

Acerca de este libro

Esta es una copia digital de un libro que, durante generaciones, se ha conservado en las estanterías de una biblioteca, hasta que Google ha decidido escanearlo como parte de un proyecto que pretende que sea posible descubrir en línea libros de todo el mundo.

Ha sobrevivido tantos años como para que los derechos de autor hayan expirado y el libro pase a ser de dominio público. El que un libro sea de dominio público significa que nunca ha estado protegido por derechos de autor, o bien que el período legal de estos derechos ya ha expirado. Es posible que una misma obra sea de dominio público en unos países y, sin embargo, no lo sea en otros. Los libros de dominio público son nuestras puertas hacia el pasado, suponen un patrimonio histórico, cultural y de conocimientos que, a menudo, resulta difícil de descubrir.

Todas las anotaciones, marcas y otras señales en los márgenes que estén presentes en el volumen original aparecerán también en este archivo como testimonio del largo viaje que el libro ha recorrido desde el editor hasta la biblioteca y, finalmente, hasta usted.

Normas de uso

Google se enorgullece de poder colaborar con distintas bibliotecas para digitalizar los materiales de dominio público a fin de hacerlos accesibles a todo el mundo. Los libros de dominio público son patrimonio de todos, nosotros somos sus humildes guardianes. No obstante, se trata de un trabajo caro. Por este motivo, y para poder ofrecer este recurso, hemos tomado medidas para evitar que se produzca un abuso por parte de terceros con fines comerciales, y hemos incluido restricciones técnicas sobre las solicitudes automatizadas.

Asimismo, le pedimos que:

+ *Haga un uso exclusivamente no comercial de estos archivos* Hemos diseñado la Búsqueda de libros de Google para el uso de particulares; como tal, le pedimos que utilice estos archivos con fines personales, y no comerciales.

+ *No envíe solicitudes automatizadas* Por favor, no envíe solicitudes automatizadas de ningún tipo al sistema de Google. Si está llevando a cabo una investigación sobre traducción automática, reconocimiento óptico de caracteres u otros campos para los que resulte útil disfrutar de acceso a una gran cantidad de texto, por favor, envíenos un mensaje. Fomentamos el uso de materiales de dominio público con estos propósitos y seguro que podremos ayudarle.

+ *Conserve la atribución* La filigrana de Google que verá en todos los archivos es fundamental para informar a los usuarios sobre este proyecto y ayudarles a encontrar materiales adicionales en la Búsqueda de libros de Google. Por favor, no la elimine.

+ *Manténgase siempre dentro de la legalidad* Sea cual sea el uso que haga de estos materiales, recuerde que es responsable de asegurarse de que todo lo que hace es legal. No dé por sentado que, por el hecho de que una obra se considere de dominio público para los usuarios de los Estados Unidos, lo será también para los usuarios de otros países. La legislación sobre derechos de autor varía de un país a otro, y no podemos facilitar información sobre si está permitido un uso específico de algún libro. Por favor, no suponga que la aparición de un libro en nuestro programa significa que se puede utilizar de igual manera en todo el mundo. La responsabilidad ante la infracción de los derechos de autor puede ser muy grave.

Acerca de la Búsqueda de libros de Google

El objetivo de Google consiste en organizar información procedente de todo el mundo y hacerla accesible y útil de forma universal. El programa de Búsqueda de libros de Google ayuda a los lectores a descubrir los libros de todo el mundo a la vez que ayuda a autores y editores a llegar a nuevas audiencias. Podrá realizar búsquedas en el texto completo de este libro en la web, en la página `http://books.google.com`



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

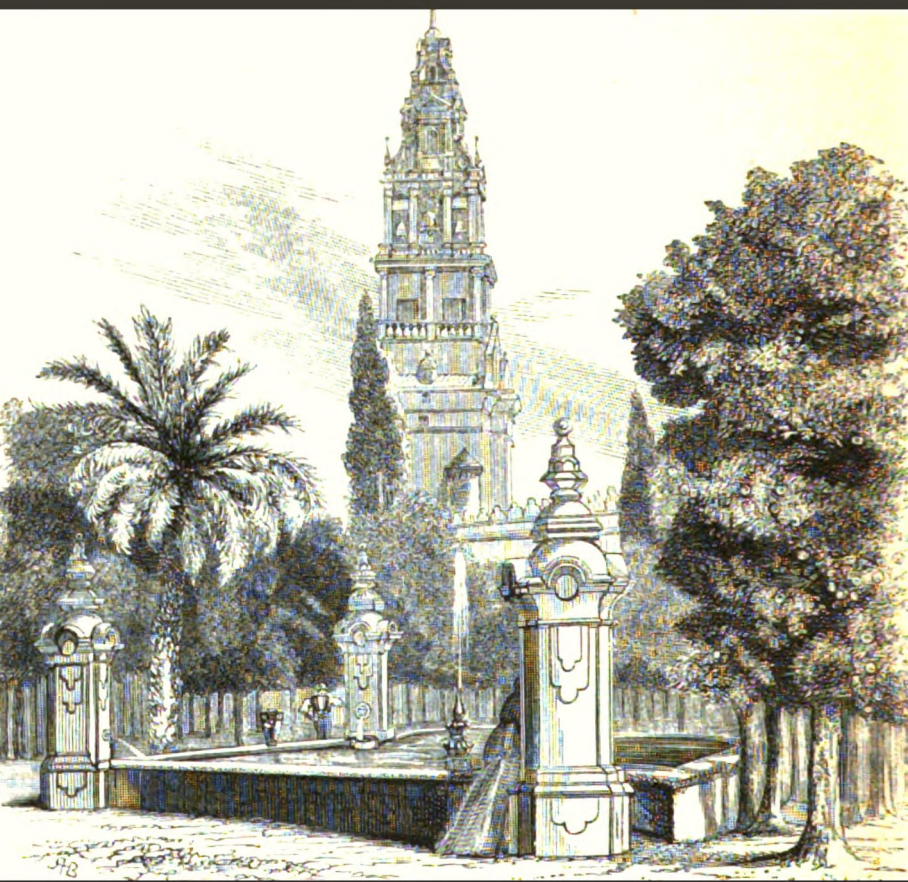
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`



Cosas de España

Wm. Pitt Byrne, Julia Clara Byrne

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

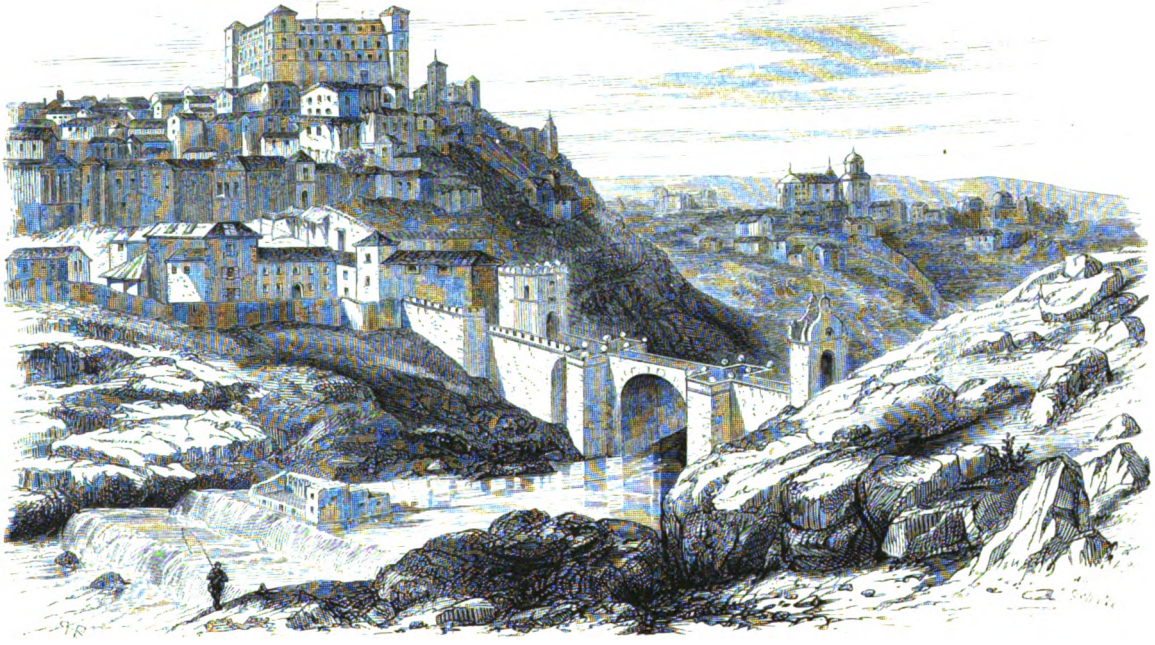
Byrne
BXY
Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



TOLEDO.

Digitized by Google

COSAS DE ESPAÑA

Illustrative of Spain and the Spaniards as they are.

By Mrs. Wm. PITT BYRNE

AUTHOR OF "FLEMISH INTERIORS," ETC.

"Hominem pagina nostra sapit."—Mart.

VOLUME II.



ALEXANDER STRAHAN, PUBLISHER

LONDON AND NEW YORK

1866

Digitized by Google

ASTOR LIBRARY
DEC 14 1915
NEW YORK

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

THE ROYALTY OF SPAIN.

PAGE

Equipages in Madrid—The Prado—Loyalty in Madrid—The Queen—The royal cortége—Punctuality—The Queen and her drives—The Prince of the Asturias—The Infanta—Infantitas—The procession to the Atocha—Presenting *placets*—The King Consort—The Hidalgo-class—The Grandees—State-processions—*Besa-manos*—Royal entertainments—The royal palace—Its hanging gardens and terraces—Fountains—Plaza del Oriente—Its *habitués*—Site of, and view from the palace—Its precincts, court, and entrance—Façade—Architecture—Windows and balconies—Interior of royal stables—Coaches—State carriages—Opening the Cortes—The Queen's horses—Mules—Asses—The Queen's liveries—The royal armoury—The Chapel Royal—A *funcion* described—The royal family at mass—The Casa de Campo—Its hothouses and gardens—A chalybeate spring—Furniture of this palace—A *trait de mœurs*—La Flórida—Palace and gardens described—Our walk thither—The washing-suburb—The Casino—Childish taste in all these palaces—Gardens, tanks, &c.—The Buen Retiro—Refused admission for a strange reason—Gardens—Camels—History of this palace—Exalted idea the natives entertain of it—Houses of Parliament—How constituted—Cortes and Senado—The two buildings described—Congreso de los Diputados 1

CHAPTER II.

MADRID—PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

The Museo—Architecture, history, founder—Collection—Velasquez, Murillo, Ribera, Zurbaran—French, Flemish and Italian schools—Sculpture galleries—Peculiar Spanish carvings—The men who exe-

Digitized by Google

PAGE

cuted them—Collection of Queen Christina of Sweden—Botanical gardens—Museum of natural history—The observatory—Courts of justice—A trial—Place of execution—The royal library—Its contents—The coins and medals—The curator—The Casa de Correos—*La Lista*—Ignorance of officials—Newspapers—Soldiers—The marble lion—The Fábrica de Tabacos—Its internal arrangements—Number of hands (chiefly women) employed—Statistics—Fire at the Fábrica—Laudable exertions of the attendants—How recognized—The mint—Its *ateliers*—Gold and silver—Various processes it passes through—Coinage—False and bad money—Spanish bankers—The Bolsa—Described—The Deuda Publica—Puerta Sta. Barbara—Debtors' prison—Described—House of correction—Other prisons—State prisons now the Audiencia—Criminal prison—Town-hall—Royal manufactures—*Imprenta Real*—Barracks 52

CHAPTER III.

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS, CHURCHES, ETC.

Charitable institutions, hospitals, and houses of charity—Benevolent associations—Foundling hospitals—Described—Their system—The *recogidas* or penitentiary—System and details—Hospital general—System, diet, arrangement, statistics—The insane department—Hospicio de Santa Maria del Carmen—Described—Infant school—Particulars—Certificated teachers—Hospicio—Various departments visited and described—Military hospital—Described—Atocha—Miraculous image—Church monuments—The Queen—"The Duke"—Campo Santo—Details and peculiarities—Funeral—Procession—Marriages—Second marriages—Convents 87

CHAPTER IV.

MODERN SPANISH LITERATURE.

Modern writers—Spanish booksellers—Literature in England in 1685—Want of reviews and critiques—Periodical publications—Contemporary authors—Espronceda—Martinez de la Rosa, historian, poet, and dramatist—Moratin—Quintana—Hartzembusch—Zorilla—Iseo—Nombelo—Balaguer—Angelon, &c.—Espronceda's history—Ventura de la Vega—Ramon Mesonero de Romanos—Mariano de Larra—Humorists—Examples of wit—Trueba—Ayala—Cervantes—Don

Digitized by Google

PAGE

Juan Nicasio—Particulars of his life—Melendez Valdez—Fernan Caballero and other popular writers—Campo-amor—El Duque de Rivas—Historical and scientific literature—Cavanilles—La Fuente—Donoso Cortés—Marques de Valdegamas—Marques de Montera—Galliano—D. Primo Comendador, Professor of Chemistry—Almanacks—Dramatic literature—Lope de Vega—Calderon de la Barca—The early stage—Voltaire's admission of the superiority of the Spanish stage—Lord Macaulay's corroboration—Alarcon—Translations of Spanish plays—Taste for the drama—National ballads—Popular epigrams—*Boleros*—*Serenatas*—Nursery rhymes—National music and national dances 112

CHAPTER V.

MADRID TO TOLEDO.

Madrid to Toledo—Early dawn—Short crepuscule—The Puerta del Sol—The broad, open streets in the solitude of morning and the early light—Peculiar effect—The Prado—The *mozos de cordel*—A "knotty" point—Spanish "navvies"—Change of scenery—Herd of camels—Approach to Toledo—Solemn and impressive aspect—Incongruity of a railway station in such proximity—Idiosyncracies of the old city—Its peculiar interest for poet, painter, antiquary, and geologist—Sober tone of colour—Absence of creeping plants among the ruins—Deserted appearance of the city—Early history of Toledo—Roderick, the last of the Goths—Casa de Don Rodrigo—Entrance to the old city—A *trait de mœurs*—Plaza Major—The market-place—Our *parador*—Oriental-looking interior—Economy of a Spanish inn—Our first breakfast in Toledo—Our waiter, Manuel—Ordering dinner—The Alcázar and other Moorish remains—Panoramic view from the Alcázar terrace—Its interest in all its details—Description of the Alcázar—Its history and its destiny—Cardinal Lorenzana—The purpose it now serves—The deserted court and broken columns—The well—Cloisters and gallery 146

CHAPTER VI.

TOLEDO.

Dinner at the Parador Nuevo—Manuel's catering—Theatre—"Los Pobres de Madrid" turns out to be "The Streets of London"—The Play-bill—Acting—Smoking forbidden during the performance—

Digitized by Google

PAGE

Evasion of the rule — The Ballet — National dances—Wonderful effects—Acrobatic exhibitions—Streets by night—Our faithful squire —How we were "called" next morning—The Cathedral—Described —Early history — Plundered of its jewels — Architects — Crypt — Mozarabic chapel — Six *ermitas* or ancient oratories — Described— Sta. Maria la Blanca—Cristo de la Luz—San José—San Eugenio— Sta. Leocadia — El Tránsito — San Juan de los Reyes — Cardinal Ximenes, Archbishop of Toledo — Casa de Don Rodrigo — History and description—Death and burial-place—Discovery of his epitaph —Count Julian 173

CHAPTER VII.

TOLEDO.

Cathedral—Gothic architecture—Interior of the edifice—Its history— Architect—Monuments—General aspect—Bells—Traditions—Legend —Archiepiscopal palace—Library—Its history and contents—Museums—Antiquities—Spanish artists—The Ayuntamiento—Hospicio of S. Juan Bautista—Hospital of Sta. Cruz — Casa de Dementes— Bridges, gates, and walls—Puente San Martino—Moorish domestic architecture—Moorish interiors—Casa de Mesa—Taller del Moro — Fábrica de Espadas — Campo Santo — Cementerio — An incident— Mounted travellers 202

CHAPTER VIII.

ARANJUEZ.

Departure from Toledo—Manuel's despair—Its probable cause—Picturesque groups—Arrival—Antiquity and origin of Aranjuez—Description of the place—The season—Its results—Innkeepers—The palace — Difficulties of admission — Site and aspect — Interior — Its gardens — Flowers — Old gardener — Forest-lands — Pleasure-grounds—Casa de Labrador—The Corte and its amusements— Market-place—Character of the people—Foundling hospital and charitable institutions—Theatre—Plaza de Toros—Departure—Uncomfortable night journey—Rain and cold—Bad railway arrangements—Arrive at Sta. Cruz 234

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IX.

LA MANCHA.

PAGE

We alight—Scenes in the dark—The station—The *diligencias*—The *fonda*—Its accommodation—Staff of the establishment—An impossible breakfast—A possible one—A hoax—Diamond cut diamond—The Pueblo of Sta. Cruz—Our walk to it—Mass—A favourable change in the weather—A friend in need—The people described—M. Babillot—A resolution—We depart in spite of the station-master—The road—Manzanares—Toboso—Ojos de la Guadiana—Arzamanzilla—Windmills—The Manchegans—Val de Peñas—The *pueblo*—The *fonda*—Interior details—The host and hostess—The inn-larder—The *amo* lionizes us—M. Avansayes—His courtesy—His cellars and practical information—French and native wine manufacture—Spirit-still—Character of the population—Corn-threshing—Characteristic trait—Dinner—Beds—The actress and her mother—A courteous offer—We prefer the waiting-room at the station—Hospitable reception—How we passed the night—Return to Sta. Cruz—The "Cordovesa"—We start—Our first disaster—Our *atelage* of mules—Magnificent scenery—The Sierra Morena—La Carolina—Breakfast-incidents—Baylen—Dinner—Mines—Jaen—A new fellow-traveller—Olives—A lecture gratis—Railway works—Mounted patrols—Brigandage—Cruelty to animals—Arrival at Córdova 250

CHAPTER X.

CORDOVA.

Arrival in Córdova—Aspect of Córdova by moonlight—In search of an hotel—A Sereno comes to the rescue—A *casa de huéspedes*—Rough accommodation—Baths—Breakfast—Site of Córdova—Buildings—Bridge—Moorish remains—History of the Moorish rule—Abdur-rhaman I.—His policy and good government—Palm trees—Pavements—Architectural embellishments and moral reforms—The Grand Mosque—Death of the Caliph—Hakkam—Abdur-rhaman II.—His reign—Abdur-rhaman III.—His magnificence—His victories—Judgment—Magnanimity—His luxury and civilization—Zehra—Costly palace—Patronage of art, science, literature, agriculture, and commerce—His end—His philosophy—Noble forbearance—We visit the mosque—Classical nomenclature of streets—History of the mosque—Court of Oranges—Exterior—Interior—Described—The Mih-rab—

Digitized by Google

PAGE

Minaret and belfry—Church of Sta. Marina—Plaza del Mercado—Campo Santo—Country seats—Luxuriant vegetation—Lovely scenery—Hermitages and monasteries—Mosquitos—Departure . . . 290

CHAPTER XI.

ARRIVAL AT SEVILLE.

Leave Córdova in the dark—Aspect of the streets—Our journey—Arrive at Seville—Cold drizzly weather—Plaza de la Infanta—The Infanta—Our *casa de huéspedes*—Arrangements—Mariquilla—No fire—Content ourselves with a *brasero*—Pleasant change—Seville herself again—Breakfast at the *restaurant*—Sevillan pastry—Andalusian character—Religion—Cleanliness—Settle ourselves in Seville, and promise the results of our observations in another volume . . 319

Digitized by Google

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
FRONTISPIECE—TOLEDO.	
TOLEDAN BAKER (TITLE-PAGE).	
CHILD'S SHEEP-CARRIAGE, MADRID	1
CAMEL IN RETIRO GARDENS	51
GROUP OF BEGGARS	86
ALCAZAR WITH PEACOCK	146
FACSIMILE OF SPANISH PLAY-BILL	179
PUERTA DEL SOL, TOLEDO	202
PALACE, ARANJUEZ	234
MARKET, ARANJUEZ	249
A PUEBLO BY THE WAY	250
A DILIGENCIA	275
THE MEZQUITA, FROM THE PATIO DE LOS NARANJOS	290
CÓRDOVA	296
PEEP INTO A PATIO, SEVILLE	319

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



CHAPTER I.

