

It may be well to add one word with regard to the climate of Northern Spain and Madrid. It has often been described as affording every variety of temperature in the shortest possible time, and certainly has not been wronged. I left Bordeaux and reached Bayonne on one occasion during weather so intensely hot, that it was scarcely endurable even by those most accustomed to heat. The inhabitants wisely kept in-doors, with closed windows and shutters, and slumbered through the noon-day heat as well as possible. On entering the mountains there was rain, but the heat was still scarcely endurable. After travelling some distance, and as we emerged on the table-land on the other side of Pancormo, the heat had changed to cold, which during the night was so great, that the conductor had to wrap himself up in his furs and warm cloak, and endeavour to forget it in sleep. Afterwards, in crossing the Somo-sierra, we had a thunder-storm, accompanied with hail and torrents of rain, more violent than I have often seen, and on entering Madrid I found that the heat had been and was intense and suffocating. Four-and-twenty hours, however, produced there a change so great that it was disagreeable to walk in the streets without an over-coat, although still the sun, when shining, was too powerful to be at all pleasant. These violent alternations of heat and cold are quite characteristic of high table-lands, especially when, as in Spain, they are bounded by lofty mountain-chains, rising here and there above the line of perpetual snow, and not so distant as to allow of the winds blowing from them to become warmed. In the Peninsula, indeed, the central tract consisting of high and almost unbroken table-land and the coast being mountainous, there is constantly a current of hot air rising during the summer from the bare and heated earth, and this is replaced by cold air rushing down from the mountains. The almost total absence of trees and forest vegetation exaggerates to the highest extent the evils arising from excessive temperature and rapid changes in this respect, so that now it would be difficult, without much time and labour, to replace the trees that probably at one time abounded in certain districts. Something might be done in the vicinity of the capital; but the Spaniard hates trees, and seems nowhere at home but on a trackless plain or in a treeless desert.

We are now back again in Madrid, and the reader must be

prepared to accompany me once more across the plains through Castile into La Mancha, and thence enter the grand defiles (almost impregnable if in any other country, but here neglected by the inhabitants in the time of need) which separate Andalusia from the northern provinces. The first thirty miles of this road are now rapidly traversed by means of a railway, forming part of a main line from Madrid to Alicant actually in course of construction, and likely to be finished within a reasonable time. The thirty miles at present opened conduct to the royal residence of Aranjuez, situated pleasantly in the valley of the Tagus, and more than fairly appreciated by visitors and Spaniards, owing to the contrast that exists in coming suddenly upon this little oasis after traversing the sterile wastes that extend unbroken from Madrid to the town. Like most of the principal river valleys of Spain, as I have already mentioned in speaking of the Ebro, it consists of a deep cleft in the table-land, the two sides of the fissure being often separated by a distance of many miles. In such depressions the river pursues its course, and the banks of the stream are naturally moister and more favourable for vegetation than the plains above.

After passing Aranjuez, its gardens, trees, and water-course, there still remain to traverse a full hundred miles of barren and totally uninteresting country, extending in one almost unbroken plain to the edge of the table-land. There is then seen a phænomenon of great interest to the geologist, as the road winds along not far from the foot of a low escarpment, evidently at one time the margin of a lake or sea, though now only enclosing a perfectly flat expanse of sand and limestone. The mean elevation of the table-land of La Mancha is considered to be at least 2000 feet above the sea, and the ground rises gradually towards the south, enclosing and shutting in the central provinces, and separating them most effectually from the southern. The defiles by which Andalusia is entered afford a singular and most striking contrast to the plain country hitherto traversed, and the more so as we appear to come suddenly into the very heart of a mountainous country at a very high level.

Once entered, the pass leading out of La Mancha presents a succession of magnificent views, not altogether without tree vegetation, and this character of the scenery extends as far as Bailen; the whole of the road to that town lying within the

rocky and irregular Sierra which forms the termination southwards of the great table-land, and on the whole consisting of a broken descent into the first of a series of nearly parallel valleys, reaching with alternating ridges of mountain and hill to the Mediterranean coast. It is near this point that the great deposits of lead ore occur in the mountains, and probably no known mineral field is so rich in supplies of this metal*. These deposits, associated with much silver and occasionally with copper ores, occur in each of the limestone districts parallel to the main axis of the Sierra Nevada.

