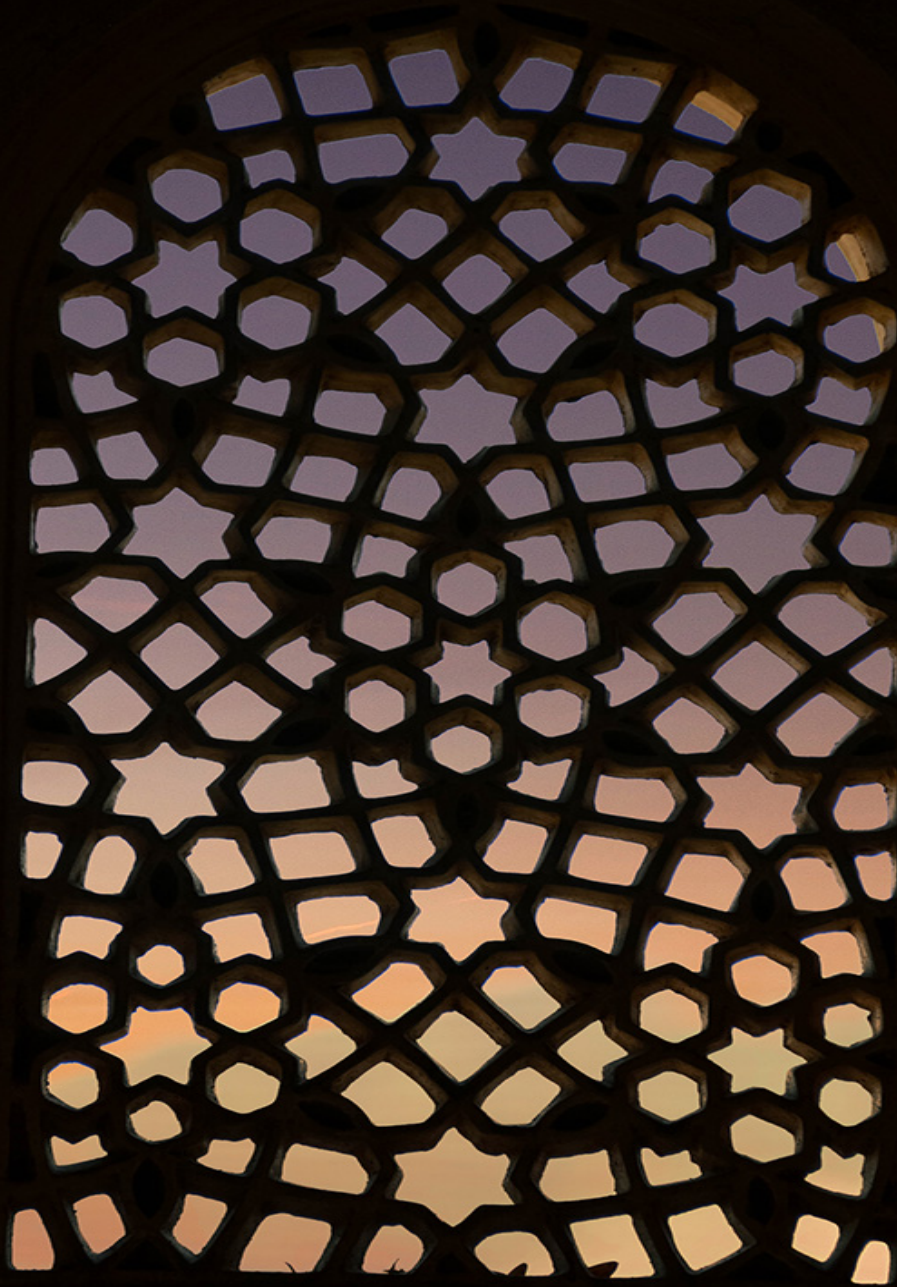


Joseph Krauskopf



JEW S AND
MOORS
IN SPAIN

Joseph Krauskopf

Jews and Moors in Spain

e-artnow, 2020

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PREFACE.

