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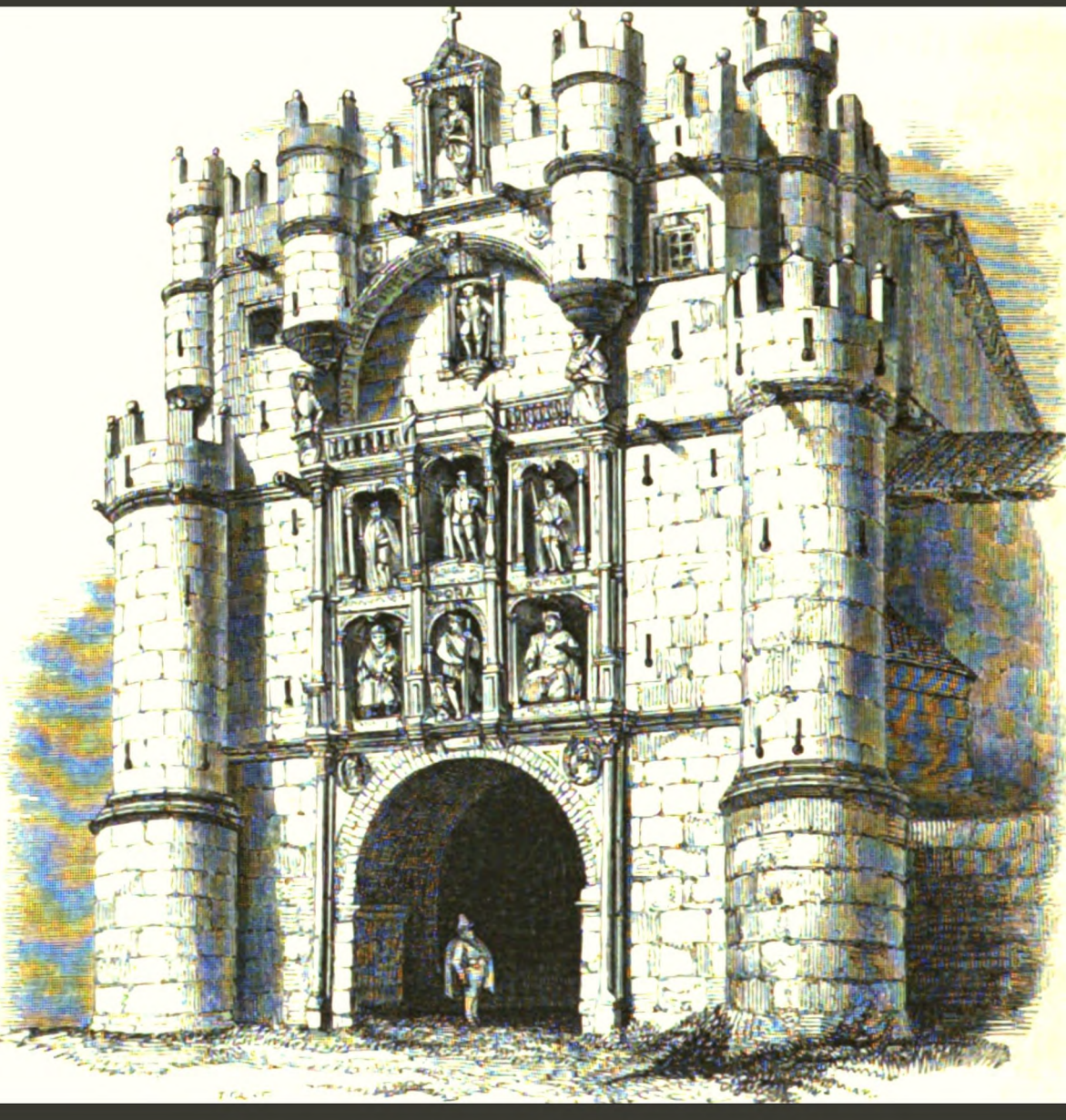

The picturesque antiquities of Spain

Nathaniel Armstrong Wells

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THE

PICTURESQUE ANTIQUITIES

OF

SPAIN;

DESCRIBED IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS,

REPRESENTING MOORISH PALACES, CATHEDRALS,

AND OTHER MONUMENTS OF ART,

CONTAINED IN THE CITIES OF

BURGOS, VALLADOLID, TOLEDO, AND SEVILLE.

, 8 4 1

BY

NATHANIEL ARMSTRONG WELLS.

LONDON:
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PREFACE.

The author of the following letters is aware that His publication would have possessed greater utility, had the architectural descriptions been more minute. He ventures to hope, however, that this imperfection may be in some measure balanced by the more extended sphere opened to whatever information it may contain.

The absence of many technical expressions, especially those which enter into a detailed description of almost all Gothic buildings, and the employment of which was forbidden by the occasion, may tend to facilitate the satisfaction of popular curiosity respecting Spanish art: the more so from the circumstance that the most intelligent in such subjects are scarcely sufficiently agreed on the application of technical terms, to allow of the compilation of a standard vocabulary. His ambition will be more than satisfied, should his past, and perhaps future

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researches, succeed, in some degree, in pioneering the path for a more scientific pen.

Should this work fall into the hands of any reader, whose expectations of entertainment may have been encouraged by the announcement of another Spanish tour, but who may feel but moderate enthusiasm for the artistic and monumental glories of the Peninsula, an explanation is due to him, exonerative of the author from much of the responsibility attached to the matter-of-fact tone of his descriptions. It is no less his nature than it was his wish to paint what he saw as he saw it. Unfortunately his visits to Spain took place after the accomplishment of the revolution, the hardest blows of which were aimed at her church. The confiscation of the ecclesiastical revenues has necessarily stripped the processions and other ceremonies of their former splendour, and by suppressing what constituted one of their chief attractions to the native population, transferred the interest of the lover of the picturesque from the bright colours of animated grouping, to the dead back-ground of stone and marble they have left.

In studying, however, to preserve this strict accu-

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racy in all that related to the principal subject of his correspondence, his aim was to enliven it by the introduction of any incidents worthy of notice which came under his observation. In this object he hopes he may have succeeded.

One more remark is necessary. The letters from Seville, which form the second of the two parts into which the volume is divided, although placed last in order of succession, date in reality from an earlier period than the rest; and even from a different tour, as will appear from the description of the route. They were addressed to various individuals, whereas those forming the first part were all written to the same person. They are thus placed with a view to geographical order and clearness; and to a sort of unity, which appeared advisable in the subject of a volume. The two excursions having been separated by an interval of three years, should alterations have taken place during that period in the places described, the above circumstance not being borne in mind might lead to an appearance of chronological inaccuracy in the descriptions, although there is not much probability of the existence of such changes.

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PICTURESQUE ANTIQUITIES

OF

SPAIN.

LETTER I.

TO MRS. C——R.

Rue de Richelieu.

You perceived at a glance the satisfaction you caused me, when, on receiving my temporary adieus, you requested me to send you some account of my travels in Spain. Had it not been so, you had not been in possession, on that day, of your usual penetration. Indeed, you no doubt foresaw it; aware that, next to the pleasure of acquiring ocular information respecting the peculiar objects which interest an individual, there is no greater one than that of communicating to a spirit, animated by congenial tastes, the results of his explorations. You must have foreseen, that, with my recollections of the pleasure I had derived from our excursions in one of the most interesting regions of France, during which I was witness to the intelligence and rapidity of percep-

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tion you displayed in the appreciation of the monuments of the Middle Ages, the opportunity of committing to paper the impressions I should receive in a country so rich in those treasures, with a view to your information, would give an additional interest to my tour, as well as encouragement in surmounting the obstacles to be met with among a people not yet broken in to the curiosity of tourists.

You professed also, with a modesty always becoming to talent and worth, a complete ignorance respecting Spain: adding, that you would be grateful for every sort of information; and that you were anxious to be enlightened on the subject not only of the monuments and fine arts, but also of the history of that country, of which you had never had an opportunity of informing yourself; summing up by the enumeration of the three names of the Cid, Charles the Fifth, and Roderic the Goth, the entire amount of your acquaintance with the leading characters of Spanish history.

Indeed, the ignorance you profess with some exaggeration, is more or less general in our country; nor is it surprising that such should be the case. Spain has been in modern times in the background of European progress. The thousand inconveniences of its routes and inns have deterred the most enterprising from making it a place of

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resort; and while a hundred less interesting scenes of travel, such as Baden-Baden, Bohemia, sporting adventures in Norway, or winterings in St. Petersburg, have claimed your attention during the reposes of quadrilles, and substantiated the conversation of several of your morning visitors, Spain has been unnoticed and unknown — laid on the shelf with the Arabian Nights—considered a sort of fabulous country, which it would be charming to know, but with which there would never be a chance of forming an acquaintance; and you have contented yourself with a sort of general information respecting it, derived from a few romances and poems. You are intimate with Boabdil and the wars of Granada, but to those events is limited your knowledge of its ancient history; and the reigns of Charles the Fifth and Philip the Second, with the addition of some confused visions, in which *autos-da-fé* and dungeons contrast in a rather gloomy back-ground with laughing majas, whirling their castagnettes to the soft cadences of guitars, fill up the remaining space allotted to Spain in your recollections.

It would be a task full of interest for me—possessed, as I shall probably be, of ample opportunities for its accomplishment — to draw up for your information a summary of the leading events of

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Spanish history; connecting them by the chain of reigns of the successive sovereigns; and thus to press into a limited compass a sort of abstract of the annals of this extraordinary nation: but I am deterred by the certainty that such an attempt, by me, would fail of its intended object. The events, thus slurred over, would have the effect of whetting the appetite for knowledge, which they would not satisfy; and the interminable lists of monarchs, of successions, usurpations, alliances and intermarriages, rendered doubly intricate by the continual recurrence of the same names, without sufficient details to particularise each—a chaos of outlines without the necessary shading to bring out the figures from the canvass—would not only set at defiance the clearest memory, but would be a trial which I would not for worlds impose upon your patience. No history is more attractive than that of Spain; and those works which exist upon the subject, although all, more or less, sullied with inaccuracies, and most of them infected with prejudice, and immersed in superstitious delusion, are still well worth your perusal; but it would lead me out of my depth, were I to undertake in my correspondence more than an occasional historical quotation, when required by the interest attached to any monument which it may fall to my lot to describe.

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Were I not to transmit to you a conscientious and faithful account of all that I shall see, I should be guilty of cruelty; and that the more base, from the certain impunity that must attend it. I say this, from the impossibility of your ever undertaking the same journey, and consequently of your ever being able to compare my portraits with their originals. In fact, the incompatibility of your nature, and that of the Spanish climate, must ever be present to me, who, during the vivifying heats of the late very bearable *canicule*, in your French château—so constructed as to perform the functions of an atmospheric sieve, by separating the wind, which rushed through its doors and windows, judiciously placed in parallels for the purpose, from the warmer sunshine without—was witness, nevertheless, to your unaffected distress, when you protested against any lofty, oak-panelled room being sat or reclined in by more than one human being at a time, lest it should be over-heated; placing thus an obstacle in the way of conversation, in which to shine is your especial province, by rendering it necessary to converse through various open doors; while, were an additional testimony necessary to prove the sincerity of your sufferings, your favourite of favourites, Caliph, repulsed and uncaressed, hung his silken ears, as he solemnly retreated to coil

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himself on a distant rug, and voted the dog-days a misnomer.

Nor were you contented with your atmosphere, until, the season of insects and *al-fresco* suppers being long left behind, and the autumnal equinox having peremptorily closed the doors and windows, fitted, alas! by a carpenter who flourished in the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, so plentiful a supply of air was afforded by the handy-works of the said carpenter, that the Chinese screen had some difficulty in maintaining its post, and the flames of the well-furnished elm-fire ascended with a roar that would have shamed many a cataract of the rival element. Not but that I would willingly forego the opportunity of sending you erroneous information, in exchange for your presence in that country; and for your assistance in comprehending the nature of a people apparently composed of such contradictory ingredients. You might probably succeed in fathoming the hidden springs of character, which give birth to a crowd of anomalies difficult to explain. You would discover by what mystery of organization a people, subject to the influence of violent passions, combine an abject subjection to the forms of etiquette, carried to its extreme in every-day life, with occasional outbreaks of adventure and romance worthy of the days of Orlando and Rodo-

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monte; and account for a nation exchanging a costume which combines utility with grace, for one inferior in both respects. Inventors of whatever is most fascinating in dances and music—you would discover the motive which induces them to abandon both, but principally the first, which they replace by the French *rigodon*, or dancing-made-easy, and adapted to youth, manhood, and all stages of paralysis; and, possessing the cathedrals of Leon, Burgos, and Seville, to denounce Gothic architecture as barbarous, and to brand it with the contemptuous denomination of "crested masonry."

Should my mono- (—monument-) mania run riot, and over-describe, over-taxing even your passion for that branch of art, be assured—and to this promise you may always look back for consolation and encouragement—that I will not write you a history of the recent, or any previous Spanish revolution, *apropos* of the first sentry-box I meet with, even though its form be that of a Lilliputian brick castle. Nor shall my first glimpse of a matador occasion you a list of bull-fights, voluminous enough to line the circumference of the *barrera*. No Diligence shall be waylaid, nor in my presence shall any ladies' fingers be amputated, the quicker to secure her rings, if I can possibly avoid it; and, as far as depends on me, I shall arrive in a whole skin at each journey's end,

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and without poisoning you or myself with garlick, unless the new Cortes pass a law for denying to the stranger all other sorts of aliment.

I have resolved, by a process of reasoning which I need not at present impart to you, and in virtue of a permission which I have little doubt of your granting, to publish my part of our correspondence. I think that neither of us will be a loser by this plan, however conceited I may appear to you for saying so. Yourself, in the first place, must be a gainer by the perusal of descriptions, on which, from their being prepared for the ordeal of a less indulgent eye, greater care will necessarily be expended: the public may benefit in obtaining information, which shall be at all events accurate, relative to subjects as yet inadequately appreciated by those they are the most likely to interest: while the chief gainer, in the event of these two ends being attained, will of course be your devoted and humble correspondent.

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LETTER II.

ROUTE TO SPAIN THROUGH FRANCE.

Bayonne.

The position of Burgos on the principal line of communication by which Madrid is approached from the north of Europe; the fact of its being the first city met with, after crossing the Pyrenees, in which monuments are found remaining of the former genius and grandeur of the country; and the name of which calls up the more stirring and eventful epochs of Spanish history,—render it, notwithstanding its actual distance from the frontier, a sort of introduction or gateway to Spain—the Spain of the tourist.

The most agreeable and least troublesome way of visiting the best parts of Spain excludes, it is true, this route; for the provinces of the Peninsula which combine the greater number of requisites for the enjoyment of life with the most attractive specimens of the picturesque, whether natural or artificial, are those nearest to the coast, and they are approached more conveniently by sea. Those, however, who can

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devote sufficient time, will be repaid, by a tour in the interior of the country, for the increase of trouble it may occasion them; and this tour should precede the visit to the maritime provinces, as it will render their superior comforts and climate the more acceptable from the contrast. The scenery of the Pyrenees, and the passing acquaintance formed with the original and picturesque population of the Basque provinces, secure the traveller against any danger of ennui throughout the land-journey between the frontier and the city of Burgos.

There does not exist the same security throughout the extent of route which it is necessary to travel in order to reach this frontier. The approach to Spain across the south-western provinces of France offers few objects worthy of detaining us on our way to the Peninsula. It is one of the least interesting of French routes. From Paris you pass through Orleans and Tours. At Chatellerault—between the latter city and Poitiers—the inn-door is besieged by women offering knives for sale. It is everywhere known that cutlery is not one of the departments of French manufactures which have attained the greatest degree of superiority. A glance at the specimens offered for our choice while changing horses at Chatellerault, showed them to be very bad, even for France.

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This did not, however, prevent a multitude of travellers from purchasing each his knife, nor one of them from laying in a plentiful stock, stating that he destined a knife for each member of his family—evidently one of the most numerous in France. I inquired of a native the explanation of this scene, and whether these knives were considered superior to those met with in other towns. "Oh no," was the reply; "but it is usual to buy knives here." I ventured to say I thought them very bad. "That is of no consequence; because, whenever you have passed through Chatellerault, every one asks you for a knife made on the spot." These victims of custom had paid enormous prices for their acquisitions.

Poitiers is a crazy old town, but contains one of the most admirable specimens of the architecture immediately preceding the pointed, or ogivale, and which the French savans call "the Romane." I allude to the church called "the Notre Dame de Poitiers." The west front is highly ornamented, and unites all the peculiar richness with the quaintness and simplicity of design which characterize that fine old style. I must not omit the forest of Chatellerault, passed through on leaving that town. It is famous as the scene of the picnic given to the ladies of the neighbouring city by the officers of a Polish regiment quartered there, immediately before the breaking out

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of the Peninsular war. It is related that Polish gallantry overstepped etiquette to such a degree,—and *that* by premeditation,—as to urge these cavaliers, by force of bayonet, and sentries, to separate all the husbands, and other male relatives, from the fairer portion of the guests. The consequences of such a termination of the festivities may easily be imagined; Bonaparte, a rigid judge with regard to all divorces except his own, on receiving the complaint of the insulted town, condemned the officers *en masse* to be decimated, and the survivors degraded from their rank. He relented, however, afterwards, on an understanding that they were to regain their sullied laurels in the Peninsula; where, in fact, in consequence of his orders, such opportunities were afforded them, that scarcely a man in the regiment survived the earliest campaigns.

The inhabitants of Chatellerault are said to take great offence on being asked their age, suspecting the inquirer of a malicious calculation.

The new quarter of Bordeaux is handsome, spacious, and airy. In the promenade called "La Quinconce," on the bank of the river, a large insulated edifice, the most monumental in view, is discovered by the inscription on its front to be an establishment for warm baths. At one extremity of the principal façade is seen, in sculptured letters, "Bains des

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dames;" at the other, "Bains des hommes." At this latter entrance a handsome staircase leads to the corridor of general communication, on the unsullied white wall of which the code of discipline of the establishment, traced in large sable characters, forces itself on the notice of the visitor. It consists of the following single and rather singular statute: "Il est expressement défendu aux garçons de permettre à deux hommes de se servir de la même baignoire." After some reflection I concluded it to be a measure of precaution with regard to cleanliness, carried, no doubt, to an extreme at Bordeaux. This town is well deserving of a few days' halt, should the traveller's object be amusement, or the pleasures of the table, for which it enjoys a well-merited reputation. It is a large and handsome city, the second in France in beauty, and vies with the capital in the elegance of its shops and principal streets. The theatre is, externally, the finest in France; and there is, besides the cathedral, and surpassing it in interest and antiquity, a remarkable Gothic church.

Of the sixty leagues which separate this town from Bayonne, forty afford the most perfect example of monotony. One sighs for the Steppes of Russia. These are the well-known Landes, consisting of uncultivated sands and morass; now covered league after league with the unvarying gloom of the pine

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and cork forests,—now dreary and bare,—but ever presenting to the wearied eye a wide interminable waste, replete with melancholy and desolation. It is true, that a day of pouring rain was not calculated to set off to advantage the qualities of such a region, and should in strict justice be admitted in evidence before passing condemnation on the Landes.

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LETTER III.

THE BASQUE PROVINCES.

Burgos.

It never causes me surprise when I see the efforts made by persons of limited means to obtain the situation of Consul in a continental town.

In spite of one's being, as it were, tied to one's residence,—and that not one's home,—there are advantages which counterbalance the evil. The place carries with it a certain degree of consequence. One feels oneself suddenly a man of influence, and a respectable public character. I have heard one, certainly far from being high on the list of these functionaries, termed by a humbler inhabitant of his "residence," the "Premier Consul."

The income, too, is, it is true, limited; but then one is usually in a cheap place. In fact, I always envied these favoured individuals. No calling, however, is without its *déboires*. It seems as if Providence had decreed that an income cannot be fairly,

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if agreeably, earned. Thus, the set-off against the bliss of the consul, is the necessity he is under of holding out his hand for his fee. I make these remarks, to introduce to your notice an ingenious method, put in practice—probably invented—by our consul at Bayonne, for getting over the irksomeness of this duty. I found him in his *bureau*, pen in hand, and a large sheet of official-shaped paper before him, half written over. On my passport being presented for his *visa*, his countenance assumed a painful expression, in which regret was blended with a sort of tendency to compassion, and which at first occasioned me a sensation of alarm, conjuring up in my imagination all the consequences of an irregular passport—tedious routes to be retraced, time lost, expense incurred, and suspicion, and even incarceration—infection—death !

Meanwhile he pointed to the letter he was writing, and, drawing forward with the other hand a chair, said that he was at that moment memorializing the Foreign Office on the subject of these visas ; that his pain was extreme at seeing travellers compelled to send or come to his office, and to lose thus much valuable time ; he was likewise concerned at their having to pay three francs each for so useless a ceremony as his visa ; but he wished it to be remarked, that it was at present a ceremony quite indispensable ;

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since, only four days back, a gentleman had been compelled to return from the Spanish frontier (a distance of seven leagues) in the middle of the night, in consequence of his having neglected this, as yet, necessary observance.*

Leaving Bayonne by Diligence, although still at some distance from the frontier, you are already in a Spanish vehicle. The only difference consists in its being drawn by horses as far as Irun, a few hundred yards in Spain, at which place they are replaced by a team of mules; but the *mayoral* is Spanish from the commencement, as also usually the greater number of the travellers. From the first view of Spanish ground, the monotony of the landscape ceases, and gives place to picturesque scenery. This effect is as sudden as if produced by the whistle of a scene-shifter. From the brow of a hill the valley of the Bidassoa opens on the view, the bay on the right, two or three towns in the centre, and beyond them, stretching to the left, the chain of the Pyrenees. This opening scene is very satisfactory to the newly arrived traveller, whose expectations have been rising towards fever-heat as he gradually neared the object of his dreams—the "renowned romantic land;" the more so, as he is well prepared,

* The very polite individual alluded to no longer fills the post of Consul at Bayonne.

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by the Landes of France, to enjoy to the utmost the variety of scene afforded by the two days of mountain and valley which separate the frontier from the town of Vitoria.

The Diligence comes to a halt every afternoon; the day's journey having commenced at three in the morning. There are three of these days between Bayonne and Burgos. At Tolosa and Vitoria—the intermediate places of rest—the system is as follows: Arriving at about four in the afternoon, an interval is allowed of about two hours, which in a long journey can always be profitably employed, until the meal, called supper. This is Homerically plentiful, and varied sufficiently to suit the tastes of all such as are accustomed to the vicissitudes of travelling. The repast over, all gradually retire to their sleeping apartments, where they are undisturbed until two o'clock in the morning.

At this hour each passenger is furnished with a candle, and requested to get up; and at a quarter to three the *muchacha* (chambermaid) reappears, bearing in her hand a plate, on which, after rubbing his eyes, the traveller may discover, if it be allowed so to speak, an imperceptible cup, a *xicara*,—since, having the thing, they have a name for it, which is of course untranslateable,—of excellent chocolate, an *azucarillo* (almost transparent sugar prepared for

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instantaneous melting), a glass of water, and a piece of bread. After partaking of this agreeable refreshment, you have just time left to pay your bill, fold up your passport, which during the night has remained in the hands of the police, and to take your seat in the Diligence.

The towns of the Basque provinces appear not to have been much maltreated during the Carlist war; not so the villages, most of which present a melancholy aspect of ruin and desolation. The churches, built so as to appear more like keeps of castles, have mostly withstood the shock. The destruction was oftener the result of burning than of artillery. The lover of the picturesque offers his silent gratitude to the combatants on both sides, for sparing, although unintentionally, some of the most charming objects of all Spain.

Among the most striking of these is Hernani. It is composed of one street, of the exact required width for the passage of an ordinary vehicle. This street is a perfect specimen of picturesque originality. The old façades are mostly emblazoned with the bearings of their ancient proprietors, sculptured in high relief. On entering the place, the effect is that of a deep twilight after the broad blaze of the sunny mountains. This is caused by the almost flat roofs, which advance considerably beyond the

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fronts of the houses, and nearly meet in the centre of the street: the roof of each house is either higher or lower, or more or less projecting, than its neighbour; and all are supported by carved wood-work, black from age. The street terminates on the brow of a hill, and widens at the end, so as to form a small square, one retreating side of which is occupied by the front of a church covered with old sculpture; and the diligence, preceded by its long team of tinkling mules, disappears through the arched gateway of a Gothic castle.

In this part of Spain one does not hear the sounds of the guitar; these commence further on. On Sundays and holydays, the fair of Tolosa, and of the other Basque towns, flourish their castagnettes to the less romantic whinings of the violin; but, in traversing the country, the ear is continually met by a sound less musical, although no less national, than that of the guitar—a sort of piercing and loud complaint, comparable to nothing but the screams of those who have "relinquished hope" at Dante's grim gateway.

These unearthly accents assail the ear of the traveller long before he can perceive the object whence they proceed; but, becoming louder and louder, there will issue from a narrow road, or rather ravine, a diminutive cart, shut in between

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two small round tables for wheels. Their voice proceeds from their junction with the axle, by a contrivance, the nature of which I did not examine closely enough to describe. A French tourist expresses much disgust at this custom, which he attributes to the barbarous state of his neighbours, and their ignorance of mechanical art; it is, however, much more probable that the explanation given by the native population is the correct one. According to this, the wheels are so constructed for the useful purpose of forewarning all other drivers of the approach of a cart. The utility of some such invention is evident. The mountain roads are cut to a depth often of several yards, sometimes scores of yards, (being probably dried-up beds of streams,) and frequently for a distance of some furlongs admit of the passage of no more than one of these carts at a time, notwithstanding their being extremely narrow. The driver, forewarned at a considerable distance by a sound he cannot mistake, seeks a wide spot, and there awaits the meeting.

You need not be told that human experience analysed resolves itself into a series of disappointments. I beg you to ask yourself, or any of your acquaintances, whether any person, thing, or event ever turned out to be exactly, or nearly, such as

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was expected he, she, or it would be. According to the disposition of each individual, these component parts of experience become the bane or the charm of his life.

This truth may be made, by powerful resolve, the permanent companion of your reflections, so as to render the expectation of disappointment stronger than any other expectation. What then? If you know the expected result will undergo a metamorphosis before it becomes experience, you will not be disappointed. Only try. For instance,—every one knows the Spanish character by heart; it is the burden of all literary productions, which, from the commencement of time, have treated of that country. A Carlist officer, therefore,—the hopeless martyr in the Apostolic, aristocratic cause of divine right; the high-souled being, rushing into the daily, deadly struggle, supported, instead of pay and solid rations, by his fidelity to his persecuted king;—such a character is easily figured. The theory of disappointments must here be at fault. He is a true Spaniard; grave, reserved, dignified. His lofty presence must impress every assembly with a certain degree of respectful awe.—I mounted the *coupé*, or *berlina*, of the Diligence, to leave Tolosa, with a good-looking, fair, well-fed native, with a long falling auburn moustache. We commenced by ban-

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dying civilities as to which should hold the door while the other ascended. No sooner were we seated than my companion inquired whether I was military; adding, that he was a Carlist captain of cavalry returning from a six months' emigration.

Notwithstanding the complete polish of his manners in addressing me, it was evident he enjoyed an uncommon exuberance of spirits, even more than the occasion could call for from the most ardent lover of his country; and I at first concluded he must have taken the earliest opportunity (it being four o'clock in the morning) of renewing his long-interrupted acquaintance with the flask of *aguardiente:* but that this was not the case was evident afterwards, from the duration of his tremendous happiness. During the first three or four hours, his tongue gave itself not an instant's repose. Every incident was a subject of merriment, and, when tired of talking to me, he would open the front-window and address the *mayoral;* then roar to the postilion, ten mules ahead; then swear at the *zagal* running along the road, or toss his cigar-stump at the head of some wayfaring peasant-girl.

Sometimes, all his vocabulary being exhausted, he contented himself with a loud laugh, long continued; then he would suddenly fall asleep, and,

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after bobbing his head for five or six minutes, awake in a convulsion of laughter, as though his dream was too merry for sleep. Whatever he said was invariably preceded by two or three oaths, and terminated in the same manner. The Spanish (perhaps, in this respect, the richest European language) hardly sufficed for his supply. He therefore selected some of the more picturesque specimens for more frequent repetition. These, in default of topics of conversation, sometimes served instead of a fit of laughter or a nap: and once or twice he hastily lowered the window, and gave vent to a string of about twenty oaths at the highest pitch of his lungs; then shut it deliberately, and remained silent for a minute. During dinner he cut a whole cheese into lumps, with which he stuffed an unlucky lap-dog, heedless of the entreaties of two fair fellow-travellers, proprietors of the condemned quadruped. This was a Carlist warrior!

The inhabitants of the Basque provinces are a fine race, and taller than the rest of the Spaniards. The men possess the hardy and robust appearance common to mountaineers, and the symmetry of form which is almost universal in Spain, although the difference of race is easily perceptible. The women are decidedly handsome, although they also are anything but Spanish-looking; and their beauty is

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often enhanced by an erect and dignified air, not usually belonging to peasants, (for I am only speaking of the lower orders,) and attributable principally to a very unpeasant-like planting of the head on the neck and shoulders. I saw several village-girls whom nothing but their dress would prevent from being mistaken for German or English ladies of rank, being moreover universally blondes. On quitting Vitoria, you leave behind you the mountains and the pretty faces.

For us, however, the latter were not entirely lost. There were two in the Diligence, belonging to the daughters of a Grandee of the first class, Count de P. These youthful señoritas had taken the opportunity, rendered particularly well-timed by the revolutions and disorders of their country, of passing three years in Paris, which they employed in completing their education, and seeing the wonders of that town, *soi-disant* the most civilized in the world; which probably it would have been, had the old *régime* not been overthrown. They were now returning to Madrid, furnished with all the new ideas, and the various useful and useless accomplishments they had acquired.

Every one whose lot it may have been to undertake a journey of several days in a Diligence,—that is, in one and the same,—and who consequently recol-

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lects that trembling and anxious moment during which he has passed in review the various members of the society of which he is to be, *nolens volens*, a member; and the feverish interest which directed his glance of rapid scrutiny towards those in particular of the said members with whom he was to be exposed to more immediate contact, and at the mercy of whose birth and education, habits, opinions, prejudices, qualities, and propensities, his happiness and comfort were to be placed during so large and uninterrupted a period of his existence,—will comprehend my gratitude to these fair *émigrées*, whose lively conversation shortened the length of each day, adding to the charms of the magnificent scenery by the opportunity they afforded of a congenial interchange of impressions. Although we did not occupy the same compartment of the carriage, their party requiring the entire interior and *rotonde*, we always renewed acquaintance when a prolonged ascent afforded an opportunity of liberating our limbs from their confinement.

The two daily repasts also would have offered no charm, save that of the Basque *cuisine*, — which, although cleanly and solid, is not perfectly *cordon bleu*, —but for the entertaining conversation of my fair fellow-travellers, who had treasured up in their memory the best sayings and doings of Arnal, and the other

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Listons and Yateses of the French capital, which, seasoned with a slight Spanish accent, were indescribably *piquants* and original. My regret was sincere on our respective routes diverging at Burgos; for they proceeded by the direct line over the Somo sierra to Madrid, while I take the longer road by the Guadarramas, in order to visit Valladolid. I shall not consequently make acquaintance with the northern approach to Madrid, unless I return thither a second time; as to that of my fellow-travellers, I should be too fortunate were it to be renewed during my short stay in their capital.

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LETTER IV.

ARRIVAL AT BURGOS. CATHEDRAL.

Burgos.

THE chain of the Lower Pyrenees, after the ascent from the French side, and a two days' journey of alternate mountain and valley, terminates on the Spanish side at almost its highest level. A gentle descent leads to the plain of Vitoria; and, after leaving behind the fresh-looking, well-farmed environs of that town, there remains a rather monotonous day's journey across the bare plains of Castile, only varied by the passage through a gorge of about a mile in extent, called the Pass of Pancorbo, throughout which the road is flanked on either side by a perpendicular rock of from six to eight hundred feet elevation. The ancient capital of Castile is visible from a considerable distance, when approached in this direction; being easily recognised by the spires of its cathedral, and by the citadel placed on an eminence, which forms a link of a chain of hills crossing the route at this spot.

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The extent of Burgos bears a very inadequate proportion to the idea formed of it by strangers, derived from its former importance and renown. It is composed of five or six narrow streets, winding round the back of an irregularly shaped colonnaded plaza. The whole occupies a narrow space, comprised between the river Arlançon, and the almost circular hill of scarcely a mile in circumference, (on which stands the citadel) and covers altogether about double the extent of Windsor Castle.

The city has received a sort of modern facing, consisting of a row of regularly built white houses, which turn their backs to the Plaza, and front the river; uniting at one extremity with an ancient gateway, which, facing the principal bridge, must originally have stood slightly in advance of the town, to which it formed a very characteristic entrance. It is a quadrangular edifice, pierced with a low semicircular arch. The arch is flanked on the river front by small circular turrets, and surmounted by seven niches, containing statues of magistrates, kings, and heroes; while over these, in a centre niche, stands a semicolossal statue of the Virgin, from which the monument derives its title of "Arco de Santa Maria." Another arch, but totally simple, situated at the other extremity of the new buildings, faces another bridge; and this, with that of Santa Maria, and a

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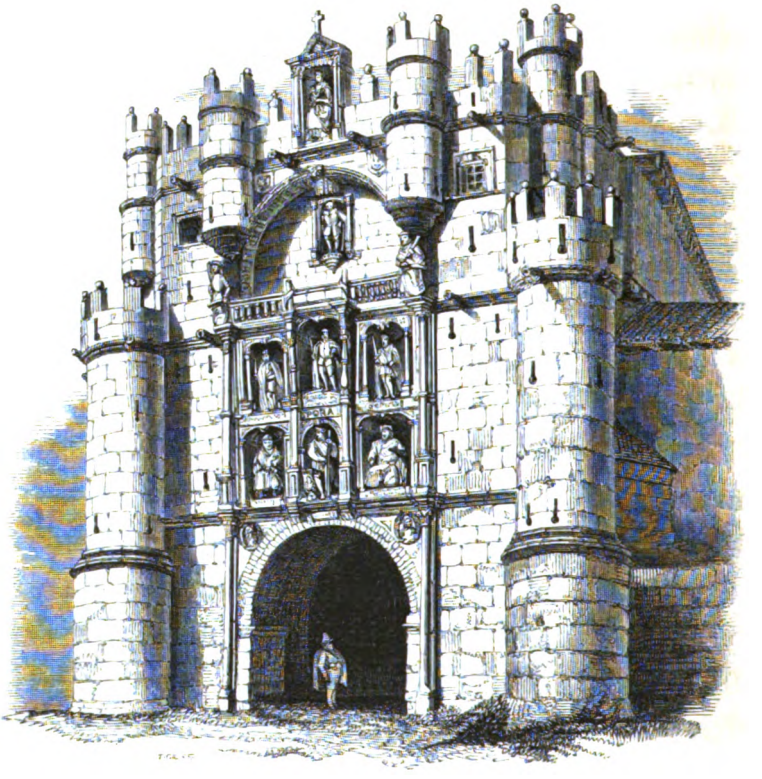

ARCO DE SANTA MARIA.

third, placed halfway between them, leading to the Plaza, form the three entrances to the city on the river side.

The dimensions of this, and many other Spanish towns, must not be adopted as a base for estimating their amount of population. Irun, at the frontier of France, stands on a little hill, the surface of which would scarcely suffice for a country-house, with its

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surrounding offices and gardens: it contains, nevertheless, four or five thousand inhabitants, and comprises a good-sized market-place and handsome town-hall, besides several streets. Nor does this close packing render the Spanish towns less healthy than our straggling cities, planned with a view to circulation and purity of atmosphere, although the difference of climate would seem to recommend to each of the two countries the system pursued by the other. The humidity of the atmosphere in England would be the principal obstacle to cleanliness and salubrity, had the towns a more compact mode of construction; whilst in Spain, on the contrary, this system is advantageous as a protection against the excessive power of the summer sun, which would render our wide streets—bordered by houses too low to afford complete shade — not only almost impassable, but uninhabitable.

The Plaza of Burgos (entitled "de la Constitucion," or "de Isabel II.," or "del Duque de la Victoria," or otherwise, according to the government of the day,) has always been the resort of commerce. The projecting first-floors being supported by square pillars, a sort of bazaar is formed under them, which includes all the shop population of the city, and forms an agreeable lounge during wet or too sunny weather. Throughout the remainder of the town,

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with the exception of the modern row of buildings above mentioned, almost all the houses are entered through Gothic doorways, surmounted by armorial bearings sculptured in stone, which, together with their ornamental inner courts and staircases, testify to their having sheltered the chivalry of Old Castile. The Cathedral, although by no means large, appears to fill half the town; and considering that, in addition to its conspicuous and inviting aspect, it is the principal remaining monument of the ancient wealth and grandeur of the province, and one of the most beautiful edifices in Europe, I will lose no time in giving you a description of it.

This edifice, or at least the greater portion of it, dates from the thirteenth century. The first stone was laid by Saint Ferdinand, on the 20th of July 1221. Ferdinand had just been proclaimed king by his mother Doña Berenguela, who had invested him with his sword at the royal convent of the Huelgas, about a mile distant from Burgos. Don Mauricio, Bishop of Burgos, blessed the armour as the youthful king girded it, and, three days subsequently to the ceremony, he united him to the Princess Beatrice, in the church of the same convent. This bishop assisted in laying the first stone of the cathedral, and presided over the construction of the entire body of the building, including half of the two principal towers.

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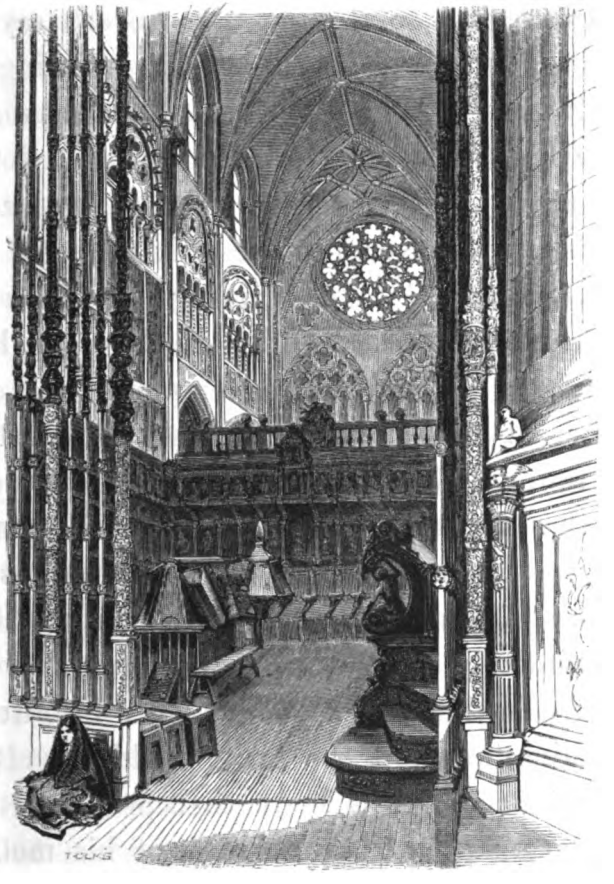
His tomb may be seen at the back of the Choir. From the date of the building its style may at once be recognised, allowing for a difference which existed



INTERIOR OF THE CHOIR.

between England and the Continent, the latter being somewhat in advance. The original edifice must have

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been a very perfect and admirable specimen of the pointed architecture of its time in all its purity As it is, unfortunately, (as the antiquary would say, and, I should add, the mere man of taste, were it not that tastes are various, and that the proverb says they are all in nature,) the centre of the building, forming the intersection of the transept and nave, owing to some defect in the original construction, fell in just at the period during which regular architecture began to waver, and the style called in France the "Renaissance" was making its appearance. An architect of talent, Felipe de Borgoña, hurried from Toledo, where he was employed in carving the stalls of the choir, to furnish a plan for the centre tower. He, however, only carried the work to half the height of the four cylindrical piers which support it. He was followed by several others before the termination of the work; and Juan de Herrera, the architect of the Escorial, is said to have completed it. In this design are displayed infinite talent and imagination; but the artist could not alter the taste of the age. It is more than probable that he would have kept to the pure style of his model, but for the prevailing fashion of his time. Taken by itself, the tower is, both externally and internally, admirable, from the elegance of its form, and the richness of its details; but it jars with the rest of the building.

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Placing this tower in the background, we will now repair to the west front. Here nothing is required to be added, or taken away, to afford the eye a feast as perfect as grace, symmetry, grandeur, and lightness, all combined, are capable of producing. Nothing can exceed the beauty of this front taken as a whole. You have probably seen an excellent view of it in one of Roberts's annuals. The artists of Burgos complain of an alteration, made some fifty years back by the local ecclesiastical authorities, nobody knows for what reason. They caused a magnificent portal to be removed, to make way for a very simple one, totally destitute of the usual sculptured depth of arch within arch, and of the profusion of statuary, which are said to have adorned the original entrance. This, however, has not produced a bad result in the view of the whole front. Commencing by solidity and simplicity at its base, the pile only becomes ornamental at the first story, where rows of small trefoil arches are carved round the buttresses; while in the intermediate spaces are an oriel window in an ornamental arch, and two narrow double arches. The third compartment, where the towers first rise above the body of the church, offers a still richer display of ornament. The two towers are here connected by a screen, which masks the roof, raising the apparent body of the façade an additional story.

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This screen is very beautiful, being composed of two ogival windows in the richest style, with eight statues occupying the intervals of their lower mullions. A fourth story, equally rich, terminates the towers, on the summits of which are placed the two spires.

These are all that can be wished for the completion of such a whole. They are, I imagine, not only unmatched, but unapproached by any others, in symmetry, lightness, and beauty of design. The spire of Strasburg is the only one I am acquainted with that may be allowed to enter into the comparison. It is much larger, placed at nearly double the elevation, and looks as light as one of these; but the symmetry of its outline is defective, being uneven, and producing the effect of steps. And then it is alone, and the absence of a companion gives the façade an unfinished appearance. For these reasons I prefer the spires of Burgos. Their form is hexagonal; they are entirely hollow, and unsupported internally. The six sides are carved *à jour*, the design forming nine horizontal divisions, each division presenting a different ornament on each of its six sides. At the termination of these divisions, each pyramid is surrounded near the summit by a projecting gallery with balustrades. These appear to bind and keep together each airy fabric, which, everywhere transparent, looks as though it required some such re-

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straint, to prevent its being instantaneously scattered by the winds.

On examining the interior of one of these spires, it is a subject of surprise that they could have been so constructed as to be durable. Instead of walls, you are surrounded by a succession of little balustrades, one over the other, converging towards the summit. The space enclosed is exposed to all the winds, and the thickness of the stones so slight as to have required their being bound together with iron cramps. At a distance of a mile these spires appear as transparent as nets.

On entering the church by the western doors, the view is interrupted, as is usual in Spain, by a screen, which, crossing the principal nave at the third or fourth pillar, forms the western limit of the choir; the eastern boundary being the west side of the transept, where there is an iron railing. The space between the opposite side of the transept and the apse is the *capilla mayor* (chief chapel), in which is placed the high altar. There are two lower lateral naves, from east to west, and beyond them a series of chapels. The transept has no lateral naves. Some of the chapels are richly ornamented. The first or westernmost, on the north side, in particular, would be in itself a magnificent church. It is called the "Chapel of Santa Tecla." Its dimensions are ninety-

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six feet in length, by sixty-three in width, and sixty high. The ceiling, and different altars, are covered with a dazzling profusion of gilded sculpture. The ceiling, in particular, is entirely hidden beneath the innumerable figures and ornaments of every sort of form, although of questionable taste, which the ravings of the extravagant style, called in Spain "Churriguesco" (after the architect who brought it into fashion), could invent.

The next chapel—that of Santa Ana—is not so large, but designed in far better taste. It is Gothic, and dates from the fifteenth century. Here are some beautiful tombs, particularly that of the founder of the chapel. But the most attractive object is a picture, placed at an elevation which renders difficult the appreciation of its merits without the aid of a glass,—a Holy Family, by Andrea del Sarto. It is an admirable picture; possessing all the grace and simplicity, combined with the fineness of execution, of that artist. The chapel immediately opposite (on the south side) contains some handsome tombs, and another picture, representing the Virgin, attributed by the cicerone of the place to Michael Angelo. We next arrive at the newer part, or centre of the building, where four cylindrical piers of about twelve feet diameter, with octagonal bases, form a quadrangle, and support the centre tower, designed by Felipe

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de Borgoña. These pillars are connected with each other by magnificent wrought brass railings, which give entrance respectively, westward to the choir,—on the east to the sanctuary, or capilla mayor,—and north and south to the two ends of the transept. Above is seen the interior of the tower, covered with a profusion of ornament, but discordant with every other object within view.

The high altar at the back of the great chapel is also the work of Herrera. It is composed of a series of rows of saints and apostles, superposed one over the other, until they reach the roof. All are placed in niches adorned with gilding, of which only partial traces remain. The material of the whole is wood. Returning to either side-nave, a few smaller chapels on the outside, and opposite them the railings of the sanctuary, conduct us to the back of the high altar, opposite which is the eastern chapel, called "of the Duke de Frias," or "Capilla del Condestable."

All this part of the edifice—I mean, from the transept eastward—is admirable, both with regard to detail and to general effect. The pillars are carved all round into niches, containing statues or groups; and the intervals between the six last, turning round the apse, are occupied by excellent designs, sculptured in a hard white stone. The subjects are, the Agony in the Garden, Jesus bearing the Cross, the Cru-

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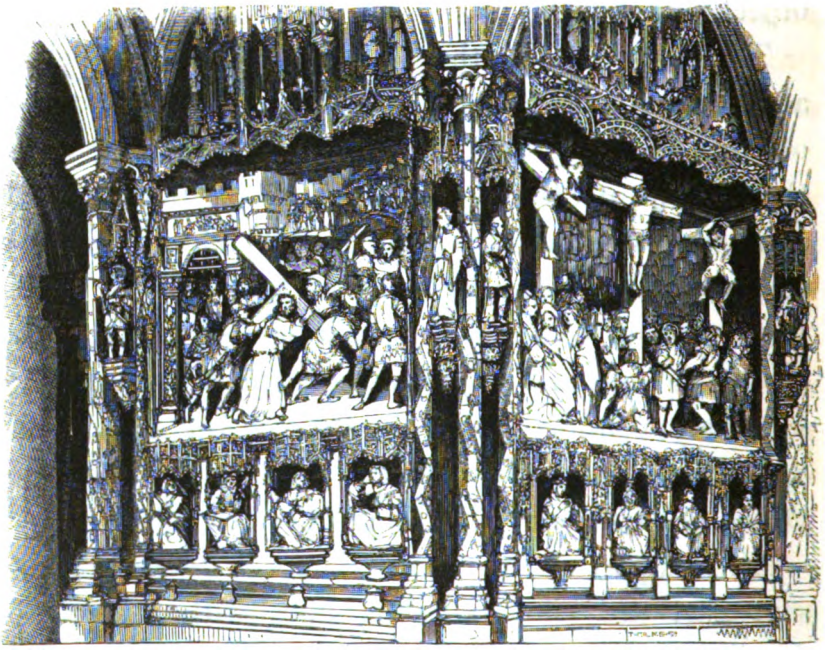
cifixion, the Resurrection, and the Ascension. The centre piece, representing the Crucifixion, is the most striking. The upper part contains the three sufferers in front; and in the background a variety of buildings, trees, and other smaller objects, supposed to be at a great distance. In the foreground of the lower



SCULPTURE IN THE APSE.

part are seen the officers and soldiers employed in the execution; a group of females, with St. John supporting the Virgin, and a few spectators. The costumes, the expression, the symmetry of the figures,

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all contribute to the excellence of this piece of sculpture. It would be difficult to surpass the exquisite grace displayed in the attitudes, and flow of the drapery, of the female group; and the Herculean limbs of the right-hand robber, as he writhes in his torments, and seems ready to snap the cords which retain his feet and arms,—the figure projecting in its entire contour from the surface of the background,—present an admirable model of corporeal expression and anatomical detail.

In clearing the space to make room for these sculptures, the artist had to remove the tomb of a bishop, whose career, if the ancient *chronique* is to be depended on, must have been rather singular. The information, it must be owned, bears the appearance of having been transmitted by some contemporary annalist, whose impartiality may have perhaps been biassed by some of the numerous incitements which operate upon courtiers.

Don Pedro Fernandez de Frias, Cardinal of Spain, Bishop of Osma and Cuenca, was, it is affirmed, of low parentage, of base and licentious habits of life, and of a covetous and niggardly disposition. These defects, however, by no means diminished the high favour he enjoyed at the successive courts of Henry the Third and Juan the Second. The Bishop of Segovia, Don Juan de Tordesillas, happened by an

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unlucky coincidence to visit Burgos during his residence there. The characters of the two prelates were not of a nature to harmonise in the smallest degree, and, being thrown necessarily much in each other's way, they gave loose occasionally to expressions more than bordering on the irreverent. It was on one of these occasions, that, the eloquence of the Cardinal Bishop here interred being at default, a lacquey of his followers came to his assistance, and being provided with a *palo*, or staff, inflicted on the rival dignitary certain arguments *ad humeros*—in fact, gave the Bishop of Segovia a severe drubbing. The Cardinal was on this occasion compelled to retire to Italy.

Turning our backs to the centre piece of sculpture last described, we enter the Capilla del Condestable through a superb bronze railing. In these railings the Cathedral of Burgos rivals that of Seville, compensating by number for the superior size and height of those contained in the latter church. That of the chapel we are now entering entirely fills the entrance arch, a height of about forty feet; the helmet of a mounted knight in full armour, intended to represent St. Andrew, which crowns its summit, nearly touching the keystone of the arch. This chapel must be noticed in detail. Occupying at the extremity of the church a position

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answering to that of Henry the Seventh's Chapel at Westminster Abbey, it forms a tower of itself, which on the outside harmonises with peculiar felicity with the three others, and contributes to the apparent grandeur and real beauty of the exterior view. The interior is magnificent, although its plan and style, being entirely different from those of Henry the Seventh's Chapel, prevent the comparison from going further. Its form is octagonal, measuring about fifty feet in diameter, by rather more than a hundred in height. Its style florid Gothic of the fourteenth century. The effect of its first view is enhanced by its being filled, unlike the rest of the church, with a blaze of light introduced through two rows of windows in the upper part.

Two of the sides are furnished with recesses, which form lesser chapels, and in one of which there is a fine organ. Between the centre of the pavement and the principal altar, a large square block of mixed marble covers the remains of the founders of the chapel, and bears on its surface their recumbent figures executed in great perfection.*

* The following inscriptions are placed at the feet of the respective statues :

" Aqui yace el muy Ilustre Señor Don Pedro Hernandez de Velasco, Condestable de Castilla, Señor del estado, y gran casa de Velasco, hijo de Don Pedro Hernandez de Velasco, y de Doña Beatriz Manrique, Condes de Haro. Murio de setenta y siete años, anno de mil cuatro

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This is the finest tomb in the cathedral. The embroidery of the cushions, the ornaments on the count's armour, the gloves of the countess, are among the details which merit particular notice amidst the beautiful execution of the whole. The high altar of this chapel does not accord with the general effect, being designed in the style of the *renascimiento*. In the centre of it is nevertheless fixed a treasure that would compensate for worse defects. A small circular medallion represents the Virgin and Child, in an attitude very similar to that of the Madonna della Seggiola, executed on porphyry. This delicious little work, of about nine inches in diameter, forms the centre of attraction, and is the most precious ornament of the chapel. On the right hand, near the altar, a small doorway admits to the sacristy.

This contains several relics of the founders. A small portable altar of ivory, forming the base of a crucifix of about eighteen inches in height, is an exquisite model of delicate workmanship. Here

cientos y noventa y dos, siendo solo Virey de estos reynos por los Reyes Catolicos."

"Aqui yace la muy Ilustre Señora Doña Mencia de Mendoza, Condesa de Haro, muger del Condestable Don Pedro Hernandez de Velasco, hija de Don Inigo Lopez de Mendoza, y de Doña Catalina de Figueroa, Marqueses de Santillana. Murio de setenta y nueve annos, anno de mil y quiniento."

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also has been treasured up a picture, behind a glass, and in a sort of wooden case; a bequest likewise of the founders. Unfortunately they neglected to impart the name of its author. The nebulous sort of uncertainty thus made to surround this relic has magnified its merits, which might otherwise perhaps not have claimed particular notice, to the most colossal dimensions. They scarcely at last know what to say of it. At the period of my first visit to Burgos, it was a Leonardo da Vinci; but, after a lapse of two years, the same sacristan informed me that it was uncertain whether the painting was executed by Raffaelle or Leonardo, although it was generally supposed to be by Raffaelle; and a notice, published since, gives the authority of an anonymous connaisseur, who asserts it to be far superior to Raffaelle's "Perle." It is now consequently decided that it cannot be a Leonardo, and is scarcely bad enough for a Raffaelle.

Without venturing *tantas componere lites*, I may be allowed to give my impression, on an inspection as complete as the studied darkness of the apartment, added to the glass and wooden case, would permit. It is a half-figure of the Magdalene. The execution is very elaborate and highly finished, but there are evident defects in the drawing. In colouring and manner it certainly reminds you of

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da Vinci—of one of whose works it may probably be a copy; but, whatever it is, it is easy to discover that it is *not* a Raffaelle.

This chapel does not occupy the precise centre of the apse. A line drawn from the middle of the western door through the nave would divide it into two unequal parts, passing at a distance of nearly two yards from its centre. An examination of the ground externally gives no clue to the cause of this irregularity, by which the external symmetry of the edifice is rendered imperfect, although in an almost imperceptible degree; it must therefore be accounted for by the situation of the adjoining parochial chapel, of more ancient construction, with which it was not allowable to interfere, and by the unwillingness of the founder to diminish the scale on which his chapel was planned.

Before we leave the Chapel del Condestable, one of its ceremonies deserves particular mention. I allude to the *missa de los carneros* (sheep-mass). At early mass on All Souls day, a feast celebrated in this chapel with extraordinary pomp, six sheep are introduced, and made to stand on a large block of unpolished marble, which has been left lying close to the tombs, almost in the centre of the chapel; near the six sheep are placed as many inflated skins of pigs, resembling those usually filled

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with the wine of the country; to these is added the quantity of bread produced from four bushels of wheat: and all remain in view during the performance of high mass. At the conclusion of the final response, the sheep are removed from their pedestal, and make for the chapel-gates, through which they issue; and urged by the voice of their driver, the peculiar shrill whistle of Spanish shepherds, and by the more material argument of the staff, proceed down the entire length of the cathedral to the music of the aforesaid whistle, accompanied by their own bleatings and bells, until they vanish through the great western portal.

Returning to the transepts, we find two objects worthy of notice. The cathedral having been erected on uneven ground, rising rapidly from south to north, the entrance to the north transept opens at an elevation of nearly thirty feet from the pavement. To reach this door there is an ornamental staircase, of a sort of white stone, richly carved in the *renaissance* style. This door is never open, a circumstance which causes no inconvenience; the steps being so steep as to render them less useful than ornamental, as long as any other exit exists.

A beautifully carved old door, of a wood become perfectly black, although not so originally, gives access to the cloister from the east side of the

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south transept. The interior of the arch which surmounts it is filled with sculpture. A plain moulding runs round the top, at the left-hand commencement of which is carved a head of the natural size, clothed in a cowl.



HEAD OF SAINT FRANCIS.*

The attention is instantly rivetted by this head: it is not merely a masterpiece of execution. Added to the exquisite beauty and delicate moulding of the upper part of the face, the artist has succeeded

* The above woodcut may, it is hoped, serve as a guide to future travellers in their search for this head, of which it has no pretension to give an adequate idea.

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in giving to the mouth an almost superhuman expression. This feature, in spite of a profusion of hair which almost covers it, lives and speaks. A smile, in which a barely perceptible but irresistible and, as it were, innate bitterness of satire and disdain modifies a wish of benevolence, unites with the piercing expression of the eyes in lighting up the stone with a degree of intellect which I had thought beyond the reach of sculpture until I saw this head. Tradition asserts it to be a portrait of Saint Francis, who was at Burgos at the period of the completion of the cathedral; and who, being in the habit of examining the progress of the works, afforded unconsciously a study to the sculptor.

The two sacristies are entered from the cloister: one of them contains the portraits of all the bishops and archbishops of Burgos. Communicating with this last is a room destined for the reception of useless lumber and broken ornaments. Here the cicerone directs your attention to an old half-rotten oaken chest, fixed against the wall at a considerable height. This relic is the famous Coffre del Cid, the self-same piece of furniture immortalised in the anecdote related of the hero respecting the loan of money obtained on security of the supposed treasure it enclosed. The lender of the money, satisfied by the weight of the trunk, and the chivalrous honour

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of its proprietor, never saw its contents until shown them by the latter on the repayment of the loan: they were then discovered to consist of stones and fragments of old iron.

One is disappointed on finding in this cathedral no more durable *souvenir* of the Cid than his rat-corroded wardrobe. His remains are preserved in the chapel of the Ayuntamiento; thither we will consequently bend our steps, not forgetting to enjoy, as we leave the church, a long gaze at its elegant and symmetrical proportions. It may be called an unique model of beauty of its particular sort, especially when contemplated without being drawn into comparison with other edifices of a different class. Catalani is said, on hearing Sontag's performance, to have remarked that she was "la première de son genre, mais que son genre n'était pas le premier." Could the cathedral of Seville see that of Burgos, it would probably pronounce a similar judgment on its smaller rival.

The profusion of ornament, the perfection of symmetry, the completeness of finish, produce an instantaneous impression that nothing is wantingin this charming edifice; but any one who should happen to have previously seen that of Seville cannot, after the first moments of enthusiasm, escape the comparison which forces itself on him, and which is not in favour of this cathedral. It is elegant, but deficient

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in grandeur; beautiful, but wanting in majesty. The stern and grand simplicity of the one, thrown into the scales against the light, airy, and diminutive, though graceful beauty of the other, recalls the contrast drawn by Milton between our first parents; a contrast which, applied to these churches, must be considered favourable to the more majestic, however the balance of preference may turn in the poem.

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LETTER V.

TOMB OF THE CID. CITADEL.

Burgos.

THE Ayuntamiento, or Town-hall, presents one façade to the river, and the other to the Plaza Mayor, being built over the archway which forms the already mentioned entrance to the central portion of the city. The building, like other town-halls, possesses an airy staircase, a large public room, and a few other apartments, used for the various details of administration; but nothing remarkable until you arrive at a handsomely ornamented saloon, furnished with a canopied seat fronting a row of arm-chairs. This is the room in which the municipal body hold their juntas. It contains several portraits: two or three of kings, suspended opposite to an equal number of queens; the two likenesses of the celebrated judges Nuño Rasura and Lain Calvo, near which are seen the simple square oaken chairs from within the angular and hard embrace of which they administered the laws and government of Castile;

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a full-length of Fernan Gonzalez; and lastly, one of the Cid.