Passing Jaen, the road enters a broken tract of country abounding with fruit-trees and richly cultivated, opening into the valley of one of the main branches of the Guadalquivir, the other having been crossed at Menjibar, between Bailen and Jaen. This valley opens out, and is traversed by numerous water-courses, mostly dry, between a low range of hills to the north and the chain of the Sierra Nevada, which is seen stretching out in its full extension as the road descends into the so-called *Vega*, or plain of Granada.

There is no doubt that the aspect of this plain from any of the enclosing heights is both grand and extremely pleasing, though, perhaps, it has been a little exaggerated by the natural enthusiasm of the traveller whose eye has become accustomed to utter sterility. After crossing Spain, anything green and vegetable looks delicious; but if it were not for that, I do not think the mere vegetation, as seen in passing along the road, would be considered so remarkable, while on the other hand the dust is so troublesome as to put a terrible check upon admiration of any kind. The first view of the Sierra Nevada, however, rising to the height of nearly 13,000 feet, and covered even at the end of August with very visible and numerous patches of snow, is a feature equally remarkable for its grandeur and beauty, and affords a noble back-ground to the cultivated garden-like appearance in the nearer distance. The subtropical character of the vegetation in these plains did not strike me so forcibly as

* The mines of Linares, long celebrated and exceedingly rich for lead, are situated to the east of Bailen, near the Sierra Morena. The difficulty and expense of conveying stores to the mine and the ore to market are the only drawbacks to the production, but these are sufficient to check the workings except when lead bears a high price in the market.

it would perhaps have done if I had not previously seen the east coast of Spain, where things are much more forward than they are here. For example, the figs and grapes are not ripe till September; and though at the time of my visit there were peaches, plums, apples, pears, and prickly pears (the last just coming in), the fruit and vegetables were neither fine nor abundant. This was perhaps owing to the badness of the season.

The Spanish part of Granada offers nothing particular, and does not differ from other Spanish towns, except that the houses are rather better and the streets rather wider than usual. The public places are not striking, nor do the churches seem worth looking at. The hotel where I stayed is new, excellent, and perfectly clean, with a very fair cuisine and comfortable rooms; it provides all that is wanted. There were no insects of any kind, and nothing disagreeable. It is called the Fonda de Vigaray.

The Moorish part of the town is entered by a fine Moorish gate, and is altogether oriental. It is said to be like the main street in Cairo. The principal street is narrow, very picturesque, full of shops open to the street, and in all respects unlike everything European. It is usually much crowded, and exceedingly noisy with human voices, but far too narrow for anything but a mule to pass in addition to the throng of people. The rest of the Moorish town is very poor, and much of it consists of holes cut in the rock, in which the wretched dregs of the population and tribes of gipsies find shelter.

Leaving the town, and advancing up a steep narrow street, we soon reach the gate which forms the present entrance to the precincts of the Alhambra. Under the name of Alhambra is included a considerable space of ground, formerly strongly fortified and entirely enclosed, and still defensible. It includes part of the old Moorish fortress, the old summer palace of the Moorish kings, a detestable modern carcase built on the ground formerly occupied by the winter palace of the Moors, and extensive gardens, besides numerous houses and a church. Of these, the remaining towers of the old fortress, the summer palace, and the walks and walls, are the objects of interest, the palace being that which attracts chief attention, as being probably the most exquisite existing specimen of Moorish architecture in design and execution. There is, however, no