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This volume is a reprint of newspaper reports of a series of lectures delivered by the author from the pulpit of Congregation B'nai Jehudah, Kansas City, Mo., during the Fall and Winter of 1885-1886.

The lectures were prepared to fulfill the requirements of popular discourses, and designed to convey information upon a highly important epoch of the world's history, that is almost neglected in English literature.

The thought of publishing these lectures in book form was utterly foreign to the author throughout their preparation, until an urgent solicitation from very many persons, both Jews and Gentiles, in all parts of this country, whose interest in these lectures was aroused by their wide-spread republication by the Press, made it a duty.

Kansas City, Mo., January, 1887.

The following are two of the many letters addressed to the author, requesting him to have his lectures on "THE JEWS AND MOORS IN SPAIN" published in book form.

LETTER FROM HON. T. T. CRITTENDEN,

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Ex-Governor of the State of Missouri.

KANSAS CITY, MO., MARCH 29, 1886.

RABBI JOSEPH KRAUSKOPF.

DEAR SIR:—Having read with pleasure and edification the series of lectures delivered in the Synagogue, Kansas City, Mo., entitled "THE JEWS AND MOORS IN SPAIN," in which you treat of the social, political, religious and intellectual life of these Oriental nations, may I inquire if it is your purpose to have them published in book form?

I think the lectures too valuable, too full of prolonged historic research and thought to live only one day in the columns of a daily newspaper. Even if they were designed "to adorn a tale or point a moral" of the great race to which you belong, whose history commenced with Abraham and will end with that of the human race, still the history of that race was (and is) so intimately interlaced with the history of the other races for the intervening centuries, that the lectures are in part, so much the history of the other races, that they can be read and studied by all men without prejudice or animosity. One thing is certain, you have in the lectures divested history of much of its dry and useless details, and make it a thrilling romance of facts, presented in the simplest and purest Anglo-Saxon language.

I know not how others view the lectures, only speak this for myself—no library is complete without the History of the Jewish race, and no history of that race for the period covered, is more comprehensive, truthful and impartial than that presented in these lectures. I think the book would find a ready sale in all thinking, reading communities.

Very Truly Yours,

THOS. T. CRITTENDEN.

LETTER FROM ARNOLD KREKEL,

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Judge of the U. S. Court, Western District of Missouri.

KANSAS CITY, MO, APRIL 2, 1886.

RABBI JOSEPH KRAUSKOPF.

MY DEAR SIR:—Having attended a number of your lectures on "THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS AND MOORS IN SPAIN," and read such as I did not hear, allow me to give expression to my views regarding the same. Aside from the interest the student of history must always feel in that part of history of which your lectures treat, the manner of treatment specially interested me. Relating historical facts, too often becomes dry and irksome, and it requires more than ordinary skill of presentation to make the subject interesting and attractive. In this you have fully succeeded by interweaving with the facts those matters which enliven the picture. A knowledge of the social condition of a people, and the relation to which they stand to their age, enables us to judge of their worth and the influence they exercised. Your lectures, as a whole, presented a life-breathing social picture of the times and people, and as the civilization of Europe was largely effected by the Jews and Moors, their history embraces to a large extent the history of civilization, and thereby acquires an interest not limited to the people and countries of which your lectures give so interesting an account. A publication in permanent form of your lectures would advance our knowledge of that part of history to which we have always looked for instruction and guidance, and I hope you may find a way of accomplishing this object.

Very Respectfully,

A. KREKEL.

**EDITORIAL IN THE KANSAS CITY JOURNAL OF SUNDAY, APRIL
24, 1886.**

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The Journal published yesterday morning the eighteenth and last of the series of lectures delivered by Rabbi Krauskopf on "THE JEW AND MOOR IN SPAIN." From first to last these lectures have been of absorbing interest. The Synagogue has been crowded on the occasion of their delivery, and it was with regret that the Rabbi's hearers heard that the lecture on Friday night was the last of the series.