Owing to the singularity of this last portrait, it is the first to attract attention. The hero is represented in the most extraordinary of attitudes: the head is thrown back, and the face turned towards one side; the legs in a sort of studied posture; a drawn sword is in the right hand, the point somewhat raised. The general expression is that of a comic actor attempting an attitude of mock-heroic impertinence; and is probably the result of an unattained object in the mind of the artist, of producing that of fearless independence.

Beyond this apartment is the Chapel, a plain, not large room, containing but two objects besides its very simple altar, with its, almost black, silver candlesticks. Over the altar is a Conception, by Murillo; and, in the centre of the chapel, a highly polished and neatly ornamented funereal urn, composed of walnut-wood, contains the remains of the Cid: the urn stands on a pedestal. On its two ends in letters of gold, are inscriptions, stating its contents, and the date of its application to its present purpose. I was told that the bones were contained in a leaden box, but that a glass one was being prepared, which, on opening the lid of the urn, would afford a view of the actual dust of the warrior.

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The remains of the Cid have only recently been conveyed to Burgos from the monastery of San Pedro de Cardenas, about four miles distant. They had been preserved there ever since his funeral, which took place in the presence of King Alonzo the Sixth, and the two Kings, sons-in-law of the hero, as soon as the body arrived from Valencia.

This monastic retreat, if dependence may be placed on the testimony of the Cerberus of the Alcalde,—the cicerone (when duly propitiated) of the municipal edifice,—did not turn out to be altogether a place of repose to the warrior. According to this worthy, an amusing interpreter of the popular local traditions, the exploits performed subsequently to the hero's interment were such as almost to throw a shadow over those he enacted during his mortal existence. One specimen will suffice. Some twenty thousand individuals, including the monks of all the neighbouring monasteries, were assembled in the church of San Pedro, and were listening to a sermon on the occasion of the annual festival in honour of the patron saint. Guided by curiosity, a Moor entered the church and mingled with the crowd. After remaining during a short time motionless, he approached a pillar, against which was suspended a portrait of the Cid, for the purpose of examining the picture. Suddenly the figure was seen by all pre-

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sent, whose testimony subsequently established the fact, to grasp with the right hand the hilt of its sword, and to uncover a few inches of the naked blade. The Moor instantly fell flat on the pavement, and was found to be lifeless.

You would be surprised at the difficulty of forming even here, in the midst of the scenes of his exploits, a definite idea of this Hercules of the Middle Ages. For those who are satisfied with the orthodox histories of the monks, he is without defects — a simple unsophisticated demi-god. But there have been Mahometan historians of Spain. These are universally acknowledged to have treated of all that concerned themselves with complete accuracy and impartiality; and, when this happens, it should seem to be the best criterion, in the absence of other proof, of their faithful delineation of others' portraits.

However that may be, here is an instance which will give you an idea of the various readings of the Cid's history.

Mariana relates, that an Arab expedition, headed by five kings (as he terms them) of the adjoining states, being signalized as having passed the mountains of Oca, and being occupied in committing depredations on the Christian territory, Rodrigo suddenly took the field, recovered all the booty, and made all five kings prisoners. All this being done

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by himself and his own retainers. The kings he released after signing a treaty, according to which they agreed to pay him an annual tribute. It happened, that on the occasion of the first payment of this, Rodrigo was at Zamora, whither he had accompanied the King of Castile; and he took an opportunity of receiving the Arab messengers in presence of the court. This was at least uncommon. The messengers addressed him by the appellation of Syd (sir) as they handed over the money. Ferdinand, delighted with the prowess of his courtier, expressed on this occasion the desire that he should retain the title of Syd.

This anecdote undergoes, in the hands of the Arab writers, a curious metamorphosis. According to them, the expression Syd was employed, not by tributary kings, but by certain chiefs of that creed whose pay the Catholic hero was receiving in return for aid lent against the Christians of Aragon.

They attribute, moreover, to this mirror of chivalry, on the surrender of Valencia, a conduct by no means heroic—not to say worthy a highwayman. He accepted, as they relate, the pay of the Emyr of Valencia to protect the city against the Almoravides, who at that period were extending their conquests all over Moorish Spain. The Cid was repulsed, and the town taken. After this defeat he shut himself

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up in a castle, since called the Peña del Cid (Rock of the Cid), and there waited his opportunity. On the departure of the conquerors from the city, in which they left an insufficient garrison, he hastened down at the head of his campeadores, and speedily retook Valencia.

The Cadi, Ahmed ben Djahhaf, left in command of the place, had, however, only surrendered on faith of a capitulation couched in the most favourable terms. It was even stipulated that he should retain his post of governor; but no sooner was the Cid master of the place than he caused the old man to be arrested and put to the torture, in order to discover from him the situation of a treasure supposed to be concealed in the Alcazar; after which, finding he would not speak, or had nothing to reveal, he had him burned on the public place.

The Citadel of Burgos, at present an insignificant fortress, was formerly a place of considerable importance, and commanded the surrounding country; especially on the side on which the town—placed at the foot of the eminence—lay beneath its immediate protection, and could listen unscathed to the whizzing of the deadly missiles of war as they passed over its roofs. During the various wars of which Castile has been the theatre at different periods, this citadel has, from its important position, occupied the

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main attention of contending armies; and, from forming a constant *point-de-mire* to attacking troops, has finally been almost annihilated. The principal portion of the present buildings is of a modern date, but, although garrisoned, the fortress cannot be said to be restored.

The extent of the town was greater than at present, and included a portion of the declivity which exists between the present houses and the walls of the fortress. At the two extremities of the town-side of the hill, immediately above the level of the highest-placed houses now existing, two Arab gateways give access through the ancient town-walls, which ascended the hill from the bottom. Between these there exists a sort of flat natural terrace, above the town, and running along its whole length, on to which some of the streets open. On this narrow level stood formerly a part, probably the best part, of the city, which has shared the fate of its protecting fortress; but, not being rebuilt, it is now an empty space,—or would be so, but for the recent erection of a cemetery, placed at about half the distance between the two extremities.

Before, however, the lapse of years had worn away the last surviving recollections of these localities, some worshipper of by-gone glory succeeded in discovering, on the now grass-grown space, the situa-

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tions once occupied by the respective abodes of the Cid and of Fernan Gonzalez. On these spots monuments have been erected. That of Gonzalez is a handsome arch, the piers supporting which are each faced with two pillars of the Doric order on either side; above the cornice there is a balustrade, over which four small obelisks correspond with the respective pillars. The arch is surmounted by a sort of pedestal, on which is carved an inscription, stating the object of the monument. There is nothing on the top of the pedestal, which appears to have been intended for the reception of a statue.

The monument in memory of the Cid is more simple. It consists of three small pyramids in a row, supported on low bases or pedestals; that in the centre higher than the other two, but not exceeding (inclusive of the base) twenty feet from the ground. On the lower part of the centre stone is carved an appropriate inscription, abounding in ellipsis, after the manner usually adopted in Spain.

It is not surprising that these monuments, together with the memory of the events brought about by the men in whose honour they have been erected, should be fast hastening to a level with the desolation immediately surrounding them. The present political circumstances of Spain are not calculated to favour the retrospection of by-gone glories. Scarcely is time

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allowed—so rapidly are executed the transmutations of the modern political diorama—for examining the events, or even for recovery from the shock, of each succeeding revolution; nor force remaining to the exhausted organs of admiration or of horror, to be exercised on almost forgotten acts, since those performed before the eyes of the living generation have equalled or surpassed them in violence and energy. The arch of Fernan Gonzalez, if not speedily restored, (which is not to be expected,) runs the risk, from its elevation and want of solidity, of being the first of the two monuments to crumble to dust; a circumstance which, although not destitute of an appearance of justice,—from the fact of the hero it records having figured on an earlier page of Castilian annals,—would nevertheless occasion regret to those who prefer history to romance, and who estimate essential services rendered to the state, as superior to mere individual *éclat*, however brilliant.

You will not probably object to the remainder of this letter being monopolized by this founder of the independence of Castile; the less so, from the circumstance of the near connection existing between his parentage and that of the city we are visiting, and which owes to him so much of its celebrity. Should you not be in a humour to be

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lectured on history, you are at all events forewarned, and may wait for the next despatch.

Unlike many of the principal towns of the Peninsula, which content themselves with no more modern descent than from Nebuchadnezzar or Hercules, Burgos modestly accepts a paternity within the domain of probability. A German, Nuño Belchides, married, in the reign of Alonzo the Great, King of Oviedo, a daughter of the second Count of Castile, Don Diego Porcellos. This noble prevailed on his father-in-law to assemble the inhabitants of the numerous villages dispersed over the central part of the province, and to found a city, to which he gave the German name of "city" with a Spanish termination. It was Don Fruela III., King of Leon, whose acts of injustice and cruelty caused so violent an exasperation, that the nobles of Castile, of whom there existed several of a rank little inferior to that of the titular Count of the province, threw up their allegiance, and selected two of their own body, Nuño Rasura and Lain Calvo, to whom they intrusted the supreme authority, investing them with the modest title of Judges, by way of a check, lest at any future time they should be tempted, upon the strength of a higher distinction, to make encroachments on the common liberties.

The first of the two judges, Nuño Rasura, was the

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son of the above-mentioned Nuño Belchides and his wife, Sulla Bella (daughter of Diego Porcellos), and grandfather of Fernan Gonzalez. His son Gonzalo Nuño, Fernan's father, succeeded on his death to the dignity of Judge of Castile, and became extremely popular, owing to his affability, and winning urbanity of deportment in his public character. He established an academy in his palace for the education of the sons of the nobles, who were instructed under his own superintendence in all the accomplishments which could render them distinguished in peace or in war. The maternal grandfather of Fernan Gonzalez was Nuño Fernandez, one of the Counts of Castile who were treacherously seized and put to death by Don Ordoño, King of Leon. The young Count of Castile is described as having been a model of elegance. To singular personal beauty he added an unmatched proficiency in all the exercises then in vogue, principally in arms and equitation. These accomplishments, being added to much affability and good-nature, won him the affections of the young nobles, who strove to imitate his perfections, while they enjoyed the festivities of his palace.

It appears that, notwithstanding the rebellion, and appointment of Judges, Castile had subsequently professed allegiance to the Kings of Leon; for a

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second revolt was organized in the reign of Don Ramiro, at the head of which we find Fernan Gonzalez. On this occasion, feeling themselves too feeble to resist the royal troops, the rebels had recourse to a Moorish chief, Aecipha. The King, however, speedily drove the Moors across the frontier, and succeeded in capturing the principal revolters. After a short period these were released, on the sole condition of taking the oath of allegiance; and the peace was subsequently sealed by the marriage of a daughter of Gonzalez with Don Ordoño, eldest son of Ramiro, and heir to the kingdom.

The Count of Castile was, however, too powerful a vassal to continue long on peaceable terms with a sovereign, an alliance with whose family had more than ever smoothed the progressive ascent of his pretensions. Soon after the accession of his son-in-law Don Ordoño, he entered into an alliance against him with the King of Navarre. This declaration of hostility was followed by the divorce of Fernan's daughter by the King, who immediately entered into a second wedlock. The successor of this monarch, Don Sancho, surnamed the Fat, was indebted for a large portion of his misfortunes and vicissitudes to the hostility of the Count of Castile. Don Ordoño, the pretender to his throne, son of Alonzo surnamed the Monk, with the aid of Gon-

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zalez, whose daughter Urraca, the repudiated widow of the former sovereign, he married, took easy possession of the kingdom, driving Don Sancho for shelter to the court of his uncle the then King of Navarre. It is worth mentioning, that King Sancho took the opportunity of his temporary expulsion from his states, to visit the court of Abderrahman at Cordova, and consult the Arab physicians, whose reputation for skill in the removal of obesity had extended over all Spain. History relates that the treatment they employed was successful, and that Don Sancho, on reascending his throne, had undergone so complete a reduction as to be destitute of all claims to his previously acquired *sobriquet.*

All these events, and the intervals which separated them, fill a considerable space of time ; and the establishment of the exact dates would be a very difficult, if not an impossible, undertaking. Various wars were carried on during this time by Gonzalez, and alliances formed and dissolved. Several more or less successful campaigns are recorded against the Moors of Saragoza, and of other neighbouring states. The alliance with Navarre had not been durable. In 959 Don Garcia, King of that country, fought a battle with Fernan Gonzalez, by whom he was taken prisoner, and detained in Burgos thirteen

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months. The conquest of the independence of Castile is related in the following manner.

In the year 958, the Cortes of the kingdom were assembled at Leon, whence the King forwarded a special invitation to the Count of Castile, requiring his attendance, and that of the Grandees of the province, for "deliberation on affairs of high importance to the state." Gonzalez, although suspicious of the intentions of the sovereign, unable to devise a suitable pretext for absenting himself, repaired to Leon, attended by a considerable *cortége* of nobles. The King went forth to receive him; and it is related, that refusing to accept a present, offered by Gonzalez, of a horse and a falcon, both of great value, a price was agreed on; with the condition that, in case the King should not pay the money on the day named in the agreement, for each successive day that should intervene until the payment, the sum should be doubled. Nothing extraordinary took place during the remainder of the visit; and the Count, on his return to Burgos, married Doña Sancha, sister of the King of Navarre.

It is probable that some treachery had been intended against Gonzalez, similar to that put in execution on a like occasion previous to his birth, when the Counts of Castile were seized and put to death in their prison; for, not long after, a second

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invitation was accepted by the Count, who was now received in a very different manner. On his kneeling to kiss the King's hand, Don Sancho burst forth with a volley of reproaches, and, repulsing him with fury, gave orders for his immediate imprisonment. It is doubtful what fate was reserved for him by the hatred of the Queen-mother, who had instigated the King to the act of treachery, in liquidation of an ancient personal debt of vengeance of her own, had not the Countess of Castile, Doña Sancha, undertaken his liberation.

Upon receiving the news of her husband's imprisonment, she allowed a short period to elapse, in order to mature her plan, and at the same time lull suspicion of her intentions. She then repaired to Leon, on pretext of a pilgrimage to Santiago, on the route to which place Leon is situated. She was received by King Sancho with distinguished honours, and obtained permission to visit her husband, and to pass a night in his prison. The following morning, Gonzalez, taking advantage of early twilight, passed the prison-doors in disguise of the Countess, and, mounting a horse which was in readiness, escaped to Castile.

This exploit of Doña Sancha does not belong to the days of romance and chivalry alone: it reminds us of the still more difficult task, accomplished by

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the beautiful Winifred, Countess of Nithisdale, who, eight centuries later, effected the escape of the rebel Earl, her husband, from the Tower, in a precisely similar manner; thus rescuing him from the tragic fate of his friends and fellow-prisoners, the Lords Derwentwater and Kenmure.

Doña Sancha obtained her liberty without difficulty, being even complimented by the King on her heroism, and provided with a brilliant escort on her return to Castile. Gonzalez contented himself with claiming the price agreed upon for the horse and falcon; and—the King not seeming inclined to liquidate the debt, which, owing to the long delay, amounted already to an enormous sum, or looking upon it as a pretext for hostility, the absence of which would not prevent the Count of Castile, in his then state of exasperation, from having recourse to arms—passed the frontier of Leon at the head of an army, and, laying waste the country, approached gradually nearer to the capital. At length Don Sancho sent his treasurer to clear up the account, but it was found that the debt exceeded the whole amount of the royal treasure; upon which Gonzalez claimed and obtained, on condition of the withdrawal of his troops, a formal definitive grant of Castile, without reservation, to himself and his descendants.

Before we quit Burgos for its environs, one more

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edifice requires our notice. It is a fountain, occupying the centre of the space which faces the principal front of the cathedral. This little antique monument charms, by the quaint symmetry of its design and proportions, and perhaps even by the terribly mutilated state of the four fragments of Cupids, which, riding on the necks of the same number of animals so maltreated as to render impossible the discovery of their race, form projecting angles, and support the basin on their shoulders. Four mermaids, holding up their tails, so as not to interfere with the operations of the Cupids, ornament the sides of the basin, which are provided with small apertures for the escape of the water; the top being covered by a flat circular stone, carved around its edge. This stone,—a small, elegantly shaped pedestal, which surmounts it,—and the other portions already described, are nearly black, probably from antiquity; but on the pedestal stands a little marble virgin, as white as snow. This antique figure harmonises by its mutilation with the rest, although injured in a smaller degree; and at the same time adds to the charm of the whole, by the contrast of its dazzling whiteness with the dark mass on which it is supported. The whole is balanced on the capital of a pillar, of a

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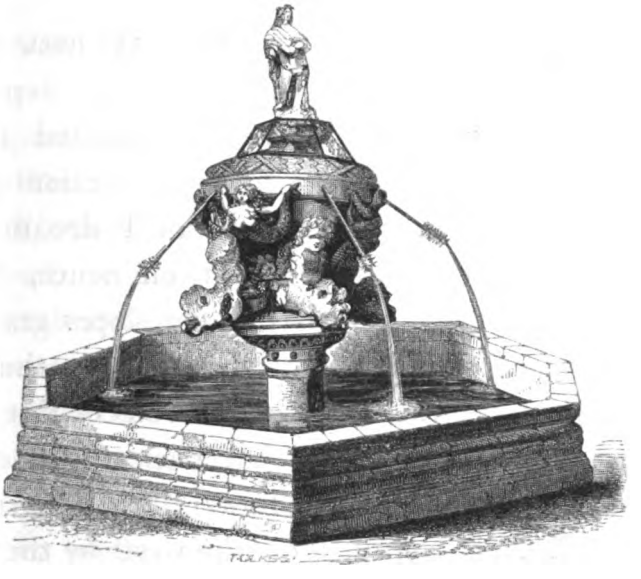
most original form, which appears immediately above the surface of a sheet of water enclosed in a large octagonal basin.



FOUNTAIN OF SANTA MARIA.

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LETTER VI.

CARTUJA DE MIRAFLORES. CONVENT OF LAS HUELGAS.

Burgos.

THE Chartreuse of Miraflores, situated to the east of the city, half-way in the direction of the above-mentioned monastery of San Pedro de Cardeñas, crowns the brow of an eminence, which, clothed with woods towards its base, slopes gradually until it reaches the river. This spot is the most picturesque to be found in the environs of Burgos,—a region little favoured in that respect. The view, extending right and left, follows the course of the river, until it is bounded on the west by the town, and on the east by a chain of mountains, a branch of the Sierra of Oca. Henry the Third, grandfather of Isabel the Catholic, made choice of this position for the erection of a palace; the only remnant of it now existing is the church, which has since become the inheritance of the Carthusian monks, the successors of its royal founder.

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The late revolution, after sparing the throne of Spain, displayed a certain degree of logic, if not in all its acts, at least in sparing, likewise, two or three of the religious establishments, under the protection of which the principal royal mausoleums found shelter and preservation. The great Chartreuse of Xeres contained probably no such palladium, for it was among the first of the condemned: its lands and buildings were confiscated; and its treasures of art, and all portable riches, dispersed, as likewise its inhabitants, in the direction of all the winds.

In England the name of Xeres is only generally known in connection with one of the principal objects of necessity, which furnish the table of the *gastronome;* but in Andalucia the name of Xeres de la Frontera calls up ideas of a different sort. It is dear to the wanderer in Spain, whose recollections love to repose on its picturesque position, its sunny skies, its delicious fruits, its amiable and lively population, and lastly on its once magnificent monastery, and the treasures of art it contained. The Prior of that monastery has been removed to the Cartuja of Burgos, where he presides over a community, reduced to four monks, who subsist almost entirely on charity. This amiable and gentlemanlike individual, in whom the monk has in no degree

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injured the man of the world,—although a large estate, abandoned for the cloister, proved sufficiently the sincerity of his religious professions,—had well deserved a better fate than to be torn in his old age from his warm Andalucian retreat, and transplanted to the rudest spot in the whole Peninsula, placed at an elevation of more than four thousand feet above the level of the Atlantic, and visited up to the middle of June by snow-storms. At the moment I am writing, this innocent victim of reform is extended on a bed of sickness, having only recently escaped with his life from an attack, during which he was given over.

This Cartuja possesses more than the historical reminiscences with which it is connected, to attract the passing tourist. It owes its prolonged existence to the possession of an admirable work of art,—the tomb of Juan the Second and his Queen Isabel, which stands immediately in front of the high altar of the church. This living mass of alabaster, the work of Gil de Siloë, son of the celebrated Diego, presents in its general plan the form of a star. It turns one of its points to the altar. Its mass, or thickness from the ground to the surface, measures about six feet; and this is consequently the height at which are laid the two recumbent figures.

It is impossible to conceive a work more elaborate

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W. A. Wells. del.

W. F. Starling sc.

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than the details of the costumes of the King and Queen. The imitation of lace and embroidery, the exquisite delicacy of the hands and features, the infinitely minute carving of the pillows, the architectural railing by which the two statues are separated, the groups of sporting lions and dogs placed against the foot-boards, and the statues of the four Evangelists, seated at the four points of the star which face the cardinal points of the compass,—all these attract first the attention as they occupy the surface; but they are nothing to the profusion of ornament lavished on the sides. The chisel of the artist has followed each retreating and advancing angle of the star, filling the innermost recesses with life and movement. It would be endless to enter into a detailed enumeration of all this. It is composed of lions and lionesses, panthers, dogs,—crouching, lying, sitting, rampant, and standing; of saints, male and female, and personifications of the cardinal virtues. These figures are represented in every variety of posture,—some standing on pedestals, and others seated on beautifully wrought arm-chairs, but all enclosed respectively in the richest Gothic tracery, and under cover of their respective niches. Were there no other object of interest at Burgos, this tomb would well repay the traveller for a halt of a few days, and a country walk.

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At the opposite side of the town may be seen the royal convent of Las Huelgas ; but as the nuns reserve to themselves the greater part of the church, including the royal tombs, which are said to be very numerous, no one can penetrate to satisfy his curiosity. It is, however, so celebrated an establishment, and of such easy access from the town, that a sight of what portions of the buildings are accessible deserves the effort of the two hundred yards' walk which separates it from the river promenade. This Cistercian convent was founded towards the end of the twelfth century by Alonzo the Eighth,—the same who won the famous battle of the Navas de Tolosa. It occupies the site of the pleasure-grounds of a royal retreat, as is indicated by the name itself. In its origin it was destined for the reception, exclusively, of princesses of the blood royal. It was consequently designed on a scale of peculiar splendour. Of the original buildings, however, only sufficient traces remain to confirm the records of history, but not to convey an adequate idea of their magnificence. What with the depredations of time, the vicissitudes of a situation in the midst of provinces so given to contention, and repeated alterations, it has evidently, as far as regards the portions to a view of which admission can be obtained, yielded almost all claims to identity with its ancient self.

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The entire church, with the exception of a small portion partitioned off at the extremity, and containing the high altar, is appropriated to the nuns, and fitted up as a choir. It is very large; the length, of which an estimate may be formed externally, appearing to measure nearly three hundred feet. It is said this edifice contains the tomb of the founder, surrounded by forty others of princesses. The entrance to the public portion consists of a narrow vestibule, in which are several antique tombs. They are of stone, covered with Gothic sculpture, and appear, from the richness of their ornaments, to have belonged also to royalty. They are stowed away, and half built into the wall, as if there had not been room for their reception. The convent is said to contain handsome cloisters, courts, chapter-hall, and other state apartments, all of a construction long subsequent to its foundation. The whole is surrounded by a complete circle of houses, occupied by its various dependants and pensioners. These are enclosed from without by a lofty wall, and face the centre edifice, from which they are separated by a series of large open areas. Their appearance is that of a small town, surrounding a cathedral and palace.

The convent of the Huelgas takes precedence of all others in Spain. The abbess and her successors

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were invested by the sovereigns of Leon and Castile with especial prerogatives, and with a sort of authority over all convents within those kingdoms. Her possessions were immense, and she enjoyed the sovereign sway over an extensive district, including several convents, thirteen towns, and about fifty villages. In many respects her jurisdiction resembles that of a bishop. The following is the formula which heads her official acts:

"We, Doña . . . ., by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See, Abbess of the royal monastery of Las Huelgas near to the city of Burgos, order of the Cister, habit of our father San Bernardo, Mistress, Superior, Prelate, Mother, and lawful spiritual and temporal Administrator of the said royal monastery, and its hospital called 'the King's Hospital,' and of the convents, churches, and hermitages of its filiation, towns and villages of its jurisdiction, lordship, and vassalage, in virtue of Apostolic bulls and concessions, with all sorts of jurisdiction, proper, almost episcopal, *nullius diocesis*, and with royal privileges, since we exercise both jurisdictions, as is public and notorious," &c.

The hospital alluded to gives its name to a village, about a quarter of a mile distant, called "Hospital del Rey." This village is still in a sort of feudal dependance on the abbess, and is the only

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remaining source of revenue to the convent, having been recently restored by a decree of Queen Isabella; for the royal blood flowing in the veins of the present abbess had not exempted her convent from the common confiscation decreed by the revolution. The hospital, situated in the centre of the village, is a handsome edifice. The whole place is surrounded by a wall, similar to that which encloses the convent and its immediate dependances, and the entrance presents a specimen of much architectural beauty. It forms a small quadrangle, ornamented with an elegant arcade, and balustrades of an original design.

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LETTER VII.

ROUTE TO MADRID. MUSEO.

Toledo.

THE route from Burgos to Madrid presents few objects of interest. The country is dreary and little cultivated; indeed, much of it is incapable of culture. For those who are unaccustomed to Spanish routes, there may, indeed, be derived some amusement from the inns, of which some very characteristic specimens lie in their way. The Diligence halts for the night at the Venta de Juanilla, a solitary edifice situated at the foot of the last or highest *étage* of the Somo Sierra, in order to leave the principal ascent for the cool of early dawn. The building is seen from a considerable distance, and looks large; but is found, on nearer approach, to be a straggling edifice of one story only.

It is a modern inn, and differs in some essential points from the ancient Spanish *posada*,—perfect specimens of which are met with at Briviesca and

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Burgos. In these the vestibule is at the same time a cow-shed, sheepfold, stable, pigsty,—in fact, a spacious Noah's Ark, in which are found specimens of all living animals, that is, of all sizes, down to the most minute; but for the purification of which it would be requisite that the entire flood should pass within, instead of on its outside. The original ark, moreover, possessed the advantage of windows, the absence of which causes no small embarrassment to those who have to thread so promiscuous a congregation, in order to reach the staircase; once at the summit of which, it must be allowed, one meets with cleanliness, and a certain degree of comfort.

The Venta de Juanilla, on the Somo Sierra, is a newish, clean-looking habitation, especially the interior, where one meets with an excellent supper, and may feast the eyes on the sight of a printed card, hanging on the wall of the dining-room, announcing that luxury of exotic gastronomy—Champagne—at three crowns a bottle: none were bold enough that evening to ask for a specimen.

There is less of the exotic in the bed-room arrangements; in fact, the building appears to have been constructed by the Diligence proprietors to meet the immediate necessity of the occasion. The Madrid road being served by two Diligences, one, leaving the capital, meets at this point, on its first night, the

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other, which approaches in the contrary direction. In consequence of this arrangement, the edifice is provided with exactly four dormitories,—two male, and two female.

Nor is this the result of an intention to diminish the numbers quartered in each male or female apartment; on the contrary, two rooms would have answered the purpose better than four, but for the inconvenience and confusion which would have arisen from the denizens of the Diligence destined to start at a later hour being aroused from their slumbers, and perhaps induced to depart by mistake, at the signal for calling the travellers belonging to the earlier conveyance,—the one starting at two o'clock in the morning, and the other at three.

On the occasion of my *bivouaque* in this curious establishment, an English couple, recently married, happened to be among the number of my fellow-sufferers; and the lady's report of the adventures of the female dormitory of our Diligence afforded us sufficient amusement to enliven the breakfast on the other side of the mountain. It appeared, that, during the hustling of the males into their enclosure, a fond mother, moved by Heaven knows what anxious apprehensions, had succeeded in abstracting from the herd her son, a tender youth of fourteen. Whether or not she expected to smuggle, without

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detection, this contraband article into the female pen, we could not determine. If she did, she reckoned somewhat independently of her host; for on a fellow-traveller entering in the dark, and groping about for a considerable time in search of an unoccupied nest, a sudden exclamation aroused the fatigued sleepers, followed by loud complaints against those who had admitted an interloper to this holy of holies of feminine promiscuousness, to the exclusion of one of its lawful occupants. The dispute ran high; but it must be added to the already numerous proofs of the superior energy proceeding from aroused maternal feelings, that the intruder was maintained in his usurped resting-place by his determined parent, notwithstanding the discontent naturally caused by such a proceeding.

We have now reached the centre of these provinces, the destinies of which have offered to Europe so singular an example of political vicissitude. It is an attractive occupation, in studying the history of this country, to watch the progress of the state, the ancient capital of which we have just visited,—a province which, from being probably the rudest and poorest of the whole Peninsula, became the most influential, the wealthiest, the focus of power, as it is geographically the centre of Spain,—and to witness its constantly progressive advance, as it gradually

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drew within the range of its influence all the surrounding states; exemplifying the dogged perseverance of the Spanish character, which, notwithstanding repeated defeat, undermined the Arab power by imperceptible advances, and eventually ridded the Peninsula of its long-established lords. It is interesting to thread the intricate narrative of intermarriages, treaties, wars, alliances, and successions, interspersed with deeds of heroic chivalry and of blackest treachery, composing the annals of the different northern states of Spain; until at length, the Christian domination having been borne onward by successive advantages nearly to the extreme southern shores of the Peninsula, a marriage unites the two principal kingdoms, and leads to the subjection of all Spain, as at present, under one monarch.

It is still more attractive to repair subsequently to the country itself; and from this central, pyramidal summit—elevated by the hand of Nature to a higher level than the rest of the Peninsula; its bare and rugged surface exposed to all the less genial influences of the elements, and crowned by its modern capital, looking down in all directions, like a feudal castle on the fairer and more fertile regions subject to its dominion, and for the protection of which it is there proudly situated,—to take a survey of this extra-

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ordinary country, view the localities immortalized by the eventful passages of its history, and muse on its still varying destinies.

Madrid has in fact already experienced threatening symptoms of the insecurity of this feudal tenure, as it were, in virtue of which it enjoys the supreme rank. Having no claim to superiority derived from its commerce, the fertility of its territory, the facility of its means of communication and intercourse with the other parts of the kingdom or with foreign states, —nothing, in fact, but its commanding and central position, and the comparatively recent choice made of it by the sovereigns for a residence; it has seen itself rivalled, and at length surpassed in wealth and enterprize, by Barcelona, and its right to be continued as the seat of government questioned and attacked. Its fall is probably imminent, should some remedy not be applied before the intermittent revolutionary fever, which has taken possession of the country, makes further advances, or puts on chronic symptoms; but its fate will be shared by the power to which it owes its creation. No residence in Europe bears a prouder and more monarchical aspect than Madrid, nor is better suited for the abode of the feudal pomp and etiquette of the most magnificent —in its day—of European courts: but riding and country sports have crossed the Channel, and are

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endeavouring to take root in France; fresco-painting has invaded England; in Sicily marble porticoes have been painted to imitate red bricks; and a Constitutional monarchy is being erected in Spain. Spaniards are not imitators, and cannot change their nature, although red bricks should become the materials of Italian *palazzi*, Frenchmen ride after fox-hounds, and Englishmen be metamorphosed to Michael Angelos. The Alcazar of Madrid, commanding from its windows thirty miles of royal domains, including the Escorial and several other royal residences, is not destined to become the abode of a monarch paid to receive directions from a loquacious and corrupt house of deputies,—the utmost result to be obtained from forcing on states a form of government unsuited to their character. If the Spanish reigning family, after having settled their quarrel with regard to the succession, (if ever they do so,) are compelled to accept a (so-called) Constitutional form of government, with their knowledge of the impossibility of its successful operation, they will probably endeavour, in imitation of the highly gifted sovereign of their neighbours, to stifle it, and to administrate in spite of it; until, either wanting the talent and energy necessary for the maintenance of this false position, or their subjects, as may be expected, getting impatient at finding themselves

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mystified, a total overthrow will terminate the experiment.

I am aware of the criticism to which this opinion would be exposed in many quarters; I already hear the contemptuous upbraidings, similar to those with which the "exquisite," exulting in an unexceptionable wardrobe, lashes the culprit whose shoulders are guilty of a coat of the previous year's fashion. We are told that the tendency of minds, the progress of intellect, the spirit of the age,—all which, translated into plain language, mean (if they mean anything) the fashion,—require that nations should provide themselves each with a new Liberal government; claiming, in consideration of the fashionable vogue and the expensive nature of the article, its introduction (unlike other British manufactures) duty-free. But it ought first to be established, whether these larger interests of humanity are amenable to the sceptre of so capricious a ruler as the fashion. It appears to me, that nations should be allowed to adapt their government to their respective characters, dispositions, habits of life, and traditions. All these are more dependant than is supposed by those who possess not the habit of reflection, on the race, the position, the soil and climate each has received from nature, which, by the influence they have exercised on their habits and dispo-

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sitions, have fitted them each for a form of constitution equally appropriate to no other people; since no two nations are similarly circumstanced, not only in all these respects, but even in any one of them.

What could be more Liberal than the monarchy of Spain up to the accession of the Bourbon dynasty? the kings never reigning but by the consent of their subjects, and on the condition of unvarying respect for their privileges; but never, when once seated on the throne, checked and embarrassed in carrying through the measures necessary for the administration of the state. The monarch was a responsible but a free monarch until these days, when an attempt is being made to deprive him both of freedom of action and responsibility—almost of utility, and to render him a tool in the hands of a constantly varying succession of needy advocates or military *parvenus*, whom the chances of civil war or the gift of declamation have placed in the way of disputing the ministerial salaries, without having been able to furnish either their hearts with the patriotism, or their heads with the capacity, requisite for the useful and upright administration of the empire. In Spain, the advocates of continual change, in most cases in which personal interest is not their moving spring, hope to arrive ultimately at a republic. Now, no one

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more than myself admires the theories of Constitutional governments, of universal political power and of republicanism: the last system would be the best of all, were it only for the equality it is to establish. But how are men to be equalised by the manufacturers of a government? How are the ignorant and uneducated to be furnished with legislative capacity, or the poor or unprincipled armed against the seductions of bribery? It is not, unfortunately, in any one's power to accomplish these requisite preliminary operations; without the performance of which, these plausible theories will ever lose their credit when brought to the test of experiment. How is a republic to be durable without the previous solution of the problem of the equalisation of human capacities? In some countries it may be almost attained for a time; in others, never put in motion for an instant. No one more than myself abhors tyranny and despotism; but, after hearing and reading all the charges laid at the door of Absolutism during the last quarter of a century, I am at a loss to account for the still greater evils and defects, existing in Constitutional states, having been overlooked in the comparison. The subject is far less free in France than in the absolute states of Germany: and other appropriate comparisons might be made which would bring us

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still nearer home. I would ask the advocates for putting in practice a republican form of government, and by way of comparing the two extremes, whether all the harm the Emperors of Russia have ever done, or are likely to do until the end of the world,—according to whatever sect the date of that event be calculated,—will not knock under to one week of the exploits of the French republicans of the last century? And if we carry on the observation to the consequences of that revolution, until we arrive at the decimation of that fine country under the military despotism which was necessarily its offspring, we shall not find my argument weakened.

I entreat your pardon for this political digression, which I am as happy to terminate as yourself. I will only add, that, should the period be arrived for the Spanish empire to undergo the lot of all human things—decline and dissolution, it has no right to complain, having had its day; but, should that moment be still distant, let us hope to see that country, so highly favoured by Nature, once more prosperous under the institutions which raised her to the highest level of power and prosperity.

Meanwhile, the elements of discord still exist in a simmering state close to the brim of the cauldron, and a mere spark will suffice at any moment to make them bubble over. The inhabitants of Madrid are

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in hourly expectation of this spark ; and not without reason, if the *on-dits* which circulate there, and reach to the neighbouring towns, are deserving of credit. Queen Christina, on her road from Paris to resume virtually, if not nominally, the government, conceived the imprudent idea of taking Rome in her way. It is said that she confessed to the Pope, who, in the solemn exercise of his authority as representative of the Deity, declared to her that Spain would never regain tranquillity until the possessions of the clergy should be restored to them.

Whatever else may have passed during the interview is not stated ; but a deep impression was produced on the conscience of the Queen, to which is attributed the change in her appearance evident to those who may happen to have seen her a few months since in Paris. This short space of time has produced on her features the effect of years. She has lost her *embonpoint*, and acquired in its place paleness and wrinkles. She is firmly resolved to carry out the views of the Pope. Here, therefore, is the difficulty. The leading members of her party are among those who have profited largely by the change of proprietorship which these vast possessions have undergone: being the framers or abettors of the decree, they were placed among the nearest for the scramble. In the emptiness of the

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national treasury, they consider these acquisitions their sole reward for the trouble of conducting the revolution, and are prepared to defend them like tigers.

When, therefore, Queen Christina proposed her plan* to Narvaez, she met with a flat refusal. He replied, that such a decree would deluge the country with blood. The following day he was advised to give in his resignation. This he refused to do, and another interview took place. The Queen-mother insisted on his acceptance of the embassy to France. He replied, that he certainly would obey her Majesty's commands; but that, in that case, she would not be surprised if he published the act of her marriage with Muños, which was in his power.† This would compel Christina to refund all the income she has received as widow of Ferdinand the Seventh. The interview ended angrily; and, doubtless, recalled to Christina's recollection the still higher presumption of the man, who owed to her the exalted situation from which, on a former occasion, he levelled his attack on her authority. I

* It will be seen that this letter was written shortly after the Queen's return to Spain, and previous to the publication of her marriage.

† It is probable that this threat, supposing it real, may have assisted in determining the Queen's resolution, since executed, of publishing the marriage.

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am not answerable for the authenticity of these generally received reports; but they prove the unsettled state of things, when the determined disposition of the two opposite parties, and the nearly equal balance of their force, are taken into consideration.

I was scarcely housed at Madrid, having only quitted the hotel the previous day, when the news reached me of the death of one of the fair and accomplished young Countesses—the companions of my journey from Bayonne to Burgos. You would scarcely believe possible the regret this intelligence occasioned me,—more particularly from the peculiar circumstances of the occurrence. Her father had recently arrived from France, and the house was filled for the celebration of her birthday; but she herself was forbidden to join the dinner-party, being scarcely recovered from a severe attack of small-pox. The father's weakness could not deny her admission at dessert, and an ice. The following day she was dead.

Acquaintances made on the high road advance far more rapidly than those formed in the usual formal intercourse of society. I can account in no other way for the tinge of melancholy thrown over the commencement of my sojourn at Madrid by this event,—befalling a person whose society I had only enjoyed

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during three days, and whom I scarcely expected to see again.

The modern capital of Spain is an elegant and brilliant city, and a very agreeable residence; but for the admirer of the picturesque, or the tourist in search of historical *souvenirs*, it contains few objects of attraction. The picture-gallery is, however, a splendid exception; and, being the best in the world, compensates, as you may easily suppose, for the deficiency peculiar to Madrid in monuments of architectural interest.

To put an end to the surprise you will experience at the enumeration of such a profusion of *chefs d'œuvre* of the great masters as is here found, it is necessary to lose sight of the present political situation of Spain, and to transport ourselves to the age of painting. At that time Spain was the most powerful, and especially the most opulent empire in Europe. Almost all Italy belonged to her; a large portion actually owning allegiance to her sceptre, and the remainder being subject to her paramount influence. The familiarity which existed between Charles the Fifth and Titian is well known; as is likewise the anecdote of the pencil, picked up and presented by the Emperor to the artist, who had dropped it.

The same taste for, and patronage of, painting,

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continued through the successive reigns, until the period when painting itself died a natural death; and anecdotes similar to that of Charles the Fifth are related of Philip the Fourth and Velasquez. All the works of art thus collected, and distributed through the different palaces, have been recently brought together, and placed in an edifice, some time since commenced, and as yet not entirely completed. Titian was the most favoured of all the Italian painters, not only with respect to his familiar intercourse with the Emperor, but also in a professional point of view. The Museo contains no less than forty of his best productions. Nor is it surprising that the taste of the monarch, being formed by his masterpieces, should extend its preference to the rest of the Venetian school in a greater degree than to the remaining Italian schools. There are, however, ten pictures by Raffaelle, including the Spasimo, considered by many to be his greatest work.

A cause similar to that above named enables us to account for the riches assembled in the Dutch and Flemish rooms, among which may be counted more than two hundred pictures of Teniers alone. I should observe, that I am not answerable for this last calculation; being indebted for my information to the director, and distinguished artist, Don Jose

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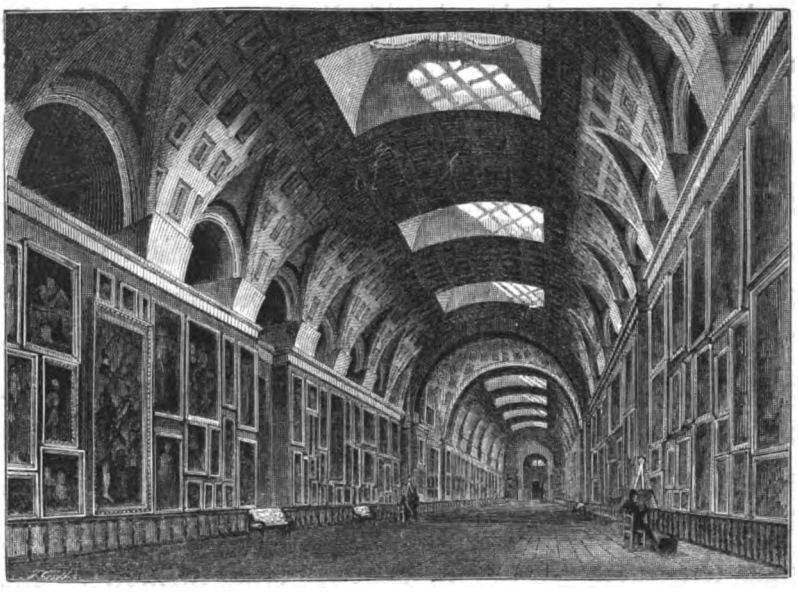

ITALIAN GALLERY AT THE MUSEO, MADRID.

Madrazo. There is no catalogue yet drawn up. Rubens has a suite of rooms almost entirely to himself, besides his just portion of the walls of the gallery. The Vandykes and Rembrandts are in great profusion. With regard to the Spanish schools, it may be taken for granted that they are as well represented as those of the foreign, although partially subject, nations. The works of Velasquez are the most numerous; which is accounted for by his situation of painter to the Court, under Philip the Fourth. There are sixty of his paintings.

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The Murillos are almost as numerous, and in his best style: but Seville has retained the cream of the genius of her most talented offspring; and even at Madrid, in the collection of the Academy, there is a Murillo—the Saint Elizabeth—superior to any of those in the great gallery. It is much to be wished that some artist, gifted with the pen of a Joshua Reynolds, or even of a Mengs (author of a notice on a small portion of these paintings), could be found, who would undertake a complete critical review of this superb gallery. All I presume to say on the subject is, were the journey ten times longer and more difficult, the view of the Madrid Museo would not be too dearly purchased.

Before I left Madrid, I went to the palace, to see the traces of the conspiracy of the 7th October, remaining on the doors of the Queen's apartments. You will recollect that the revolt of October 1842 was that in favour of Christina, when the three officers, Concha, Leon, and Pezuela, with a battalion, attacked the palace in the night, for the purpose of carrying off the Queen and her sister. On the failure of the attempt, owing to its having been prematurely put in execution, the Brigadier Leon was shot, and the two others escaped.

It appears that the execution of this officer, unlike the greater number of these occurrences, caused a

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strong sensation in Madrid, owing to the sympathy excited by his popular character, and the impression that he was the victim of jealousy in the mind of the Regent. The fine speech, however, attributed to him by some of the newspapers, was not pronounced by him. His words were very few, and he uttered them in a loud and clear tone, before giving the word of command to his executioners. This, and his receiving the fire without turning his back, were the only incidents worthy of remark.

One of the two sentries stationed at the door of the Queen's anteroom when I arrived, happened to have played a conspicuous part on the eventful night. The Queen was defended by the guard of hallebardiers, which always mounts guard in the interior of the palace. This sentinel informed me that he was on guard that night, on the top step of the staircase, when Leon, followed by a few officers, was seen to come up. Beyond him and his fellow-sentry there were only two more, who were posted at the door of the Queen's anteroom, adjoining her sleeping apartment. This door faces the whole length of the corridor, with which, at a distance of about twenty yards, the top of the staircase communicates. In order to shield himself from the fire of the two sentinels at the Queen's door, Leon grasped my informant by the ribs right and left, and, raising him from the

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ground, carried him, like a mummy, to the corridor; and there, turning sharp to the left, up to the two sentries, whom he summoned to give him admittance in the name of the absent Christina.

On the soldiers' refusal, he gave orders to his battalion to advance, and a pitched battle took place, which was not ultimately decided until daybreak—seven hours after. The terror of the little princesses, during this night, may be imagined. Two bullets penetrated into the bed-room; and the holes made by about twenty more in the doors of some of the state apartments communicating with the corridor, are still preserved as souvenirs of the event. The palace contains some well-painted ceilings by Mengs, and is worthy of its reputation of one of the finest residences in Europe. The staircase is superb. It was here that Napoleon, entering the palace on the occasion of his visit to Madrid, to install Joseph Buonaparte in his kingdom, stopped on the first landing; and, placing his hand on one of the white marble lions which crouch on the balustrades, turned to Joseph, and exclaimed, "Mon frère, vous serez mieux logé que moi."

There is no road from Madrid to Toledo. On the occasions of religious festivities, which are attended by the court, the journey is performed by way of Aranjuez, from which place a sort of road conducts to the an-

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cient capital of Spain. There is, however, for those who object to add so much to the actual distance, a track, known, in all its sinuosities, throughout its depths and its shallows, around its bays, promontories, islands, and peninsulas—to the driver of the diligence, and to the mounted bearer of the mail; both of whom travel on the same days of the week, in order to furnish reciprocal aid, in case of damage to either. A twenty-four hours' fall of rain renders this track impassable by the usual conveyance; a very unusual sort of carriage is consequently kept in reserve for these occasions, and, as the period of my journey happened to coincide with an uncommonly aqueous disposition of the Castilian skies, I was fortunately enabled to witness the less every day, and more eventful transit, to which this arrangement gave rise.

Accordingly at four o'clock on an April morning—an hour later than is the custom on the road from France to Madrid—I ascended the steps of a carriage, selected for its lightness, which to those who know anything of Continental coach-building, conveys a sufficient idea of its probable solidity. There was not yet sufficient daylight to take a view of this fabric; but I saw, by the aid of a lantern, my luggage lifted into a sort of loose net, composed of straw-ropes, and suspended between the hind wheels in precisely such juxta-position, as to make the portmanteaus, bags, &c.

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bear the same topographic relation to the vehicle, as the truffles do to a turkey, or the stuffing to a duck. There was much grumbling about the quantity of my luggage, and some hints thrown out, relative to the additional perils, suspended over our heads, or rather, under our seats, in consequence of the coincidence of the unusual weight, with the bad state of the *road*, as they termed it, and the acknowledged caducity of the carriage. I really was, in fact, the only one to blame; for I could not discover, besides my things, more than two small valises belonging to all the other six passengers together.

At length we set off, and at a distance of four miles from Madrid, as day began to break, we broke down.

The break-down was neither violent nor dangerous, and was occasioned by the crash of a hind wheel, while our pace did not exceed a walk: but it was productive of some amusement, owing to the position, near the corner of the vehicle which took the greatest fancy to *terra firma*, of a not over heroic limb of the Castilian law, who had endeavoured to be facetious ever since our departure, and whose countenance now exhibited the most grotesque symptoms of real terror. Never, I am convinced, will those moments be forgotten by that individual, whose vivacity deserted him for the remainder of the journey;

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and whose attitude and expression, as his extended arms failed to recover his centre of gravity exchanged for the supine, folded-up posture, unavoidable by the occupant at the lowest corner of a broken-down vehicle,—while his thoughts wandered to his absent offspring, whose fond smiles awaited him in Toledo, but to whom perhaps he was not allowed to bid an eternal adieu—will live likewise in the memory of his fellow-travellers.

This *dénouement* of the adventures of the first carriage rendered a long halt necessary; during which, the postilion returned to Madrid on a mule, and brought us out a second. This proceeding occupied four hours, during which some entered a neighbouring *venta*, others remained on the road, seated on heaps of stones, and all breakfasted on what provisions they had brought with them, or could procure at the said *venta*. The sight of the vehicle that now approached, would have been cheaply bought at the price of twenty up-sets. Don Quixote would have charged it, had such an apparition suddenly presented itself to his view. It was called a phaeton, but bore no sort of resemblance to the open carriage known in England by that name. Its form was remarkable by its length being out of all proportion to its width,—so much so as to require three widely-separated windows on each side. These were

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irregularly placed, instead of being alike on the two sides, for the door appeared to have been forgotten until after the completion of the fabric, and to have taken subsequently the place of a window; which window—pursuant to a praiseworthy sense of justice—was provided for at the expense of a portion of deal board, and some uniformity.

The machine possessed, nevertheless, allowing for its rather exaggerated length, somewhat of the form of an ancient landau; but the roof describing a semicircle, gave it the appearance of having been placed upside down by mistake, in lowering it on to the wheels. Then, with regard to these wheels, they certainly had nothing very extraordinary about their appearance, when motionless; but, on being subjected to a forward or backward impulse, they assumed, respectively, and independently of each other, such a zigzag movement, as would belong to a rotatory, locomotive pendulum, should the progress of mechanics ever attain to so complicated a discovery. Indeed, the machine, in general, appeared desirous of avoiding the monotony attendant on a straight-forward movement; the body of the monster, from the groans, sighs, screams, and other various sounds which accompanied its heaving, pitching, and rolling exertions, appearing to belong to some unwieldy and agonised mammoth and to move by its

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own laborious efforts, instead of being indebted for its progress to the half-dozen quadrupeds hooked to its front projections.

The track along which this interesting production of mechanical art now conveyed us, bore much resemblance to a river, in the accidents of its course. Thus we were reminded at frequent intervals, by the suddenly increased speed of our progress, that we were descending a rapid: at other times the motion was so vertical, as to announce the passage down a cataract. These incidents were not objectionable to me, as they interrupted the monotony of the walking pace, to which we were condemned; although one or two passengers of rather burly proportions, seemed not much to enjoy their repetition. However this might be, assuredly we were none of us sorry to find ourselves at eight o'clock that evening safely housed at Toledo.

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LETTER VIII.

PICTURESQUE POSITION OF TOLEDO. FLORINDA.

Toledo.

EVERY traveller—I don't mean every one who habitually assists in wearing out roads, whether of stone or iron—nor who travels for business, nor who seeks to escape from himself—meaning from ennui, (a vain attempt, by the way, if Horace is to be depended on; since, even should he travel on horseback, the most exhilarating sort of locomotion, ennui will contrive to mount and ride pillion)—but every one who deserves the name of traveller, who travels for travelling sake, for the pleasure of travelling, knows the intensity of the feeling which impels his right hand, as he proceeds to open the window-shutter of his bed-room, on the morning subsequent to his nocturnal arrival in a new town.

The windows of the Posada del Miradero at Toledo are so placed as by no means to diminish the interest of this operation. The shutter being opened, I found myself looking from a perpendicular ele-

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vation of several hundred feet, on one of the prettiest views you can imagine. The town was at my back, and the road by which we had arrived, was cut in the side of the precipice beneath me. In following that direction, the first object at all prominent was the gate leading to Madrid—a cluster of half Arab embattled towers and walls, standing somewhat to the left at the bottom of the descent. These gave issue to the track mentioned in my journey, and which could now be traced straight in front, to a considerable distance.

The ground rises slightly beyond the gates of the town, and preserves a moderate elevation all across the view, retreating right and left, so as to offer the convex side of the arc of an immense circle. This formation gives to the view a valley, extending on either side, shut in on the left by mountains at a distance of four miles; while to the east it extends as far as the eye can reach,—some mountains, scarcely perceptible, crossing it at the horizon. The Tagus advances down the eastern valley from Aranjuez; which château is in view at the distance of twenty-eight miles, and approaching with innumerable zigzags to the foot of the town, suddenly forms a curve, and, dashing into the rocks, passes round the back of the city, issues again into the western valley, and, after another sharp turn to the left, resumes the

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same direction as before. All this tract of country owes to the waters of the Tagus a richness of vegetation, and a bright freshness nowhere surpassed. So much for the distant view.

To judge of the nearer appearance of the town, I crossed the bridge of Alcantara, placed at the entrance of the eastern valley, and leading to Aranjuez. The situation may be described in a few words. Toledo stands on an eminence nearly circular in its general form. It is a mass of jagged rock, almost perpendicular on all its sides. The river flows rather more than half round it, descending from the east, and passing round its southern side. The left or south bank is of the same precipitous formation; but, instead of presenting that peculiarity during only a short distance, it continues so both above and below the town; while on the opposite side the only high ground is the solitary mass of rock selected, whether with a view to defence or to inconvenience, for the position of this ancient city. The Tagus is crossed by two bridges, one at each extremity of the semicircle described by it round the half of the town. These bridges are both highly picturesque, from their form no less than their situation. They are raised upon arches of a height so disproportionate to their width, as to appear like aqueducts; and are provided at each extremity with towers, all, with one

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exception, Moorish in their style. The lower bridge (lower by position, for it is the higher of the two in actual elevation) bears the name of San Martin, and is traversed by the road to Estremadura; the other leads to Aranjuez, and is the puente de Alcantara. We are now standing on this last, having passed under the Arab archway of its tower.

Its width is just sufficient for the passage of two vehicles abreast, and it is covered with flag-paving. The river flows sixty feet below. At the back of the tower which faces you, at the opposite end of the bridge, rises a rock, almost isolated from the rest of the cliff, and on its top the half-ruined towers and walls of a Moorish castle. On the left hand extends the valley, through which the river approaches in a broad mass. The road to Aranjuez follows the same direction, after having first disappeared round the base of the rock just mentioned, and is bordered with rose-trees, and occasional groups of limes, which separate it from the portions set apart for pedestrians. On the right hand the river (still looking from the bridge) is suddenly pressed in between precipices, becomes narrow, and at the distance of a few hundred yards, forms a noisy cascade.

Still looking in that direction, the left bank—a rocky precipice, as I mentioned before—curves round and soon hurries it out of sight. The lower part of

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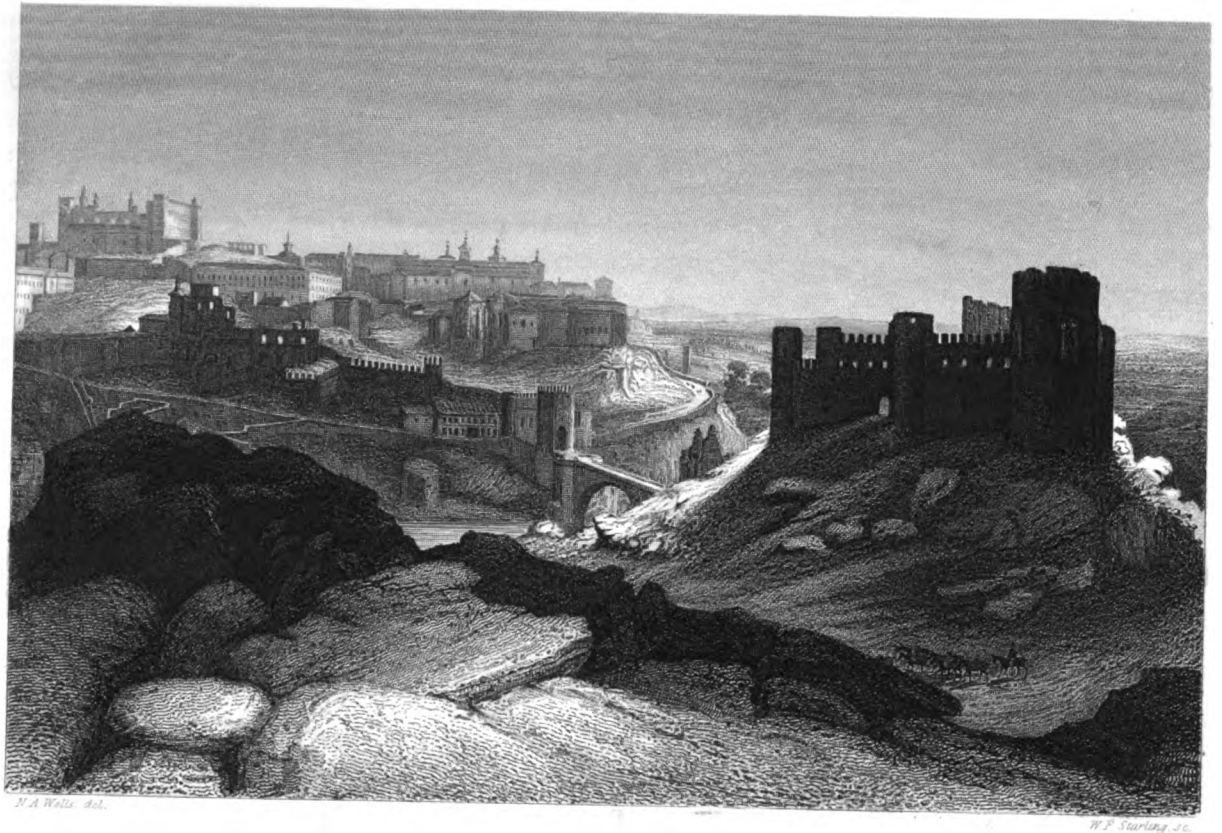

N.A. Wells. del.

W.F. Starling. sc.

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the opposite or town bank is ornamented, close to the cascade, with a picturesque ruin, on which you look down from your position. This consists of three stories of arches, standing partly in the water. Above and behind them rise a few larger buildings, almost perpendicularly over each other, and the summit is crowned with the colossal quadrangular mass of the Alcazar.

The ruinous arches just mentioned, are the remains of a building erected by a speculator, who had conceived a plan for raising water to the Alcazar by means of wheels, furnished with jars, according to the custom of this part of Spain. The arrangement is simple; the jars, being attached round a perpendicular wheel, successively fill with water, as each arrives at the bottom, and empty themselves, on reaching the summit, into any receptacle placed so as to receive their contents. The speculator, having to operate on a colossal scale, intended probably to superpose wheel over wheel, and to establish reservoirs at different elevations, as it would scarcely be possible to work a wheel of such dimensions as to carry jars to the height required (more than three hundred feet), even though furnished with ropes, which are made to turn round the wheel and descend below it.

