

THE ADVENTURES OF ABEN-HAMET.

THE LAST ABENCERRAGE.

[Translated from the French by W. F. Hatheway.]

CHAPTER I.

THE RETURN TO THE HOME OF HIS ANCESTORS.

WHEN Boabdil, the last king of Granada, was obliged to abandon the kingdom of his father, he stood for a short time upon the summit of a neighboring mountain. From this elevated spot one could perceive the sea, upon which the unfortunate monarch was about to embark for Africa, the city of Granada and the wide extending valley and the river Xenil, with the white tents of Ferdinand and Isabella gleaming upon its banks. At the sight of this beautiful country, with its groves of cypress trees, which yet marked here and there the tombs of the Mussulmen, Boabdil burst into tears. His mother, the Sultana Aixa, who, with the nobles that formerly composed his court, was accompanying him in his exile, said to him: "Bewail now, like a woman, a kingdom that you knew not how to defend like a man." They descended the mountain, and Granada disappeared from their eyes.

The Moors of Spain, who joined in the fate of their king, scattered themselves over Africa. The Zegri and Gomeles took seat in the kingdom of Fez, from which they had drawn their origin; other tribes remained upon the coast from Oran to Algiers, and the Abencerrages settled in the environs of Tunis. They founded, in sight of the ruins of Carthage, a colony which is yet distinguished among the Moors of Africa for the elegance of its manners and the mildness of its laws. These families carried into their new country the remembrance of their ancient land. The *Paradise of Granada* was always fresh in their memory, and often would mothers repeat its name to their tender offspring. The romances of their country were sung to them from the cradle up to manhood. They prayed five days in the mosques with faces turned toward Granada. They beseeched Allah to restore to his chosen people that land of happiness. In vain did the African land offer the exile its fruits, its waters, its verdure, and its shining sun—distant far from the *vermillion towers* of Granada,

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