

Ferdinand and Isabella the *Catholic*, who had united under one crown Leon, Castile, and Arragon. The Véga, but late so beautiful and so blooming, soon became one vast scene of carnage and desolation.

Astrologers had long foretold that the fall of the empire should take place in the reign of Boabdil. That prince occupied the throne, and the Christians had advanced to the very gates of Granada. The prediction was about to be fulfilled: Boabdil, weak and undecided, was not the man to stem such a torrent. Frightened at the misfortunes which menaced his subjects, he would have capitulated at once were it not for the remonstrances of Mouza, one of his generals, who succeeded in inspiring the Moors with a spark of courage. Mouza placed himself at the head of the cavalry, harassed the enemy without mercy, but also without much benefit to the cause which he defended with such ferocious valor.

Meanwhile the Christian camp had been destroyed by an accidental conflagration. Ferdinand and Isabella, anxious to disappoint the Moors of Granada in the hopes founded on this disaster, decided on having a city erected on the place where the camp had stood; and, as if by enchantment, on the very spot where a few days before nought was seen but tents and light pavilions, a city sprang up,* furnished with solid and substantial buildings, and girt by thick walls. What more was wanting to convince the Moors that the siege was only to cease on the reduction of Granada.

Whilst food and provisions of all kinds abounded amongst

* This city still exists under the name of *Santa Fe*.