must his mind have been agitated by the tumult of contending feelings! On the one hand, with what bitterness, and unavailing regret would he look back on the vain struggles and hopes deferred, which month by month, and year by year, had sickened his heart, producing a most natural repugnance, even in his brave spirit, to re-embark on such "a sea of troubles." While on the other, wherever else he turned, a still more cheerless prospect opened before him. He was now on his way to England, but though going there under the patronage of Henry, he could hardly expect to find his path perfectly clear. He would still be a stranger among strangers, to begin anew the wearisome task of disarming self-interest, enlightening ignorance, and conciliating prejudice. Whereas now at length, Isabella's unexpected offer seemed likely to realize his fondest aspirations, and the mere word of the good Queen would exercise an influence on him the most solemn promises of the selfish Ferdinand had no longer the power of producing.

During the centuries of war that preceded the final expulsion of the Moors from Spain, the spot we were now passing had witnessed many a gallant deed of high emprise, and the waters of

the Xenil were often crimsoned with the bravest blood of Christian and Moslem. It was the pass by which the Spanish chivalry used to carry their forays up to the enemy's gates, from some of their nearest strongholds, such as Alcalá la Real, or even occasionally from Cordova itself. One of the worst disasters recorded in Spanish history took place in the immediate neighbourhood, when on the 26th of June, 1319, an army of such numbers, "as covered the face of the earth," commanded by the Infantes Pedro and Juan, was utterly routed by the Moors with the loss of 50,000 men, including the two Princes, one of whom, Don Pedro, was skinned, stuffed, and hung up over the gate of Elvira. Nearly two hundred years later, the bridge of Pinos was the scene of one of the bloodiest encounters of the last Moorish war, when the royal army under Ferdinand forced the passage after a desperate resistance.

But of all the events, of which the bridge of Pinos has been the theatre, though they may occupy a larger space in the pages of history, none can be compared in point of genuine interest with the unrecorded conflict, which took place that memorable February day in the mind of Columbus, when, in answer to Isabella's invita-

tion, he decided to return to the royal camp at Santa Fé, where the King and Queen then resided, having in the previous month accomplished the crowning achievement of their reign by the conquest of Granada.

From this spot nothing lay between us and Granada, but the famous Vega, a plain which, occupying the bed of a dried-up lake, runs up to the walls of the town, and stretches some thirty miles to the westward, an uninterrupted expanse of verdure and fertility. Doubling the base of a mountain, Elvira, which projects like a promontory into the bosom of the Vega, we rode in single file along the narrow path by which alone, for several miles, Granada was approachable on the Cordova side. Not but what a road of unimpeachable dimensions exists in that direction; but when we passed on the 30th of November, it was a mere causeway of mud, with depth and width enough to engulf all the donkeys in the neighbourhood, one of which, as its half-devoured carcase testified, had recently sunk therein, to rise no more.

The existence of such a road, within a league of such a place as Granada, would be almost incredible to those, who have not travelled in Spain, where the highways are invariably worse

kept in the vicinity of large towns, than out in the country.

This portion of the Vega is an uninteresting level of irrigated cornfields, divided by banks of earth, and intersected in every direction by water-courses, which at this season were brimful, so as to flood all the intermediate ground, for the purpose of stimulating the vegetation of the newly-sown grain. Having in due course emerged upon firm road, near a grove of the finest cypress-trees I ever saw, we soon entered the town, threading several narrow lanes of most Oriental appearance, and passing the graceful archway of the well-known Casa del Carbon, while our cavalcade attracted universal notice, we crossed the torrent-stream of the Darro, and entering the principal thoroughfare, alighted with much satisfaction at the doorway of the Victoria Hotel.

The following description of the Duke of Wellington's splendid property near Granada, wh. was presented to him by Fernando VII in recognition of his services during the Peninsular War, is to be found in Ginez Perez de Hita's "Guerras Civiles de Granada 1595

The Soto de Roma is a most agreable demesne, it is very heavily timbered & amidst the woods it is easy to lose one's way. There is great abundance of both feathered & furred game. The distance fr. Granada to the borders of the property is a league & a half & the Soto itself is more than four leagues in length & breadth" p 357.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

