

After the expulsion of the infidels, Ferdinand gave to the Cid's descendant, the riches of several Moorish families, and created him Duke of Santa Fe.

The new Duke settled in Granada, and died quite young, leaving only one son, already married—Don Rodriguez, father of Blanca.

Dona Teresa de Xeres—wife of Don Rodriguez gave birth to a son, who, like all his ancestors received the name of Rodriguez, but in order to distinguish him from his father they called him Don Carlos.

Don Carlos was only fourteen years old when he followed Cortes to Mexico; he had braved all the dangers; he had been witness to all the horror of that adventure; he had assisted the fall of the last king of a world but little known up to that time. Three years after that catastrophe Don Carlos returned to Europe.

The aspect of a new world; long voyages over waters hitherto untried; the spectacle of revolutions and vicissitudes of life had disturbed the religious and melancholy mind of Don Carlos; he joined the order of Calatiava; and, despite the prayers of Don Rodriguez, renouncing marriage, he bequeathed all his wealth to his sister.

Blanca de Bivar, only sister of Don Carlos, and much younger than he, was the idol of her father; she had lost her mother, and was just entering her eighteenth year, when Aben-Hamet appeared at Granada.

Heaven had bestowed all its favors upon this enchanting girl; her voice was ravishing; her dance lighter than the zephyr; with the charms of a French woman, she had all the passion of a Spaniard, and her natural coquetry took nothing away from the constancy, the strength and elevation of her heart.

"Father," said Blanca; "here is the Moor of whom I spoke to you: (Don Rodriguez had hastened towards his daughter when he heard the cries,) "he heard me singing and remembered the voice; he entered the garden to thank me for having shown him his way."

The Duke de Santa Fe received the Abencerrage with the grave yet unaffected politeness of the Spaniard. We do not see amongst this people, any of those servile airs, any of those turns of expression, which tell the abjection of the mind and the degradation of the soul. The speech of the great lord and the peasant is the same; the habits, the compliments are all the same.