ROYAL PERSONAGES AND PALACES.

"Behold, how the vulgar run to see a king go by!"
BACON.

"Esta mañana salí
A ese verde hermoso sitio,
A esa divina maleza,
A ese ameno paraiso,
A ese parque, rica alfombre
Del mas supremo edificio
Dosel del cuarto planeta,
Con privilegios de Quinto,
Esfera en feu de los rayos
De Isabel y de Felipe;
Desde cuyo heróico asiento,
Siempre bella, siempre inoreto,
Estan católicas luces,
Dando resplendor al indio,
Siendo en el jardin del aire
Ramilletes fugivitos."
CALDERON DE LA BARCA.

THE equipages driving about the streets of Madrid, and the quadrupeds harnessed to them, are extremely stylish, and give an appearance of luxury and wealth to the city which, unfortunately, is not borne out by life beneath the surface. These vehicles are admirably well appointed, the liveries are handsome, the caparisons elabo-

Digitized by Google

rate, and the *tout ensemble* as striking as any turn-out in Hyde Park; there is nothing flashy about them, and all the accessories are substantial and in good taste.

The fashionable hour for exhibiting carriages and steeds, and their owners, on the Prado, is the cool of the evening; and when the royal family is in town, some of the royal carriages, and generally the Queen herself, may be seen there daily.

Her Majesty, the King Consort, and the younger scions are driven about with great pomp and ceremony; and though the times are past when "*Ne touchez pas à la Reine*" was the order of the day, there is a great attempt, on the part of Royalty, at maintaining the form now that the feeling which prompted this exaggeration of loyalty has undergone a very natural modification. The Spaniards naturally are a loyal people, apparently too conservative ever to be satisfied with any form of government that is unmonarchical, and if they manifest little enthusiasm in the presence of Royalty, it is, we imagine, attributable to the general apathy and indifferentism of their temperament, and perhaps also (as far as Madrid is concerned) to the fact that the royal family are continually before their eyes. No doubt, also, the people feel that they do not owe much to the present Government, and the Queen has taken no extraordinary measures which can be said to have benefited the country, so that she has no right to expect her people will regard her as a sovereign *hors ligne*. We must remember, too, that personally she does not represent that dignity which might command the exalted homage once accorded to the ermine in Spain, but scarcely capable, even under more favourable circumstances, of being understood in this age of defunct chivalry. There is reason to believe that much of the awe in which sovereigns were held in stiffer times, was due to the fact that they were much more rarely seen, and perhaps the people scarcely realized that

Digitized by Google

they were simple mortals in all but the name. In our days, on the other hand, there is a levelling of all social distinctions; education has placed the million on a much nearer equality with the upper ten thousand, at the same time that it has enlightened the once ignorant classes, and made them "like one of us." Add to this, that the arcana of Royalty are now, in all ways, thrown open to their observation; greengrocers who have made fortunes, or at all events their descendants of the very next generation, are presented at Court, and the persons of Emperors and Kings are offered to the gaze of the vulgar in their own proper attitudes, and in the most condescending costumes, shorn of those phantom externals which long kept up the popular delusion, as if they had never considered the inevitable effect of that simple *deshabille* in which, according to Voltaire, even a hero sheds his *prestige*. Popularity is a very fine thing, but if kings and queens desire to maintain the dignity with which past ages enhaloed them, it is dangerous to let themselves be seen without their crowns.

The Queen of Spain is not only to be bought for a *peseta*, *à l'instar* of other Queens who never held their heads so high, but she is to be seen, in photography, by those who cannot afford the purchase, in all the toy-shops in Madrid, and her subjects may scan her features and pass their freest comments on her appearance; so that when her Majesty drives out, surrounded by her suite, escorted by her mounted bodyguard, drawn by six or eight splendidly caparisoned steeds, she must not be surprised if, even through all this imposing pomp, they detect the original of the unadorned picture with which they are so familiar.

It often happens, therefore, when the *cortége* passes, that, with the exception of the few strangers visiting Madrid who may be passing, not a head is turned, and scarcely a hat is lifted: there is hardly one of the *habitués* who

Digitized by Google

would wait five minutes to see the royal party start or alight. On the first day of our arrival in Madrid we met the imposing *cortége* in the Plaza del Oriente, returning from the Buen Retiro;—the extensive gardens of this palace, situated on the other side of the Prado, form the object of one of the Queen's favourite drives; indeed, this is the only purpose it serves, and the palace—like all these satellitical *real casas*, but *mock* palaces, in and around Madrid—is unoccupied and consigned to the care of superannuated *concerjes*. It must have been about seven in the evening when they reached the Palacio; there were a few loungers about, who raised their heads languidly as the clatter of hoofs aroused their attention, but no notice of any kind was taken of the circumstance. The palace wore a most placid expression; all the windows were closed, and scanty were the lights in the kitchens and servants' offices, while a few dim candle-flames flickered in some of the private apartments. The Infantitas and their nurses arrived first, in a coach drawn by six mules; a similar carriage whirled by, with the Infanta, and another containing the Prince of the Asturias. Each was attended by two footmen and two outriders, and driven by a postilion and coachman, all in dress liveries; they were also respectively escorted by bodyguards. About a quarter of an hour after, came the Queen and King Consort, in an open carriage drawn by six horses, similarly escorted and attended, and followed by their suite, in a coach and six—mules.*

One circumstance which probably contributes to the unpopularity of the Queen is the want of punctuality which marks all her movements. She does not seem to

* The number of horses or mules attached to a carriage has now, as formerly, considerable significance, and is decided by the strictest laws of etiquette. "Before we got within the gates of the town," says Major Dalrymple, in his correspondence, a hundred years ago, "the postilion dismounted and detached two of the horses; no one but the bishop may drive through the streets in a coach and six."

Digitized by Google

have learned or appreciated the dictum of Louis le Grand, "*L'exactitude, c'est la politesse des rois:*" in this respect, at all events, she is not to be relied upon. Notwithstanding her professed admiration of everything Spanish, the Queen wears a bonnet in her drives, and so do the little Princesses, who are always taken out in a separate carriage, attended by their women, and may be seen holding their little fans in their hands. Occasionally, the carriage which contains the Infantitas is followed by a handsome *fourgon* and four, carrying the "royal perambulator," into which they are removed on arriving at the gardens of the Buen Retiro, which the Queen visits almost daily. The Queen is generally drawn by six or eight magnificent horses, but the Infantes and Infantas and the suite by mules. When the Queen goes to the theatre she also employs mules; but they are splendid beasts, as large and almost as powerful as horses, with soft velvety coats, on which patterns are cut, and the royal arms are stamped on their haunches.

On Saturday afternoons the Queen drives in state to "Benediction" at the church of the Atocha; a *haie* of soldiers lines either side of her passage through the large quadrangle, for on state occasions, of which this is considered one, she makes her egress by the grand entrance. Before starting on that day, the people are permitted to bring their petitions to the palace door at a given hour, where one of the domestics of the royal household receives them, and they are carried straight to the Queen, who accords them her special attention, and if within reasonable bounds, they are pretty sure to be favourably received.

The Saturday on which we had arranged to witness the hebdomadal pilgrimage to the Atocha was a brilliant day, and the vast court in front of the palace, which is a right royal edifice, rich in marbles and granites, and of grand architectural proportions, looked truly palatial, its white

Digitized by Google

micacious surface telling strikingly on the deep blue sky. The troops were ranged into files, with mounted officers to keep them in order, and the band stood ready to strike up. All that was wanted was an enthusiastic crowd to await and cheer the royal party. Alas! that element was not supplied—a small number of stray loungers and a few foreigners alone thought it worth while to greet them with their presence. A little before the appointed hour something of a crowd—not a London crowd, nor a Paris crowd, but a Madrid crowd,—a very different thing,—had assembled; however, as quarter of an hour after quarter of an hour passed away, and the hands of the great clock, to which impatient eyes were often turned, left the promised period far behind them, the expectants seemed to think the gratification of their loyalty too dearly purchased, and gradually withdrew, a comparatively small number mastering their impatience sufficiently to remain. The *aguadores* and ambulant vendors of *horchata* and *esponjados* circulated among the visitors and the soldiers, and were, now and then, lucky enough to find a thirsty soul willing to expend a *cuarto* in the luxury of a glass of sparkling *agua fria*, to drown at once his drought and his impatience.

At last—for even Royalty must conform, in time—a sudden movement near the door, a sharp and rapid order from the officers, and an instant falling into the ranks among the men, announced that the tiresome *attente* was ended. The elegant open carriage, with its eight magnificent horses, its postilions, coachmen, footmen, outriders, and mounted bodyguard, swept round and up to the grand entrance. The Queen entered, followed by the King Consort, the Prince of the Asturias, and the Infanta or Princess Royal. The band struck up, and the carriage, followed by the suite in other carriages drawn by mules, dashed through the double file. There was no cheering, but the people bowed, and the royal personages returned

Digitized by Google

their salutation. The church of the Atocha is about two miles from the palace; some pious individuals followed the *cortége* on foot, but the combined action of civil and religious loyalty produced no great rush. The Queen is large in stature, but rather what might be called bulky than stately. There is no dignity either in her face or figure, and the graces of majesty are altogether wanting. The countenance is cold and expressionless, with traces of an unchastened, unrefined, and impulsive character, and the indifference it betrays is not redeemed by any regularity or beauty of feature.

The King Consort is much smaller in figure than his royal two-thirds, and certainly is not a type that could be admired for its manly qualifications; but we have to remember that in Spain aristocratic birth is designated rather by a diminutive stature and sickly complexion than by those attributes of height, muscular power, open expression, and florid hue, which in England constitute the ideal of "race."

In Spain the pride of the *hidalgo* class, which forbids its members to consort with families of a position in any way inferior to their own, has, in the course of time, induced so many and such close intermarriages, that the whole of the grandee population has deteriorated *en masse*, and while maintaining the social *prestige* of rank, they have physically *déclassé* themselves, and become so dwarfed and dwindled, that we almost recognize a Spanish nobleman by the absence of those external marks which ought to distinguish him.* We may go on to say that, if debilitated

* A popular "*chiste*" (from which, in all probability, is derived our word *jest*) expresses the contempt into which these inconsistent aristocrats have brought themselves in the eyes of their fellow-countrymen. It runs thus:—

"Es el don de aquel hidalgo
Como el don del algodon
Que non puede tener don
Sin tener ántes el algo."

Digitized by Google

in body, the upper classes in Spain are no less debased in mind. The genuine unsophisticated child of the soil is a noble, generous-hearted, open-spoken fellow, as sober as honest, with whom it is a real pleasure to deal. He is incapable of a meanness, and you may take him by the hand without feeling that you are losing caste by the contact. This is the Spanish peasant, who, with all his faults, has at least a noble disposition and fine capabilities; but if you ascend the social ladder you soon discover how these admirable qualities have been mismanaged and abused. We no longer recognize in the haughty, selfish, overreaching denizen of the town and the Court, the once simple nature which has been so utterly vitiated. Idleness—unhappily the root of all vices—is a part of the Spaniard's character; procrastination has become with him a habit of mind, and exemption from the inevitable law of labour is his sole preoccupation. Whatever he *must* do he does in the laziest, most superficial, and least efficient manner, and the aggregate consequence of this repeated practice—which in fact becomes to him a second nature—is disastrous in the extreme. Individual weakness of character produces national deterioration, and the result is what we may call a moral "vicious circle;" for the mischief reacts upon itself.

It is impossible not to blame the Government for this lamentable state of things; the constant changes which take place in its deliberations must necessarily discourage any attempt at steady enterprise, while its policy seems to be rather to keep the people *amused* than *employed*; to flatter the national weakness for winning money by luck, rather than earning it by industry; while the example of the higher classes sets before them the disastrous error of despising domestic order, cleanliness, and comfort, and aiming at external glitter and ephemeral luxury.

Of the vices of that circle of which Royalty is the

Digitized by Google

centre it would be superfluous to speak, for unhappily, voices from all parts of Europe repeat the disgraceful report, and the Spanish Court has long been the theme of public comment and public contempt. There can be little doubt as to who is chiefly to blame in the lamentable result. The Queen is said to have expressed herself on this delicate personal subject in terms as touching as deplorable, and all must agree with her in "wondering that, considering the education the Queen-Mother gave her children, matters are not even worse."

The Princess Royal is neither beautiful nor aristocratic, but she has a very amiable countenance, while the little Prince of the Asturias is exceedingly diminutive. He has delicate features and a very intelligent glance, but he is by no means a noble-looking child. He has just been removed from petticoat management, and placed under the tutelage of a preceptor. It is not as yet decided who is ultimately to have the honour of this office; rumour gives it to the Marques de Molins: at present it is provisionally held by El Senor Puente Cardenal Arzobispo de Burgos, for whom it appears the Queen has a special regard. The little fellow being now eight years old, the officers of his household have been nominated, and the Gentlemen ot the Chamber, here called also "*Gentilhombres de Cámera*," are as follows:—

El Duque de Alsaga, Conde de Palma del Rio;
El Conde de Mirasol;
Don Pedro Domingo Lignes;
Don José Adomo y Fuentes; y
Don Rafael Primo de Rivera.

He is said to be trained with much care, and his education is a great deal more comprehensive than was that of any of his predecessors—as well it may be!

Except on the occasion of a function like that we have described, the Prince does not habitually drive out with

Digitized by Google

the Queen, but has his own carriage, and may be seen on the Prado, or in other directions, attended by his tutor.

We now come to speak more particularly of the nucleus of that "*Corte*" which has arrogantly assumed an importance it is far from possessing, and has, by a somewhat violent figure of speech, given its name to the whole capital.

When the Queen really goes out "in state," a great fuss is made, carpets (such as they are) are spread even along the road, and draperies are hung outside the houses. In Madrid there is a great deal of trouble taken on such occasions, and the public buildings are all supplied with extremely costly velvet or silk hangings, richly embroidered with gold, silver, and colours, to be used for the purpose. Persons of rank have their arms ostentatiously embroidered on large velvet squares, fringed with gold, which are hung over the balconies; those of humbler pretensions are content to make their curtains or table-covers serve the turn, and silk quilts, or even gaudy cotton coverlets, according to the means of the householder, are employed, *faute de mieux*.

The effect is gay in the extreme, and if the weather be favourable, and the streets well filled, the scene conveys the idea that the houses literally are turned inside out. Triumphal arches of graceful design are also erected, and to give the Matritenses their due, this part of the business is executed with consummate taste, and regardless of expense. This temporary processional apparatus is no gimcrack gingerbread work, sometimes more ephemeral in its construction than the brief event it is to solemnize; all is solid, well built, and firmly knit together, with an earnestness and a purpose we cannot help respecting, even though so much labour and precaution may seem superfluous.

The Queen, at these times, is received with very unusual demonstrations of welcome; bouquets and sweet-

Digitized by Google

meats are cast into her carriage with respectful profusion, and even *billets-doux* in verse, written on coloured paper, and addressed to her by her faithful subjects, overwhelm the Royal feelings. This was especially the case when, on the *only* occasion on which her life was attempted, she appointed, after her escape, a solemn day of thanksgiving to testify her sense of her preservation from the cowardly *cuchillo* aimed at her. This event, and the grand doings which accompanied it, are talked of still, though it is some years ago, and the young Princess, the celebration of whose presentation at the Atocha gave rise to the occurrence, is now marriageable! But the pageant which celebrated her escape was elaborately got up, and the accounts we still hear of it, speak well for the loyal affection of the people, who, if not naturally demonstrative, certainly took every means, by the enthusiasm with which they received their Queen on her reappearance among them, to reassure her as to their indignation at the base and treacherous act, and to convince her of their own loyalty to her person.

The Queen is said to be fond of society, and enjoys the entertainments given at the palace with a heartiness which was only exceeded in the days when she loved dancing. The *Besamanos* is a terribly fussy and operose "*funcion:*" it is literally what it calls itself, and not only those who attend it, kiss hands, but every inmate of the palace, down to the porters and scullions, and the stranger that is within its gates, come, in their due course and place, and perform their tiresome ceremony. If tiresome to her Majesty, it is not less tedious to those who attend, and it becomes increasingly so by reason of the Queen's own want of punctuality, to which we have already alluded. This foible is, however, so well known that we only wonder the time is not calculated accordingly. Her Majesty observes the most extraordinary hours; if report speak truly, 3 A.M. is the hour for retiring, and 2 P.M. for rising. We

Digitized by Google

are left to imagine how the work which has to be done in the intervening hours is regulated.

In the last century the following was the programme of the movements of the Court, which have varied but little since, except as regards its residence at Escorial. This palace is, so to speak, now abandoned by the reigning Sovereign, who gives the preference to La Granja. In those days, then, the Court resided from the middle of January till Holy Week at the Pardo; then at Madrid till after Easter, assisting at the religious ceremonies of the Holy Week; at Aranjuez till the middle of June; again at Madrid for three weeks or a month; at S. Ildefonso till October; at the Escorial till December; once more at Madrid till January.

There are special receptions for the celebration of particular events; thus during last January—"*En triste conmemoracion*" of the Infante Doña Concepcion, who died three years ago—all the Cabinet attended to pay their respects to the royal parents.

The Royal Palace of Madrid, with its unique hanging gardens, balustraded terraces, marble fountains, is not only a regal, but a magnificent architectural monument: the whole of this grand and massive edifice, above the granite basement story, which slightly projects, and gives it great solidity, is of white sparkling Colmenares stone. It is said to cover an area of about 500 feet square, and is 100 feet high; it occupies an admirable site, being that formerly selected by the Moors for their Alcazar,—one of those old impregnable strongholds, only to be found in the Peninsula, and fast falling to decay even there: the ancient Moorish edifice stood till within 150 years, when it was burnt to the ground. The Bourbon King Philip V., in his rage to have everything about him as French as possible, would willingly have availed himself of the opportunity to plant a second Versailles in its place; this plan was long

Digitized by Google

talked of, and preparations were even made with a view to its ultimate accomplishment, but the architect, Abate Filippo di Jubarra, dying, the affair was transferred into the hands of Giovanbattista Sachetti, to whom is due the present design. It is a noble conception, and cannot fail to impress the stranger in Madrid with the grandeur of its aspect. It was built about a century ago, but it takes a long time to *finish* anything in Spain, and as the peculiarly dry climate certainly does not damage buildings or affect their appearance as in other countries, it has the appearance of having but just been completed. It is, in fact, to a certain extent still unfinished; the gardens have never been properly laid out, and the ground enclosed for them has not even as yet all been *défriché*. A very handsome marble fountain is in course of erection on the most elevated terrace of the very undulating and picturesque gardens on the west front. Below this, is a pretty little covered bridge over the Manzanares, which may be seen peeping through the thick plantations, forming a private road to one of the Queen's pleasure-palaces (of which there are several in and around Madrid), called "La Casa de Campo." To adopt the high-flown language of Melendez Valdez, one of the modern poets of Spain,—

> "Allá do besa humilde Manzanares
> Los altos, sacros lares
> Del mayor de los Reyes."

On the east front of the palace, is a large handsome public *plaza*, to form which, it is said, a block of nearly a hundred houses was "removed" by Ferdinand VII., who conceived the plan of this open square surrounded with lofty stone edifices, among which, the Italian Opera-house, a noble structure, stands opposite the palace gates. Ferdinand did not live to complete his design, but it has been well carried out since, and this aristocratic *quartier*, occupying the most elevated portion of the city, imparts to it a very dignified

Digitized by Google

character, which tells effectively on the capital. The Plaza is raised about three feet above the level on which the palace stands, and is gained by three granite steps; there is a broad gravelled promenade surrounding the garden in the centre, which is enclosed within a handsome iron railing; this is laid out as a plantation, intersected by paths, and adorned with statues which were brought from Burgos. In the centre, mounted on a handsome pedestal raised on steps, is the famous "Cavallo de bronce," being an equestrian statue of Philip IV., who, as its name implies, counts for very little in the group. It was cast from a model by Pietro Tacca, a Florentine, from a drawing by Diego Velasquez; and the artist has accomplished the feat of producing a most spirited attitude, and at the same time of so accurately balancing his figure, that the horse stands on its hind legs, without the intervention of the tail, which does not assist in supporting it, as in the case of the famous statue of Peter the Great. There are 18,000 lbs. of metal in this massive and colossal effigy, and it is justly admired by all who now see it in its conspicuous position. It was brought from the Buen Retiro, where its retired nook, in a garden only occasionally opened to the public, was not considered worthy of its great merit.