Crossing the bridge, the road quits the river, or

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rather is left for a certain space by it, until it meets it at the distance of a mile. This road is a favourite promenade of the inhabitants, and deservedly so. On each side, for the distance of a mile, it is bordered by hedges of magnificent rose-trees. These hedges are double on both sides, enclosing walks for the promenaders on foot. Behind those on the outside, the colours are varied by the pale green of the olive-tree; and over them occasional clusters of lime-trees, mingled with the acacia and laburnum, furnish shade, in case of an excess of sunshine. This promenade, flanked on one side by the hills, and on the other, by the highly cultivated plain, in parts of which the Tagus is seen occasionally to peep through its wooded banks, is most delicious during the rose season. I should especially recommend the visitor of Toledo to repair to it during the first hour after sunrise, when thronged with birds, which are here almost tame, and fill the air with their music; and also in the evening, when frequented by the mantilla-hooded fair of the city.

There is, however, notwithstanding the beauty and gay appearance of this profusion of roses, a singular effect produced by their situation. Usually seen surrounded by other flowers or by well-kept grass or earth, they do not look quite themselves on the side on which they rest their bushy foundations on a

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dusty road, covered with deep ruts. The fish out of water forms a hackneyed, not to say a dried up, comparison; but we can compare the rather pallid and unnatural appearance of these plants to that of a bevy of ladies, who, tired of the monotony of a ball-room in Grosvenor Place, should resolve, precisely at the crisis when candle-light is more than ever required for their rather suffering complexions, to compel their partners to lead them, at sunrise, a galopade down Tattersall's yard. The roses, thus misplaced, are nevertheless roses, and cease not to be fair, in spite of their unusual *entourage*, and to contribute to the beauty and novelty of this picturesque promenade.

Amongst the variety of harmless weaknesses by which human imagination, and consequently human locomotion are influenced, I look upon one of the most irresistible (if such an epithet be applicable to a weakness) to be that fractional component part of the cravings of antiquarianism, which urges some persons in the search after, and rewards their labours on the discovery of, the locality supposed to be the birthscene of some great historical event, however insignificant in other respects, or even however loathsome its actual state may be to the outward senses. Thus, when, in Normandy, the worthy and probably waggish majordomo of the crumbling old castle of

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Falaise, directs your attention to the window from which Duke Robert caught the first glance of the ankle of William the Conqueror's mother,—as she pursued her professional labours, and polluted with her soapsuds the silver brook a quarter of a mile below him,—and suddenly yielded his soul to its irresistible beauty: notwithstanding the impossibility of the thing, many, and I confess myself one, are too delighted with the window, and the rivulet, and the majordomo, and the — God knows what!— perhaps with the very impossibility—to allow themselves a moment's sceptical or sarcastic feeling on the subject.

I should mention that my visit to Falaise happening to take place shortly after the passage of the King of the French on a tour through his western provinces, the aforesaid cicerone pointed out a highly suspicious-looking inscription, being the initials of the monarch, carefully engraved in the stone; which he informed me had been cut by Louis Philippe, on the occasion of his visit at midnight to the room of Duke Robert; but of which I took the liberty of suspecting himself of being the sculptor, during some idle moment,—fond as he probably was of contemplating the innocently expressive countenances of his satisfied visitors.

Actuated by the feeling I have attempted to describe, one of my first inquiries at Toledo related to

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the well-known story of Florinda and her bath, so fatal to the Gothic sway in Spain. I was immediately directed to the spot, on which is seen a square tower, pierced by arched openings through its two opposite sides, and on a third side by a similar but smaller aperture. The four walls alone remain, and the whole is uncovered. This symmetrical-looking edifice, well built and composed of large stones, measures about sixteen feet square, and from forty to fifty in elevation, and stands on the edge of the river, on the town side, about a hundred yards below the western bridge—that called after Saint Martin—at the precise point at which the river quits the town, and its north bank ceases to be precipitous.

The extreme point of the termination of the high ground is immediately over the building, and is covered with the ruins of King Roderick's palace, the outer walls of which descend to the water, and are terminated by a small roundtower within a few yards of the quadrangular edifice. The edifice is called the Baño de la Cava, meaning Florinda's bath, although the native popular tradition, losing sight of the events of the history, has metamorphosed the heroine of the spot into a Moorish princess.

In fact, the rocky precipice terminates at this

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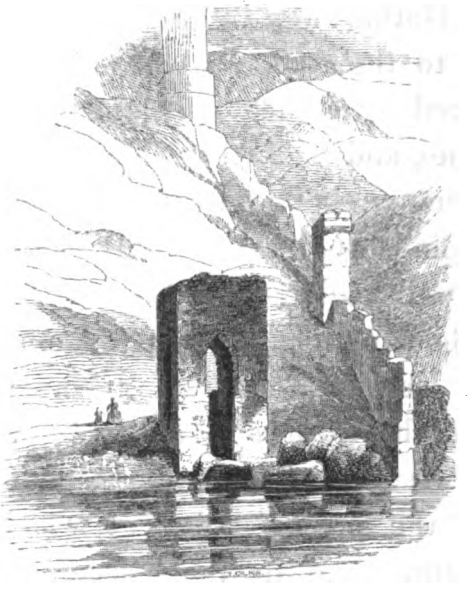

FLORINDA'S BATH.

spot,—the last piece of rock forming part of the foundation of the square tower, immediately beyond which is a gently descending sand-bank most convenient and tempting to bathers. This circumstance, added to the situation of Roderick's residence, immediately above the scene, was delightfully corroborative of the tradition; and proved sufficiently, had all investigation ceased there, the identity of the spot with the scene of the anecdote. Owing to an excess of curiosity a new discovery threw a doubt over the whole affair.

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A bridge is too public a thoroughfare to allow of bathing to be practised in its immediate neighbourhood: and, in fact, the erection of the neighbouring one of St. Martin is of much later date than the events of the history in question. Fatal curiosity, however, led me to the back of the building, —the very bath of Florinda,—where it was impossible not to discover, even to conviction, that it, the square tower itself, had formerly been the entrance of a bridge. This is proved by the ruins of two piers, which appear above the water, — one near to the shore on which I was standing, the other near to the opposite bank, and both forming a line with the square tower on looking through its two opposite arches. The tower possesses other peculiarities which, compared with those belonging to the bridges actually in existence, fully confirm the supposition.

Now, although the tradition has christened the spot Baño de la Cava, which expression is translated "bath of the prostitute," it is certain that Florinda was the daughter of Count Julian, governor of the Spanish possessions in Africa, and a personage of sufficient rank and influence to obtain a hearing at the court of the Arab Caliph, or at all events of his viceroy in Africa, and to conceive the idea of calling a foreign army to execute his private vengeance. It is therefore extremely improbable that

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the daughter of such a person should have been seen to measure and compare the proportions of her legs with those of her companions in the immediate vicinity of a bridge, necessarily the most frequented of thoroughfares.

I confess I left the spot filled with disappointment. In vain I reflected that after all the fact is fact—that the sensual Roderick may certainly have spied from behind a window-lattice the frolics of some ladies at their bath; and that, wherever his *espionage* took place, he may for that purpose have intentionally procured himself a place of concealment, and have formed the resolution of possessing one of them. In fact, it was a matter of indifference to me whether the circumstance had occurred or not, provided I should ascertain its whereabouts, supposing it real, instead of merely discovering the spot on which it did not take place.

Having thus convicted the generally received tradition of deceit,—at least, in one of its parts,—it became an object to discover some other version of the story, which might tally in a more satisfactory manner with present existing proofs. The Arab historians deny the invasion to have been brought about by any such occurrence; but Mariana, copied by more recent writers, has either discovered or compiled a very plausible story, clear in its details,

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only erroneous in respect of the heroine's name, which he makes out to be Cava. From this version the bath is entirely excluded.

According to the custom in Gothic Spain, the sons of the nobles received their education in the royal palace, and on attaining the age of manhood, they formed an escort round the sovereign on all expeditions, whether to the field or the chase. Their daughters were likewise entrusted to the care of royalty, and attended the person of the Queen, after having completed their education and instruction in the accomplishments suited to their sex, under her superintendence. When these noble damsels could number sufficient summers, their hands were bestowed according to the royal selection.

Among the attendants of Queen Egilona, was a daughter of Count Julian, possessed of extreme beauty. Florinda, while playing with her companions in a garden, situated on the banks of the Tagus, and overlooked by a tower, which contained a portion of Don Rodrigo's apartments, exposed to view, more than accorded either with etiquette or with her intention, the symmetry of her form. King Rodrigo, who, favoured by the concealment of a window-blind, had been watching the whole scene, became suddenly enamoured of her, and resolved to obtain a return of his passion; but, after finding

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every effort useless, and his object unattainable, he at length employed violence.

Every circumstance of this story is corroborated, as far as is possible in the present time, by the position of the localities, the known customs of the period, and the character of King Roderick. But the historian Mariana, to show the minuteness and triumph of research, on which he has founded his relation, quotes the young lady's own version of the affair; in fact, no less interesting a document than her letter to her father, then in Africa, disclosing the insult offered to the family. The following is the translation of this portentous dispatch. A *billet-doux* pregnant with greater events never issued from the boudoir of beauty and innocence.

"Would to Heaven, my lord and father!—Would to Heaven the earth had closed over me, before it fell to my lot to write these lines, and with such grievous news to cause you sadness and perpetual regret! How many are the tears that flow while I am writing, these blots and erasures are witnesses. And yet if I do not immediately, I shall cause a suspicion that not only the body has been polluted, but the soul likewise blotted and stained with perpetual infamy. Would I could foresee a term to our misery!—Who but yourself shall find a remedy for our misfortunes? Shall we delay, until time

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brings to light that which is now a secret, and the affront we have received entail on us a shame more intolerable than death itself? I blush to write that which I am bound to divulge. O wretched and miserable fate! In a word, your daughter—your blood, that of the kingly line of the Goths, has suffered from King Rodrigo,—to whose care, alas! she was entrusted like the sheep to the wolf,—a most wicked and cruel affront. It is for you, if you are worthy the name of a man, to cause the sweet draught of our ruin to become a deadly poison to his life; nor to leave unpunished the mockery and insult he has cast on our line and on our house."

Don Julian, who, as some say, was of royal descent, and a relative, not far removed, of Roderick—was possessed of qualities no less marked by daring than artifice. His plans well digested, he committed his government in Africa to the charge of a deputy, and repaired to the court at Toledo. There he made it his business to advance in credit and favour until the moment should arrive for action. His first step was, by means of false alarms of attacks meditated on the northern frontier, to get rid of the principal part of the disposable forces in that direction. Meanwhile he caused a letter from his Countess, who remained in Africa, to be forwarded to the King, in which, on the plea of serious illness, she urgently

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entreats the royal permission for the departure of Florinda to Ceuta. It is related that the profligate Rodrigo consented to the journey with so much the better grace, that possession had divested the attractions of his victim of all further hold of his passions, already under the dominion of new allurements.

There is a gate at Malaga, giving issue towards the sea-shore, which bears to this day the name of Gate of the Cava: through it she is said to have passed on embarking for Africa.

With regard to the name "la Cava" given to the gate and to the bath, I am disposed to prefer the popular notion to the assertion of Mariana, that it was her name. It is a natural supposition that the anecdote of the affair of Toledo, spread among the Arabs, who, for centuries after this period, were the depositaries of the annals and traditions of the Peninsula,—should have become tinted with a colour derived from their customs and ideas. Now it would be difficult to persuade an Arab that the circumstances of the story in question could befal a virtuous female, surrounded with the thousand precautions peculiar to an oriental court. If we add to this the contemptuous tone assumed by them towards those of the hostile creed—a tone that must have suited in an especial degree with their way of thinking on the subject of female deportment among the

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Christians, which they look upon as totally devoid of delicacy and reserve—the epithet applied to Florinda is easily accounted for. But to return to the story.

It only now remained for Don Julian to determine the Caliph's viceroy in Africa in favour of the invasion. Repairing to his court, he obtained an audience, in which he painted to the Prince, in such eloquent terms, the natural and artificial wealth of the Spanish peninsula, the facility of the enterprise, owing to the absence of the principal part of the disposable hostile force, and the unpopularity of King Rodrigo, that an expedition was immediately ordered; which, although at first prudently limited to a small troop under Tharig, led to the conquest, in a few campaigns, of the whole Peninsula.

Mingled with the ruins of Roderick's palace are seen at present those of the monastery of Saint Augustin, subsequently erected on the same site: but on the side facing the river, the ancient wall and turrets, almost confounded with the rock, on which they were built, have outlived the more recent erections, or perhaps have not been interfered with by them. Immediately beyond the portion of these walls, beneath which is seen the Baño de la Cava, they turn, together with the brink of the precipice, abruptly to the north, forming a right

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angle with the river bank: this part faces the western *vega* or valley, and looks down on the site of the ancient palace gardens, which occupied the first low ground. They extended as far as the chapel of Santa Leocadia. The ground is now traversed by the road to the celebrated sword-blade manufactory, situated on the bank of the river, half a mile lower down. With the exception of the inmates of that establishment, the only human beings who frequent the spot are the votaries on their way to the shrine of Santa Leocadia, and the convicts of a neighbouring *Presidio* in search of water from the river.

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LETTER IX.

CATHEDRAL OF TOLEDO.

Toledo.

EVERY successive æra of civilization, with the concomitant religion on which it has been founded, and from which it has taken its peculiar mould, has, after maintaining its ground with more or less lustre, and throughout a greater or smaller duration, arrived at its inevitable period of decline and overthrow.

In ceasing, however, to live, and to fill society far and wide with its enlightening influence,—in exchanging its erect attitude for the prostrate one consequent on its fall,—seldom has a creed, which has long held possession of the most enlightened intellects of our race for the time being, undergone an entire extinction, so as to disappear altogether from the face of the earth, and leave no trace of its existence. The influence of the soil, formation, and climate of the region, in the bosom of which such

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civilization has had its birth, on the dispositions and faculties of the race which has become its depositary, has always set its peculiar mark on its monuments, whether civil, military, or religious, but especially the last; which monuments, surviving the reign of the power to which they owe their existence, prolong and sanctify its memory, while they stand, erect and silent, over its grave; and furnish valuable information and benefit to those future generations sufficiently enlightened to consult them.

If this theory of successions and vicissitudes be consonant (which probably no one will deny) with the march of events on the surface of this our planet, then do the circumstances of the present situation invest, as far as regards Spain, those relics of human genius and human enthusiasm, the venerable temples of her declining faith, with an interest beyond that which they have possessed at any period since their foundation. It is impossible to have paid any attention to the events of the last few years, without having received the conviction that the reign of Christianity is here fast approaching,—not the commencement, but the termination of its decline. Spaniards will never do things by halves; and will probably prefer the entire overthrow of ancient customs to the system pursued in France, of propping up, by government

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enactments and salaries, a tottering edifice of external forms, long since divested of its foundation of public belief.

To speak correctly, the decline of religious supremacy in Spain is by no means recent. It was coeval with that of the arts, and of the political grandeur of the country. The gradual cessation of the vast gifts and endowments for the erection of the religious establishments was a symptom of devotional enthusiasm having passed its zenith. Had not this occurred nearly three centuries back, Madrid would not have wanted a Cathedral. Nothing could ever have tended more directly to compromise the durability of Christianity in Spain, than the final expulsion or extermination of the Moors and Jews. Had Torquemada and a few others possessed heads as clear and calculating as their hearts were resolute and inexorable—a knowledge of human nature as profound as their ambition of divine honours was exalted, they would have taken care not entirely to deprive the Church of food for its passions and energies. They would not have devoured all their heretics at a single meal, but would have exercised more *ménagement* and less voracity. They would have foreseen that by burning a few hundred Jews and Arabs less each year, nourishment would remain to animate the declamations of preachers, and the ener-

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gies of the faithful; without which the fatal effects of sloth and indifference must inevitably take root in the imaginations, and eventually undermine their lofty fabric.

The decline was, however, so gradual as to exercise no perceptible influence on the general conduct of the population, by whom forms were still observed, churches filled, and acts of devotion unceasingly accomplished. A variety of causes (into a description of which it is not my object, nor would it be your wish, that I should enter, but of which one of the most influential has been the importation of foreign ideas—as well through natural channels, as by special and interested exertions) has precipitated the *dénouement* of this long-commenced revolution; and that with so headlong a rapidity, that, in that Spain which surpassed all other nations in bigoted attachment to religious rites, the confiscation of all the possessions of the Church, under a promise (not to be performed) of salaries for a certain number of ecclesiastics, insufficient for the continuation of the ancient ceremonies, is received by the population with indifference! The Cathedral of Toledo, deprived of the greater number of its functionaries,—including its archbishop and fifty-six of its sixty canons, and no longer possessing, out of an income of hundreds of thousands sterling, a trea-

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sure sufficient for providing brooms and sweepers for its pavement,—will, in perhaps not much more than another year, if the predictions of the inhabitants be verified, be finally closed to public worship.

The same interest, therefore, which surrounded the Arab monuments three centuries since, and the Roman edifices of Spain in the fifth century, attaches itself now to the Christian temples; which, at this crisis, offer themselves to the tourist in the sad but attractive gloom of approaching death; since depriving them of the pomp and observances which filled their tall arcades with animation, is equivalent to separating a soul from a body. He will explore them and examine their ceremonies with all the eagerness and perseverance of a last opportunity,—he will wander untired through the mysterious twilight of their arched recesses, and muse on the riches lavished around him to so little purpose, and on the hopes of those who entrusted their memories to the guardianship of so frail and transient a depositary. The tones of their giant though melodious voices, as, sent from a thousand brazen throats, they roll through the vaulted space the dirge of their approaching fate, will fill him with sadness; and the ray that streams upon him from each crimson and blue *rosace* will fix itself on his memory, kind-

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ling around it an inextinguishable warmth, as though he had witnessed the smile of a departing saint.

I had read of Toledo being in possession of the finest church in Spain,—and *that* in the book of a tourist, whose visit to this town follows immediately that to Seville. Begging pardon of the clever and entertaining writer to whom I allude, the Cathedral of Toledo strikes me as far from being the finest in Spain; nor would it be the finest in France, nor in England, nor in other countries that might be enumerated, could it be transported to either. It is large; but in this respect it yields to that of Seville. What its other claims to pre-eminence may be, it is difficult to discover. It is true that its interior presents a specimen of the simple and grand pointed style of its period. This being put in execution on a large scale, would render it an imposing and a beautiful edifice, but for a subsequent addition, which, to render justice to the architect, he certainly never could have contemplated. The noble pillars, towering to a height of sixty feet, have been clothed, together with their capitals, in a magnificent coat of whitewash! Without having witnessed such a desecration in this or some similar edifice, it is impossible to conceive the deadening effect it produces on the feeling of admiration such a building ought to excite. An inscription in dis-

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tinct and large characters, over the southernmost of the three western doors, after recording the conquest of Granada by the Catholic Kings, as Ferdinand and Isabella are here termed, the expulsion of the Jews, and the completion of the Cathedral, brands with this act of barbarism one Don Francisco Fernandez de Cuença, *obrero mayor* (almost a Dean) of the Cathedral in the year 1493.

There is, however, a moment of each day when the tall arcades vindicate their outraged majesty. "La nuit tous les chats sont gris," says the proverb. I therefore proceeded at the approach of twilight (all access at a later hour being prohibited) to see whether its application would extend to this church. This is, in fact, the hour, just before the closing of the doors, at which it should be visited. Darkness has assumed his empire within these walls long before the stirring labyrinth without has had warning of his approach. No colours nor gildings (the latter being rather injudiciously distributed) are visible—nothing but a superb range of beautifully painted windows; and the columns only trace their dim outline a little less black against the deep gloom of the rest of the building. At this hour, could it last, it would be impossible to tire of wandering through this forest of magnificent stems, of which the branches are only seen to spring, and imme-

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diately lose themselves beneath the glories of the coloured transparencies rendered doubly brilliant by their contrast with the gloom of all below them. The principal merit, in fact, of this edifice, consists in its windows. That of the purity of its general style deserves also to be allowed; but with some reserve in the appreciation of the accessory points of the design. It depended, for instance, on the judgment of the architect, to diminish or to increase the number of columns which separate the different naves, and by their unnecessary abundance he has impaired the grandeur of the general effect.

The interior dimensions are as follows:—Length, including a moderately sized chapel at the eastern extremity, three hundred and fifty English feet; width, throughout, one hundred and seventy-four feet; height of the principal nave and transept, about one hundred and twenty feet. The width is divided into five naves; those at the outside rising to about two-thirds of the height of the two next adjoining; and these to about half that of the centre nave. An entire side of a chapel opening out of the southernmost nave, is ornamented in the Arab style—having been executed by a Moorish artist at the same period as the rest; and not (as might be conjectured) having belonged to the mosque, which

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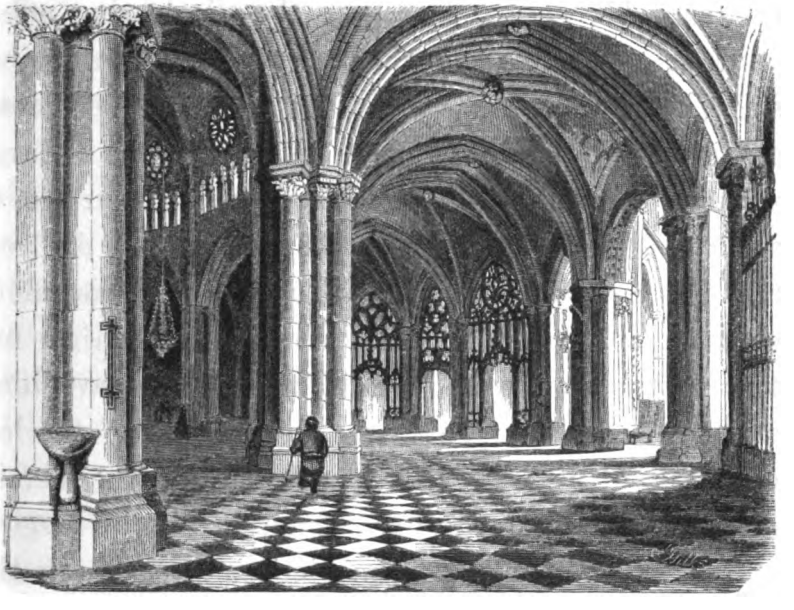
occupied the same site previously to the erection of the present cathedral. This small chapel would be a beautiful specimen of the Arab ornament in stucco, but for several coats of whitewash it has received. An arched recess occupies the centre, and is called the Tomb of the Alguazil. A handsome doorway in the same style is seen in the anteroom of the Chapter-saloon.



APSE OF THE CATHEDRAL, TOLEDO.

Facing the entrance to the centre or extreme eastern chapel, that of San Ildefonzo, the back of the high altar, or, as it is vulgarly called, the Tras-

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coro, is—not adorned, would it were possible not to say disfigured, by an immense mass of sculpture called the Transparente. It is not easy to imagine the reason of this altarpiece having received its name, for it is not more transparent than any other mountain—never was witnessed so lamentable a misapplication of riches and labour! Some of the marble was brought from Carrara; the rest is not of a very good white, and being thus exposed to an unfavourable contrast, adds to the displeasing effect of the unwieldy forms which enter into the composition of this huge blunder of art—this pile of masses on masses of ugliness. At the sight of a large spherical form rising abruptly from the surface of some shaft of a pillar, you step back, and discover that it forms part of the posteriors of a corpulent cherub, as large as the column itself, which he has thus unmercifully annihilated, in order to save himself the trouble of passing a few inches to the left or right. But it is needless to notice the details of this piece of sculpture, which being the largest, and occupying the most conspicuous position in the whole church, forcibly attracts the attention which, but for that circumstance, one would rather bestow in another direction.

It is a relief to take one's station on the shining mahogany benches adjoining the wall of the op-

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posite chapel of San Ildefonzo; and to contemplate its chaste style and graceful proportions, and the handsome tombs which occupy its octagonally divided walls. The piece of sculpture in marble, placed over the principal altar, is undeserving of its conspicuous situation. It represents the Vision of San Ildefonzo, to which we shall shortly have occasion to direct our attention.

The adjoining chapel, as we proceed towards the northernmost nave, that of Santiago, or more generally called after its founder, Don Alvaro de Luna, is still finer. It is larger and loftier, and of a more ornamental design. It presents five sides of an octagon: the three remaining sides turning inwards to suit the form of the apse. This Alvaro de Luna, the Lord Essex of Juan the Second, having by the high favour he enjoyed in the intimacy of the monarch, given umbrage to the courtiers, was put to death by the King, who gave credit to the charges falsely brought against him. Don Juan, however, who did not long survive his friend, had justice done to his remains. Being found innocent by a posthumous trial at Valladolid, his body was conveyed with great pomp to Toledo, and placed in the centre of his chapel. The tomb of his Countess stands close to his own; and in the niches of the surrounding walls, those of his most distinguished relatives, one of whom,

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on the right of the altar, is represented in complete armour, with a turban on his head. The treasures bestowed on this favourite, flowed plentifully into the Cathedral of Toledo. Besides his chapel, the finest of all—the elaborately executed enclosure of the sanctuary, is one of his gifts: his arms are there recognised, frequently recurring among the various designs of the external tracery.

A narrow passage, leading from the apse between the chapel of Don Alvaro, and the entrance to the sacristy, communicates with the chapel of the kings. After passing through a simply designed anteroom of more recent date, the eye reposes with pleasure on a small interior in the pointed style of the latest period—of proportions, perhaps, not the less graceful from their being rather narrow for the length. Two richly ornamented arches, stretching across the interior, divide it into three parts, in the first of which is seen a gallery containing an elaborately wrought gilded confessional. The walls of the two other divisions are divided into six parts; the chapel having been constructed and endowed by Juan the First, for the reception of six monuments: those of himself and his Queen Isabella; those of his father Henry the Second, (natural son of Alonzo the Eleventh, and who dethroned and killed with his own hand his half-brother, Pedro the cruel,) and

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Doña Juana his wife; and those of Henry the Third, and Doña Catalina his wife.

Returning to the interior of the apse, and continuing in the direction of the north side, another small passage and anteroom lead to the principal sacristy, which communicates with the next chapel, called the Sagrario, and composed of three apartments. The great sacristy contains some good paintings, particularly the ceiling by Giordano—a modern tomb of the late archbishop, Cardinal de Bourbon, and a series of narrow doors, within which are recesses. The first of these contains the crown and bracelets of the Virgin of the Sagrario: in four others are preserved magnificent ornaments of silver, representing emblematically the four quarters of the globe. Each quarter is personified by a figure invested with the attributes which characterize the region she represents, seated on a large silver globe, on the front of which is traced the quarter represented. The globe is supported by figures of animals. In the last of these recesses is seen the sword of Alonzo the Sixth, who won Toledo from the Moors. It is small, and unornamented, except by a hilt of embossed silver, on which the arms are repeated four times. In the smaller sacristy within are several good pictures, but not so remarkable as to prevent their being eclipsed by the splendid robe

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of the Virgin of the neighbouring Sagrario, here exhibited, extended flat on a semicircular board, such being the form of the garment.

No one knows the value of this treasure. During the Peninsular War, the archbishop, in order to spare the French Generals too great a temptation, conveyed it, together with whatever else deserved the precaution, to Cadiz. It is embroidered almost entirely with pearls on a tissue of silver; but none of the silver is visible without separating the pearls, diamonds, &c, with the fingers. Most of the larger pearls possess the irregular sort of beaten shape often observed in the best specimens. Some are enormous. Numbers of diamonds, rubies, and other stones are admitted in the upper part, to vary and enliven the effect of the different designs of the embroidery. In another case is extended the front-piece, worn together with the robe, which is open in front. The robe sits nearly in the fashion of a lady's cloak, but perfectly stiff, and widening as it descends, so much as to make the figure assume the appearance of a triangle, of which the base is longer than the two other sides. The opening in front corresponds with the outline of the two sides, being wider below than above, although not in as great a degree. This opening is occupied by the front piece, which is much smaller than the robe, but

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still more valuable, being principally worked in brilliants. It contains also every variety of precious stones, introduced as their colours may happen to accord with the design.

In addition to these is shown the dress of the Bambino, similar in materials to the two others; but the pearls and diamonds more equally distributed.

But the marvel of this costume is the crown. This ornament adds to the splendour of its materials, the most exquisite and elaborate workmanship. It would require hours to appreciate the labour and taste displayed in all its details. Marshal Soult, could he but see it, would order masses for the soul of the prelate who spared him such a temptation. The diamonds, especially those which compose a cross surmounting the centre, are of the purest water, and of immense size. But in the midst of the dazzling and harmonious intricacy of this gem of all colours, there is a centre of attraction, which took my fancy more than the rest. Immediately under the centre ball, an immense spherical emerald, which supports the diamond cross), is a small bird suspended on a hook within the crown. All the parts of this bird are composed of white enamel, except the body, around which the wings, legs, neck, and head, are attached, and which consists of a pearl of an oval form, about the size of a sparrow's egg. The move-

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ment of the statue during a procession, keeps the bird (hanging from its hook) in constant agitation, and produces the effect of a living bird enclosed in a cage of precious stones.*

A pair of bracelets, possessing no less magnificence than the crown, but rather too heavy and bulky to be graceful, are suspended in the same recess, and worn on the same occasions.

It should not be forgotten, as a proof of the judgment shown in the choice of ornaments, which, as far as regards the front, consist principally of diamonds, that the complexion of the Virgin of the Sagrario, is more than dark—in fact, quite black.† The innermost of the three apartments forming the chapel of the Sagrario is called the Ochavo, and is the deposit of a collection of relics of all kinds. It is an octagon, surmounted at an elevation of more than double its diameter by a dome ornamented with excellent painting. The walls are faced with the best Spanish marbles. Each of the eight sides contains an open recess reaching to the first cornice—an elevation of about twenty-five feet; and in these recesses are contained all the valuable relics belonging

* The crown was valued in Cadiz at a hundred and sixty thousand pounds, of which the emerald, which supports the cross, represents forty thousand.

† She is of a wood, whether artificially or naturally, of a tint between the darkest mahogany and ebony.

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to the cathedral; — a rich display of silver statues, reliquaries, coffins, chests, and crosses of gold and silver, some containing jewels of great value. A silver statue of Saint Ferdinand wearing a golden crown is among the objects most worthy of remark; also a cross containing a portion of the true cross, presented to the cathedral by St. Louis. This and several other relics, such as a phial containing the Virgin's milk, a portion of our Saviour's purple garment, &c., were presented to the cathedral by St. Louis on his return from the east, and are here preserved, together with the letter in his own handwriting, which accompanied them.

The Virgin of the Sagrario receives by far the greatest share of devotion brought to the numerous shrines of this vast temple, even greater than that offered at the high altar. More masses are performed at her altar than at all the others added together. The aisles facing her antechapel are constantly filled with a crowd of kneeling votaries. She stands in the second enclosure, turning her back to the Ochavo. An iron railing separates her apartment from the first chapel, which is usually open to the aisles. She stands consequently in full view, magnificently robed in a *fac simile* imitation of her pearl dress, the original being only worn on one or two occasions during the year.

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The interior of the Capilla Mayor, is ornamented with several rows of statues, and some handsome funereal monuments, forming together a sort of transparent wall of sculpture on each of its sides. In the midst of a series of mitred archbishops, and coroneted princes, the figure of a peasant occupies one of the most conspicuous positions. It stands on the left side, as you face the High Altar, and about twenty feet from the pavement. This statue represents a celebrated historical personage. Alonzo the Eighth, when penetrating across the Sierra Morena into Andalucia, in search of the Moorish army under the King of Morocco, Mahomed ben Jacob, was in danger of losing the fruit of his exertions, in bringing together the forces of the Kings of Aragon and Navarre, together with numerous other confederates. He had led the combined army into a defile, in which he would have had to receive the attack of the Moor at an insuperable disadvantage. The hostile forces occupied a height called the Puerto del Miradal.

It was at the moment that retreat was the subject of deliberation, that a peasant presented himself, and offered to guide the army out of the pass. Having assured himself of the man's sincerity, Alonzo put himself under his conduct, and was led to the summit of the mountain, where he

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found himself on the border of an immense plain. This decided the great victory of las Navas de Tolosa gained over the Moors on the 16th of July, 1212. Alonzo ordered a statue of the peasant to be placed in this cathedral. He is represented in a costume not unlike that of an ancient Roman rustic, a sort of tunic reaching to the knees, and his face is covered with a profuse beard.

The interior of the choir is the work of Felipe de Borgoña, and Berruguete; the latter having been employed, after the death of Felipe de Borgoña, in 1548, in continuing the sculptures. The entire south side was left for him to complete; after which he added a group in marble, representing the Transfiguration, placed rather injudiciously, since it outtops the screen or back of the choir; thus presenting to the view of those who enter from the western or grand entrance, and who are more likely to have come with the intention of viewing the ornaments, than the canons who are seated in the choir—the back of the subject, or rather, forms which represent no subject whatever. There is a Virgin on a pedestal in the centre of the eastern end of the choir, turning her back to the bronze railing which separates it from the transept. This statue has occupied its present position ever since the erection of the cathedral; and it is probable

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would long since have quitted it, but for a still greater inconvenience consequent on its removal. The attempt was recently made, when a mass of water issued with much violence from beneath the pedestal, and putting to flight the canons who were assembled to preside at the operation, instantly inundated the whole church. The virgin occupies probably the site of the fountain which must have been the centre of the court, at the period of the existence of the mosque. However that may be, he spot is the exact centre of the present edifice.

At the two eastern angles of the quadrangle, formed by the intersection of the transept and principal nave, close to the railing of the capilla mayor are two pulpits of bronze, excellently wrought; supported on short pillars of rare marbles.

A tall pyramidal Gothic edifice* of gilded and painted wood, rising to the full height of the ceiling, stands in front of a column of the second nave from

* The Author has in every instance made use of the word Gothic, in preference to the employment of any sort of periphrasis; considering that the chief intention of a name is, not that its application should accord with its derivation, but rather that it should present to all who know it, or have dictionaries, an identical meaning, in order that the idea of the individual employing it may be speedily caught. Now the word Gothic having always been applied to this architecture, it is comprehended. A dismounted highwayman is termed a pad. The oblong area in the centre of Madrid is called a door. "What's in a name?"

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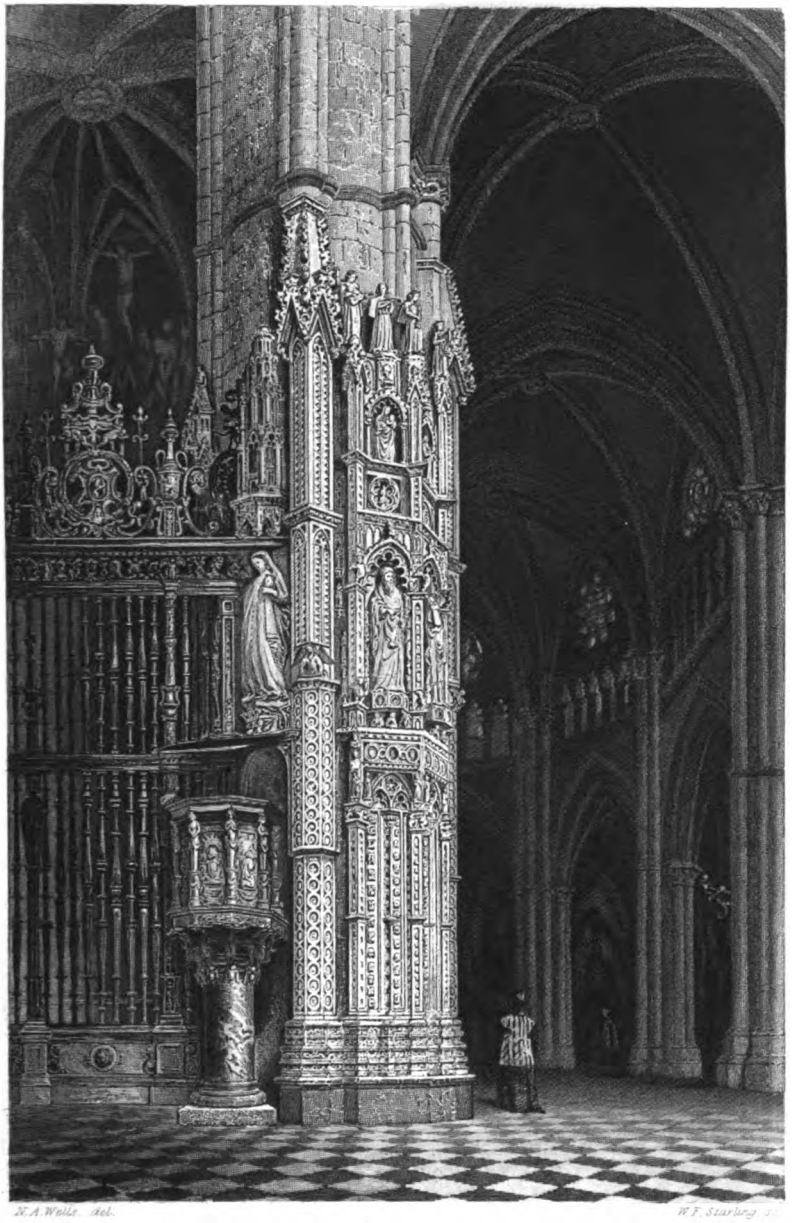

INTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL, TOLEDO.

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the north side. All its sides are open, and furnished with bronze railings, through which is seen an altar, raised on three or four steps. In the centre of the altar is inserted a marble slab—a highly prized relic, being the stone on which the Virgin placed her foot, on the occasion of her appearing in the cathedral in *propriâ personâ* to the Archbishop San Ildefonzo. This peculiar favour bestowed on the saint—and a robe with which she invested him with her own hands, were bestowed, according to the historian Mariana, in recompense of his zeal in opposing the doctrine of the two Frenchmen, Pelagio and Helvidio, whose writings and preachings tended to shake the belief in the virginity of the Saviour's mother. The occurrence is thus described:

"The night immediately preceding the feast of the Annunciation, the archbishop entered the church, surrounded by several of the clergy. As they entered, the cathedral appeared filled with a brilliant light. Those who accompanied the saint, overcome with terror, turned and fled. Remaining alone, he advanced to the foot of the high altar, and fell on his knees; when, on the chair from which it was his custom to deliver his exhortations to the people, —clothed in more than human majesty—appeared the mother of Christ, who addressed him in the following words:—'This gift, brought from Heaven,

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shall be the reward of the virginity which thou hast preserved in thy body, joined with purity of mind, and ardour of faith; and for having defended our virginity.'

"Having thus spoken, she placed on him, with her own hands, a robe, which she commanded him to wear on the celebration of her festivals, and those of her Son."

The representations of this scene, from which is derived the claim of superior sanctity assumed by this cathedral, are multiplied both in marble and on canvas in all parts of the edifice, as well as in almost all the churches of Toledo. In most cases, the execution of them has been intrusted to unskilful hands. The best specimen is that executed in marble over the small altar I have just noticed. It is remarkable for the graceful and good-humoured expression of the Virgin, and the easy, almost merry, demeanour of her celestial attendants.

The marble box which contains the Host is let into the altar-piece, of which it appears to form a part of the surface, only projecting slightly as its sides are convex. Turning on a pivot, it presents four different fronts, each representing, in well executed relief, a different scene in the Virgin's life.

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LETTER X.

CAFÉS. WEDDING CEREMONY. CATHEDRAL CONTINUED. ALCAZAR HOSPITAL OF SANTA CRUZ. CONVENT OF LA CONCEPTION. MYSTERIOUS CAVERN. CONVENT OF SANTA FE, OR OF SANTIAGO. SONS-IN-LAW OF THE CID.

Toledo.

One of the first contrasts between this and other countries, which forces itself on the observation, is the amalgamation of the different classes of society in public places of resort. The grandee is far too sure of his personal importance and consideration, to entertain any fear of its being diminished by contact with those of inferior rank; and the peasant is far too proud to importune his superiors by any indiscreet efforts at familiarity.

At Burgos I found the *Gefe politico*, or governor of the province, sipping his lemonade in the evening at the *café;* his elbow brushing the back of a mayoral of a diligence, and surrounded by an assemblage of all classes of the male inhabitants of the town. These cafés are curious establishments; they

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are divided into two classes—the Café, properly so called, and the Botilleria—in which tea and coffee are not usually called for, but all the other refreshments of the café; such as *helados* (frozen beverages of all sorts), *sorbetes* (ices), liqueurs, wines, &c. These latter are the resort, in some towns, of both sexes, and indeed the cafés also in a less degree. But the etiquette in these things differs in the different provinces.

At Madrid, where foreign customs first penetrate, ladies are rarely seen in these resorts; by which they are considerable losers. No doubt, were the attractions of French cafés sufficiently powerful, your sex would not have withered them, by their disdain, into the uncivilized dens which they are. You are not of course invited by the billiard tables, or by the allurements of black coffee and cognac; but were the waiters to set before you a tumbler of frozen lemonade after a July evening's dusty walk, you would speedily bring such habits into fashion.

Much as the refreshments of Spanish cafés have been celebrated, their fame is surpassed by the reality. It is only when you have panted through a southern summer's day, and breathed an atmosphere of fire, that you are disposed to receive the illustration of the full sense of the word refreshment; and it is then they hand you a brobdignag goblet, brim

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full of frozen orange-water or lemonade, or snow-white orgeat—which, from the imperceptible inroads made by the teaspoon on its closing-up surface, appears likely to last you the whole night. These and other similar luxuries, including the ices, at which those of a Grange or Tortoni would melt with jealousy, are plentiful in second and third-rate towns, and rank among the necessaries of life, rather than as objects of indulgence. They are of course cheap, or it would not answer.

The poor apply to the distributors of iced barley-water, who carry about a sort of cask, strapped between their shoulders, and containing ice in the centre, to maintain the frigidity of the beverage. By lowering and advancing the left shoulder, the vendor pours the contents of the cask through a small neck or pipe into the glasses, which he carries in a flat basket with cellaret partitions. A tumbler of this costs a halfpenny; its imbibing occupies two or three minutes, and assuages for hours the sufferings of the thirstiest palate.

At Madrid, the cafés have each its political colour; except that called del Principe, after the adjoining theatre. In this, politics are less characterised, literature having here taken up her quarters. It is probable that she is a less profitable customer, being habitually less thirsty. Accordingly, on put-

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ting your head into the door, you see a saloon far more brilliantly lighted up than the others; but the peripatetic doctrines seem to prevail. Few persons are seated at the tables; and instead of the more profitable wear and tear of broken glasses, the proprietor probably finds substituted a thankless annual item for worn out floors. In the same street there is a club; but this is an exotic importation and on the exclusive plan, not quite of London, but of the Paris *cercles*.

In the cafés of Toledo, on the days of *fiesta*, the fair sex predominates, especially in summer. The great resort is, however, the Zocodover, from nine to ten in the evening. This little irregularly formed *plaza* is crowded like an assembly-room, and possesses its rows of trees, although a respectable oak would almost fill it.

A soirée has occasionally been known to be given in Toledo, but it is an occurrence of much rarity, and mostly occasioned by some unusual event,—the arrival of a public singer, or, still more unusual, a newly made fortune. The other evening I was admitted to one, the pretext for which was a wedding. This ceremony takes place at the residence of the bride, and although a subsequent formality is necessary in the Church, its delay does not defer the validity of the union, nor its consummation. The wedding-

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day arrived, the families and friends of both parties assemble at eight in the evening.

The bride was distinguishable by a white veil or *mantilla* in the middle seat of a sofa, between her mother and sister, who rose to receive the guests. A narrow table had been dressed up into a temporary altar, and furnished with a crucifix and candles. All the party being arrived, a priest left his chair, and entered an adjoining room to robe; on his reappearance the company rose and flocked round the bride and bridegroom, who stood together before the priest, doing penance each with a long wax-light in the right hand, held in a muslin handkerchief.

The ceremony lasts about ten minutes without any change of posture. The priest departs to unrobe; the miserable bride and blushing bridegroom receive felicitations; and all resume their seats, and look at each other.

Presently chocolate was handed round, and an attempt at conversational murmur commenced, afterwards ices. And now the minister took a formal leave of the company, after complimenting the bride. Two or three other holy men, obedient to the signal, carried out their interminable hats before them: when a sudden revolution broke out. At the closing of the door on the hindmost ecclesiastic

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the bridegroom rushed to the altar, and grasping with one hand the crucifix, and with the other two of the candlesticks, ran to the apartment that had assumed the character of vestry, and deposited them there, followed by officious friends bearing the remaining articles, until every awe-compelling symbol had disappeared. One or two guitars were extracted from their hiding-places under sofas, and sent forth careless but lively preludes. The men stood up and circulated; the women talked and laughed; a quadrille was speedily formed, and concluded; waltzing followed, and forfeits, and whatever you like, and—"the arrangements were on a scale of costly magnificence, and the festivities were prolonged, &c."

But these events are rare in Toledo. The every-day amusements consist in an infamous theatre, and the promenade; this is only on Saints' days; but these are almost every day. On six or seven occasions in the year, these promenades are absolute events, and much looked forward to. It is necessary to inquire which is the promenade patronised by the saint of the great day, whoever he is, and take your place in the tide, for no one absents himself.

Dresses for these celebrations are things premeditated; and the effect produced, and all the little events and rencontres of the day form for each belle, thrilling subjects of retrospection. *Man-*

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tillas may be trimmed, and innocent plots woven for these occasions, without danger of disappointment by clouds or storms; and instead of the Virgin being implored that the sun may shine, who never disappoints them, she is sometimes requested to inspire some ruse for a momentary escape from his too searching effulgence.

Here may fair foreigners feast their eyes on fawn-coloured *majos*, whose every step (although no more exalted beings than butchers, postilions, horsedealers, and such like) would be envied by Antinous and Apollo. I should advise no veils, nor winkings, nor blinkings on these occasions, but eyes wide open—for never more (the Pyrenees once repassed) will their orbits expand to the forms and costumes of blackguards half so beautiful.

But these are subjects slightly unsuited to the interior of the cathedral, of our presence in which we are evidently forgetful. The Mozarabic Chapel, founded by Cardinal Ximenes de Cisneros, is situated under the southern tower, and contains a Virgin and Child executed in Mosaic, and a curious old fresco painting, representing the battle of Oran, at which the Cardinal was victorious over the Arabs. This chapel is set apart for the performance of the Mozarabic ritual, still retained by a portion of the population of Toledo, and the exercise of which

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was continued in several churches, until the closing of some of them at the recent revolution.

The Arab conquerors of Spain exercised towards the religion of the country, the most complete and liberal tolerance. All who preferred remaining in the conquered towns to flight and exile, were allowed to retain a sufficient number of places of worship for the free exercise of their religion. On the subsequent introduction of the Italian missal, those who retained the ancient gothic forms were called Mozarabes (mixti Arabes, according to some, from their service being the same as that in use during the co-existence together of the two creeds). A more probable origin is attributed to the expression by some antiquaries, who derive it from Muza, the name of the Moorish general. The mass of the Christians who had taken refuge in the Asturias, applied the term to their brethren, who preferred accepting from the Arabs what they considered a degrading tolerance. The following singular mode of decision was adopted for the purpose of settling the question between the two missals.

The King, Alonzo the Sixth, the Archbishop Don Bernardo, and the court, were among the advocates of the new missal, which, being adopted in Rome, they were very desirous of establishing on the occasion of the restoration of the Christian supremacy

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at Toledo. The mass of the people were attached to their ancient forms. It was resolved that the question should be decided by an appeal to a sort of neutral power; and Mars was selected, probably on account of his being a person disinterested in the affair. A champion was chosen by each party, and a day appointed for settling the difference by single combat. Accordingly, the court, the clergy, and the people being assembled, the representatives of the two missals took their station, lance in rest, and on the appointed signal spurred to the encounter. The ancient missal was approved of by the warlike god; but the King and his party were dissatisfied with the result, and resolved on another trial. A large fire was lighted in the principal plaza, and the two missals were thrown into it.

Again the ancient forms conquered, the rival parchment having caught the flame and being drawn out in a blaze. The populace now commenced a cry of triumph; but, to their great disappointment, the King, in his quality of umpire, pronounced a judgment which he might as easily have put in execution before the trials: namely, that considering that the Roman Missal, although on fire, was not consumed, they were both equally agreeable to the deity — they should therefore both

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be preserved, and that some of the more ancient churches should continue the exercise of the Moz-arabic service, while the Roman ritual should be established in the metropolitan temple, and in the greater number of the parishes.

Before we leave the cathedral, the cloister claims our attention. It is a spacious and handsome quadrangle, inclosing a garden. The eastern wall is adorned with excellent frescos of comparatively modern date, and all bearing the same signature—Francisco Bayeu. There are seven subjects on that side, being the number of intervals corresponding with the arcades, and three more continuing down another side. The best are two, taken from the history of Saint Casilda; and three from that of San Eugenio, first archbishop of Toledo, martyrised in France. The arcades on the east side are shut in by large pieces of sail-cloth, in order to protect the paintings against the sun's rays.

The library of manuscripts belonging to this cathedral is distinguished rather by the quality than the quantity of its contents. It is approached by a staircase communicating with the cloister, and is a handsome room. It contains a copy of the Talmud on the papyrus leaves, and in the Coptic dialect. The following are also among its treasures: The Book of Esther in Hebrew, on a single piece of

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parchment; two bibles of the seventh century, one of which belonged to St. Isidore; the missal used by Charles the Fifth in the monastery of Yuste; the poems of Dante, manuscript of the poet's time, with illustrations; the laws of Alonso the Tenth (surnamed the wise), and a volume of his poetical works, with the music opposite those intended to be sung: two ancient Chinese volumes, one on botany, the other on natural history, both illustrated.

The next edifice I visited was the Alcazar, the largest and most conspicuous building in Toledo. I expected to find there some Arab and Roman remains, having so read in more than one tour. It was not until some time after my visit that I obtained the information that the Moorish palace occupied a different site. The present comparatively modern building is principally of two epochs. On the east is the original portion erected by Alonzo the Sixth. The entire north and south fronts are probably additions of Philip the Second. The whole partakes of a divided character between castle and palace: it is not remarkable for any architectural merit, possessing neither beauty as a palace, nor solidity as a fortress; and having been occupied as a military position during the war of the succession, and more recently in that of independence, its being already a ruin, before its modern appearance would seem to legitimize such

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a state, causes no surprise. But its position is superb. Occupying the most elevated point of the town, it far exceeds the whole by the immense height of its walls, and commands an admirable view of the surrounding country. The only object deserving notice in this ruin is a colossal staircase, which occupies an entire side of the court,—a length of about two hundred and fifty feet,—and is ornamented by a light and elegant colonnade. This edifice ceased to be a palace on the final establishment of the court at Madrid, and after some time became the manufactory whence issued the famous silk and velvet brocades, the fabrication of which has now ceased, but with which Toledo formerly supplied the wardrobes of the court, and the well-garnished sacristies of Spain's wealthiest cathedrals.

Descending from the Alcazar through the Plaza de Zocodover, and thence towards the bridge of Alcantara, a few yards from the Plaza bring us in view of the façade of the Hospital of Santa Cruz, or "de los niños expositos," — foundling hospital. The institution owes its origin to the Archbishop, Don Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, called the Great Cardinal of Spain. Although death prevented his witnessing the execution of his project, his fortune, administered by his next relatives and executors,—the Queen Isabella, and the Duke of Infantado,—was

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employed in the erection of the buildings, and in the endowment of the establishment. The plans and conditions were not even drawn up until after the Cardinal's death; and they were never entirely put in execution. The church consists of one nave, of a length out of all proportion to its width and elevation. It was to have been crossed by another of the same proportions, with the exception of the elevation, which was to have been eighty feet in both. This combined with the length—about three hundred and fifty feet, as is seen in the existing nave,—would have rendered the edifice one of the most extraordinary in existence. The altar was to have stood in the centre of the intersection of the two naves. As it is, the long bare interior looks as though it had been destined for a picture gallery or library, but rather for the latter from the low-coved roof of cedar, and from the inadequate distribution of light. To the left of the altar is seen a portrait of the founder; and on the opposite side, about a hundred feet further down the nave, a large Adoration,—a superior painting, especially with regard to the colouring: the author unknown.

There are two large courts surrounded by arcades: one of them is a model of lightness and beauty, and contains in one of its angles an admirably ornamented staircase. The architect of the Santa Cruz

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was Enrique Egas, who also built the celebrated hospital of the same name at Valladolid. He designed the whole according to the style then introduced, after the pointed style had been abandoned, and which in Spain received vulgarly the appellation of Plateresco, from the ornaments resembling the embossing of a silversmith. It is also confounded with the Renacimiento. The Plateresco style, from the too great liberty it afforded the architect, of setting aside the classic models, and following his own inventions, has produced in Spain, more than in any other country, (from there being at that period more wealth devoted to the construction of public monuments there than elsewhere,) the evil effects resulting from ill-guided and unrestrained powers of imagination. Fortunately, however, a few architects existed whose more correct taste kept them within some bounds; and who, in deserting the old models, replaced them by a style, if less pure, yet by no means inelegant. The architect Egas appears to have partaken of both natures at different moments; for, while his court above-mentioned is a specimen of consummate grace and good taste, the entrance front of the building is one of the bad examples of the style of the period.

The establishment covers a large space, about half the extent occupied by the double palace of the

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Arab kings of Toledo. The remainder of the site contains two convents,—that of Santiago, and that of the Conception. The hospital was conducted formerly on a scale proportionate to the extent of its accommodation; but it is now no more than a reminiscence; the revenues having probably been incorporated in the recent registrations of national property. The number of inmates at present enjoying the benefits of the foundation amounts to fourteen only.

The Convent of la Conception adjoins the hospital of Santa Cruz. From the exterior are seen two churches, placed in close parallel contact, and each composed of a single nave. Both are evidently very ancient, one being in the Arab style; but the form of the other renders it probable that it is the more ancient of the two. You are disappointed after being shown this last, on being informed that the Moorish portion is forbidden ground, being appropriated by the nuns to their private use, and possessing no communication with the adjoining edifice, but a curtained grating, through which its secluded inmates assist at religious services. In the public church, a singular ornament figures on a conspicuous part of the wall near the entrance; it is the carcass of a large crocodile, fixed high enough to be

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out of reach, although no one would be likely to purloin so unwieldy a curiosity. We are told the animal frequented the neighbourhood of Toledo; where, under cover of the pine forests, which formerly extended far over this mountainous region, its existence had long filled with terror the few travellers whom their mercantile pursuits compelled to pass within its accustomed haunts: that at length a knight (it was in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella) clothed in a full suit of armour, rode forth from Toledo, fully resolved to try conclusions with the monster, in order if possible to immortalize his name throughout the surrounding regions, by ridding them of so dire a scourge. The battle took place, and victory declaring for the knight, whose name unfortunately does not figure in the legend,—he assembled the peasants, and had his enemy's carcass borne in triumph to Toledo, where he made a present of it to the convent.

While on the subject of traditions, it is worth while adverting to a cavern, the entrance of which exists in this part of the town; and which is said to extend to a distance of eight miles, passing under the Tagus. It is related that somewhat less than a century back, the government ordered this cavern to be explored; but the exploring party was met at the commencement of the descent by so violent

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a gust of wind, as to extinguish all the torches, and the courage of the explorers, for the attempt was never resumed. The failure by no means contributed to diminish the mysterious qualities attributed to the cavern, on the subject of which the wildest notions are currently entertained.

A worthy and excellent native of Toledo, to whose antiquarian enthusiasm (a quality doubly valuable here from its scarcity) I am indebted for some information and much entertainment, undertook one day to enlighten me with regard to the origin of this subterranean curiosity. Commencing by warning my credulity against the innumerable fables current on the subject, and which only resembled each other in their absurdity and impossibility, he added, "The real fact is this,—the cavern is the work of Hercules, who excavated it for the accommodation of the assemblies of the people, whom he instructed in the elements of magic."

The convent of Santiago, or of Santa Fé, or of Las monjas santiagistas, or Las cavalleras, occupies the portion of the ancient Moorish alcazar, remaining from the site of the two last-mentioned buildings. It is built round two courts, one of which is divided into planted parterres, intersected with brick-paved walks. The architecture of this first court is very simple; it consists of a plain arcade of semicircular

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arches supported on square piers, and a repetition of the same on the first story. From this court opens the parlour of the Commendadora or abbess, and the choir, which forms a continuation of the public chapel. There is also under the arcade a folding door, which, when opened exhibits a collection of small pictures attached to it, as on the leaves of an album, and others suspended against the portion of wall it encloses. The centre painting of these last represents the Mater dolorosa weeping over the dead body of her Son. It has much of the manner of Alonza Cano, and is an admirable painting, more especially the dead body: the superior, however, did not know the name of the artist. She complained bitterly of the loss of a first-rate picture of the Divino Morales, which formerly occupied the place of her little collection, and which was taken possession of by Marshal Soult.

The second court is highly ornamental owing to the elegance of its architecture, and its magnificent proportions; it is a long quadrangle; the pillars below are very lofty, and support the gallery above without intermediate arches. They are not of a pure design, the shafts being too long for their diameter: in other respects they imitate the Tuscan order. Those of the arcade above are Ionic; but the effect here is destroyed by walls and windows, which have

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been constructed in their intervals, for the purpose of converting the open gallery into a warmer corridor. The walls below are clothed to the height of about four feet with the *azulejos*, or porcelain mosaic, of the sort originally employed by the Arabs, and from which the ornament took its name, being blue and white, without any other colour.

Opening from this court is the Sala Capitular a handsome saloon used on occasions of elections of the Commendadora, or other solemnities, which do not take place in the church. It contains a portrait of the sister of St. Ferdinand,—a member of the community; and a curious picture of St. Iago leading to victory the christian army of Don Ramiro the First. In fulfilment of a promise made to the king the night preceding the battle of Albayde, the apostle, according to the historians, led the army in person, mounted on a milk-white charger, which cantered along at a sufficient elevation over the heads of the combatants, to be visible to all; thus inspiring, simultaneously, his *protégés* with confidence, and the Moors with terror. From that victory the Spanish war-cry of Santiago is said to derive its origin.

The buildings on the north side of the large court stand on the brink of a perpendicular rock, overhanging the *faubourg* on the Madrid side of

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Toledo, and commanding right and left the luxuriant *vega*, to an extent of from forty to fifty miles. Over the highest story of this portion of the building, and forming a continuation of the rock, a Belvidere has been constructed, the roof of which is supported by piers, leaving all the sides open: it forms a promenade of about a hundred feet in length, by twenty-five in width.