external beauty, the walls being perfectly plain and without openings of any kind, except here and there a simple doorway. It is not till this door has closed upon one that the land of enchantment is reached, but it is then felt to be as much beyond imagination as it is difficult of description. You first enter a small cloistered court, in the middle of which is a piece of water surrounded with a small garden. Around are Moorish columns, and above a double cloister there is a passage closed with lattice-work, the retreat of the ladies when processions were passing, or other unusual events taking place in the court below, and the other a story higher, quite open. Both these and all the arches and windows are richly decorated with the most elaborate tracery. At one end of this oblong cloister is a part much more rich than the rest, opening first into an ante-room and then into a glorious hall, 150 feet high, and of the most noble and perfect proportions. It is called the Hall of the Ambassadors, and was the place of audience of the Moorish kings. With the loss only of a few of the details and some of the colouring, all here is nearly as it was left—marvellously grand and exquisitely beautiful. Out of the first court there is a passage opening into a second—the celebrated Court of Lions—communicating on one side with a small group of state rooms, the private apartments of the King and Queen, and on the opposite side with a room celebrated as the place where the Abencerages were murdered. On the third side is a singular oblong room or corridor called the Hall of Justice. I had not imagined that anything could be so beautiful as this Court of Lions*. In the centre of the court is a fountain supported by some strange-looking figures, all of marble, and supposed to be meant for the lions themselves—whence the name of the court. All that there is here is of the most delicate and rich workmanship, and resembles nothing that I had seen elsewhere. The material is marble and plaster, but the plaster is almost as hard as the marble, and is decorated with rich colour as well as delicate lace-like form. The roofs are inlaid wood-work, also very richly deco-

* This Court of Lions, reproduced with minute accuracy by Mr. Owen Jones, in the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, is perhaps one of the most attractive and beautiful objects in the remarkable group of architectural restorations there to be studied.

rated with colour. The effects of light and shade in these places at evening, and when the sun is setting, are extremely fine, and the views from them of the town and plains of Granada and the distant mountains, lovely beyond expression. I have seen nothing nearly so beautiful, and quite participate in all the enthusiasm of the warmest admirers of the place. It is indeed chiefly beauty that is to be admired, for though there are some grand things, they are all so influenced by the beauty as to cause that to preponderate in all the effects produced. There is another Moorish palace close by, in the midst of the most rich, charming, and luxuriant gardens. It is called the Generalife, and also contains much Moorish work of the finest kind. Although my time was greatly limited, I paid a second visit to the Alhambra, and spent in all not less than eight or ten hours there during the two days of my stay in Granada; but I felt that I had, after all, merely looked at, and not seen it. It requires to be studied in detail. There are many other things in the town that people are taken to see, but I could not bring myself to visit them. Indeed the cathedral and churches seemed to me in miserable taste, and did not bear comparison with the Moorish architecture.

As I do not pretend to be writing a connected and descriptive account of Spain, but merely my impressions while travelling hastily through those parts of the country that were not important in reference to the work I had in hand, I prefer leaving this description, imperfect as it is, to speak for itself, rather than write an elaborate account at second-hand to explain why this singular specimen of Moorish art impresses so strongly the imagination of persons not deeply informed in architecture, and judging merely by the eye. I confess to the general impression obtained from my visit to the Alhambra being more distinct and complete than I can remember from any other object of the like kind. I have, since writing the description, seen a good deal of Moorish architecture, both in Spain and northern Africa, but nothing has at all dimmed the impression, and I still regard the Alhambra as an architectural wonder worthy of all praise.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

THE VALLEY OF THE ALPUJARRAS.

THE fine mountain range of the Sierra Nevada forms the southern boundary of the celebrated and rich plains (*vegas*) of Granada, and extends with occasional broad and deep valleys, and under a variety of names, towards the east as far as the coast, near Carthagená, and westwards also for a very great distance. The tract between the Sierra Nevada chain and the Mediterranean, occupying a length of sixty miles, and a breadth varying from thirty to forty miles, has been called for some centuries the "*Alpujarras*," or pasture lands, and possesses considerable historical interest, as being the last refuge of the Moors in Europe, when, after the conquest of Granada, they were still allowed to retain a footing, and whence they were only driven, about the beginning of the seventeenth century, by the shameful violation of the treaties that had been concluded with them. They were then hunted out by Philip III. from one mountain fortress to another, being rather treated like wild beasts than as the remains of an accomplished and elegant people, to whom Europe is indebted for the germ of its noblest architecture, and for some buildings that have never been excelled for richness of decoration, ingenuity, and taste. As may be supposed, this spot offers many curious and interesting remains of its former inhabitants, and, shut out as it is from the rest of Spain, it presents also many peculiarities of natural history and geology which render it well worthy of attention and close investigation. Its most interesting points are, however, not to be reached except on horseback, and then only from two or three directions; for although a cart-road was constructed from about the centre of the district to Almería, towards the close of the last century, and might easily be put in repair, it is at present unusable, and there is no idea of any improvement; so that the whole communication between the numerous villages of the main valley and the coast is conducted by mules,