Dillon, in his "Travels through Spain" a century since, mentions this statue as then standing in the gardens of the Retiro, and tells us that "Tacca, its talented but unfortunate author, died of grief occasioned by the treatment he received from the minister of the Grand Duke on account of his leaving it unfinished; but his eldest son, Ferdinand, came to Madrid and fixed together the three parts of which it consisted, placing the statue properly." Its height is 84 palmos, or 19 feet 9 inches English. In an inventory of the Retiro it was valued at 40,000 pistoles, or £28,000,—"much more," he adds, "than it could have cost;" but we think a fancy-value may be allowed to a masterpiece of

Digitized by Google

art such as this, and to produce which Velasquez, Tacca, and Galileo had combined their efforts.

The Plaza del Oriente is provided with seats, and forms a fashionable lounge, as well as a promenade and strolling ground for nurses and children.

A brisk trade is pursued here in go-carts, but in which, harnessed *sheep* are substituted for the goats we are accustomed to see reduced to this slavish service. They, however, appear to submit to the yoke with philosophical equanimity, and certainly do not waste away beneath the oppression, for they are very "stout." It is a curious fact that these sheep, which have very thick wool, are all either black or piebald.

The eastern façade of the palace has for a background the wild Castilian panorama to which the three other sides are open. It is a peculiar and attractive view, and albeit separated from the eminence on which is reared the imposing edifice, by the Montaña del Principe Pio to the north, and the extensive woods of the Casa di Campo to the west, it shows traces of the parching effects of the torrid heat to which, for the greater part of the year, these plains and mountains are exposed. The absence of verdure, and especially of foliage, is very striking, but Castilian scenery is *sui generis;* and when we look at it with this conviction, its desolation has a charm of its own, and creates an impression, the dignity of which, fairer scenes are wholly incapable of suggesting. The snow-capped heights of the distant Guadarama trace their serrated outline on the deep soft blue of the heaven, and form an appropriate boundary to the somewhat severe expanse before and below us. The Manzanares rolls its silvery thread lazily below the slopes of the palace gardens, and makes one wish its stream had formed a bolder feature in the strange and arid prospect.

"Nothing," says Talbot Dillon, the ambassador, writing a century ago, "can be more bleak or dismal than the

Digitized by Google

general aspect of the country round the seat of its monarch, and that chiefly from the great want of trees, to which the Castilians have an intense dislike, from a false notion that they increase the number of birds to eat up their corn, forgetting not only that in their climate the shade and shelter of the foliage are required, but that without them they have no means of securing moisture, and preserving it after dews and rains."

It is interesting to compare this account with a previous one, as from the collation of the two we may almost ascertain the period when this disastrous destruction of forests took place. In a curious old book drawn up by Argote de Molinas, in 1582, by order of King Alfonso, called "Libro de Monteria," and containing some quaint and interesting information on forests and venery, the country round Madrid is extolled for its shady situation and extensive woods, "well suited for hunting stags, boars, and even bears." A ludicrous note at foot informs posterity that "his present Catholic Majesty takes great pleasure in shooting wolves and wild cats!"

The east wing is that occupied by the royal family, and it has a busy, bustling aspect. The sentinels oscillate before it, and horses and carriages drive up and wait by the hour together for their owners in the shade of the building. The Queen's mounted picquet may be seen frequently waiting her Majesty's pleasure, and standing in readiness to escort her carriage, which, as well as those of the Infantitas, prolong the expectation of the *désœuvrés* who lounge about the Plaza.

The horses or mules are always covered up with bright-coloured cloths until the moment before the start, when a number of liveried servants rush out, and whisk them off with incredible celerity. The royal livery is dark blue, "turned up," like that of the Pope, with both crimson and scarlet, and trimmed with broad worsted coach-lace. The large portal on this side leads into a handsome paved court,

Digitized by Google

240 feet square, and as will be inferred from what we have said above, it is by this opening that the royal family make "their exits and their entrances:" but this is only on ordinary occasions; for state ceremonials the grand north façade, with its spacious arena, the Plaza del Palacio, in front, is the one honoured.

It is the custom at Easter-tide to fasten large palm branches, which have been blessed, across the balconies, and it is considered advantageous to leave them there, until they yield to the weather or their own caducity, a superstitious idea of protection being attached to their presence. Of course they gradually dry, but many remain as originally fixed till removed to make place for fresh supplies the following year. We remarked that most of those at the palace were still extant, and they have a very picturesque effect. It is not unusual in the hot weather to see all the palace windows thrown open until sunset, when they are sedulously closed.

As for what there may be within—not being in any way related to the "boy Jones"—we must refer our readers to the guide-books, seeing that Her Most Catholic Majesty being in the occupation of her *real casa* at Madrid during the whole of our visit to the capital of the Castiles, we considered it in better taste not to press an inspection which might possibly have inconvenienced the Sovereign, the Half-sovereign, and possibly the small change of those august types. The "*Corte*" (regarded by Spaniards as the *only court* in the wide world) is stated on the best authority to be in all respects well appointed. The apartments are gorgeously furnished, and decorated with gilded cornices, balustrades, moveables, and fixtures, draped with the richest crimson silks and velvets, walled with the noblest mirrors and the choicest pictures, ceiled with the most elaborately painted medallions and panellings, and floored with *marqueterie* of the rarest marbles, while the

Digitized by Google

porportions of the rooms, galleries, and halls are such as to give the grandest effect to all this costly upholstery. With the conviction that such (as far as relates to the accessories) is the interior of the Madrid palace—for to its moral condition we have no intention of alluding—we credulously contented ourselves, and hope our readers will be able to picture all its glories to their imaginations from this general description; at the same time, not having partaken of the bread, salt, or shelter of the royal hosts, we feel ourselves untrammelled by any respect for the laws of hospitality, and perfectly at liberty to pass what observations we please on the exterior.

The chief objection we shall mention is a characteristic one, and consists in the beggarly way in which all the glazier's work has been done, or rather left undone: glass is a scarce commodity in the Peninsula; it *is* manufactured, and is even made into window-glass, such as it is; but the art of producing any pane larger than a foot square seems to be wholly unknown. It is blown, as sheet glass is with us, and is wavy at the best; the consequence being, that it is very indifferent in quality and very dear in price. If a pane of glass gets broken, it is actually worth while here, to "lead" it, in half a dozen places! and as this is of frequent occurrence, it seems to follow that this course is preferable to replacing it. The disfigurement to the palace is manifest, for all the nobly-proportioned windows are filled up with this wretched material; and in order to simulate the large panes they are incapable of manufacturing, they unblushingly resort to the unsatisfactory and most unsightly contrivance of fixing one pane on the edge of another. Besides the bad appearance, this course is open to the objectionable consequence of necessarily breaking every atom of glass in the sash if one of the lower panes should be smashed. Here, as in Italy, putty is a material unknown, and the glass is leaded into the rabbet.

Digitized by Google

The royal stables are systematically constructed; they are of great extent, and form an important department. They are visited with great eagerness and interest on Mondays, when the public are admitted very freely into every nook and corner; on the occasion of our visit, all except our own party were Spaniards. This portion of the building is substantial and handsome, and is in every respect worthy of the remainder of the edifice. The Queen's carriages are shown first, and are about a hundred and twenty-five in number: among them are some curiosities and antiquities, the most venerable of these being the first carriage ever used in Spain,—the vehicle of Charles Quint. It is a monstrous machine, and, like the ark in more particulars than one, looks as if it might have been an hundred years a-preparing. It is "constructed to hold" six persons, and is chiefly made of carved ebony, with a great deal of ornamentation. It is wide at the top, narrowing towards the bottom, and has neither windows nor doors to close the wide opening on either side,—in fact it is altogether similar to those immortalized by Velasquez and other painters of those days. Another antediluvian-looking, but much more modern construction, is an emblematical triumphal car, built for and used by Ferdinand VII. It is a most theatrical combination, and, *tout roi qu'il était*, his Majesty must, when in it, or on it, have looked very much like "Mengin" at a Boulevard fair. Then there is the state-coach, all glass and gilding and satin—not unlike the royal British state-coach—and the coronation carriage, distinguished by being surmounted by a crown enriched with precious stones. Next comes a very elaborate vehicle, in form and adornment much in the *style de l'Empire*, richly and curiously inlaid with exquisitely fine miniatures in medallions, mother-o'-pearl, tortoiseshell, and green and yellow gold leaves, in delicate wreaths and borders.

Digitized by Google

There is a very elegant *char-à-bancs*, which may be termed a pic-nic carriage, used chiefly in summer at Aranjuez: a richly ornamented and most elegantly designed sledge, shaped like a dragon, the seat being fixed behind, with stirrups for the driver, who sits astride on it. It is handsomely finished, the scales being gilded and picked out with scarlet. There are silver *cascabeles* fixed to it. Near this stands a costlily got-up dog-cart; a curricle with silver-gilt bar; several open phaetons, barouches, coaches, chariots, travelling carriages, waggonettes, go-carts, velocipedes, and finally perambulators. All are arranged in rows, with many liveried attendants to wait upon them; but it was very difficult to get any information out of these valets respecting their inanimate but certainly very *roués* charges.

The state carriages are individualized by separate names, and when following each other in a procession, are recognized as distinct personalities.

Thus on the occasion of opening the House, or Cortes,—a ceremony which takes place about the end of December,—the procession is headed by four mounted guards (*batidores de caballería*), and leaves the palace about 12 in the day, when follow:—

1. The "Coche" named "De Bronces" (containing the four Kings-at-Arms), drawn by six cream-coloured horses, with plaited manes and tails, and without plumes.

2. The "Coche Casimiro," occupied by the four Major-Domos on duty, drawn by six light chestnut horses, likewise without plumes.

3. The "Coche Amarante," similarly drawn, and occupied by the Chamberlains of SS. AA. the Infantes Don Francisco and Don Sebastian.

4. The "Coche Tableros Dorados," occupied by the Señora Camarera Major of her Majesty, Dama de Guarda, and the Gentil-hombre de Cámera de Servigio, drawn by six bays without plumes.

Digitized by Google

The nicest punctilio is observed in all the minutiæ of ceremonials, and the public will please to take note that the liveries of these four coaches are *de media gala*, or only half in state.

5. The fifth is called "Da Cifras," and contains the First Equerry (*Cabalerizo Mayor*), the Mayordomo Mayor, and other officials, and is drawn by six black horses without plumes.

6. The sixth, the "Magnifico Coche de Concha" (tortoiseshell), drawn by six magnificent white horses with plumes, contains S.A.R. the Infante Don Sebastian.

7. The seventh, "Corona Ducal," in which is conveyed S.A.R. the Infante Don Francisco, is harnessed to six magnificent chestnuts (the property of S.A.), with his own plumes.

8. The eighth, a coach of honour, expressively called "Respeto de SS. MM.," and in which no mortal is allowed to sit, drawn by eight dark greys (*tordos oscuros*), with blue and white plumes. This carriage serves to separate the Royal *ichor* from the flesh and blood of subjects, and immediately precedes—

9. The ninth coach, "Corona Real," bearing their Majesties (*Los Reyes*), a truly Spanish expression, who are drawn by eight spirited light chestnut horses (*briosos caballos castaños claros*), magnificently caparisoned, and with large nodding white plumes.

The postilions, coachmen, footmen, grooms, and attendants wear a livery of *gala galen ó sea gala antigua.*

The *estribo*, or coach-step, is the place of the equerries respectively of the Reyes and the Infantes. The ceremony of the opening of the Cortes seems to be planned, like other Governmental institutions, on the model of that of England, and to follow much the same programme as our own: according to the reports, even "the speech" is read by her Majesty of Spain with the stereotyped "*voz clara, y tranquilla entonacion*," which could not by the

Digitized by Google

laws of courtesy be wanting to the delivery of any royal speech, however it might be mumbled. "Señores, Senadores y Diputados" is the mode of address, and the speech follows the accepted formula. Like the famous general who first marched his men up the hill and then marched them down again, as soon as the business is concluded, the procession returns to the palace in the same order in which it came, every component individual looking as if he or she thought something important had been effected, the Queen receiving more or less notice on the way, according to the state of the political, and perhaps also a *little* to that of the atmospheric barometer.

To return, not to our *moutons* but to our *montures*, or rather to all the *Queen's* horses, and all the Queen's men —for of both there is a grand display at the palace—we may state that her Majesty's stud is decidedly one of the sights of Madrid, and we spent a tolerably long morning in visiting it. The animals enjoying the enviable distinction of belonging to the royal service, certainly are splendid creatures, and some are of noble size, and do honour to their promotion. Size, indeed, seems to constitute one great merit within the royal stables. The Queen's own horse is a colossal grey, it is prettily dappled, clean limbed, and well formed, but has far more the appearance of a powerful, well-bred dray-horse than a lady's (much less a Queen's) *monture*. It is true that her Majesty's *physique* is such as to require a proportionately powerful charger, and moreover, as the Queen has not taken riding exercise for some time, and as no doubt the quadruped has been well fed all the same, the easy life he has been leading, *procul negotiis*, and unconscious of income-tax, has aided him in following the royal example in the matter of increasing bulk; he and his mistress have therefore fairly kept pace with each other, as the horse and his rider should. Notwithstanding

Digitized by Google

his exalted position, he condescended to accept a few lumps of sugar out of our hand, to the amusement of the good-natured old groom who is at his service.

A beautiful Arab mare, also rather rounded in *contour*, is appropriated to the use of the Infantita, who evidently does not work her very hard. An English horse of great value in the next stall was shown as the special property of the King Consort, and was said to have never been crossed by any other rider: however, each of the grooms boasted that he possessed in *his* department the King's riding-horse. All are classified with the greatest regard to organization; all the light greys are in one stable, the dark greys in another; the light chestnut and the dark chestnut, the bays and the roans, and the sorrel and the black, and the cream-coloured—of which there are very few—are respectively segregated, and the ponies by *themselves*. Among these, the pony of the juvenile heir-apparent is an exquisite little animal, but his small *Alteza* does not ride above once a month.

Together with this, is a very choice collection of ponies, for the use of the younger Princesses, as well as for that of any youthful visitors who may be enjoying the hospitality of the palace.

We remarked that there are no racks in these stables, the obvious reason being that hay forms no part of their bill of fare, chopped barley-straw being the substitute.

The mules, about 250 in number, are magnificent beasts, of great size, and with thick soft coats;* they vary in

* It is a remarkable circumstance that mules should have come to be cultivated to so great an extent, and with such signal success. In the days of the "Reyes Catolicos," mules were, by a royal ordinance, excluded from the service of the saddle, their universal use up to that time having occasioned a deterioration in the breed of horses. When Columbus, who was aged and infirm, was desirous of an interview with Ferdinand, to seek redress for the injuries of his enemies, and found himself too weak to undertake, on horse-

Digitized by Google

colour, and are also carefully classified; they are simply divided from each other by slung bars, while the horses are for the most part stalled, especially those sent to their Majesties as *regalos*. Each beast, whether horse, pony, mule, or ass, has his or her name painted over the stall. One scapegrace, a fine spirited bay, with a vicious eye, said to be given to kicking and other obstreperous proceedings, had his feet manacled, besides being opprobriously stigmatized under the name of "Republicano." The collection of *borricos* is fine; so also is a curious little breed of miniature mules. The mules and asses of Spain must decidedly bear away the palm over those of all other European nations, and deserve mention among the *cosas de España*.

The tails of the mules are managed with a peculiar taste; the hair is cut away about four or five inches from the crupper, and then is allowed to hang in a long bunch, having the appearance of a brush-handle with a whisk at the end of it. We amused the grooms not a little by the inquiry whether any of the Queen's horses wore false tails: if they do, the grooms, who denied it, bore a false *tale*, as they positively denied the impeachment.

There is a hospital for the sick horses, a granary, and a chapel, dedicated to San Antonio, for the attendants.

The royal saddles, harnesses, trappings, housings, plumes, and paraphernalia of all kinds, are arranged with great precision and minuteness. They are of various classes, whether for festal, semi-gala, or grand feast-days. Many of them are of great value and elaborate workmanship, richly embroidered in gold and colours. The saddles of the royal family are in a case apart; and the various

---

back, the journey from Sevilla to Segovia (whither the Court had removed from Burgos on the death of Isabella), he was obliged to apply for a special permission from the King to ride a mule on the occasion.

Digitized by Google

saddles, as modified at different times for her Majesty, show a graduated increase in size, which, it is to be hoped, had reached its culminating point when the last was made. Since that time her Majesty has not ridden. A large room is set apart for the royal liveries; some are kept in presses hanging on pegs for every-day use, others folded away on shelves for medium occasions; others, for "gala" days, are preserved in glass cases, and some are kept in reserve, in case of accidents. Of those in use, each servant has his name over his peg, and a corresponding name inside the collar of his coat, or the lining of his hat. They are romantic names that these same gentlemen allow themselves to be called by. There are no vulgar "Johns" or "Jeameses" in the royal 'all; here they rejoice in the sweeter sounding appellations of "Roméo," "Isidoro," "Tiburzio," "Fernando," "Rafael," &c.

Another of the sights connected with the palace is the royal armoury, containing, say the Spaniards, the finest armorial collection, in an historical point of view, in the world. The "Armeria Real" is not to be visited without an order from the Caballerizo Mayor, but it is not difficult to obtain this at the palace itself. We found all the show-places in Madrid visible only on certain days and hours, and inexorably closed at other times: no entreaties, no representations, and, what is more surprising to an Englishman, no bribes, can move a Spanish official to overstep his "*consigne*," and admit a visitor on any other terms than those contained in the "bond." The *papeleta*, or ticket, always supplies necessary particulars, so that although want of time may drive some desperate tourist to make a rash attempt at getting the *entrée* in an irregular way, he need not err through ignorance. This gallery, on the south side of the Plaza del Palacio, runs parallel with the grand façade of the palace; it is 36 feet wide, and nearly 230 long, and was erected, by order of the second Philip, by Gaspar de

Digitized by Google

Vega, as a receptacle for the royal collection of arms, till then preserved at Valladolid.

We must record our admiration of the interior arrangement of these valuable relics of a chivalrous age, and treasured evidences of the martial spirit which once animated the breast of the Iberians. Nothing can be more effective than the mounted figures of armed men on armed horses, which take up a bold position down the centre, supported by grim-visaged and "iron-clad" warriors, posted on either side of the deep embrasures of the windows along the length of the gallery. Between the windows, at the extremities, and down the opposite side, are glass cases, containing some of the greatest curiosities of armorial remains to be met with in Europe. The names attached to nearly all the suits, being almost undisputed, add immensely to the interest with which one surveys and examines them. There are no fewer than nineteen suits which were worn by Charles V., and several which belonged to Philip II.; the workmanship of all these is very fine. There are also specimens of Italian and of German armour. The suits of Ferdinand and Isabella, of the Cid, of Don Juan of Austria, of Columbus, of Guzman the Good, all figure here, with helmets and shields, whose adventures, could we but know them, must be full of romance and piquancy, for no doubt they took a large part in scenes which fill the pages of history. The collection of swords deserves special attention; they are of every conceivable shape and size, and include some formidable double-hilted weapons, which tell their own tale, and that of the heroes who handled them. This arm is called by the Spaniards "*montante*," and when wielded by some of the brave warriors of old,—

> ". . . with huge two-handed sway,"—

no doubt, like that of the victorious archangel,—

> ". . . The horrid edge came down,
> Wide wasting."

Digitized by Google

Of the "*montante*" we shall have to speak again, when we visit the sword manufactory at Toledo.

Others of the swords preserved here have magnificently jewelled hilts, and are swords of honour, presented at different periods as royal gifts. We ought scarcely to class with these sterner implements, some military trinkets belonging to Charles III. and Charles IV., set with gems, looking like a mockery of the purpose to which weapons are destined, and not inspiring the beholder with much respect for the monarchs who could use them even for sporting. To enumerate the curiosities of archæological wealth contained in this collection would be infringing on the duties of a guide-book; but we strongly advise our readers who may be interested in hoplonological matters, to refer to Gasper Sensi's *catalogue raisonné*. This book, collated by a Frenchman, and published in Paris, is the best, if not the only satisfactory history of the contents of the royal Spanish armoury. The attendants, as usual, know very little about these interesting objects, which, strange to say, do not seem to rouse their national vanity.

There were some curious Moorish arms, saddles, and moccasins, and the old Gothic suspended gold crowns, found some few years ago at Toledo, are shown under glass, with other antiquities dug up in different parts of the Peninsula, an account of which, the *guias* furnish in detail.