The regulations of this convent are much less strict than those observed by all other religious communities. It would not otherwise have been possible to obtain permission to visit the establishment in detail. The *monjas cavalleras* (knight-nuns) of the military order of Santiago, take the white veil only, and not the black. If a nun inherits a property, she obtains permission from the council of military orders, sitting at Madrid, to absent herself from the convent for the purpose of transacting all necessary business. The same permission may be obtained in cases of illness. In taking the vows there is no prostration beneath the veil. The novice crosses her hands in a kneeling posture, and takes the oath on the Gospel. One is struck by something invincibly puzzling in this amalgamation of military regulation with religious hierarchy and female seclusion. They call themselves knights; their abbess, commander. The king, as Grand Master

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of the military orders (since Ferdinand the Fifth) of Calatrava, Alcantara, and Santiago, is their recognised chief; and whenever military mass is required to be performed, the troops march into their chapel to beat of drum.

I was even assured that these recluses are not obliged to refuse a hand offered for a waltz, if it belongs to an arm having an epaulette at its other extremity; and that such scenes are known to occur in the presence of the commandress herself.

Our party, formed for the visit to this convent, having been presented to the superior, she gave directions to a nun to show us every part of the establishment. This sister, who, we were told, bore the title and rank of serjeantess (sargenta), possessed the remains of great beauty, and her (probably) forty summers had not injured her commanding and graceful figure. No sooner had she ushered us into the choir than she left us for an instant, and returned with her mantle of ceremony, —the costume in which they take the vow, and in which they appear on all occasions of solemnity. It was with evident satisfaction that she performed this part of her duties of cicerone; nor was it to be wondered at. No costume could have been invented better calculated to set off her natural advantages. It is composed of a sort of white serge, and appears

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to have no seam. Attached round the shoulders it sweeps the ground with a train of four or five feet. A cross of scarlet cloth, bound with dark brown edges, and of a graceful form, figures on the portion which covers the left arm from the shoulder to the elbow. The white cap, gathered all over into minute plaits, rises into two parallel ridges, which passing over to the back of the head, imitate the form of a helmet. Two large lappets descend to the shoulders and complete the costume, which is entirely white, with the exception of the cross. In walking round the choir to display to us the effect of this dress, the fair *santiagista* was a model of majesty and grace.

To judge from her replies to our questions, it would appear that the system of softening the severity of monastic seclusion, and of partial and occasional communication with the beings of the outer world, instead of producing more contentment in the minds of the recluses, may possibly tend to unsettle them, and render them more dissatisfied with their lot. When asked how long she had inhabited the convent, she replied with an unrestrained and most pathetic inflation of the chest, more eloquent than the loudest complaint — "A very long time; nearly twenty years." The white mantle, she told us, was an object the sight

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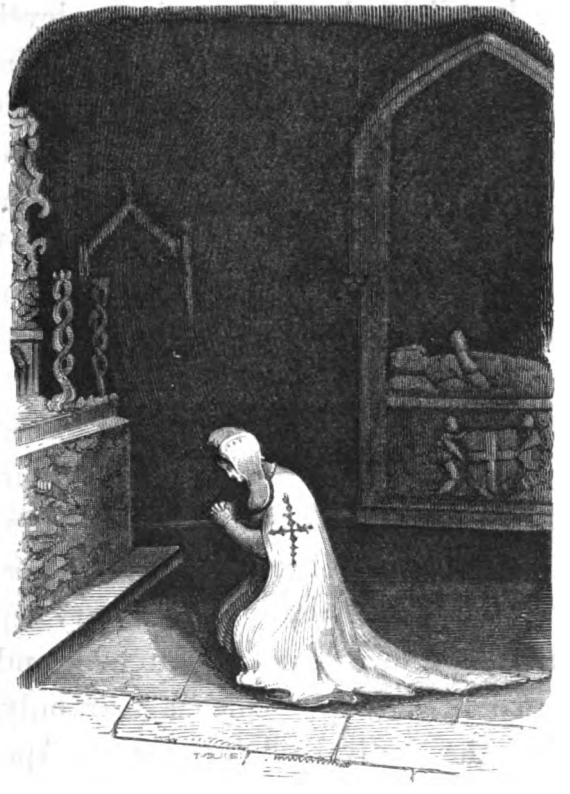

COSTUME OF A MILITARY NUN.

of which always gave birth to serious reflections; since it was destined not even to quit her after death, but to serve also for her shroud.

The nun's choir is entirely separated from the public chapel, with the exception of two gratings, which admit to the latter the sound of the organ, and through which the nuns have a better view of the church than the public can obtain of the choir,

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this being less lighted, and on a lower level. Near the choir a small oratory of no greater dimensions than about seven feet square, appears to be the only remains extant of the Arab buildings, which occupied the site. The ceiling is hemispherical, and ornamented in the Arab style; and one of the walls contains a niche surrounded by Arab tracery. I should mention likewise a fountain in the garden, which bears a similar character.

These nuns live less in community with each other than those of other convents; in fact, their life resembles in many respects that of independent single ladies. Each inhabits her own suite of apartments, and keeps her own servant. Her solitary repasts are prepared in her own separate kitchen, and at the hour chosen by herself. Once a-year only, on the occasion of the festival of the patron Apostle, the community assembles at dinner. The common refectory is at present let to strangers, together with other portions of the convent. The novice who wishes to enter this convent must be of good family, (proof of noble descent being demanded up to grandfathers and grandmothers inclusive) and possessed of property. Of the entrance of the present *commendadora* into the convent thirty years since, a romantic story is related. She belongs to a family of rank in the province of La Mancha,—and it is worth men-

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tioning, that she recollects Espartero's father, who, as she states, served a neighbouring family in the capacity of cowherd.

A match, *de convenance*, had been arranged for her by her parents, on the accomplishment of which they insisted the more rigidly from her being known to entertain an attachment, the object of which was disapproved. No resistance being of any avail, the wedding-day was named ; and she was taken to Toledo for the purpose of making the necessary purchases for the occasion. It so happened that she was received by a relative, a member of the community of Santiagistas ; and whether she confided her pains to the bosom of this relative, and yielded to her persuasions—nuns being usually given to proselytism ; or perhaps acting on the impulse of the moment ; she declared on the morning after her arrival her resolution never to quit the convent ; preferring, as she resolutely affirmed, an entire life of seclusion, to an union with a man she detested. Instead, therefore, of the wedding dresses, a *manton capitular* was the only ornament purchased.

The property of this establishment remaining for the most part in possession of the respective original possessors, and not forming a common stock, the conscientious scruples of the revolution made an exception in its favour, owing to which it is not

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reduced to so destitute a condition as that of the other unclosed convents. The nuns of San Clemente — the principal convent of Toledo, and of which the abbess alone possessed private property, are reduced to a life of much privation, as are also those of all the other convents. Some obtain presents in return for objects of manual industry, such as dolls' chairs, and other similar toys. Those of San Clemente had, and still have, a reputation for superior skill in confectionary. A specimen of their talent, of which I had an opportunity of judging in the house of a friend of the abbess, appeared to me to warrant the full extent of their culinary fame. They do not, however, exercise this art for gain. At San Clemente, and no doubt at all the others, the new government—besides the confiscation of all rents and possessions in money and land—seized the provisions of corn and fruits which they found on searching the attics of the building.

Immediately below the ruined modern Alcazar, and facing the Expositos, is seen a vast quadrangular building, each front of which presents from twenty to thirty windows on a floor. It is without ornament, and is entered by a square doorway, which leads to an interior court. It is now an inn, called Fonda de la Caridad, but was originally the residence of the Cid, who built it simultaneously with the

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erection of the Alcazar, by Alonzo the Sixth, shortly after the taking of the town; Ruy Diaz being at that time in high favour, and recently appointed first Alcalde of Toledo, and governor of the palace. It was on the occasion of the first cortez held in this town, that the hero demanded a formal audience of Alonzo, in which he claimed justice against his two sons-in-law, the counts of Carrion.

These were two brothers, who had married the two Countesses of Bivar. On the occasion of the double marriage, a brilliant party had assembled at the Cid's residence, where all sorts of festivities had succeeded each other. The two bridegrooms, finding themselves, during their presence in this knightly circle, in positions calculated to test their mettle, instead of proving themselves, by a display of unequalled valour and skill, to be worthy of the choice by which they had been distinguished, gave frequent proofs of deficiency in both qualities; and, long before the breaking up of the party, their cowardice had drawn upon them unequivocal signs of contempt from many of the company, including even their host. Obliged to dissimulate their vexation as long as they remained at the château of the Cid, they concerted a plan of vengeance to be put in execution on their departure.

They took formal leave, and departed with their

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brides for their estate, followed by a brilliant suite. No sooner, however, had they reached the first town, than, inventing a pretext, they despatched all the attendants by a different route, and proceeded on their journey, only accompanied by their wives. Towards evening the road brought them to a forest, which appeared to offer facilities for putting their project in execution. Here they quitted the high-way, and sought a retired situation.

It happened that an attendant of the Countesses, surprised at the determination of the party to divide routes, had been led by curiosity to follow them unobserved. This follower, after having waited some time for their return to the high-road, penetrated into the midst of the wood, in order to discover the cause of the delay. He found the two brides lying on the ground, almost without clothing, and covered with blood, and learned that they had just been left by their husbands, who had been scourging them almost to death.

It was against the perpetrators of this outrage that the Cid pleaded for justice. A certain number of nobles were selected by Alonzo, and directed to give a decision after hearing the accusation and the defence. The offence being proved, the Counts had nothing to urge in extenuation, and judgment was pronounced. All the sums of money, treasures,

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gold and silver vases and goblets, and precious stones, given by the Cid with his daughters as their dowry, to be restored; and (at the request of Ruy Diaz) the two Counts of Carrion, and their uncle, who had advised them to commit the act, were condemned to enter the lists against three of the followers of the Cid. The last decision was momentarily evaded by the Counts; who urged, that, having come to Toledo to be present at the cortez, they were unprovided with the necessary accoutrements. The King, however, insisted that they should not escape so mild a punishment, and repaired himself to Carrion, where he witnessed the combat, in which, it is needless to add, the culprits came off second best. The marriages being, at the same time, declared null, the Cid's daughters were shortly afterwards married a second time; the eldest, Doña Elvira, to Don Ramiro, son of Sancho, King of Navarre; and the younger, Doña Sol, to Don Pedro, hereditary Prince of Aragon.

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LETTER XI.

STREETS OF TOLEDO. EL AMA DE CASA. MONASTERY OF SAN JUAN DE LOS REYES. PALACE OF DON HURTADO DE MENDOZA.

Toledo.

We will now hasten to the opposite extremity of the city, where the monastery of San Juan de los Reyes lays claim to especial interest. But I already hear you cry for mercy, and exclaim against these endless convents and monasteries; the staircases, courts, and corridors of which cause more fatigue to your imagination, than to the limbs of those who, however laboriously, explore their infinite details. Infinite they are, literally, in Toledo; where the churches, the greater number of which belong to convents, are not seen, as elsewhere, scattered singly among the masses of the habitations, but are frequently to be found in clusters of three or four, whether united by the same walls, or facing each other at the two sides of a street. It may, perhaps, afford you a short relief to pick your way over the

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somewhat rugged pavement of a few of the Toledo streets, and take a survey of the exterior town, which our present destination requires us to traverse in its entire extent. I must inform you that, for the success of this enterprise, the stranger stands in absolute need of a pilot, without whose assistance his embarrassments would be endless.

Toledo scarcely boasts a street in which two vehicles could meet and continue their route. Most are impassable for a single cart; and, in more than one, I have found it impossible to carry an open umbrella. Such being the prevailing width of the streets, their tortuous direction causes a more serious inconvenience. He who has attempted the task of Theseus, in the mazes of some modern garden labyrinth, will comprehend the almost inevitable consequence of relying on his own wits for finding his way about Toledo,—namely, the discovery that he has returned to his point of departure at the moment he imagined that half the town separated him from it. This result is the more favoured by the similarity of the streets and houses. No such thing as a land-mark. All the convents are alike. You recollect at a particular turning, having observed a Moorish tower; consequently, at the end of the day, the sight of the Moorish tower leads you on, buoyed up by doubly elevated

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spirits, in the required direction, most anxious to bring the tiring excursion to a close: but this tower leads you to the opposite extremity of the city to that you seek, for there are half a dozen Moorish towers, all alike, or with but a trifling difference in their construction.

Nor is this obstacle to solitary exploration unaccompanied by another inconvenience. I allude to the continual ascents and descents. The surface of the mountain on which Toledo is built, appears to have been ploughed by a hundred earthquakes, so cut and hacked is it, to the exclusion of the smallest extent of level ground. To carry a railroad across it, would require an uninterrupted succession of alternate viaducts and tunnels. In consequence of this peculiarity, the losing one's way occasions much fatigue. To do justice to the inhabitants, an almost universal cleanliness pervades the town,—an excellence the attainment of which is not easy in a city so constructed, and which gives a favourable impression of the population. It is one of the towns in which is proved the possibility of carrying on a successful war against the vermin for which the Peninsula has acquired so bad a reputation, by means of cleanliness maintained in the houses.

In the house I inhabited on my arrival, I had suspected for some days an unusual neglect in the

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duties of the housemaid, to whose department it belonged to sweep the *esteras* or matting, which serve for carpets, from the circumstance of my having been visited by one or two unwelcome tormentors. I ventured a gentle remonstrance to the *ama* (landlady), stating my reasons for the suspicion I entertained. It happened that on the previous day I had mentioned my having been shown over the Archbishop's palace. This she had not forgotten; for with a superb coolness, scarcely to be met with out of Spain, she replied, "Fleas! oh, no! sir! we have none here,—you must have brought them with you from the Palace." Satisfied, however, with having maintained her dignity of landlady, she took care to have the nuisance removed.

This *ama*, as may be already judged, was a curiosity. In the first place, she was a dwarf. The Spaniards are not, generally speaking, a more diminutive race than the other inhabitants of Southern Europe: but when a Spaniard, especially a woman, takes it into her head to be small, they go beyond other nations. Nowhere are seen such prodigies of exiguity. The lady was, moreover, deformed, one of her legs describing a triangle, which compelled her in walking to imitate the sidelong progress of a crab. Possessed of these peculiarities she had attained, as spinster, that very uncertain age called by some

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"certain," but agreed by all to be nearer the end than the commencement of life.

Although not an exception, with regard to temper, to the generality of those whose fate it is to endure such a complication of ills, she nevertheless on frequent occasions gave way to much amiability, and especially to much volubility of discourse. She was not without a tinge of sentimentality; and when seated, fan in hand, and the *mantilla puesta*, on one of the chairs shorn of almost their entire legs, which were to be found in all parts of the house,—she made by no means a bad half-length representation of a fine lady.

She had apparently experienced some of the sorrows and disappointments incident to humanity; and on such occasions had frequently, no doubt, formed the resolution of increasing, although in a trifling degree, some religious sisterhood, of which establishments she had so plentiful a choice in her native city; but, whether on a nearer approach, she had considered the veil an unbecoming costume, or her resolution had failed her on the brink of the living tomb, the project had not as yet taken effect. The turn, however, thus given to her reflections and inquiries, had perfected in her a branch of knowledge highly useful to strangers who might be thrown in her way. She was a limping ency-

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clopedia of the convents and monasteries of Toledo; and could announce each morning, with the precision of an almanack, the name of the saint of the day,—in what church or convent he was especially fêted, and at what hour the ceremony would take place. She was likewise *au fait* of the foundation, ancient and modern annals, and peculiarities of every sort which belong to every religious establishment of the many scores existing in Toledo. Her administration of the household affairs was admirably organized owing to her energetic activity. Her love of cleanliness would frequently induce her to take the sweeping department into her own hands—a circumstance which was sure to render the operation doubly successful, for the brooms, which in Toledo are not provided with handles or broomsticks, were exactly of a length suited to her stature. Before we take leave of her, here is one more of her original replies.

I complained to her at breakfast that the eggs were not as fresh as usual; and, suiting the action to the word, approached the egg-cup containing the opened one so near to her, that the organs of sight and smell could not but testify to the justice of my *reclamation*. Shrugging her shoulders, until they almost reached the level of the table—and with much contempt depicted on her countenance: "How could it be otherwise?" she exclaimed, "the egg

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was taken a quarter of an hour ago from under the hen; but you have broken it at the wrong end."

The monastery called San Juan de los Reyes, was founded by Ferdinand and Isabella, on their return from the conquest of Granada, and given to a fraternity of Franciscan friars. An inscription to this effect in gothic characters runs round the cloister walls, where it forms a sort of frieze, in a line with the capitals of the semi-columns. The inhabited part of the establishment is in a state of complete ruin, having been destroyed by the French during the Peninsular War. The cloisters are, likewise, in a semi-ruinous state: the part best preserved being the church; although that was not entirely spared, as may be supposed from its having been used as cavalry stables.

The choice of a situation for the erection of this convent was perfect in the then flourishing state of Toledo; and, even now, its picturesque position lends a charm to the melancholy and deserted remains still visible of its grandeur and beauty. It stands on the brow of the cliff, commanding the termination of the chasm already described as commencing at the bridge of Alcantara. It commands, therefore, the ruins of Roderick's palace, placed a few hundred yards further on, and on a lower level; still lower the picturesque bridge of

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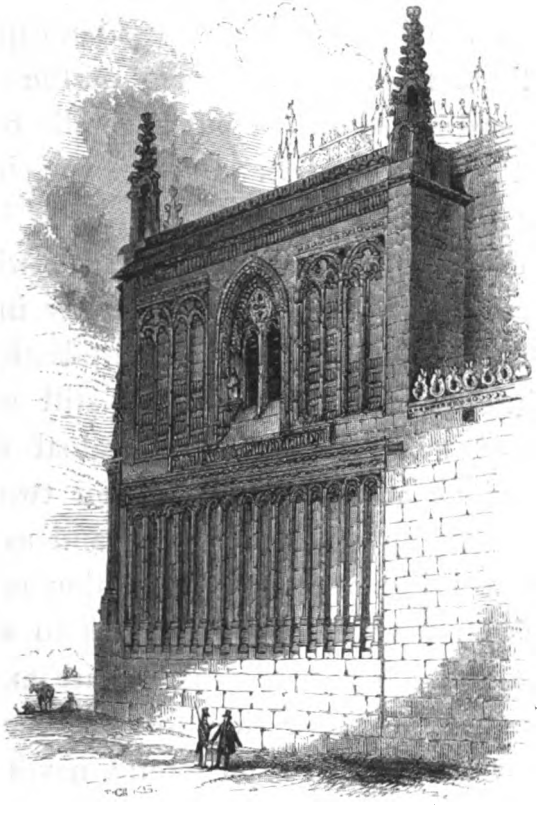
St. Martin, striding to the opposite cliff, over arches of ninety feet elevation, and the lovely *vega* which stretches to the west.



CHURCH OF SAN JUAN DE LOS REYES.

This monastery was one of the most favoured amongst the numerous royal endowments of that period. It is said that its foundation was the result of a vow pronounced by Ferdinand and the Queen

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before the taking of Granada. In addition to the scale of magnificence adopted throughout the entire plan, the royal founders, on its completion, bestowed a highly venerated donation — the collection of chains taken from the limbs of the Christian captives, rescued by them from the dungeons of the Alhambra. They are suspended on the outside walls of the two sides of the north-eastern angle of the church, and are made to form a frieze, being placed in couples crossing each other at an acute angle; while those that remained are suspended vertically in rows by fours or fives, in the intervals of the pilastres.

The interior of the church is still sufficiently entire to give some idea of its original splendour. Its dimensions are rather more than two hundred feet in length, by eighty in width, and as many in height—excepting over the intersection of the nave and transept, where the ceiling rises to a hundred and eight feet. These dimensions are exclusive of three recesses on either side, forming chapels open to the nave, there being no lateral naves or aisles. The style of the whole is very ornamental; but the east end is adorned with an unusual profusion of sculpture. The transept is separated from the eastern extremity of the building, by a space no greater than would suffice for one of the arches; and its ends form the lines, which being prolonged, con-

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stitute the backs of the chapels. The royal arms, supported by spread eagles, are repeated five times on each end-wall; separated respectively by statues of saints in their niches, and surmounted by a profusion of rich tracery. These subjects entirely cover the walls to a height of about forty feet, at which elevation another inscription in honour of the founders runs round the whole interior. The transepts not being formed by open arches, the sides afford space for a repetition of the same ornament, until at their junction with the nave they are terminated by two half-piers covered with tracery, and surmounted by semi-octagonal balconies, beneath which the initials of Ferdinand and Isabella, made to assume a fancy shape, and surmounted by coronets, are introduced with singularly graceful effect

But the chief attraction of this ruin is the cloister. A small quadrangle is surrounded by an ogival or pointed arcade, enriched with all the ornament that style is capable of receiving. It encloses a garden, which, seen through the airy-web of the surrounding tracery, must have produced in this sunny region a charming effect. At present, one side being in ruins and unroofed, its communication with the other three has been interrupted; and, whether or not in the idea of preserving the other sides from the infection, their arches have been closed nearly

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CLOISTER OF SAN JUAN DE LOS REYES, TOLEDO.

to the top by thin plaister walls. Whatever may have been the motive of this arrangement, it answers the useful purpose of concealing from the view a gallery which surmounts the cloister, the arches of which would neutralize the souvenirs created by the rest of the scene, since they announce a far different epoch of art, by the grievous backsliding of taste evinced in their angular form and uncouth proportions.

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Until the destruction of the monastery by the French, the number of monks was very considerable; and in consequence of the unusual privileges accorded to their body, had become the objects of especial veneration. A curious proof of this still exists in the form of a printed paper, pasted on one of the doors in the interior of the church, and no doubt preserved carefully by the fifteen or sixteen brothers, who continued after the dispersion of the rest to inhabit the few apartments, which, by their situation over the cloister, had escaped the flames; and who were only finally compelled to evacuate their retreat on the occasion of the general convent crusade of the late revolution. It is an announcement of indulgences, of which the following is the opening paragraph: —

"Indulgence and days of pardon to be gained by kissing the robe of the brothers of San Francisco.

"All the faithful gain, for each time that they kiss the aforesaid holy robe with devotion of heart, two thousand and seventy-five days of Indulgence. Further than this, whosoever of the faithful shall kiss the aforesaid holy robe devoutly, gains each time eight thousand one hundred days of pardon. The which urges to the exercise of this devotion the Princes, Kings, Emperors, Bishops, and highest dignitaries of the Church, and the monks of other re-

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ligious orders; and even those of the same order gain the same, according to the doctrine of Lantusca, who writes, 'Videant religiosi quantum thesaurum portent secum.' Since those who with hearts filled with lowliness and love, bend the knees to kiss the precious garment, which opens to so many souls the entrance to Heaven, leading them aside from the paths of perdition, with trembling and terror of the entire hosts of hell, are doubtless those who gain the above-mentioned Indulgences, &c."

Cardinal Ximenes had assumed the habit of this monastery before his nomination to the see of Toledo.

Among the numerous relics of the ancient prosperity of this ruinous corner of Toledo, are seen the walls of the palace of Don Juan Hurtado de Mendoza. To them were confided the secret murmurings of Charles the Fifth's vexation, when, elated with his Italian successes — lord of the greatest empire of Christendom, and flattered by the magnificent hospitality of the Genoese, he only resorted hither to be bearded by his Spanish vassals, and to hear his request for supplies unceremoniously refused. Although monarch of nearly half Europe, and, better still, of Mexico and Peru, that sovereign appears to have undergone the torments of a constantly defective exchequer.

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His armies were not numerous for such an empire, and yet they were frequently in revolt for arrears of pay. Could at that time the inventor of a constitution on the modern principle have presented himself to Charles, with what treasures would he not have rewarded him? On his arrival in Spain, in the autumn of 1538, the emperor convoked the cortez in Toledo, "for the purpose of deliberation on the most grave and urgent causes, which obliged him to request of his faithful vassals an inconsiderable contribution, and of receiving the assurance of the desire with which he was animated, of diminishing their burdens as soon as circumstances should enable him to do so." All assembled on the appointed day — the prelates, the grandees, the knights, the deputies of cities and towns. The opening session took place in the great salon of the house of Don Juan Hurtado de Mendoza, Count of Melita, in which the emperor had taken up his abode; and two apartments in the convent of San Juan de los Reyes, were prepared for the remaining meetings — one for the ecclesiastical body, presided by the Cardinal de Tavera, archbishop of Toledo, accompanied by Fray Garcia de Loaysa, cardinal, and confessor of the emperor, afterwards Archbishop of Seville — the other for the lay members of the cortez.

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Although an adept at dissimulation, what must have been the impatience of Charles, while under the necessity of listening, day after day, to reports of speeches pronounced by the independent members of his *junta* on the subject of his unwelcome proposition, without the consolation of foreseeing that the supplies would eventually be forthcoming. The orators did not spare him. The historian, Mariana, gives at full length the speech of the condestable Don Velasco, Duke of Frias, a grandee enjoying one of the highest dignities at the court, who commences by declaring that, "with respect to the Sisa," (tax on provisions, forming the principal subject of the emperor's demand,) "each of their lordships, being such persons as they were, would understand better than himself this business: but what he understood respecting it was, that nothing could be more contrary to God's service, and that of his Majesty, and to the good of these kingdoms of Castile, of which they were natives, and to their honour, than the Sisa;" and, further on, proposes that a request be made to his Majesty, that he would moderate his expenditure, which was greater than that of the Catholic kings.

On an address to this effect being presented to the emperor, he replied, that "he thanked them for their kind intentions; but that his request was

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for present aid, and not for advice respecting the future:" and finding, at length, that no Sisa was to be obtained, he ordered the archbishop to dissolve the *junta*, which he did in the following words: — "Gentlemen, — his Majesty says, that he convoked your lordships' assembly for the purpose of communicating to you his necessities, and those of these kingdoms, since it appeared to him that, as they were general, such also should be the remedy; but seeing all that has been done, it appears to him that there is no need of detaining your lordships, but that each of you may go to his house, or whither he may think proper."

It must be confessed that the grandees, who had on this occasion complained of Charles's foreign expeditions, and neglect of his Spanish dominions, did not pursue the system best calculated to reconcile him to a residence among them. Instead of taking advantage of the opportunities afforded by social intercourse, for making amends for the repulse he had suffered from the cortez, they appeared desirous of rendering the amount of humiliation which awaited him in Spain a counterpoise to his triumphs in his other dominions. On the close of the above-mentioned session, a tournament was celebrated in the *vega* of Toledo. On arriving at the lists, an *alguacil* of the court, whose duty it was to clear the

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way on the emperor's approach — seeing the Duke de l'Infantado in the way, requested him to move on, and on his refusal struck his horse with his staff. The duke drew his sword and cut open the officer's head. In the midst of the disturbance occasioned by the incident, the *alcalde* Ronquillo came up, and attempted to arrest the duke in the emperor's name — when the constable, Duke de Frias, who had just ridden to the scene of bustle, reining in his horse, exclaimed, "I, in virtue of my office, am chief minister of justice in these kingdoms, and the duke is, therefore, my prisoner;" and addressing himself to the alcalde: "know better another time, on what persons you may presume to exercise your authority." The duke left the ground in company of the last speaker, and was followed by all the nobles present, leaving the emperor entirely unaccompanied. It appears that no notice was taken by Charles of this insult; his manner towards the Duke of Infantado on the following day being marked by peculiar condescension, and all compensation to the wounded *alguacil* left to the duke's generosity.

The personal qualities of this prince, as a monarch, appear to have been overrated in some degree in his own day; but far more so by subsequent writers. The brilliancy of his reign, and the homage which

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surrounded his person were due to the immense extent of his dominions; and would never have belonged to him, any more than the states of which he was in possession, had their attainment depended in any degree on the exercise of his individual energies. When in the prime of youth, possessed of repeated opportunities of distinguishing himself at the head of his armies, he kept aloof, leaving the entire conduct of the war to his generals. His rival, Francis the First, wounded at Pavia in endeavouring to rally his flying troops, and at length taken prisoner while half crushed beneath his dead horse, was greater—as he stood before the hostile general, his tall figure covered with earth and blood —than the absent emperor, who was waiting at Valladolid for the news of the war.

Nor were the qualities of the statesman more conspicuous than those of the warrior on this occasion. Having received the intelligence of his victory, and of the capture of his illustrious prisoner, he took no measures—gave no orders. To his general every thing was left; and when the captive King was, at his own request, conveyed some time after to Spain, the astonished emperor had received no previous notice of his coming. He allowed himself to be out-manœuvred in the treaty for the liberation of his prisoner; and when Francis broke the pledge

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he had given for the restitution of Burgundy, he took no steps to enforce the execution of the stipulations; and he ultimately gave up the two French princes, who remained in his power as hostages, in return for a sum of money.

Far from maintaining the superiority in European councils due to his extensive dominions, the Italian republics were only prevented with the greatest difficulty, and by the continual presence of armies, from repeatedly declaring for France: and even the popes, to whom he paid continual court, manifested the small estimation in which they held his influence by constantly deserting his cause in favour of Francis,—the cause of the champion of Christianity in favour of the ally of the Infidel, and *that* frequently in defiance of good faith; shewing how little they feared the consequences of the imperial displeasure.

If these facts fail in affording testimony to his energy and capacity, still less does his character shine in consistency. He professed an unceasing ardour in the cause of Christianity; offering to the French king the renunciation of his rights, and a release from that monarch's obligations to him, on condition of his joining him in an expedition against the Infidels; but when he found himself at the head of an immense army under the walls of

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Vienna, he sat still and allowed Solyman to carry off at his leisure the spoils of the principal towns of Hungary.

When at length he made up his mind to take the field, he selected, as most worthy of the exercise of his prowess, the triumph over the pirate Barbarossa and his African hordes: the most important result of the campaign being the occupation of Tunis, (where in his zealous burnings for Christianity he installed a Mahometan sovereign,) and the wanton destruction by his soldiers of a splendid library of valuable manuscripts.

We have seen how little his Spanish subjects allowed themselves to be dazzled by the splendours of his vast authority, and history informs us how far he was from conceiving the resolution of reducing them to obedience by any measures savouring of energetic demonstration. The irreverence to his person he calmly pocketed, and the deficiences in his exchequer were supplied by means of redoubled pressure on his less refractory Flemings. He submitted to the breach of faith of Francis of France, and to the disrespect of his Castilian vassals; but, on the burghers of the city of Ghent being heard to give utterance to expressions of discontent at the immoderate liberties taken with their purse-strings, he quits Madrid in a towering rage, crosses France at

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the risk of his liberty, and enters his helpless burg at the head of a German army, darting on all sides frowns of imperial wrath, each prophetic of a bloody execution.

Aware of the preparations of Francis for attacking his dominions simultaneously in three different directions, he took insufficient or rather no measures to oppose him, but turning his back, embarked for Algiers, where he believed laurels to be as cheap as at Tunis. There, however, he lost one half of his armament, destroyed by the elements; and the remainder narrowly escaping a similar fate, and being dispersed in all directions, he returned in time to witness the unopposed execution of the plans of his French enemy. What measures are his on such an emergency? Does he call together the contingents of the German States? Unite the different corps serving in Lombardy and Savoy,—dispatch an order to the viceroy of Naples to march for the north of Italy; and having completed his combinations, cross the Pyrenees at the head of a Spanish army, and give the law to his far weaker antagonist? No! nothing that could lead to an encounter with the French king accorded with his policy, as it has been called, but more probably with his disposition. He quits Spain, it is true, and using all diligence, travels round France, but not too near it, and arrives

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in Flanders. Here he puts himself at the head of his Germans, and marches—against the Duke of Cleves! who had formed an alliance with his principal enemy.

Seeing the emperor thus engaged, Francis completes a successful campaign, taking possession of Luxembourg and other towns. At length the sovereign of half Europe, having received news of the landing of an English army in Picardy, resolves to venture a demonstration against France. He therefore traverses Lorraine at the head of eighty thousand troops, and makes himself master of Luneville: after which, hearing that Francis had despatched his best troops to oppose Henry the Eighth, and was waiting for himself, as the less dangerous foe, with an army of half the strength of his own, and composed of recruits, he makes up his mind to advance in the direction of Paris. After a fortnight's march he finds himself in presence of the French king, to whom he sends *proposals of peace!*

These being rejected, he continues his march; when a messenger from Francis announces his consent to treat. Under these circumstances, does he require the cession of Burgundy, according to the terms of the unexecuted treaty of Madrid? Does he even stipulate for any advantage, for any equality? No! he agrees, on the contrary, to cede Flanders

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to the French, under colour of a dowry with his daughter the Infanta Maria, who was to be married to the Duke of Orleans; or else Milan, with his niece the daughter of the King of the Romans; and he beats a retreat with his immense army, as if taking the benefit of a capitulation.

There is something in the result of this French campaign which appears to explain much of Charles's previous conduct; and shows that in many instances he was actuated by personal fear of his gallant rival. On this occasion he did not hesitate to desert the King of England, who had no doubt calculated on his coöperation, as much as Charles had depended on the diversion created by the British army. The more one reflects on the passages of this emperor's history, the less one is surprised at his resolution to abdicate. He gave in this a proof of his appreciation of his real character, which undoubtedly fitted him rather for a life of ease and retirement, than for the arduous duties of supreme power.

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LETTER XII.

ARAB MONUMENTS. PICTURES. THE PRINCESS GALIANA. ENVIRONS.

Toledo.

RETURNING along the edge of the cliff, a very short space separates the extreme walls of the ruined monastery of Ferdinand and Isabella, from an edifice of much greater antiquity, although not yet a ruin. Its exterior as you approach, is more than simple. It is not even a neatly constructed building; but such a pile of rough looking mud and stone, as, on the continent, announces sometimes a barn, or granary of a farming establishment *mal monté*. A high central portion runs from end to end, from either side of which, at about four-fifths of its height, project lower roofs of brownish-red tiles. The old square rotten door is in exact keeping with all this exterior, and contributes its share to the surprise experienced on entering, when you discover, on a level with the eye, distributed over a spacious

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quadrangular area, a forest of elaborately carved capitals, surmounting octagon-shaped pillars, and supporting innumerable horse-shoe arches, scattered in apparent confusion. All these as you advance



INTERIOR OF SANTA MARIA LA BLANCA, TOLEDO.

down a flight of steps, fall into rank, and you speedily find yourself in the centre of an oriental temple in all its symmetry.

The principal light entering from the western extremity, you do not at first perceive that three of the five naves terminate at the opposite end, by

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half domes of more modern invention. These have since been almost built out, and do not form a part of the general view,—not in consequence of a decree of a committee of fine arts, but for the convenience of the intendant of the province, who selected the edifice, as long as it remained sufficiently weather-proof for such a purpose, for a magazine of government stores. There is no record of the antiquity of this church, supposed to be the most ancient in Toledo: at all events, it is the most ancient of those constructed by the Arabs. It was originally a synagogue, and received the above mentioned half cupolas on its conversion to a Catholic church; since which period it has been known by its present title of Santa Maria la Blanca.

A few hundred yards further on, following the same direction, is the church called the Transito, also in the oriental style, but on a different plan: a large quadrangular room, from about ninety to a hundred feet in length, by forty in width, and about seventy high, without arches or columns, ornamented with Arab tracery in stucco, on the upper part of the walls, and by a handsome cedar roof. A cement of a different colour from the rest runs round the lowest portion of the walls, up to about breast high; no doubt filling the space formerly occupied by the azulejos. Some remains of these still deco-

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rate the seats, which are attached to the walls at the two sides of the altar. The building is in excellent preservation, and until lately was used as a church of the Mozarabic sect. The ornaments are remarkable for the exquisite beauty of their design, and are uninjured, excepting by the eternal whitewash, the monomania of modern Spanish decorators.

The Jews were the primitive occupants of this elegant temple also. Samuel Levi, treasurer and favourite of Pedro the Cruel (who subsequently transferred his affection from the person of his faithful servant to the enormous wealth, amassed under so indulgent a prince, and seized a pretext for ordering his execution) was the founder of this synagogue. The inauguration was accompanied by extraordinary pomp. The treasurer being, from his paramount position at the court of Castile, the most influential personage of his tribe, the leading members of Judaism flocked from all parts of Europe to Toledo to be present on the occasion, and a deputation from Jerusalem brought earth of the Holy Land, which was laid down throughout the whole interior before the placing of the pavement.

A very different origin, more suited to believers in miracles, is attributed to this church by the present titular sacristan. This Quasimodo of the

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fabric, a simple and worthy functionary, enjoys a sinecure, except, it is to be feared, with regard to salary. Although, however, no duties confine him to his post, his attachment to the edifice prevents his ever being found further from it than the porch; under the cool shelter of which, as he leans against the wall, he fabricates and consumes the friendly *cigarito.* When questioned with an appearance of interest on the subject of the building, he replies with unrestrained delight. Its foundation he attributes to Noah, fixing the date at seventeen hundred years back; but without adding any particulars relative to this miraculous visit paid to Toledo, by the ghost of the patriarch.

As is the case with all other ecclesiastical edifices closed pursuant to the recent decrees, this building may become the property of any one, who would offer a sufficient price, not according to the real value, but to that to which such objects are reduced by the great number in the market. Several other churches are simply closed and left unguarded; but the antiquarian sacristan above mentioned, is placed here on account of the existence of a room in which are contained the archives of the knights of Calatrava and Alcantara, until recently its proprietors. No reparations, however, are ordered; and there is many an enthusiast in

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archæological research who, should such an edifice fall under his notice, would, no doubt, rescue it from its now imminent fate. It is not only a monument admirable for the details of the ornaments, the best of its sort to be met with north of Andalusia, but it forms a valuable link in the chain of architectural history. It is the first ecclesiastical edifice of its style recorded as having set the example of an open area, destitute of columns and arcades.

At the distance of a few hundred yards from this building, a portion of the precipice is pointed out, to which was given in former times the name of the Tarpeian rock. It was the spot selected by the Jewish authorities, (who enjoyed in Toledo, under the Kings of Castile, the right of separate jurisdiction in their tribe,) for the execution of their criminals. It is a perpendicular rock, but with an intermediate sloping space between its base and the Tagus.

One of the most curious of the Arab monuments of Toledo, is the church called the Christo de la Luz, formerly a mosque. It is extremely small; a square of about twenty feet; and is divided by four pillars into three naves, connected with each other, and with the surrounding walls, by twelve arches. This disposition produces in the ceiling

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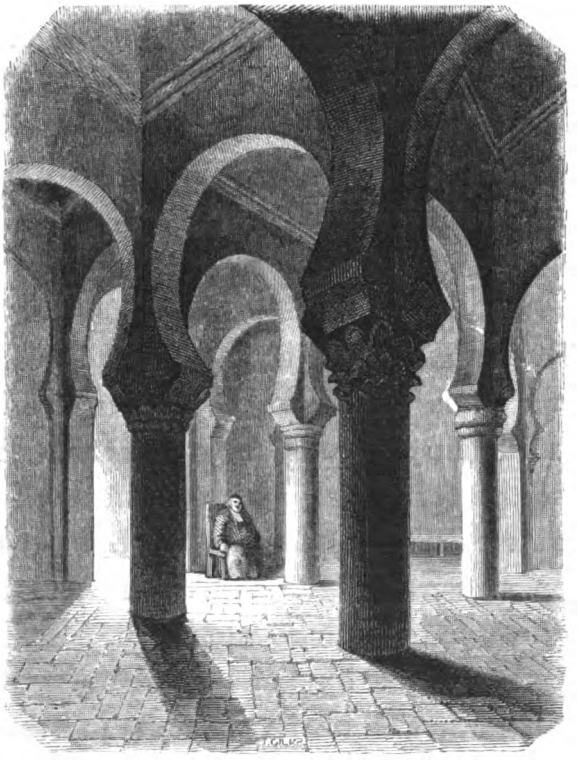

INTERIOR OF CHRISTO DE LA LUZ. TOLEDO.

nine square compartments, which rise each to a considerable height, enclosed by walls from the tops of the arches upwards. Each small square ceiling is coved and ornamented with high angular ribs, rising from the cornice and intersecting each other, so as to form a different combination in each of the nine.

The principal remaining Arab buildings are, the

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beautiful gate called Puerta del Sol; part of the town walls with their towers; the parochial church of San Roman; the tower of the church of St. Thomas; and two or three other similar towers. Several private houses contain single rooms of the same architecture, more or less ornamental. The most considerable of these is situated opposite the church of San Roman, and belongs to a family residing at Talavera. They have quitted the house in Toledo, which is in a ruinous state. The Moorish saloon is a fine room of about sixty feet in length by upwards of forty high, and beautifully ornamented. The Artesonado roof of cedar lets in already, in more than one part, light and water; and half the remainder of the house has fallen.

The good pictures in Toledo are not very plentiful. It is said some of the convents possessed good collections, which were seized, together with all their other property. Many of these are to be seen in the gallery called the Museo Nacional, at Madrid. Others have been sold. Those of the cathedral have not been removed; but they are not numerous: among them is a St. Francisco, by Zurbaran; and a still more beautiful work of Alonzo del Arco, a St. Joseph bearing the Infant. It is in a marble frame fixed in the wall, and too high to be properly viewed: but the superiority of the

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colouring can be appreciated, and the excellence of the head of the saint. In the smaller sacristy are two pictures in Bassano's style, and some copies from Raphael, Rubens, and others. At the head of the great sacristy, there is a large work of Domenico Theotocopuli, commonly called El Greco, (the head of the school of Toledo) which I prefer much to the famous Funeral of the Count Orgaz, in the church of Santo Tonie, which, according to some, passes for his masterpiece. In the first are traits of drawing, which forcibly call to mind the style of the best masters of the Roman school, and prove the obligation he was under to the instructions of his master Michel Angelo. The subject is the Calvary. The soldiery fill the back ground. On the right hand the foreground is occupied by an executioner preparing the cross, and on the left, by the group of females. The erect figure of the Christ is the principal object, and occupies the centre, somewhat removed from the front. This is certainly a fine picture; the composition is good, and the drawing admirable, but the colouring of the Greco is always unpleasing.

In the Funeral of Count Orgaz it is insufferably false; nor, in fact, is it easy to conjecture to what sort of merit this picture owes its celebrity. It possesses neither that of conception, nor that of

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composition, nor of expression: least of all that of colouring. All that can be said in its favour is, that the row of heads extending from one end of the canvass to the other, across the centre, are correct portraits of personages of note, who figured in the history of the epoch. The worst part of all is, the Heaven of the upper plan of the picture, into which the soul of the Count has the bad taste to apply for admission. This was, in fact, one of the works which gave occasion to the saying of a critic of a contemporary school, who declared that the Glorias (heavenly visions) of the Greco looked like Infernos, and his Infernos like Glorias.

In the Transito there is an Adoration, a charming picture, apparently by Rembrandt. There are here and there good pictures among the other churches, but none very remarkable. In general, the most attractive objects are the old picture-frames, and other gilded ornaments and wood carvings. All these, in the taste of the commencement of the last century and earlier, which is at present so much in request, are in such profusion, as would draw tears of admiration from the eyes of a Parisian upholsterer, and showers of bank notes from the purses of furniture collectors.

You will not, I am sure, by this time, object to our quitting Toledo, and making a short excur-

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sion in its environs. I shall therefore request you to accompany me to the ruins of a Moorish palace, on the banks of the Tagus, a mile distant from the town, called the Palacio de Galiana. The Princess Galiana was the daughter of Galafre, one of the earlier Arab Kings of Toledo. The widely extended fame of her beauty, is said to have fired the imagination of Charles, son of Pepin, King of France, who resolved to throw himself at her feet as a suitor, and forthwith repaired to Toledo. However glowing the terms in which report had represented her charms, he found them surpassed by the reality; but a prince of a neighbouring state had forestalled him in his suit. This obstacle did not, however, deter him from persisting in his resolution. He forthwith challenged his rival to mortal combat; and, clearing his road to the hand of the princess with the point of his lance, married her, and carried her back with him to Paris.

The attachment of her father to this princess is said to have been such from her earliest childhood, that he gave himself up entirely to this affection—devoting all his wealth to the gratification of her caprices. The Arab palace, now no longer in existence, took its name from hers, in consequence of a new one having been erected for her by her father, adjoining his own, at a period at which she had

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scarcely grown out of childhood. The two residences being occupied by succeeding princes as one, received the appellation of los Palacios, (the Palaces) of Galiana.

In addition to her town residence, she soon after had the other palace constructed about a mile from Toledo. To arrive at the ruins, we pass the bridge of Alcantara, and follow the rose-tree promenade. From this a path on the left-hand leads to the spot across a field in garden-like cultivation. The selection made by the Arab princess of this situation, proves her to have possessed, in addition to her beauty, a consummate taste and intelligence of rural life.

The Tagus—a name, by the way, more deserving of poetic fame than many a more widely echoed stream—in this spot, as if conscious of the pains he must shortly undergo, while dashing through the deep and narrow chasm through which he must force a passage around Toledo, seems to linger, desirous of putting off the fated storm. His course becomes more circuitous as he approaches; and indulging in a hundred irregularities of form, he plays round several small thickly wooded islands, penetrating with innumerable eddies and back currents, into flowery nooks and recesses; while here and there he spreads out in a wide sheet his apparently motionless waters,

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as if seeking to sleep away the remainder of his days on these green and luxurious banks.

In the midst of this delicious region, which recalls to the recollection some of the more favoured spots in England, but which, with the addition of the Spanish climate in early summer, is superior to them all, was placed the palace. The valley for a considerable distance still bears the name of the Garden of the King,—Huerta del Rey. The site of part of the pleasure grounds immediately adjoining the river, is left wild, and covered with woods; and the remainder is converted into a farm in the highest state of cultivation. The ruin consists of three sides of a not very large quadrangle; the massive walls of which are pierced with two stories of arched windows. The remainder of the edifice was doubtless less solid, and has entirely disappeared.

Many a tale of romance would be gathered—many a stirring scene recorded, could so precious a document be brought to light as a chronicle drawn up by some St. Simon of the Court of Toledo, who had recorded the daily events of which this retreat was the theatre, during the time it served as a residence for several successive sovereigns. But in this land words have always been fewer than deeds, and records are the rarest sort of subsisting monuments. One anecdote, however, is transmitted, of which this

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spot was the scene, in the time of the last but one of the Moorish princes who reigned at Toledo, before its surrender to Alonzo the Sixth.

Alonzo was himself one of the actors on the occasion. In early life he had been deprived by his brother Sancho, King of Castile, of the portion of the kingdoms which fell to his share by the will of his father, Ferdinand the First. On his expulsion from his inheritance he took refuge at the court of the Arab king of Toledo, by whom he was received with every mark of favour which could have been lavished on a friend. The Moor (for the family then reigning was not Arab, although the two races are constantly confounded in Spanish histories) gave him a palace, and settled on him splendid revenues, to be continued during the time he should think fit to accept his hospitality. He even sent invitations to all the friends and followers of his guest, in order that he might be surrounded with his own court.

Alonzo, touched by this delicate hospitality, attached himself warmly to his host; his friendship for whom (I believe a solitary instance in those times among the sovereigns in Spain) lasted until the death of the latter. The youthful exile, thus handsomely treated, passed much of his time in the society of his royal protector.

On one occasion, the court being at the country

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palace of Galiana, the king and his attendants were reclining in the cool shade of the garden, and Alonzo at a short distance, apparently asleep. The king, pointing to the town, which towered on its precipice immediately in front of the party, was expatiating on the strength of its position. All agreed that it was impregnable; until a brother of the monarch observed, that there was one mode of warfare against which it would not hold out: and he proceeded to explain his plan, which consisted of an annual devastation of the valley of the Tagus at the time of harvest, to be executed by an invading army, which might be disbanded during the winter months. This system, he maintained, would inevitably reduce the city by famine to the necessity of a surrender.

No sooner was the last phrase uttered, than all present in an instant struck by the same thought, turned towards the sleeper; and the greater number, filled with suspicion respecting the reality of his slumbers, addressed significant looks to the king, the intention of which could not be mistaken, and which boded no good to Alonzo. Whatever might have been the feelings of the Moor at this moment, he took no further notice of the incident, and allowed his guest to terminate his nap when he thought proper.

When the death of Sancho took place before Zamora, Alonzo was still at Toledo. The intelli-

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gence being conveyed to him by a confidential messenger from his sister, he lost no time in taking leave of his host, who wished him success with every demonstration of friendship, and repairing to Burgos. There, after some hesitation, the nobles consented to his investiture with the sovereignty. During his brilliant reign he resisted several tempting opportunities of breaking with his Moorish ally and former host, and thus adding to his dominions,—and preserved his friendship and loyalty unstained. After the death of the Moorish king, he, however, speedily fell out with his successor. War was declared on both sides, and it was resolved to attack Toledo. The well known result was, the taking of the town after seven years, the time mentioned in the garden of Galiana, and by means of the annually repeated devastation of the Vega, according to the plan imagined and described in the above mentioned conversation.

Returning by the Rose-tree Walk, immediately on approaching the bridge, an advanced portion of the cliff which bounds the road on the left detaches itself from the rest towards the summit, which rises in a circular form. On it stands the Castle of San Servando, one of the most picturesque of the Arab remains existing in this part of Spain. The origin of this fort is uncertain. Some attribute it to the

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Romans, and consider the Moorish windows and ornaments to be subsequent additions, from their being constructed with bricks instead of the same stone as the rest of the walls. But this is not a sufficient reason, since the same peculiarity exists in all the Arab edifices in Toledo. In fact, the reason is evident. The hard black sort of stone used for the walls, would almost have defied the chisel which should have attempted to fashion its surface into the delicate forms required by the Arab mode of decorating. This argument, therefore, being set aside—remains the masonry, which is more likely from its appearance to be Gothic or Arab, than Roman.

It is probably entirely Arab. It encloses a quadrangular space of about a quarter of an acre, and is a ruin; but the walls and towers are almost entire. There are three small towers, that is of small diameter, but lofty; and two larger, one of which is circular: the other is a parallelogram terminating by a semicircle at one of its extremities. This tower has lost apparently about a third of its elevation. Their walls are so perfectly constructed as to appear externally like solid rocks smoothed and rounded. Each larger tower contains two rectangular brick projections, in which are small elegantly-arched openings for windows.

The edifice was thoroughly repaired by Don Pedro

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Tenorio, archbishop of Toledo; the same who built the bridge of San Martin. It has since played its part in numberless wars, and was at length reduced to a ruin during the insurrection headed by Juan de Padilla, at the commencement of Charles the Fifth's reign.

During the Peninsular war of the present century, the old battlements echoed once more with the sounds of warfare. It was occupied by a body of French, who repaired a portion of the masonry at the summits of the towers, and erected a low wall along the whole length of the Toledo side. They were able, from their position, to batter the Alcazar, which is immediately opposite, but on a higher level; and to command the bridge of Alcantara, and road to Aranjuez.

In the other valley which extends to the west of Toledo exist the remains of a circus for chariot races, generally supposed, at first sight, to be Roman. They present, in fact, every characteristic of a Roman work. The rough interior masonry is all that remains; and that only rising to a height of from three to four feet from the ground, with the exception of a single arch. The earth mingled with ruins, has apparently filled up much of the interior, and surrounding the exterior simultaneously, has only left visible the upper portion of the edifice.

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The end which is in the best preservation is of a semicircular form. From it the sides run in parallel directions, and lose themselves in the ruins of a more recently erected convent. They are traceable to a length of more than four hundred yards. The width is two hundred and ninety feet within the building, at the present elevation of the ground, and three hundred and twenty feet on the outside, which appears to have consisted of a series of arches. There are also remains of an amphitheatre adjoining the semicircular end of the stadium.

There being no indication of the Romans having at any period planted any considerable establishment at Toledo, in fact no author but Livy having noticed the place, and he but slightly; the antiquaries have sought for the origin of these monuments among Gothic traditions; and it is believed by them, that they were erected during the early part of the sixth century, by Theudio, a Gothic King, who manifested much attachment to Roman customs.

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LETTER XIII.

CASTLES OF ALMONACID, GUADAMUR, MONTALBAN, AND ESCALONA. TORRIJOS.

Toledo.

I MET this morning with an entertaining scene, in a quarter in which it might be the least looked for. The archiepiscopal palace contains an excellent library, which has always been open to the public. Although the revenues of the see are now withdrawn, and the palace is vacant, the books remain on the shelves, and the head librarian, a *racionero* of the cathedral, has the good nature to throw open the rooms from eleven to twelve, on all days of labour, (as those are called on which no saint is celebrated,) although he no longer enjoys a salary, nor the means of providing a single attendant to see to what passes in the different apartments.

I was occupied this morning in the *racionero's* room, when he received a visit from two French tourists, both persons of notoriety; one being a

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member of the chamber of deputies, and one of the leaders of the republican party; and the other, I believe, also in the chamber, but principally known as a writer of political pamphlets, in which the French reigning family, and the powers that be are lashed with unwearying severity. The first mentioned personage commenced the conversation in Spanish, which the other did not speak: but on hearing the librarian make an observation in French, the pamphleteer took up the argument in his own language, and nearly in the following terms.

"As this gentleman understands French, I will explain to him the object of my tour," and addressing himself to the Spaniard, he continued—"I find it a relief, in the midst of my arduous political duties, to make an occasional excursion in a foreign country, and thus to enlarge the sphere of my usefulness, by promoting the cause of humanity in the various localities I visit. It is thus that I have recently passed through Andalucia, and have recommended, and, I doubt not, successfully, to the principal personages possessed of influence in its numerous cities, the establishment of all sorts of useful institutions. I am now in Toledo, animated with the same zeal. I have obtained an introduction to you, Sir, understanding that you are an individual possessed of considerable influence, and

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enjoying unbounded means of carrying out the projects, which, I doubt not, you will agree with me in considering essential to the well being and improvement, both moral and material, of your ancient locality."

During this exordium, the Spaniard, who happens to be possessed of a vivacity, unusual in his countrymen, and a sort of impatience of manner, had endeavoured more than once to obtain a hearing. At length he replied, that he feared it would not be in his power to carry out the views which Monsieur did him the honour to communicate to him, owing to the absence of sufficient resources at his disposal, whether for public purposes, or in his individual and private capacity.

The Frenchman was not, however, to be so easily discouraged. "This, Sir," he replied, "is the result of your modesty; but I am persuaded that I have only to make my objects understood, in order to obtain their complete execution. For instance, one of the most insignificant in expense, but of infinite utility, is this: it would be a source of much gratification to me, if you would have the most conspicuous spots throughout Toledo ornamented with statues, representing, with greater or less resemblance, all the personages, distinguished from various causes in the history of Spain, to whom

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Toledo has given birth. These works I should wish to be entrusted to artists of acknowledged talent, and"—he was proceeding with constantly increasing rapidity of enunciation, when the exhausted librarian's patience being at an end, he interrupted the torrent. "However grateful the city of Toledo and myself must be for your interest and advice, I am grieved to repeat that my anxiety to comply with your wishes is totally powerless. We are without funds; and I, for my own part, can assure you that I am *sans le sou*. Do me the favour to name any service of a less expensive nature, and I shall rejoice in proving to you my entire devotion. Excuse my *impolitesse*. I am called for in the next room. I kiss your hand." It is needless, in fact the attempt would baffle human intelligence, to conjecture what the real object of these very liberal and very political gentlemen might be, in honouring all parts of Spain with their visit.

The more distant environs of Toledo, principally towards the south and south-east, are remarkable for a profusion of ruined castles. Supposing a circle drawn at a distance of thirty miles from Toledo as its centre, and divided, as it would be, by the Tagus, descending from east to west, into two equal parts, the southern half, and the western portion of the other, are so plentifully strewed with these

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fortresses, that, in many instances, five or six are visible from the same point of view.

A chain of low mountains crosses the southern portion of the semicircle, in a parallel line with the Tagus. Some of its branches advance into this region, and terminate in detached peaks, which have afforded to the aristocracy of former times favourable positions for their strongholds; and a still greater number of proprietors, not being possessed of the same advantages of site, were compelled to confide in the solidity of their walls and turrets, which they constructed in the plain, usually adjoining the villages or towns inhabited by their vassals. The greater number of these edifices are of a date subsequent to the surrender of Toledo to the Christians, and were erected on the distribution of the different towns and estates among the nobility, on their being successively evacuated by their Moorish proprietors. The Count of Fuensalida, Duke of Frias, is the most considerable landed proprietor on this side of Toledo, and several of the ruined castles have descended to him.

I will not fatigue you by the enumeration of all these remains, of which but a few are remarkable for picturesque qualities, and still fewer for the possession of historical interest, as far as can be known at present. One of them, situated ten miles to the

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south-east of Toledo, and visible from its immediate neighbourhood, attracts notice owing to its striking position. Occupying the summit of a conical hill, which stands alone on the plain, and placed at four times the elevation of Windsor Castle, you expect to find it connected with the history of some knightly Peveril of the Peak, but learn with surprise that it was the stronghold of the Archbishops of Toledo; and was erected by Don Pedro Tenorio, the same prelate who rebuilt the bridge of San Martin, and repaired the Moorish castle of San Servando.

Before you ascend the peak, you pass through the village of Almonacid, from which the castle takes its name, and which, unlike that more recently erected pile, is completely Arab in aspect. All the houses are entered through back courts, and present no difference of appearance, whether shops, taverns, *posadas*, or private residences. After tying my horse in the stable of the posada, and giving him his meal of barley, which he had carried in the *alforjas* (travelling bags) suspended behind the saddle, I took my own provisions out of the opposite receptacle, and established myself before the kitchen fire.

On my asking for wine, the hostess requested I would furnish her with two *quartos* (one halfpenny) with which she purchased me a pint, at the tavern

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next door. The host of the posada, who was seated next me, and a friend at the opposite corner of the fire-place, favoured me, during my meal, with their reminiscences of a battle fought here, during the Peninsular war. They had not heard of the English having taken any part in the quarrel, with the exception of the old woman, who recollected perfectly the name of Wellington, and pronounced it as perfectly, but thought he had been a Spanish general. They described the battle as a hard fought one, and won by the French, who marched up the hill with fixed bayonets, as the old host, almost blind, described by assuming the attitude of a soldier jogging up a hill, and dislodged the Spanish garrison from the castle.

I could have willingly passed a week in this village, so exciting are the remains of Arab manners to the curiosity. The name of the place had already raised my expectations, but the blind landlord of the posada unconsciously won my attachment from the first moment. No sooner was I seated, than, leaning towards me, and patting my arm to draw my attention, he pointed to his two eyes. At first I was at a loss to understand him; but soon discovered that he was desirous of knowing whether I was sufficiently versed in the mysteries of Esculapius, to prescribe for the relief of his suffering

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organs. To this trait he soon added one still more characteristic, by actually speaking of Toledo, by its Moorish appellation Tolaite. Had he worn a turban, sat cross-legged and offered me coffee and a pipe, I should not have been more taken by surprise, than by this Arab expression assailing the ear, in the heart of Spain, ten miles from the town itself, in which the name had probably not been uttered for three or four centuries.

