I was now delivered once more from my prison and chains; and, at the command of the Emperor, put to school, to learn the Moorish language, and to write Arabick; and in the latter I should have certainly been a tolerable proficient, had not my master's insolence, and violent death by the Emperor's orders, prevented it; for after being with him about three months, during which he had often called me Christian dog, and most severely beat me, it coming to the Emperor's ears, he was by his order instantly despatched, by tossing him up, and so breaking his neck.

After this, I was put no more to school to learn the language, but immediately into the hands of Emhamenet Sageer, whose business was to train up and instruct youth how they should speak and behave before the Emperor, and in the war; he having for such purposes under his care about six hundred boys; and with whom I had not been above a fortnight, before I had the charge of eighty of them committed to me, I being made their Alcayde,* or captain, to see they kept clean the walks (during all intervals from exercise) in the Emperor's garden, where

* Al Kaid.
he and his favourite Queen Hellema Hazzezas (in English the beloved) were used to walk. In this station I had not been but a very little time, when the Queen coming one day into the walks, before I had the power to hide myself in a little house set there for that purpose (and which, at her approach, we were commanded always to do), happened to see me, and the next day begged me of the Emperor, which he readily granting, ordered us immediately out one by one, till she should see the same person; and after the first, second, and third were presented, and turned back again, he ordered their captain to appear, when I instantly appeared, and the Queen's saying I was the same she would have, I was forthwith given her, and by her again to her favourite son Muly Zidan, a youth of about eight years of age, and then resident with his mother in the palace of Sherrers; where she, with thirty-eight of the Emperor's concubines, and several eunuchs, were closely shut up, and to which I was made chief porter of the innermost door, that is to say, of the door next without that of the entrance into the galleries leading to the several apartments, and where none could gain admittance, but through me; as indeed none were to be admitted, the Emperor only excepted, nor him neither, in case he should offer to come, without giving notice, at an unseasonable hour; as once indeed he did, and though he had gained admittance in at the several outer doors, yet was he by me denied; for how could I tell it was him, when he was on the one side, and I on the other, of a thick door close shut; and allowing, as by his being let in at the several outer doors, and his usual way of knocking, I might have very little reason to doubt it, and which might likewise have induced me to open it, yet, what did that signify to me, when I had positive orders before (as no doubt had all the rest) to admit none after such an hour, without being before advised of it, and of some certain signs to be given accordingly on the outside of the door; and further, my orders were, that in case any one should attempt to enter at such an unseasonable hour, and not immediately depart after his first and second knocking, and denials of entrance, but should presume to knock a third time without giving the signs as aforesaid, I should then fire through

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the door — as indeed I had now an occasion to do.

The Emperor being admitted, as aforementioned, in at the several outer doors, and knocking at mine, I demanded aloud, "Who was there?" to which I was answered, "Muly Smine"; and which, indeed, by his voice and usual way of knocking, I was pretty well assured it was. However, I told him that I very much doubted it; for that I had never known His Excellency to come at such an unseasonable hour, without my being pre-advised thereof; and which, as I then was not, he should at his peril be gone, or I would present him with half a dozen bullets through the door, which he prayed me not to do, for that it was actually himself, and that if I would not let him in, he would certainly chop off my head the next day, knocking again louder than before; but, on the contrary, if I would admit him, he would give me such a fine horse (calling him by his name), with all the rich furniture belonging to him, and would make me a great man. I told him I would not do it if he would give me all the horses and furniture in the empire; for that as I was entrusted and commanded by the renowned Muly Smine or Ishmael, the most glorious Emperor in the world, to keep that post inviolable against all impostors and intruders whomsoever, and as I had but too much reason to believe him such, I would not on any terms open the door, be the consequence what it would, being thoroughly resolved not to betray my trust; therefore it was in vain for him any longer to persist. When he changing his note from rewards to threats, and knocking again, I fired all the bullets which I had ready by me in a blunderbuss, quite through the door, which indeed (he keeping himself close on one side, as I before imagined) could in nowise hurt him; and on his seeing my so resolute resistance, and no likelihood of his admittance, he returned as he came, highly threatening me for keeping him out, and as much commending those at the several outer doors for their so readily letting him in, assuring us that we should on neither side lose our reward; and indeed we did not, being very early in the morning all ordered out, and all those who gave him admittance had some their heads cut off, others cruelly used;
and myself, after being highly commended for my fidelity, rewarded with a much finer horse than that he offered to give me in case I would betray my trust.

This palace of Sherrers is a very large spacious building (as indeed are all the Emperor's houses), and certainly prodigious strong, the walls twelve feet thick, and five stories high, built only of fine earth and hot lime, mixed and well incorporated by a vast number of slaves kept for that purpose; for it is thrown, as I may say, into a mould, being first boarded up on each side, so that being very well rammed together, it becomes, in a very little time, harder and more durable than stone.* It is covered on the top with blue tiles, ceiled in the inside, and finely painted, and hath in it several hundred separate apartments for his concubines and eunuchs, besides those set apart for his favourite queen and her retinue. All his other wives (in number no less than four thousand) being closely shut up in several other sumptuous houses allotted for them; though all, as I may say adjacent, and all within the same enclosure.

My lodging was between the inner door before mentioned and that of the entrance into the galleries, leading to the several apartments; my companions six boys, and two young lions about half grown, being reared up there from whelps; but becoming unruly, their removal was desired, and complied with.

[ends with first par.]