GRANADA, *December* 1*st*.—It was to the Cathedral we went first, on the morning after our arrival, reserving the Alhambra, which is some distance from the hotel, for the afternoon, when we should have more time to devote to this culminating object of our tour. The Cathedral, a handsome, half-Gothic, half-classical building of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, profusely ornamented with jasper, and precious marbles, is utterly deficient in solemnity and grandeur of appearance, and its glaring, white-washed interior would be infinitely improved by the introduction of good painted glass. It contrasts disadvantageously by its excess of light, which in summer must be quite overpowering, with every other Spanish Cathedral we saw, where the opposite extreme prevails; and in the awe-inspiring gloom, into which you suddenly emerge from the broad

sunshine, as at Toledo and Seville especially, painting, and sculpture, retablo, and alabaster tomb, present to the eye a perplexing, undistinguishable mass, in which beauty of detail, and distinctness of outline, are altogether lost in the surrounding twilight. I missed here the nearly-universal St. Christopher, which, in most Spanish Cathedrals, towers, a Colossus in fresco, near the transept-entrance, so as to be seen by all on going in, it being a popular belief, that no one, who looks at this Saint, can come the same day to an evil end.

We hurried onward to the *Capilla de los Reyes*, where Ferdinand and Isabella lie buried. This chapel, a very good specimen of Florid Gothic, adjoins the southern side of the Cathedral, and is one of the most interesting spots I ever visited. It is separated from its antechapel by the most superb *reja*, or screen of iron-work, we saw anywhere in Spain, the land (as I have already remarked, more than once), *par excellence*, for cunning workmanship in gold, silver, and all kinds of metal. The abundance of light is here a great advantage, as it reveals every portion of *El Maestro Bartolomé's* exquisite design, as well as the alabaster glories of the royal tombs, which fill up the whole

area between the screen, and the high-altar of the chapel. Passing onwards by a side-door, we stood above the vault, where the remains of Ferdinand, Isabella, and their daughter, the poor insane Juana, with her husband, Philip of Burgundy, are entombed, while on either hand, a magnificent monument of noble dimensions, and superb execution, rises to the height of some five feet above the chapel floor. Each of these monuments, which are said to be the work of an Italian sculptor, has the form of an altar-tomb, with recumbent figures of a royal pair, life-sized, reposing on its horizontal surface. Descending into the vault below, we saw the four coffins, which, having been concealed during the French occupation of Granada, remain exactly in their original condition. They are perfectly plain, and almost rude in their construction, each bearing the initial of its occupant. Isabella's coffin is marked with the letter *Y;* for the Spaniards write the name of their greatest Queen, not as we do, but "Ysabel."

The leading idea of this chapel is the conquest of Granada, which is reproduced again and again, in every feature. On each side of the high-altar are some remarkable carvings in

wood, coloured, gilt, and draped in character, so as to be exact representations of the King and Queen in face, form, and costume, as they appeared at the taking of the city. That circumstance gives these carvings historical interest; nor is it unworthy of remark, that they are represented in an attitude, then beginning to go out of fashion in works of art, though no other could be more suitable, even to those powerful monarchs, who in the conquest of Granada were acknowledging the crowning event of their glorious reign—they are on their knees, devoutly giving thanks to Almighty God for the victory over the Moors. Their faces are precisely of that character, which convinces the beholder of their life-like truthfulness, veritable portraits in fact, and not mere creations of the imagination—Ferdinand heavy, and slow-minded, but resolute; Isabella calm, benevolent, and wise, with more comeliness than beauty.

The high-altar is panelled with carvings of the same date and description, illustrating the surrender of the Alhambra. Ford, a good judge of Art, and perfectly acquainted with all that Spain contains of greatest interest, remarks that few things in the whole land are more curious.

Isabella, on a white palfrey, rides between her husband, and Cardinal Mendoza. Boabdil comes forth on foot to meet them, and delivers up the key of the town, holding it by the wards. Behind the King and Queen appear the ladies of the court, knights, and soldiers; while the Christian captives, whom the surrender has just restored to freedom, march out, two and two, in long procession, a glad, and thankful company.

The carvings on the other side of the altar set forth the conversion of the Moors, who preferred Christianity with Granada, to Mahometanism without it. The artist may not have intended it, but nothing can be more dismal, and unhappy, than the countenances of these converts, as if the reception of Christianity had been to them anything but a privilege. Indeed, the manner in which they are taken to the font for baptism, gives one far more the idea of a flock of sheep being driven into the fold, than the voluntary act of free agents; while their number would lead one to fear, that adequate instruction and preparation must have been altogether impossible. The artist has, perhaps unconsciously, quite illustrated the general spirit (at least) of those "various modes—sometimes by blandishment, sometimes by rigour, sometimes exhorting,

sometimes entreating, sometimes hanging, sometimes burning—by which the hard hearts of the Infidels were subdued, and above fifty thousand coaxed, teased, and terrified into baptism." * Ford calls particular attention to the mufflers and leg-wrappers of the women, which are precisely of the same pattern as those still worn by the Moors of Tetuan.