The builder of the castle of Almonacid must have placed more confidence in the difficulties of approach, than in the solidity of his structure. The walls are partly of stone, and partly of *tapia*, or earth. There only remain, the exterior wall, enclosing an area of about sixty to seventy yards in diameter, and of a pentagonal form; and, in the centre, the keep, a quadrangular tower, somewhat higher than the rest of the buildings. There are no traces of living apartments. At each of the five angles of the outer wall, is a small tower, and others in the centres of some of the fronts; those looking to the west are circular, the rest square. The nearer view of this ruin causes disappointment, as it appears to have been a slovenly and hasty construction: but, at a distance, its effect is highly picturesque.

The castle of Montalban is situated to the south-

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west of Toledo, at a distance of six Spanish leagues. It resembles, in size and importance, some of the largest English castles; and justifies thus far the tradition preserved here, of its having for a short period, served for a royal prison—Juan the Second being said to have been confined there by his exasperated favourite, Don Alvaro de Luna. This story is not, however, confirmed by historians, several of whom I have vainly consulted, for the purpose of discovering it. Ferreras mentions the castle, or rather the town, which lies at a distance of two leagues (eight miles) from it, as having belonged to the queen of Juan the Second; who, he states, was deprived of it, against her will, in favour of Don Alvaro, and another place given her in exchange. On the confiscation of the favourite's possessions, previous to his decapitation, it reverted to the crown; and there is no further notice taken of it in the history, until the Emperor Charles the Fifth, confers on its then proprietor the title of Count. This personage was Don Alonzo Tellez Giron, third in descent from Juan Pacheco, Duke of Escalona, who had erected Montalban into a separate fief, in favour of one of his sons and his descendants, on the singular condition of the family name undergoing a change, on each successive descent. The alternate lords were to bear the names respectively

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of Giron and Pacheco. The first Count of Montalban married a daughter of D. Ladron de Guevara, proprietor, *à propos* of castles, of that of Guevara, in the neighbourhood of Vitoria, constructed in an extremely singular form. The centre tower appears intended to imitate the castles of a chess-board. It is situated on the southern declivity of the chain of mountains, a branch of the Pyrenees, which separates the province of Guipuscoa from those of Navarre and Alava.

On the opposite descent of the chain another fortress existed in remote times. Both were strongholds of robbers, whose descendants derived their family name, Ladron (robber) from their ancestors' profession. In a document signed by D. Garcia Ramirez, King of Navarre in 1135, D. Ladron de Guevara, governor of Alava, figures among the grandees of the kingdom; the descendants were afterwards called lords of Oñate, and the castle is at present the property of the Count de Oñate, a grandee of the first class. From its occupying a point *stratégique* of considerable importance, commanding the plain of Alava, and the high road as it enters the valley of Borunda, it has been in recent times occupied by the Carlists, and fortified.

Montalban belongs at present to the Count of Fuensalida. It is completely ruinous, but the outer

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wall is almost entire; and one of two lofty piles of building, in the form of bastions, which flanked the entrance, is in sufficient preservation to allow the apartments to be recognised. Their floors were at a height of about eighty feet from the ground; and the mass of masonry which supported them, is pierced by an immense gothic arch reaching to the rooms. The opposite corresponding mass remains also with its arch; but the upper part which contained rooms, no longer exists. On this, the entrance side, the approach is almost level, and the defence consisted of a narrow and shallow moat; but the three other sides, the fortress being of a quadrangular form, look down into a deep ravine, through which a river, issuing from the left, passes down two sides of the castle, and makes for the valley of the Tagus, which river is seen at a distance of five or six miles.

The precipice at the furthest side descends perpendicularly, and is composed of rocks in the wildest form. The river below leaps from rock to rock, and foams through a bed so tormented, that, although owing to its depth of at least five hundred feet from the foundations of the castle, it looks almost like a thread, it sends up a roar not less loud than that of the breakers under Shakspeare's Cliff. The valley, opening for its passage, gives to the view, first, the

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Tagus, on the opposite bank of which lies the town of Montalban, dependant on the lords of the castle; beyond it an extensive plain, dotted with castles and towns, most of them on the road from Madrid to Talavera; and at the horizon the Sierra del Duque, coated with snow from about half its height upwards. The extent of the view is about sixty miles.

The outer enceinte of the castle of Montalban encloses a space of five or six acres in extent, in which no buildings remain, with the exception of the picturesque ruin of a small chapel in the centre. Like almost all other residences possessed of scenery sufficiently precipitous, this castle boasts its lover's leap. A projection of wall is pointed out, looking over the most perpendicular portion of the ravine, to which a tradition is attached, deprived by time of all tangible distinctness, if ever it possessed any. The title given to the spot in this instance is "The Leap of the Moorish Girl," Despeñadera de la Mora. The position will probably bear no comparison with the Leucadian promontory; nor is it equal to the Peña de los Enamorados, near Antequera, in Andalucia, immortal likewise in the annals of passion, and of which the authentic story is preserved. Of those in our country I could name one—but I will not, though few know it better—nor is it the meanest of its tribe. But with these exceptions I know of none among the

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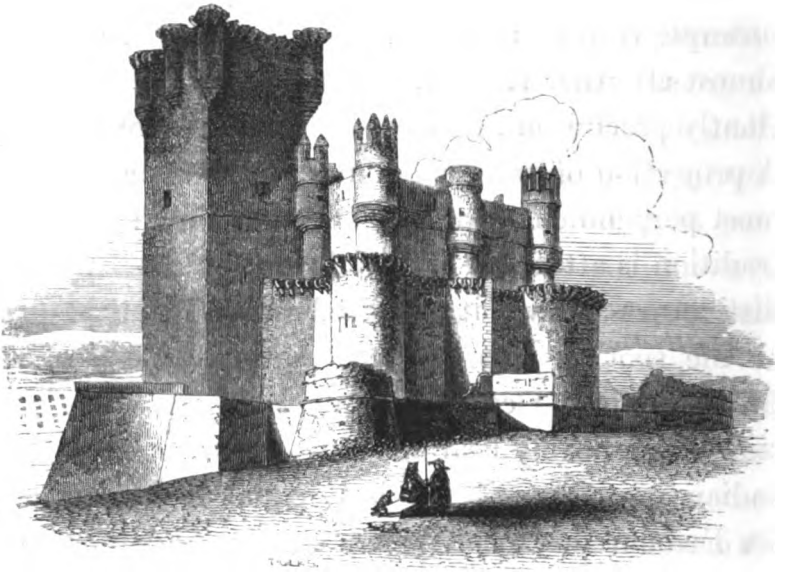
numerous plagiarisms of the famous lover's leap of antiquity that offers to despair in search of the picturesque more attractions than the Despeñadera of Montalban.

The best preserved castle of these environs, and the handsomest building, is that of Guadamur. It is not large, but it is impossible for a residence-fortress to be more complete, and more compact. It is composed of three enclosures, one within the other, and



CASTLE OF GUADAMUR.

forms a quadrangle, with the addition of a lofty and massive tower, projecting from one of the angles. The centre, or inner quadrangle, is about half the

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height of the tower, and has, at its three remaining angles, and at the centre of each front, an elegant circular turret. This portion of the edifice formed a commodious and handsome residence. It was divided into two stories, with vaulted ceilings,—the lower apartments being probably set apart for the offices of attendants, and places of confinement for prisoners: in the centre of the upper story was a diminutive open court, supported by the vaults of the ground-floor, and into which a series of elegantly proportioned rooms opened on all sides. Although the greater part of the vaults and interior walls are fallen in, the rooms are all to be traced, and inscriptions in the old Gothic letter run round the walls of some of the apartments. A second enclosure rises to about two-thirds of the elevation of the inner quadrangle, and is provided with corresponding turrets; but the proportions of these are more spacious, and their construction and ornament more massive. Beyond this are the exterior defences rising out of the moat, and very little above the surrounding ground.

Viewed from without, nothing indicates that this edifice is a ruin. Over the entrance are the arms of the Counts of Fuensalida. It is supposed by many that this castle was erected by Garcilaso de la Vega, grandfather of the "Prince of Spanish poets," as the celebrated bard of Toledo is entitled. Others main-

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tain its founder to have been Pedro Lopez de Ayala, first Count of Fuensalida. This latter story is the more probable one; since, besides its being confirmed by the armorial shield above mentioned, it has been adopted by Haro in his Nobiliario, a work drawn up with care and research, in which Garcilaso de la Vega is stated to have purchased some towns from the family of Ayala,—among others Cuerva, in the near neighbourhood, but not Guadamur.

The Ayalas were descended from the house of Haro, lords of Biscay. Several of them had held high offices at the Court of Castile. The grandfather of the founder of the castle had been High Chancellor of Castile, and Great Chamberlain of Juan the First; and his father, the first lord of Fuensalida, was High Steward, and first Alcalde of Toledo. He lost an eye at the siege of Antequera,—taken from the Moors by Ferdinand, afterwards King of Aragon, in the year 1410, and thus acquired the surname of the One-eyed. To him Juan II. first granted the faculty of converting his possessions into hereditary fiefs: "Because," according to one of the clauses of the act, "it was just that the houses of the grandees should remain entire in their state for the eldest son; and in order that the eldest sons of the grandees might be maintained in the estates of their predecessors, that the name and memory of the

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grandees of the kingdom might not be lost, and that the hereditary possessions and houses, and the generations of the sons of grandees might be preserved."

It was Pedro Lopez de Ayala, son of the one-eyed lord of Fuensalida created Count by Enrique the Fourth, that built the castle. He was a great favourite with the king, and his constant companion, notwithstanding his being afflicted with deafness—a bad defect in a courtier, and which procured him also a surname. He succeeded his father in his different dignities. His loyalty did not keep pace with his obligations to Henry the Fourth; for, being first Alcalde of Toledo, he made no effort to prevent that town from joining the party of the Prince Alonzo, who pretended to his brother's crown; but he was recalled to his allegiance by the devoted exertions of his wife.

This lady was Doña Maria de Silva, a daughter of Alonzo Tenorio de Silva, Adelantado of Cazorla. On the breaking out of the rebellion of Toledo, she agreed with her brother Pedro de Silva, Bishop of Badajos, to send a joint letter to the king, in which they pressed him to come to Toledo in disguise. Enrique the Fourth approved of the plan; and arriving in the night, accompanied by a single attendant, was received by the bishop at his residence in the convent of San Pedro Martir. Notwithstanding the darkness, he had been recognised by a ser-

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vant of Marshal Payo de Ribera, a partisan of Prince Alonzo. This noble, immediately on learning the king's arrival, joined with the Alcalde, who had not been let into the secret by his wife, and called the citizens to arms by sounding the great bell of the cathedral. A crowd was speedily assembled at the king's lodging, who would have been immediately made prisoner, but for his attendant Fernando de Ribadenegra, who succeeded, single handed, in repulsing a party who had forced an entrance.

At this crisis the disloyal magistrate became alarmed, and sent his two sons, Pedro de Ayala, and Alonzo de Silva, accompanied by Perafande Ribera, son of the above-mentioned marshal, to entreat the king to quit the town. Henry consented; and at midnight left the convent, accompanied by the three youths. He had ridden sixteen leagues that day, and his horses being exhausted with fatigue, he requested the two sons of Ayala to lend him theirs. They did so, and accompanied him on foot as far as the city gates, where he left them, and set off for Madrid.

In order to pacify the people, Pedro Lopez ordered his brother-in-law, the bishop, to quit the town, and he repaired to the Huerta del Rey, a country-house in the environs. On arriving at Olias the king sent the two brothers, in recompense of their good ser-

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vice, a deed of gift of seventy thousand *maravedis* of annual revenue.

The grief of Maria de Silva at the failure of her project was such as almost to deprive her of her reason, and added to the eloquence of her entreaties to win over her husband to the king's interests. He now, therefore, exerted himself to gain the principal citizens, and succeeded so completely, that within three days from the departure of Enrique the Fourth, he was enabled to recall the Bishop of Badajos to Toledo, and to banish in his stead the Marshal de Payo and his son, who retired to their estates. Unanimous was now the cry of "Viva Enrique Quarto, y Mueren los rebeldes!" and the following day, a Sunday, the king re-entered Toledo in the midst of the general joy and festivity, and proceeded directly to the residence of the Alcalde, in order to thank his wife for her loyal efforts. A lodging was there in readiness to receive him, which he occupied during his stay in Toledo. Pedro Lopez de Ayala received on the king's return to Madrid the title of Count of his town of Fuensalida, and shortly afterwards, at Medina del Campo, a grant of the towns of Casaruvias del monte, Chocas, and Arroyomolinos.

The town and castle of Escalona are situated at eight leagues, or thirty-two miles, to the east of

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Toledo. It is one of the towns, about a dozen in number, the foundation of which is attributed by the Count de Mora, in his history of Toledo, to the Jews. He fixes the date at about five centuries before the Christian era, when a large number of Israelites, to whom Cyrus, king of Babylon, had granted their liberty, arrived in Spain under the guidance of a Captain Pirrus, and fixed themselves principally in and around Toledo. He also states that the synagogue of Toledo—since called Santa Maria la Blanca—was erected by them. The name given by them to Escalona was Ascalon. The neighbouring Maqueda was another of their towns, and was called Mazeda. It was created a duchy by Ferdinand and Isabella in favour of their courtier Cardenas. I cannot learn the date of the castle of Escalona. Alonzo the Sixth won the town from the Moors; and it is probable that the castle was erected, at least in part, by Diego and Domingo Alvarez, two brothers, to whom he granted the place. After their death it reverted to the crown of Castile, and continued to be royal property until Juan II. gave it to his favourite Don Alvaro de Luna.

This grandee was known to have amassed great treasures in the castle; and on the confiscation of his possessions at the period of his final disgrace, the king marched an army to take possession of the

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fortress; but the countess held out successfully, and obliged the royal troops to raise the siege. On a second attempt, made after Don Alvaro's execution, his widow considered she had no further object in maintaining it, and lost no time in coming to terms. The conditions of the surrender were, that the treasure should be divided into three equal parts, one for the king, another for herself, and the third for her son. The son was likewise allowed to inherit the castle, and by the marriage of his daughter, it came into the possession of the Marquis of Villena, D. Lopez Pacheco, created Duke of Escalona by Henry the Fourth. The family of Fellez Giron, proprietors of Montalban, were descendants of this duke. At present the castle of Escalona belongs to the Duke of Ossuna. It is not only the most considerable of the numerous ruins disposed over the territory of Toledo, but one of the most interesting historical relics of Spain, having filled an important place in the annals of several of the most stirring periods. The unfortunate Blanche, Queen of Pedro the Cruel, was its inmate during several years; as also her rival, Maria de Padilla, at a subsequent period.

The best excursion from Toledo in point of architectural interest, is that to Torijos, a small town situated rather to the left of the direct road to Escalona, and five leagues distant. Immediately

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before arriving there, the castle of Barciense is met with, situated on an eminence which commands an admirable view, extending south and west to a semi-circle of mountains, composed of the Sierra del Duque, and the chain called the mountains of Toledo, and for a foreground looking down on a perfect forest of olive-grounds, surrounding the town of Torijos, two miles distant. The ruin of Barciense consists of a lofty square tower, and the outer walls of a quadrangle. There is nothing worth notice, with the exception of a bas-relief, which occupies all the upper half of the tower on the east side. It consists of a solitary lion rampant; probably the largest crest ever emblazoned. The Dukes of Infantado were proprietors of this castle.

The little town of Torijos contains a Gothic, or rather semi-Moorish palace, two Gothic churches, an ancient picturesque gateway, and the ruins of a magnificent monastery. It is one of those towns here and there met with on the Continent, which, at a favourable crisis of the arts, have fallen to the proprietorship of one of those individuals idolised by architects—men whose overplus of fortune is placed at the disposal of their eyes, and employed in ministering to the gratification of those organs. The greater part of the decoration of Torijos dates from the reign of Ferdinand the Catholic, when it be-

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longed to D. Gutiere de Cardenas, father of the first duke of Maqueda. The following story is related respecting the founding of the monastery by his wife Teresa Enriquez.

This lady resided, when at Toledo, in a mansion, the ruins of which still exist, on the opposite side of the street to the monastery of San Juan de los Reyes, of which I sent you a description in a former letter. Being warmly attached to religious observances, (for she went by the name of Teresa la Santa,) and animated with an enthusiastic fervour towards everything which appertained to the splendid establishment in front of her residence, she had discovered a position, from which a view could be obtained, overlooking the principal scene of the religious ceremonies of the Franciscans. She there caused a window to be constructed, splendidly ornamented in the Arab style, and kneeling on a rich *prie-dieu*, she united her daily devotions with those of the *frailes*.

No small sensation was caused by this proceeding, most perceptible probably within the monastery, on the discovery being made by the brethren of the addition to their holy fraternity. The cardinal became alarmed, and intimated to Doña Teresa that the window was ill-placed,—that it admitted too much light in a wrong direction; that, in short, it must disappear. The veto of the all-powerful Ximenes de

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Cisneros, already regarded as the dispenser of the royal frowns and favours, could not be resisted. The window was blocked up; but the interference was replied to in terms pointed with pious pique and holy revenge. The lady declared verbally to the prelate that she had no need of his convent, for she would found a more splendid one at Torijos. This threat, immediately put in execution, produced the building I mentioned above, the ruin of which is all that now remains.

Of the inhabited portions the external walls alone remain. The cloister is almost entire, and the church has only lost its roof. The rich tracery surrounding the doorways, and the sculpture in all parts of the interior, consisting chiefly of repetitions of the founder's armorial bearings—in imitation or satire of the profusion of similar ornament in San Juan de los Reyes—are entire, and appear as though they had been recently executed. The church is designed after the plan of San Juan, but the style of its ornament is much more elegant. The cloister is, however, very inferior to that of Toledo, and the whole establishment on a smaller scale.

Every traveller in search of the picturesque knows in how great a degree his satisfaction has been increased whenever the meeting with a scene deserving of his admiration assumes the nature of a discovery.

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For this reason, the chapters of tourists should never be perused before a journey—independently of their possessing more interest subsequently to an acquaintance having been made with the country described. Strictly speaking written tours are intended for those who stay at home.

But the most favourable first view of a highly admirable building or landscape, is the one you obtain after the perusal of tours and descriptions of the country, in none of which any notice is taken of that particular object or scene. The village of Torijos is approached under these advantageous circumstances. Every step is a surprise, owing partly to the above cause, and partly to one's being inured to the almost universal dreariness and ugliness of the villages and small towns of this part of Spain. The appearance under these circumstances of a beautiful Gothic cross and fountain, of an original and uncommon design, outside the walls of the place, and the open tracery of the tall windows of the ruined monastery at the other side of a green meadow, creates an agreeable surprise, and adds considerably to the pleasure which would be derived from the same objects, had expectation been already feeding on their beauties. Imagine, then, the discovery, after leaving behind these monuments, (sufficient for the immortality of a score of Castilian villages,) of the façade of the

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principal church, consisting of one of the richest and most exquisite specimens of Gothic decoration in Spain; and, a street further on, of a second ornamental portal of a different sort, but Gothic likewise, giving access to a half Arab palace.

The Count of Altamira is the proprietor of this place, but neither he nor any of his family have inhabited the edifice for several years, and it is allowed to go to decay. Some of the *artesonado* ceilings, more especially that of the chapel in form of a cupola, admit the light through the joinings of the gilded woodwork. A large hall on the first-floor, which formed the anteroom to a suite of inner apartments, decorated in the Arab style, has been taken possession of by the *haute volée* of Torijos for their public ball-room. A tribune for musicians is placed against one of the end walls, and adorned with paper festoons. A placard, inscribed with the word *galop*, was visible in front of the seat of the leader of the band, indicating that the Torijos balls terminate with that lively dance. There was no furniture in that nor any other part of the house, with the exception of an *entresol* inhabited by the count's steward. This person no sooner learned that I was an Englishman, than he commenced setting in the best possible light the advantages the premises possessed for the establishment of every sort of manufactory.

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It appears the proprietor is anxious to dispose of the building; and as all the English pass here for manufacturers, owing to the principal articles of common use, introduced by smugglers, being English, the worthy factotum had instantly made up his mind that I was the purchaser sent by Providence to take the old edifice off his master's hands. He is evidently either promised a bonus on the success of his efforts to sell, or he wished to pass with the property; for his idea produced a degree of zeal most useful towards the satisfaction of my curiosity, and without which his patience would have been exhausted before I had completed the view of the building. One peculiarity of the rooms consists in the ceilings—that is, the ornamental ones—being nearly all either domes, or interiors of truncated pyramids. There is only one flat. It is ornamented with the shell of the arms of the Cardenas family—each of the hundreds of little square compartments having one in its centre. The staircase is adorned with beautiful Gothic tracery.

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LETTER XIV.

VALLADOLID. SAN PABLO. COLLEGE OF SAN GREGORIO. ROUTE BY SARAGOZA.

Tolosa.

I SHOULD have sent you an account of my excursion to Valladolid at the time it took place, but was prevented by the shortness of my stay and the hurry of my departure from Madrid, which immediately followed. I preserved, however, memoranda of the limited explorations which were to be made during a flying visit of three days, and will now give you the benefit of them, such as they are; as also of my experience of the public travelling in that direction. You will recommend your friends, who may visit this land of adventure, and are careful at the same time of their personal comforts, to wait the introduction of railroads, before attempting this excursion, when you hear that I met with three upsets in one night, and was afforded, in all, nearly five hours' leisure for contemplating the effect of moonlight upon the sleeping mules and an upside-down carriage!

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The town of Valladolid contains monuments of much interest, although none of great antiquity. The greater number date from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and form a chain, illustrative of the progress of architecture in this country, subsequently to the abandonment of the Gothic style. This style is, however, worthily represented by two edifices, placed in juxtaposition, and ornamented each with a façade of extraordinary richness. I will content myself with the endeavour to give you some idea of these two buildings, which, although belonging to a style so common in England and France, are totally unlike all the Gothic specimens I am acquainted with in those countries.

The largest of the two is the monastery of San Pablo. It was a foundation of much magnificence, and the building has sustained very little injury, owing to its having, immediately on the expulsion of the monks, been applied to other uses, instead of being deserted and left to decay. It is now a Presidio, or central prison for condemned malefactors. The cloister is a superb quadrangle, of the pointed style of the end of the fourteenth century, and is the usual resort of the prisoners, who are grouped so thickly over its pavement, that it is with difficulty one passes between them, without adding to the clanking of chains as their wearers

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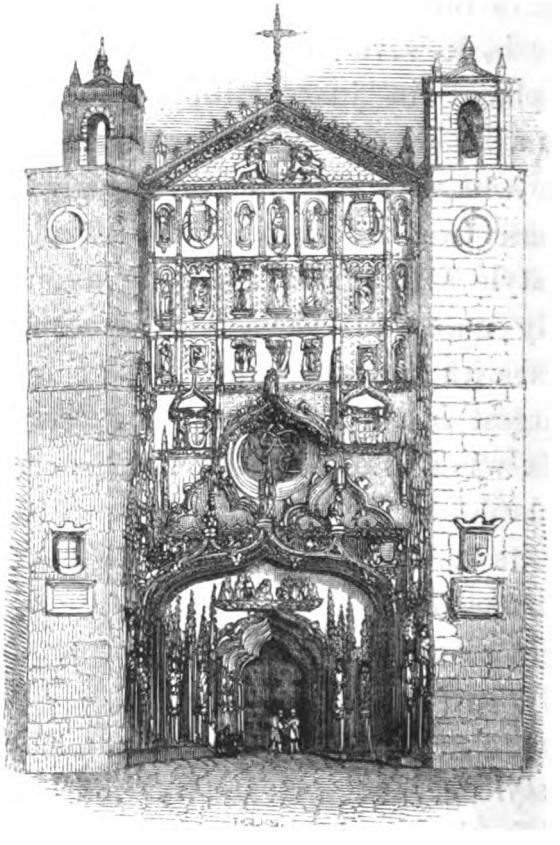
change their posture to make way. The façade of the church is enclosed between two small octagon towers without ornament, like a picture in a frame. Within these all is sculpture. The door-way is formed of a triple concentric arch, flanked by rows



FAÇADE OF SAN PABLO.

of statues, all of which are enclosed within another arch, which extends across the whole width, from

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tower to tower. Over this there is a circular window, surrounded with armorial escutcheons, and the remainder of the façade is covered with groups of figures in compartments, up to the summit, a height of about a hundred and thirty feet, where there is a pediment ornamented with an immense armorial shield and lions rampant as supporters, and the whole is surmounted by a cross.

The church was erected by the celebrated Torquemada, who was a monk in the establishment. Doña Maria, Queen of Sancho the Fourth, although mentioned as the founder of the monastery, only completed a small portion of the edifice compared to what was subsequently added. A handsome tomb by Pompeyo Leoni, is seen in the church. It is that of Don Francisco de Sandoval, Duke of Lerma, and his wife. The woodwork of the stalls is by Ferrara. It is adorned with fluted Doric columns, and is composed of walnut, ebony, box and cedar. The superb façade of this church and its sumptuous tracery, had well nigh been the cause of a misunderstanding between the representative of the Spanish Government and myself. To obtain admission to the interior of the building, which I was told had become national property, I addressed my humble request in writing to the *gefe politico*, or governor of the province, resident at Valladolid. I left

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the note at his official residence, and was requested to return at an hour appointed, when I was to obtain an audience. The functions of a *gefe politico* answer to those of no provincial functionary in England, or any other constitutional state—he has more authority even than a Préfet in France. He represents the monarchical power, with this difference, that he is uncontrolled by parliament within the limits of his province. Although not charged with the military administration, he can direct and dispose of the armed force; besides being a sort of local home minister and police magistrate; in fact, the factotum or *âme damnée* of the Cromwell of the moment, with whom he is in direct and constant communication on the affairs of his district.

I was at Valladolid during the regency of Espartero, when the cue given to these functionaries, relative to the *surveillance* of foreigners was very anti-French, and favourable to England. Now in the eyes of a *gens-d'armes* every one is a thief until he can bring proof to the contrary, just as by the jurisprudence of certain continental countries, every accused is presumed criminal—just as every one who comes to a Jew is presumed by him to have old clothes to sell, or money to borrow. Thus, owing to the nature of the duties of the Governor of Valladolid, every foreigner who met

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his eye, was a Frenchman, and an *intrigant*, until he should prove the reverse.

Not being aware of this at the time, I had drawn up my petition in French. On my return for the answer, my reception was any thing but encouraging. The excessive politeness of the Spaniard was totally lost sight of, and I perceived a moody-looking, motionless official, seated at a desk, with his hat resting on his eyebrows, and apparently studying a newspaper. I stood in the middle of the room for two or three minutes unnoticed; after which, deigning to lift his head, the personage inquired in a gruff tone, why I did not open my cloak. I was not as yet acquainted with the Spanish custom of drawing the end of the cloak from off the left shoulder, on entering a room. I therefore only half understood the question, and, being determined, at whatever price, to see San Pablo, I took off my cloak, laid it on a chair, and returned to face the official. "I took the liberty of requesting your permission to view the ancient monastery of San Pablo."—"And, pray, what is your reason for wishing to see San Pablo?"—"Curiosity."—"Oh, that is all, is it!"—"I own likewise, that, had I found that the interior corresponded, in point of architectural merit, with the façade, I might have presumed to wish to sketch it, and carry away the drawing in my port-

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manteau."—"Oh, no doubt—very great merit. You are a Frenchman?"—"I beg your pardon, only an Englishman."—"You! an Englishman!!" No answer. "And pray, from what part of England do you come?" I declined the county, parish, and house.

These English expressions, which I had expected would come upon his ear, with the same familiarity as if they had been Ethiopian or Chinese, produced a sudden revolution in my favour. The Solomon became immediately sensible of the extreme tact he had been displaying. Addressing me in perfect English, he proceeded to throw the blame of my brutal reception on the unfortunate state of his country. "All the French," he said, "who come here, come with the intention of intriguing and doing us harm. You wrote to me in French, and that was the cause of my error. The monastery is now a prison; I will give you an order to view it, but you will not find it an agreeable scene, it is full of criminals in chains." And he proceeded to prepare the order.

Not having recovered the compliment of being taken for a conspirator; nor admiring the civilisation of the governor of a province, who supposed that all the thirty-four millions of French, must be *intrigants*, I received his civilities in silence, took the order, and my departure. The most curious part

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of the affair was, that I had no passport at the time, having lost it on the road. Had my suspicious interrogator ascertained this before making the discovery that I was English, I should inevitably have been treated to more of San Pablo than I desired, or than would have been required for drawing it in detail.

The adjoining building is smaller, and with less pretension to magnificence is filled with details far more elaborate and curious. The Gothic architecture, like the Greek, assumed as a base and principle of decoration the imitation of the supposed primitive abodes of rudest invention. The Greek version of the idea is characterised by all the grace and finished elegance peculiar to its inventors; while the same principle in the hands of the framers of Gothic architecture, gave birth to a style less pure and less refined; but bolder, more true to its origin, and capable of more varied application. In both cases may be traced the imitation of the trunks of trees: but it is only in the Gothic style that the branches are added, and that instances are found of the representation of the knots and the bark. In this architecture, the caverns of the interior of mountains are evidently intended by the deep, multiplied, and diminishing arches, which form the entrances of cathedrals; and the rugged exterior of the rocky mass,

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which might enclose such a primæval abode, is imaged in the uneven and pinnacled walls.

The façade of the college of San Gregorio, adjoining San Pablo, furnishes an example of the Gothic decoration brought back to its starting point. The tree is here in its state of nature; and contributes its trunk, branches, leaves, and its handfuls of twigs bound together. A grove is represented, composed of strippling stems, the branches of some of which, united and bound together, curve over, and form a broad arch, which encloses the door-way. At each side is a row of hairy savages, each holding in one hand a club resting on the ground, and in the other an armorial shield. The intervals of the sculpture are covered with tracery, representing entwined twigs, like basket-work. Over the door is a stone fourteen feet long by three in height, covered with *fleurs-de-lis* on a ground of wicker-work, producing the effect of muslin. Immediately over the arch is a large flower-pot, in which is planted a pomegranate tree. Its branches spread on either side and bear fruit, besides a quantity of little Cupids, which cling to them in all directions. In the upper part they enclose a large armorial escutcheon, with lions for supporters. The arms are those of the founder of the college, Alonzo de Burgos, Bishop of Palencia. On either side of this design, and separated respec-

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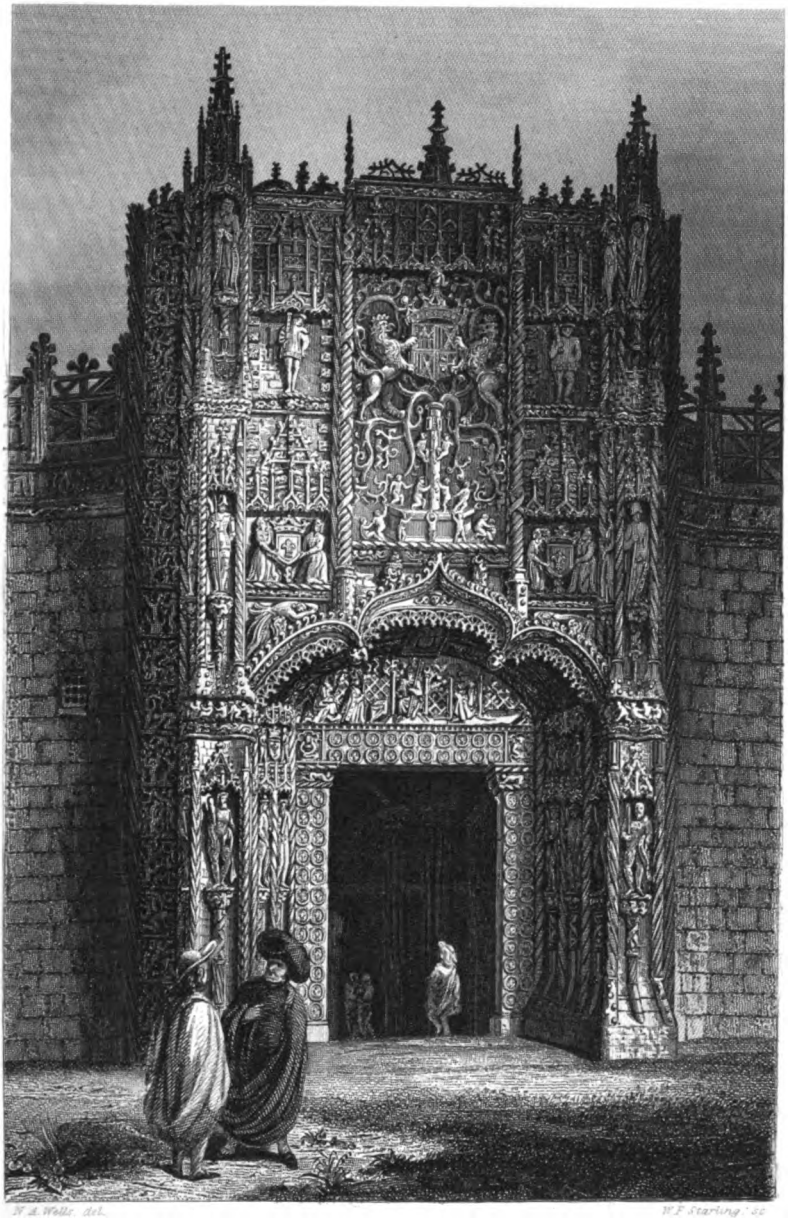

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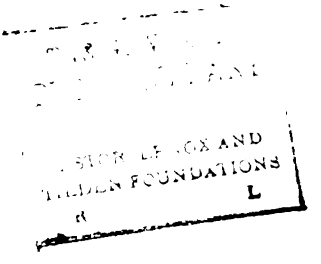

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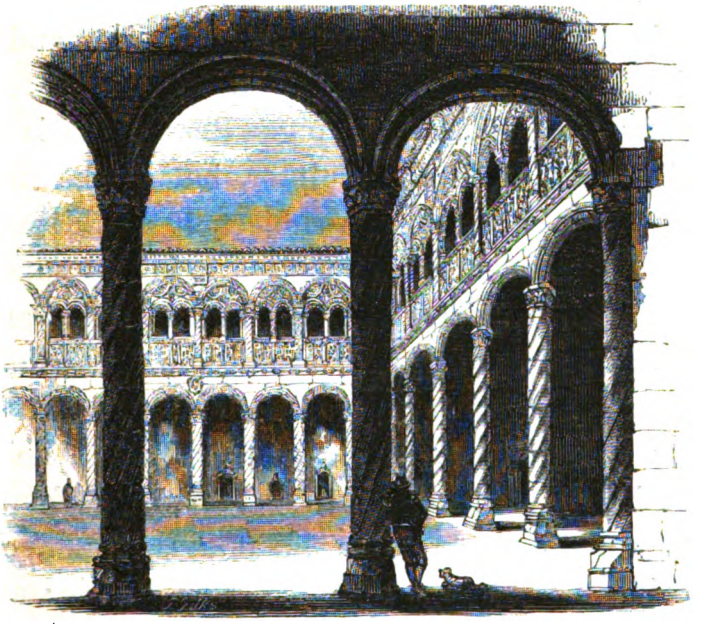
tively by stems of slight trees, are compartments containing armed warriors in niches, and armorial shields. All the ornaments I have enumerated cover the façade up to its summit, along which project entwined branches and sticks, represented as broken off at different lengths.

The court of this edifice is as elaborately ornamented as the façade, but it was executed at a much



COURT OF SAN GREGORIO. VALLADOLID.

later period, and belongs to the renaissance. The pillars are extremely elegant and uncommon. The doorway of the library is well worthy of notice; also

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that of the refectory. The college of San Gregorio was, in its day, the most distinguished in Spain. Such was the reputation it had acquired, that the being announced as having studied there was a sufficient certificate for the proficiency of a professor in science and erudition. It is still a college, but no longer enjoys the same exclusive renown. In the centre of the chapel is the tomb of the founder, covered with excellent sculpture, representing the four virtues, and the figures of three saints and the Virgin. It is surrounded by a balustrade ornamented with elaborate carving. Berruguete is supposed to have been the sculptor, but in the uncertainty which exists on the subject, it would not be difficult to make a better guess, as it is very superior to all the works I have seen attributed to that artist. At the foot of the statue of the bishop is the following short inscription, "Operibus credite." To this prelate was due the façade of San Pablo; he was a Dominican monk at Burgos, where he founded several public works. He became confessor, chief chaplain, and preacher to Isabel the Catholic: afterwards Bishop of Cordova; and was ultimately translated to the see of Palencia. He received the sobriquet of Fray Mortero, as some say from the form of his face, added to the unpopularity which he shared with the two other favorites of Ferdinand

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and Isabella,—the Duke of Maqueda, and Cardinal Ximenes, with whom he figured in a popular triplet which at that period circulated throughout Spain,

> Cardenas, el Cardenal,
> Con el padre Fray Mortero,
> Fraen el reyno al retortero.

which may be freely translated thus:

> What with his Grace the Cardinal,
> With Cardenas, and Father Mortar,—
> Spain calls aloud for quarter! quarter!"

The concise inscription seen on the tomb, was probably meant as an answer to this satire, and to the injurious opinion generally received respecting his character.

I returned from Toledo by way of Madrid and Saragoza. The diligence track from Toledo to Madrid was in a worse state than at the time of my arrival: a circumstance by no means surprising, since what with the wear and tear of carts and carriages, aided by that of the elements, and unopposed by human labour, it must deteriorate gradually until it becomes impassable. Since my last visit to the Museo the equestrian portrait of Charles the Fifth by Titian has been restored. It was in so degraded a condition that the lower half, containing the foreground and the horses' legs, presented scarcely a distinguishable object. It has been handled with

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care and talent, and, in its present position in the centre of the gallery, it now disputes the palm with the Spasimo, and is worth the journey to Madrid, were there nothing else to be seen there. I paid another visit to the Saint Elizabeth in the Academy, and to the Museum of Natural History, contained in the upper floor of the same building. This gallery boasts the possession of an unique curiosity; the entire skeleton of a Megatherion strides over the well-furnished tables of one of the largest rooms. I believe an idea of this gigantic animal can nowhere else be formed. The head must have measured about the dimensions of an elephant's body.

From Castile into Aragon the descent is continual, and the difference of climate is easily perceptible. Vineyards here climb the mountains, and the plains abound with olive-grounds, which are literally forests, and in which the plants attain to the growth of those of Andalucia. In corresponding proportion to the improving country, complaints are heard of its population. Murders and robberies form the subject of conversations; and certain towns are selected as more especially *mal-composées*, for the head-quarters of strong bodies of *guardia civile*: without which precaution travelling would here be attended with no small peril. This state of things is attributed partly to the disorganising effects of the

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recent civil war, which raged with peculiar violence in this province. The same causes have operated less strongly in the adjoining Basque provinces, from their having to act on a population of a different character,—colder, more industrious, and more pacifically disposed, and without the desperate sternness and vindictive temper of the Aragonese.

The inhabitants of this province differ in costume and appearance from the rest of the Spaniards. Immediately on setting foot on the Aragonese territory, you are struck by the view of some peasant at the road-side: his black broad-brimmed hat, — waistcoat, breeches, and stockings all of the same hue, varied only by the broad *faja*, or sash of purple, make his tall erect figure almost pass for that of a Presbyterian clergyman, cultivating his Highland garden. The natives of Aragon have not the vivacity and polished talkativeness of the Andalucian and other Spaniards; they are reserved, slow, and less prompt to engage in conversation, and often abrupt and blunt in their replies. These qualities are not, however, carried so far as to silence the continual chatter of the interior of a Spanish diligence. Spanish travelling opens the sluices of communicativeness even of an Aragonese, as it would those of the denizens of a first class vehicle of a Great Western train, were they exposed during a short time to its vicissitudes.

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However philosophers may explain the phenomenon, it is certain that the talkativeness of travellers augments in an inverse ratio to their comforts. The Spaniards complain of the silence of a French diligence; while, to a Frenchman, the occupants of the luxurious corners of an English railroad conveyance, must appear to be afflicted with dumbness.

Saragoza is one of the least attractive of Spanish towns. Its situation is as flat and uninteresting as its streets are ugly and monotonous. The ancient palace of the sovereigns of Aragon is now the Ayuntamiento. It would form, in the present day, but a sorry residence for a private individual, although it presents externally a massive and imposing aspect. Its interior is almost entirely sacrificed to an immense hall, called now the Lonja. It is a Gothic room, containing two rows of pillars, supporting a groined ceiling. It is used for numerous assemblies, elections, and sometimes for the carnival balls. The ancient Cathedral of La Seu is a gothic edifice, of great beauty internally; but the natives are still prouder of the more modern church called Nuestra Señora del Pilar,—an immense building in the Italian style, erected for the accommodation of a statue of the Virgin found on the spot, standing on a pillar. This image is the object of peculiar veneration.

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After leaving Saragoza you are soon in the Basque provinces. The first considerable town is Tudela in Navarre; and here we were strongly impressed with the unbusinesslike nature of the Spaniard. This people, thoroughly good-natured and indefatigable in rendering a service, when the necessity arises for application to occupations of daily routine appear to exercise less intelligence than some other nations. It is probably owing to this cause that at Madrid the anterooms of the Foreign Office, situated in the palace, are, at four in the afternoon, the scene of much novelty and animation. In a town measuring no more than a mile and a half in each direction, the inexperienced stranger usually puts off to the last day of his stay the business of procuring his passport, and he is taken by surprise on finding it to be the most busy day of all. Little did he expect that the four or five *visas* will not be obtained in less than forty-eight hours: and he pays for his place in the diligence or mail (always paid in advance) several days before. It is consequently worth while to attend in person at the Secretary of State's office, in search of one's passport, in order to witness the scene.

The hour for the delivery of these inevitable documents, coincides with the shutting up for the day of all the embassies: so that those which

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require the subsequent *visa* of an ambassador, have to wait twenty-four hours. Hence the victims of official indifference, finding themselves disappointed of their departure, and minus the value of a place in the mail, give vent to their dissatisfaction in a variety of languages, forming a singular contrast to the phlegmatic and *impassible* porters and ushers, accustomed to the daily repetition of similar scenes. Some, rendered unjust by adversity, loudly accuse the government of complicity with the hotel-keepers. I saw a Frenchman whose case was cruel. His passport had been prepared at his embassy, and as he was only going to France, there were no more formalities necessary, but the visa of the police, and that of the foreign office. All was done but the last, and he was directed to call at four o'clock. His place was retained in that evening's mail, and being a mercantile traveller, both time and cash were of importance to him. On applying at the appointed hour, his passport was returned to him without the *visa*, because the French Secretary had, in a fit of absence, written Cadiz, instead of Bordeaux — he was to wait a day to get the mistake rectified.

These inconveniences were surpassed by that to which the passengers of our diligence were subjected at Tudela. Imagine yourself ensconced in a corner of the Exeter mail (when it existed) and on

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arriving at Taunton, or any intermediate town, being informed that an unforeseen circumstance rendered it necessary to remain there twenty-four hours, instead of proceeding in the usual manner. On this announcement being made at Tudela, I inquired what had happened, and learned that a diligence, which usually met ours, and the mules of which were to take us on, was detained a day at Tolosa, a hundred miles off. Rather than send a boy to the next stage to bring the team of mules, which had nothing to do, a dozen travellers had to wait until the better fortunes of the previous vehicle should restore it to its natural course.

As if this contretems was not sufficient, we were subjected to the most galling species of tyranny, weighing on the dearest of human privileges, I mean that which the proprietor of a shilling,—zwanziger, franc, or pezeta, — feels that he possesses of demanding to be fed. We had left Saragoza at nine in the morning, and had arrived without stoppages at six. A plentiful dinner, smoking on the table of the *comedor*, might have produced a temporary forgetfulness of our sorrows: but no entreaties could prevail on the hostess to lay the table-cloth. It was usual for the joint supper of the two coaches to take place at nine, and not an instant sooner should we eat. Weighed down by this complica-

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tion of miseries, we sat, a disconsolate party, round the *brasero*, until at about eight our spirits began to rise at the sight of a table-cloth; and during half an hour, the occasional entrance of a waiting woman, with the different articles for the table, kept our hopes buoyed up, and our heads in motion towards the door, each time it opened to give entrance, now to a vinegar cruet, now to a salt-cellar.

At length an angelic figure actually bore in a large dish containing a quantity of vegetables, occasioning a cry of joy to re-echo through our end of the room. She placed it on a side-board and retired. Again the door opened, when to our utter dismay, another apparition moved towards the dish, took it up and carried it away; shutting the door carefully behind her. This was the best thing that could have occurred; since it produced a sudden outburst of mirth, which accompanied us to the table, now speedily adorned with the materials of a plentiful repast.

The next town to Tudela, is the gay and elegant little fortress of Pamplona, from which place an easy day's journey, through a tract of superb mountain scenery, brings you to Tolosa, the last resting-place on the Spanish side.

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PART II.

SEVILLE.

LETTER XV.

JOURNEY TO SEVILLE. CHARACTER OF THE SPANIARDS. VALLEY OF THE RHONE.

Marseille.

In order to reach the south of Spain, the longest route is that which, passing through France, leads by Bayonne to the centre of the northern frontier of the Peninsula, which it then traverses from end to end. It is not the longest in actual distance; but in regard to time, and to fatigue, and (for all who do not travel by Diligence), by far the longest, with regard to expense. Another route, longer, it is true, in distance, but shorter with respect to all these other considerations, is that by Lyons and Marseille; from either of which places, the journey may be made entirely by steam.

The shortest of all, and in every respect, is that by the Gibraltar mail, which leaves London and Falmouth once a week. This is a quicker journey

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than that through France, even for an inhabitant of France, supposing him resident at Paris, and to proceed to England *viâ le Hâvre*. But there is an objection to this route for a tourist. Desirous of visiting foreign scenes, he will find it too essentially an English journey—direct, sure, and horribly business-like and monotonous. You touch, it is true, at Lisbon, where during a few hours, you may escape from the beef and Stilton cheese, if not from the Port wine; and where you may enjoy the view of some fine scenery; but all the rest is straightforward, desperate paddling night and day; with the additional objection, that being surrounded by English faces, living on English fare, and listening to English voices, the object of the traveller—that of quitting England—is not attained; since he cannot be said to have left that country, until he finds himself quarrelling with his rapacious boatman on the pier of the glittering Cadiz.

Although this arrangement may possess the merit of the magic transition from England to Andalucia, which, it must be allowed, is a great one—many will prefer being disembarked in France; looking forward, since there is a time for all things, to a still more welcome disembarkation on England's white shores, when the recollected vicissitudes of travel shall have disposed them to appreciate more

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than ever her comforts and civilization, and to be more forgiving to her defects; and, should they not be acquainted with the banks of the Rhone below Lyons, adopting that equally commodious and infinitely more varied course.

In fact, there are few who will not agree with me in pronouncing this the best way, for the tourist, of approaching Spain. It is not every one, who will not consider the gratifications which the inland territory of the Peninsula may offer to his curiosity too dearly purchased by the inconveniences inseparable from the journey. Add to this the superiority of the maritime provinces, with scarcely any exception, in point of climate, civilization, and attractions of every sort. Valencia, Barcelona, Malaga, and Cadiz are more agreeable places of residence, and possess more resources than even Madrid; but their chief advantage is a difference of climate almost incredible, from the limited distance which separates them from the centre of the Peninsula. The Andalucian coast enjoys one of the best climates in the world; while the Castiles, Aragon, and La Mancha can hardly be said to possess the average advantages in that respect; owing to the extremes of cold and heat, which characterize their summer and winter seasons, and which, during autumn and spring, are continually alternating in rapid transition.

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Andalucia unites in a greater degree than the other maritime provinces, the advantages which constitute their superiority over the rest of Spain. It does more, for it presents to the stranger a combination of the principal features of interest, which render the Peninsula more especially attractive to the lover of travel. It is, in fact, to Spain what Paris is to France; Moscow and Petersburg to Russia. England, Italy, and Germany are not fit subjects for illustrating the comparison; their characteristic features of attraction and interest being disseminated more generally throughout all their provinces or states. Whoever wishes to find Spain herself, unalloyed, in her own character and costume, and in her best point of view, should disembark in Andalucia.

There, unlike the Castiles, and the still more northern provinces, in which only the earth and air remain Spanish, and those not the best Spanish —where all the picturesque and original qualities that distinguish the population, are fast fading away —the upper classes in their manners and costumes, and the Radicals in their politics, striving to become French—there, on the contrary, all is natural and national in its half-Arab nationality: and certainly nature and nationality have given proof of taste in selecting for their last refuge, the most deli-

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cious of regions; where earth and heaven have done their utmost to form an abode, worthy of the most beautiful of the human, as well as the brute creation.

I will not pause to inquire whether the reproach be justly addressed by the other Spaniards, to the inhabitants of this province, of indolence and love of pleasure, and of a disposition to deceitfulness, concealed beneath the gay courtesy of their manners; it would, indeed, be a surprising, a miraculous exception to the universal system of compensations that we recognise as governing the world, had not this people some prominent defect, or were they not exposed to some peculiar element of suffering, to counterbalance in a degree the especial and exclusive gifts heaped upon them. By what other means could their perfect happiness be interfered with? Let us, then, allow them their defects—the necessary shade in so brilliant a picture—defects which, in reducing their felicity to its due level, are easily fathomed, and their consequences guarded against, by sojourners amongst them, in whose eyes their peculiar graces, and the charm of their manner of life, find none the less favour from their being subject to the universal law of humanity. They cannot be better painted in a few words, than by the sketch, drawn by the witty and graceful

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Lantier, from the inhabitants of Miletus. "Les Milesiens," he says, "sont aimables. Ils emportent, peut-être, sur les Athéniens" (read "Castillans") "par leur politesse, leur aménité, et les agrémens de leur esprit. On leur reproche avec raison cette facilité—cette mollesse de mœurs, qui prend quelquefois l'air de la licence. Tout enchante les sens dans ce séjour fortuné—la pureté de l'air—la beauté des femmes—enfin leur musique—leurs danses, leurs jeux—tout inspire la volupté, et pénêtre l'âme d'une langueur délicieuse. Les Zéphirs ne s'y agitent que pour repandre au loin l'esprit des fleurs et des plantes, et embaumer l'air de leurs suaves odeurs."

This passage is, word for word, so exactly applicable to the Andalucians and their land, that it is difficult to imagine another people to have sat for the portrait, nor to a more talented painter. It is a pity that the author I quote, is a rarity in modern libraries: owing, perhaps, to his descriptions being at times rather warm, or, as his compatriotes would say, *un peu regence.*

In Spain, the country of proverbs, they are very fond of summing up, by the aid of a few epithets, the distinctive character of each province. As bad qualities frequently predominate in these estimates, it is of course usual for the individual, who undertakes the instruction of a foreigner in this department

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of knowledge, to omit the mention of his own province. After all, the defects attributed to the inhabitants of one portion of a country by those of another, are not to be taken for granted without considerable reservation; allowance must be made for rivalry and jealousies. Almost every country affords examples of these wholesale accusations laid to the charge of particular counties or divisions of territory. Thus the character usually attributed in Spain to the Andalucians, is that of a people lively, gay, of extreme polish and amiability of manners, but false and treacherous. The Galicians are said to be stupid and heavy, but remarkably honest; the Catalonians courageous but quarrelsome, *mauvais coucheurs*. No doubt in some of these instances, the general impression may be borne out to a certain extent, by some particular class of the denizens of the province alluded to; but such distinctions are rarely perceptible among the educated classes. It is perhaps less easy in Spain than elsewhere, to establish these classifications at all successfully. Contradictions will be met with at every step, calculated to shake their infallibility. To our eye, as foreigners, there are sufficient peculiarities belonging to the nation universally, and respecting which our knowledge is far from being complete, without attempting to classify a greater or smaller list of subdivisions, the

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appreciation of which would require a prolonged residence in the country.

Spain is looked upon by the greater number of strangers as a land delivered over to depredation, and highly insecure. In fact, it is surprising that such should not be the fate of a country in which instruction is limited, and where, as I myself have witnessed, servants may be known to be in the daily practice of stealing without their dismissal being by any means a necessary result. It is surprising, that in the absence of any strong natural objection to theft, any honesty should exist in the presence of temptation; yet I know no country where there is more, if I may form an opinion from the individuals of whom I have had an opportunity of judging. However, as an instance of the contradictions one meets with, the following event was represented as having taken place in one of the provinces in which I had received the favourable impression abovementioned.

A cidevant colonel, just arrived in Madrid, related the fact to me one evening, on which, as chance would have it, I found him at supper. Immediately on my entering the room he commenced complaining of the lack of silver articles of necessity for the table, and accounted for it in the following manner. He had recently arrived with his family from a pro-

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vincial town, in which he had filled a government situation. Shortly before his departure he had invited all his friends to a leave-taking repast; and after the departure of his guests nearly two dozen articles of plate were missing. "In packing up," I observed, "no doubt some dishonest domestic—" "No, no," he interrupted, "they were all pocketed by my guests."

That the man in office should have conciliated the attachment of all his acquaintances to such a degree, as that all should conceive simultaneously the idea of preserving a *souvenir* of his person, and that in so delicate and unostentatious a manner,—was not possible. As, therefore, I still retained my impression of the honesty of the lower classes, and as the sufferer appeared to treat the occurrence as one by no means extraordinary, I came to the conclusion, that—either Spanish integrity, unlike that of other nations, must rise in an inverse ratio to men's fortunes and stations; or that the author of the anecdote had been tempted, by the desire of masking the (perhaps unavoidable) deficiencies in his supper service, to have recourse to his inventive talent, at the expense of his absent friends' reputation.

I believe it must be allowed that with respect to the disregard of the rights of proprietorship, of which the lower classes are accused, there are suffi-

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cient instances on record to counterbalance, in some degree, my personal experience; but there is this to be urged in favour of that class of culprits, where such are met with, that their mode of operation is far more manly and courageous than that of the depredators of some other climes—by which means they obtain also the full reputation of their misdeeds. There may scarcely be said to be anything mean or degrading in their manner of thieving: and their system is itself a proof that they see no sin in it. They take to the mountains, and declare open war againt those whom they consider the unjust monopolizers of wealth.

Instances of this sort are no doubt frequent in Spain; in Toledo they relate that, some years since, the passes of Estremadura were occupied by one of the most formidable and best organized of these bands, under the orders of a female. Various versions were given of this woman's history; but the one most accredited accounted in the following manner for her having adopted the profession of freebooter. A young lady of rank had disappeared from her family residence, leaving no trace by which to guide conjecture as to her fate. It was therefore presumed she had been kidnapped. The event, however, had already long ceased to be a subject of conversation in the district, when three or four years after, a

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traveller, who had escaped from an attack of banditti, announced the fact of their being commanded by a woman. Although well disguised, her voice, and delicate figure had betrayed her sex. The fact was subsequently confirmed by positive discoveries; and, at length, confiding in the alteration time and her mode of life had produced in her appearance, she ceased to make a mystery of the circumstance, and headed the attacks, mounted usually on a large black horse. Her age and beauty coinciding with the description given of the young countess who had disappeared some years previously, gave rise to the supposition of their identity. The band has been since dispersed, and many of them captured; but their chief has contrived to escape, and it is probable the truth respecting her may never be divulged.

It is said she at times exercised more pitiless cruelties than are usually practised by the male chiefs of the regular banditti; and that, after such acts,—as though conscience-stricken,—she would, by way of compensation, allow parties to pass unmolested.

From such instances as these a portion of the Spanish population must be considered amenable to the charge brought against them; but there are peculiarities of a different stamp, which mark the

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Spaniards in general, and are more deserving of notice in a summary of the national characteristic qualities. It is impossible, for instance, not to be struck by the intelligence and tact, independent of cultivation, which pervade all classes. Whether the denizens of these southern climes are indebted to the purity of their atmosphere, for this gift of rapid perception, in which they surpass our northern organizations, or to whatever cause they may owe it; the fact leads to involuntary speculation on what might have been the results, in a country so distinguished, besides, by its natural advantages, had the Arab supremacy lasted until our days. At a period when education was generally held in no estimation in Europe, the first care of almost every sovereign of that race was usually directed to the establishment, or improvement, of the public schools, in which the sciences and languages were taught at the royal expense. No town being unprovided with its schools, it is difficult to imagine to what degree of superiority over the rest of Europe the continuation of such a system would have raised a people so gifted as to be capable of supplying, by natural intelligence, the almost universal absence of information and culture.

You continually meet with such instances of uncultivated intelligence as the following. I was occu-

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pied in sketching in a retired part of the environs of Madrid, when a ragged, half-naked boy, not more than ten or eleven years of age, and employed in watching sheep, having to pass near me, stopped to examine my work. He remained for nearly a quarter of an hour perfectly still, making no movement except that of his eyes, which continually travelled from the paper to the landscape, and back from that to the paper. At length, going away, he exclaimed, "Que paciencia, Dios mio!"

The following is an example of the absence of cultivation, where it might have been expected to exist. A student leaving the university of Toledo, at the age of twenty-seven, told me he had studied there eleven years, and had that day received his diploma of barrister, which, when sent to Madrid, where it would be backed by the sanction of the minister, would authorise him to practise his profession in any town throughout Spain. In the course of the same conversation, he asked me whether Russia was not situated in the Mediterranean, and whether England did not form a portion of that country.

Tact and good manners are so universal among the lower classes, that a more familiar intercourse than we are accustomed to, can be allowed between persons of different ranks. Those of the highest class are seen, during a journey, dining at the same

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table with their servants; and on all other occasions entering into conversation with them. This intercourse of good nature and good understanding, universally existing between superiors and inferiors, and which is never known to degenerate into familiarity, would preserve Spain a long time from revolutions of a popular origin—were she left to herself. The Spaniard of the lowest station has as considerable an idea of his personal consequence as a marquis, and maintains with his equals all the forms of high breeding. If you stop to listen to the discussions of a knot of ragged children playing at marbles, you will hear them address each other by the title of Señor.

The urbanity and polish which prevails throughout all classes is genuine, and the result of good-nature. This is proved by their readiness to render all sorts of services as soon as they are acquainted with you, and even before; and *that* notwithstanding their suspicion and dislike of strangers, a disposition for which they have ample cause. I don't mean to include services which might incur pecuniary outlay; it would be something like requesting the loan of the Highlander's inexpressibles. Although even of this a remarkable instance has fallen under my observation,—the capability existing,—but they will spare no trouble nor time: doubling the

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value of the obligation by the graceful and earnest manner of rendering it.