It is the purpose of Rabbi Krauskopf to have his lectures issued in book form. They will make an attractive volume, and will no doubt be widely read. Rabbi Krauskopf is a graphic writer, and his lectures upon "THE JEW AND MOOR IN SPAIN" are a series of historical occurrences related in a manner that serves to chain the reader's attention—old world scenes are accurately and vividly described. The reader is taken through all the struggles, the defeats and the triumphs of the Jews. Their arts, their industry, their upright dealings and their steadfast adherence to their religion through trials and persecutions are related with a proud belief that they were God's chosen people, working out their destiny according to His will. The lecturer started with the Jews as he found them, a prosperous community in southwestern Europe, busily engaged in transforming Spain into a granery and garden spot of Europe, respected by their

heathen neighbors, happy and contented. He passed on to the period of persecution in the Sixth Century when Christianity of a somewhat forcible nature attempted the conversion of the Jews by persecution; when many were massacred and others driven into exile. Then came the Arab invasion and during the period of Mohammedan supremacy the Jews were again allowed to live in peace and the exercise of their own religious rites. For eight centuries the Jews and the Moors worked side by side and the once down-trodden people rose to affluence and high position.

With the decline of Mohammedan power, and the expulsion of the Moors by the Spaniards, the Jews were again reduced to a pitiable state. Spain arose to enormous power, but that, too, has waned, and the population of 30,000,000 people has dwindled to about half that number. The manufactures, the commerce and the agricultural, the universal prosperity which the Jews had built up disappeared, and the glory of Spain departed as rapidly as it had been acquired. In the expulsion of the Jews and Moors alone does Rabbi Krauskopf attribute the ruin of Spain.

The lectures read like a romance. They are an historical romance, told in a charming manner, full of descriptions accurate, truthful. When they are compiled the volume will undoubtedly meet with a large sale. It was not the original intention of the Rabbi to issue his lectures in book form, but many people, both Jews and Christians, have requested him verbally and by letter to do so, and he has decided to grant their requests.





The Jews and Moors in Spain.

CHAPTER I.

A DAY IN CORDOVA.

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SIX AND EIGHT AND TEN CENTURIES BACK IN THE WORLD'S HISTORY.—OUR ENTRANCE INTO SPAIN.—A MIRACLE.—THE BEAUTIFUL GUADALQUIVIR.—OUR BRONZE COMPLEXIONED OARSMAN.—FAIR CORDOVA.—THE CITY OF THE ARTS AND SCIENCES.—NIGHT.—A SERENADE.—OUR DEPARTURE.

It is with the past that we shall commune in these pages. Events and scenes, beautiful and loathsome, joyous and tearful, ennobling and degrading, will follow each other in rapid succession. There will be much that, despite the very best of historic sources, and most reliable and impartial authorities, will be accepted as fabulous or will be rejected as incredible or impossible. Achievements will be described, that will startle us for their peerless magnificence and lead us to suppose that we are not dealing with facts, but with the imaginations of some rich phantasy or with the fictitious colorings of a mind enthusiastic for an ideal society; and miseries and sufferings will be depicted that will strike terror into our very soul, and cause our heart to rise in rebellion against the mind, when asked to believe them as actual occurrences, and not as some distressing and revolting and blood-stained work of fiction, written by some hellish fiend

for the amusement or for the schooling of the vicious indwellers of the bottomless pit of Tophet. And yet, it will be history, and true history, strange and incredible, marvelous and anomalous though it may appear. Six and eight and ten centuries have since passed by, and the most wonderful of all centuries they have been, centuries that chronicle the birth and prodigious growth of the sciences and inventions, the creation and successful continuance of republican and constitutional governments, the breaking down of castes and barriers between man and man, the suppression of political and religious terrorism and these blessed results have so tickled our conceit, have so raised our moral standard that it is almost impossible for us to properly conceive—either in all its grandeur or in all its baseness—that era of the past, which we are about to traverse.