I could not help thinking how much happier a country Spain, in all probability, would now be, had a different course been adopted towards her Moorish inhabitants. If, instead of having to make their choice between forsaking Mahometanism, and exile, they had been allowed to retain their old homes (with such precautions as might be deemed necessary to secure their peaceful submission to their new rulers), and their gradual conversion attempted with all the zeal, ability, and other appliances, which the Church of Spain had then the power to employ, the land would in that case have been spared the loss of her most industrious and intelligent inhabitants, and whole districts, once proverbial for good farming, and fertility, saved from their present unproductiveness, and lack of popu-

* *Quarterly Review*, No. lxxxv. p. 78.

lation. As it was, the Spanish hierarchy imitated one of the worst principles of Mahometanism, and forced Christianity upon reluctant multitudes.

The deaf old verger, after giving us ample time for a careful examination of these most curious carvings, and setting a step-ladder, from the top of which we gained a better view of the royal tombs, next proceeded to draw forth, from some hidden receptacle, objects of still greater attractiveness, which had been bequeathed to this chapel by its founders. Among these were Isabella's sceptre, and missal—Ferdinand's sword, and crown—an exquisite Gothic pyx of gold, two feet high, covered with emblems of the Eucharist, and having the base of its pedestal hollowed out so as to contain a representation of the Last Supper, very similar in point of design (but on a greatly-reduced scale) to the famous one by Leonardo da Vinci, every part of it being executed in the most masterly manner—a small picture by Hemling, "The Adoration of the Magi," before which mass used to be said daily, during the siege of Granada—a viril (a species of monstrance) in gold, enamelled, and encircled by diamonds of large size—an embroidered cope, encrusted with gold to such a degree, that un-

supported it would almost stand upright, and covered with subjects from our Saviour's Life, the whole being (it is said) the production of the Queen's own hand, and presented by her to Cardinal Mendoza for the service of this chapel, in addition to two other similar vestments of even greater beauty, richness of colouring, and exquisite workmanship—and last, not least in point of interest, the identical standards used by the Christian army at the siege.

All these relics of the conquest of Granada are in excellent preservation, and as we examined them one by one in that quiet, antique-looking vestry, it seemed all but incredible that more than three centuries and a half had glided away since they were first laid up in their ponderous presses of chestnut-wood, so vividly did they recall the past, making us almost eye-witnesses of those momentous events, in which they had played their part.

We were highly amused with the number and size of the old-fashioned mirrors let into the panelling of the vestry walls for the use of the Cathedral canons, each dignitary having a separate glass for his own special benefit. Every one, initiated into the mysteries of a vestry, is aware that a certain amount of looking-glass

forms an indispensable item of its furniture. But, until I saw the vestries of Burgos and Granada, I always fancied four or five inches of that useful article were quite sufficient for every clerical purpose. It is never, however, too late to learn, and the most interesting piece of original information, respecting the Church in Spain, I was able to pick up, in our whole progress from Bayonne to Gibraltar, consists in the fact, that a cathedral canon cannot don his ecclesiastical vestments without the aid of as much looking-glass as would suffice for the dressing-table of most ladies!

CHAPTER XXXVII.

BEFORE setting off for the Alhambra, I must crave permission to introduce our guide and *commissionnaire*, Ximenes, who excited our interest, not only as being a member of the same family as the great Cardinal, but still more as the son of Mateo Ximenes, whom Washington Irving has handed down to immortality in his delightful "Tales of the Alhambra."

Ximenes is the best *lacquais de place* I ever saw, being not only attentive, and obliging, intelligent, and well-mannered, but—a very rare quality in that fraternity—not in the least degree officious, and he shows you exactly what you want to see, without boring you with the twaddle most guides delight in. Our hotel was the Victoria, a name which, repeated in the

Calle de la Victoria, seems intended to be an additional memorial of the conquest of Granada. It is well situated at the northern extremity of the Alameda, and from its front windows commands a good view of the Sierra Nevada, draped in its mantle of snow. The situation is, however, better adapted for summer than winter, as it loses the sun before noon, and our rooms, being totally unprovided with grates, or any sort of fire-place, were miserably cold.

On our way to the Alhambra, we had to traverse some of the oldest quarters of the town, where picturesque streets and dirty alleys, lining each bank of the Darro—a brawling mountain-stream, that intersects the whole length of Granada—are crowded together within the gorge of a narrow ravine, dominated by the towers of the fortress.

