

have reverted to thee, and a  
My hour is come—I must  
hall; follow me not, lest evil  
Remember what I have said,  
med for my deliverance.” So  
and a dark passage leading be-  
neared, and was no longer seen.  
A cock was now heard from  
Alhambra, in the valley of the  
of light began to appear above  
A slight wind arose, there  
rustling of dry leaves through  
ers, and door after door shut to

to the scenes she had so lately  
the shadowy multitude, but  
om court were gone. The moon  
s and galleries stripped of their  
tained and dilapidated by time,  
bs. The bat flitted about in the  
the frog croaked from the fish-

the best of her way to a remote  
to the humble apartment occu-  
The door as usual was open, for  
poor to need bolt or bar; she  
pallet, and, putting the myrtle  
pillow, soon fell asleep.  
he related all that had befallen  
Lope Sanchez, however, treated  
dream, and laughed at the child.  
He went forth to his customary  
en, but had not been there long  
later came running to him almost  
er! father!” cried she, “behold  
which the Moorish lady bound

ed with astonishment, for the stalk  
pure gold, and every leaf was a  
Being not much accustomed to  
was ignorant of the real value of  
saw enough to convince him that  
ore substantial than the stuff that  
ly made of, and that at any rate  
t to some purpose. His first care  
most absolute secrecy upon his  
spect, however, he was secure,  
on far beyond her years or sex.  
the vault, where stood the statues  
er Nymphs. He remarked that  
urned from the portal, and that  
were fixed upon the same point  
the building. Lope Sanchez could  
his most discreet contrivance for  
He drew a line from the eyes of  
int of regard, made a private mark  
en retired.

er, the mind of Lope Sanchez was  
ousand cares. He could not help  
stant view of the two statues, and

became nervous from the dread that the golden secret  
might be discovered. Every footstep that approached  
the place made him tremble. He would have given  
anything could he but have turned the heads of the  
statues, forgetting that they had looked precisely in  
the same direction for some hundreds of years, with-  
out any person being the wiser.

“A plague upon them,” he would say to himself,  
“they’ll betray all; did ever mortal hear of such a  
mode of guarding a secret?” Then on hearing any  
one advance, he would steal off, as though his very  
lurking near the place would awaken suspicions.  
Then he would return cautiously, and peep from a  
distance to see if every thing was secure, but the  
sight of the statues would again call forth his indigna-  
tion. “Ay, there they stand,” would he say,  
“always looking, and looking, and looking, just where  
they should not. Confound them! they are just like  
all their sex; if they have not tongues to tattle with,  
they’ll be sure to do it with their eyes.”

At length, to his relief, the long anxious day drew  
to a close. The sound of footsteps was no longer  
heard in the echoing halls of the Alhambra; the last  
stranger passed the threshold, the great portal was  
barred and bolted, and the bat and the frog, and the  
hooting owl, gradually resumed their nightly voca-  
tions in the deserted palace.

Lope Sanchez waited, however, until the night  
was far advanced, before he ventured with his little  
daughter to the hall of the two Nymphs. He found  
them looking as knowingly and mysteriously as ever  
at the secret place of deposit. “By your leaves,  
gentle ladies,” thought Lope Sanchez, as he passed  
between them, “I will relieve you from this charge  
that must have set so heavy in your minds for the last  
two or three centuries.” He accordingly went to  
work at the part of the wall which he had marked,  
and in a little while laid open a concealed recess, in  
which stood two great jars of porcelain. He attempt-  
ed to draw them forth, but they were immoveable,  
until touched by the innocent hand of his little daugh-  
ter. With her aid he dislodged them from their  
niche, and found, to his great joy, that they were  
filled with pieces of Moorish gold, mingled with jewels  
and precious stones. Before day-light he managed  
to convey them to his chamber, and left the two  
guardian statues with their eyes still fixed on the va-  
cant wall.

Lope Sanchez had thus on a sudden become a rich  
man; but riches, as usual, brought a world of cares  
to which he had hitherto been a stranger. How was  
he to convey away his wealth with safety? How  
was he even to enter upon the enjoyment of it with-  
out awakening suspicion? Now, too, for the first  
time in his life, the dread of robbers entered into his  
mind. He looked with terror at the insecurity of  
his habitation, and went to work to barricado the  
doors and windows; yet after all his precautions he  
could not sleep soundly. His usual gaiety was at an  
end, he had no longer a joke or a song for his neigh-

hours, and, in short, became the most miserable ani-  
mal in the Alhambra. His old comrades remarked  
this alteration, pitied him heartily, and began to  
desert him; thinking he must be falling into want,  
and in danger of looking to them for assistance.  
Little did they suspect that his only calamity was  
riches.

The wife of Lope Sanchez shared his anxiety, but  
then she had ghostly comfort. We ought before this  
to have mentioned that Lope, being rather a light  
inconsiderate little man, his wife was accustomed, in  
all grave matters, to seek the counsel and ministry  
of her confessor Fray Simon, a sturdy broad-shoulder-  
ed, blue-bearded, bullet-headed friar of the neigh-  
bouring convent of San Francisco, who was in fact  
the spiritual comforter of half the good wives of the  
neighbourhood. He was, moreover, in great esteem  
among divers sisterhoods of nuns; who requited him  
for his ghostly services by frequent presents of those  
little dainties and knick-knacks manufactured in  
convents, such as delicate confections, sweet biscuits,  
and bottles of spiced cordials, found to be marvellous  
restoratives after fasts and vigils.

Fray Simon thrived in the exercise of his func-  
tions. His oily skin glistened in the sunshine as he  
toiled up the hill of the Alhambra on a sultry day.  
Yet notwithstanding his sleek condition, the knotted  
rope round his waist showed the austerity of his self-  
discipline; the multitude doffed their caps to him as  
a mirror of piety, and even the dogs scented the  
odour of sanctity that exhaled from his garments,  
and howled from their kennels as he passed.

Such was Fray Simon, the spiritual counsellor of  
the comely wife of Lope Sanchez; and as the father  
confessor is the domestic confidant of woman in  
humane life in Spain, he was soon made acquainted,  
in great secrecy, with the story of the hidden trea-  
sure.

The friar opened eyes and mouth and crossed  
himself a dozen times at the news. After a moment’s  
pause, “Daughter of my soul!” said he, “know  
that thy husband has committed a double sin—a sin  
against both state and church. The treasure he  
hath thus seized upon for himself, being found in the  
royal domains, belongs of course to the crown; but  
being infidel wealth, rescued as it were from the  
very fangs of Satan, should be devoted to the church.  
Still, however, the matter may be accommodated.  
Bring hither the myrtle wreath.”

When the good father beheld it, his eyes twinkled  
more than ever with admiration of the size and beauty  
of the emeralds. “This,” said he, “being the first  
fruits of this discovery, should be dedicated to pious  
purposes. I will hang it up as a votive offering  
before the image of San Francisco in our chapel, and  
will earnestly pray to him, this very night, that your  
husband be permitted to remain in quiet possession of  
your wealth.”

The good dame was delighted to make her peace  
with heaven at so cheap a rate, and the friar, putting