The chapel-royal is a gem of decoration, and rich in paintings and valuable marbles; there is a great deal of elaborate stucco ornamentation, richly gilded, as are also the capitals and bases of the columns, which are of the Corinthian order; the effect of the *tout ensemble* is gorgeous. The chapel is on the north side of the palace, and is divided from the state rooms by a long, handsome glazed corridor; both are on the first floor.

Visitors are admitted by tickets to the high mass on Sundays; and hearing there was to be a grand *funcion*

Digitized by Google

in honour of a special festival, one Sunday, we attended. The appointed hour was twelve o'clock, and we were punctual to the time. We found the portion of the chapel reserved for strangers very crowded; but though there were many foreigners as usual, our party were the only representatives of our country. The grand staircase was thrown open, and the corridor, along which the royal family were to pass from the state chambers into the chapel, was carpeted, but in the most poverty-stricken way, with odds and ends of faded threadbare carpets and rugs, of different widths, patterns, manufactures, and ages, altogether presenting a most motley appearance.

The sentinels walked up and down with the most solemn air, and two *Suisses*, or *celadors*, strutted about the entrance with most pavonic importance. The chapel was carpeted, but in much more respectable style, and a really gorgeous daïs, and canopy, covered with cloth of gold, were prepared for the Queen and King Consort, with the royal arms embroidered in rich colours on the back; two thrones, with footstools and *prie-dieus* before them, stood on the daïs.

The hour struck, the crowd was assembled, all was ready, but despite preparations and appearances, no mass began; we inquired how this was, and were told that twelve was the hour, but there was no certainty as to the time when the office would begin, as her Majesty heard mass at what hour she pleased!—another *cosa de España*, twelve being the latest hour, in all other countries, at which the ecclesiastical law allows mass to be celebrated. One of the company present having told us that he had known the Queen to arrive as late as two o'clock, we resolved not to dance attendance any longer, but to return later. We accordingly retreated to the church of Santa Cruz, where we found a very energetic preacher holding forth to an eager audience. He had a vast flow of words,

Digitized by Google

and seemed to express his ideas with a certain kind of ready eloquence. The matter was plain and practical, and the earnestness of his manner evidently impressed his auditory. The congregation stood all the time they were being addressed; in fact there is little or no accommodation for sitting in a Spanish church; and as the sermon never lasts more than from twenty minutes to half an hour, the feat is possible.

We took matters coolly, and returning to the chapel-royal at half-past two, found we were still quite in time. About ten minutes after our arrival, there was a flourish of trumpets, and then the band struck up, for the royal party was in the act of proceeding to the appointed place: a passage, isolated by a low moveable railing on either side, was contrived through the middle of the crowd, and passing through this, they walked across the chapel and took their places, followed by their suite. The Queen was attired in a richly brocaded sky-blue satin dress, trimmed with a profusion of white lace. She wore, thrown over her head, a white lace veil, but no bonnet. The Princess Royal was dressed in white, and also veiled; the little Prince in a blue tunic and short, loose white trousers: the King and all the officers wore uniforms covered with ribbons and decorations. We remarked a degree of levity about the royal party which, if it was not in our imagination, was calculated to take from the dignity of the demeanour that should be expected from crowned heads during a religious ceremony in public; but the manner of Spaniards, even among the priesthood, during the services, we have generally observed to be less measured and tranquil than with the people of other countries, and possibly it is due merely to a phase of the national character with which we are not familiar; at all events, we set it down as a *cosa de España*. One little incident, no doubt, was unusual, and might justify the smile it

Digitized by Google

occasioned; the officiating priest, when proceeding to that part of the mass which requires him to incense the *assistans*, carried his censer, of course, in the first instance to the royal pair, and having passed from the Queen to the King, his Majesty happened to omit the salutation with which it is customary to recognize the offering of the thurible. On this, the Queen recalled him to himself by what would under any other circumstances be called a "nudge," but of course it could not be that *here*, and we fancied that both the royal countenances broadened for a minute or two.

The little Princess appeared very devout and collected; and the youthful heir-apparent conducted himself with great propriety. As soon as the function was over, the band again played, and the royal family retired, passing through the assembled congregation, and graciously bowing as they made their way back to the gallery conducting to the private apartments.

The King Consort does not appear to advantage as regards stature when seen on foot, and beside his wife, as he is considerably shorter and thinner, and he has not by any means a handsome or intelligent face. The Queen's features are not delicately moulded, neither is there much refinement in her expression; she has blue eyes, and hair of a neutral colour, but rather light than dark, and looks much older than her age, and decidedly older than her husband.

The following extract from the diary of Major Dalrymple, dated 1775, and referring to the family of Charles III., offers a curious picture of Court-life in that day.

"I was," he says, "several times at Court during its residence at Madrid. All the royal family dine publicly in separate rooms, and it is the etiquette to visit them while they are at dinner—a most tiresome ceremony for those who are obliged to be there; and the ambassadors cannot escape a constant attendance.

Digitized by Google

"Don Luis, the King's brother, who is the lowest in rank, is the first visited; he is the strangest-looking mortal imaginable, and his person is not more peculiar than his dress; ever since he was a Cardinal he has detested anything that comes near his neck, so his tailor has been particularly careful to bring that part of his coat which should be its collar, no higher than half-way up his breast; this Prince is, however, universally esteemed because of his humane disposition.

"The next in turn is the Infanta Doña Maria, who seems a very inoffensive and unpretending little woman. Then come the two Infantes, Don Gabriel and Don Antonio. Thence I passed on to the Prince and Princess of Asturias; the latter is of the house of Parma, and seems to be very affable; the Prince looks like a plain, honest man, but has a rooted aversion to every person and every thing Italian or French. As, however, the Princess entertains contrary sentiments, it is hoped she may in the end prevail on him to conform to them. As an instance of his dislike, I may mention that the French Ambassador having complained that the Prince always conversed with him in Spanish, and the same having been reported to the Prince, he took occasion to ask the envoy in what language the Dauphin addressed the Spanish Ambassador at the Court of Versailles. On being told, 'In French,' he continued as before to employ the Spanish tongue.

"The last visit is to the King. This monarch hath a very odd appearance both in person and dress; he is of diminutive stature, with a complexion of the colour of mahogany; and as he has not been measured for a coat these two-and-thirty years, the one he wears sits upon him like a sack; his waistcoat and breeches are generally of leather, with a pair of cloth spatterdashes on his legs. At dinner the pages bring in the several dishes, and presenting them to one of the lords in waiting, he places them

Digitized by Google

upon the table; another nobleman stands on the King's side to hand him his wine and water, first tasting it, and then presenting it on his knee; the Primate sits there to say grace; the Inquisitor General also attends at a distance on one side, and the captain who has the guard, on the other; the ambassadors are in a circle near him, with whom he converses for a short time, when they retire into a room behind his chair; the rest of the Court form a second circle, without the ambassadors, at the end of the room.

"When the King rises from table, all who are to be introduced to his Majesty are presented; and the Governor of Madrid having received the parole, the King enters the room to the ambassadors.

He goes out a sporting every day of the year, rain or blow. Whilst at Madrid it is only once a day—in the afternoon; but in the country, when at the *real sitios*, morning and evening. He often drives six or seven leagues out and back, as hard as the horses can go: this pace is most fatiguing for his attendants, especially those who have to clear the way for the mad helter-skelter of carriages, horses, and mounted guards that come tearing after them; and it is curious to see. It is by no means uncommon to hear of the *guardia de corps* getting killed, whilst the falls they receive continually result in dislocated shoulders, broken arms, fractured legs, &c. The country all round the palace is enclosed for his Majesty's sports."

This account of Charles's strange mania for quick driving is corroborated by the English Ambassador, in whose diary we find the following memorandum:—

"On the 26th, the Court set out for San Ildefonso; the troops were under arms lining the road from the palace as far as the eye could reach; besides horse and foot guards, there were three regiments of infantry and one of cavalry. The carriages were attended by the body-guard, and *drove as hard as they could go.*" What a pity that

Digitized by Google

a king with such tastes did not live in these days of express trains!

We quote another and contemporary author, also now out of print, who testifies to the mad and childish disposition of the King, whose pastimes cannot be said to have been of a very elevated description.

"The expedition," says this writer, "against the wild cats at Cuerva, about fourteen miles from Aranjuez, was formerly one of the *délassements* of the Court during its stay there. It has been computed that each cat, killed during these hunts, cost the country £1,000! The breed was that of the large mountain cat, not very fierce; and the worst crime they were guilty of was that of destroying a little game, of which there was great abundance."

Save and except the "Real Palacio," the palaces in Spain are, like its proverbial *châteaux*, suggestive of "great cry and little wool." We had heard grand accounts of the "Casa de Campo," a rustic dwelling belonging to the Crown, within a short walk of the palace, the grounds of the two communicating, as we have stated, by a little bridge across the Manzanares. We had much preliminary difficulty in obtaining tickets of admission; and, as usual, the directions were very precise as to the day and hour at which it might be visited.

As we had time to spare, we took a sweep round the north side of the palace and gardens, crossing the Puente de Toledo, where we met some noisy evidences of life and traffic, in the passage of an unusual concourse of cattle and drovers, and merchandise of all sorts coming into the town; we also passed through acres of linen bleaching in the sun, and observed long files of *lavanderas* kneeling on the river's bank. When near the *Casa*, we perceived, in the middle of one side of the long stone wall which surrounds the gardens, a well, near which a circular seat had been cut in the stone; round it were crowded several

Digitized by Google

figures, all proving to be aged, infirm, or diseased persons. We asked them what were the particular virtues of the fluid, to which they evidently attributed some miraculous properties. An inscription on a semicircular label over the opening proclaimed it to be a chalybeate spring; but on tasting it, we could detect no traces whatever of iron. However, the drinkers seemed to think it had the power of restoring them, which doubtless answered the purpose just as well as if it really had.

In all probability, here, as in most cases, it is the *walk* to the well which produces whatever good result may follow, and not the water imbibed, on arriving there. This supposed chalybeate-water is, nevertheless, sold in Madrid, to those who are too idle to fetch it, or who consider it worth sending away, at four *cuartos*, or about one penny, the bottle.

A little farther on, we came to a large gateway, which we found open, and about a couple of hundred yards within the walled enclosure, stood the dwelling-house. Our surprise at the aspect of this mean-looking and comparatively small, prim, old-fashioned, and inconvenient tenement may be imagined. It is clumsily designed and wretchedly built; the rooms are low, misshapen, and narrow; the windows are short, with sashes *à la guillotine*, and not at equal distances; and there is generally one opposite a door: the walls are so thin that the whole concern has the appearance of being run up for temporary uses; and the ceilings are cracked and stained. We only saw one bed, and that a state-couch beneath an alcove; it was an old-fashioned *style de l'Empire* piece of furniture, and all the rest was in harmony with it: skimped, stiff, straight, and faded was the character of the whole *ameublement;* white cotton curtains, soiled and wispy; steep-backed, rush-seated chairs, most antipathetic in expression; rectilinear tables, and consoles with straight shrunken legs, tapering into

Digitized by Google

the castors, stood surlily on the dull, rough, discoloured, uneven, and naked brick floors, and made up the poverty-stricken catalogue; while in several of the rooms, innocent of repairs, the paint was chipped and discoloured, and the paper hung in strips from the walls. One table, about four feet in diameter, was pointed out to us by the *concierge* as if he thought it a great curiosity; it was in one piece, and made he could not say of what wood. As it was mahogany, we turned to our dictionary and asked him if it was not of "*caoba?*" "Ah, yes!" he said, "that is it; but how can *that* book tell you what *this* table is made of?" and he started back as if he suspected there had been some diabolical communication between them.

Some of the rooms are decorated in what we can only call "pot-house style;" and there is not so much as the ghost of a view from any of the windows. The gardens, which profess to be kept up, but have a very neglected, wilderness-like aspect, are laid out in a stiff, unattractive style. The paths radiate on the plan of a fan, as at Carlsruhe, and the borders between, though overgrown with weeds, also abound with flowers both choice and rare to an English eye; but they would seem to spring up *sponte sud*, and in spite of the discouragement of the gardener, who did not even know their names! He was not even so well informed as the lady who boasted that "there were two botanical names she could always retain among the modern appellations so puzzling in a modern conservatory: to wit, '*Aurora Borealis*' and '*Delirium tremens.*'"

Mixed with the flowers were fruit bushes, and forest timber grew intermingled with fruit trees. In the middle of one of the flower-gardens stood a quaint and lofty old greenhouse, the perpendicular side being of brick, with a narrow sloping roof of heavy ridge tiles, the opposite side being of small panes of glass in broad wooden frames, but of glass so opaque that it was diffi-

Digitized by Google

cult to see through them! Within this clumsy structure were orange and lemon trees in pots, probably of a more delicate growth than those flourishing outside without any discernible care: we saw some colossal horse-chestnuts, but there was no ascertaining their history, for it was quite in vain to ask any information of the gardener. He was civil enough, and even gave us a flower now and then, if he saw we admired it; but he seemed to know little or nothing about his profession, and certainly his gardening did him very little credit. The place is very extensive, and the paucity of attendants was extraordinary; but it is clear the Queen takes no pride in keeping these places in order, though she frequently visits them, and is fond of dining at one or other of them, *al fresco*.

The Casino is similar in character, only the land round it is less extensive; and the Florida is like unto it; but there, there is a wilderness of *entourage*.

On leaving the Casa de Campo, we had the choice of two issues; one, that by which we came, the other by the tunnel and bridge communicating with the gardens of the Real Palacio. As the latter was shorter by about three miles, we naturally selected it, and were congratulating ourselves on the discovery, when we found ourselves arrested by what in France would be called a *Suisse*—here a *Guardabosque*—one of the guardians of the gardens—who politely asked us whither we were going. We told him we were going home; but to our dismay we found he decidedly objected to our taking that road, and asked if we had tickets for the gardens. We told him we were not aware they were required, on which he assured us that without them it was quite impossible we could pass through the royal gardens. We represented that we were both tired and belated, and that it was very desirable that we should be able, on a sultry day, to save a three miles' walk; we further assured him that,

Digitized by Google

if it were against the rules, we would walk through with our eyes shut, and undertake not to look at any of the royal trees or shrubs, or to tread unnecessarily on a royal weed: but all in vain; we found him very good-humoured, but very firm. Tickets were the order, and tickets we must have. "Come," said we, "if we have not tickets from the Queen of Spain, here is a ticket from the Queen of England which ought to serve the same purpose," and we exhibited a passport. For a moment he was evidently shaken, and the arms and supporters completely awed him; but after a moment's inspection, he said he was afraid it would not answer the purpose, though he begged to be allowed to examine it, and asked many questions respecting it. We next tried what a bribe would do, but to this we found him inexorably insensible, and he was even proof against a present of cigars. At last we tried him on the point of gallantry, urging that, for the sake of the ladies, he ought to strain a point; and, curiously enough, we found we had struck the right chord: the plea was unanswerable; and simply begging us not to let ourselves be noticed, by lingering unnecessarily about the gardens, he permitted us to pass.

The next of these dilapidated palaces that we visited was the Florida, the entrance to which must be at least three miles beyond the Puerta S. Vincente. These neglected royal residences remind one irresistibly of the traditional Frenchman of a former generation, who appears in the proverb with "a frilled front and ruffles, and never a shirt;" the grounds around them—and most especially those surrounding the Florida—are magnificent in their extent, and, from one point, there is even a view! There are also a few tanks and fountains, boxed round, *i.e.*, planted round with stiffly-cut box hedges, and there are some avenues of polled orange and citron trees. We met, too, with some arbours and summer-houses, and, passing

Digitized by Google

through a path protected on either side by espaliered vines, we suddenly discovered a very novel bower,—

> "O'er which the mantling vine
> Spreads forth her purple grape,
> And gently creeps, luxuriant."

Beneath this romantic canopy was a verdant platform, and in its centre a rustic table and chairs. In the middle of the table was a miniature fountain, and all around were orange and lemon trees; this, we were told, was the dining-table of the Queen and royal family, when they come to pass a fine day at the Florida; and when they dine here they may certainly be said to have their *desserts* hanging over their heads.

There is also at the Florida another attempt at the fan-like radiating avenues, here consisting of acacias and a very pretty kind of holly, without prickles; occasionally the visitor is surprised by a patch of fruit trees, but there is very little method or order in the arrangement. Beyond these attempts at cultivation, are miles of forest land entirely left to the care of Dame Nature, with whom Spanish agriculturists as well as horticulturists seem to have an idea they ought not to interfere.

The Duchess of Alba was the original proprietress of this domain; and, judging from the condition into which the interior decorations and the furniture have fallen, but little can have been laid out, either in ornamental or substantial repairs, since the property came into the possession of the Crown. There are some very finely painted walls and ceilings, and those panelled with satin damask have not faded so much as might have been expected.

The staircases and some of the doors and window-shutters are panelled with mahogany and adorned with handsome gilt mouldings, and there is one small boudoir the walls of which are of scagliola, bordered with Roman patterns and

Digitized by Google

centred with medallions. The *comedor* is of peculiar construction; one end is circular, and fitted with a handsome white marble fountain; above is a gallery, supported on Corinthian columns, for an orchestra.

We returned along the banks of the Manzanares. The water of this rivulet—for, as we have before observed, it is not a river—is very muddy, but the banks are picturesque to an English eye; the water is diverted into several streams, to facilitate lavatory operations, and all along this road is another suburb devoted to ablutionary purposes. Indeed, the Manzanares seems devoted to this ignoble object, and "what power divine shall henceforth wash" its polluted current, remains to be told. The quantities of clothes hanging out to dry are almost inconceivable, especially as the road is, so to speak, encumbered with the *galiegos* carrying along, on the curious hempen "knots" in use here, huge white bags containing still further supplies.

This sight speaks well for the personal cleanliness of the Matritenses, who certainly must care more for the condition of "surtout or shirt" than is generally supposed. For our part, though dirty in their habits, we have always thought the Spaniards particularly cleanly in their persons.

These washing suburbs are rather too much in sight of the palace windows, unless we are to suppose that her Majesty of Spain entertain notions as primitive on the subject as the Princess Nausicaa, who, thinking it not derogatory to take part in the purification of the household linen, literally and practically forestalled the discreet proverb which declares, "*Que le linge sale doit se laver en famille.*"

The washing-boards used by the laundresses all along the banks of the numerous branches into which the scanty waters of the Manzanares have been ingeniously economized, are precisely those supposed in this part of the world to be a modern trans-Atlantic invention.

Digitized by Google

There are several very pretty little bridges across the stream; and all along the road are most picturesque cottages, the effect of which is enhanced by the groups of peasants dining or sleeping before the doors, under shade of the vine-covered awnings stretched on rude sticks before them. Here and there, we observed small, uninviting road-side hovels, where it is intimated, by the characteristic notice, "*Aqui se guisa de comer*," that hungry travellers, provided with the raw material, can be accommodated with cooking machinery. The road offers a scene of much interest and some satisfaction, on a fine sunny day, but the misery of these places in a cold or rainy winter must be fearful.

There are some fine distant views along this road, but still characterized by barrenness and aridity.

As we are on the subject of palaces we will record our opinion of the Casino, another of those little, shabby gimcracks which have neither the merit of being useful nor ornamental, and which the Crown cannot apparently afford even to keep in repair: a description would amount almost to a repetition of all the rest: a tumble-down shooting-box, with a few badly-furnished rooms, discoloured draperies, and broken windows; a large, rambling, neglected piece of pleasure-ground, paths overrun with weeds, damaged statues, moss-grown tanks, and fountains out of order, untidy hot-houses, with a few worthless plants growing in them, musty summer-houses, in the most *rococo* taste, suggestive of an abandoned tea-garden,—such was the condition in which we found the Casino—all this within a walled enclosure in the middle of the town! another of the results of the childish taste of the Spanish kings, for it was built by Ferdinand VII., who seems to have had no greater mental elevation than his predecessors;—

κακοῦ κόρακος, κακον ὠὸν.

Digitized by Google

In two or three of the rooms here, the upholstery is costly, but the space is narrow and the ceilings low. A ridiculous pavilion in the garden, and consisting of two small, utterly useless rooms, seems to have been fitted up regardless of expense. Just within the door stands a wooden figure of a sentinel, life-size, which might be called the "King's doll," for it is difficult to conceive of a full-grown man, the Monarch of an extensive country, and whose people might have given him more than sufficient occupation, taking any interest in such contemptible toys. An artificial river has been cut through the grounds, and at one extremity, concealed by bushy plants, chiefly laurels and oleanders, is a water-wheel worked by oxen, its intention being to draw up a reserve of water for its supply; the bed of this stream meanders about and terminates in a boat-house.