donkeys, and horses, partly along this road and partly in the river valleys. The central part of the tract is without any regular approach whatever, as the eastern road originally extended only to some mines of lead formerly worked by the crown, and never had any communication with the transverse valley to the west, through which the only other roads necessarily pass. The isolation is thus nearly perfect, and except in reference to the mines of the Sierra de Gador, which are important and flourishing, no one thinks of penetrating this main valley between the Sierra Nevada and the parallel ranges of mountains.

But I must describe more in detail the geographical peculiarities of the district in question. The Sierra Nevada is a magnificent wall of rock, chiefly of mica schist, rising at its two highest points to upwards of 12,000 feet above the sea, and retaining for many miles the character of a lofty, continuous and impassable barrier, extremely precipitous on both sides, though most so to the south, ranging nearly east and west, and broken off or partially terminated by extremely deep and abrupt transverse valleys, one a few miles west of the city of Granada, and another east of Guadix, the intermediate distance being, as already stated, about sixty miles. Nothing in mountain scenery is grander or more majestic than this noble range, whether seen from the plains of Granada or the lofty heights of the Sierra de Gador. It is one abrupt, simple, unbroken mountain-mass, the main elevations only just distinguishable above the general level, and the whole covered at intervals with snow even in the month of August, but completely white for many months in the year. Below, on the north side, are the glorious plains of Granada, rich with olives, grapes, figs, pomegranates, maize, and oranges; and beyond them, still further north, rises another but less considerable mountain range, the commencement of the vast tertiary plateaux for which Spain is so remarkable. The picturesque city of Granada, crowned with the Alhambra and the Generalife, is seen, together with numerous villages in the upper part of the plain, near where the Darro and the Genil unite their waters and become available for irrigation on a large scale. The sources of these rivers (which ultimately unite with the Guadalquivir, between Cordova and Seville) are in the Sierra Nevada and its northern spurs, not far from the peak of Muley-Hassan,

the most elevated point in Spain*. They are, like almost all the rivers of Spain, extremely variable in the quantity of water they carry down, but, unlike a large proportion, they generally afford sufficient to be available for agricultural purposes; and to the efforts of the Moors, in the irrigation of the slopes and plains by an ingenious use of these streams, the whole riches of the plains are due.

The Sierra Nevada is so deeply intersected by the two gorges of the Guadalfeo on the west, and the Rio di Almeria on the east, that although as a mountain-chain it is really continued on either side, the name is changed and the connection lost sight of. These gorges are both occupied by tertiary sands and detritus to an extent rather astounding to geologists accustomed only to measure deposits of the same age in Northern Europe. The gorges themselves, through which now very little water passes except in torrents, and which are most part of the year perfectly dry, and form the only roads of the country, have been in many places cut through by the action of water to a depth of hundreds and even thousands of feet. So perfectly dry, however, is the atmosphere in this part of Europe, that these natural cuttings, instead of being soon filled up by the falling in of the slopes, remain permanently vertical, or nearly so, although the material is nothing but slightly coherent gravel. Roads cut through them, or in them, are in the same way left with perfectly smooth vertical or even overhanging walls on either side, often 300 or 400 feet high, a proof at once of the softness of the material and the absence of all atmospheric action.