But know we must, and therefore, what the mind refuses to believe, and what the heart refuses to credit, let the eye see. Let us think ourselves back six and eight and ten centuries. Let us enter upon a far and distant journey. Away we speed. Far, far across the wild Atlantic. We have reached the sunny land of Spain. Here let us pause for a hasty inspection. It will not take us long, for that country, that is among the poorest of all European countries to-day, whose reeking filth has recently made it a scene of revelry to the ravishing plague, whose stupendous ignorance, and appalling superstitions, have made it a by-word among the civilized people of the earth, that country, so backward now, will certainly have no attractiveness for us, ten centuries earlier in its history.

Lo! A miracle! The magic wand of some frolicksome fay must have suddenly transformed the land of expected filth and wretchedness into a beauteous fairyland. Amidst rapturous admiration of the indescribable beauties, which meet our gaze everywhere, we glide along upon the placid

surface of the Guadalquivir, in which a wondrously clear blue sky glasses itself, and splendrous palaces and gorgeous parks are reflected. We have entered beautiful Andalusia. We glide along the southern declivity of the Sierra Morena. Suddenly there breaks upon our view a scene of beauty that mocks every attempt at description. We ask our black eyed, bronze complexioned and proud featured oarsman for the name of that magnificent city that lies stretched for miles along the right bank. He understands us not. We address him in French, in German, in Greek, in Latin. No answer. We are at our wits' end. We must know, and so we seek recourse, as a last resort, to our mother tongue, the language of the Hebrews, and his face brightens, and his tongue is loosened, and in accents as melodious and pure as it must have been spoken by David himself, when he sang to his harp, the words of his own heaven-inspired psalms he makes reply: "What ye behold, ye strangers, is the city of Cordova, the government seat of the valiant and chivalrous, and scholarly and liberal, and art-loving Caliph Abderrahman III."

We are burning with a desire to see that city, whose simple outlines display such bewildering elegance. With our courteous oarsman as guide, we advance along the street that leads from the river bank. We gaze and gaze in awe-stricken silence. Amazement is expressed on every countenance. Our eyes are dazzled with the enchanting magnificence that abounds. We have reached the palace of the Caliph. Are we dreaming? Are we under the power of some magic spell? Is this a whim of some sportive, mischief-loving fay? Have we not thought ourselves some ten centuries back? Are we in the midst of the Dark Ages; in European lands, and among the people of the tenth century, concerning whose stupendous ignorance and loathsome filth historians have had so much to say? Has history deceived us in its teaching that the people of Europe, six and eight

centuries back had scarcely emerged from the savage state, that they inhabited floorless, chimneyless, windowless huts, those of princes and monarchs differing only in their having rushes on the floor and straw mats against the walls, that they fed on roots and vetches and bark of trees, clothed in garments of untanned skin which remained on the body till they dropped in pieces, that there existed scarcely a city, everywhere pathless forest and howling wastes?

It is not a dream. Neither has history deceived us. We are in European lands, but among Oriental people. We are in the midst of the prime of the dark ages, but we are in the Southern part of Spain, in Andalusia, in the city of Cordova, a city of 200,000 houses, and 1,000,000 inhabitants, of hundreds of parks and public gardens, of menageries of foreign animals, of aviaries of rare birds, of factories in which skilled workmen display their art in textures of silk, cotton, linen, and all the miracles of the loom, in jewelry and in filigree works, in works of art, and in scientific instruments and apparatus. We are in the city that, even then, could boast of a college of music, of libraries, of public schools, of universities in which instructions were given in the sciences and philosophies and languages, and literatures and arts. We are in the city of art and culture and learning, the city made famous and beautiful by the literary and cultured Moors and Jews, whose prosperity continued as long as the followers of Mohammed and the followers of Moses were permitted to dwell in peace side by side, but whose glory vanished as soon as Christianity banished the Jews and Moors from Spain. But we must not indulge in any reflections now. Our raven locked guide, whose beautiful form, and winning countenance, and melodious voice involuntarily remind us of the beautiful lover of the love-inflamed Shulamite in "Solomon's Song," beckons, and we must follow. On we march, and with every step new and matchless beauties unroll themselves before us. We know