The next of these palaces we endeavoured to introduce ourselves to, was that known as the "Buen Retiro," a short distance beyond the Pra'o, and forming the object of the almost daily drive of the Queen and royal family. During both the visits we have paid to Madrid, we made efforts to see the interior of this *Real Casa*, but were always put off with one excuse or another: on one occasion we were five minutes too late; on another, the Queen was there; on a third, it was the wrong day, the order having been changed without altering the *papellita;* one day it was a *fiesta*, on which we made sure of admission, because the *entrée* is *libre* on Sundays, and in all *else*, a *fiesta* is synonymous with a Sunday; and finally, at the last attempt we made, on the *right* day and hour, we were told we could not be admitted because it had been raining!! We were too dull to apprehend the reply, and thought the *guarda* was either insane or dreaming; but no, he was perfectly wide awake, and as sober as even a Spaniard could be, for he assured us most courteously of his disap-

Digitized by Google

pointment at being *obliged* to disoblige us, but it was the express order of the *Reina misma* "that no visitor should be admitted on the afternoons succeeding rainy mornings." This last excuse was so ludicrous that we were restored to equanimity, naturally concluding that the palace must be very gorgeous to justify this scrupulous care, and should infallibly have gone away with this impression, but that one of our party having asked the functionary what the rooms were like, he, in the guilelessness of his heart, assured us the fittings were "quite as handsome" as those of the Casa de Campo! This put the *comble* to our merriment, for the joke was quite irresistible; the laugh of the whole party was so universal that we were obliged to explain to our civil informant, that Englishmen were not accustomed to see such wonderful care bestowed on such wonderfully rubbishing furniture, and that in England no "gentleman's gentleman," who respected himself, would accept a situation in a house where *his* apartments were so shabby.

The gardens of the Retiro are of great extent, and are tolerably well maintained. All the quadrupedal labour is performed by camels, who walk with dignified gait about the broad paths, and carry their loads in large panniers. They are preferred because their large soft feet do not cut up the ground or mark the paths, on the smoothness of which the Queen seems to set such great importance. There is a large tank railed round at the extremity of the principal avenue, well stocked with geese and swans; it forms a fine piece of water, called the *Estanque*, but has a Chinese character; and the gardens are stiffly laid out, so that, though the breadth of the paths and the luxuriance of the plantations which divide them impart a certain grandeur, the general effect is cold and unattractive.

This palace was contrived as a residence for the fourth Philip, in order that he might have a fine range of private

Digitized by Google

grounds within bow-shot of his capital and *Corte*. The Comte-duc d'Olivares it was, to whom this *Roi fainéant* was indebted for the notion; and it suited perfectly well with the dispositions and intentions of both king and minister. The former, who fancied himself overworked with the cares of state, welcomed the arrangement which provided him with a "*buen retiro*," in the creation of which his mind was interested, provided with a private theatre, a museum, an observatory, a menagerie—in which he took particular delight, and other means of diversion and *délassement*; while the latter, who coveted the power his master considered a burden, was as anxious to possess himself of this, as he was desirous to divert the indolent monarch from the contemplation of a fast-decaying empire, the fall of which he felt he had not had the skill to avert.

The King had a capital picture-gallery in his "retreat;" and it is said that a fine Velasquez and some valuable pictures of the Venetian school were lost when this palace was burnt. Subsequently to this catastrophe, it was rebuilt by Ferdinand VI.: but the end was not yet. During the Peninsular War, the French, finding in it an exceptional spot for the establishment of a military station, trod down the plantations, tore up the trees, ravaged the buildings, and scampered over the paths: *they* did not stop to consider the superior advantages of camels' feet! the horses' hoofs suited them perfectly well. They broke up the Casa de Fieras, filled up the *estanque* or ornamental water, and, in short, reduced the Buen Retiro to a condition the utter reverse of anything its name suggests: fire and war had done their work, and the last state of the place was worse than the first. For the third time, however, the hand of the builder was engaged in restoring the ill-fated card-house; and it now stands in the midst of widespread pleasure-grounds, laid out on a large scale, and adorned with statues, fountains, tanks, labyrinthine paths,

Digitized by Google

and *clairières*, which disclose pretty peeps of distant country—a portion being open to public promenading. As a palace, however, it is unworthy of its destination, and can only be regarded as a monument of the mean taste and "low ambition" of the late king, who, apparently ignorant of the real glory of a monarch, prostituted his power and his opportunities to the childish gratification of an incomprehensible taste, erecting useless residences, toy-palaces, summer-houses, and pagodas—a weakness which affected many of his predecessors, and seems always to have floated about more or less in the atmosphere breathed by the kings of Spain. One only wonders that the owners of these ill-favoured places should think them worth showing, especially to foreigners, to whom they are but so many evidences of "the nakedness of the land."

The Casa de Fieras, like the rest, has been patched up again, and a few miserable bears, leopards, monkeys, camels, and ostriches are encaged there; but although this is the only menagerie in Spain, it has no appearance of being organized, or of serving scientific purposes.

We learn from an English traveller who visited the Casa de Fieras in 1780, that there was to be seen among the birds a crested falcon from the Caraccas: he describes it as "about the size of a turkey, with a hooked bill," and says that "he raises his feathers on his head in the form of a crest; he is mixed black and white; the tail distinguished by four cinereous parallel stripes; and he is an *undescript* bird, not noticed by Linnæus."

The royal glass and china manufactory, once established here, after the example of that at Sèvres, and known as "La China," no longer exists. We will not recall the absurd and irritating accusations to which its demolition gave rise.

Don Ramon de Mesonero Romanos, one of the satirical writers of the present day—better known, perhaps, under the *sobriquet* of "*El Curioso Parlante*,"—has given in one

Digitized by Google

of his amusing papers a pretty true notion of the national vanity of Spaniards as regards these show-places. The suburban Browns, Joneses, and Robinsons of Madrid make it their Hampton Court, and get together parties to spend the day in this "*recinto de armida*," this "*oasis encantador*." Far from sharing the naïve simplicity of Wordsworth's smock-frocked hero, to whom—

> "A primrose on the river's brim,
> A yellow primrose was to him,
> And it was nothing more,"—

the Matritenses regard these royal freaks as the most wonderful fairy fabrics that could be conjured up by an enchanter's wand. To them the Retiro constitutes one of the wonders of the world, and the preliminaries they are content to go through to obtain the coveted ticket which is to admit them within its marvellous precincts, are never considered too arduous or too intricate. There is always considerable shuffling about the distribution of these *tarjetas*, and perhaps there is some idea that it is politic thus to impart a fictitious value to that which, if too easily accorded, might be estimated at its just worth; be this as it may, it is certain that there can be no necessity to give the unfortunate applicant the trouble of addressing himself to half-a-dozen intermediaries, and, when he has got his ticket, of passing him on from one official to another for every individual department through which he is promenaded. However, his delight at the childish trinkets, trumpery ornaments, automaton figures, and *chinesque* curiosities, whether exhibited in the grottoes, *kiosques*, *montagnes russes* of the gardens, or the old-fashioned upholstery, clockwork puppets, and toys only fit for grown-up children, within the palace,—would be cheaply purchased at ten times the labour, and may certainly be excused when we remember that these gewgaws sufficed to entertain the intelligence of kings!

Digitized by Google

We visited, one day, the Houses of Parliament, or Cortes, known as the "Senado" for the Lords, and the "Congreso de los Diputados" for the Commons. They are in different quarters of the city. The Lords formerly held their sessions in *el cason* or banqueting-hall of the Convent of San Geronimo at the Puerto Pelota. No very remarkable State events seem to have been ratified here by this august (?) body: this was before 1837; they now occupy the Senado, a new and substantial edifice, not far from the Real Palacio, but much less imposing, architecturally speaking, than the Congreso.

Within, the decorations are handsome and effective, and marble panelled walls and marquetry floors in the halls, antechambers, and committee-rooms, give it finish and solidity. The session-hall is elongated in form, and in no way remarkable; the seats are covered with green velvet, and the throne is a massive gilt chair, richly draped and canopied with ermine; beside it, is a less prominent seat for the King Consort, who accompanies the Queen on the occasion of the opening.

The President's chair occupies the usual place; there is a commodious strangers' gallery, and a separate gallery for any of the members of the Cortes who may like to attend, non-officially of course. The members are not all "grandees," but some are *titulados del reino*, and have not the privilege of remaining covered in presence of the Queen. There is a desk fitted with a drawer and inkstand in front of each *fauteuil*, and a brass plate, whereon the name and titles of the member to whom it is appropriated are inscribed. The members in this House speak from the tribune.

There is a handsome committee-room, besides retiring rooms, where members may hold private conferences. This sounds so like business, it is to be regretted there is not something beyond the mere form. Behind the principal departments is devised a very elegantly fitted little bed-

Digitized by Google

room, for the use of any member who might happen to be taken ill; attached to it is a drawing-room and anteroom, and there is a *dégagement* by means of a private staircase, so that he can, while he remains, be attended by his family.

The members have the use of an extensive library, but of what benefit it is to them, does not appear. Beside this is a pantry fitted with cupboards, and containing the needful appliances for the administration of *eau sucrée*. The element which refreshes the deliberations of the grandees of Spain is drawn from a row of silver taps, and the supply seems abundant, but it does not prevent the debates from being very dry; nothing, in fact, in this proverbially arid climate is damp but their *deuda publica*, which continues to be *due* in the morning and is always *missed* in the evening.

Eau sucrée, as understood in Spain, is a *spécialité;* the substitute for the little saucers of pounded sugar handed during working hours in the French Houses of Parliament, consisting of *esponjados* or *caramels*. These are long sticks of sugar, hardened by being mixed with white of egg, and baked; they are dipped into the glass of *agua fria*, and consumed by sucking!

The Senadores, or members of the Upper House, are nominated for life by the Queen: there are now about 300 members. Cabinet Ministers sit in the Lower as well as the Upper House, but can only vote in the latter; their attendance at either is regulated by the importance of the debates.

Senadores are not all men of rank, but many grandees are Senadores, and it is only these who remain covered before the Queen. There are among the members a great many military officers, and besides the army, the navy and the other liberal professions send representatives.

The Commons, who are elected for three years, but can be dissolved by Royal pleasure, sit at the "Congreso de Diputados," a handsome architectural monument, about

Digitized by Google

half-way down the Carrera San Geronimo on the left. It is built of stone, and has a fine, bold, triangular pediment, supported by columns. On either side the broad steps is a colossal lion "*sejant gardant*" *in plaster!* It is a far finer building than the Senado, and is near the Prado, while the other is near the Real Palacio; in front is a small *plaza*, laid out and planted with flower-borders, and in the centre stands a statue of Cervantes, on a square pedestal.

The interior is spacious and well proportioned, but the ornamentation is trivial, and not worthy of the character of the edifice, and the ceilings are too showy to be in good taste. The session-hall is semi-circular, and has a gallery for the diplomatic body, as also places for any strangers, who are admitted with tickets. This hall is illuminated with elaborately gilt carvings, surrounding medallions, and panels bearing subjects from the pencils of modern masters.

In form it resembles the Corps Législatif in Paris—or, as a facetious royalist friend of ours was wont to style it—the "Corps Figuratif." The place of honour was of course occupied by the throne, on a tribune in front of which, stands the President's chair, with a table before it. The seats of the members are graduated, and radiate from this centre. Each member rises and speaks from his place, and not from the tribune, though he has his choice if he prefer to make his address from the latter. There are 349 members, and every class of the community is represented. Some of the members are professional men, and some landed-proprietors. The Queen always opens the House in person on the 22nd December, and the session lasts from four to five months: the sittings take place daily, from four to six, Sundays excepted; the speech is compiled by the Cabinet. There appears to be some good speaking among the members, though there is so little to show for it; we were told that the best speakers are Olozaga, Posala-Real, Segasto, and Nocedal.

Digitized by Google

The whole system, like the Government itself, is an imitation of our own; but Spaniards are not Englishmen, and it is strange that the wide difference of national character should not have been considered when the present form of government became a Spanish institution. A constitutional monarchy is not a *cosa de España*—it is not understood, and thus far, at least, there has been no great reason to rely on its success or to anticipate its durability. The continual changes of ministry must be most prejudicial to its character as well as its efficiency, but time alone can show whether the apprehensions which naturally suggest themselves will be realized. The state of the Court—that "Corte" which regards itself as the "Corte" *par excellence*—can scarcely continue without producing visible and disastrous results, and there is little reason to hope for any amelioration. It is melancholy to see such elements of national dignity and national prosperity, as exist in the noble attributes of the Spanish character, and the no less generous nature of her soil, entirely nullified by the disastrous and enduring effects of an unsettled Government.

Spain is a living illustration of the old proverb, "Give a dog a bad name," &c. She has lost her character, and it will be a hard matter for her to recover it. The present process certainly will not much contribute to this result. She gets no credit with other nations for the merits and advantages she possesses, because they have not been produced to any useful purpose, nor have they been made available in contributing to her greatness, and above all, because she has not paid her debts. What a glorious opportunity of lasting *éclat* exists here for a wise, just, and energetic Government! With such materials, an "Isabella the Catholic" would render Spain once more the first country in Europe, whereas in the present depressed condition of that fine country, we can hardly believe that

Digitized by Google

there ever was a time when a Spanish monarch could be supposed to assert,—

"Furchtbar blüht durch Künste unsers Landes, Britannia."

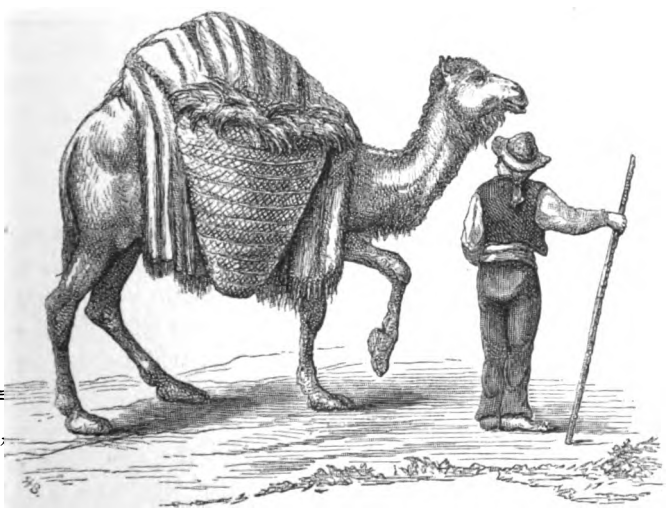
The anterior history of the country for some time past has been that of ceaselessly recurring disturbances, which have ended, like all *cosas de España,* in nothing but *smoke;* meantime her task is before her; it is indicated in the plainest language; Spain must recollect what she once was; she must rouse herself to new vitality, and endeavour to recover her physical advantages, together with the moral dignity of her people.

As we have already remarked, the result of a long-pursued system of recklessness and neglect is apparent everywhere. Had Spain even maintained her noble forests, and otherwise pursued a well-organized agricultural policy, how different would now have been her commercial, financial, and moral position! She has a difficult task before her, for how can she be expected to bring to the labour of restoration that energy which did not even suffice to maintain the condition she once enjoyed? The indolent character of the people does not seem sufficient for the labour, and yet the end proposed is only valuable in so far as she may be able to work it out for herself. As it is, foreign nations, who have sent their engineers to establish the improvements now taking place, in one branch of the many reforms that have to be made, are rendering her but a questionable service, and the results will be very different from what they would have been had she been using her own exertions in her own behalf. We doubt whether this be not assisting and increasing the demoralization of the country, and perhaps we need not go further to account for the extraordinary fact that the railways have not yet proved any benefit to it. The great want of connecting roads to assimilate the lines that have been made, and carry on their influence and their utility, is another draw-

Digitized by Google

back to their success, and here again it is the Spaniard who is at fault; yet he does not attempt to remedy the want. A complete moral regeneration alone can make Spain what she ought to be, and it is for wiser heads than ours to suggest the means of procuring it. We cannot agree with those who attribute the lethargic inaction and want of vitality of Spain to the influence of her religion; reforms in this respect have been carried sufficiently far to have enabled men to judge whether that be the root of the evil.

That peace should be secured, at almost any sacrifice, must be obvious to the most superficial observer; and yet at the present moment it seems doubtful whether the short-sighted policy of the Government, impelled by a suicidal national vanity, will not bring the unhappy country into that most fatal of all disasters, a trans-Atlantic war.



Digitized by Google

CHAPTER II.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS IN MADRID.

"For where would you . . .
Have found the ground of study's excellence
Without the beauty of a woman's face?
From woman's eyes the doctrine I receive:
They are the ground, the books, the academies,
From whence doth spring the true Promethean fire."
Love's Labour Lost.

". . . Postquam se lumine puro
Implevit, stellasque vagas miratur et astra
Fixa polis, vidit quantâ sub nocte jaceret
Nostra dies, refertque sua ludibria."
LUCAN.

"For Justice, while she winks at crimes,
Stumbles on innocence sometimes."
Hudibras.

IF Spain has less to show than other nations, as regards the progress of intellect and the march of mind, she has æsthetical excellences which compensate in a measure for the deficiency. To her inhabitants, the gifts of nature balance the shortcomings of civilization; while those who visit her, breathe for the time the refreshing atmosphere of an unsophisticated age.

Despite the devastations of war, and the spoliations of victorious invaders, Spain still possesses treasures of art, doubly valuable to her, as evidences of what she once was.

Digitized by Google

One of the largest edifices skirting the Prado, and standing within a handsome railing, enclosing well-kept grounds, is the Real Museo; and a *real* museum it is, for the collection of gems it contains is a treasury for the artist and the man of taste. The building, though massive and somewhat heavy, owing to its excessive length, which is disproportioned to its height, is nevertheless grand and imposing; it transmits to the present generation another of Charles III.'s efforts at posthumous celebrity, for it was he who constructed it in 1785. By a somewhat unfortunate choice, he employed, as its architect, a man of very moderate talent, Juan de Villanueva, and his design, though weak, was accepted. It was at that time, however, intended for a museum of natural history: under Charles IV. it was very nearly levelled with the ground; and on its reconstruction its destination was altered, and it was appropriated to the uses it now serves,—Frederick VII., in compliance with the wish of his third and penultimate wife, the amiable and cultivated Isabella, a princess of Portugal—having completed it for a picture gallery.

It is now nearly half a century since the first detachment of pictures, rescued by the exertions of this Queen, and the co-operation of the Marques de Santa Cruz, from the damp and forgotten nooks into which they had been stowed away by the soulless Ferdinand, to make room for the French gewgaws with which he refurnished his palace—were transported hither and hung up for public enjoyment.

They were eagerly visited, and connoisseurs were not slow to recognize their merit. Those of the Spanish school were chiefly by Velasquez, and are all very superior samples of that remarkable master. By degrees another and another saloon were thrown open, and the gems of art owned by the Spanish Crown then first came to light. The grand collection from the Escorial was added about twenty years after the first opening, and other

Digitized by Google

galleries have from time to time fallen in, until the collection now assembled there, has become the richest in the world, numbering two thousand specimens, and in every way worthy its European reputation. Velasquez — the painter of Spain *par excellence*, and by far the mightiest of her geniuses—can only be really studied here; his originality and versatility, the power with which he seized on nature, and the honesty with which he portrayed such subjects as his taste selected, are all discernible in the genuine, and—where they have escaped the Vandalism of "restorers"—untouched samples which are preserved in this wealthy museum.

