

was; then a vision of two ladies, who refused to look at each other; then a confused mass of golden curls and jetty black ringlets, seemingly contending; but the golden curls were always victorious. He would then fancy he was falling into a horrible pit, with blue eyes and black eyes gazing mournfully after him.

For many days the lady came regularly, sitting at his bedside, and as he became stronger she read to him from Voltaire and Montesquieu (which works, or rather a part of them, were found in an old cabinet), and as they became better acquainted as day after day passed away, they conversed of common-place affairs, and even of political and religious subjects.

He spoke of his old guardian, of his early days when he hunted the wolf on the moors and haunts of Estremadura, nor did he omit the beautiful Annetta de Balboa. He read to her the paper he had preserved from the charm, and she seemed pleased when he avowed his intention of seeing the nun. It was finally arranged that the señora would remain, for the present, in the cave, as she would be safer there than in any other place he knew in all Spain. In the course of another week two horses stood at the entrance of the cave, at the termination of an old road that reached down quite to the wall of Cordova. The Knight noticed not that the señora trembled violently as he bade her adieu, and pressing her hand to his lips, and leaping into the saddle of his prancing steed, the two turned the heads of their horses into the wide pathway, now on either side over-run with luxuriant vegetation, and the next moment they were making the descent. As the huge gateway rolled back into its place, Antonia returned to her apartment, and taking her rosary commenced a long litany. She stopped as she remembered what the Don had said to her respecting exhortations to the Saints, then pressing her hand upon her forehead she murmured half aloud: "No, no, anything but that, I cannot forget nor disregard the prayers my sainted mother taught me!" Antonia continued at her devotions until the shades of evening were drawing their folds thick and fast over the crags and distant mountains, and the plain below lay wrapped in night.

CHAPTER XII.

MADRIDATI—QUESADA.

Gomez de Manchez and Vallandano continued the descend of the mountain toward Cordova, until they arrived at the Moor's road, a wide levelled path, leading to the base of the Sierra Morenas, and terminating at a point nearly a league to the north-eastward of the town. This road was built ages before by the Moors, and as it now went only to the mountains, it was but little used except by the banditti. They saw no person until they arrived at the base, when they started forward at a brisk gallop, the gay ribbons of their broad-