

CHAPTER XVIII.

BRAVADO OF THE THREE CAVALIERS—AMBUSH AT THE BRIDGE
OVER THE GUADAYRA—DESPERATE VALOR OF GARCI PEREZ—
GRAND ATTEMPT OF ADMIRAL BONIFAZ ON THE BRIDGE OF
BOATS—SEVILLE DISMEMBERED FROM TRIANA.

OF all the Christian cavaliers who distinguished themselves in this renowned siege of Seville, there was none who surpassed in valor the bold Garci Perez de Vargas. This hardy knight was truly enamoured of danger, and like a gamester with his gold, he seemed to have no pleasure of his life except in putting it in constant jeopardy. One of the greatest friends of Garci Perez was Don Lorenzo Xuarez Gallinato, the same who had boasted of the valor of Garci Perez at the time that he exposed himself to be attacked by seven Moorish horsemen. They were not merely companions, but rivals in arms; for in this siege it was the custom among the Christian knights to vie with each other in acts of daring enterprise.

One morning, as Garci Perez, Don Lorenzo Xuarez, and a third cavalier, named Alfonso Tello, were on horseback, patrolling the skirts of the camp, a friendly contest arose between them as to who was most adventurous in arms. To settle the question, it was determined to put the proof to the Moors, by going alone and striking the points of their lances in the gate of the city.

No sooner was this mad bravado agreed upon than they turned the reins of their horses and made for Seville. The Moorish sentinels, from the towers of the gate, saw three Christian knights advancing over the plain, and supposed them to be messengers or deserters from the army. When the cavaliers drew near, each struck his lance against the gate, and wheeling round, put spurs to his horse and retreated. The Moors, considering this a scornful defiance, were violently exasperated, and sallied forth in great numbers to revenge the insult. They soon were hard on the traces of the Christian cavaliers. The first who turned to fight with them was Alfonso Tello, being of a fiery and impatient spirit. The second was Garci Perez; the third was Don Lorenzo, who waited until the Moors came up with them, when he braced his shield, couched his lance, and took the whole brunt of their charge. A desperate fight took place, for though the Moors were overwhelm-