There is a truthfulness and a power, a breadth and a meaning in the touch of Velasquez, which absolutely fascinate the beholder; and no man of taste, or, we had almost said, of feeling, will pass through Madrid without making the acquaintance of the great master; for we seem to get at his character through his works as we see them here, and to esteem him and them simultaneously. His portraits are among the wonderful things of art, and one never sees a representation of a royal countenance by this king of painters, without respecting and believing in the man who dared so truthfully to reproduce the heavy, uninteresting features, and often repulsive expression, of monarchs and their scions. Murillo—whose paintings are undoubtedly more pleasing at first sight, but who, unlike the conscientious Velasquez, rather loses than gains by continued inspection and study—is less richly represented here; but still the gallery possesses not fewer than forty specimens of this master, among which are some very enchanting pictures. The soft, sweet style of Juanes, and the severe, not to say savage, power of Ribera, whose effects are not appreciated without a certain horror, as well as the masterly facility of Zurbaran, may be admired in delightful leisure here. We may study, too, the gradual *décadence* of

Digitized by Google

Spanish art through the successive discouragements to national self-consciousness, in every phase of mental effort, by the imbecile kings who could neither understand nor patronize genius, and under whose fatal indifference the sacred flame of inspiration was well-nigh extinguished. With specimens of the earlier native masters, however, this gallery is well supplied, and it is a priceless advantage to enjoy the rare opportunity of being able to study the various schools in such close proximity; for France, Italy, Holland, and Flanders, especially the latter, have largely contributed—we will not too closely inquire *how*—of the wealth of their easels to augment the value of this vast treasury.

Morales, surnamed El Divino, and whose subjects are generally those afforded by the life of the "Divine Master," does not contribute a single specimen to the Madrid collection. At Badajoz, his native place, some of the pictures of this master are to be seen; and in one of the religious houses at Valencia is a fine "Christ bearing the Cross;" indeed, most of his pictures are still in the hands of Religious, or in churches.

We need not expatiate in praises of this gallery of galleries; its great superiority, and the completeness of a collection in which masters of all schools are represented worthily, and some not only by their best specimens, but in very considerable numbers, is a matter universally recognized. Its attractions alone would repay a visit to Madrid, and foreigners enjoy a valuable and wisely accorded privilege in the facilities they find for visiting the contents of this amply-stored museum.

The gallery of sculpture and casts, marbles, bronzes, vases, *marqueterie* and jewels, is very extensive; among them we meet with many antiques, as well as specimens of modern, native and foreign schools of art. Madrid, strange to say, does not possess a single sample of that most suc-

Digitized by Google

cessful and almost exclusively national school of art which excelled in painted life-size wood-sculptures. The finest existing assemblage of these figures is that which delighted us so greatly at Valladolid, and struck us not only as being remarkable for the individual perfection of each work, and the general originality and excellence of the style, but as eminently indicative of a distinct application of Spanish skill, of which we ourselves had no idea, and very much doubt if it be at all generally known. We have already mentioned the names by which such men as Juni, Hernandez, Becerra, Alonzo Cano and Montanes were but very partially recognized, even by a small proportion of their own countrymen, but, we might add, their fame deserves to reach the ear of foreign appreciators of all countries. Some of the antiques exhibited here are said to have belonged to the famous Queen Christina of Sweden, and were originally at the Palace of the Granja.

Days on days might be spent within this building, so unattractive in its external heaviness, but as indicative of the gloom and solemnity of the Spaniard, as the chaste but elegant exterior of the Louvre is of French taste and intelligent industry.

We were much interested, on Sundays, in observing that the visitors were of a class totally different from those who frequent it on week-days. We met few foreigners, and rarely any English there, and on the hebdomadal festival the majority consisted of the men and women of the working orders, interspersed with soldiers, all apparently enjoying and appreciating the sight.

There is in Madrid a Royal Academy and an exhibition of the pictures of modern artists, but it is another of the *cosas de España*, and is got up with little spirit. It is not annual, and the very intervals at which it takes place are indefinite and irregular; sometimes it is within two, sometimes within three years. Their first painter is

Digitized by Google

Gisbert, known to fame as an historical painter; his merit may be estimated among ourselves by his picture of the "Communeros" sent to the London International Exhibition of 1862. Gisbert has since produced a still more effective picture, the subject of which is "The Landing of the Puritans in New England."

Next in order of merit we may reckon Casado, Rosales, Ruiparez, and Zumacois, pupils of Meissonnier,—beautiful as an original painter, and singularly minute in detail and finish; but they are a long way behind their master. Tierros is the Wilkie of Spain, and his scenes of rustic life, though well imagined and spirited, are sadly wanting in perspective: of contemporary portrait-painters Madrugo is considered the best, but he may be said to have retired from his occupation. All those we have mentioned, paint in oils, and the sister art of water-colour-drawing is little practised, and therefore little understood in Spain.

The Infante Don Sebastian has shown his appreciation of modern art by his purchase of an historical landscape, entitled "Despues del Combate" ("After the Battle"), by the admired painter, Sanchez Blanco: this picture was shown at the Exhibition of Fine Arts.

There has been much talk of a new museum to be erected by Señor Jarenio on the site of the present veterinary school. The principal façade is to be 48 feet long; building, 420 feet deep; columns of portico, 31 feet high; interior measurement of library, 100 feet square.

The Museum of Natural History is worth a visit; indeed, the state of scientific progress and knowledge among the Matritenses can only be truly measured by such tests. We found it was open every morning till two o'clock, but it contains a poor collection, and is very little frequented. The building is fine, having been originally the Custom-house; the proportions are imposing, and the façade handsome. It was built by Sabatini in 1769, therefore under

Digitized by Google

Charles III., to whom Madrid owes, as we have before observed, many of its monuments.

The larger and smaller megatheria preserved here are remarkably perfect, especially the latter, which was found near Madrid. So much for fossils. The zoological department is very inferior to those of other capitals, but boasts two characteristic specimens, viz.: the famous *toros* Caramelo and Señorita, who gave such good sport, and died so bravely, not exactly in harness, but on the arena, that they have been honoured with a niche in their country's temple of science! They must feel somewhat out of their element there; but never mind, it is better to be mummified in such company than to disappear in the degrading obscurity of the shambles.

Attached to this institution is a zoological garden, which is rapidly improving in organization and extent. Very recently some valuable additions have been made to its contents. St. Marcos Jiménés de la Espada, the Spanish naturalist, entrusted by the Scientific Commission of the Pacific (or rather the branch which interests itself in the study of vertebrated animals) with the selection of specimens, recently shipped by the French frigate *Perseverance* from Valparaiso for Havre, among many other rare and curious animals, five llamas, two Patagonian hares, a chinchilla, a condor, four black-necked swans, two black geese—*rarœ aves!*—and two large boxes of birds of choice varieties, for stuffing.

Among the mineralogical curiosities is the famous loadstone, which weighs six pounds, and upholds a weight of sixty: it is called *piedra imán.* There are also marbles and ores exhibited here which, being of the soil, are worth studying.

When Talbot Dillon visited Madrid during his embassy in 1775, he mentions the opening of the Cabinet of Natural History by Charles III., and states "it was at that time

Digitized by Google

confined to the second floor of a handsome house," and that nearly all the natural curiosities it contained had been collected by Don Pedro Davila, a native of Peru, and presented to the King, who very properly appointed him the curator of the same. Davila had left his collection in Paris, whence the King caused them to be brought. "Every object," adds this entertaining narrator, "is ranged with neatness and elegance, and the apartments are opened twice a week to the public, besides being shown privately to strangers of rank."

The "collection of beasts and birds," which he proceeds to describe, and qualifies as "not large at present," appears to have obtained but few additions since, considering that a century has elapsed.

At the farthest extremity of the Prado we turned up a broad road, which brought us to the Observatory, where the name of Charles III., its founder, again occurs, showing how actively this monarch employed himself in forwarding the moral and social interests of his people. It is a fine domed Ionic building, and has a handsome Corinthian portico or vestibule supported by massive columns. It consists of two *corps de bâtiment*, which are built partly of granite and partly of Colmenarés stone; it is perched on an elevation eminently suited for the purposes of observation, overlooking not only the whole city, but a vast expanse of surrounding country. The view is most interesting, especially from the large glass lantern which surmounts the edifice; but for astronomical purposes it is by no means the first in Spain. There are several of a higher character; and precedence, above all others, is accorded to that of San Fernando near Cadiz, whether as regards its position or the means and appliances in serving for the prosecution of its scientific labours by the astronomer who has the charge of it and the instruments supplied to it; all those we saw here were English, and by Dollond, but

Digitized by Google

none of very recent date; the principal were an electric battery and telegraph, and several large telescopes, besides that used for the daily observations. This is a large instrument, capable of being turned every way, and so placed as to take in the whole sweep of the heavens. The domed apartment in which it stands is made to open in the form of an arc, to the width of twelve or fourteen inches, at the meridian of Madrid, the telescope being fixed so as to take in its field, at any angle within the compass of the opening.

Of the two buildings which constitute the Observatory, one is the residence of the astronomer royal and officials connected with it, the other is the observatory proper, and is constructed to contain the library, telescope-room, and other practical departments. The whole building was nearly demolished by the invaders, but was partly restored by Ferdinand VII., and completed by the present Queen, who re-established it as a scientific institution.

As for the functionary in whose charge it is, and whom we wanted much to have seen and conversed with, he did not appear, though we waited some time in the hope of falling in with him. In his absence, and all the apparatus being covered up, we were unable to make any perquisitions into the state of astronomical science in the metropolis of Spain, but we suspect it is at a very low ebb. This is much to be regretted, as the climate is magnificent for celestial observations. It would have been interesting to ascertain whether there are not more stars visible to the naked eye in Madrid than in our own obfuscated climate; to us it certainly appeared they were considerably more numerous.

We ferreted out a tolerably intelligent fellow, who gave us the benefit of all he did know, but his aspirations were limited to this globe of earth; and all the information we could obtain from him was in the geographical line. He showed us the principal points of terrestrial interest to be

Digitized by Google

discerned from the glass pinnacle within which we stood, and indicated, among other spots, the gate and highway made by order of Charles III., that he might have a "royal road" to the Granja untrodden by the *commun des mortels.*

On the Prado are also situated the Botanical Gardens, for which, as the inscription over the handsome iron gates tells us, the Matritenses are likewise indebted to Charles III. It was instituted by that monarch just one hundred years ago. During the *verano,* or early summer, these gardens are only closed at night; during the rest of the year they can be seen only on special days, and one of the conditions of admission is that the weather be fine. The grounds are tastefully laid out, and are kept in wonderful order for a garden of Spain: the specimens are well arranged and appear healthy, and the walks afford a green *recreo* to the parched and dusty cits who are not opulent in parks or even in squares, and whose capital partakes overmuch of the arid nature of the barren plains which surround it; an oasis such as this, is therefore appreciated.

Though laid completely waste at the time of the French invasion, with many other public institutions, it was the first to be reinstated, and it might therefore have been expected to make more rapid progress; but Spain has never produced any very celebrated botanist, notwithstanding the variety of the climate, the productiveness of the soil, and the luxuriance of the rich and curious tropical plants which grow and flourish in some of her latitudes. This is only one among many contemplations of the capabilities of the land and its people, which is fraught with regret and disappointment that opportunities and men should be so disastrously mismatched.

We found our way one morning into the Sala de Audiencia. It is a fine stone building, with an open portico of noble dimensions. We walked up a light and broad stone staircase, and on the first landing found three *salas,* respect-

Digitized by Google

ively described as "Sala de Primera," "Sala de Segunda," and "Sala de Tercera Instancia." As far as external appearance went, each was an exact fac-simile of the other. Each was divided across the middle by an oak partition, some four to five feet high, the floor behind the partition being raised by a step. On this, under a handsome crimson velvet canopy, sat three judges, wearing wigs and gowns; in front of them was a long massive oak table, and suspended behind the judges was a kit-cat portrait of the Queen, opposite a life-size Crucifixion.

The portion of the hall without the bar was handsomely paved in squares of black and white marble, and it was refreshingly clean, neither smoking nor its disagreeable accompaniment being allowed within the court. There were benches without the bar, for the witnesses and for the public, and an *alguazil* stood in the midst of this space, dressed in black, holding in his hand a wand of office, and looking very solemn, his business being to keep order and wait upon the court. He was relieved at intervals of an hour.

To the right of the judges, and against the wall, between two of the large windows, was fixed the desk of the prisoner's advocate, who sat there with his junior. The court was nearly empty, a party of half a dozen peasants only, occupying one of the benches appropriated to the public; they seemed interested in the case, and from what they said it appeared they had come there expecting to be called as witnesses.

Within the bar, and on the side of the oak table opposite to that at which the judges were seated, with his face towards them, sat the advocate of the Crown, reading the accusation. The prisoner was not present, being at the Carcero in Alcalá: the accusation was a very lengthy one, and so tediously verbose, that the very judges were set nodding by the monotonous accent with which it was read. The story was that of a riot which had taken place on the

Digitized by Google

11th December last, on the occasion of a royal procession, when the coachman of a certain Marques, leaving the rank of the procession, took occasion to attack some shepherds, against one of whom he had a *vendetta* (it is always that) on account of a love affair. The son of the shepherd, being with his father, and seeing him attacked, fell upon the *cochero* Lope, and stabbed him: he then, it seems, escaped, and it was only some time after that, being pursued by the relations of the murdered man, he was taken.

At the conclusion of this tiresome reading, the counsel for the prisoner rose and spoke very distinctly and forcibly in his defence, declaring the crime with which his client was charged to have been simple manslaughter, and to have been caused by extreme provocation; that if ever such an offence could be accompanied with extenuating circumstances this was a case which called not merely for the indulgence, but even for the sympathy of the court, and that he was too well acquainted with the equity and intelligence of the judges to feel the slightest apprehension as to the result, &c. The junior counsel supported him in nearly the same words, and likewise concluded by expressing his confidence in the coming acquittal; upon which he also sat down, and the senior judge simply replying "*Vista*," the court was dissolved, &c. The result of their wise deliberations was only to be known the next day. A few persons about the door, selling flowers and garlands for tombs in a small market under the portico, testified some slight interest in the fate of the prisoner by the inquiries they made of the few who had been present, and passed their conjectures as to the probable issue, which they seemed to have made up their minds would be an acquittal.

Criminals are now always executed in the Campo de Guardias, a large open space at some distance outside the Puerta de Bilbao, where the troops are also exercised. They are neither guillotined nor hanged; garrotting is the

Digitized by Google

form of execution. Formerly the Plaza de la Cebada, or barley-market, within the town, was the spot chosen for carrying out capital punishments.

Recourse is continually had in Spain to the royal prerogative for obtaining the pardon of condemned criminals, and women are rarely, if ever, subjected to capital punishment. On the Queen's last birthday, her Majesty graciously accorded to seventy-nine prisoners confined at Ceuta, and condemned *á cadena perpétua*, a commutation to the next lighter punishment; and to twenty-nine prisoners incarcerated in the same place for various terms, a remission of one quarter of their sentence.

An instance of remission of punishment attended with unusual circumstances—we might almost term them dramatic—has just occurred at Bonilla de la Sierra, where a frightful murder was committed on the person of a shepherd, named Candido Cornejo, by two men known as Marcos Horente and Augustin Jimenez, the latter being an accomplice, and having been corrupted by the former. Both were condemned to be executed on the first of the month, but Jimenez having been "recommended to mercy," a respite was despatched from Madrid at midnight, on the 29th ult., to suspend his punishment (instead of himself). It seems almost incredible that, even in Spain, a matter, literally of life and death, should have been so outrageously miscalculated; but the fact remains, that when the messenger arrived, he found the unhappy convict and his accomplice had been already executed twelve hours! *Requiescant in pace!* Truly, from beginning to end, this is a *cosa de España.*

Two or three recent cases of assassination, or rather of stabbing, which have come to our knowledge, are of a kind not, we fear, very infrequent in Spain, or *perhaps*, even still nearer home.

One is that of a woman, who, in the middle of the night,

Digitized by Google

and without any apparent provocation, inflicted on her sleeping husband three deadly wounds, in the shoulder, the throat, and the wrist. The cries of the victim aroused their child, a boy of nine years old, who ran screaming to the neighbours, and soon the house was filled with spectators, to whom a horrible sight presented itself, for the bed was one pool of blood. The alarm soon spread to the authorities, who, notwithstanding the hour of the night and the inclemency of the weather, were soon on the spot —the *alcaïde*, the doctors, the secretary of the *Ayuntamiento*, the *alguazil*, a *guardabosque* and attendants; they inspected the place, took depositions, examined the wounds, and seized the murderess, Victoria Sezarra, with the fatal *narvajo* still in her hand.

Another case occurred in the Calle de Peligios in Madrid. It appears that a party of young fellows entered a gambling-house, late at night, in the Calle de Zurita. After amusing themselves there for some time they adjourned to a tavern, where they were joined by some of their companions, and where a dispute arose about their play. Suddenly, and without any provocation, one, Tuerto Guillen, drew his *narvajo*—a weapon of unusual size,—and deliberately stabbed one Menal Salas, inflicting four blows. At the noise which ensued, several *serenos* appeared, as well as *guardias veteranes*. They carried him to a surgeon in the Calle Jacome-trezo, and the wounds having been dressed, they sent for a priest, who administered the last sacraments to the dying man: he was then carried to the hospital, where he shortly expired. The authorities acted on this as on the last-mentioned occasion, the circumstances of bad weather and an unseasonable hour being precisely similar.

We might multiply instances in which the *cuchillo* plays a dastardly part, for it forms, as we have before said, the mode of attack for which Spaniards are (in)famous.

A treacherous murder has just been perpetrated in Val-

Digitized by Google

ladolid under circumstances of peculiar aggravation. A fellow who owed a small sum of money to an old lady living with her servant in the Calle de la Plateria, and having repeatedly promised to pay her, determined at last to rid himself of his creditor. He went to her house under pretence of making her a present of a box of grapes, and sending the servant down with his wife to fetch the fruit, he drew his knife and stabbed her; the wife, meantime, took the servant about from one house of call to another, to give her husband time to do the deed. When they returned to the house, he opened the door with his blood-stained hands; then perceiving that the servant had discovered him, he sent his wife back into the alcove to fetch the knife, while he pinioned and gagged her, after which he stabbed her several times. While this was going on, the alarm had been given, and one of the sons of the murdered woman knocked at the door; hearing the servant screaming, he called up the neighbours, and succeeded in capturing the aggressor, who made no attempt to escape. The assassin and his wife were led to the Deposito Municipal, and the victims to the hospital. Their children, mere babes, three in number, were taken charge of by a friend of the family.

The Royal Library is collected in a fine house which is said once to have belonged to Godoy, Principe de la Paz; it is somewhat sombre within, being fitted up with a dark walnut panelled staircase, &c. It contains 200,000 volumes, and is open for reading—for those who have obtained the permission—from ten till three every day. The street in which it stands, is fortunately not a very frequented thoroughfare, so that the reading-room is remarkably quiet. The books are not of the most modern, and the bulk of the works are patristic and theological, but there are some curious and valuable MSS. Ladies are not admitted among the books! This is so sig-

Digitized by Google

nificant a fact that it would be satisfactory to have its meaning.

The medals and coins are considered a first-rate collection, and the keeper of them is a most painstaking, amiable exhibitor, besides being an intelligent appreciator of the merits of the numismatic curiosities of which he holds the charge. It is said he has upwards of 450,000 in his keeping; they are beautifully arranged in little drawers, neatly labelled, and the curator seemed to know in a moment where to find whatever we asked to see. Nothing could be more obliging than the readiness with which he gratified our curiosity; and the information he gave us respecting the early Spanish and Moorish coins, of which the collection is very complete and very interesting, showed him to be fully master of his subject, and well qualified for his position. But although this may be a very agreeable way of receiving knowledge, it is not a very practical one, and the utility of such a collection must be lamentably crippled by the mode in which they are arranged: classified no doubt they are, and each compartment in which they are stowed away, bears its name and particulars of the contents; but what we have to complain of is that these important keys of history should be "stowed away" at all. Until they are laid side by side in open cases, and catalogued in an available list, they might almost as well not have been preserved, as far as the general public is concerned. The walking and talking catalogue is very useful and very efficient as far as he goes, but he cannot be omnipresent, neither can he be wound up to walk and talk for ever, nor yet can he be expected to hand down his knowledge by oral tradition to his successor. Our informant seemed thoroughly up in the history of coinage in general, and of the coins under his care in particular, and he seemed pleased at our requesting to inspect the moneys of the Moors, of which he assured us his was the best collection

Digitized by Google

existing. They are in gold, copper, and silver, and extend over a long period of time; they are of very flexible metal, and bear on them the name of the king under whom, and that of the place where, they were coined, in Arabic letters,—but no effigy, out of respect for the second commandment. This series of coins serves to define the several periods, events and sovereigns, marking the annals of Moorish history, otherwise tolerably obscure. We examined some Gothic coins not nearly so neatly finished, and among the early Spanish, we saw no gold. Silver, it seems, has often passed current in Spain in ingots; indeed, the power of coining was a privilege only accorded to some favoured cities on special conditions, by their conquerors, and Carthage it was, which first treated the ancient Iberia to a sight of metal manufactured into coin. The curator threw some light upon the condition of the rough little worn-out pieces of money which we told him we were surprised to find in circulation, by informing us that both in ancient and modern times, his countrymen had been content, in default of that civilization and energy which compels other nations to do all things decently and in order, to pass as money, bits of metal of whatever shape, shaven or broken off a bar of metal, all that was required being that it should bear the adequate weight. It struck us that this spoke well for the honesty of a public who would let slip such a fine opportunity of "sweating" the metal that passed in this suggestive form through their hands. *Credat Judæus.* However, he assured us that such was the case, and that these "pieces" have a name, viz., "*macuquinos.*"

There are some valuable antique cameos shown here. On our mentioning our acquaintance with Cardinal Wiseman, whose numismatic knowledge was so extensive, the curator said his Eminence had paid a visit to this museum many years ago, and nothing would give him greater pleasure

Digitized by Google

than to see that distinguished man there again—a very natural wish, but one, alas! destined never to be realized: his Eminence died within a short period of this time.