The principal part of the Sierra Nevada and its loftiest peaks lie to the east of the city of Granada, so that the way from Granada to the Alpujarras runs at once towards the south, and is identical with a road commenced, but not finished, to the town of Motril on the coast, where a strip of almost tropical land admits of the cultivation of the sugar-cane, rice, and many other vegetable productions not elsewhere seen in Europe. After following this road for some miles, we diverge to the left, and enter the Alpujarras.

* The peak of Muley-Hassan is estimated at 12,762 feet, and there are six other peaks above 10,000 feet, all immediately adjacent, and within the range of the Sierra Nevada, in the most limited sense in which the name can be given.

Although not represented in any maps that I have seen, two distinct mountain-chains extend between the Sierra Nevada and the sea. The central part of one of them is locally called the Sierra de Gador, whose higher ridges rise to a height of not less than 7000 feet above the sea. The part towards the west is the Sierra de Lujar, and that to the east the Sierra de Alhamilla; while the parallel coast range to the south, which is not named, consists of a series of hills, probably from 2000 to 4000 feet high, and therefore little inferior to the loftiest mountain-chain in the British Islands, although far below the sierras just named. Between these various chains of mountains there are thus in the district two intervening principal valleys running east and west, besides which there are some transverse or north and south valleys, in addition to a strip of low land generally extending between the foot of the southernmost hills and the coast. The valleys between the Sierra Nevada and those sierras immediately to the south, are the longest, widest, and most important, and have been regarded as forming the whole district of the Alpujarras, by those not familiar with the ground. These valleys are two in number, being separated by a distinct watershed, and they form together a somewhat lofty plateau of tertiary detrital rock, probably 2000 feet above the sea, deeply cut through at intervals by barrancas or gorges, presenting, chiefly on the north side, or towards the lofty and snow-covered ridges of the Sierra Nevada, a perfect chaos of hills, entirely due to the eroding action of water, probably commenced at the first elevation of this tract above the sea in which it was formed, but continued since, and greatly increased, by the torrents that sweep down the precipitous ravines of the Sierra after rain, and during the rapid melting of the snows in the beginning of summer. From one end of this valley or plateau to the other, these results are repeated with every variety of circumstance and in every degree of magnitude. The total vertical thickness of the detritus cut into is very great, and it offers almost all imaginable varieties of material, from uniform heaps of fine sand to conglomerates, where angular blocks, measuring several scores of cubic yards, are mixed irregularly with rolled blocks of almost equal size, and with others of all intervening dimensions down to a small pebble. Sometimes regularly bedded and nearly horizontal, occasionally presenting singular and beautiful instances of false stratification,

and sometimes locally elevated to an angle of from 15° to 30° or even 45° , these grand detrital heaps, everywhere offering natural sections of the noblest kind, form a perfect study for the geologist, and are well worthy the attention of those who still fancy that vast and unknown convulsions must have accompanied the breaking up of whole sections of the earth's crust, in order to produce many less striking and less extensive conglomerates of ancient date in other countries. It is at least pretty certain that no such inordinate and fearful disruptions either preceded or accompanied the formation and elevation of the conglomerates in question, for the whole district appears to have undergone nothing more than slow upheaval during a long lapse of time, entirely within the latter part of the tertiary era, and chiefly at an almost recent period, accompanied only by rare and exceptional instances of earthquakes and other purely local disturbances, generally of small extent. This is indeed so much the case, that a great proportion of the thousands of square miles of detrital tertiary rock, and the still greater range of tertiary lacustrine deposits of the Peninsula, are for the most part little removed from horizontal stratification, though certainly elevated some thousands of feet above the level they occupied during the time of their original formation.

This great northern valley of the Alpujarras is, as I have said, naturally divided into two parts by a watershed connected with the central and most elevated point of the Sierra Nevada, near the grand peak of Muley-Hassan, which stands out to the north of the principal line of the Sierra, and is connected with another spur in that direction. A theoretical view of the probable nature of the movements producing this condition of things will perhaps assist the reader in fully understanding the physical geography; and I will therefore first state, in as few words as possible, the nature of the rocks and the mode in which the structure in question admits of explanation.