Should your reception by a Spaniard be marked by coldness, it is generally to be accounted for by a very excusable feeling. The Spaniard is usually deeply preoccupied by the unfortunate state of his country. This subject of continual reflection operating on a character singularly proud, but which is at the same time marked by a large share of modesty,—qualities by no means incompatible,—occasions him a sensation when in presence of a foreigner, nearly approaching to suffering. He feels a profound veneration for the former glories of his land, and admiration of its natural superiority; but he is distrustful of his modern compatriots, of whom he has no great opinion. His anxiety is, therefore, extreme with regard to the judgment which a Frenchman or Englishman may have formed respecting his countrymen and country: and he is not at his ease until satisfied on that point; fearing that the backward state of material civilization may be attributed by them to hopeless defects in the natural character, and diminish their respect for his country. He is restored to immediate peace of mind by a delicate compliment, easily introduced, on the ancient grandeur of Spain, or the eternal splendour of her skies and soil, and especially by an expression of disapproval of the

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influence which foreign governments seem desirous of arrogating to themselves over her political destinies.

Should the stranger delay the application of some such soothing balm, he will not hesitate to provoke it, by ingeniously leading the conversation in the direction he wishes, and then heaping abuse and censure on his compatriots.

The interference of foreign governments in their politics is, in fact, one of the consequences of the present national inferiority, the most galling to their feelings. This is accounted for by the high independence, which is one of the principal features of their character, and is observable in the most insignificant events of their daily life. The practice which prevails in some countries, of meddling, each with his, (and even) *her* neighbour's concerns, and of heaping vituperation where a man's conduct or opinions differ from his who speaks, is one of the most repugnant to the Spanish nature. If a Spaniard hears such a conversation, he stares vacantly, as though he comprehended nothing; and the natural expression traceable on not a few countenances and attitudes may be translated, "I don't interfere in your affairs, pray don't trouble yourself about mine."

It is curious to trace this in their favorite sayings, or proverbs (*refrans*), by which the national pecu-

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liarities of character are admirably depicted. Of these no people possess so complete a collection. The following is one which expresses the feeling to which I allude:

El Marques de Santa Cruz hizó
Un palacio en el Viso:
Porque pudó, y porque quisó.

or, translated,

What could induce Sir Santa Cruz to
Build a house the Viso close to?
—He had the money, and he chose to.

I place, in the translation, the edifice close to the Viso, instead of upon it, as in the original text. I doubt whether any apology is necessary for this poetical licence, by which the intention of the proverb undergoes no alteration. It is true, a house may be close to a hill without being erected upon it; but if, as in this instance, it is on the top of the hill, it is most certainly close to it likewise.

The submission of the Spaniards to the despotism of etiquette and custom in trifles, does not (otherwise than apparently) constitute a contradiction to this independence of character. However that may be, the breach of all other laws meets with easier pardon, than that of the laws of custom. This code is made up of an infinity of minute observances, many of which escape the notice of a forcigner, until

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accustomed by degrees to the manners of those who surround him. He will not, for instance, discover, until he has made himself some few temporary enemies, that no greater insult can be offered to a person of rank, or in authority, than saluting him in a cloak *embozado*—the extremity thrown over the shoulder.—A similar neglect is not pardoned either by the fair sex. The minutest peculiarities in dress are observed, and if at all discordant with the received mode of the day, incur universal blame. The situation of a stranger is, in fact, at first scarcely agreeable in a country in which the smallest divergence from established customs attracts general attention and criticism. This does not, however, interfere with the ready goodnature and disposition to oblige met with, as I said before, on all occasions.

In some instances the attachment to external forms operates advantageously. Such is that of the picturesque practice prevailing in many of the provinces, of assuming the quality of the *Beata*. In Toledo, certain peculiarities in the toilette of one of a group of young ladies attracted my curiosity. She was apparently about seventeen; pretty, but by no means remarkably so for a Spaniard, and appeared to be in deep mourning. Whenever, in speaking, a movement of her right hand and arm lifted up her mantilla, a japanned leather sash was exposed to

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view, of about two inches in width, an end of which hanging from the right side, reached rather lower than the knee. On the right sleeve, half-way between the shoulder and the elbow, was fixed a small silver plate, called an *escudo*, and a rosary was worn round her neck.

I was informed, on inquiry, that she was *una beata;* and being still in the dark, my informant related her story. He commenced by the inquiry, whether I had heard of a young man being drowned four months previously in the Tagus. I replied that I had heard of thirty or forty; for he referred to the bathing season, during which, as the river is sown with pits and precipices, and unprovided with humane societies, accidents occur every day. He then named the victim, of whose death I had in fact heard. He was a youth of the age of twenty, and the *novio* (intended) of the young lady in black. On hearing suddenly, and without preparation, the fatal news, she had been seized with a profuse vomiting of blood, and had continued dangerously ill during several weeks. She was now convalescent and had made her appearance in society for the first time.

My informant added, on my repeating the inquiry respecting the costume, that it is the custom for a young lady, on recovering from a serious illness to offer herself to the *Virgen de los dolores;* the

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external sign of the vow consisting in the adoption of a dress similar to that worn by the Virgin in the churches. The obligation assumed lasts generally during a year; although some retain the dress for the remainder of their life. Examples are known of this practice among the other sex; in which case the costume is that of a Franciscan friar; but the *beato* becomes the object of ridicule.

Among the forms of society to which especial importance is attached are the ceremonies and duration of mourning for relations. The friends of the nearest relative,—especially if a lady,—of a person newly deceased, assemble day after day for a considerable time in her house. All are in full dress of deep mourning; and the victim of sorrow and society is expected to maintain a continual outpouring of sighs and tears, while she listens to each consoler in turn. Much importance is attached to the display of the usual appearances of grief, even when the circumstances of the case do not necessarily call for it. Happening to enter a house in which news had been received of the death of a relative, who resided in another part of Spain, I found the lady of the house discussing with a friend the form of her new mourning dress.

Struck by the melancholy expression of her countenance, and the redness of her eyes, I inquired

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whether any bad news had been received. My question gave rise to a renewed flood of tears; "Yes, yes," was the reply; "I have had terrible news; my poor uncle, who had been afflicted for years with dropsy, died only six days ago." I expressed my sincere regret at so sad an event, while she continued her explanations to the other lady. "I understand," she said, in a voice almost suffocated, "that this sleeve is no longer to be—drawn in—and the—front according to the last—French—fashion,—is at least an inch—shorter." Taking the opportunity of the first moment of silence, I asked for some further details respecting this beloved uncle. "It was your Señora mother's brother, I believe?" "No, no, the husband of my aunt: and what—do you—think of the—mantilla?" After the reply of the other visitor to the latter question, I continued,—"But your profound regret, on occasion of the loss of so amiable a companion, is natural." "Terrible, sir, yes—my poor uncle." "Had you seen him shortly before the sad event?" "Alas! no, sir, I never—saw him but —once in my life; and—should not now have recognised him—for I—was then—only five years old."

The Spaniards are not a dinner giving nation; obedient, as some suppose, to their proverb,—which although the effect, may also operate as a cause,—namely "Feasts are given by fools, and partaken of

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"by wise men." This proverb, however, paints the national character with less fidelity than most others; the parsimonious selfishness it implies is not Spanish. Sufficient reasons exist to account for the rarity of dinner invitations.

Although the English are not responsible for the geniality of climate, which corks up their crystallized souls, to be enclosed fog-tight, until released by a symbolical ceremony of the popping of champagne corks,—it is not the less true that dinners are their only introductions to acquaintanceship. Spaniards have corks also, and well worth the trouble of drawing, as well as all the other *materiel* of conviviality; but they despise it, finding the expansion operated by their sunshine more complete and less laborious. Their sociability no more requires dinner parties than their aloes hedges do steam-pipes. With the exception of their ungovernable passion for cold water, their sobriety is extreme; and this may perhaps unite with a dislike to social ostentation in resisting the exotic fashion of dinners. But bring a good letter of introduction to a Spaniard, and you will find a daily place at a well-supplied table, the frequent occupation of which will give unmistakable pleasure.

In such case you are looked for as a daily visitor; not ceremoniously, but as using the house when in

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want of a more cheerful home than your *posada*. Eolus has not yet been appointed here the arbiter of smiles,* and your entrance is always the signal for the same animated welcome. The only variation will be a good-natured remonstrance, should your visits have undergone any interruption.

To return to my route. Aware of the inconvenience of Spanish inland travelling, and with Seville for my object, I proceeded to Lyon. Nor had I long to wait for the reward attendant on my choice of route. Getting on board the steam-packet at six o'clock on an autumn morning, I experienced at first some discouragement, from the fog, which I had not reflected was the natural—or rather unnatural—atmosphere, of that most discouraging of all places, a prosperous manufacturing town. No sooner, however, had we escaped, by the aid of high-pressure steam, from these deleterious influences, than, our way gradually opened before us, rather dimly at first, but more and more clear as the sun attained height,—the banks of the Rhone having, during this time, been progressing also in elevation and grandeur, by eight o'clock we were enjoying a rapidly moving panorama of superb scenery.

This day's journey turned out unusually auspi-

* "Who does a kindness is not therefore kind.—
Perhaps the wind has shifted from the East."—Pope.

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cious. Owing to some favourable combination of celestial influences, (although I perceived no one on board likely to have an astrologer in his pay), no untoward accident—so common on this line—befell us. No stoppages—no running down of barges, nor running foul of bridges—nor bursting of engines. The stream was neither too shallow, nor too full, so that we were preserved both from running aground, and from being run away with. Our boat was the fastest of the six which started at the same time; and one is never ill-disposed by a speed of eighteen miles an hour, although it may be acquired at an imminent risk of explosion.

There is many a day's journey of equal or greater beauty than the descent of the Rhone; but I know of none which operates a more singular effect on the senses. It is that of being transported by a leap from the north to the south of Europe. The Rhone valley, in fine weather, enjoys a southern climate, while all the region to the north of Lyon, is marked by the characteristics of the more northern provinces. That town itself, with its smoke, its gloom, and its dirt, maintains itself at the latitude of Manchester; whose excellent money-making inhabitants, if thrown in the way of a party of Lyonnais, would scarcely feel themselves among strangers, so complete would be the similarity of habits and man-

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ners. The transition, therefore, to those wafted down the sunny valley of the Rhone, is as theatrical as the scenery itself, but with the agreeable addition of reality. Every surrounding object contributes to the magic of the change. Taking leave of a bare and treeless country, and its consequently rough and ungenial climate, which, in its turn, will necessarily exercise its influence on the character of the population, you find yourself gliding between vineclad mountains, not black and rugged like those of the Rhine, but soft and rosy, and lighted by a sky, which begins here to assume a southern brilliancy. The influence of the lighter atmosphere first begins to be felt, expanding the organs, and filling the frame with a sensation, unknown to more northern climes, of pleasure derived from mere existence. Then the language you hear on all sides is new and musical; for the crew of the steamer is Provençal, and their *patois* falls on the ear with something approaching the soft accent of Italy; while their expressive eyes, sunburnt faces, and a certain mixture of animation and languor—the exact counterpart of the phlegmatic industry of the north, complete the scene, with which they are in perfect harmony.

A propos of harmony, when the sailors' dinner hour arrived, they were summoned by an air of

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Rossini, played on a bugle; the performer—one of their number—having first thrown himself flat on the deck, in the attitude of a Turk about to receive the bastinado, and then raising his chest, by the aid of his two elbows, to the height required for the inflation of the instrument.

Nor is this leap from north to south so purely imaginary, since the boat Sirius, aided by the furious current, actually paddled at the rate of from seventeen to eighteen miles an hour; and we reached Avignon at sunset, about five o'clock. The distance being calculated, allowing for the windings of the river, will verify the rate maintained during the day. Notwithstanding the odious nature of comparisons, I could not help forming that between this river and the Rhine, and giving the preference to the first. The bold though gloomy precipices of the Rhine yield, in point of charm, to the more open expanse of the Rhone valley, and the larger scale of the scenery, especially when the far more brilliant lighting-up is considered. Nor does the Rhone yield to its rival, in regard to the picturesque form and position of its castles and other buildings; while its greater width, and handsome bridges, add an additional feature.

The best scene of the day, and a fit climax for its termination, was the approach to Avignon at

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sunset,—a superb Claude. A turn of the river placed the castle—an immense mass crowning the city, and presenting an irregular outline,—directly between us and the sun, the sky doing away, by its brightness, with all the details of the landscape. The principal objects were, the broad expanse of water, and the mass of deep purple, tracing its dark but soft outline on the blaze of gold at its back. On turning to look in the opposite direction, a scene equally striking presented itself. The mountains between which we had been winding during the last half of the day, are, from this point of view, ranged in an immense semicircle, extending round half the horizon, and at that moment were tinged by the sun, with a bright rose colour, while they scarcely appeared at half their actual distance. It looked like the final scene of an aërial ballet, when a semicircle is formed by the rosy sylphs who have figured during the representation.

After the hurly burly of debarkation at Avignon, and forcing our way through the army of luggage porters—a ferocious race, notorious, at this place, for the energy, amounting often to violence, with which they urge the acceptance of their kind offices—the picturesque look of the place, and the necessary hour of waiting for dinner, led me to a scene, which I accepted as a satisfactory greeting

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on my arrival in the land of the troubadours. A group of half a dozen labourers, returned from their day's work, were lolling in every variety of attitude, on some large stones placed in front of the château. They were singing—and with perfect precision of ensemble—each his part of the chorus. At the conclusion of every morceau, the whole party made the façade of the ancient palace echo with peals of laughter; after which they all talked at once, until they had agreed on the choice of the succeeding air.

The castle of Avignon—ancient residence of the Popes, shelters now a different sort of inmates. It serves for barracks for a regiment of infantry. At this moment the lamplighter had completed his rounds in the interior, and given to each of the innumerable windows, an undue importance in the architectural effect of the mass. Such is the irregularity of their distribution over this vast façade —or such it appeared to be then, for I have not seen it by daylight—as to give them the appearance of having being thrown at it by handfuls, and fixed themselves each at its first point of contact with the wall.

Or by way of compensation for the extravagant supposition of so large a hand, we can suppose the edifice diminished, and resembling with its jagged

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outline, a ragged black cloak, which, having been stretched out, to serve as a mark for rifle-shooters, would admit the light through openings not less symmetrically distributed than these windows.

Between Avignon and Marseille, by the land route, the only spot of interest is Aix. It is a well placed little town; although, in the summer, its position must procure for it rather too much warmth. There are no remains of king Réné's palace; nor could I learn that any souvenir of him was extant, with the exception of a statue, which represents the jovial old king of the trouvères in the character of Bacchus. This figure ornaments a hot fountain, situated at the head of the wide street, planted with trees, by which the town is entered.

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LETTER XVI.

VOYAGE TO GIBRALTAR.

Cadiz.

I HAVE just returned from a visit to the signal-tower—the highest look-out in Cadiz; from which is seen a panorama equalled by few in Europe. The Atlantic, and its coast down to Trafalgar Cape—the mountain distances of the Ronda—and Medina Sidonia on its sugar-loaf rock, like an advanced sentinel—all Cadiz, with its hundreds of white Belvideres—and the bright blue bay, decked with glittering white towns, and looking (but with more sparkling glow) like an enormous turquoise set round with pearls. But let not, I entreat you, these magic words—Cadiz—Andalucia—raise your expectations unduly; lest they be disappointed, on finding that I fail in doing justice to this charming country. With regard to this town, not only would it be a task beyond my powers to paint its bright aspect and to give you a sufficiently glowing descrip-

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tion of its pleasures. It is not even my intention to partake of these—being bent on accomplishing my principal object—the exploration of the monuments of Seville. However let us not anticipate. You ought to have had news of me from Gibraltar, where I made a much longer stay than I had intended, owing to an unexpected meeting with an old friend.

The fact is, I put off writing until I should again be in movement, hoping that my letters might thus acquire greater interest. I will resume my journey from France, in which country we parted.

The steam-packets leave Marseille for the south of Spain every tenth day; and I happened to arrive a day or two after one of the departures. Rather than wait eight days, therefore, I agreed for my passage on board a trader bound for Gibraltar; by which arrangement, as the captain assured me that the voyage would only occupy five days, I was to be at my journey's end before the departure of the Phénicien, as the steam-packet was called. The latter, moreover, made no progress excepting during the night, in order to afford the passengers an opportunity of passing each day in some town; and being anxious to arrive at Seville, I should not have liked the delays thus occasioned. I do not, however, recommend the adoption of my plan; for the

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five days, as it turned out, became twenty-four, and the Phénicien arrived at Cadiz long before I reached Gibraltar.

The captain's prognostic of course supposed a favourable voyage; and I was wrong in reckoning on this, particularly at the time of year, and in the Mediterranean. I was wrong, also, in confiding in my Provençal captain, who, in addition to various other bad qualities, turned out to be the most inept blockhead to whom ever were entrusted lives and cargoes.

My fellow-passengers consisted of a Marseille merchant, who possessed a trading establishment at Gibraltar; a young French officer, on leave of absence to visit his mother, who was Spanish; and a Moorish traveller, proceeding homeward to Tetuan. From certain hints dropped by the merchant, who was well acquainted with the passage, we soon learned the probable character of our captain, as he belonged to a race not very favourably spoken of by those whose goods and persons they were in the habit of conveying; and these predictions being soon partially confirmed by the man's incivility, we began to look upon him as our common enemy. One of the accusations brought against his class was, a disposition to reduce the supply of provisions within undue limits. This, however,

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we could not lay to his charge, as the adverse winds rendered necessary an extreme prudence in our daily consumption. My principal anxiety arose from want of confidence in the capacity of the man for the performance of his duties as a seaman. This anxiety was grounded on various symptoms sufficiently striking to attract the notice even of a landsman; and more particularly on a scene, during which his presence of mind, if mind he possessed, totally deserted him.

We had passed several days off the Balearic Islands—or rather on and off—for each morning we issued from behind Ivica, and returned at night to take shelter under its cliffs; ours being the only vessel of several performing the same passage restrained by fear from attempting any progress during these nights. The reason of this we learned subsequently. At length, when we did risk an advance, we chose the worst moment of all: the breeze becoming a gale, and almost a head-wind, from having been less unfavourable. Whatever may now have been our anxiety, we could easily discover that the author of our misfortune was a prey to more terror than ourselves.

Against this wind we proceeded, gaining about a hundred yards an hour, during five days; at the end of which it changed slightly, and allowed us to

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reach the entrance of the channel; that is, we had doubled the Cape de Gata, and were off the south coast of the peninsula, nearly opposite Almeria, and in the direct line of all the vessels entering the Mediterranean; which, as they are sometimes delayed in expectation of a favourable wind for passing the Straits of Gibraltar, were now bearing down in great numbers. At this crisis the gale, which had all along continued to be violent, became once more almost directly adverse, and increased in fury.

Our gallant captain's features always assumed towards evening a more serious expression. A faint tinge of green was observed to replace the yellow of his usual complexion, and he passed the nights on deck, as unapproachable as a hyena—by the way, also a most cowardly animal. At length one day as evening approached, the wind was almost doing its worst, and we went to bed tossed about as if in a walnut-shell—lulled by an incessant roaring, as it were, of parks of Perkin's artillery.

It being essential to keep a good look-out, and to show a light occasionally, in order to avoid being run down—the lantern—unable to live on deck, from the water as well as the wind, which passed through the rigging—was confided to the passengers, with a recommendation, by no means

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likely to be neglected, to keep it in good trim, and to hand it up with promptitude when called for.

At about twelve o'clock, sure enough, the call was heard, in the somewhat agitated tones of the captain. The passenger, whose business it was, for we took the watch each in his turn—immediately jumped up and handed up the lantern. Thinking this sufficient, we remained as we were; but in less than a minute, it was brought back extinguished, and thrown down into the cabin. Immediately after a general view holloa was audible above the roar of the storm, and the mate's voice was heard at the top of our staircase, begging us to get up as we were going to be run down.

We now lost no time in making our way to the deck; no one speaking a word, but each waiting for his turn to mount. Being furthest from the staircase, or rather ladder, I arrived the last. On reaching the deck, I was met by about a ton of salt water, which appeared to have mistaken me for a wicket, as it came in as solid a mass, and with about the same impulse as a cricket ball. Finding I was not to be dashed back again down stairs, it took the opportunity of half filling the cabin, the door of which I had not thought of shutting. On recovering my breath and reopening my eyes, I discerned, by aid of the white bed-apparel of my

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fellow passengers, a dim crowd, pressed together at the bow of the vessel, consisting of all the inhabitants of the frail tenement, excepting the steersman and myself. I rushed forward; but finding my voice insufficient to add any effect to the cry which had been set up, to give notice to the crew of the approaching vessel, I made for the side, which I saw, by the position of the group, was threatened with the expected contact; and catching at a rope ladder, placed myself on the top of the bulwarks, resolved on trying a jump as the only chance of escape in case of meeting.

There was now time to examine our situation perfectly well. I looked towards the stern, and could see that the helm was not deserted: but it was of no avail to save us from the danger; since, sailing as near the wind as we could, as far as I understood the subsequent explanation of the sailors, we could not change our direction on a sudden, otherwise than by turning a sort of right-about-face. We went on, therefore, trusting that the other crew would hear the cry, and discover our position in time. The night being extremely dark, and the sea running high, the approaching vessel was scarcely visible to us when first pointed out by the sailors; still less should I have looked forward to its threatening us with any danger: but the eye of experience

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had not been deceived, and from my perch I was soon able to discover, as each passage over the summit of a wave brought the dark mass against the sky, that its approach was rapid, and directed with unerring precision, so as to cross our course at the fatal moment. She was scudding before the gale, with almost all her sails set, and consequently, on striking our ship, nothing could save us from an instantaneous founder.

At each successive appearance the mass became larger and blacker; but the cry of our crew, in which I now joined, never ceased. At length we were only separated by the ascent of one wave, at the summit of which was balanced the huge bulk of our antagonist, while we were far below the level of her keel—but her steersman had heard the cry; for at the moment when certainly no hope of saving—at least our ship, remained to any of us, we saw the other swerve as she descended—and after approaching to within half her length of our starboard bow, she glided by at the distance of a yard from where I was standing.

I now drew a deep breath before I jumped down on to the deck; after which, beginning to perceive that I was as wet as if we had been run down, I was hastening to the cabin, when my progress was stopped by the captain, who, without perceiving

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any one, was stamping up and down the centre of the vessel, and actually tearing his hair with both his hands. I paused to observe this tragic performance, which shortly gave place to an indistinct and much interrupted speech, in which, in the intervals left by all the oaths as yet invented in the French and Languedoc tongues, there could be distinguished dark threats of vengeance, addressed to the captain of the large brig, whom he was to discover without fail on his return to Marseille.

All the passengers now descended to the cabin, and having stripped and rolled myself in my cloak turned inside out, I threw myself on my couch. We were now, in spite of recent experience, provided with a fresh lighted lantern, to be produced on the next call. This we took care still to look to, although we hardly expected more than one such chance in one night.

It was past two, and we had scarcely left off discussing our narrow escape, when another rapid and significant demand for the lantern announced a second peril. On this occasion I took my time, for I had reflected on the odds, which were immense, against our being a second time so exactly in any one's way, where there was room for the whole navigation of the world to pass abreast. Nor could I suspect any of my fellow-passengers of being the

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unlucky Jonas of our misfortunes; although the Moor was looked upon by some of the sailors with a suspicious eye, for not consenting to partake of a leg of chicken, if the animal had been killed and cooked by any other hand than his own, and for the mysterious formalities they accused him of observing in killing his poultry; such as turning his face in a particular direction, and requiring the blood to flow in a particular manner —on failure of which last requisite, he threw the fowl overboard. These things alarmed the sailors, but helped, on the contrary, to encourage me; as I thought the man's being possessed of a conscience and religious scruples, rather, if any thing, an additional safeguard for us.

This time, therefore, I drew on my boots and trowsers; and, wrapped in my cloak, proceeded in company with the Moor, who had taken it as leisurely as myself, to join the party on deck. They had kept the lantern in a safe position until the moment it would have the best chance of taking effect, a proper precaution, as it was likely to be so shortlived. And at the moment I arrived the order was being given to shew it ahead. A sailor took it, and before he could reach the bow of the vessel, a wave broke over him and washed his lantern fairly into the sea. Upon this the captain said not

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a word, but running to the helm, took it in hand, and turned the ship right round, presenting her stern to the wind, and to the approaching vessel,—which we now soon lost sight of, as we were not a slow sailing craft in a fair wind. Having performed this masterly feat, and given orders that no change should be made in any respect, he went to bed; muttering as he left the deck various indistinct sounds between his teeth. The next morning we had undone nearly all our six day's work, and before evening of the following day, had returned to within sight of Cape St. Martin near Valencia.

It was now a fortnight since we had quitted Marseille, and we were nearly half-way to our place of destination; but Neptune took pity on us, and having given the usual scolding to Eolus, we were allowed to resume our course, although not at as good a rate as we could have wished. The tempest had ceased, and by means of a feeble but fair wind which succeeded, we regained in three days and nights almost all our lost way, and were on the point of doubling the Cape Gata. Here we remained stationary in a dead calm during another three days, after which an almost imperceptible movement in the air in the wished-for direction bore us to within sight of Gibraltar.

This progress along the southern coast lasted three

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days more, and introduced me to the climate of Andalucia. At the end of November it was still a splendid summer—but with just sufficient air to prevent our suffering from the heat. The blue Mediterranean at length vindicated her fair fame, and proved that one of her smiles had the power of throwing oblivion over all the harm of which she was capable during her moments of fretfulness. As you will easily imagine, I passed these delicious days, and nearly the entire nights on deck. Our view consisted of the magnificent precipices which terminate, at the shore, the Alpuxarras chain of mountains. These are coloured with the various tints peculiar to the ores and marbles of which they are formed; and now showed us all their details, although we never approached within twenty-five miles of shore. The purity of the atmosphere added to their great elevation, gave them the appearance of being only four or five miles distant. The only means of proving the illusion consisted in directing the telescope along the line of apparent demarcation between the sea and the rock, when the positions of the different towns situated on the shore were indicated only by the tops of their towers. Among others, the tower of Malaga Cathedral appeared to rise solitarily from the water, the church and town being hidden by the convexity of the sea's surface.

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With the bright blue sea for a foreground, varied by continually passing sails, these superb cliffs formed the second plan of the picture; while over them towered the Granada mountains of the Sierra Nevada, cutting their gigantic outlines of glittering snow out of the dark blue of the sky, at a distance of twenty leagues. The evenings more particularly possessed a charm, difficult to be understood by the thousands of our fellow creatures, unable to kill that fragment of time without the aid of constellations of wax-lights, and sparkling toilettes,—not to mention the bright sparks which conversation sometimes, but not always, sprinkles o'er the scene. Now I do not pretend to speak with disrespect of *soirées*, nor even of balls or ra-outes, as our neighbours say; Polka forfend I should blaspheme her deity, depreciate her loudly laudable energies, or apostrophize her strangely muscular hamstrings! I only maintain that a night passed at sea, off the southern Spanish coast in fine weather, does not yield to the best of nights.

The observation of the land, of the passing sails, and the management of our own, and the various phenomena of sea and sky, having gradually yielded to sunset and twilight—and these in their turn leaving the vessel to its solitude, conversation became amusing between people of such different origin,

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habits, and ideas, brought together by chance, drawn nearer to each other by the force of circumstances, and by having partaken of the same buffetings. The Moor would then offer a cup of his coffee, or rather, according to the Oriental custom, a thimbleful of his quintessence of that exquisite berry. Our French ensign was a tolerable musician, and was easily prevailed on to unpack his cornet-à-piston, and to astonish the solitude of the night, and the denizens of the deep, by the execution of the favourite airs of Auber and Halevy. Sometimes a bark too distant to be visible would hail us on hearing these unusual strains; and faint sounds of applause would arrive as if from wandering naiads.

At length one afternoon brought us in sight of Gibraltar. And now, lest we should arrive without further mishap, our precious Provençal took care to give us a parting proof of his incapacity,—which however, thanks to our good fortune, did not bring upon us the annoyance it threatened. The rock of Gibraltar was before us the whole of the following day; but there appeared also in sight, somewhat to its left, and at a much greater distance, a sort of double mountain, apparently divided from the middle upwards by a wedge-formed cleft. The captain replied to all questions by describing this object as consisting of two distinct mountains, which he

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pronounced to be no others than the two Pillars of Hercules,—promising us that the next morning we should see them separated by the entire width of the Straits.

Far from suspecting the authenticity of this explanation, I innocently inquired what was the large rock (Gibraltar itself) apparently much nearer to us. "Oh!" he replied, "it was some promontory on the coast of Andalucia, the name of which had escaped his memory;" adding that we steered very slightly to the left of the said rock, because the wind having increased, and blowing off shore, we could not make Gibraltar otherwise than by keeping well into the shore, to prevent our being driven towards Africa. All this about the wind was so true, that had we preserved to the last the direction we were then following, we must inevitably have gone to Africa, and added a day and a night to our voyage.

The Marseille merchant, who had made the voyage twenty times, listened to all this; but although very intelligent on most subjects, and more particularly with regard to the qualities and value of silks and quincaillerie, his notions of practical geography had not probably attained any great development, as he appeared perfectly satisfied. I therefore passed the day and retired that night filled with curiosity respecting this remarkable promontory, that had

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escaped the notice of Arrowsmith and the continental geographers. The following morning, to my extreme astonishment, the double mountain was still as undivided as ever, notwithstanding our having approached so near to the great rock as to distinguish its colour, and the details of its surface. We were still steering so as to leave it behind us.

I now began to suspect something was wrong; and getting hold of the merchant, proceeded to question him closely, recalling to his recollection the captain's explanation of the previous day, and the consequent miraculous union of Gibraltar with the mountain of the monkies, to accomplish which the former must have quitted Europe subsequently to the publication of the last newspapers we had seen at Marseille. His replying that he certainly thought the great rock put him in mind of Gibraltar confirmed my suppositions; and I prevailed upon him to repeat his opinion to the ignoramus, who was peaceably eating his breakfast on the bulwarks of the quarter-deck. We went to him instantly, and on hearing the remark, he merely observed that it was very possible; and leaving his sausage, quietly proceeded to the helm, which he no more quitted until we were in the bay at four in the afternoon. We had only lost about five or six hours by the blunder; but had we

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continued the same course another half-hour, we could not possibly have made Gibraltar that day.

It was with more than the ordinary excitement of the organ of travelling,—for if phrenology deserves to be called a science, such an organ must exist,—that I approached this great Leviathan of the seas; perhaps, all causes considered, the most remarkable object in Europe. During the approach the interest is absorbing; and the two or three hours employed in passing round the extremity of the rock, and stretching sufficiently far into the Straits, to gain wind and channel for entering the bay, slipped away more rapidly than many a ten minutes I could have called to my recollection. The simultaneous view of Europe and Africa; the eventful positions with which you are surrounded,—Tarifa, Algeciras, and further on Trafalgar; the very depths beneath you too shallow for the recollections which crowd into this limited space; commencing with history so ancient as to have attained the rank of fable,—and heroes long since promoted to demi-gods; and reaching to the passage of the injured Florinda, so quickly responded to by that of Tharig, followed by a hundred Arab fleets. The shipping of all nations continually diverting the attention from these *souvenirs*; and, crowning all, the stupendous mass of the now impregnable rock.

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Amidst all this, I could not drive from my thoughts the simple and patriotic old Spanish historian de Pisa, and the operation to which he attributes the origin of this mountain. From him may be learned all the details respecting this work of Hercules; as to which, as well as to the motives of its fabricator, the poets of antiquity were in the dark. Hercules had been induced, by the high reputation of Spain, of her population, and her various natural advantages, to conduct thither an army for the purpose of taking possession of the country. After having put his project in execution, he remained in Spain, and enjoyed a long and prosperous reign. The victory, which gave him possession of the country, took place at Tarifa; and it was in its commemoration and honour that before he established the seat of government at Toledo, he assembled the conquered population, and compelled them to throw stones into the sea, by which means, in a short time, this monument was completed.

Before we set foot on this imperceptible trophy of a league in length by two thousand feet high the French ensign and myself hailed a steamer as we passed by her in the offing, and found she was bound for Cadiz, and we must go on board the following afternoon. On landing, however, my projects underwent a change, as I told you at the

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commencement of my letter. There is not much to be seen at Gibraltar that would interest you, except indeed the unique aspect and situation of the place. To military men its details offer much interest. There is a large public garden on the side of the mountain, between the town, which occupies the inmost extremity, and the Governor's house near the entrance of the bay. The batteries constructed in the rock are extremely curious, and calculated to embarrass an enemy whose object should be to dismount them. I thought, however, with deference to those conversant with these subjects, that they were likely to possess an inconvenience—that of exposing to suffocation the gunners employed in the caverns, out of which there does not appear to exist sufficient means of escape for the smoke.

The most amusing sight in Gibraltar is the principal street, filled, as it is, with an infinitely varied population. Here you see, crowded together as in a fair, and distinguished by their various costumes,—the representatives of Europe, Asia, and Africa,—Arabs, Moors, Italians, Turks, Greeks, Russians, English, and Spaniards, Jews, and, occasionally, a holy friar conversing with some Don Basilio, appearing, in his long cylindrical hat, as if blessed with a skull sufficiently hard to have entered the side

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of a tin chimney-top, precipitated upon it by a gust of wind.

Among all these a successful guess may here and there be risked at the identity of the Andalucian leader of banditti, lounging about in search of useful information. The contrabandistas are likewise in great plenty.

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LETTER XVII.

CADIZ. ARRIVAL AT SEVILLE.

Seville.

Cadiz is the last town in Europe I should select for a residence, had I the misfortune to become blind. One ought to be all eyes there. It is the prettiest of towns. After this there is no more to be said, with regard, at least, to its external peculiarities. It possesses no prominent objects of curiosity. There is, it is true, a tradition stating it to have possessed a temple dedicated to Hercules; but this has been washed away by the waves of the ocean, as its rites have been by the influx of succeeding populations. Nothing can be more remote from the ideas of the visitor to Cadiz, than the existence of anything antique; unless it be the inclination to prosecute such researches: the whole place is so bright and modern looking, and pretty in a manner peculiar to itself, and unlike any other town,—since, like everything else in Spain, beauty also

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has its originality. Nothing can be gayer than the perspective of one of the straight, narrow streets. On either side of the blue ribbon of sky, which separates the summits of its lofty houses, is seen a confusion of balconies, and projecting box-windows, —all placed irregularly—each house possessing only one or two, so as not to interfere with each other's view, and some placed on a lower story, others on a higher; their yellow or green hues relieving the glittering white of the façades. Nor could anything improve the elegant effect of the architectural ornaments, consisting of pilasters, vases, and sculpture beneath the balconies, still less, the animated faces—the prettiest of all Spain, after those of Malaga —whose owners shew a preference to the projecting windows, wherever a drawing-room or boudoir possesses one.

The pavement of these elegant little streets, is not out of keeping with the rest. It would be a sacrilege to introduce a cart or carriage into them. A lady may, and often does, traverse the whole town on foot, on her way to a ball. It is a town built as if for the celebration of a continual carnival. Nor does the charge brought against the Gaditanas, of devotion to pleasure, cause any surprise: were they not, they would be misplaced in Cadiz. Hither should the victim of spleen and melancholy direct

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his steps. Let him choose the season of the carnival. There is reason to suspect that the advertiser in the Herald had this remedy in view, when he promised a certain cure to "clergymen and noblemen, who suffer from blushing and despondency, delusion, thoughts of self-injury, and groundless fear:" these symptoms being indications of an attack of that northern epidemy, which takes its name from a class of fallen angels of a particular hue.

In Cadiz, in fact, does Carnival—that modern Bacchus of fun, give a loose to his wildest eccentricities—nor may those who are least disposed to do homage to the god escape his all-pervading influence. All laws yield to his, during his three days of Saturnalia. Not the least eccentric of his code is that one, which authorizes the baptism of every passenger in a street with the contents of jugs, bestowed from the fair hands of vigilant angels who soar on the second-floor balconies. The statute enjoins also the expression of gratitude for these favours, conveyed with more or less precision of aim, in the form of hen's eggs—of which there is consequently a scarcity on breakfast-tables on the mornings of these festive days. At eleven o'clock each night, four spacious buildings scarcely suffice for the masquerading population.

But the paddles have been battering for some

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hours the waters of the Guadalquiver, and we are approaching Seville, a city given to less turbulent propensities—where Pleasure assumes a more timid gait, nor cares to alarm Devotion—a partner with whom she delights, hand in hand, to tread this marble-paved Paradise. The passage between Cadiz and Seville, is composed of two hours of sea, and eight or nine of river. The beautiful bay, and its white towns, with Cadiz itself, looking in the sunshine like a palace of snow rising out of the sea—have no power now to rivet the attention, nor to occupy feelings already glowing with the anticipation of a sail between the banks of the Guadalquivir. A ridge of hidden rocks lengthens the approach, compelling the pilot to describe a large semicircle, before he can make the mouth of the river. This delay is a violent stimulant to one's impatience. At length we have entered the ancient Betis; and leaving behind the active little town of St. Lucar, celebrated for its wines, and for those of the neighbouring Xeres, of which it embarks large quantities —we are gliding between these famous shores.

Great, indeed, is the debt they owe to the stirring events that have immortalized these regions, for they are anything but romantic. Nothing can be less picturesque;—all the flatness of Holland, without the cultivation, and the numerous well-peopled villages,

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which diminish the monotonous effect. On the right are seen at some distance the wooded hills of Xeres; but for scores of miles, on the opposite side, all is either marsh, or half-inundated pasture, with here and there some thinly-scattered olive trees, and herds of oxen for its sole living occupants. At a few leagues from Seville, the increased frequency of the olive grounds—a few villages and convents, and at length the darker green masses of the orange groves, give rapidly strengthening indications of approaching civilization; and you are landed a short distance below the town, to reach which, it is necessary to traverse the Christina Gardens. The cathedral occupies this southern extremity of the city; and on your way to the inn, you may make an estimate of the length of one side of its immense quadrangular enclosure. Immediately beyond this you are received into the inevitable labyrinth of crooked lanes, peculiar to an Arab town.

The steam trip from Cadiz is so easy a day's journey, that no necessity for repose or refitting interferes with the impatience of those who arrive to explore the external town. You speedily, therefore, sally forth, and thread a few of the mazy streets; but without venturing too far, on account of the evident risk of losing your way. Should

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you chance to stumble on the Plaza Mayor,—called Plaza de San Francisco,—you are at once rewarded by the view of the *ayuntamiento*, one of the most elegant edifices in Spain: otherwise the extreme simplicity of the bare, irregular, but monotonous white houses, will create disappointment—you will stare about in the vain search of the magnificence, so much extolled, of this semi-Moorish capital, and discover, that nothing can be plainer, more simple, more ugly, than the exterior of the Seville habitations. At length, however, some open door, or iron grille, placed on a line with an inner court, will operate a sudden change in your ideas, and afford a clue to the mystery. Through this railing, generally of an elegant form, is discovered a delicous vista, in which are visible, fountains, white marble colonnades, pomegranate and sweet lemon-trees, sofas and chairs (if in summer), and two or three steps of a porcelain staircase.

You now first appreciate the utility of the more than plain exteriors of the houses of this town; and you admire an invention, which adds to the already charming objects, composing the interior of these miniature palaces, a beauty still greater than that which they actually possess, lent by the effect of contrast. It is calculated that there are more than eighty thousand white marble pillars in Seville. For this

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luxury the inhabitants are indebted in a great measure to the Romans, whose town, Italica, seated, in ancient times, on the opposite bank of the river, four miles above Seville, and since entirely buried, furnished the Arab architects with a considerable portion of their decorating materials.

In a future letter I hope to introduce you to the interior of some of these abodes, where we shall discover that their inhabitants prove themselves not unworthy of them, by the perfect taste and conception of civilized life, with which their mode of existence is regulated.

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LETTER XVIII.

THE ARABS IN SPAIN. ALCAZAR OF SEVILLE.

Seville.

THE chief attraction of this most interesting of the provinces of the Peninsula, consists in the numerous well preserved remains of Arab art. The most sumptuous of their palaces are, it is true, no longer in existence, nor the principal mosques, with the exception of the metropolitan temple of Cordova: but there remain sufficient specimens to shew, that their architecture had attained the highest excellence in two of the principal requisites for excellence in that science—solidity and beauty.

The superiority of the Arabs in this branch of science and taste is so striking, that all other departments of art, as well as the customs and peculiarities of that race, and the events of their dominion in this country, become at once the subjects of interest and inquiry. It is consequently very satisfactory to discover that one can examine almost

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face to face that people,—probably the most advanced in science and civilization that ever set foot in Europe; so little are the traces of their influence worn away, and so predominant is the portion of it still discernible in the customs, manners, and race of the population of this province, and even to a considerable extent in their language.

There is something so brilliant in the career of the Arab people, as to justify the interest excited by the romantic and picturesque (if the expression may be allowed), points of their character and customs. Their civilization appears to have advanced abreast with their conquests, and with the same prodigious rapidity; supposing, that is, that previously to their issuing from their peninsula, they were as backward as historians state them to have been: a point not sufficiently established. Sallying forth, under the immediate successors of Mahomet, they commenced, in obedience to the injunction of their new faith, a course of conquest unrivalled in rapidity. Their happy physical and mental organization, enabled them to appropriate whatever was superior in the arts and customs of the conquered nations; and whatever they imitated acquired during the process of adaptation, new and more graceful modifications. It has been asserted that they owed their civilization to the Greeks; and, certainly, the

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first subjected provinces being Greek, their customs could not but receive some impression from the contact: but it is not probable that the Greeks were altogether their instructors in civilization. Had such been the case their language would probably have undergone a change, instead of continuing totally independent of the Greek, and attaining to greater richness. They are known to have possessed poets of eminence before the appearance of Mahomet, consequently before they had any communication with the Greeks; shortly after the commencement of their intercourse with them, they shewed a marked superiority over them in geometry, in astronomy, architecture, and medicine, and it would probably be found, but for the destruction of so many Arab libraries, that they did not yield to them in eloquence and poetic genius.

Established in Spain, they carried the arts of civilization—the useful no less than the elegant, to the highest perfection. They introduced principles of agriculture adapted to the peculiarities of the country. The chief requisite for a country, parched by a cloudless sun, being water—they put in practice a complete system of irrigation, to which the Spaniards are still indebted for the extraordinary fertility of their soil. Many other arts that have since been permitted to dwindle into insignificance,

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and some altogether to disappear, were bequeathed by them. The Morocco preparation of leather is an instance of these last.

Their high chivalry, added to their moderation after victory, would have divested even war of much of its barbarism, had they had to do with a race less impenetrable, and more susceptible of polish than were the iron legions of their Gothic antagonists. The persevering and repeated acts of treachery practised by these, at last drew their civilized adversaries, forcibly into the commission of acts of a similar nature—it being frequently necessary in self-defence to adopt the same weapons as one's enemy. When firmly settled in Spain, the Arabs no longer appear to have taken the field with a view to conquest. Abderahman the First, Almansor, and other conquerors, returned from their victories to repose in their capital; contenting themselves with founding schools and hospitals to commemorate their successes, without making them instrumental to the increase of their domination. After this time campaigns seem frequently to have been undertaken from motives of emulation, and for the purpose of affording them opportunities for a display of their prowess, and giving vent to their military ardour. They considered an irruption on the hostile territory, or an attack on a town, in the light of a tour-

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nament. The Christians, on the contrary, fought with a view to exterminate, and without ever losing sight of their main object—the expulsion of the Arabs and Moors from the Peninsula. It was thus that they ultimately succeeded—a result they probably would not have attained, had the Moorish leaders been actuated by similar views, and displayed less forbearance.

Much of the misapprehension which exists in Europe respecting this race is attributable to the exaggerations of writers; much more to the absence of reflection in readers, and to the almost universal practice of bringing every act related of personages inhabiting remote and half-known climes, to the test of the only customs and manners with which we are familiar, and which we consider, for no other reason, superior to all others—making no allowance for difference of education, climate, tradition, race. An European, subjected to a similar process of criticism, on the part of an inhabitant of the East, would certainly not recognise his own portrait—a new disposition of light bearing upon peculiarities, the existence of which had hitherto been unsuspected by their owner; and he would manifest a surprise as unfeigned, as a Frenchman once expressed in my hearing, on finding himself in a situation almost parallel. Conversing on the subject

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of a play, acted in Paris, in which an Englishman cut a ridiculous figure—a lady present remarked, that, no doubt, in the London theatres the French were not spared; upon which the Frenchman I allude to—a person possessed of superior intelligence—exclaimed: "How could that be, since there was nothing about a Frenchman that could be laughed at?"

On reading of a reprehensible act attributed to a Mahometan, some will brand Mahometanism in general, and of all times and places, with the commission of the like crimes, placing the event at a distance of a thousand leagues, or of a thousand years from its real place and date: forgetting that power has been abused under all religions; and that we only hear one side of the question with respect to all that relates to the Oriental races—our information only reaching us through the medium of writers of different and hostile faith. It is a singular fact that the popular terror, which so long attached itself to the idea of a Saracen, and which derived its origin from the conquests of the Mahometans, has its equivalent in certain Mahometan countries. In some parts of the empire of Morocco, the idea of a Christian is that of a ruffian of immense stature and terrific features; calculated to inspire the utmost fear in the breasts of all who approach him.

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Such is their notion of his ferocity, that one of the emperors, Muley Ismael, in order to terrify his refractory subjects into obedience, was in the habit of threatening to have them eaten up by the Christians.

From the inferior value set on human life by the races of the East, we accuse them of barbarity: forgetting, that, owing to the absence of all analogy between our origin, races, and education, we are incompetent to appreciate their feelings, and the motives of their conduct, and have consequently no right to condemn them. If we abstain from taking our neighbour's life, we set also a proportionate value on our own: a native of the East displays, it is true, less veneration for his own species. Deeply impressed with the dogmas of his religion, which form the guide of his every day life, the habit of acting up to the doctrines which he has been taught to believe, diminishes his estimate of the value of temporal life, whether that of others, or his own, which he exposes on occasions on which we should not be inclined to do so. He does not take life for cruelty's sake, nor without provocation. Were he to be furnished with Arabian accounts of the treatment of a London or Paris hackney-coach horse, he would think of the noble and friendly animal which carries him to battle, and turn in disgust from such a page.

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The system practised at Constantinople of nailing to his door-post the ear of the culprit detected in the employment of false weights, is, no doubt, very discordant with our customs; but this mode of punishment is said to be attended with such success, as to do away almost entirely with the occasion for it. Were it adopted in some other capitals, it would certainly at first disfigure many a neatly adorned entrance, and give additional occupation to painters; but the result might possibly be a more universal observance of the injunction contained in the eighth commandment. As far as regards the Arabs of Spain, it may be securely affirmed, that, during the course of their triumphs, and long before they had attained their highest civilization, no cruelties were exercised by them, which came near to the barbarity of those practised subsequently by their Christian adversaries on victims of a different creed, when in their power. We may instance the example set by St. Ferdinand, who, it is said, when burning some Moors, piously stirred up the fire himself in the public place of Palencia.

It cannot, however, be denied that cases of cruelty have occurred, and are related in history of the Arabs, although they are rare among those of Spain; but, if cruel, the Arab never added hypocrisy to his cruelty. After having ravaged all Andalucia with

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fire and famine, St. Ferdinand formed the project of proceeding to Africa the following year, in order to attack the inhabitants of that country. His death interrupted the course of these humane projects. Being dropsical, and feeling his end approaching, he called for his son Alphonso, afterwards his successor, to whom this prince—cut off in the midst of his thirsty longings for blood and slaughter—is related to have given "the counsels, which the sentiments of piety, justice, and love for mankind, with which he was filled, inspired so great a monarch."

As for the degenerate modern tribes, descendants of some of the most civilized of former days, we have witnessed their contest, *pro aris et focis*, during the last few years, against a sample of the Christians of to-day: the mode of making war is perfectly similar on both sides.

It is a no less curious *travers* of human nature, from its being an almost universal one—that of which the modern Spaniards afford an example. They apply the term "barbarians" to the descendants of their Moorish compatriots, although they themselves have scarcely advanced a step in civilization since the day that, in the public place of Granada, Ferdinand the Catholic burned one million five thousand Arab books, being all he could collect

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throughout Spain: showing what tremendous power may be wielded by a single human hand, when applied to the task of undoing. That King, by a single signature, accomplished an act which may be considered as equivalent to retarding, by several centuries, the civilization of a great country,—perhaps, even, to cutting it off from the only opportunity it was destined to possess, during the present ages, of arriving at the summit which the more privileged nations are permitted to attain; while it influenced injuriously the progress of letters, science, and art throughout Europe. But we will no longer allow digressions to delay our visit to the Alcazar, where we shall find visible proof of Arab superiority, at least, in architectural science and invention.

Passing to the east of the cathedral through the large open space, on the left of which is the Archbishop's palace, and on the right the cathedral and exchange, the embattled outer walls of the Alcazar stop the view in front; varied here and there with square towers, and containing in the centre an arched entrance. The present buildings occupy the south-eastern corner of the ancient enclosure of the royal residence, which comprised all the remaining space as far as the banks of the river, passing round the south side of the cathedral, and, in fact, including it in its precincts—an enclosure of about a mile

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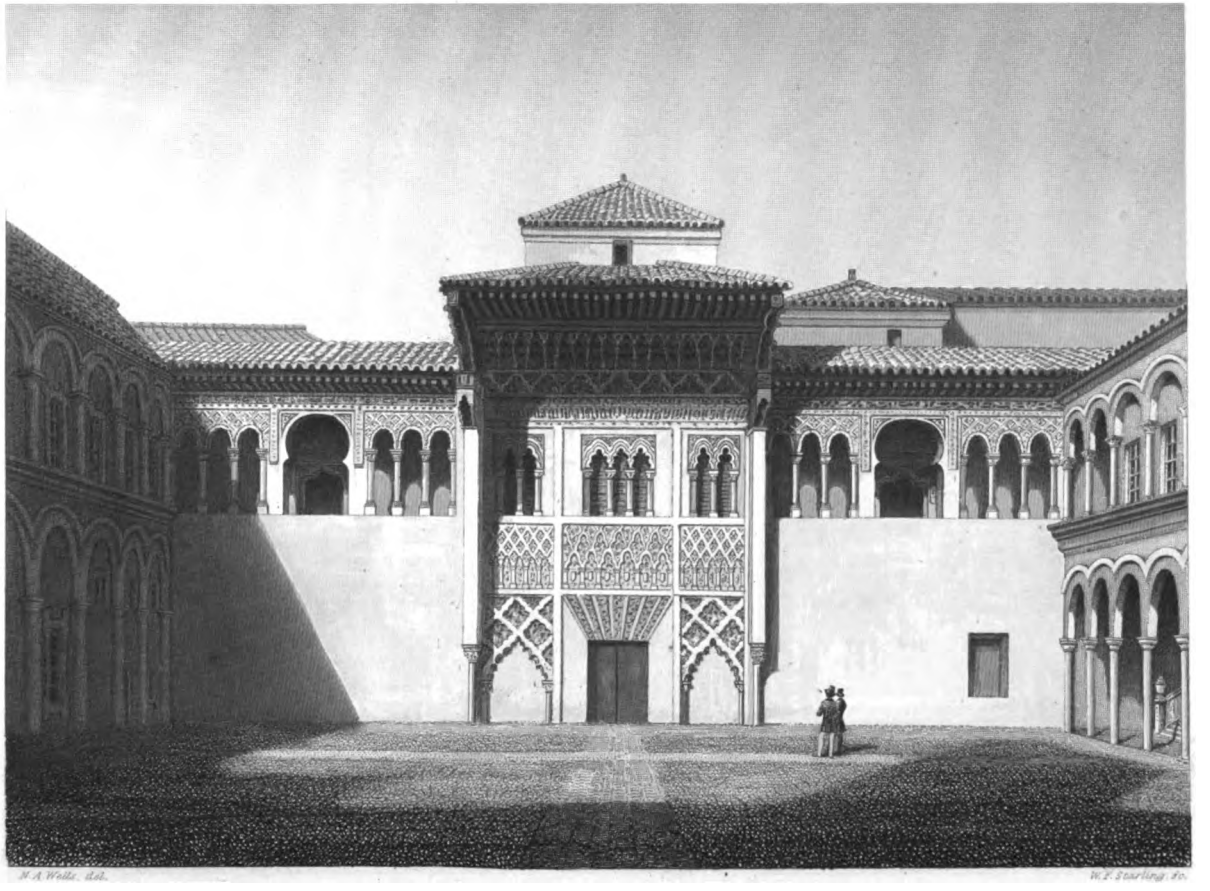

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and a half in circumference. An old tower, or scrap of wall, indicates here and there the position of the ancient buildings, the site of which is now occupied by two or three *plazuelas*, or squares, and several streets communicating between them. The present palace scarcely covers a third of the original extent.

Having passed through the first entrance, you are in a large square, surrounded with buildings without ornament, and used at present as government offices. At the opposite side another archway passes under the buildings, and leads to a second large court. This communicates on the left with one or two others; one of these is rather ornamental, and in the Italian style, surrounded by an arcade supported on double columns, and enclosing a garden sunk considerably below the level of the ground. This court is approached by a covered passage, leading, as already mentioned, from the left side of the second large square, the south side of which—the side opposite to that on which we entered—consists of the façade and portal of the inner palace of all; —the Arab ornamental portion, the residence of the royal person.

At the right-hand extremity of this front is the entrance to the first floor, approached by a staircase, which occupies part of the building on that side of the square, and which contains the apartments of

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the governor. The staircase is open to the air, and is visible through a light arcade. The centre portal of this façade is ornamented, from the ground to the roof, with rich tracery, varied by a band of blue and white *azulejos*, and terminating in an advancing roof of carved cedar. Right and left, the rest of the front consists of a plain wall up to the first floor, on which small arcades, of a graceful design, enclose retreating balconies and windows.

Entering through the centre door, a magnificent apartment has been annihilated by two white partitions, rising from the ground to the ceiling, and dividing it into three portions, the centre one forming the passage which leads from the entrance to the principal court. Several of the apartments are thus injured, owing to the palace being occasionally used as a temporary lodging for the court. Passing across the degraded hall, a magnificent embroidered arch—for the carving with which it is covered more resembles embroidery than any other ornament—gives access to the great court.

It is difficult to ascertain what portion of this palace belongs to the residence of the Moorish Kings, as Pedro the Cruel had a considerable portion of it rebuilt by Moorish architects in the same style. The still more recent additions are easily distinguished. One of them, in this part of the edifice,

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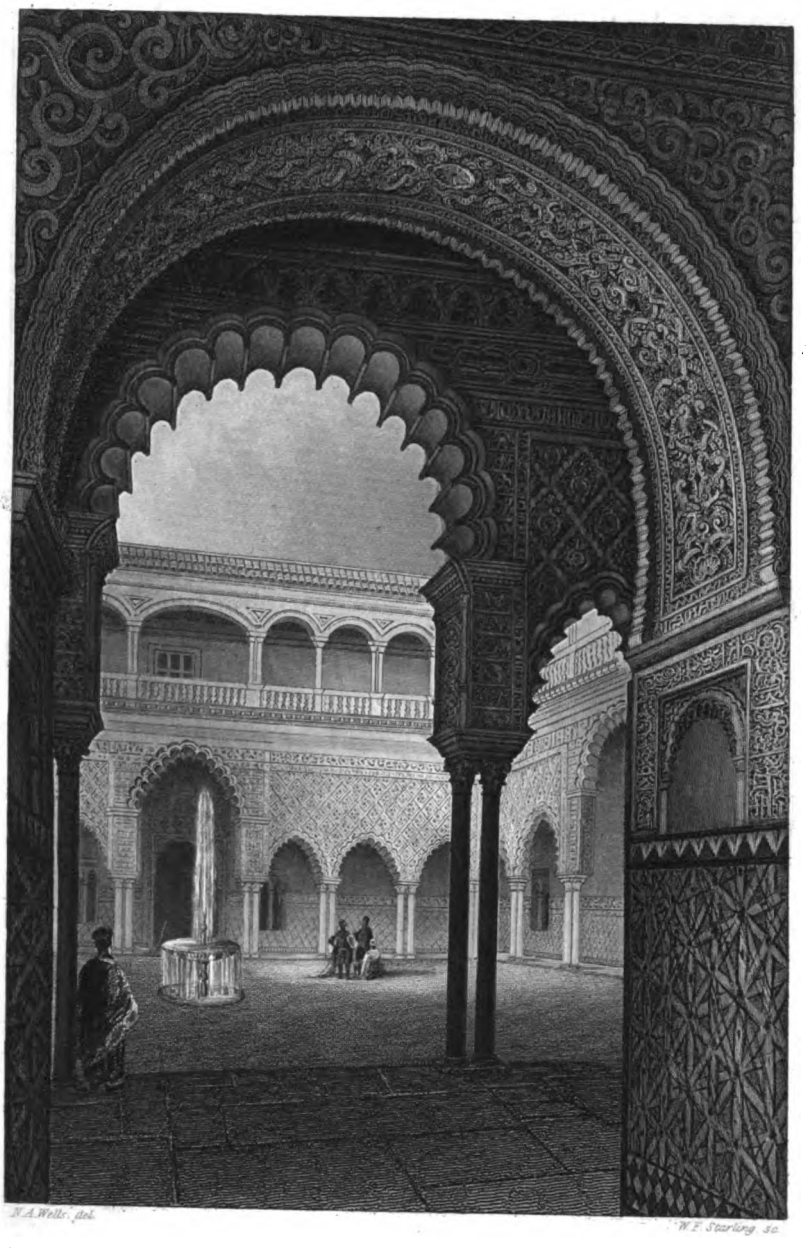

W.A. Wells, del. W.F. Starling, sc.

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is a gallery, erected by Charles the Fifth, over the arcades of the great court. This gallery one would imagine to have been there placed with a view to demonstrate the superiority of Arab art over every other. It is conceived in the most elegant Italian style, and executed in white marble; but, compared with the fairy arcades which support it, it is clumsiness itself. The court is paved with white marble slabs, and contains in the centre a small basin of the same material, of chaste and simple form, once a fountain. The arcades are supported on pairs of columns, measuring about twelve diameters in height, and of equal diameter throughout. The capitals are in imitation of the Corinthian. The entire walls, over and round the arches, are covered with deep tracery in stucco; the design of which consists of diamond-shaped compartments, formed by lines descending from the cornice, and intersecting each other diagonally. These are indented in small curves, four to each side of the diamond. In each centre is a shell, surrounded by fanciful ornaments. The same design is repeated on the inside of the walls, that is, under the arcade, but only on the outer wall; and this portion of the court is covered with a richly-ornamented ceiling of Alerce, in the manner called *artesonado*.