Being in the Puerta del Sol, we made our way to the Casa de Correos, or post-office, which we found was close at hand. It is a large handsome building at the end of the Calle de Caretas, and in sight of the "Puerta." It was with that department known here as the Lista de Correos—*Gallicè*, Poste Restante—that we had to do, and it certainly is no credit either to the rest of the building or to the Madrileños, or indeed to the strangers who frequent it. A fouler staircase could scarcely be conceived, even in Madrid; and the office, when reached, is in keeping with its approaches, while the thick atmosphere of tobacco is almost blinding:—an unmistakable *cosa de España.*

We cannot say much for organization in Spain generally, nor for the post-office arrangements in particular; indeed, what can we expect of a public office where the clerk in the foreign department, on your presenting a letter addressed to New Zealand, and inquiring on which day it should be posted, replies, "That depends on the department in France in which it is situated." However, we must bear in mind that previously to the year 1766, the very idea of a post-office was unknown in Spain. The officials at the office are totally ignorant of the amount of stamps required for letters and papers to any given place, and invariably refer you to the *estangueros:* these are tobacconists, to whom the monopoly of stamps is accorded; tobacco and stamps being taxed articles, and coming to the vendors direct from the Government offices.

There is one practice, however, connected with the delivery of letters in Spain which deserves commendation, and might be adopted with advantage in other countries. As soon as the mails arrive, the letters are sorted alphabetically, and a list is made out on which the name of each

Digitized by Google

addressee is copied, with a number opposite to it. This strip of paper is, or rather ought to be, immediately wafered up beside that of the previous day—for there are several rows of them, dating back as far as four or five months, that of each day bearing its own date,—and those whose letters are addressed to the "*Lista*," are at liberty to come hither daily, to consult it. As soon as they detect their name they ask for the number or numbers opposite to it, and on showing their passports, the letters are immediately handed. There is a similar process for newspapers, and parcels of printed matter. The arrival of the mail is somewhat irregular, the distribution of it, still more so, and the production of the "*Lista*," as might be expected, a work of time. A Spaniard has no idea of hurrying himself for any one; and no matter how many applicants may be waiting, he takes his time, and only attends to them when it suits his own convenience. The officials are extremely indifferent to the difficulties of foreigners, and either cannot or will not give them any help in the way of information. We frequently remarked, when there, waiting for our letters, that our party was singled out, by French, Germans, and Spaniards themselves, who, unacquainted with the arrangements of the Madrid post-office, seemed to take it into their heads that we were better able than any one else, to tell them all they did not know. As to inquiring of the men behind the grilled window, this did not seem to occur to them in any way. There was always a large proportion of soldiers waiting for letters, and, whoever else might be there, these were invariably served first.

Letters may be posted at the *estancos*, or may be thrown into either of the two gaping lions' mouths, carved in white marble, and fixed on either side of the chief entrance. They look so obsolete and abandoned, that it requires some stretch of faith to believe that they lead to

Digitized by Google

anything but a bottomless pit, besides being eminently suggestive of the fatal lion's mouth of inquisitorial memory, and inseparably connected with our *souvenirs* of Venice, and her mysterious history.

Another large, important, and interesting Government establishment is the Fabrica de Tabacos. If, however, one were to visit this only, and imagine all the rest after this beginning, one would go away with a very erroneous idea of Spanish activity and industry. This monster building offers, in every department, the busiest scenes imaginable: there are similar establishments in all the large towns in the Peninsula; and next to that at Seville, Madrid may boast that hers is the most extensive. 4,500 women and 150 men have constant employment here, and the interior of the vast *atelier* is extremely imposing. Like everything else in this country, it is peculiar to itself. Such *ateliers* would be unusable in other climates; they are, in fact, large, lofty, wide, and therefore spacious, brick corridors, paved with stone: nevertheless we are bound to add that, although the windows are large, the ventilation is detestable; in some of them the atmosphere is pestilential; a respectable English pig would certainly object to it. The cigar-makers—all women—sit at low tables, in parties of four, five, or six, the whole floor around them being strewed with dried tobacco-leaves, which they are engaged in rolling up into cigars. There is a female overseer to every ten or twelve tables, and, besides keeping them closely to their work, her business is to hold a jealous eye over the quantity of material entrusted to each party to make up. The tables are ranged down either side of the *atelier*, and a basin of gum-water, with a brush in it, stands on the middle of each table, one woman being employed in wetting and another in rolling the leaves; when made, the ends are neatly cut. The refuse, after being dried again, and pounded by steam, in another department, is made up

Digitized by Google

into blue paper packets, for cigarettes. When the cigars reach the number of fifty-one they are tied in bundles, and strips of coloured or white paper being pasted round them, they are carried away to be packed. The price of the labour is regulated by the quality of the cigar, the best realizing a real, and the most inferior six cuartos a bundle. The utmost they *can* make is six bundles a day, but few turn out more than five, though they are at their work from 7 a.m. till 9 p.m.; it is therefore very poor pay, at best. After dark the *ateliers* are wretchedly lighted with scanty oil *quinquets* suspended here and there. It is only in the carpentering, case-making and packing departments that *men* are employed. Each case is nailed up, corded, and sealed with a stamped leaden seal, bearing the Government impress.

We find from statistical data, that a century ago tobacco was imported from England by the Spaniards, to be worked up with their own, after which it was coloured with red earth called *almagre*. Their own tobacco was worth five reals the pound; and after it was thus adulterated, they sold the snuff at thirty-two reals the pound. At this rate, the King was clearing an annual revenue of about 600,000 duros. The manufacture at that time gave employment to 12,000 people. The bulk of the tobacco now used in Spain is drawn from Havannah.

Of the history of tobacco as an article of luxury, Major Dalrymple's correspondence offers a curious illustration in a *détail de mœurs*, a century old, which is amusing at the present time, and, moreover, reads like a page out of Sterne.

"Whilst walking in the gardens," says this quaint and original observer, "the Marquis took out of his pocket a little bit of tobacco, rolled it up in a piece of paper, making a cigar" (we should say a cigarette) "of it, and gave it to one of his footmen to light: the servant took his flint and

Digitized by Google

steel, and match and tinder, which every man carries about him, struck a light, took two or three whiffs, and then returned it to his master. It was offered to me and the rest of the company; I declined the favour, but the others smoked about." And he adds, with charming *naïveté*, "This is a very common practice with every person, in *almost* every place." In this respect, Spain then certainly has progressed!

We have been talking of the great Fabrica in the present tense, forgetting that this huge edifice is now a thing of the past, having, since our visit, been destroyed by fire. It was a sad disaster, and threw a large number of families into great want and distress. However, as it is a Government concern, and an important source of revenue, no doubt it will soon be reorganized as before. Meantime, in order to remedy the mischief as much as is possible under these disastrous circumstances, Señor Jareño, the architect, as soon as he heard of the calamity, made the promptest arrangements possible, to obtain the veterinary school, the palace of the Marques de la Vega de Armijo, and the "local de la esposicion de pinturas," within which he transferred as many of the *employés* as he could stow, as a temporary *atelier*. By these laudable exertions, after only a brief delay, the whole number were restored to their employment: charitable subscriptions were organized for the sufferers, as is always the case in Spain on the occasion of any public calamity.

It appears that by far the larger portion of the stock on the premises at the time of the conflagration was the property of the Government, and very little of it belonged to contractors. The manufactured tobacco, already packed, that was destroyed, was estimated at 800,000 reals. It has, however, since been calculated that the loss did not amount to more than 30,000 duros.*

* The consumption of tobacco in France increases in an immense propor-

Digitized by Google

It seems that the engines did good service; and it was a curious as well as a fortunate circumstance that, owing to a portion of the Casino, closely adjoining, being on fire, the assistance which was obtained for the purpose of extinguishing the fire there, rendered valuable assistance to the Fabrica, although the latter edifice, not being insured by that company, had no claim upon their aid. The exertions of all concerned are said to have been beyond all praise. At a town council, held for the purpose, the unbounded thanks of the Government were expressed by the governor of the province to the *alcaldes*, *rejidores*, and all concerned, for the indefatigable zeal with which they had come to the rescue on this memorable occasion.

As soon as the poor operatives were replaced at their work, they organized, among themselves, a meeting, whereat it was arranged that they should meet and attend a public religious function, addressed to our Lady "de Solidad." All the expenses of this elaborate religious service were defrayed by their own spontaneous contributions. The church, though large, was quite full, and all wore their working garb.

We took a walk in the afternoon to the farther ex-

---

tion. In 1815 it was only 53 millions, and in 1858 173 millions, having in that time more than tripled. In a period of forty-seven years it produced to the Treasury a gross sum of 4,386,794,264f., and a net amount of 3,044,078,356f. The sale of tobacco, as is known, is a Government monopoly, and the gross receipts from it are set down in the budget of the present year at 183,000,000f. From that sum, however, must be deducted 15,424,000f. for salaries, 12,437,200f. for rent, buildings, wages to workmen, repairs, supplies of paper, envelopes, salt, and casks; 211,000f. for indemnities to departments in which the plant is cultivated, 205,000f. for fees to exports, 43,009,000f. for purchase of foreign and native tobacco, and 96,933f. for extraordinary services; total, 57,501,533f., thus leaving a balance of 125,498,467f. to the Treasury. The increase in the price of tobacco just imposed will raise the receipts, it is estimated, to about 220,000,000f.

Digitized by Google

tremity of the Prado, to see the Mint. It stands in a new and handsome *boulevard* which is in course of rapid construction, and is itself a fine modern building, of extensive dimensions, very recently finished. It has been in use about five years, and is certainly one of the most striking public edifices in Madrid. It is built of red brick and stone mixed, and has an oak roof with widely projecting eaves. It stands on a raised terrace, and has a very imposing aspect. We were admitted with great readiness and good-nature, but, as usual on these occasions, the officials manifested some little surprise that we should consider it a sight worth seeing. One of the superintendents conducted us through the several *ateliers*, where we saw, in regular order, all the various processes: beginning with melting the silver in earthen crucibles inside the furnaces, then pouring out the white-hot liquid, by means of a powerful forceps to grasp the vessel, into moulds. The men are protected by wet leather aprons and leather gauntlets, also kept soaking wet, on account of the great heat. These cylindrical lumps of silver, still red-hot, are beaten with powerful iron mallets on the stone floor, and after being reduced into ingots, or bars, are rolled, by steam cylinders, into sheets of the thickness required for the coin about to be struck. All, in fact, is proceeded with in precisely the same manner as in the mints of Paris and London, and the coin is cut out of it by steam-worked machinery. The weighing, cleansing and stamping are ingenious operations, executed with great nicety. In the latter the two sides are stamped and the edge is milled all round, by one stroke of the machine.

Some of the machinery is French, some English, and that used for stamping was made at Barcelona.

The gold coinage is executed here, and by a precisely similar process, but it does not take place so often. The copper, as we have already described, is coined at Segovia.

Digitized by Google

A separate department of this building is appropriated to the printing of stamps.

The current coins of Spain, at the present time, are in a very debatable state. Some of the pieces are rubbed so smooth that no power, earthly or unearthly, can decipher the image and superscription. The four-real and five-real pieces are so much alike that they are a continual cause of error and dispute, and the values into which the money is divided are puzzling in the extreme.

The copper coinage, up to this time in use, is most extraordinary. Some of the impressions on pieces have no resemblance to anything that one might expect to find on them; they seem to have been subjected to the "question" until all resemblance to their former selves has been effaced by the process. Some of the cuartos retain neither the signs nor even the form of a coin; they are mere shapeless laminæ of copper, and so thin that they are oftener curled than flat. The onzas, or sixteen dura pieces, are a handsome gold coin, but useless for all practical purposes, and as it is rare to find any one who can give change for one, they are now being withdrawn from the circulation. It is very difficult to get any, even the smallest, gold piece changed, and you can scarce offer an Isabellino across a counter without exciting suspicion; if you are not known, it is either refused, or the shopkeeper will send out to ascertain if it be good. In some of the provinces—Andalusia, for example—there is no possibility of passing a piece if it should have the slightest hole in it, or if it should be chipped in the edge.

There is a great deal of bad and false money in circulation, and as it is almost impossible not to suppose the *good* money may be bad, from its very suspicious appearance, it is very difficult to avoid getting it sometimes. It is well to know that there is no security in taking money from a banker, who is just as likely to be the means

Digitized by Google

of circulating spurious pieces as any tradesman. We can speak from experience on this subject, as we ourselves received from a banker in Madrid a *very* bad Isabellino. The loss of the money, in such a way, is always vexatious, but it was far more annoying to have it discourteously returned with a suspicious look by the money-taker at the railway station, where we unconsciously tendered it in payment. We wasted a great deal of time and paper in useless remonstrance with the firm, and it was only on writing peremptorily, with the assurance (which we fully intended carrying out) that we should certainly expose them, in order to deter others from dealing with them, that they finally made an abject but reluctant restitution. A banker, in Madrid, lives in a large handsome house, and keeps his carriage, but he is a different class of man from a London banker, who, if he be successful in his calling, matches with the daughters of our noblest houses, and may even fraternize with our peers of the realm. There are many people, who, in their dealings with a London firm, waive the good old practical rule of "counting money even after one's father," and never find their confidence abused. Let them beware how they trust a Spanish banker—"*cave canem.*" The instance we have just mentioned was not a solitary one; at Cordova, if the banker did not give us a *bad* piece, he slipped among our change defaced gold pieces, which, in our ignorance of Spanish provincial customs, we accepted without observing them, but afterwards found could not be passed in that province; we subsequently got rid of them in Madrid, but not without some trouble.

The Bolsa, or Royal Exchange of Madrid, was established in 1831. It is an ugly, insignificant building, stowed away in a back street, with a very suggestive name, "Calle del Desengaño," and no doubt it proves a practical *désenchantement* to all speculators in the funds of the country. We

Digitized by Google

may recall here Gavarni's inimitable apologue of the cock, with crest and tail erect, strutting up the steps of the Paris Bourse, his lofty head full of the visions of the fortune his brain has already achieved for him, and all his feathers standing out in self-conscious anticipation of the grand position he will soon occupy in the world: this was "*Comment on y entre;*" the *revers de la médaille* contains the moral: the next time, he is seen descending the steps of the back door, three at a time, crest-fallen and tailless! without so much as a bit of down on his back. Alas! "*voilà comment on en sort!*" If ever such an illustration would apply in all its force, it must be in the Calle del Desengaño; victims more thoroughly *plumés* could scarcely be found, for of all the evidences of the transitionary state of Spain, that founded on her financial condition is the least promising.

This edifice should be styled "The Temple of Hope Deferred."

The Bolsa is as shabby and unattractive as the Exchange of London and the Bourse of Paris are handsome and prosperous-looking; the façade is low and old-fashioned; there is a small lodge on each side the entrance, out of one of which starts the "*janitor aulæ,*" to demand your *paragua*, as you enter; over the centre is a clock, and the paved passage through which you pass leads to a small covered court where all the financial business is transacted.* The hours are from ten to three o'clock. On the left—and a sinister-looking place it is—is the Despacho de la Deuda Publica; we almost expect to see over its gloomy and forbidding portal some kindly warning which might deter the

* Within the precincts of the Bolsa is a small occasional place of business called the "Balsin," where on Sundays and *fiestas*, when the official place is closed, "City men" meet to transact their affairs. Negotiations effected here are thoroughly recognized, and are quoted quite openly next day. The Jews are said to be the instigators of this measure of financial economy.

Digitized by Google

unwary from expecting any satisfactory business will ever be despatched there. It is the burial-place of hope, but has not even the decent superficies of a whited sepulchre.

The public debt naturally reminds one of private insolvencies, so turning hence we betook ourselves up to the Puerta Sta. Barbara, where stands the debtors' prison. It is called the "Carcel de Villa," and contains not only the debtors, but the criminals of all shades belonging to Madrid, and besides securing these, serves as a House of Correction for boys from eight to sixteen years of age.

Having visited all the prisons in London, besides others in England, all those in Paris, many in the French provinces, several in Belgium, and a few in Italy, we consider ourselves in the light of connoisseurs, capable of giving an opinion on the subject, and can safely say that we were wholly unprepared for the interior which here presented itself to our view. Our experience of prison-life had never revealed to us anything so forbidding, and so totally unlike what any establishment under the supervision of Government ought to be. The domestic uncleanness we met with, within those great gaunt walls, was only to be rivalled by the moral turpitude of their denizens; and the lax, irregular discipline by which the place is (mis)ruled was in harmonious discord with the rest.

We found the door open, and although there were two sentinels pacing before the entrance, we passed in unmolested; these worthies contented themselves with halting for a moment, staring at us, and then continued their oscillations as before; meantime we proceeded through the *portone* into a paved passage, and beneath a tolerably lofty archway, passed on till we came to a door on either side; one of these led to a staircase, but we turned to the other, our curiosity being piqued by a deafening din of numerous voices proceeding from that direction: all were talking at once in the coarsest and hoarsest of tones;

Digitized by Google

women's voices were mingled with those of men, and each seemed to be doing his best to top the others; add to this that the place whence the sound issued gave back a loud reverberating echo, and the effect may be imagined. The door, as it yielded to our push, revealed the mystery. We found ourselves in a long, lofty, wide, and particularly dirty hall, divided into three compartments by railed partitions, and we at once recognized it as the *parloir*.

Behind the farthest of these partitions, and stretching through the bars as far as the width would admit, like wild beasts in a cage, were eighty to a hundred prisoners bawling at the very loudest pitch of their lungs,—

" . . . ostia centum
Unde ruunt totidem voces."

In the intermediate compartment, according to the custom established in the *parloirs* of all criminal jails, were stationed two sentinels, who walked imperturbably up and down this grilled corridor, while outside the third grating were collected the friends and relatives who had come to avail themselves of the questionable privileges of the "visiting day," and were responsively eager and clamorous in their demonstrations.

It was a strange sight to contemplate, and many a touching episode might have been disentangled from the incidents which met our gaze. Grey-haired fathers we saw, and profligate sons, and aged mothers, whose wretched homes were made yet more desolate and destitute by the absence of those to whom they had a right to look in decrepitude and infirmity for some return of the care lavished on their helpless infant years. Wives there were, visiting their husbands, brothers and boon companions jesting and making light of a position only too familiar to themselves: the yells, the altercations, and, alas! also the lamentations of those united cries formed an unearthly and lugubrious record. Tales of woe and breaking hearts

Digitized by Google

there must have been mingled with all that brawling and vehemence: but it was not possible to get at any details, or even to discover what class of crime had chiefly contributed to fill this repulsive dungeon; the organization of such places in Spain is so imperfect that facts have rather to be guessed at than ascertained. We gathered, however, that besides these who were merely the *prévenus* or accused, this prison contains convicts condemned to periods of incarceration varying from two to twenty years. This was the "criminal" department.

Having escaped from this den of abomination, misery, and crime, we entered the other door, and ascended the stairs; on the first floor we found a rough-looking office, where three stout, solemn-looking book-keepers — two seated at tables, and one behind an office-desk — seemed engaged in some registering occupation. One wore spectacles, and had a wise, owl-like expression, and all three looked grave and consequential. They raised their eyes inquiringly as we entered, and the most important-looking peered at us over his glasses as if thoroughly puzzled; —perhaps he thought we had come to deliver ourselves up to justice! We soon put an end to his mystification by telling him we should be much obliged if he would give us a permission to see the prison. "To *see* the prison?" said he, with an air which showed he was totally incapable of taking in the idea. "Yes," reiterated we, "to see, to look over, to visit, the prison." "If I understand you," replied he, "you want to have access to the wards and cells, to go up and down stairs, and inspect the prisoners, and the house, and perhaps the kitchen, and all the rest. Well, it's a strange idea, but I have no wish to prevent you if you find any satisfaction in it;" and the three officials looked at each other, and smiled at the novel and comical notion. He motioned us politely out,

Digitized by Google

and then called a jailer, who appeared with a bunch of keys on a large ring, as if by an after-thought he had recollected that there would be some of the doors we should not be able to get through.