Without going beyond the immediate country, and connecting the South of Spain with the rest of Europe and with the North of Africa, which would be necessary before completely entering into the whole question, it is sufficient to say that the Sierra Nevada consists almost entirely of metamorphic rocks of schistose character, at one time partially or entirely overlaid by thick beds of shale, and subsequently by masses of calcareous matter of

very ancient date. These exist, it would seem, on the north as well as south flanks of the present mountain-range, and were probably originally continuous, though it is also likely that the line of elevation of the Sierra had been already determined and had actually commenced at the time of their being deposited. During the lapse of ages this calcareous matter became limestone, and at length was so far changed by time and the causes always at work amongst rocks, as to put on its present highly crystalline character. In doing so, however, the amount of contraction both laterally and vertically must have been very considerable, and as the impurities of the calcareous mud were many of them separated off into distinct beds, and the crystalline character became fully developed, these contractions passed into regular systems of fissures, chiefly vertical. During this change the whole mass of rocks of the district was being slowly thrust upwards along a line or axis ranging east and west, and the limestone, originally but little developed on the ridge, was easily and entirely split asunder and gradually carried away by the action of the currents and waves of the ocean, through which the elevation no doubt took place. A little limestone and the underlying shales remain on the immediate flanks of the Sierra, but the great mass of the deposit is not only at some distance to the south, but has a broad, deep, intermediate valley between, and presents a steep and scarped face towards the north. Even, however, at this first elevation, the upheaving force produced other results than the simple formation of the central chain of the Sierra and the subordinate flanking ranges of limestone. At various places where the limestone had been split by contraction, the resistance was overcome, these fissures widened, and the limestone thrown off on either side, thus commencing the formation of the two principal transverse valleys of the Guadalfeo and the Almeria rivers, and several subsidiary barrancas or gorges, and cañadas or depressions, without an outlet. In the former, the general direction of the inclination of the beds is east and west, thrown off in a saddle-shaped form, as would necessarily result from the cause I have assumed. In the cañadas, on the other hand, the beds incline towards each other, forming a trough. The prevailing general direction of the inclination of the limestone was, it must be remembered, originally south, as having been lifted up by the slates on a line

parallel to this rock and to the north of it. Thus a certain amount of complication exists in the inclination of the beds when first examined, which is easily explained, however, by the hypothesis I have assumed.

But the complication does not end here. At a date considerably subsequent to that at which the main elevation of the Sierra was commenced, a similar but smaller elevating force acted in a similar direction some distance to the south and near the coast, also producing its effects. These could not fail to repeat the phenomena already described, though in a less considerable degree. Thus the limestone is thrown by this later elevation to the north instead of the south, and its southern face as well as its northern is escarped, while all the principal valleys and barrancas are widened at both ends, and its cañadas or troughs completely enclosed. The limestone is thus thrown as it were into a succession of troughs or inverted saddles, presenting bluff sides both to the north and south, and precipitous walls of rock to the east and west, wherever cleft in a north and south direction. It has a rough approximation in external form to huge rectangular masses, each split in the direction of its shorter sides by barrancas, and each separated from its neighbouring mass by a wide yawning chasm, filled up often to half its depth by the fragmentary portions of similar rock and schist removed during the formation of the structure I have endeavoured thus to illustrate.

Owing to some cause which I will not here discuss, the limestone rock of the central and principal mass, and indeed of the others also, contains a considerable quantity of metalliferous ore, chiefly lead, but including also copper and silver; and the working of the mines, especially in the Sierra de Gador and its vicinity, has long been an important industrial occupation of the inhabitants. It is, however, little known at a distance, and still retains all the most remarkable peculiarities handed down from the Moors.