not what we shall admire first, and most, whether the polished marble balconies that overhang luscious orange gardens, or the courts with the cascades of water beneath the shades of the cypress trees, or the artificial lakes, supplied with water by hydraulic works, replete with fish; whether the shady retreats with inlaid floors and walls of exquisite mosaic, vaulted with stained glass and speckled with gold, over which streams of water are continually gushing, or the fountains of quicksilver, that shoot up in glittering globules and fall with a tranquil sound like fairy bells; whether the apartments into which cool air is drawn from the flower gardens, in summer by means of ventilating towers and in winter through earthen pipes or caleducts imbedded in the walls—the hypocaust, in the vaults below, or the walls adorned with arabesque and paintings of agricultural scenes and views of paradise, or the ceilings corniced with fretted gold, other great chandeliers with their hundreds and hundreds of lamps; whether the columns of Greek, Italian, Spanish and African marble, covered with verd-antique and incrustated with lapis lazuli, or the furniture of sandal and citron wood, inlaid with mother of pearl, ivory, silver, or relieved with gold and precious malachite, or the costume of the ladies woven in silk and gold, and decorated with gems of chrysolites, hyacinths, emeralds and sapphires; whether the vases of rock crystal, Chinese porcelains, the embroidered Persian carpets with which the floors are covered, the rich tapestry that hangs along the walls, or the beautiful gardens, profuse with rare and exotic flowers, winding walks, bowers of roses, seats cut out of the rock, crypt-like grottoes hewn into the stone; whether the baths of marble, with hot and cold water, carried thither by pipes of metal, or the niches, with their dripping alcarazzas, or the whispering galleries for the amusement of the women, or the labyrinths and marble play-courts for the children.

On and on we pass, and new beauties still. We pass mosques and synagogues whose architectural finish is still the admiration and model of the world, and our gentle guide informs us that a public school is attached to each, in which the children of the poor are taught to read and write. We pass academies and universities, and our guide assures us that many a Hebrew presides over the Moorish institutions of learning. He reads the expression of surprise on our countenance, for we think of the striking contrast between his Mohammedan liberality and the intolerance of the other European countries, from which they are scarcely weaned as yet, and he modestly informs us that the Mohammedan maxim is, that "the real learning of a man is of more importance than any particular religious opinions he may entertain." And as the famous scholars pass in and out, our guide mentions them by name, and speaks of their brilliant accomplishments, of professors of Arabic classical literature, of professors of mathematics and astronomy, compilers of dictionaries similar to those now in use, but of larger copiousness, one of these covering sixty volumes, he points out the lexicographers of Greek and Latin and Hebrew and Arabic, and the encyclopedists of the "Historical Dictionary of Sciences," the poets of the satires, odes and elegies, and the inventors of the rhyme, the writers of history, of chronology, of numismatics, mathematics, astronomy, of pulpit oratory, of agriculture, of topography, of statistics, of physics, philosophy, medicines, dentistry, surgery, zoology, botany, pharmacy, and of the numerous other branches of learning.

Night has set in. Men are gathering around their evening fires to listen to the wandering literati, who exercise their wonderful powers of tale telling, and edify the eager listeners by such narratives as those that have descended to us in the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments." The dulcet strains of the dreamy and love-awaking mandolin,

accompanying the rapturous love song of some chivalrous knight to his lady fair, break on our ears. Soon all is silent. We fain would stay, but our guide is weary from his day's task. Perchance the sweet strains of the serenade have awakened within his bosom tender longings for his fair Shulamite, "whose eyes are as the dove's, and whose lips are like a thread of scarlet, and whose speech is comely," (Song of Solomon, chap. iv.) to whom he would eagerly speed. And so we retrace our steps. For miles we walk in a straight line, by the light of public lamps; seven hundred years after this time there was not so much as one public lamp in London. For miles we walk along solidly paved streets. In Paris centuries subsequently, whoever stepped over his threshold on a rainy day stepped up to his ankles in mud. We have reached the bank of the Guadalquivir, and we have parted with our guide.

