

Musa was one of the earliest authors of algebra.

In astronomy they made distinguished discoveries. Alhaimon discovered the obliquity of the ecliptic and the true size of the earth. The Arabs taught geography by globes, while the rest of the world laboured under the old delusion of flatness.

In the practical arts of life the civilised world owes much to the Arabs. They introduced scientific and skilful agriculture, and they maintained an immense commerce with the other nations of the civilised world. With Constantinople alone they carried on a great trade; their commerce extended from the Black Sea and East Mediterranean into the interior of Asia; it reached India and China and extended along the coast of Africa to Madagascar.

The Spanish Arabs reached the height of their importance in the reign of Alhakem the Second. Weak rulers and internal dissension followed. From A.D. 1031 onward the Arabian unity was broken and Moslem Spain was governed by petty kings.

The Mohammedan hosts having been routed by the army of Christian Crusaders, the Moslems gave up Andalusia, and Mohammed ben Alhamar, their ablest ruler, fixed his court in Grenada and established there the only state which survived the wreck of the African Empire. Here for more than two centuries and a half the Moslems defended themselves against the attacks of their Christians neighbours.

But when Ferdinand of Arragon married Isabella of Castile, and the

New World. Columbus, travelling under the patronage of Queen Isabella, discovered America on October 12, 1492. Spain acquired all lands west and south of a line drawn from the Arctic to the Antarctic pole, 100 leagues west of the Azores. Spanish travellers and adventurers flooded the new country. Spain was omnipotent on the Western Hemisphere. New discoveries by her voyagers added to her glory and her wealth. The native

captains who spread the military fame of their country all over Christendom in the beginning of the sixteenth century.

The discovery of America brought immense wealth into the coffers of the King. The royal house of Spain became one of the great powers of Europe, and the subjects at home were well governed and happy. Everything was done with great executive regularity and ability. The adminis-

tration of Spain was the worst governed country in the world. Charles' absence from Spain, his duty as Emperor of Germany and arbiter of the destinies of Europe, were the beginning of the long tale of wretchedness. While he reigned, the constant wars he waged in Europe, Africa, Asia, and America drained the treasury of all the gold which poured in from the New World.

The one pride of Charles' ignoble reign was the vast empire in Asia and



THE ALHAMBRA.

kingdom of Spain was formed, the royal pair determined to root the enemies out of their country. All the chivalry of Spain was aroused to the effort, and the time was propitious, as Grenada was more than usually divided by quarrelling factions. In the spring of 1491 Ferdinand and Isabella invested the city of Grenada. It was impossible for the Moslems to hold out, and on the 2nd of January, 1492, the last act in the drama was performed. This ended the Arabian empire in the Peninsula, after nearly seven hundred and fifty years. The magnificent palace of the Alhambra and all the other great achievements of their civilisation were left as a heritage to Christian Spain.

At the very time that the Moorish civilisation was being crushed out of Spain, the rapidly ascending country was acquiring vast territories in the

Indians in America were hunted down and exterminated with appalling atrocity. From Mexico and Peru a civilisation that might have instructed Europe was crushed out. Almost at the same time Spain crushed two civilisations, Oriental and Occidental, and in the end was ruined herself.

The reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, however, was the pinnacle of Spanish glory. Dominant in the New World, the nation held one of the first places in Europe and was prosperous at home.

Isabella, a woman of wonderful ability and strength of character, attended the meetings of the Council herself and saw that all suits were equitably adjusted. She took pains to avail herself of foreign resources for the improvement of the army. In the military training school of her time were formed those celebrated

tration of home affairs was a tribute to the sagacity and goodness of the sovereigns, and equalled in its way the splendour of the empire abroad.

Ferdinand and Isabella were succeeded by their grandson, Charles I. He and the country were unequal to the prosperity which they inherited. Charles was away from home most of the time. As Charles V. of Germany, a throne he inherited through his father, the Spanish crown coming from his mother, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, he was continually embroiled in the politics of Europe. He had no time for the administration of Spanish affairs.

Spain had reached her summit in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella. From the moment of their death she declined. From the end of the reign of Charles to the constitutional government of this century, it is mid

America which his viceroys won and held for him. They established a regular line of communication from ocean to ocean across the Isthmus of Panama. Spain regarded the Pacific Ocean as her own closed sea. The West Indies became her provinces. The Spanish flag floated over Florida, New Mexico, Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, Chile, Paraguay, and Buenos Ayres, and every island of the Caribbean Sea.

Spain still owned half the world, although her fortunes at home were declining and her government turning to rottenness.

For a century after Charles V., Spain was governed by his three successors, Philip II., III., and IV. This century is known as the century of decline in Spain. Philip II. was titular King of England, France and Jerusalem, absolute Dominator in Asia, Africa and America, Duke of Milan and both the Burgundies, and hereditary sovereign of the seventeen Netherlands. He added to these the crown of Portugal.

The century of the Philips was one of many devastating wars and petty intrigues at home.

Charles II. came to the throne in 1665. He is remembered in history chiefly as the king who engaged in the wretched, disgraceful intrigues which led to the war of the Spanish succession.

The next century is filled up with a line of petty kings, engaged for the most part in the general European wars and in vile intrigues at home. The history of the quarrels of Spain in the New World and the various treaties by which she surrendered much of her vast territory there are well-known chapters of American history.

The intrigues of the miserable Spanish court became more and more disgraceful and more weakening to the Spanish nation. An adventurer and trickster called Manuel Godoy got possession of the King and Queen at the end of the eighteenth century and left the unhappy country too weak and spiritless to resist the coming of Napoleon.

Napoleon playing on the weakness