On the opposite side of the court to that on which

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we entered, another semicircular arch, of equal richness, leads to a room extending the whole length of the court, and similar in form to that situated at the entrance, possessing also an ornamental ceiling, but plainer walls. The left and right sides of the court are shorter than the others. In the centre of the left side, a deep alcove is formed in the wall, probably occupied in former times by a sofa or throne: at present it is empty, with the exception, in one corner, of a dusty collection of *azulejos* fallen from the walls, and exposing to temptation the itching palms of enthusiasts. At the opposite end a large arch, admirably carved, and containing some superb old cedar doors, leads to the Hall of Ambassadors. This apartment is a square of about thirty-three feet, by nearly sixty in height. It is also called the *media naranja* (half-orange), from the form of its ceiling.

In the centre of each side is an entrance, that from the court consists of the arch just mentioned, forming a semicircle with the extremities prolonged in a parallel direction. Those of the three other sides are each composed of three arches of the horse-shoe form, or three-quarters of a circle, and supported by two columns of rare marbles and jasper surmounted by gilded capitals. The walls are entirely covered with elegant designs, executed in

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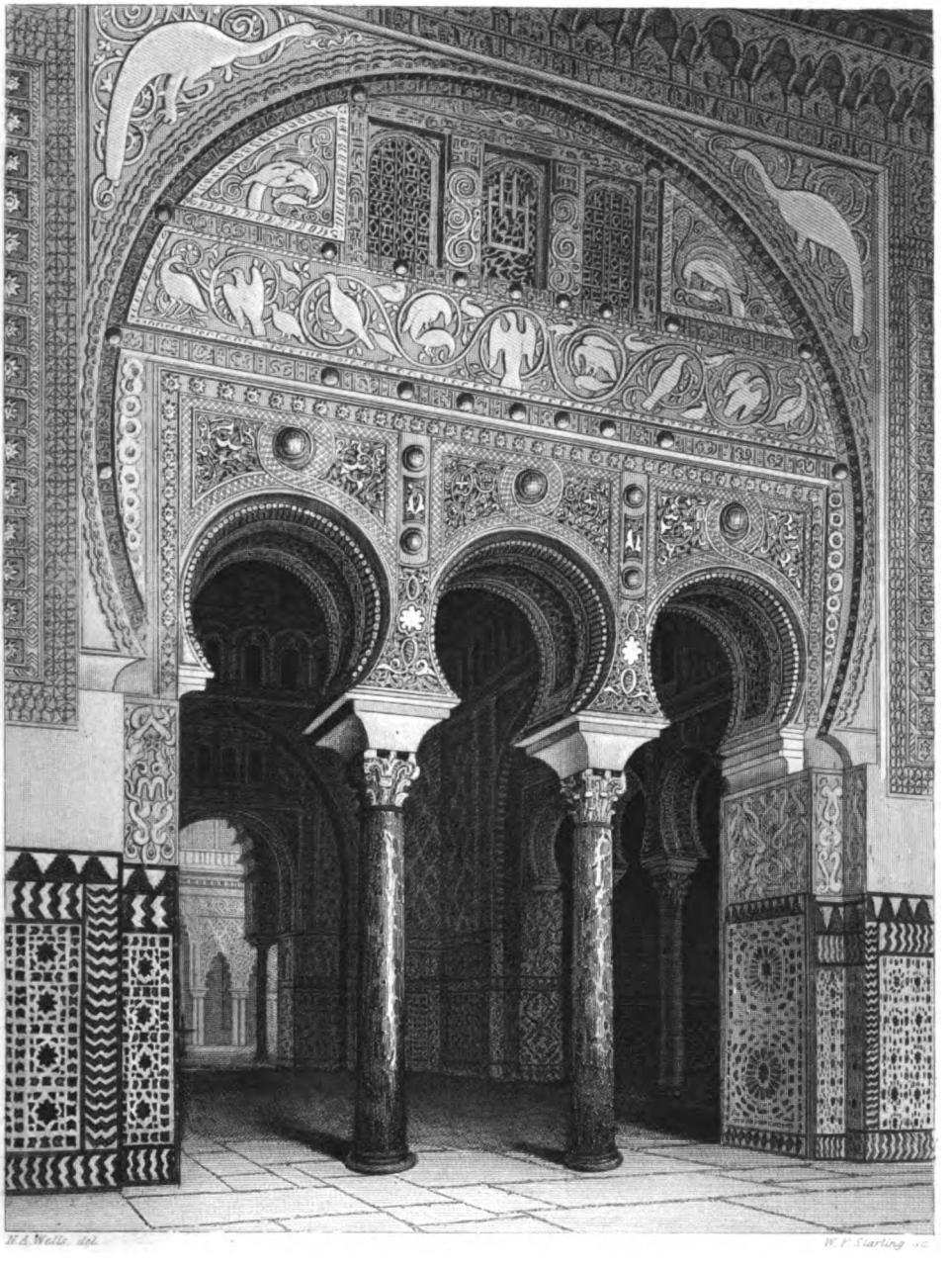

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stucco, the effect of which suffers from a series of small arches, running round the upper part of the room, having been deprived of their tracery to make room for the painted heads (more or less resembling) of the kings of Spain, Goths and their successors, excepting the Arabs and Moors. This degradation is, however, forgotten from the moment the eye is directed to the ceiling.

In the Arab architecture, the ornament usually becomes more choice, as it occupies a higher elevation; and the richest and most exquisite labours of the artist are lavished on the ceilings. The designs are complicated geometrical problems, by means of which the decorators of that nation of mathematicians and artists attained to a perfection of ornament unapproached by any other style. From the cornice of this room rise clusters of diminutive gilded semi-cupolas, commencing by a single one, upon which two are supported, and multiplying so rapidly as they rise, some advancing, others retreating, and each resting on a shoulder of one below, that, by the time they reach the edge of the great cupola, they appear to be countless. The ornament of this dome consists of innumerable gilt projecting bands, of about two inches in width; these intersect each other in an infinite profusion of curves, as they stretch over the hemispherical space. The artist,

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who would make a pencil sketch of this ceiling, should be as deep a geometrician as the architect who designed it.

On quitting the Hall of Ambassadors, we arrive at the best part of the building. Passing through the arcade at the right-hand side, a long narrow apartment is crossed, which opens on a small court called the Court of Dolls (Patio de los Muceñas). No description, no painting can do justice to this exquisite little enclosure. You stand still, gazing round until your delight changes into astonishment at such an effect being produced by immoveable walls and a few columns. A space, of about twenty feet by thirty,—in which ten small pillars, placed at corresponding but unequal distances, enclose a smaller quadrangle, and support, over a series of different sized arches, the upper walls, — has furnished materials to the artist for the attainment of one of the most successful results in architecture. The Alhambra has nothing equal to it. Its two large courts surpass, no doubt, in beauty the principal court of this palace; but, as a whole, this residence, principally from its being in better preservation and containing more, is superior to that of Granada, always excepting the advantage derived from the picturesque site of the latter. The Court of Dolls, at all events, is unrivalled.

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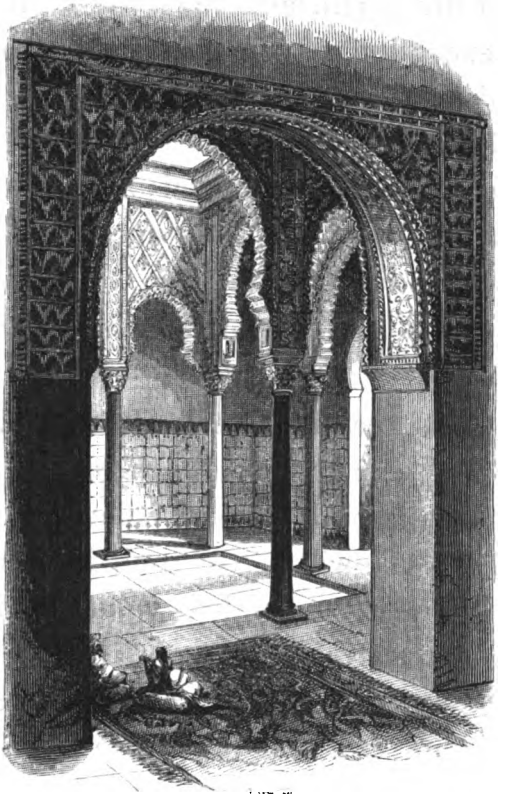

COURT OF DOLLS, ALCAZAR, SEVILLE.*

The architect made here a highly judicious use of some of the best gleanings from Italica, consisting of a few antique capitals, which, being separated from their shafts, have been provided with others, neither made for them, nor even fitted to them.

* Feeling his powers as a draughtsman inadequate to do justice to this court, the author has inserted the above sketch merely to show the general architectural design.

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The pillars are small, and long for their diameter, with the exception of the four which occupy the angles, which are thicker and all white. The rest are of different coloured marbles, and all are about six feet in height. The capitals are of still smaller proportions; so that at the junction they do not cover the entire top of the shaft. This defect, from what cause it is difficult to explain, appears to add to their beauty.

The capitals are exquisitely beautiful. One in particular, apparently Greek, tinged by antiquity with a slight approach to rose colour, is shaped, as if carelessly, at the will of the sculptor; and derives from its irregularly rounded volutes and uneven leaves, an inconceivable grace. The arches are of various shapes, that is, of three different shapes and dimensions, and whether more care, or better materials were employed in the tracery of the walls in this court, or for whatever other reason, it is in better preservation than the other parts of the palace. It has the appearance of having been newly executed in hard white stone.

Through the Court of Dolls you pass into an inner apartment, to which it is a worthy introduction. This room has been selected in modern times, as being the best in the palace, for the experiment of restoring the ceiling. The operation has been

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judiciously executed, and produces an admirable effect. The design of this ceiling is the most tasteful of the whole collection. Six or seven stars placed at equal distances from each other, form centres, from which, following the direction of the sides of their acute angles, depart as many lines; that is, two from each point; or, supposing the star to have twelve points—twenty-four from each star: but these lines soon change their directions, and intersecting each other repeatedly, form innumerable small inclosures of an hexagonal shape. The lines are gilt. Each hexagonal compartment rises in relief of about an inch and a half from the surface, and is ornamented with a flower, painted in brilliant colours on a dark ground.

The room is twenty-four feet in height by only sixteen wide, and between sixty and seventy in length. At the two ends, square spaces are separated from the centre portion by a wall, advancing about two feet from each side, and supporting an arch, extending across the entire width. These arches were probably furnished with curtains, which separated at will the two ends from the principal apartment, and converted them into sleeping retreats. Their ornaments are still more choice than those of the centre. With the exception of this room, all the principal apartments, and the two courts, are

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decorated from the ground upwards to a height of about five feet, with the *azulejos*, or mosaic of porcelain tiles, the colours of which never lose their brilliancy.

The first floor is probably an addition made entirely subsequently to the time of the Moors. It contains several suites of plain white-washed rooms, and only two ornamental apartments, probably of Don Pedro's time. These are equal to those on the ground floor with respect to the tracery of the walls, unfortunately almost filled with white-wash; but their ceilings are plainer. There is a gallery over the Court of Dolls, of a different sort from the rest, but scarcely inferior in beauty to any part of the edifice. The pillars, balustrades, and ceilings, are of wood.

One of the last mentioned apartments has an advantage over all the rest of the palace, derived from its position. It opens on a terrace looking over the antique gardens, — a view the most charming and original that can be imagined. This room must be supposed to have been the boudoir of Maria Padilla, — the object of the earliest and most durable of Pedro's attachments; whose power over him outlived the influence of all his future liaisons. It is indeed probable that the taste for this residence, and the creation of a large portion

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of its beauties, are to be attributed to the mistress, rather than to a gloomy and bloodthirsty king, as Pedro is represented to have been, and whose existence was totally unsuited to such a residence. In the Court of Dolls the portion of pavement is pointed out on which his brother Don Fadrique fell, slaughtered, as some say, by Pedro's own hand,—at all events in his presence, and by his order.

This monarch, were his palace not sufficient to immortalize him, would have a claim to immortality, as having ordered more executions than all the other monarchs who ever ruled in Spain, added together. It appears to have been a daily necessity for him; but he derived more than ordinary satisfaction when an opportunity could be obtained of ordering an archbishop to the block. The see of Toledo became under him the most perilous post in the kingdom, next to that of his own relatives: but he occasionally extended the privilege to other archbishopricks. It is a relief to meet with a case of almost merited murder in so sanguinary a list. Such may be termed the adventure of an innocent man, who, seeing before him a noose which closes upon everything which approaches it, carefully inserts his neck within the circumference.

This was the case of a monk, who, hearing that Pedro, during one of his campaigns, was encamped

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in a neighbouring village, proceeded thither, and demanded an audience. His request being immediately granted, no doubt in the expectation of some valuable information respecting the enemy's movements, the holy man commenced an edifying discourse, in which he informed Don Pedro, that the venerabilissimo San Somebody (the saint of his village) had passed a considerable time with him in his dream of the previous night: that his object in thus miraculously waiting upon him was, to request he would go to his Majesty, and tell him, that, owing to the unpardonable disorders of his life, it was determined he should lose the approaching battle. It was the unhappy friar's last sermon; for in less than five minutes he had ceased to exist.

It stands to reason, that, owing to the retired habits of this friar, a certain anecdote had never reached his ear relative to another member of a religious fraternity. At a period that had not long preceded the event just related, the misconduct of this sovereign had drawn down upon him the displeasure of the head of the church.* The thunderbolt was already forged beneath the arches of

* He had put to death the "Master of St. Bernard," a title of those days possessed by the chief of that order appointed by the Pope. It was Urbano V, who, on the occasion of this act, resented at the same time various other offences.

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the Vatican; but a serious difficulty presented itself. The culprit was likely to turn upon the hand employed in inflicting the chastisement. At length a young monk, known to a member of the holy synod as a genius of promise, energetic and fertile in resources, was made choice of, who unhesitatingly undertook the mission. He repaired to Seville, and after a few days' delay, employed in combining his plan of operation, he got into a boat, furnished with two stout rowers, and allowing the current to waft him down the Guadalquivir, until he arrived opposite a portion of the bank known to be the daily resort of the King, the approached the shore, and waited his opportunity.

At the accustomed hour the royal cavalcade was seen to approach; when, standing up in the boat, which was not allowed to touch the shore, he made signs that he would speak to the party. The monkish costume commanded respect even from royalty, and Don Pedro reined in his horse. The monk then inquired whether it would gratify his Majesty to listen to the news of certain remarkable occurrences that had taken place in the East, from which part of the world he had just arrived. The King approached, and ordered him to tell his story; upon which he unrolled the fatal document, and

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with all possible rapidity of enunciation read it from beginning to end.

Before it was concluded, the King had drawn his sword, and spurred his horse to the brink of the water; but at his first movement the boat had pushed off,—the reader still continuing his task,—so that by the time Pedro found himself completely excommunicated, his rage passing all bounds, he had dashed into the water, directing a sabre cut, which only reached the boat's stern. He still, however, spurred furiously on, and compelled his horse to swim a considerable distance; until, the animal becoming exhausted, he only regained the shore after being in serious danger of drowning. It may easily be imagined that the papal messenger, satisfied with his success, avoided the contact of terra firma, until he found himself clear of Pedro's dominions.

Quitting the room—that of Maria Padilla (according to my conjecture) by the door which leads to the terrace, you look down on a square portion of ground, partitioned off from the rest by walls, against which orange-trees are trained like our wall-fruit trees, only so thickly that no part of the masonry is visible. All the walls in the garden are thus masked by a depth of about eight inches of leaves evenly clipped. In the fruit season the effect

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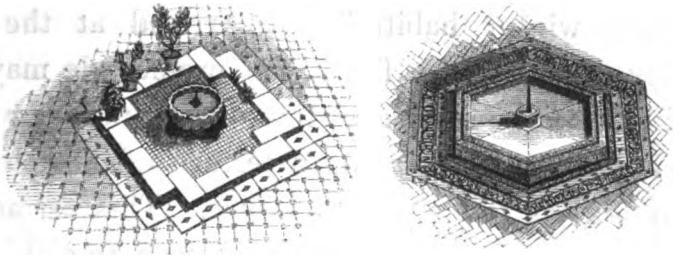
is admirable. The small square portions next to the palace thus partitioned off are laid out in flower-beds, separated by walks of mixed brick and porcelain, all of which communicate with fountains in the centres. The fountains, simple and destitute of the usual classical menagerie of marine zoology



FOUNTAINS AT THE ALCAZAR.

and gods and goddesses, whose coöperation is so indispensable in most European gardens to the propulsion of each curling thread or gushing mass of the cold element,—derive all their charm from the purity and taste displayed in their design. One of the most beautiful of them consists merely of a raised step, covered with *azulejos*, enclosing a space of an hexagonal form, in the centre of which the water rises from a small block of corresponding form and materials. The mosaic is continued outside the step, but covers only a narrow space.

The terrace stretches away to the left as far as the

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extremity of the buildings, the façade of which is hollowed out into a series of semicircular alcoves; there being no doors nor windows, with the exception of the door of the room through which we issued. The alcoves are surrounded with seats, and form so many little apartments, untenable during the summer, as they look to the south, but forming excellent winter habitations. Arrived at the extremity of the palace front, the promenade may be continued at the same elevation down another whole side of the gardens, along a terrace of two stories, which follows the outer enclosure. This terrace is very ornamental. From the ground up to a third of its height, its front is clothed with the orange-tree, in the same manner as the walls already described. Immediately above runs a rustic story of large projecting stones, which serves as a basement for the covered gallery, or lower of the two walks. This gallery is closed on the outside, which is part of the town wall. The front or garden side is composed of a series of rustic arches, alternately larger and smaller, formed of rugged stones, such as are used for grottoes, and of a dark brown colour—partly natural, partly painted.

The arches are supported by marble columns, or rather fragments of columns,—all the mutilated antique trunks rummaged out of Italica. For a shaft

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of insufficient length a piece is found of the dimensions required to make up the deficiency, and placed on its top without mortar or cement. Some of the capitals are extremely curious. Among them almost every style may be traced, from the Hindoo to the Composite: but no one is entire, nor matched with any part of the column it was originally destined to adorn. Over this gallery is the open terrace, which continues that of the palace side on the same level. The view extends in all directions, including the gardens and the surrounding country; for we are here at the extremity of the town. At the furthest end the edifice widens, and forms an open saloon, surrounded with seats, glittering with the bright hues of the *azulejos*.

From these terraces you look down on the portion of the garden in which the royal arms are represented, formed with myrtle-hedges. Eagles, lions, castellated towers,—all are accurately delineated. Myrtle-hedges are also used in all parts of the gardens as borders to the walks. It is a charming evening's occupation to wander through the different enclosures of these gardens, which, although not very extensive, are characterised by so much that is uncommon in their plan and ornaments, that the lounger is never weary of them. Nor is the visible portion of their attractions more curious than the hidden sources of

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amusement and—ablution, by means of which an uninitiated wanderer over these china-paved walks, may be unexpectedly, and more than necessarily refreshed. By means of a handle, concealed—here in the lungs of some bathing Diana in the recesses of her grotto—here in the hollow of a harmless looking stone—an entire line of walk is instantaneously converted into a stage of hydraulics—displaying to the spectator a long line of embroidery, composed of thousands of silver threads sparkling in the sunshine, as issuing from unseen apertures in the pavement they cross each other at a height of a few feet from the ground, forming an endless variety of graceful curves. Almost all the walks are sown with these *burladores*, as they are termed.

A large portion of the grounds consists of an orange-grove, varied with sweet lemon-trees. The trees are sufficiently near to each other to afford universal shade, without being so thickly planted as to interfere with the good-keeping of the grass, nor with the movement of promenading parties. In the centre of this grove is a beautiful edifice,—a square pavilion entirely faced, within and without, with the *azulejos*, with the exception only of the roof. Around it is a colonnade of white marble, enclosing a space raised two feet above the ground, and surrounded by a seat of the same mosaic. The

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interior is occupied by a table, surrounded with seats.

The subterranean baths, called the baths of Maria Padilla, are entered from the palace end of the garden. They extend to a considerable distance under the palace, and must during the summer heats, have been a delightfully cool retreat.

This *alcazar* is probably the best specimen of a Moorish residence remaining in Europe. The Alhambra would, no doubt, have surpassed it, but for the preference accorded by the Emperor, Charles the Fifth, to its situation over that of Seville: owing to which he contented himself with building a gallery over the principal court at the latter; while at Granada, he destroyed a large portion of the old buildings, which he replaced by an entire Italian palace. At present the ornamented apartments of the Seville palace are more numerous, and in better preservation than those of the Alhambra.

Both, however, would have been thrown into the shade, had any proportionate traces existed of the palace of Abderahman the Third, in the environs of Cordova. Unfortunately nothing of this remains but the description. It is among the few Arab manuscripts which escaped the colossal *auto-da-fé* of Ferdinand and Isabella, and would appear too extravagant to merit belief, but for the known

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minuteness and accuracy of the Arab writers, proved by their descriptions of the palaces and other edifices which remain to afford the test of comparison.

The immense wealth lavished by these princes, must also be taken into consideration, and especially by the Caliphs of Cordova, who possessed a far more extended sway than belonged to the subsequent dynasties of Seville and Granada. According to a custom prevalent at their court, rich presents were offered to the sovereign on various occasions. Among others, governors of provinces, on their nomination, seldom neglected this practical demonstration of gratitude. This practice is to this day observed at the court of the Turkish Sultan, and serves to swell the treasury in no small degree. Abderahman the Third, having granted a government to the brother of his favourite, Ahmed ben Sayd, the two brothers joined purses, and offered a present made up of the following articles—accompanied by delicate and ingenious compliments in verse, for the composition of which they employed the most popular poet of the day:—Four hundred pounds weight of pure gold; forty thousand sequins in ingots of silver; four hundred pounds of aloes; five hundred ounces of amber; three hundred ounces of camphor; thirty pieces of tissue of gold

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and silk; a hundred and ten fine furs of Khorasan; forty-eight caparisons of gold and silk, woven at Bagdad; four thousand pounds of silk in balls thirty Persian carpets; eight hundred suits of armour; a thousand shields; a hundred thousand arrows; fifteen Arabian, and a hundred Spanish horses, with their trappings and equipments; sixty young slaves — forty male, and twenty female.

The palace near Cordova, erected by this sovereign, was called Azarah (the Flower) after the name of his favourite mistress. Its materials consisted entirely of marble and cedar wood; and it contained four thousand three hundred columns. It was sufficiently spacious to lodge the whole court, besides a guard of cavalry. The gardens, as was usual with the Arabs, formed the part of the residence on which were lavished the greatest treasures of wealth, and the choicest inventions of taste. The fountains were endless in number and variety. On one of the most picturesque spots was situated an edifice called the Caliph's Pavilion. It consisted of a circular gallery of white marble columns with gilded capitals; in the centre rose a fountain of quicksilver, imitating all the movements of water, and glittering in the sun with a brightness too dazzling for the eye to support. Several of the saloons of this palace were ornamented with fountains. In one, which

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bore the name of the Caliph's Saloon, a fountain of jasper contained in the centre a golden swan of beautiful workmanship—and over it hung from the ceiling a pearl, which had been sent from Constantinople as a present from the Greek Emperor to Abderahman. The mosque of this palace surpassed in riches, although not in size, the Aljama of Cordova.

These were monuments worthy to have kings and caliphs for architects, for such they had. There is no doubt that the palace of Azahrah was planned and designed by the Caliph himself; and the founder of that dynasty, Abderahman the First, not only designed the magnificent mosque of Cordova, but presided daily over the progress of its erection. Possessed, as these sovereigns were, as well as all the well-born portion of their nation, of a highly cultivated education, the intervals of leisure, left them by war, were rarely thrown away in idleness. Abderahman the First was a poet, besides being a mathematician, an architect, and the first soldier of his time. Some of his writings have been preserved, and are among the Arab works collected and translated by Condé into Spanish. The following stanzas, addressed to a palm-tree, must be, as is always the case, still more beautiful in the original, although charming in the Spanish. The monarch of the

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Western Empire, after having vanquished his enemies, and pacified his dominions,—beloved by his subjects and by all who approached him, and possessed of the resources of science to occupy his mind, was nevertheless unhappy. He preferred his home in Asia to the splendours of an imperial throne in such a land as Andalucia. He caused a young palm-tree to be brought from Syria, and planted in a garden formed by him in the environs of Cordova; and it was his delight to sit in a tower constructed in the garden, and gaze at his tree.

It was to this tree he addressed the lines thus translated :—

Tu tambien, insigne palma,
Eres aqui forastera.
De Algarbe las dulces auras
Tu pompa halagan y besan.
En fecundo suelo arraigas,
Y al cielo tu cima elevas,
Tristes lagrimas lloraras,
Si qual io sentir pudieras.

Tu no sientes contratiempos
Como io de suerte aviesa:
A mi de pena y dolor
Continuas lluvias me annegan.
Con mis lagrimas regue
Las palmas que el Forat riega,
Pero las palmas y el rio
Se olvidan de mis penas.

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Cuando mios infaustos hados,
Y de Al. Abas la fiereza
Mi forzaron de dexar
Del alma las dulces prendas;
A ti de mi patria amada
Ningun recuerda ti queda;
Pero io, triste, no puedo
Dexar de llorar por ella.

It is probable that on the occasion of the surrender of Cordova to Ferdinand the Third, the Moors destroyed their palace of Azarah, since they were desirous of acting in a similar manner at Seville, with regard to Geber's Tower. Perhaps from disgust at the idea that a monument, the beauty and grandeur of which had inspired them with a sort of affection, would be, being gazed at, trodden, and possibly disfigured, (as it turned out) by those whom they looked upon as barbarians, and who would not appreciate its perfection, they attempted to introduce a clause into the conditions of the surrender of Seville, stipulating the destruction of the tower.

By way of testifying to the accuracy of the opinion they had formed of their adversaries, Saint Ferdinand was on the point of agreeing to the clause: when his son, afterwards his successor, Alonso el Sabio, perhaps the only Christian present, who felt sufficient interest in a square mass of masonry, to care how the question was decided,

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energetically interfered, affirming that a single brick displaced, should be paid with the lives of the whole population.

This most perfect scientific monument left by the Arabs, for the possession of which, after the architect, Europe is indebted to Alonso the Tenth, we will presently examine, together with the cathedral, which was afterwards erected, so as to include it in his plan.

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LETTER XIX

CATHEDRAL OF SEVILLE.

Seville.

We have visited the most beautiful edifice in Seville; we are now approaching the most magnificent. The native writers, participating somewhat in the character attributed to the inhabitants of their province, sometimes called the Gascony of Spain, declare this cathedral to be the grandest in the world. This is going too far; setting aside St. Peter's, and the Santa Maria del Fiore, the style of which renders the comparison more difficult, the Duomo of Milan, of which this building appears to be an imitation, must be allowed to be superior to it, externally at least, if not internally. Had they ranked it as the finest church out of Italy, they would not have been much in error, for such it probably is.

No one in approaching, excepting from the west, would imagine it to be a Gothic edifice. You perceive an immense quadrangular enclosure, filled apparently

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with cupolas, towers, pinnacles of all sorts and styles, but less of the Gothic than any other. These belong to the numerous accessory buildings, subsequently annexed to the church; such as sacristies, chapels, chapter-hall, each subsequent erection having been designed in a different style. The cathedral is inaccessible on the south side, that which we first reach in coming from the Alcazar. It is enclosed here within a long Italian façade of about thirty to forty feet elevation, ornamented by a row of Ionic pilasters, supporting an elegant frieze and balustrade. We therefore ascend the raised pavement, which, bounded by a series of antique shafts of columns, surrounds the whole enclosure; and having passed down the greater part of the east end, find a small portal close to the Giralda, which admits to the church through the court of orange-trees. Before we enter, we will look round on this view, which possesses more of the Moorish character, than that which awaits us in the interior. Some idea of the general plan of these buildings will be necessary, in order that you may perfectly understand our present point of view.

I mentioned above, that the general enclosure formed a square. This square, the sides of which face the four points of the compass, is divided by a straight line into two unequal parts, one being about

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a third wider than the other. The direction of the line is east and west; to the south of it is the cathedral, to the north, the Moorish court of orange-trees. The Arab Tower, now called the Giralda, stands in the north-east angle of the cathedral, and the small door, through which we have just entered, in the south-eastern angle of the court, is close by it.

The court is surrounded by buildings; for besides the church on its south side, a chapel called the Sagrario, runs down the entire western end. The east side and half the north are occupied by arcades, which support the library, the gift of the son of Columbus to the cathedral; and the remaining half side by a sacristy. The buildings of the east and north sides lean against the old embattled wall on the outside. The chapel of the Sagrario to the west is in the Italian style. Avenues of orange-trees, and a marble fountain of a simple but choice design, are the only objects which occupy the open space. Throughout it reigns an eternal gloom, maintained by the frowning buttresses and pinnacles of the cathedral, which overhang it from the south.

A small doorway, near to that by which we entered the court, gives access to the cathedral at all hours. On entering an almost more than twilight

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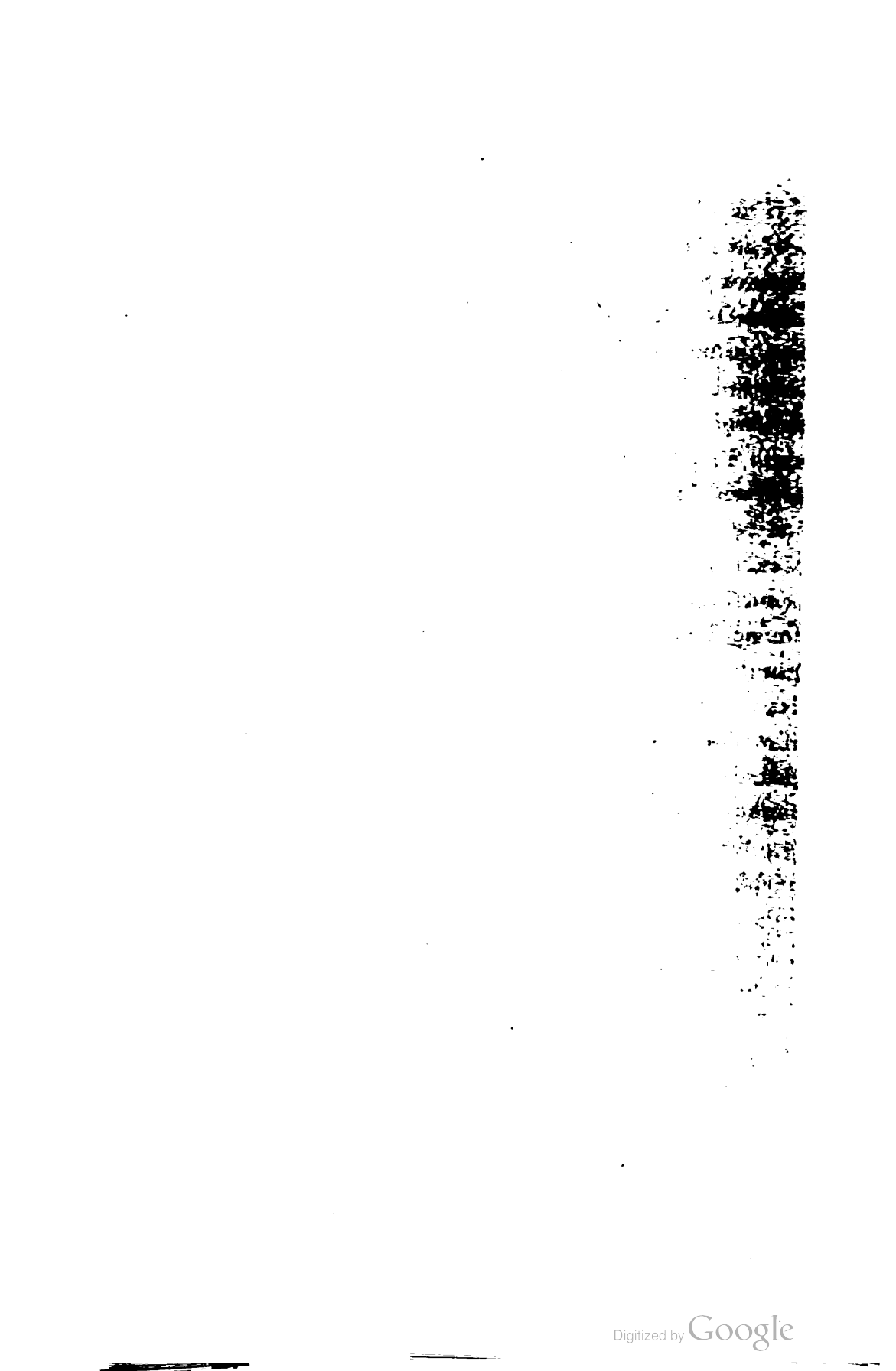
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W.A. Wolls del.

W.F. Starling sc.

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would confuse the surrounding objects, did it immediately succeed the sunshine of Andalucia; and were not the transition rendered gradual to the eye by the deep shades of the orange court. As you advance towards the centre nave, this darkness aids in producing the effect of immensity, which is the next idea that presents itself. In fact the enormous elevation and width of the edifice is such as at first to overpower the imagination, and to deprive you of the faculty of appreciating its dimensions. It produces a novel species of giddiness arising from looking upwards.

To arrive at the intersection of the principal nave and transept, you traverse two side naves, both about eighty-five feet in height, and spacious in proportion. The centre nave is a hundred and thirty-two feet, but rises at the quadrangle, forming its intersection with the transept about twenty feet higher. The ceiling here, and over the four surrounding intercolumniations, is ornamented with a groining of admirable richness. That of the centre quadrangle is here and there tinged with crimson and orange tints, proceeding from some diminutive windows placed between the lower and upper ceilings.

After having sufficiently examined the upper view, the eye wanders over the immense vacuum of the

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transept, and rests at length on the bronze railings which, on the east, separate you from the high-altar, and on the west from the choir. These are superb.

That of the Capilla Mayor rises to an elevation of sixty feet, and is throughout of the most elaborate workmanship. It is the work of a Dominican monk, who also executed the two pulpits. The choir forms, as usual, a sort of saloon, which occupies the centre of the church, that is, in this instance, two of the five intercolumniations which reach from the transept to the western portal. Passing round it, in the direction of the western doors, where the view is more open, the plan and style of the building are more easily distinguished. They are remarkably simple. The area is a quadrangle of three hundred and ninety-eight feet by two hundred and ninety-one, and is divided into five naves by four rows of pillars, all of about sixty feet elevation. The width of the centre nave and transept is fifty-nine feet, and the whole is surrounded by chapels. The distance between the pillars, of which there are only eight in each row, has the effect of generalizing the view of the whole edifice, and imparting to it a grandeur which is not obtained in the cathedral of Toledo, of almost equal dimensions; while the smaller and less gaudily coloured windows shed a more religious ray, and are preferable to those of

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Toledo, which, magnificent in themselves, attract an undue share of the observation, instead of blending into one perfect composition of architectural harmony.

Immediately above the arches of the principal nave and transept, at a height of about ninety feet, runs a balustrade, the design of which consists of a series of pointed arches. Above it are the windows, reaching nearly to the ceiling. They are painted in rather dark tints, and afford no more than a sort of *demi-jour*, which at the east end decreases to twilight. Rather more light is admitted towards the western extremity, from some windows of plain glass, in the lateral chapels, without which the pictures they contain could not be viewed; but from this end the high-altar is scarcely discernible. The simple grandeur of this view loses nothing by the absence of all ornamental detail: the portion most ornamented is the pavement, composed of a mosaic of the richest marbles. About half-way between the portals and the choir, are inserted two or three large slabs, bearing inscriptions; one of them is to the memory of Christopher Columbus; another to his son. There are no other details to draw the attention until we visit the chapels, in which all the treasures of art are dispersed. A few pictures are scattered here and there around

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the eastern part of the building; all of them are good. A large one of Zurbaran, in the north transept, is a master-piece. It represents St. Jerome, surrounded by an assembly of monks.

At the west end of the northernmost nave, the first door opens to a vast church, called the chapel of the Sagrario, already alluded to as forming the western boundary of the orange-court. It is nearly two hundred feet in length; in the Italian style; the orders Doric and Ionic, but loaded with heavy sculpture in the worst taste. After this a series of chapels, of a style analogous to the body of the edifice, succeed each other, commencing with that of San Antonio, and continuing all round the church. Several of them contain beautiful details of ornament, and handsome tombs. That of the Kings should be mentioned as an exception, with regard to the architecture, since its style is the *plateresco*. It contains the tombs of Alonzo the Tenth, and his Queen Beatrix, with several others. The most beautiful of these chapels is that of Nuestra Señora la Antiqua, situated on the south side, below the transept. It forms a square of about thirty feet, and rises to an elevation of upwards of eighty. The walls are divided into stories and compartments, and covered, as is also the ceiling, with admirable frescos by Martinez and Rovera.

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At a side door leading to the sacristy, are two beautiful columns of *verde antico*. The high-altar is composed of jasper, from quarries which existed at the distance of a few leagues from Seville. The statues are by Pedro Cornejo; and there are handsome tombs let into the lower part of the walls. Four antique chandeliers, one in each corner, are designed with uncommon grace and originality. From the summit of a short column rises a silver stem, from different parts of which spring flat rods of the same metal, so slight as to bend with the smallest weight: they are of various lengths, and at the extremity of each waves an elegantly formed lamp. Each of these clusters assumes a pyramidal form, and produces a charming effect when lighted up on days of ceremony,—from their harmonizing with the rest of the decorations of the chapel, no less than from the elegance of their form.

Some of the chapels of this side, and east of the transept, communicate with other buildings, erected subsequently to the principal edifice, and consequently not comprised in its plan, nor analogous to its style. Thus, after passing through the chapel called Del Mariscal, situated at the south-east of the apse, you enter an anteroom, which leads to the chapter-hall. The anteroom is an apartment

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of handsome proportions, covered, in the intervals of a row of Ionic pilasters, with a series of pieces of sculpture in white marble. The hall itself is magnificent. It is an oval of fifty-seven feet in length, entirely hung with crimson velvet enriched with gold embroidery. Another of the side chapels leads to the smaller sacristy. I call it smaller because it is not so large as that which adjoins the orange-court; but it is the principal of the two. It is a superb saloon, upwards of seventy feet in length by about sixty wide, ornamented with a profusion of rich sculpture. The architect was Juan de Herrera.

From the floor to a height of about four feet, a spacious wardrobe, composed of large mahogany drawers, runs down the two longer sides of the room. These contain probably the richest collection that exists of gold and silver embroidered velvets and silks,—brocades—lace—scarfs and mantles ornamented with precious stones: all these are the ornaments belonging to altars and pulpits; robes, trains, and vestures of different sorts, worn on occasions of ceremony by the principal dignitaries. The cathedral of Seville is said to surpass all others in these ornaments.

In this sacristy are contained likewise the treasure of gold and silver vessels, and basins; innumerable

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crosses, reliquaries, chalices, boxes, and candlesticks; and, in an upright mahogany case of about twenty feet elevation, lined with white silk, the front of which opens like a door, stands the Custodia—a silver ornament about sixteen feet high, including its base. On the day of the Corpus Christi, the Host is placed in this Custodia, and carried in procession through Seville. The silver of which it is composed weighs seven hundred weight. But it must not be supposed from this circumstance that the ornament has a heavy appearance. It is a tapering edifice containing four stories, ornamented by as many orders of architecture. The general form is circular, diminishing up to the summit, which supports a single statue. Each story rests on twenty-four columns, most of which are fluted, and all, together with their capitals, remarkable for their delicacy of finish. Among these are numerous statues of saints, in whose costumes precious stones are introduced. In that of the statue of Faith, which stands in the centre of the lower story, are some of immense value. This ornament was the work of Juan de Arfe, the Cellini of Spain.

But the pictures are the richest treasure of this apartment. It is an epitome of the Cathedral, which may be called a gallery—one of the richest that exists—of the paintings of Spanish schools: conse-

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quently, according to the opinion of many—one of the best of all galleries. The pictures are not in great numbers, but they are well adapted to their situation, being the largest in dimension, and among the most prominent in value and merit, that have been produced by their respective painters.

By the greater portion of spectators, the Spanish artists, of what may be called the golden age of painting, will always be preferred to the Italian; because their manner of treating their subject, appeals rather to the passions than to the understanding. It is the same quality which renders the Venetian school more popular than the other schools of Italy; and the Italian music more attractive than the German—Rossini than Spohr or Beethoven. I do not mean that the preference will be the result of choice, in an individual who appreciates the two styles perfectly; but that the difference I allude to renders the works of the greatest masters of Italy less easily understood.

With all the intelligence and taste necessary for the appreciation of a picture of Raffaelle, many will have had a hundred opportunities of studying such a picture, and will nevertheless have passed it by, scarcely noticed; merely, because on the first occasion of seeing it, they have not immediately caught the idea of the artist, nor entered

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sufficiently into his feelings to trace the sparks of his inspiration scattered over the canvass. How many are there too careless to return to the charge, and thus to acquire the cultivation necessary to enable them to judge of such works, who the moment a Murillo, or a Zurbaran meets their view, will gaze on it with delight, for the simple reason, that it is calculated to strike the intelligence the least cultivated.

The Spanish artists usually endeavoured to produce an exact imitation of material nature; while the Italians aimed at, and attained higher results. The object of the Spaniards being less difficult of attainment, the perfection with which they imitated nature passes conception. To that they devoted all the energies of their genius; while you may search in vain in the best productions of Italy, not excepting the school of Venice, one that most resembles the Spanish,—for anything approaching their success in that respect. By way of an example, in the Spasimo of Raffaelle, we trace the operations of the mind, as they pierce through every feature of every countenance, and the attitude of every limb throughout the grouping of that great master-piece of expression; from the brutal impatience of the one, and the involuntary compassion of the other executioner, up to the intensity of

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maternal suffering in the Virgin, and the indescribable combination of heaven and earth, which beams through the unequalled head of the Christ; but there is no deception to the eye. No one would mistake any of the figures for reality; nor exclaim that it steps from the canvass; nor does any one wish for such an effect, or perceive any such deficiency.

What, on the contrary, was the exclamation of Murillo before Campana's Descent from the Cross? This master-piece of Pedro de Campana is seen at the head of the sacristy of the cathedral. It was so favourite a picture with Murillo, that he used to pass much of his time every day, seated before it. On one occasion, his presence being required on an affair of importance, which he had forgotten, his friends found him at his usual post before the Descent; when, pointing to the figure of the Christ, he replied to their remonstrances, "I am only waiting until they have taken him down."

Although Murillo admired this perfect representation of material nature, his own works are exceptions, in fact almost the only exceptions, to this peculiarity of the Spanish masters. He partakes, indeed, of the qualities of both schools in an eminent degree. In intellectual expression and delineation of the operations of the mind, he is superior to

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all his countrymen, but inferior to the first Italian painters. In the material imitation of nature, he is superior to the greater number of the Italians, but inferior to the other principal Spanish artists. There is, at Madrid, a Christ on the Cross, of his, in which he has attempted this effect—an effort he ought rather to have despised. The picture contains no other object than the figure, and the cross of admirably imitated wood, on a simple black, or rather dark brown background, representing complete darkness. After sitting a short time before it, you certainly feel a sort of uncomfortable sensation, caused by the growing reality of the pale and tormented carcass; but it is not to be compared to the Descent of Campana. There the whole group is to the life, and no darkness called in to aid the effect. The drooping body is exposed to a powerful light, and hangs its leaden weight on the arms of those who support it, with a reality perfectly startling.

This picture is placed in the centre of the upper end of the sacristy, as being considered the best of those therein contained: but it is not without rivals. The few paintings placed here are first rate; particularly the portraits of the two archbishops of Seville, San Leandro, and San Isidero—two of Murillo's most exquisite productions. Some of the greatest compositions of this painter are contained

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in the chapels we have passed in review, where they serve for altar-pieces, each filling an entire side of a chapel. Of these large pictures, I think the best on the side we are visiting is the Saint Francis. The Saint is represented kneeling to a vision of the Virgin. It may certainly be ranked among Murillo's best efforts in the style he employed, when treating these celestial subjects, and which has been called his vaporous manner. To speak correctly, two of his three manners are employed in this picture, since the Saint is an instance of that called his warm manner.

On the opposite or north side of the cathedral, in the first chapel after passing the door of the Sagrario, is the San Antonio. This is probably the greatest work of Murillo in the two styles just mentioned, and certainly the most magnificent picture contained in the cathedral. On the lower foreground is the Saint, in adoration before the Christ, who appears in the centre, surrounded by the Heavenly Host.

No one but Murillo could ever have thus embodied his conception of a supernatural vision. On sitting down before this canvass, from which, as it extends across the whole chapel, no other object can draw off the attention, you speedily yield to the irresistible power of abstraction, and are lost

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in an ecstacy, nearly resembling that which the artist has sought to represent in the countenance and attitude of his Saint. The eye wanders in a sort of trance through the glorious assemblage of Heaven. The whole scene looks real: but it is only on taking time to study the details that you discover the prodigies of talent displayed in the drawing and finishing of this picture. An angel, suspended in front of the lower portion of the group, more especially attracts the attention. One leg is extended towards the spectator, the foreshortening of which is a marvel of execution.

Over the San Antonio, as it does not reach to the ceiling, there is a smaller picture, representing the Baptism of Christ, also by Murillo. In a chapel at the south-west angle of the church, there are several fine paintings by Luis de Vargas, one of the founders of the school of Seville.

In the choir, the collection of books for the chanting services is worth seeing. Of these immense folios, enclosed in massive covers, bound with a profusion of wrought metal mostly silver—may be counted upwards of a hundred. They are filled with paintings, infinite in minuteness and beauty. For the performances of the daily services and all duties, ordinary and extraordinary, within this edifice, more than eight hundred persons are

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employed. Five hundred masses are recited each day at the different altars: all of which taking place during the early part of the day, an idea may be formed of the business which goes on. Of the six or seven organs, I have heard three playing at the same time in different parts of the church; but so widely separated, as by no means to interfere with each other's harmony. One of them was one of the two great organs which face each other over the choir. These two play a duet once a year, on the day of the Corpus. The effect they produce is not so powerful as that produced at Toledo, but far more beautiful. At Toledo the two which correspond to these, are assisted on that occasion by a third, as powerful as both the others united, placed over the portal of the south transept, at an elevation of about seventy feet from the ground.

Among the ceremonies of the cathedral of Seville is one sufficiently unique to be deserving of notice. *El baile de los seis* (dance of the six), is performed by eight youths — probably by six originally — every evening during the feast of the Conception. It takes place in front of the high-altar, on which her statue is placed on that occasion. The service is one of especial solemnity; and, as such, accompanied, unfortunately as on all such occa-

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sions, by an orchestra of violins, to the exclusion of the organs. The singing commences at four o'clock in the afternoon, in the choir, and continues until half-past six, when all move in procession through the great railing, across the transept, and ascend the flight of steps which lead to the Capilla Mayor. Here they take their seats according to rank, on benches placed in rows from east to west, fronting a space which is left open down the centre, in front of the altar. The orchestra occupies a corner near the railing; and on the two front benches are seated—four facing four—the eight youths, dressed in the ancient Spanish costume, all sky-blue silk and white muslin, and holding each his hat, also light blue, with a flowing white feather.

The chorus now recommences, but speedily drops; when the orchestra sounds a beautiful air in the waltz measure. This is played once by the instruments alone, and joined the second time by the voices of the eight boys, or youths of the age of sixteen to eighteen; who, after having accompanied a short time, start to their legs, and continue in the same strain. At the next reprise they all, as if by word of command, place their hats on their heads, and one or two minutes after, the chant still continuing, advance, and meet in the centre, then return

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each to his place; advance a second time, and turn round each other, using the waltz step.

After singing and dancing for about a quarter of an hour, the voices are exchanged for the sounds of castagnettes, which they have held all this time in their hands, and the measure becomes more animated; and thus they terminate the performance. The same ceremony is repeated each night of the seven; only varying the air of the waltz, of which they have two.

This ceremony, now belonging exclusively to the cathedral of Seville, was originally performed in some other cathedrals; but has been gradually laid aside in all the others, having been found to occasion irreverent behaviour among a portion of the spectators. It was originally introduced among the observances in honour of the anniversary of the Conception, as a natural manifestation of joy; and such a genuine Spanish bolero would have been: but the slow time of the music, and the measured movements, adopted for the purpose of suiting the performance to the solemnity of the place, have changed the nature of the dance, and deprived it of everything approaching to cheerfulness.

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LETTER XX.

SPANISH BEGGARS. HAIRDRESSING. THE GIRALDA. CASA DE PILATOS. MONASTERIES. ITALICA.

Seville.

MENDICITY is one of the Curiosities—and not the least picturesque one—of this antique country. There should be a Mendicity Society for its preservation, together with other legacies of the middle ages. An entertaining book might be filled with its annals and anecdotes.

Nowhere, I should think, can beggary be a more lucrative calling. The convents having been the inexhaustible providence of these tribes, on their suppression the well-born and bred Spaniards consider the charge to have devolved upon them, in the absence of all possible legislation on the subject: and few, especially of the fair sex, turn a deaf ear to the mute eloquence of the open hand. Even a stranger, if possessed of an ear, resists with difficulty the graceful appeal of the well trained

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proficient: *Noble caballero, un ochavito por Dios.* — A blind girl made no request; but exclaimed — "Oh that the Virgin of Carmen may preserve your sight!"

The mendicants are classified, and assume every form of external humanity. Being in the coach-office near the Plaza del Duque, a tall well-dressed man, dangling a dark kid glove, entered, and, walking up to the book-keeper, after having carefully closed the door, made some communication to him in a low voice. The other replied in a similar tone, and they parted with mutual bows. I was puzzled on the man's turning to me and observing that the beggars were very annoying in Seville; but still certain my conjecture could not but be erroneous, I said "you don't mean to say that your acquaintance" — "Oh, no acquaintance; I never saw him before: he only came to beg."

This species of *cavallero* pauper should by no means be encouraged; he is not of the picturesque sort. Nowhere do the wretched look their character better than at Seville; as all admirers of Murillo can testify, without consulting any other nature than his canvass. But these consider they confer a sort of obligation on the individual they condescend to apply to. Nothing can exceed their astonishment and indignation when refused. Their

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great highway is the superb polished mosaic marble of the Cathedral; where they divide the authority with the embroidered dignitaries of the choir. It is useless to hope for an instant's leisure for the contemplation of this unique temple, until you have disposed of its entire population of ragged despots.

A sort of chivalrous etiquette is observed, in virtue of which a female chorus is the first to form your escort from pillar to pillar. These dismissed, you are delivered over to the barefooted Murillos. There are two modes of escape. The rich man should go in with his two hands filled with coin, and distribute to all, even to many who will return for a second contribution before he has done. But if economical, you may attain the same end, and more permanently, by sacrificing four or five days to walking up and down the nave, without looking at anything, but simply undergoing the persecution of the mob. After the fourth visit you will be left in peace.

These counsels I am competent to give you from dreadful experience; more dreadful from my having pursued a middle course. To one barefooted and rotten-scalped embryo brigand I only gave a two-*quarto* piece (halfpenny) about equal in real consequence to twopence in England. If you have

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ever seen, in the era of mail coaches, the look of quiet surprise on the countenance of the well-fed charioteer, who, having, after the sixth or seventh stage, opened the door, and muttered from behind his *cache-nez* the usual "coachman, gen'lemen" received a long-searched-for deprecatory sixpence from some careful knight with a false shirt-collar—you have noticed the self-same look, which was leisurely transferred by the urchin from the piece of copper in the open palm to my face, and back to the piece of copper.

Instead, however, of restoring it to me, his indignation seemed to inspire him with a sudden resolution. He rushed to a kneeling Señorita a few paces distant, and interrupting her devotions by a pull at the side of her mantilla, he showed the coin in the open hand, while with the other he pointed to the culprit. If he meditated revenge, he should have made another choice, instead of deranging a garment, from the folds of which a real Andalucian mouth and pair of eyes, turning full on me, aimed a smile which, I need not inform you, was not dear at two *quartos*.

Could such a smile have been natural, and the expression of mere curiosity, or was it intended for a death-wound, dealt for another's vengeance? and did the velvet language of those eyes signify a

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horrible "Pallas te hoc vulnere," in favour of the ragamuffin I had offended? At all events, the incident lost him a more munificent remuneration, by driving me from the spot, and expelling from my head, a project previously formed, of inviting him to my *fonda* to be sketched.

With regard to the oft and still recurring subject of Spanish beauty, you are hereby warned against giving ear to what may be said by tourists, who, by way of taking a new view of an old subject, simply give the lie to their predecessors. It is true, that in the central provinces, the genuine characteristic Moro-Iberian beauty is rare, and that there is little of any other sort to replace it; but this is not the case with Andalucia, where you may arrive fresh from the perusal of the warm effusions of the most smitten of poets, and find the Houris of real flesh and blood, by no means overrated.

One of their peculiar perfections extends to all parts of the Peninsula. This is the hair; everywhere your eye lights upon some passing specimen of these unrivalled masses of braided jet; at which not unfrequently natives of the same sex turn with an exclamation—Que pelo tan hermoso!

I surprised the other day a village matron, whose toilette, it being a holiday afternoon, was in progress in no more secluded a *tocador* than the middle of

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the road. The rustic ladie's-maid (whether the practice be more or less fashionable I know not) had placed on a stool, within reach of her right hand as she stood behind her seated mistress, a jug fresh water. This did she lift, just as I approached, up to her mouth, into which she received as large a portion of its contents as could be there accommodated; while with her left hand she grasped the extremity of a mass of silken hair, black as the raven's wing, and an ell in length. Both hands now, stroking down the mass, spread it out so as to present a horizontal surface of as large an extent as possible, when, suddenly, from the inflated cheeks of the abigail, re-issued with a loud sound the now tepid liquid, and bathed the entire surface, which it seemed to render, if possible, still more glossy than before. The rest of the duty of the hands appeared to consist in repeatedly separating and replacing the handfuls, until the same proceeding was reacted.

The entrance to the Giralda is outside the cathedral. Before we make the ascent, we will walk to the extremity of the Moorish enclosure of the orange-court, along the raised pavement which surrounds the whole. At the angle there is an antique shaft of granite, higher than the rest of those placed at equal distances along the edge of

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the pavement. From that point the proportions of the tower are seen to advantage, while you are at the same time sufficiently near to observe the details of the carving, and of the windows, with their delicately formed columns of rare marbles; and to lose in a great measure the effect of the subsequent additions, which surmount and disfigure the work of Geber.

The Arabian part of the building is a square of about forty-five feet, and measures in elevation four times its width. The ornaments are not exactly alike on all the four sides. On the north side (our present view) the tracery commences at a height of eighty feet, up to which point the wall of brick is perfectly plain and smooth, with only the interruption of two windows, placed one above the other in the centre. The ornament, from its commencement to the summit, is divided into two lofty stories, surmounted by a third, of half the height of one of the others. The two first are divided vertically into three parts by narrow stripes of the plain wall. The centre portions contain two windows in each story, one over the other, making, with the two in the lower portion, six altogether, which are at equal distances from each other. The form of these windows is varied, and in all uncommonly elegant; some are double,

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with a marble column supporting their two arches, and all are ornamented round the arches with beautiful tracery, and furnished with marble balconies. At one of the balconies, the Muezzin, in Mahometan times was accustomed to present himself at each of the hours appointed for prayer, and to pronounce the sentences ordained by that religion for calling the people. The half-story at the summit is ornamented with a row of arches, supported by pilasters.

On the top of the tower were seen originally, four gilded balls of different sizes, one over the other, diminishing upwards; the iron bar on which they were fixed, was struck by lightning, and gave way, leaving the balls to roll over; since which period they were never restored to their place.

The additional buildings were not erected until the seventeenth century. They are not in themselves inelegant, with the exception of the portion immediately rising from the old tower, and containing the bells. This portion is of the same width as the tower, and appears to weigh it down with its heavy effect; on the summit of the whole, at about three hundred feet from the ground, is a colossal statue of bronze, representing Faith, holding in one hand a shield, and in the other an olive-branch. By means of the shield, the statue obeys the movements of the wind, and thus gives the name of Giralda (weather-cock) to the tower.

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An interior tower, rather more than twenty feet square, runs up the whole height of the Moorish portion of the building; between which and the external walls an easy ascent is contrived on an inclined plane. The necessity of introducing light throughout the ascent accounts for the different elevation of the windows and ornaments of the different sides; but the architect has so managed this difficulty, that no bad effect is produced in the external view. At the lower part of the tower the ascent is sufficiently wide to admit of the passage of two men on horseback abreast; but it becomes narrower as it approaches the summit. Queen Christina is said to have been drawn up in a small carriage. The walls, both of the inner and outer tower, increase in thickness as they rise, and as the ascending plane decreases in width: a plan which appears opposed to the principle usually adopted by modern architects.

It is known that Geber was the architect of the Giralda, but no certainty exists respecting its date. The Spanish antiquarian Don Rodrigo Caro supposes it to have been erected during the reign of Benabet Almucamus, King of Seville, shortly before the appearance in Spain of the Almoravides; but this is no more than a conjecture, founded on the supposed wealth of that King, who possessed larger states

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than his successors, and who paid no tribute to the sovereigns of Castile.

Immediately over the highest story of the Moorish tower is the belfry. The bells are suspended on the centre of revolving beams, which traverse the open arches of the four faces of the tower. They are consequently in full view, as they throw their somersets and send forth their lively clatter on a *dia de fiesta*.

Their effect is very original, and as unlike as possible to the monotonous and melancholy cadence of an English peal. None of them are deep-toned nor solemn, but all high and sharp: so that being let loose in merry disorder, and without tune, they somehow appear to harmonize with the brilliant skies, just as the descending ding-dong in England suits the gloom of the northern heavens. Leave Seville, and never shall their tones steal on your memory without your being transported into a blaze of bright sunshine

In Spain the houses of the grandees are not called palaces, as those of the same rank in Italy are usually termed. There is not even an intermediate term, such as mansion,—still less the hall—abbey, or castle. They have the last, but only applied in cases in which it is correctly and legitimately applicable. The Arab expression *alcazar*, composed of the article

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al and *cazar*, is so like the Spanish *la casa* (the house), that, not having at hand a professor of Arabic to consult, I will risk the assertion that it bore the same meaning; notwithstanding the opinion of several French writers who translate it *château*. Chenier, author of the history of Morocco, derives it from the word Caissar, which he considers synonymous with Cæsar: but this derivation appears to admit of much doubt, as the word would signify the Emperor, instead of his residence. Supposing it to signify the house, it must no doubt have meant the principal, or royal house. At present the two words are admitted into the Spanish language as one, which is applied indiscriminately to royal town-residences, whether castles or not, as well as the term *palacio*. But a private residence of whatever extent is modestly termed a house.