We have seen in one day more than we ever dared to dream of; enough to tempt us to visit it again and again, and not only Cordova, but also Grenada, Toledo, Barcelona, Saragossa, Seville, and other cities, to acquire a better acquaintanceship with their scholars and institutions, and with the wondrous advance of their civilization. Before we return, however, we shall visit France, Germany, England and Northern Spain, during the same era of the world's history, about ten centuries back, and the scenes that we shall meet there will enable us to appreciate all the better the benefits which the Moors and the Jews lavished upon Europe, and we shall become the more painfully conscious of the unatonable crime Spain has committed in expelling the Moors from Europe, and degrading the Jews for centuries to the dregs of mankind.



CHAPTER II.

EUROPE DURING THE DARK AGES.

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UPON THE OCEAN.—DESOLATE EUROPE.—LONGING AFTER CORDOVA.—SOUTHERN SPAIN CONTRASTED WITH THE REST OF EUROPE.—REVOLTING UNCLEANLINESS.—ASCETIC MONKS ESTABLISH THE BELIEF THAT CLEANLINESS OF BODY LEADS TO POLLUTION OF SOUL.—INTELLECT FETTERED HAND AND FOOT.—CLERGY RETARDING PROGRESS.—SECULAR KNOWLEDGE SPURNED.

On, on, we glide upon the smooth, broad bosom of the majestic Guadalquivir, along graceful groves and parks and palaces, through woods and meads, hills and dales, shades and sun. A last glance, and beauteous Cordova hides her proud head behind the sun-kissed horizon.

Fair Cordova, fair Andalusia, fair Southern lands of Spain, fare ye well, take our brief adieu, till we visit you anew.

On, on, we sail, towards the Atlantic now we speed.

We have reached the shores of the interminable ocean. Its wild waves dash fiercely against the rock-ribbed shores, as if impatient for our return. Our goodly ship, staunch and strong, raises and lowers its festooned bow upon the heaving billows of the waters vast, and its pendant is playing in the wind, and its sails from the foreroyal to the mizzenroyal, and up to the very top of the mainroyal are furled to the full, in its hearty welcome to our return. We embark, and—

"On, on the vessel flies, the land is gone.
Four days are sped, but with the fifth, anon,
New shores descried, make every bosom gay,"

For we are to visit beautiful France, and learned Germany, and busy England, and Italy, of classic fame.

Once more we are on the continent. Once more our observations are to be put to the task. Once more we think ourselves some six and eight and ten centuries back in the world's history. Once more the eye is to be made to see what the mind has refused to credit.

Dreary and chilling and appalling are the scenes that now break upon our view. Longingly we think of thee, fair Cordova, thou pride of beauteous Andalusia. We think of thy pavements of marble, of thy fountains of jasper, of thy wondrous artistic skill, of thy exquisite gardens, of thy famous poets and musicians, artists and writers,

philosophers and scientists, of thy chivalrous knights and enchanting ladies. Longingly we think of thy wondrous beauty, that would, indeed, in our present surroundings, have sounded fabulous had not our own eyes seen it. Had we been suddenly transplanted from the midst of blossoming and ripening summer, joyous because of its balmy breath and the melodious song of its birds, and the fragrant breath of its flowers, and the gladdening sight of its ripening fruit into the midst of the barren winter, where nature is frozen dead, and the storm rides on the gale, and the earth is bare and naked, and the air is cold and dreary, and the sun shines gloomily through the bleak and murky skies, that sudden change could not have been more keenly nor more painfully felt than that which marked the contrast between the southern lands of Spain and the countries of France and Germany and England and Italy, during the same age of the world's history. Scarcely a city anywhere, save those few that had been erected along the Rhine and the Danube by the Romans. Nothing that could, even with the broadest stretch of leniency, be designated as agricultural. Everywhere pathless forests, howling wastes, ill-boding wildernesses, death-exhaling swamps, pestiferous fens. Prussia, and many more of to-day's proudest stars in the galaxy of European provinces, we find still uncivilized, still roaming about in the very costumes of native barbarians, in the spirits—and vampires—and nixes—and gnomes—and kobolds—inhabited pathless forests. Nowhere a street or highway, save those the Romans had built. Everywhere we must make our way, amidst indescribable difficulties, through almost impassable mud and clay. The people crowded together in miserable hamlets, inhabit wretched homesteads, crudely and bunglingly put together of undressed timber, or of twigs wattled together and covered with clays or thatched with straw or reeds, consisting seldom of more than one room, which shelters alike man, woman, child, man servant, maid servant, fowl