Emerging, at length, by the Calle de los Gomeles, and crossing a spacious *plaza*, we entered the classic regions of the Alhambra by Charles V.'s heavy gateway. The dense grove of elms, over which, to our right, peered the ruddy forms of the *Torres Bermejas*, the walks that opened out in serpentine curves, and the situation, a steep hill overhanging the town, combined to recall Heidelberg; but giving our-

selves no leisure to dwell on the outskirts, we hurried forwards to the Gate of Justice, a massive tower of *tapia*, where trials used to be held, with a large open hand cut deep into the keystone of the arch, under which we passed, while, further on in the same building, a key occupies a similar position over another portal. Hastening onwards through a narrow passage in the open air, we came upon a spacious esplanade, *Plaza de los Algibes*, the Place of the Cisterns, so called from two great reservoirs, cut out of the solid rock, by which it is underlaid, having the *Torre del Vino*, with its elegant Moorish arch, on our right.

The most conspicuous object, however, that met the eye, is the last one would either expect or desire to see in such a spot. For just at the moment when the mind is attuned to the contemplation of some of the lightest and most graceful architecture in the world, and you are eager to experience the sensations of a first impression, there, straight before you, on the choicest site in the whole circuit of the fortress, rises Charles V.'s unfinished palace, a building that in solidity and massiveness almost rivals the most ponderous constructions of Vanburgh. Anywhere else you

might feel disposed to admire its stately form and costly materials; but intruded here, and built (it is said) even upon the foundations of the Moorish winter-palace, pulled down to make way for it, it is nothing better than an insolent barbarism, unworthy such a man as Charles. Nor is one's vexation lessened on finding that it was never finished, in consequence of repeated earthquakes, which took place during its erection, and now the roofless, naked walls stare at each other in blank vacancy. I was very glad we had made our pilgrimage to Yuste before going to Granada; for I could never have enjoyed the same pleasure in visiting Charles's last retreat, after seeing the havoc he committed at the Alhambra.

Every one has noticed the extremely plain, indeed almost shabby, exterior of the Alhambra, especially when viewed in juxtaposition with the highly-decorated façade of Charles's palace. The motive for such plainness is not to be ascribed so much to a desire of producing the greatest possible contrast between its external simplicity, and internal gorgeousness, as to the purpose of averting the evil eye, of which Southern, and Eastern nations have at all times felt so universal a dread. At any rate, a most charming

artistic effect is the result, and from a narrow passage frowned upon by the offices of the neighbour-palace, and with nothing before the eye but the common-place *tapia* walls of the Alhambra, you step at once by a most unpretending little door into the full beauty of that fairy creation, consecrated at once by the associations of Poetry, Art, and History.

We are now in the Alberca. A long marble tank, 130 feet by 30, bordered by parterres of roses, rows of orange trees, and myrtles, with multitudes of gold and silver fish darting to and fro in its glassy waters, fills the whole length of its central area. The two longer walls of this court, which on their lower surface are perfectly devoid of ornamentation, are pierced above by a row of most graceful Moorish windows, opening towards the tank, and looking in that quiet spot, so fraught with a sense of repose and retirement, as if they belonged to a cluster of conventual cells. One end of the Alberca terminates in a most beautiful double arcade; at the other rises the tower of Comares, which, though not attaining an elevation of more than 75 feet by 37, still presents a very imposing appearance as it lifts itself above the surrounding buildings, so light in their

construction, so graceful in their proportions. Within its walls stands the Hall of the Ambassadors, the largest, and one of the most sumptuous apartments in the whole palace, used for the reception of envoys from foreign Powers.

It was here, that, in 1478, Don Juan de Vera delivered to Muley Aben Hassan Ferdinand's demand of the tribute paid by preceding kings of Granada to the Castilian sovereigns—the prelude to the final overthrow of the Moorish power in Spain.

It is a noble room, 35 feet square by 60 in height, crowned by a vaulted roof of *alerce* wood of extreme beauty, and illuminated in gold, red, and blue. The walls are richly stuccoed, and adorned with arabesques of great elegance. In fact, it would seem as if the artist had determined to lavish upon its ornamentation all the resources of Moorish art and taste, for the sake of producing a powerful impression on the minds of the strangers, for whose reception it was destined.

Its situation is unrivalled. As you stand in the deeply-recessed windows, to which the enormous thickness of the walls gives almost the space of small chambers, you command one of the most enchanting prospects in the world, revealing at one glance the fertile bosom of the