bond Street.



man has not done anything. The baths are wretched places for invalids to resort to, and as to an hotel, there is hardly a decent one in the place. We stopped at the only one, and were fortunate in getting rooms ; it was clean enough, but beyond a bed and a chair the rooms were destitute of furniture. Lanjaron consists of one long street, every house of which is crowded in summer, and the views from their flat roofs are perfectly enchanting. There are many beautiful walks, both above and below the town. It is delicious in the sultry heat of the day to wander through the winding paths, under the refreshing shade of the dense foliage of the Spanish chesnut, with springs of water gushing forth at every corner, and the damp mossy stones covered with fern. Every inch of the declivity is filled with gardens of figs, olives and almonds. Below the town you descend into the valley through the mass of orange trees which luxuriate on the rocky slopes, while the giant blocks of stone which lie scattered here and there in the bed of the river are covered with vines creeping over and around them and clothing them in an emerald garb, the heavy bunches of the grapes ripening as they lie upon the stones which glow with the fierce heat of the burning sun. Picturesque mills complete the scene. But little remains of the old Moorish castle. It stood many a siege, and was taken by Ferdinand himself when he advanced against it in 1500.

We could not spend more than a day in this lovely spot, where one could linger for a month and find fresh beauties. Our road led us across the valley. We roamed for two leagues along barren whitish-looking mountains, until we descended upon the valley of Orgiba, another oasis in the desert ; for certainly these lovely spots in the Alpujarras are justly entitled

to such a denomination. The general character is sterile and monotonous to a degree; the white glare, unrelieved by verdure, affects the eye most painfully, but now and then you come upon spots of surpassing beauty, broad valleys encircled by mountains or little nooks where water, gushing forth in all directions, spreads fertility around. Orgiba, conspicuous from the two tall towers of its church, stands in one of these open valleys. Its olives are something wonderful in point of size, old trunks grown into odd fantastic shapes, of perfectly gigantic dimensions, their time-worn branches still laden with fruit. We only passed through the town, being anxious to go by a ravine called the Angosturas del Rio. We soon entered upon the sandy bed of the river, now a mere insignificant stream, and continued up its wide but deserted channel, the sides fringed with the oleander, the pistachio and the tamarisk. The rocks come close down to the edge of the river's bed, and form rather a wild pass through which the stream flows. One of our guides went to a large vineyard opposite, while we stopped to breakfast, to pick a supply of grapes, and here, as at Lanjaron, they twine about the rocks. We now ascended a more barren and rocky ground, leaving the ravine through which we had been riding to cross into the great valley which descends direct from the slopes of the Mula Hacen. After a long and wild ride along the crest of the ridge we descended down a broken precipice, and crossed a bridge over a chasm. The view here was charming; the water from an enormous wheel, after feeding the mills, dashed headlong down into the ravine, at the base of which the river was foaming along among huge blocks of stone. After resting here for some time we mounted again, and climbed the opposite heights amid forests of chesnut and mulberry.

We passed one or two villages, and at length reached Portugos, whence we had determined to undertake the ascent of the Mula Hacén. Trevelez, about a league or two further on, is the point generally selected as a starting-place. As the ascent, however, could be accomplished equally from Portugos, we did not see the use of going on. All these villages on the southern slopes of the Sierra bear the same character. Low mud built houses, with flat roofs, generally consisting of only one story, present a resemblance to Arab villages which cannot fail to strike the traveller here in the last stronghold of the Moor, where he naturally seeks to trace some memorial of the race. The streets, if streets they can be called, are too dirty, and almost impassable for man or beast, so crooked and uneven, they can hardly be distinguished when you survey them from the terraces of the houses. The women, too, have an oriental stamp upon their countenances, not a little increased by the manner in which they tie their handkerchiefs over their heads. Portugos did not afford very tempting accommodations; but at last we obtained two empty rooms and beds, although not sufficient for all the party. Provisions also were not abundant in this far out-of-the-way place, raised so much above the range of civilization. The villagers in the evening flocked in to look at us, but good-humoured and civil, as Spanish peasants always are; each in turn duly stared at the wonderful strangers who had taken so much trouble to make themselves so uncomfortable.

We started with the sun, and soon looked down upon the flat roofs of Portugos, the red towers of the churches rising conspicuously in all these mountain villages. The first part of our road took us through most romantic scenery, large forests of evergreen oak interspersed with low underwood. But we soon arrived



at the limits of such vegetation, and while the mountains rose higher around us, we kept ascending over ridges of barren rock. The wind rose as we ascended, and the cold became so intense that we hardly knew how to guard ourselves from its searching blasts. In perfect despair we took refuge behind some rocks, where, sheltered from the wind, we experienced the glowing heat of the sun, whose rays seemed to lose none of their intensity even at this elevation. We breakfasted here, and refreshed ourselves before we had courage again to face the piercing wind.

It was very disagreeable having to leave our comfortable shelter, but so far on our way, it was of no use despairing, and on we went. At length we arrived near the summit, and leaving our horses, walked up to the loftiest peak, where we whiled away an hour or two in wrapt enjoyment of the prospect before us. The feeling of being actually on the very highest summit of the chain may have some influence, but undoubtedly the view from the Mula Hacen is much finer than that from Veleta; the Picacho forming so much grander an object from this point than the Mula Hacen does from its rival.

The summit of the Mula Hacen is formed by a narrow table-land, which shelves down gradually in every direction except to the north-west, where it terminates in a precipice. Steep cliffs connect the Mula Hacen with the Alcazaba, all these frowning heights encircling the crater of the Corral de Veleta, whence the Xenil takes its rise. The Mula Hacen, according to Boissier's measurement, is 10,980 feet. But few flowers bloom at the greatest altitude; the small yellow poppy (*P. pyrenaicum*) grows, however, in great quantities among its stony masses. We lingered for some time, enjoying the prospect before us, but we had a long

road over which to retrace our steps, and the shades of night had set in long before we found ourselves established once more in our most charming quarters at Portugos.

The next day we returned to Orgiba by another road through the beautiful Barranco of Poqueira. This is one of those lovely spots which come now and then to refresh the weary traveller in Spain. Poqueira is a strange village, built on so steep a declivity that the flat roofs of the houses serve almost as a walk for the inhabitants of those above them. But such dirt ! such a fraternisation of pigs and children ! Below Poqueira the water foams down by a mill with one of those beautiful mountain bridges at its side, the gorge embosomed in the deep shadow of overhanging trees. Refreshing indeed are such spots in the burning heat of a July sun ; here masses of green verdure soothe the eye, and ferns and mosses cover every stone, drooping over the sides of the waterfall and mingling their dew-besprinkled leaves with those of the vine and fig-tree. Here we have abundance of the two things generally wanting to make a paradise of sunny Andalusia, and which are indeed doubly prized from their very rarity. We had, however, to leave the shady glen and the crystal springs which gushed forth in every direction and recross those arid mountains against which the rays of the sun strike with tenfold vigour. Once more we passed Orgiba and returned to Lanjaron, whence we retraced our steps towards Granada.

We had explored but a small portion of the Alpujarras ; but unfortunately we could not extend our tour. We much regretted not being able to visit either the old towns of Baeza and Ubeda, whose streets abound with so many antiquated façades of