and beast, a commingling of sex and species not altogether conducive to modesty or morality. The floor, for the main part is composed of the hard bare ground, or at best is covered with dry leaves or with filthy rushes. Nowhere a window, nowhere a chimney, the smoke of the ill-fed, cheerless fire escaping through a hole in the roof. Straw pellets constitute the bed, and a round log serves the place of bolster and pillow, one platter of treen stands in the center of the table—if "table" it might be called—from which man, woman and child, master and servant, maid and mistress, eat with spoons of wood. Fingers serve the place of knives and forks, and a wooden trencher makes the round to quench the thirst.

Everywhere we meet with men with squalid beards, and women with hair unkempt and matted with filth, and both, clothed in garments of untanned skin, or, at best, of leather or hair cloth, that are not changed till they drop in pieces of themselves, a loathsome mass of vermin, stench and rags. No attempt at drainage; the putrefying slops and garbage and rubbish are unceremoniously thrown out of the door.

The most revolting uncleanness abounds, and we cannot help thinking of the scrupulous cleanliness that distinguished Cordova, for cleanness is one of the most rigorous injunctions and requirements with both the religion of Mohammed and the religion of Moses. Here, on the contrary, personal uncleanness, the renunciation of every personal comfort, the branding of every effort for better surroundings, we are told, upon inquiry, has the highest sanction of the church. The sordid example set by the Ascetic monks has established the belief that cleanliness of the body leads to the pollution of the soul, that in the past those saints were most admired who had become one hideous mass of clotted filth. With a thrill of admiration a priest informs us that St. Jerome had seen a monk who for

thirty years had lived in a hole, and who never washed his clothes, nor changed his tunic till it fell to pieces; that St. Ammon had never seen himself naked; that the famous virgin, named Silvia, had resolutely refused for sixty years, on religious principles, to wash any part of her body, except her fingers; that St. Euphraxia had joined a convent of 130 nuns, who shuddered at the mention of a bath; that an anchorite had once imagined that he was mocked by an illusion of the devil, as he saw gliding before him through the desert a naked creature black with filth and years of exposure; it was the once beautiful St. Mary of Egypt, who had thus during forty-seven years been expiating her sins of Asceticism.

We have seen enough to lead us to the conclusion, that when we enter into an examination of the mental and moral and religious state of the people, whose personal and domestic life hold so low a rank in the history of civilization, we must not place our expectations too high. But low as we picture it to ourselves, the reality we find is infinitely lower than even our most lenient imagination had pictured it. Only a week ago we found Cordova proud, and distinguished, and peerless in the realm of culture, and art, and philosophy, and science, and now, during the same period of the world's history, we find a deep black cloud of appalling ignorance overhanging France, and Italy, and Germany and England, here and there only broken by a few, a very few, glimmering lights. Intellect, fettered hand and foot, lies bleeding at the feet of benighted barbarism, writhing in pain beneath the lashes of degrading superstitions, and groveling credulity. We search for the cause of this stupendous ignorance, and we soon find that to the clergy, more than to all other causes combined, belongs the very ignoble distinction of having ushered into Europe this stolid ignorance, and for being responsible for the unatonable crime of having retarded the advance of civilization by many centuries.