

and hypocausts under ground warmed the waters of the bath. Exquisite arabesques, ivory couches, graceful cabinets of sandal or citron inlaid with mother-of-pearl, softest carpets, richest silks, gold, silver, malachite, porcelain, alabaster, miracles of the loom and needle, filigree, and jewellery, attested the Sybaritic luxury of the inhabitants. Yet the lord of all this splendour confessed to have enjoyed only fourteen happy days in his life !

While a great part of Europe was a pathless forest or morass, where roamed the wild boar and wild ox, upon the fertile vegas of Granada and Cordova waved the yellow corn and flashed the golden orange and citron. There, too, gleamed the snowy bolls of the cotton-plant, and glistened the silky plumage of the sugar-cane. The jasmine bowers and rose gardens of Shiraz seemed transplanted to the fairy courts and colonnades of the Alhambra. The olive, the aloe, the indigo tree, and the fig diversified the rich foliage, the vine swung burdened with its purpling fruit, and the pomegranate displayed its flaming crest. Crops followed crops through all the seasons in unbroken succession.

Under the Romans Cordova was the seat of a celebrated university, which taught philosophy and rhetoric especially, and sustained a professorship of Greek. Here were born the two Senecas and the poets Sextilius Henna and Lucan. Under the Moors Cordova became a seat of wealth, luxury, and learning, rivalling Bagdad in its splendours, and so renowned in letters as to be called the Athens of the west. The accounts of its prosperity and magnificence during this period—from the ninth century to the twelfth—almost rival the tales of the Arabian Nights. Its population of a million souls has dwindled to about forty thou-



GYPSY KING IN GRENADA.

sand. Yet Cordova, now a decayed and poverty-stricken city, with an air of utter dejection and desertion, once had six hundred mosques, fifty hospitals, eight hundred schools, nine hundred public baths, eight thousand shops, two hundred and sixty-three thousand houses, six hundred inns, a library of six hundred thousand volumes. So extensive were its manufactories of leather that the words *cordovan* and *cordwainer* are both derived from its name.