In this instance, as in many others, the proud contempt of high-sounding phraseology is common to Spain and England, where some of the most palace-like habitations are called Wentworth House, Hatfield House, Burleigh House: the very porters' lodges being sometimes such edifices as would claim the title of *château* in some other countries. But this same haughty modesty is rather individual than collective, and does not prevail as applied to towns and cities. In public acts and addresses, and even in the

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most homely precautionary warnings placarded at the corners of streets or promenades, the form used is,—"The constitutional Alcalde of this heroic and very invincible town of Madrid, or Seville, forbids, or orders, &c;" and still more splendid epithets are found for the nation in general.

I don't know whether it has occurred to you that this progressive dereliction of consistency is universal in human nature, although it assumes a variety of forms. In the present instance modesty commences at home, as they say charity should.

By the way, if charity should commence at home, together with the other affections of the heart, such as patriotism, then did the first Brutus make a mistake. If, on the contrary, his merit was great in sacrificing his son to his nation, it follows, that, in causing his entire nation to be butchered the first time they were guilty of any encroachment on the rights of the rest of the world, his glory would have increased in the ratio of one to some millions.

He either acted on a principle of justice, or preferred the applause of his compatriots to the affection of his son. If, therefore, an opportunity was ever afforded him of doing the world the above-mentioned act of justice at the expense of his countryman, and he abstained from it,—it being impossible to suppose a Roman republican capable of a dereliction

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of principle—it is clear that he preferred the applause of his nation to that of the rest of the world; and all becomes a question of taste. But what, you exclaim, has the first or any other Brutus to do with Pilate's house, the description of which is preceded by this long introduction? And was not his murder of his son benevolence itself, compared to the infliction of these digressions on your patience?

The Casa de Palatos is a palace belonging to the Duke of Medina Cœli. One of his ancestors is said to have built it in exact imitation of Pontius Pilate's palace in Jerusalem, and to have obtained possession of a large quantity of the ornaments and portable furniture belonging to the ancient building, which, on the completion of his edifice at Seville, he established, each object in the place corresponding to that which it originally occupied.

A lofty wall, filling the side of the small square, called the Plaza de Pilatos, and surmounted by a balustrade, forms the outer enclosure of the palace. You enter through a large plain arched doorway, and pass through a court, containing the porter's house, and other out-buildings devoid of ornament. A small door on the left leads from this enclosure to the principal court. Here you might imagine yourself still in the Alcazar. The ornament is in the same style; only the arcades are inferior in light-

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ness and beauty. It contains, however, a fountain very superior to that of the principal court of the Alcazar.

At the four angles are colossal statues of white marble, representing deities of the Grecian mythology. They are antique, and of Roman origin. Under the arcades a series of busts of the Roman emperors, are placed round the walls; the greater part of them are also antique. On one side of this court is the chapel, very small, and entirely covered with Arabesque ornament. At one side is placed erect against the wall a black cross, said to be a facsimile imitation of that actually carried by our Saviour, which occupied a similar situation in the palace at Jerusalem. Its length is about seven feet, and the thickness of the wood about four inches by two. Opposite to the cross is a Madonna by Raffaelle. As no light enters the chapel, excepting through a small door, and that placed under the arcades, and the picture is hung at a considerable height, it can only be examined by the aid of a ladder, which is kept near it, and then only very imperfectly. At the time the chapel was habitually used, it probably contained candles always burning.

The great staircase is very ornamental and leads to several handsome suites of rooms. There is a colonnade on one side of the garden, under which

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lies a valuable collection of antique busts, columns, capitals, and fragments of all sorts, "in most admired disorder." The proprietor never visits this residence, and every part of it is in a very neglected state.

Seville lays claim to no less a founder than Hercules. A magnificent temple dedicated to him is said to have existed on the spot at present occupied by the parish church of San Nicholas. Near it a statue of the demigod has been discovered, together with six columns, four of which are sunk so deeply in the earth that they cannot be brought to light. The other two are placed on lofty pedestals, and adorn the largest of the promenades of Seville, that called the Alameda. One of them is surmounted by the statue mentioned above, and the other by one of Julius Cæsar. Venus is also stated to have shared with Hercules the devotions of the Sevillanos. The existence of her worship in ancient times is placed beyond a doubt by the well authenticated martyrdom of Saints Justa and Rufina, condemned for refusing to do honour to the rites of that goddess, and to figure in her processions.

These two martyrs to the Christian faith have pursued, on various subsequent occasions, a conduct calculated to afford a degree of advantage to an adversary, should he presume to accuse them of renegade propensities. They have manifested them-

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selves determined protectors of the Arab tower, on every occasion of its being threatened with danger. Numerous instances are on record; the most remarkable of which, is one that has given rise to much controversy, and employed in more recent times the researches of learned men. The tradition states, that, during an earthquake, which took place in the year 1504, and of which a vivid description may be found at the end of a book, called the Regla Vieja, which exists in the archives of the cathedral—the two virgins were seen to support the tower and prevent it from falling, surrounding it with their arms, one on each side. It is also related that, on the occasion of a previous earthquake, that of the year 1396, voices were heard in the air, articulated by demons, crying, "Throw it down, throw it down;" and that others replied, "No, we cannot, for those villanous saints, Justa and Rufina, are guarding it." For these reasons it is usual, in paintings representing the Giralda, to place the figures of the two virgin Saints supporting it, one on either side; and a small model thus supported by images of the two martyrs, executed in wood, is carried in the principal religious processions. In all these representations, the figures stand rather taller than the tower.

The hospital of La Caridad is one of the principal attractions to strangers at Seville; for in its chapel

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is contained the picture, which passes for the master-piece of Murillo. The chapel is narrow and lofty, and the picture placed as near as possible to the ceiling. A sight of it can only be obtained at an angle of about twenty degrees. But the aching of the neck is unheeded during the examination of this superb picture. It is called Las Aguas, the Waters. Moses has just struck the rock, and stands in a simple and dignified attitude. In the complete contentment of his countenance there may be traced a mingled expression of pity and gratitude, as he looks on the scene which follows his action. The artist has given proof of consummate talent in the choice and treatment of his subject; which afforded him a variety of grouping, of expression, and of attitude, of which few were capable of taking better advantage.

This picture is a specimen of his natural style, and its success is considered, and I think justly, superior to that of any other of his works. The imitation of material nature is here carried to as great perfection as in many of his paintings; while at the same time nothing can surpass the poetry of the composition, nor the exquisitely harmonious grouping of the men and animals. In this last quality, Murillo is certainly unequalled. He seems also in this instance, to have reached the utmost limits of art in the ex-

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pression of the countenances, throughout the different groups, whether employed in offering silent thanksgivings, or entirely absorbed in the eager effort to obtain for their parched lips a draught of the bright liquid. In the feeling displayed in these instances, and so well represented, there is, it is true, nothing elevated, but still it is feeling; and its materiality is amply made amends for, by the chief personage of the scene, in whose countenance nothing but the sublime can be traced.

Had Murillo not painted this picture and the Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, Spanish art must have contented itself with the second rank, and Raphael would have continued without a rival. These pictures occasion regret that such genius should have employed itself during a long period, on works of a different sort. The San Antonio and a few others, were no doubt productions worthy of the painter of the Aguas, and a hundred or two others are magnificent paintings; but the time employed on some of these, and on a still greater number of less prominent merit, would have been more profitably devoted to the production of two or three which might have ranked with these giant creations of his talent.

In viewing either of these compositions, the other speedily becomes present to the imagination, and

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forces you to draw a comparison between them. They have a sort of affinity in their subject as well as in their style. The sufferers of the St. Elizabeth, occupied with their torments and their gratitude, answer to those of the Aguas, engrossed also with almost parallel feelings. The Moses, tranquil and erect in the midst of the action which surrounds him, is the exact pendant of the majestic figure and compassionate countenance of the youthful princess, exercising her saintly charities. These pictures ought to be companions in the same gallery, were it possible for two such works to find their way into one and the same apartment. But that would be a consummation as hopeless as finding St. Peter's and the Duomo of Milan in the same town; Naples and Seville in one province, a London and a Paris in one country, an Ariosto and a Byron in the same language. It has more than once occurred to me, since I have seen these two pictures, that were Raphael's Spasimo and Transfiguration placed on one side of a room, and these two on the other, and the choice offered me which pair I would possess, I should never be able to come to a decision.

Another large picture by Murillo, the multiplying of the Loaves in the Desert, is suspended opposite the Aguas, and at the same elevation. On attempting to examine it, you are forcibly reminded by cer-

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tain acute sensations in the region of the neck, of the unnatural position it has so long maintained, and you leave this picture, together with two others, placed near the entrance of the chapel, for a subsequent visit.

In the church of the Faubourg Triana, on the right hand after passing the bridge, are some excellent pictures, particularly a Conception by Murillo. The multitude of paintings left by this artist is incredible, when to all those scattered through Spain, France, and England, are added those preserved in this his native town. Almost all the good houses in Seville contain collections of pictures; and all the collections have their Murillos. There are no fewer than sixteen in the gallery of the Canon, Don Manuel Cepero; but this is the largest of the private collections, and the best, as it ought to be, since it is contained in Murillo's house. It is the residence occupied by him during the latter part of his life, and in which he died. Its dimensions and distribution are handsome. At the back of it there is a garden of limited extent, but in which not an inch of space is thrown away. Where there remains no room for choice flowers and orange trees, the walls are painted to prolong the illusion. The Canon possesses also several good paintings by Italian masters. I counted likewise four of Rembrandts, and two of Rubens. Among the

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other private collections, that of the Alcalde Don Pedro Garcia is one of the richest; it contains a Santa Barbara of Cano, an exquisite picture. A Saint Joseph by Murillo, in the collection of the French Consul (a native of Seville) is admirable.

In most of the churches there is sufficient of this sort of attraction to make them worth a visit. In the convents nothing is left; in fact they no longer exist as convents. There may be one or two remaining in Seville, but I did not hear of them. The monastery of Jeronimites, and the Chartreuse—both situated in the environs—were the most considerable religious establishments of Seville. They are converted, one into a school, and the other into a porcelain manufactory. This last, the Chartreuse, contains in its church and refectory, plentiful traces of its former magnificence. An Englishman has purchased the monastery with three or four acres of ground, containing the immediate dependencies; and he is occupied with the labours which necessarily precede its appearance in its new character, replacing the butleries, kitchens, storehouses, and cells, by rows of pudding-shaped baking-houses.

He has, however, spared the chapel, which is to continue in its former state. All the stalls, the altar, and other immoveable furniture, remain as

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he found them. The pictures and statues had of course been previously removed. The woodwork is inimitable—the best I have seen in Spain; it would be impossible in painting to represent with more delicacy, the very texture of the drapery, the very veins of the hands, and hair of the beards—of figures of a quarter the natural dimensions. You are filled with astonishment, that the infinite patience necessary for this mechanical labour should have accompanied the genius which conceived and executed the incomparable figures and heads. The refectory, of which the ceiling is the principal ornament, is to be the great show-room for the display of the china. The fortunate manufacturer inhabits, with his family, the prior's residence—one of the most elegant habitations in the world: surrounding a court, which contains of course its white marble fountain and colonnades: and he is in treaty for the purchase of the orange-grove, the park of the monastery. This pleasure-ground is ornamented here and there with Kiosks, from which are obtained views of Seville, and the intervening Guadalquivir.

On the confiscation of this monastery, several magnificent pictures disappeared, a few of which have since been placed in the cathedral. Two alabaster monuments, belonging to the family of

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Medina Cæli, were also removed; they are placed in a church at present under repair. They are erect, and fit into the wall; measuring about forty feet in height. Their upper portion is adorned with several well-executed small statues.

The other convent—that dedicated to S. Geronimo, is situated on the opposite side of the river, about a mile higher up. It is not so beautiful as the Cartuja, but on a grander scale. The principal court is magnificent; it is surrounded with upper and lower arcades, respectively of the Ionic and Doric orders: the apartments and church are of corresponding extent; but have either been deprived of their ornaments, or were originally but sparingly decorated. A ci-devant governor of Seville—a general officer, very distinguished as a linguist, has turned schoolmaster, and taken up his abode here. The day of my visit happened to be the general's birth-day, and a scene of much festivity presented itself. The schoolmaster's successor in his former post at Seville, had arrived, attended by the band of a cavalry regiment; and the great court having been converted into a ball-room, the marble arcades were made to ring with the thrilling cadences of the hautbois and clarionette—by way of a fitting afterpiece to the tragic chants of former days.

The relatives and friends of the students were

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present, so that the youthful dancers were well-provided with partners. The performances were French quadrilles, English hornpipes, German waltzes, Russian mazurkas, and Spanish fandangos. I had arrived too late for the first part of the entertainment, which consisted of a bull-fight, for which a temporary arena had been enclosed. The bulls were what are called *novillos* —that is, scarcely more than calves; as the full-grown animals would have been more than a match for their juvenile antagonists.

The ruins of the Roman city of Italica, to which I have already alluded, are situated four miles from Seville in ascending the river—and on the opposite bank. The whole town is underground, with the exception of a few houses in the part in which excavations have been made, and of the amphitheatre which occupies an eminence. No notice was taken in modern times of the existence of this buried town, until towards the end of the last century, when the remains of the amphitheatre, the only portion of the ruins which were visible, drew the attention of travellers: and the authorities of Seville received orders to commence excavating. The search yielded a large quantity of valuable remains; a temple was discovered, in the neighbourhood of which were found several statues and capitals of columns. A choice was made

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of the objects in the best state of preservation, which were forwarded to Madrid in order to form a museum. Large quantities of coins were also sent, and collections of household utensils, and ornaments. The Arabs, who did not consider these Roman relics worthy objects of antiquarian research, nevertheless had either discovered and laid open a large portion of the town, or were themselves its destroyers. From it they extracted the large quantities of marble columns and slabs with which Seville is filled. The mutilated statues, together with several funereal monuments, found in later times, and not considered deserving of the journey to Madrid, have been deposited in a large room in the Alcazar of Seville, where they are now exhibited.

No record exists of the foundation of Italica. Its annals are traced to the time of Scipio Africanus, who, on the completion of his conquest of Spain, and the final expulsion of the Carthaginians, finding himself embarrassed by the number of wounded and sick among his troops, established them in this town under the protection of a garrison. He gave to the town its name of Italica,* its previous

* The above is gathered from the following passage of Appianus Alexandrinus. "Relicto, utpote pacata regione, valido præsidio, Scipio milites omnes vulneribus debiles in unam urbem compulit,

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name being Sancius: the real situation of Italica has been the subject of much controversy. Like the Grecian cities, which claimed each to be the birthplace of Homer, several of the towns in the neighbourhood of Seville are candidates for the honour of being representations of the ancient Italica; but ample proof exists of the identity of these ruins with that city.* The Historia general, written by Alonso el Sabio, book I., chap. xv., speaks of Italica as a place of much importance in ancient times, in allusion to the invasion of a people called the Almunizes. He adds, in the antiquated Spanish of his time, "Las nuevas fueron por todas las tierras de como aquellas gentes avian ganado a España, e todos los de las islas quel oyeron crecieron les corazones por fazer otro tal, e ayuntaron muy grandes navios, e vinieronse para España, e entraron

quam ab Italiâ Italicam nominavit, claram natalibus Trajani et Adriani, qui posteris temporibus Romanum imperium tenuere."

Elius Sparcianus, in the life of Adrian, says, "Origo imperatoris Adriani vetustior a Picentibus, posterior ab Hispaniensibus manat; siquidem Adriâ ortos majores suos apud Italicam, Scipionum temporibus resedisse in libris vitæ suæ Adrianus ipse commemorat."

* No other town is so placed as to accord with the description given by Pliny, who passes it on the right bank of the river, and arrives at Seville lower down on the left: "Italica et a lævâ Hispalis colonia cognomine Romulensis."

Lucas de Tuy, who wrote four centuries back, says, "Italica est Hispalis Antigua."

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por cuatro partes. Los que entraron por Cadiz vinieron Guadalquibir arriba, e llegaron a Italica, e los de la villa salieron e lidiaron con ellos, e los de fuera entraron con ellos de vuelta por medio de la villa, e mataron los a todos, e ganaron la villa." It is not clear what invasion is here alluded to.

The town of Italica was one of the six or seven in these provinces which possessed the title of *municipia;* a superior one to that of *colonia*, from its involving the privilege of retaining its ancient laws and customs, while on the colonies those of Rome were imposed. It was among the cities which sheltered some of the earliest converts to Christianity. Its first bishop was the martyr Saint Geruncio, put to death in prison. The prison, being considered sanctified, from its containing the saint's remains, became subsequently the resort of pious votaries from all parts of the province. In the Mozarabic ritual there is a hymn for the day of this saint, one of the stanzas of which fixes the epoque of his life and martyrdom, at that of the apostles.*

* Hic fertur Apostolico
Vates fulsisse tempore:
Et prædicasse supremum
Patrem potentis filii.

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The centurion Cornelius, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, as converted by the preaching of St. Peter, was, it is said, a native of this city, and commanded a cohort raised in his native place.

The date of the destruction of Italica, is as uncertain as that of its origin. The fact of its existence during almost the entire period of the Gothic dominion, is established, by the presence of its bishops being recorded at the different councils. It is conjectured that its destruction was the work of the Arabs, who were no sooner in possession of Seville, than they considered it imprudent to allow so large a town to be in the hands of enemies in their immediate neighbourhood. This supposition of Spanish antiquaries seems hazarded without sufficient reflection; since, in the first place, had the occupants of Italica occasioned the Arabs any uneasiness, nothing was easier than to occupy the place themselves; and secondly, the ruins bear strong symptoms of having been reduced to their present state by some convulsion of nature, rather than by human agency: not to mention the coins discovered in large quantities, which would not have been neglected by human destroyers. It is not likely that the destruction of so considerable a place by the conquerors of the province, at the time they were too few to defend it, would have

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been overlooked by their historians—who make no allusion to the event.

The present appearance is that of a green undulating hill, which no one would imagine to be composed of the remains of streets, palaces, temples, and market-places. The upper portion only of the amphitheatre remains above-ground. Its form is slightly oval, nearly approaching to a circle. The greatest diameter is three hundred and twenty-five feet. It has twenty rows of seats, half of which are buried; each seat is two feet and a half in depth, and two in height. Part of the Podium remains; and enough of the entrance, to distinguish that it consisted of three large arches. It was constructed with Roman solidity. Nothing less than an earthquake could have toppled over the masses of masonry, which appear in their confusion like solid rocks. A very small portion of the ruins has been explored: and part of that, for want of being sufficiently cleared out, is again buried in earth, and the work is discontinued. The objects now above-ground, consist of five or six tessalated floors, two of which have been considered of sufficent value to be walled in, and locked up, but without being roofed.

These ruins are well worth a visit, although the road to them from Seville, bears terrible symptoms

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of having been constructed before Macadam's day; perhaps even before that of the Scipios.

At the distance of a few hundred yards from the nearest portion of the ruined town is situated the village of Santi-ponce, in which is the convent of S. Isidoro, of the order of St. Jerome. The church contains the tombs of Don Alonzo Perez de Guzman, surnamed the Good, and of his wife Doña Maria Alonzo Coronel, founders of the ducal house of Medina Sidonia. This family obtained from Ferdinand the Fourth, a grant of Santi-ponce and old Seville (Italica), with the district, and temporal and spiritual jurisdiction. Don Sancho had already rewarded the services and tried fidelity of Perez de Guzman by presenting him with the town of Medina Sidonia. An anecdote is told of him worthy of a Roman republican. Being governor of Tarifa under Sancho the Fourth, he had to defend the town against the Infant, Don Juan, who had revolted against his brother. This prince, learning that a child of Guzman was in his power, being at nurse in the environs of the town, sent for it; and, presenting himself before the walls, declared to the governor that he would kill the child, if the town were not immediately surrendered. Guzman replied by drawing his sword, and throwing it down to the prince, who had the barbarity to order the infant to be murdered before his father's eyes.

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LETTER XXI.

PRIVATE HOUSES, AND LOCAL CUSTOMS IN SEVILLE.

Seville.

THE greater number of private houses are situated in an interminable labyrinth of winding streets, between the Calle de la Sierpe, and Plaza de San Francisco and the city wall, which connects the Aqueduct of Carmona with the Alcazar. It is the South-eastern half of the city. To the west of the Calle de la Sierpe there are also a few streets containing private residences, but they are not in so large a proportion. Some of the most elegant are, however, on this side; which being less Moorish and more modern, is less chary of its attractions, and allows a part of its decoration to enliven the external façades; while its spacious doorways frequently open to the view of the passer-by a gay perspective of gardens and courts.

The sunny balcony, crowded with a crimson forest of cactuses, is not more attractive to the sight,

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than the more mysterious vista beneath it, of retreating colonnades, mingled with orange and pomegranate trees, through which the murmur of the fountain is scarcely audible. Few cities present more charms to the wanderer than one in which the houses offer a combination so luxurious as is met with in the greater number of those of Seville. The cool summer rooms opening into the court, in which the drawing-room furniture is arranged on all sides of a fountain, plentifully supplied from the aqueduct of Carmona: and, on the upper floor, the winter apartments, chosen from their being better lighted, for the deposit of a collection of pictures and these almost always excellent,—and opening to the gallery; to which, during this season, the furniture having been removed from below, is placed, together with the work frames and portable musical instruments, on the side exposed to the sun. One sees these houses and their amiable and happy-looking inhabitants, and imagines there is no life to be compared to it. Yet the experiment may be made, and fail to answer the expectations of the stranger, who, confident in his discovery of the road to happiness, may have pitched his tent in the midst of these bewitching regions.

Can it be fatality—or is it essential in human nature, to find even the least felicity there, where it

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looks for the greatest? The experiment, I say, was made. An Englishman, possessing every advantage of taste, talent, and wealth, took up his residence here, resolved to devote the remainder of his days to the peaceable enjoyments of a literary and sociable life. Thanks to his literary propensities, we are enabled to judge of the result of the trial. In a book published by the person to whom I allude, we find that no one could be less satisfied with his lot. Seville and the Sevillanos meet with no mercy at his hands, and must, if we may judge by his dislike of them, have rendered his life a burden.

This, however, is a single example, and insufficient to deter others from the attempt. It may be that this individual had not entered fully into the spirit of Andalucian existence. Every detail of life being here adapted to the place and its customs and climate, no custom can be erred against with impunity — that is, without the forfeit of some corresponding advantage.

Seville presents two so different aspects during the two opposite seasons of the year, that to be well understood it should be visited at both. During the winter, existence does not materially differ from that of the inhabitants of most other European towns; excepting that the intercourse of society is subjected to less formality. Cards of invitation are

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rarely made use of; and you are not, consequently, exposed to the annoyance of seeing and hearing your house invaded by a dense crowd, on a night you have appointed a month before, without any possibility of foreseeing whether you would be disposed or not on that particular night to undergo such a toil. These crowds are, I believe, unheard of in Seville; but those who are pleased in each other's society, know where to find each other; and without waiting for invitations, small circles are formed every evening, from which all crushing, fatigue, and intense dressing are excluded.

The winter is also a more advantageous season for the stranger, who would be totally debarred by the summer heats from the activity necessary for the satisfaction of his curiosity, in visiting the objects of interest contained in and around Seville. On the other hand, the summer season offers to his contemplation the successful attainment of a mode of existence suited to the burning climate; a problem found to be solved but in few instances. The first and most essential arrangement appears to be the turning night into day, and *vice versâ*, as far as regards society and all locomotion. No one leaves his house until long after sunset, and visiting commences some hours later. The morning being consequently the time for repose, and the breakfast hour

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nevertheless remaining the same all the year round, the *siesta* is very essential, and is judiciously placed between the dinner, which terminates at four, and the hour for movement—nine, when the Sevillano, refreshed by three or four hours sleep, and a fresh toilette, is infinitely better disposed for the evening's amusements than the denizen of more northern climes, who rises at that or a later hour from the chief repast of the day, and is put *en train* by the less natural and less durable stimulants of the table.

This mode of life presents other numerous advantages. A very prominent one is the inviolable division of time between society and solitude. We suppose the hour for rising eight,—immediately after the chocolate,—that of breakfast eleven. The intervening hours are solitary, and are frequently divided between the pillow and the toilette; while they are sometimes devoted to more useful occupations, and added to by earlier risers. From the family meeting at breakfast until the dinner hour, three, the time may be employed in business, reading, in fact, in every one's habitual pursuits. No intrusion is to be feared. No accursed idler lounges in to interrupt with his compliments, or gossip, your letter to your lawyer, or, if you are a lawyer yourself, that to your client; nor is the conscience of scrupulous porters burdened with the mendacious "not at home."

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These hours are sacred, and guaranteed by the very air, which renders the streets impassable, but leaves the cool court protected from the sun's ray by the *toldo*, (canvas awning spread at a level with the roof, and which is reefed up at night like a sail,) and refreshed by its ever-murmuring fountain and cool marble pavement, to the peaceable enjoyment of its owners. The female portion of the family are thus enabled to devote themselves to household occupations, or to their favourite employments, without having to undergo, until the second getting up in the evening, the fever of a complete toilette, which would, during the day, be insupportable. The time thus devoted to society, is amply sufficient; as it may be prolonged, as each party feels inclined, from an hour or two after sunset, until the returning rays drive all back to their cool retreat.

The night of the festival of St. John is, in Seville, sacred, from remote time, to amusement and festivity. During the five or six hours of darkness accorded by the Midsummer sun, the banks of the Guadalquivir echo the gay melodious laugh, which enlivens the animated buzz of the crowd; and the morning ray gilds the upper windows of the deserted houses before their doors are opened to the supper-craving population. The rite practised on this occasion is marked by a simplicity altogether

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antique. The youth of Seville, that is the masculine portion, have provided themselves with small boxes, containing a sort of sugar-plum of exquisite flavour. One of these is held between the finger and thumb of the *cavallero*, from the moment he sets foot on the promenade. On the approach of a party of ladies he endeavours to distinguish, as far off as the gloom permits, the features or dress of an already selected object of preference; or, if still free to make a selection, some countenance possessed of sufficient attraction to determine his choice. On discovering the owner of either of these requisites, he watches a favourable opportunity, and approaching the lady, offers the bonbon.

The *señorita*—of course unmarried—thus selected, is obliged to accept the compliment if properly offered, as well as the arm of the *cavallero* during the rest of the night; and, on arriving at her house, he receives from her parents, or chaperon, as the case may be, an invitation to supper. Should the lady be desirous of avoiding the compliment, of the approach of which she is usually aware, she must exercise her ingenuity in putting obstacles in the way of the attempt. In this effort many are successful, since the peculiar mode of proceeding, obligatory on those who make the offer, affords certain facilities. The condition is not binding on

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the fair object of the compliment, unless the lips receive the bonbon immediately from the finger and thumb of the cavalier. This is a source of no small amusement to the *señoritas* at the expense of strangers from other provinces of Spain. Conscious of being the object of preference of some young beginner, or stranger uninitiated in the mysteries of the rite—and who, let it be understood, does not happen to be an object of preference with them—they will afford him every facility of approach, and on receiving the present in the hand, will repulse without mercy the luckless wight, whose retiring steps are accompanied by peals of laughter from all the party.

The month of June is likewise distinguished by the procession of the Corpus Christi. On this occasion all the principal streets are protected from the sun by canvas awnings; and from the windows of every house draperies are suspended, the materials of which are more or less rich according to the means of their respective proprietors. From an early hour of the morning, ushered in by sunshine and the gay orchestra of the Giralda bells, the vast marble pavement of the cathedral begins to disappear beneath the momentarily increasing crowd. Here all classes are mingled; but the most conspicuous are the arrivals from the surrounding

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villages, distinguished by their more sunburnt complexions and the showy colours of their costume, contrasted with the uniformly dark tints of the attire of the Sevillanos.

Here are seen also in great numbers, accompanied by their relatives, the gay *cigarreras*, whose acquaintance we shall presently make in the *fabrica de tabaco*. The instinctive coquetry discernible, no less in the studied reserve of their looks than in the smart step and faultless nicety of costume, indicates how easy would be the transition to the quality of the still more *piquant* but somewhat less moral *maja*. The black satin, low-quartered shoe is of a different material; but the snow-white stocking, and dark green skirt the same — and the black-velvet bordered mantilla is the identical one, which was held tight to the chin, when passing, the evening before, under the city walls on the return from the manufactory to the faubourg at the other extremity of Seville.

The procession, headed by a band of music, and accompanied by the dignitaries of the diocese, and civil authorities of the province, bearing *cierges*, winds through the principal streets, and re-enters the church to the sound of the two magnificent organs, never heard in unison except on this anniversary. The exterior of the principal portal is

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ornamented on this occasion with a sort of curtain, which is said to contain upwards of three thousand yards of crimson velvet, bordered with gold lace. The columns of the centre nave are also completely attired from top to bottom with coverings of the same material. The value of the velvet employed, is stated at nearly ten thousand pounds.

Christmas-day is also solemnized at Seville, with much zeal; but the manner of doing it honour presents more of novelty than splendour. At the early hour of seven the parish churches are completely filled. The organ pours forth, from that time until the termination of the service, an uninterrupted succession of airs, called *seguidillas*, from the dance to which they are adapted. On the gallery, which adjoins the organ-loft of each church, are established five or six muscular youths, selected for their untiring activity. They are provided each with a tambourine, and their duty consists in drawing from it as much, and as varied sound as it will render without coming to pieces. With this view they enter upon the amiable contest, and try, during three or four hours, which of their number, employing hands, knees, feet, and elbows in succession, can produce the most racking intonations. On the pavement immediately below, there is generally a group, composed of the friends of the performers,

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as may be discerned from the smiles of intelligence directed upwards and downwards. Some of these appear, from the animated signs of approbation and encouragement, with which they reward each more than usually violent concussion, to be backers of favourite heroes. During all this time one or two priests are engaged before the altar in the performance of a series of noiseless ceremonies; and the pavement of the body of the church is pressed by the knees of a dense crowd of devotees.

The propensity to robbery and assassination, attributed by several tourists to the population of this country, has been much exaggerated. The imagination of the stranger is usually so worked upon by these accounts, as to induce him never to set foot outside the walls of whatever city he inhabits, without being well armed. As far as regards the environs of Seville, this precaution is superfluous. They may be traversed in all directions, at all events within walking distance, or to the extent of a moderate ride, without risk. Far from exercising violence, the peasants never fail, in passing, to greet the stranger with a respectful salutation. But I cannot be guarantee for other towns or environs which I have not visited. It is certain that equal security does not exist nearer the coast, on the frequented roads which communicate between San Lucar, Xeres,

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and Cadiz; nor in the opposite direction, throughout the mountain passes of the Sierra Morena. But this state of things is far from being universal.

I would much prefer passing a night on a country road in the neighbourhood of Seville, to threading the maze of streets, which form the south-eastern portion of the town, mentioned above as containing the greater number of the residences of private families. This quarter is not without its perils. In fact, if dark deeds are practised, no situation could possibly be better suited to them. These Arab streets wind, and twist, and turn back on themselves like a serpent in pain. Every ten yards presents a hiding-place. There is just sufficient lighting up at night to prevent your distinguishing whether the street is clear or not: and the ground-floors of the houses, in the winter season, are universally deserted.

An effectual warning was afforded me, almost immediately on my arrival at Seville, against frequenting this portion of the town without precaution after nightfall. An acquaintance, a young Sevillano, who had been my daily companion during the first five or six days which followed my arrival, was in the habit of frequenting with assiduity, some of the above-mentioned streets. He inhabited one of them, and was continually drawn by potent attraction towards

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two others. In one, in particular, he followed a practice, the imprudence of which, in more than one respect, as he was much my junior, I had already pointed out to him. A lady, as you have already conjectured, resided in the house, in question. My friend, like many of his compatriots, "sighed to many;" but he loved this one; and she was precisely the one that "could ne'er be his." She allowed him, however, a harmless rendezvous, separated from all danger, as she thought, by the distance from the ground to the balcony, situated on the first-floor. The lady being married, and regular visiting being only possible at formal intervals, these interviews had by degrees alarmingly, as appeared to me, increased in frequency and duration; until at length during two hours each evening, my acquaintance poured forth in a subdued tone, calculated to reach only the fair form which bent over the balcony, his tender complaints.

The youth of these climes are communicative on subjects which so deeply interest their feelings; and whether willing or not, one is often admitted to share their secrets at the commencement of an acquaintance. It was thus that I had had an opportunity of lecturing my friend on the various dangers attending the practice in which he was persisting, and of recommending him — the best advice of all being,

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of course, useless — to revive the more prudent custom of by-gone times, and if he must offer nightly incense to the object of his fire, to adopt the mode sanctioned by Count Almaviva, and entrust his vows to the mercenary eloquence of choristers and catgut—to anything—or anybody, provided it be done by proxy. My warning was vain; but the mischief did not befall him exactly in the manner I had contemplated.

His cousin opened my door while I was breakfasting, and informed me that L—— was in the house of Don G—— A——, and in bed, having received a wound the previous night from some robbers; and that he wished to see me. I found him in a house, into which I had already been introduced, being one of those he most frequented. A bed had been prepared in the drawing-room, all the window-shutters of which were closed, and he was lying there, surrounded by the family of his host, to whom was added his sister. As he was unable to speak above a whisper, I was given the seat by the bedside, while he related to me his adventure.

He had just quitted the street of the balcony at about nine o'clock, and was approaching the house we were now in, when, on turning a corner, he was attacked by three ruffians, one of whom demanded his money in the usual terms, "Your purse, or your

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life!" while, before he had time to reply, but was endeavouring to pass on, a second faced him, and stabbed him in the breast through his cloak. He then ran forward, followed by the three, down the street, into the house, and up the staircase; the robbers not quitting the pursuit until he rang the bell on the first-floor. The surgeon had been immediately called, and had pronounced him wounded within—not an inch, but the tenth part of an inch—of his life; for the steel had penetrated to within that distance of his heart.

My first impression was that the robbers were acting a part, and had been hired to get rid of him,—otherwise what were the utility of stabbing him, when they might have rifled his pockets without such necessity? But this he assured me could not be the case, as the person most likely to fall under such suspicion, was incapable of employing similar means; adding, that that was the usual mode of committing robberies in Seville. I left him, after having assured him how much I envied his good fortune; seeing that he was in no danger, and only condemned to pass a week or two in the society of charming women, all zealously employed in nursing him—for such was the truth—one of the young ladies being supposed, and I fear with justice, to be the object of his addresses.

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The ungrateful wretch convinced me by his reply (as we conversed in French, and were not understood by those present) that his greatest torment was impatience to escape from his confinement, in order to see or write to the other fair one.

At the end of a week he was sufficiently recovered to be removed to the house of his family. From certain hints, dropped during a conversation which took place more than a month after the event, it is to be feared that the knife of the assassin, in approaching so near to the heart of his intended victim, succeeded, by some mysterious electric transmission, in inflicting a positive wound on that of the lady of the balcony.

I afterwards learned that it was usual for those who inhabited or frequented this part of Seville, and indeed all other parts, excepting the few principal thoroughfares and streets containing the shops and cafés, to carry arms after nightfall; and in shaking hands with an acquaintance, I have sometimes perceived a naked sword-blade half visible among the folds of his cloak. These perils only exist in the winter, and not in all winters; only in those during which provisions increase in price beyond the average, and the season is more than usually rigorous: the poor being thus exposed to more than the accustomed privations.

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There are towns in which assassination and robbery are marked by more audacity than is their habitual character in this part of Andalucia. Of these, Malaga is said to be one of the worst, although perhaps the most favoured spot in Europe, with respect to natural advantages. An instance of daring ruffianism occurred there this winter. A person of consideration in the town had been found in the street stabbed and robbed. His friends, being possessed of much influence, and disposing, no doubt, of other weighty inducements to action, the police was aroused to unusual activity; the murderer was arrested, and brought before the Alcalde primero. A summary mode of jurisprudence was put in practice, and the culprit was ordered for execution on the following day. On being led from the presence of the court, he turned to the Alcalde, and addressing him with vehemence, threatened him with certain death, in the event of the sentence being put in execution. The Alcalde, although doubtless not entirely free from anxiety, was, by the threat itself, the more forcibly bound to carry into effect the judgment he had pronounced. The execution, therefore, took place at the appointed hour. The following morning, the dead body of the Alcalde was found in a street adjoining that in which he resided.

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LETTER XXII.

INQUISITION. COLLEGE OF SAN TELMO. CIGAR MANUFACTORY. BULL CIRCUS. EXCHANGE. AYUNTAMIENTO.

Seville.

In the faubourg of Triana, separated from the town by the river, may be distinguished remains of the ancient castle, which became the head-quarters of the Inquisition, on its first creation, in 1482. That body was, however, shortly afterwards, compelled to evacuate the building, by a great inundation of the Guadalquivir, which occurred in the year 1626. It then moved into the town, and, from that period to the close of its functions, occupied an edifice situated in the parish of Saint Mark. Its jurisdiction did not extend beyond Andalucia. The entire body was composed of the following official persons:—three inquisitors, a judge of the fisc, a chief Alguazil, a receiver, (of fines,) five secretaries, ten counsellors, eighty qualifiers, one advocate of the fisc, one alcayde of the prison, one messenger, ten honest persons, two sur-

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geons, and one porter. For the City of Seville, one hundred familiars: for the entire district, the commissaries, notaries, and familiars, amounted to four thousand. The ten honest persons cut but a sorry figure in so long a list. Do they not tempt you to parody Prince Hal's exclamation "Monstrous! but one halfpenny-worth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack?"

The Inquisition of Seville is of an earlier date than that of Toledo, and was the first established in Spain. It was likewise the most distinguished by the rigour of its sentences. The actual horrors of the inquisitorial vaults were, I imagine, in general much exaggerated. A few instances of severity, accompanied by a mystery, skilfully designed to magnify its effect, was sufficient to set on fire the inflammable imaginations of these sunny regions, and to spread universal terror. It was on finding these means insufficient for the extirpation of religious dissent, that, at length, executions were decreed by wholesale. Rather than give credit to the voluminous list of the secret cruelties, which were supposed by many to be exercised by the midnight tribunals, and which could have no adequate object, since a conversion brought about by such means could not, when known, profit the cause. I think it probable that all acts of severity were made

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as public as possible, in order to employ the terror they inspired as a means of swelling the ranks of Catholicism.

My opinion is in some measure backed by what occurred at Toledo. On the Inquisition of that city being dislodged from its palace,—now the seat of the provincial administration,—it was expected that the exploration of the subterraneous range of apartments, known to be extensive, would bring to light a whole Apocalypse of horrors; and all who had interest enough to obtain admission, pressed in crowds to be present at the opening. The disappointment was immense on finding not a single piece of iron, not the shadow of a skeleton, not a square inch of bloodstain. Each individual, however, during the permanence of these tribunals, lived in awe of their power; and the daily actions of thousands were influenced by the fear of becoming the victims of their cruelties, whether real or imaginary.

The terror which surrounded the persons of their agents invested them with a moral power, which frequently rendered them careless of the precaution of physical force in cases where it would have appeared to be a necessary instrument in the execution of their designs. This confidence was once well-nigh fatal to two zealous defenders of the faith. The Archbishop of Toledo, subsequently Cardinal

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Ximenes de Cisneros being on a visit at the residence of his brother of the see of Granada, it occurred to them during an after-dinner conversation that, could they accomplish the immediate conversion of the few thousands of Moors remaining in Granada, it would be the means of rendering a signal service to the Catholic Roman Apostolic religion.

Inflamed with a sudden ardour, and rendered doubly fearless of results by the excellence of the archiepiscopal repast, they resolved that the project should be put in execution that very evening.

Ever since the Conquest of Granada, a portion of the city had been appropriated to the Moors who thought proper to remain; and who received on that occasion the solemn assurance that no molestation would be offered to their persons or property, nor impediment thrown in the way of their worship. Their part of the town was called the Albaycin, and was separated from the rest by a valley. It contained some twenty to thirty thousand peaceably disposed inhabitants.

The two enterprising archbishops, their plan being matured (although insufficiently, as will appear) repaired to a house bordering on the Moorish quarter; and, calling together all the Familiars of the Inquisition who could be met with on the spur of the occasion, divided them into parties, each of a

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certain force, and dispatched them on their errand, which was, to enter the houses of the infidels, and to intimate to the principal families the behest of the prelates, requiring them by break of day, to abjure the errors of their creed, and to undergo the ceremony of baptism.

But in order that so meritorious a work should meet with the least possible delay, all the children under a certain age were to be conveyed instantaneously to the house occupied by the Archbishops, in order that they might be baptised at once.

The agents opened the campaign, and had already made away with a certain number of terrified infants, whose souls were destined to be saved thus unceremoniously, when the alarm began to spread; and, at the moment when the two dignitaries, impatient to commence operations, were inquiring for the first batch of unfledged heretics, an unexpected confusion of sounds was heard to proceed simultaneously from all sides of the house, and to increase rapidly in clearness and energy: and some of the attendants, entering, with alarm depicted on their countenances, announced that a few hundred armed Moors had surrounded the house, and were searching for an entrance.

It now, for the first time, occurred to the confederates, that difficulties might possibly attend the execu-

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tion of their project; and their ardour having had nearly time to cool, Archbishop Ximenes, a personage by no means wanting in prudence and energy, during his moments of reason, employed the first instants of the siege in taking what precautions the circumstances admitted. He next proceeded to indite a hasty line, destined for the sovereigns Ferdinand and Isabella, who were journeying in the province, to inform them of his situation, and request immediate assistance. A black slave was selected to be the bearer of the letter: but, thinking to inspire him with greater promptitude and zeal, an attendant thrust into his hand a purse of money together with the document.

The effect of this was the opposite to that which was intended. The negro treated himself at every house of entertainment on his road; until, before he had half accomplished his journey, he was totally incapacitated for further progress. This circumstance could not, however, influence the fate of the besieged prelates; who would have had time to give complete satisfaction to the offended Moors before the King could receive the intelligence. Fortunately for them, the news had reached the governor of Granada, a general officer in whose religious zeal they had not had sufficient confidence to induce them to apply to him for aid in the emer-

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gency. That officer, on hearing the state of things, sent for a body of troops stationed at a neighbouring village, to whose commander he gave orders to place a guard, for the protection at the same time of the churchmen from violent treatment, and of the Moors from every sort of molestation. This adventure of the Archbishop drew upon him the temporary displeasure of the Court.

The public buildings of Seville are on as grand a scale as those of some of the principal capitals of Europe. The college of San Telmo, fronting the Christina-gardens, is composed of two large quadrangles, behind a façade of five or six hundred feet in length, the centre of which is ornamented by a portal of very elaborate execution in the *plateresco* style. The architect, Matias de Figueroa, has literally crammed the three stories with carved columns, inscriptions, balconies, statues single and grouped, arches, medallions, wreaths, friezes. Without subjecting it to criticism on the score of purity, to which it makes no pretension, it certainly is rich in its general effect, and one of the best specimens of its style. This college was founded for the instruction of marine cadets, and for that reason named after S. Telmo, who is adopted by the mariners for their patron and advocate, as Santa Barbara is by the land artillery. He was a Do-

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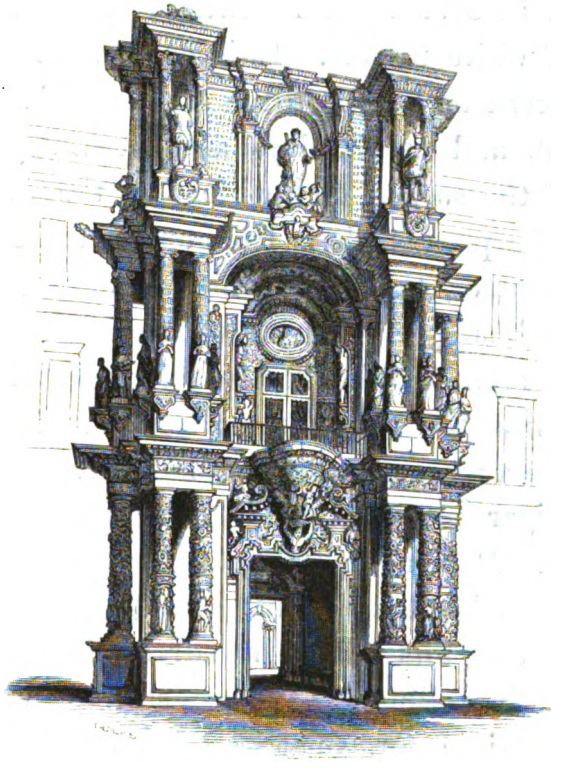

PORTAL OF SAN TELMO, SEVILLE.

minican friar, and is recorded to have exercised miraculous influence on the elements, and thereby to have preserved the lives of a boatful of sailors, when on the point of destruction. The gardens in front of this building are situated between the river and the town walls. They are laid out in flower beds and walks. In the centre is a raised

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platform of granite, forming a long square of about an acre or more in extent, surrounded with a seat of white marble. It is entered at each end by an ascent of two or three steps. This is called the Salon, and on Sundays and Feast-days is the resort of the society of Seville. In the winter the hour of the promenade is from one to three o'clock; in the summer, the hours which intervene between sunset and supper. During winter as well as summer, the scent of the flowers of the surrounding gardens fills the Salon, than which it is difficult to imagine a more charming promenade.

The cigar manufactory is also situated outside the walls. It is a modern edifice of enormous dimensions, and not inelegant. In one of the rooms between two and three hundred *cigareras*, girls employed in rolling cigars, are seen at work, and heard likewise; for, such a Babel of voices never met mortal ear, although familiar with the music of the best furnished rookeries. The leaden roof, which covers the whole establishment, furnishes a promenade of several acres.

I am anxious to return to the interior of Seville, in order to introduce you to the Lonja; but we must not omit the Plaza de los Toros, (bull circus,) situated likewise outside the walls, and in view of the river. It is said to be the handsomest in

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Spain, as well as the largest. In fact it ought to be the best, as belonging to the principal city of the especial province of *toreadores*. It is approached by the gate nearest to the cathedral, and which deserves notice, being the handsomest gate of Seville. The principal entrance to the Plaza is on the opposite side from the town, where the building presents a large portion of a circle, ornamented with plain arches round the upper story. This upper portion extends only round a third part of the circus, which is the extent of the part completed with boxes and galleries, containing the higher class seats. All the remainder consists of an uniform series of retreating rows of seats, in the manner of an amphitheatre, sufficient for the accommodation of an immense multitude. These rows of seats are continued round the whole circus: but those beneath the upper building are not accessible to the same class of spectators as the others—the price of the place being different. This is regulated by the position with regard to the sun, the shaded seats being the dearest. The upper story consists of an elegant gallery, ornamented with a colonnade, in the centre of which the box of the president is surmounted by a handsomely decorated arch.

The circus, measured from the outside, is about two hundred and fifty feet in diameter. Those who

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are desirous of witnessing to what lengths human enthusiasm may be carried, should see a representation in this Plaza. With seven prime bulls from La Ronda, and a quadrille of Seville *toreros*—the enormous circumference as full as it can hold, (as it always is,) it is one of the most curious sights that can be met with.

The origin of this amusement is not easy to be ascertained. It was undoubtedly in vogue among the Spanish Arabs, and probably originated in the time of the Goths, on the falling off of the representations of the Roman amphitheatres for want of a sufficient supply of wild beasts. In times not very remote, it had become principally an amateur performance, and the *toreros* were men of rank, who made choice of this arena, subsequently to the falling into disuse of the lists, in order to exhibit their daring and dexterity before the objects of their flame. The science is still studied by the greater part of the Spanish youth; just as, in England, the custom is maintained of receiving instruction in pugilism; but an amateur is rarely seen in these days to figure in a public arena.

The intense interest which absorbs the feelings of those present at these representations, affords a faint notion of what must have been the attractions of a Roman circus, in which combats were sustained by

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hundreds of wild beasts. In the bull-fight — sustained by a single animal, the interest would not probably be excited by the mere contest for life which takes place between the man and the brute, and of which the ultimate result is foreseen. It would, on the contrary, often yield to the disgust produced by the needless massacre of the horses; were it not that the graceful performance of the *toreros*, and their elegant costume, so well calculated to set off the symmetry of their form, first draws the attention, which, once fixed, is gradually absorbed by the progress of the contest, and at length irresistibly won by the variety of unforeseen incidents which follow in rapid succession.

Frequenters of theatres have been seen to fall asleep during the most stirring scene of a melodrame; and a continual murmur of conversation usually forms a running accompaniment to the voices of opera singers; but no one was ever detected slumbering in a *plaza de toros;* nor is a remark uttered that does not relate to the performance. This difference may probably be explained by the superior attraction of the *imprévu.* In the playhouse not only is the event known beforehand, but also every incident by which it is preceded; whereas, throughout a *corrida de toros* nothing can be foreseen. No one knows, during the present minute, whether the

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next will give birth to the direst of tragedies, or to the most exhilarating farce.

At Madrid the representations are inferior to those at Seville. They are able, it is true, to procure as fierce bulls; but they are brought from a considerable distance, and are much more expensive. The principal inferiority consists in the men, who at Madrid are wanting in the rapidity of eye, and careless courage of the Andaluz. On the entrance of a bull on the arena, whose attitude gives promise of an animated course, almost all the Madrid *toreros*, (I have seen all,) will, at his first onset, disappear simultaneously over the *barrera*. The *barrera* is the enclosure of stout planks, strengthened by posts, which separates the performers from the spectators. It is about six feet in height. At a height of three feet a projecting ledge runs round the whole, upon which, in vaulting over, the *toreador* places his foot. Behind this enclosure an open space of four feet in width is left, and serves as a refuge for those who are hard pressed. Very different is the graceful and careless attitude with which the Andaluz awaits the approach of the infuriated brute, and quietly springs aside with a flourish of his mantle of silk, while he knows there are others at hand to draw off the animal's attention.

With the exception of the *Toros* the public amuse-

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ments of Seville are limited to the balls at the Lonja during the Carnival, and to the opera. The opera varies its own pleasures, while it distributes its favours between the two western capitals of the province. From midsummer to midwinter Cadiz receives her share of melody, and the remaining six months are bestowed on Seville. Xeres has, I believe, a company to itself, supplied by a different *impresario*.

The Rossi is an excellent *primera dama*, although wanting in animation; and Comfortini is by no means a bad tenor. The second tenor, Tosi, is said to be ambitious of displaying his somewhat exaggerated attitudes on the boards of the Haymarket. There is a deficiency of *ensemble*, since the severe discipline necessary for obtaining that result does not accord with the genius of the place—or perhaps an unexceptionable *maestro de capella* is too expensive a luxury to suit the Seville purses. However this may be, the easy inhabitants, who hear the same opera frequently six times in a week, and would hear it seven times had not the performers a holiday on Saturday—may be taken grievous liberties with before they utter a complaint. They, in fact, look upon the performance chiefly as an excuse for resorting to this their habitual lounge.

The Barbiere di Seviglia should, however, be wit-

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nessed here by every amateur. It is only here that justice is done to the *libretto* of Rossini's masterpiece. Figaro becomes a real barber, and scorns all velvets and finery; and Almaviva leaves his court-dress at home, and takes a good *capa* of *paño pardo* for his nocturnal excursions. The scenery represents the actual streets of Seville. Local customs are introduced, and local expressions interspersed in the Italian dialogue. On this occasion one spirit animates boxes, lunetas, orchestra, and stage. At the opening note of the first melody the allegro, passing like electricity from the corner of the page through the eye, brain, and arm of the leader, appears as though it spirted like wildfire from the extremity of his bow over stage, boxes, stalls, and galleries, lighting up in an instant all eyes with animation and pleasure.

In the scene of old Bartolo's discomfiture the melodies of the *maestro* are totally extinguished beneath the din of overturned tables and chairs, and cracking furniture; and the joyous exclamations of the entire assembly, unite with the jibes of the actors, and seem to pursue the poor old guardian with one overwhelming peal of derision.

But it is only in this one instance that representations come off in such a manner. On the contrary, the company exhibit habitually all the aristocratic

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nonchalance of larger capitals. Their business there is society. It is there that *les affaires de cœur* hold their Royal Exchange; and observation, conjecture, and speculation,—but usually without ill-nature,—sufficiently occupy those who are not actors in this general by-play. The youth of these climes do not put in practice the same arts of concealment and reserve as are adopted in colder cities; but each, unconscious of evil, makes for the box of his *enamorata;* or, if that is impossible, for the nearest vacant situation. Advise, therefore, any friend who may intend visiting Seville, not hastily to pay his visit of curiosity to the opera, but to wait, if possible, until offered a seat by some *habituée* in her box. This *Senora* may possibly not have any *affaire* of her own on hand; in fact the married ladies of course form an exception, if not in all cases, at least as far as regards such undisguised manifestations of preference:—in this case she will take delight in putting him *au fait* of all those that are going forward.

If in a conversable humour she will do more. Commencing with the nearest, or the most conspicuous of the performers in these mute dramas, she will relate to him the vicissitudes of the respective histories up to the time then present, and the probabilities which each case may suggest for the future. Thus your friend, instead of having sacrificed an

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entire evening to the dubious amusement of following the plot of a single opera, which may have been a bad one, or interpreted by bad actors, will return to rest with some score of plots and romances filling all the corners of his memory—all possessing the zest of reality and actuality, as he will have contemplated the heroes and heroines in their mortal shape, and clothed in indisputable *capas* and *mantillas;* besides, another advantage which these romances will possess over all the popular and standard novels—that of omitting the most insipid chapter of all, the one containing the *dénouement.*

There only remain two public buildings worthy of notice; but they are such as to rank among the most remarkable of Spain. The Lonja (Exchange) was erected during the reign of Philip the Second, in the year 1583, by Juan de Herrera. At this period the excesses committed in all parts of Spain by the architects, no longer restrained by rule of any sort, had brought about a salutary effect, after a sufficiently lengthened surfeit of extravagance. Herrera took the lead in the reaction, and followed the more correct models of art.

Among the authors of some of the most lamentable specimens of aberration of style scattered throughout Spain, are found several names high in rank among the painters of the best period. These artists, de-

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sirous of emulating some of the great masters of Italy, who had attained equal superiority in architecture, painting, and sculpture, risked their reputation in these different pursuits with greater confidence than just appreciation of their peculiar genius. At the head of them was Alonzo Cano, one of the most distinguished painters of the schools of Andalucia; and who has been called the Guido of Spain. He may certainly lay a more legitimate claim to that title than to that of the Michael Angelo of Spain, accorded to him by some of the less judicious of his admirers for no other reason than that of his combining the three above mentioned arts.

His paintings are characterized by a peculiar delicacy of manner, correct drawing, and exquisite finish. The sickly paleness of his flesh is sometimes unpleasing, and his personages are gainers by the addition of drapery, in the arrangement of which he approaches to the excellence of the best Italian schools. The life of this artist was varied by more adventure than usually falls to the lot of those of his profession. His talent as a painter had already become celebrated while he was still a monk, having taken the vows very early in life. He had been from the first an enemy to the subordination of the cloister, and at length a series of irregularities led to his expulsion from his monastery.

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Alonzo was not, however, the original inventor of this eccentric style. A Roman architect, Francisco Borromini, the rival of Bernini, and of whom it was said, that he was the first of his time in elevation of genius, and the last in the employment of it,— is supposed to have first introduced it. Followers and imitators of these sprung up in great numbers, and Spain was speedily inundated with extravagancies: façades, moulded into more sinuosities than a labyrinth, — cornices, multiplying their angles like a saw, murderously amputated columns, and broken-backed pediments. Juan de Herrera was not, probably, possessed of more talent than the Roman; but of what he had he made a better use. His reputation was beginning to make rapid progress. when he was selected, on the death of Juan Baptista de Toledo, to continue the Escorial. His task there was not the simple one of continuing the unfinished pile according to the plans already traced.

The religious fervor of Philip the Second was on the ascent, and during the progress of the building he had resolved to double the number of monks, for whom accommodation had been provided by the original plan. To meet this necessity, Herrera raised the buildings to double their intended elevation. His completion of this immense work, rendered more difficult than it would have been had the original design been his own, or even had

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that of his predecessor been persisted in (for various other modifications were commanded, especially with regard to the plan of the church,) fully established his fame; and the edifice would probably have gained, had Philip not, at the last moment, yielded to a new caprice, and called in another artist (the architect of the famous country-house of the Viso) to erect the great staircase.

The object of Herrera, traceable in all his works, was the re-establishment of antique art in all its purity. In cathedrals success was more difficult of attainment than in civil edifices; but the effort is easily discerned, striving against the difficulties inseparable from the system, which applies to the purposes of one creed the principles of art invented for ministering to other forms. His cathedral of Valladolid is an instance of this: the most unsuccessful portion of which (the tower) has fallen before the completion of the edifice. Should the works ever be continued, this would be a most fortunate circumstance, were it not that the future builders are sure to persist in the same course, and to disfigure the pile with another similar excrescence, in contempt of symmetry and rule.

The Lonja of Seville is a structure so perfect as to bid defiance to criticism. It might have been built by Vitruvius. The general plan is a quadrangle, enclosing a court surrounded by an arcade. There are

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two stories, ornamented externally by pilasters. The order is Tuscan, both above and below. The court, staircase, and various apartments, are decorated with a profusion of the rarest marbles. The whole is a specimen, almost unique, of chaste elegance and massive solidity. In this edifice, the resort of wealthy traders during the period of the colonial prosperity of Spain, are contained, among the archives, the original despatches of Columbus: and, it is also said, those of Cortez and Pizarro.

The Ayuntamiento, or Town Hall, is an edifice of another sort. It is of the *plateresco* epoch. But Seville, having been apparently preserved by especial favour from the introduction of specimens of bad taste; it is a building of extreme beauty. The façade is divided into two unequal parts. The smaller of the two is covered with sculpture, and contains an open porch or vestibule, decorated throughout with a profusion of ornament. I could not learn the name of the artist to whom these sculptures are attributed, but they are worthy of the chisel of John of Bologna. The other portion of the front is without ornament from the ground to the first story, along the whole extent of which runs a series of open arches supported by columns. These columns and arches are models of lightness and grace.

The Ayuntamiento is situated in the Plaza de San Francisco; from one extremity of which a street

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leads to the cathedral: at the other commences the principal street of Seville, called the Calle de la Sierpe. Here are all the best shops, and the principle cafés. It leads also to the post-office, to the opera, and to the Plàza del Duque, so called from its containing the house of the Duke of Medina Sidonia; but it possesses, likewise, two other ducal residences, besides others of almost equal pretension. These mansions are scarcely ever occupied by their proprietors. It is a small irregularly formed place, and its ducal habitations, whatever they may be internally, by no means improve its appearance.

A few streets further on is the Alameda. This is a place magnificent in extent, but possessing no architectural merit. Its principal ornament is an avenue of elms, of about half a mile in length, at the head of which are placed the two antique columns and statues of the temple of Hercules. At the further extremity, on the left, is the church of the Jesuits, closed since the revolution.

THE END.

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