On leaving Granada, and passing through the deep tertiary gorges of the upper part of the Guadalfeo, I have already said that we turn to the east and enter the western side of the principal valley of the Alpujarras. The distance of this point from Granada is about fifteen miles, and we then find ourselves between the western part of the Sierra Nevada and the Sierra de Lujar,

whose elevation may be about 5000 feet, although no accurate measurements have been taken. This valley is everywhere at a very high level, the ground is much broken, the villages far asunder, the quantity of water small, and the cultivation, though not unimportant, by no means so considerable as in many other parts of the district. We are here only on the outskirts of the district, and the peculiar characteristics are hardly yet seen.

The first town in the Alpujarras is Lanjaron. There is a road, travelled by a kind of diligence, which approaches to within a couple of miles of it, and there terminates abruptly, the rest of the way being much too narrow and precipitous for anything but men and quadrupeds. In spite of this little difficulty, this spot is frequented during some of the summer months by people from Granada and elsewhere for the sake of some mineral waters it possesses. These waters taste strongly of sulphuric acid, and are cold and very clear. They seemed to me to be derived in all probability from the decomposition of a very pyritous shale which abounds in the tertiary rocks adjacent, and through which the spring rises. Sweet and pure water rises not far off in similar springs. The contact of the tertiary sands, conglomerates and marls with the old schists of the Sierra Nevada is at no great distance, and is no doubt the cause of the water being retained and given off again in this form. Springs of water are, however, rare in thirsty Spain, and are valued accordingly.

The little town of Lanjaron is pretty, and, being whitewashed, looks tolerably clean. All the houses are of the Moorish type, with their open courts in the middle, a total absence of windows to the exterior, low walls, perfectly flat roofs, and sometimes pretty minaret-looking towers. Abundance of olives, grapes, figs, pomegranates, and other fruit-trees are seen in the gardens, and as each house is in some degree detached, the whole space covered is not inconsiderable. The streets are narrow, rough, stony, and disagreeable. A Moorish castle is on a detached hill a little below the town.

From Lanjaron there is about four miles of mountain-path to Orjiba, another Moorish town of the same kind, and the capital of one of the small divisions of the district, and at this place, about thirty or thirty-five miles from Granada, I concluded a very interesting day's ride. As usual in these out-of-the-way spots, the *posada* or inn provides no food whatever, and the traveller

is dependent on what his saddle-bags may contain. You have four whitewashed walls, with two holes, one doing duty as door and the other as window, two or three very primitive chairs, the seats made of the *esparto* (the useful grass of the country, from which ropes, baskets, mats, shoes, and a number of other useful if not indispensable articles are manufactured), and an equally primitive table, which, when carefully protected by being placed against the wall, allows of plates and dishes being put upon it without much danger. To these is added, when needed, a light moveable frame like a camp-stool, on which are placed a mattress of *esparto*, two sheets, and a pillow. In the town you can buy bread, which is generally good, besides garlic, and other vegetables, such as pimento, tomato, cucumber, &c. Occasionally, but not always, you can have eggs, bad wine, oil and vinegar, and with these you may prepare your meal. The correct thing in that case is the *gazpacho*, which consists of all the vegetables you can get cut up fine, and put into a bowl with a quantity of bread and a sufficient quantity of cold water to swim the whole mess. A little vinegar and a great deal of oil are added; and the whole being well-mixed, the feast is prepared. Such a meal hardly comes up to an Englishman's idea of dinner after a twelve hours' ride, but he must take things in Spain as he can get them, and be thankful if he can get anything. Meat in these villages is almost unknown during the summer; fowls are not larger than partridges, and consist of little more than bones tied round with packthread; and sausage, which can only be had in the large towns, is harder than some kinds of wood, and after all is more deeply imbued with garlic than anything else. The wine is generally excessively bad, but the bread is white, hard, and of excellent flavour, though rather indigestible.

About daybreak next morning, my companion and I left Orjiba, and soon entered a rambla, along which kind of path the greater part of our road now lay. A rambla is so common in the southern provinces of Spain, and yet so exclusively confined to the Peninsula, that no one who has not been in that country can fully realize its nature and conditions, and yet, without some idea of its peculiarities, the style of travelling cannot be at all understood. I will endeavour to give a correct and full description of the more characteristic features of these curious phenomena in physical geography, and as I