Our guide conducted us to the debtors' department, not unlike some of the debtors' prisons in Paris in its arrangements, but far more dirty. The prisoners have rooms to themselves, with alcoves for their beds. These rooms open from a common corridor, to which all have access, and here they walk about with a *nonchalant* air, habited in loose dressing-gowns and smoking-caps, visiting each other in their rooms, and seeming altogether to lead a very free and easy life; the majority of them were youngish men, but they did not look very happy.

The juvenile department answers to the prison of La Petite Roquette, but what a complete contrast in the management! and what would the good and venerable *aumônier*, Père Crose,—the father of his little captives—say to so sad a state of things as we found here!

There is, it is true, a school for the education of the infant prisoners, but there is no separation of any kind between those who have committed slight and those who have perpetrated grave offences. We saw an interesting little fellow of eleven, who was committed on the previous day, for killing a goat. Their performances in school were tolerably satisfactory; some wore a vicious expression, others appeared simple; there was scarcely a good-looking face among them.

There are in Madrid ten prisons, among which we reckon the Penitentiary, or Recogidas de Sta. Maria Magdalena. There is another Carcel correccional de jóvenes, besides the one we have named as included in the Carcel de Villa, the Model Prison, said to be a great improvement on the old system, San Nicolas de Barri, the Casa de la Galéra, the

Digitized by Google

Carcel de Vagos—a sort of workhouse,—and the Military Prison.*

* That a political prison might easily be filled, seems probable from the following curious catalogue of insurrections in the Spanish Peninsula which have taken place since 1808:—

On the 2nd May—*the Dos Mayo*—of that year, the standard of independence was raised by Daviz Velarde and Ruiz.

In 1814, General Mina headed a military outbreak to re-establish the Constitution of 1802.

1820, Occurred Riego's famous attempt to proclaim the same constitution.

1822, Four battalions of the Royal Guard appeared in arms in favour of absolutism.

1824, A new insurrection broke out against Ferdinand VII., who was charged with being a Freemason because he had not re-established the Inquisition; on the other hand, in the latter part of the same reign, some insurgents demanded the Constitution of 1812, and were joined by the infantry in garrison at Corunna. On the death of the King arose the disturbance of Zumalacarreguy, who, with Torreguy and other chiefs, proclaimed Don Carlos.

1835, Cardero endeavoured, at the head of a battalion, to substitute the Constitution for the "Statuto."

1836, 3,000 men of the garrison at La Granja, at the orders of three sergeants, compelled Queen Christina to take an oath to the Constitution of 1812.

1838, It was the turn of Narvaez and Cordora, who attempted at Seville a retrograde movement which failed.

1840, The army, under the orders of Espartero, pronounced against the regency of Queen Christina.

1841, A movement in her favour took place at Madrid, Pamplona, and Zaragoza.

1843, Occurred another, in which Generals Serrano, Prim, Ortega, and Narvaez joined. In the same year, Catalonia endeavoured to establish a central junta.

1844, Alicante declared in favour of Espartero. Some months after, General Zurbano tried to restore the Constitution of 1837.

1846, All the garrisons of Galicia united in favour of the same object, which had replaced that of 1812 in the hearts of the insurgents.

1848, Catalonia strove for the same end. In the month of May the Commandant, Buceta, at the head of the Regiment of Spain, caused some disturbances; later a battalion and three squadrons appeared in arms at Seville against the Constitution of 1845.

Digitized by Google

The present "Audiencia," in the Atocha Street, was formerly a state prison, built in the time of Philip IV., this fact being testified to, by the inscription which remains over the door, and which would apply admirably to a British gaol, intimating, as it does, that it was constructed for the "security and *comfort*" of its inmates.

We thought the Town Hall of Madrid a very characteristic building, and not unpicturesque; it is long for its height, being only of two stories, but it has curious square towers at the corners, with rising slated roofs; the staircase is handsome, and the halls within are spacious; there is a thoroughfare through it. Near it is an antiquated mansion, which they told us was formerly the town residence of Cardinal Jimenes, and hard by is another historical building, called the Torre de Lujanes, recorded in the annals of France as the prison where their King Francis I. was kept in durance vile by his victor, Charles Quint, during his celebrated captivity.

There were formerly, it appears, at several of the large

In 1854, Brigadier Horé, at Zaragoza, at the head of his regiment, made a special pronunciamiento of grievances, but was put down. On the 28th June, Dulce and O'Donnell disembarrassed the throne of the Camarara which dishonoured it.

1856, It was the turn of Commandant Corrales, who proclaimed Charles VI. at Zaragoza. In July of the same year General Rios, Commandant of Girona, pronounced in favour of the constituent Cortes. Several other movements took place with the same view.

1859, Some sergeants of Alicante and Seville were executed for endeavouring to establish a republic.

1860, General Ortega, Captain-General of the Balearic Islands, proclaimed the reign of the Conde de Montemolin.

1865, Took place at Valencia a movement so hastily conducted, that the leaders did not give themselves time to issue a programme.

1866, Came on the affair of General Prim, with its unsuccessful issue.

This list may be taken as an historical comment on the excitability of popular feeling in the matter of politics.

Digitized by Google

cities in Spain, and more especially at Madrid, manufactories of tapestry, glass, and china, similar to those of Sèvres, Gobelines, Potsdam, and Petersburg, under the special patronage of Royalty. But whereas in other countries they live and flourish, here they are obsolete, a thing of the past, having almost entirely disappeared; the Fabrica of tapestry at Madrid can only be said to exist, for it exhibits scarcely any vitality, and besides the state of torpidity into which it has fallen, it has lost its distinguishing characteristic, that of being the exclusive property of the Crown.

Carpets and hangings are still manufactured there, and orders are executed—in the course of time—for those who can afford so expensive a luxury as one of these costly *alfombras*. These carpets are extremely thick and substantial; they are of velvet pile, and are cut while on the roller, with shears, like the Gobelines carpets. The patterns are handsome, the colours rich, and the quality such as to insure durability; they are so thick that they will bear to be recut or mown as often as four times. They are said to wear for fifty years, but the price is fabulous, by far exceeding even those of the Gobelines carpets. All the operatives live on the premises, which are very extensive; but there are times when there is little or nothing to do, and then they are glad to take employment elsewhere. We saw one or two large carpets in the loom *in medias res*, no one was at work upon them, and we could not get any satisfactory information about them. In the other looms were several old carpets sent there to be repaired and recut, previously to being cleaned: the process of restoration seems to be chiefly undertaken at this season of the year. The building is curious in external appearance, being very low, but covering a good deal of ground; it has no pretensions, and stands just outside the Puerta Santa Barbara.

Digitized by Google

Another of these royal establishments is the Imprenta Real, in the Calle de Carretas, where may be seen fine specimens, whether of typography or engraving. Among the latter are to be found copies of the pictures in the Museo, which have been engraved; but as the engraving is the work of the natives, we were not surprised to observe how very indifferent was the execution. There has been an improvement of late years in those productions, in the execution of which, foreigners—chiefly French—are engaged. This is not the kind of employment at which a Spaniard is likely to excel, and the fact is certain that he rarely succeeds; all art, however, and this among the rest, is on the advance.

Among public edifices the various *cuarteles*, or barracks, in Madrid, are snug, comfortable places, though not quite so luxurious as those of France. The new barracks on the Montaña del Principe Pio form a magnificent building, of very monumental character, and constitute a striking feature in the general outline of the city.



Digitized by Google

CHAPTER III.

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS, CHURCHES, CEREMONIES, ETC.

"A little sorrowful, deserted thing,
Begot of love, and yet no love begetting;
Guiltless of shame, and yet for shame to wring:
And too soon banished from a mother's petting,
To churlish nurture and the wide world's fretting,
For alien pity and unnatural care.
* * * * * *
Pity it was to see those frequent tears
Falling unheeded from his friendless eyes,
There was such beauty in those twin blue spheres
As any mother's heart might leap to prize."

HOOD.

"Non agnamve sinu pigeat fœtumve capellæ
Desertum, oblitâ matre, referre domum."

TIBULLUS.

THE capital of Spain is more bountifully supplied with charitable institutions than is by any means generally supposed. There are in Madrid of hospitals alone, twenty save one,—the Hospital General, that of La Pasion, of Anton-Martin, of La Concepcion, of the Buen Suceso, of Monserral, of El Ponteficio, of La Princesa, of La Misericordia, of Buen-dicha, of SS. Pedro, Firmin, Andrés, Antonio de los Portugueses, Luis de los Franceses, of the Orden Tercera, of Nuestra Señora de la Novena, the

Digitized by Google

Hospital General Militar, and a most important and useful one known as the Convalecencia. Besides this active and practical relief for one form of suffering alone, Madrid affords some useful moral machinery in charitable local societies. Each parish owns an association and district-societies for the purpose of relieving the poor by domiciliary visits. There are four municipal *hospicios*,—that of San Fernando; the Carmen; the Foundling, or Casa de Niños Expositos; San Bernardino y Desamperados; besides these are many foundations due to private charity.

To give an idea of the activity of this latter institution, we may state that, at the end of last October, there were under its roof 419 boys; in November, 16 were admitted; 4 were apprenticed and 4 died; at the beginning of December the house held 429.

We find in addition many other benevolent associations and philanthropic societies, as the Monte de Piedad; La Caja de Ahorros, or Savings Bank; El Posito; La Sociedad del Buen Pastor, and others.*

It would not have been possible, or indeed in any way necessary, to visit all these; we therefore contented ourselves with making acquaintance with a few of the principal, by way of judging of the rest, and of forming some opinion as to the state of this phase of life in Madrid.

Foundling hospitals, of larger or smaller calibre, exist in every town in the Peninsula, and are generally very fairly organized. They are always well filled, and thus far cer-

* We ought not to omit mention of the unobtrusive but very extensive benevolence exercised in Madrid, and indeed throughout Spain, on the occasion of any public calamity. We had, recently, occasion to admire the wonderful alacrity with which the *empresas* of theatres, of bull-fights, and of public amusements of all sorts, came forward to supply funds for the assistance of the sufferers from the disastrous inundations of Valencia, and the terrible fire at the Fabrica de Tabacos, as well as under other similar misfortunes.

Digitized by Google

tainly justify the great argument used against them that they offer facilities to crime. At the same time, we cannot admit that this circumstance in any way demonstrates that they encourage or contribute to increase it, for the number of illegitimate children born here is not greater than elsewhere, though the number that survive birth and escape murder is undoubtedly more considerable. All, therefore, that can be proved against foundling institutions is, that they do not prevent the birth, but that they do prevent the massacre, of illegitimate children, who—*mirabile dictu*—seem to come into the world just the same whether there be foundling hospitals or not.

The Madrid Foundling is a building of tolerable extent, though not of any architectural magnificence. It is well suited to the purpose, and is commodious within. Its principal entrance is in the Calle de los Embajadores. The "*tour*" is in the wall close to the door, and beside it is suspended a bell, which the depositor of the infant is expected to ring on abandoning the child within it. Above this receptacle is an inscription, supposed to express the cry of the unfortunate little "*paroissiens du 13me arrondissement*,"—"*Abandonado por mis padres, la caridad mi recogiò.*" Twenty-two sisters of S. Vincent de Paul have the charge of this house, which receives upwards of a thousand children. The number of children brought into the house each day, varies from one to ten; to-day eight had come in, and no day ever passes without at least one arrival. No inquiries are ever made respecting the foundlings, but many of them are sent in, marked, or have some token attached to them, and it is by no means unusual, after they are reared and educated, to find they are reclaimed by their parents; others are sought out by their parents, when some unlooked-for amelioration in their circumstances enables them to support their offspring. It is a very remarkable fact that no mother ever abandons

Digitized by Google

her child to the care of an institution until the struggle she makes to bring it up herself becomes utterly hopeless. It is said that, however indolent by constitution, a Spanish woman's nature becomes energetic when she is called upon to exert herself for this purpose.

There are thirty wet-nurses in the house, and each wet-nurse has the charge of two children; those who are strong enough are brought up by hand; the cost of nursing one of these children is six duros a month.

The dormitory is a long wide corridor, furnished down either side with pretty oval bassinettes made to swing. They are lined with pink, and gracefully draped with fringed and figured muslin curtains, supported by a curled hook. They are elegant little cribs, and seem out of character with the dubious origin of their infant occupants, who are mostly (supposed to be) of the lowest class, and certainly, to judge by their aspect, are the plainest, coarsest, and most uninteresting little animals that can be imagined to belong to the human race.

The dormitories, refectories, and *ateliers* into which the children are removed when older, are tolerably well kept. Their clothes are exceedingly neat, and liberally abundant, and the *lingerie* is a model of order. The kitchen is perhaps the least satisfactory department of the establishment, but this is to be expected in Spain. They showed us a machine for slicing the bread into thin shavings for soup, which they evidently regarded as a masterpiece of mechanism. It came from France, and we saw duplicates of it in all the public institutions we visited in Spain. The food is such as the country affords, and such as the habits of the people have rendered admissible, but it would not be palatable to English taste.

At seven years of age the children begin to be instructed in "book-learning," and are also apprenticed to a trade. For the former purpose there is a *colegio* attached to the

Digitized by Google

house, and for the latter a series of *ateliers*, where they may learn any trade for which they show any aptitude. The proceeds of their work contribute to the support of the house. This establishment is for girls, and there is a similar one for boys, called San Bernardino y Desamperados.

Close by is a *maison d'accouchement* under the dedication of Nuestra Señora de la Esperanza, and the singular fact that the *plebs* have extemporized for it the name of "El Pecado Mortal" is a testimony to the popular feeling on the subject. It is very much the fashion to cry out against the immorality of Continental nations as distinguished from our own country, and to regard them, in a matter-of-course way, as being infinitely below us in the moral scale. It is customary to point to some of their institutions in confirmation of this view, and to make a special outcry against the vice which has given rise to the establishment of lying-in and foundling hospitals. Of the deficiency of these in our country we are accustomed to make an utterly illogical boast, for as long as our country remains infamous for infanticide—bearing away in this the palm from every other country in the world—it is mere hypocrisy to pretend to think that we do not need their valuable intervention. A very sapient writer in one of our popular periodicals, has recently remarked that the introduction of foundling hospitals into this country would "remove one great protection to chastity." We regret we cannot agree with him, and should be thankful if he would point out the "chastity" we are to protect. "*Dans quel coin obscur cette vertu, est-elle allé se nicher?*" We do not find it in large cities,—take London, Edinburgh, or Belfast, where vice is proverbially, not prevalent, but rampant; neither do we discover it in manufacturing towns, such as Liverpool, Birmingham, or even Droitwich—let our readers go and consult the statistics of *that* small spot,—nor yet in mining

Digitized by Google

localities, where the opportunities are such as almost to suggest vice where it does not already exist; nor any more, alas! in rural parishes, where a woman is scarcely ever made a wife unless she be first a mother. We do not exactly see in what respect Continental countries go beyond our own in this form of criminality, and the only *perceptible* difference consists in that, while in the former, mothers avail themselves of the opportunity which Christian charity has provided for the maintenance and education of their offspring, who thus have as good a chance of success in life as any other member of the community, in the latter, the same class of unhappy beings, failing to find a similar resource, are thrown on the guilty alternative of murdering, or hiring an assassin to dispose of their hapless children. Such horrors are of too recent date in the criminal annals of our own country to need further allusion.

Where opinions are so divided already, we content ourselves with pointing to facts, and we accordingly protest against the theory that foundling hospitals produce the moral evil they are designed to cure; all precedent is opposed to it, and we reserve the privilege of maintaining our conviction until those who support that fallacious view can point out to us a country where there are no foundling hospitals, and, at the same time, no infanticides. We call attention to the fact, that however prevalent may be the crime of murder in Spain—and for this we have already accounted,—that of infanticide is absolutely UNKNOWN in the Peninsula: whereas as far as present experience goes, that country which possesses none of these institutions is disgraced with the heaviest charge of this frightful crime. As we cannot reform human nature, let us at least do what we can to avert the consequences of its frailties, and while preventing the additional criminality, save the lives, and educate to some useful purpose the minds of the hapless children, who must

Digitized by Google

otherwise either materially or morally become the victims of their unhappy position.

This house, like the other benevolent institutions, is supported by the subscriptions of the charitable, and when these prove insufficient, recourse is had to theatrical representations, which are very frequently given for the benefit of various charities; *corridas de toros* are frequently held for the same purpose; indeed, at *all* the *funciones*, after the expenses are paid, the surplus is divided between the hospitals.*

Immediately adjoining the house of the "Niñas Expositas" stands that of Sta. Maria Magdalena, otherwise called "Las Recogidas." It is a large house, newly built, airy, and well constructed, for the reception of *filles répenties*. There are seven sisters of S. Vincent, and at the present time sixty inmates. These are of two classes—gratuitous inmates, who share a common dormitory and a common day-ward; and a higher class, who pay from six to ten reals a day, according to whether they are or are not supplied with board. The strictest incognito is observed regarding their individuality in both cases; even the sisters never know their real names, nor are they aware whence they come and whither they go.

In the common dormitory a name such as Iñez, Carmen, or Ximena is painted on a little board suspended over each bed, and those occupants who successively use it, adopt, for the time being, the name thereon inscribed, and are recognized in the house by no other.

The private rooms are accommodated with one, two, or three beds; the beds are within draped or partitioned alcoves, and those who prefer to be quite alone can have

* In Paris a tithe, or 10me of the profits made by the theatres every night, is given to supply a fund for the hospitals. A municipal officer presides each night over the money-taker's proceedings at each house, to check the amounts received.

Digitized by Google

a single-bedded room. Those who are received into the private rooms, and are therefore exempted from using the day-ward of the lower class, occupy their own room in the daytime. Each room is supplied with a bell, and the nuns attend upon them. Two months is the usual period of their sojourn, but they are at liberty to remain longer. There is a chaplain attached to the institution; and the chapel, which is very handsomely built, adjoins it.

At the corner of the Prado and the Calle de Atocha stands the Hospital General, a fine old building of great extent. It is finely proportioned, and everything connected with it is on a large scale. The wall enclosing it extends along the Prado for some distance, and the house, built round a *patio*, is entered from the Calle de Atocha. The *patio* is planted with shrubs and flowers, and has a fountain in the centre; there is a cloister round it, above which run glazed galleries on the upper floors. These corridors are very lofty, and of great width; they are substantially paved with asphalte, and open into the various wards. Part of this building is very old, and owes its existence to Charles Quint: it was continued by Philip II., and completed by Charles III., and is the poor-house of the whole province. Zaragoza offers a similar refuge to the destitute.

We were shown over it by one of the brothers of S. Vincent, of whom there are nineteen in the house, besides forty-four sisters of the same order. He was a stout, hearty old fellow of between fifty and sixty years of age, and looked like the conventional monks we see in pictures of well-to-do monasteries; he was exceedingly obliging, and seemed to have a faint idea of England, as some remote world which had nothing in common with his own country; his manner was very gracious and patronizing, and he testified a most condescending affability in imparting information, evidently considering us in the light of *yahoos* who

Digitized by Google

must be as ignorant of life in general as we were of the particulars of this institution. However, we got on very well with him, and ascertained all we wished to hear, which we suspect pretty well exhausted his stock of knowledge. We visited the medical and surgical wards, and were agreeably surprised to find them admirably constructed for ventilation, owing chiefly, however, to their spacious dimensions; they are floored with asphalte, and very clean. At the extremity of each ward, containing about fifty beds, there is an altar or chapel, where mass is occasionally celebrated. There are twelve chaplains to the house, which receives 2,000 poor, and to each ward there is a doctor and surgeon.

Besides the paupers, who are admitted gratuitously, there are rooms of a better description for inmates of both sexes, who may wish for accommodation in the hospital department. In these wards the floors are tiled, and the beds, which vary in number from three to six or eight, are draped with white curtains, and divided from each other by draperies of the same description. Some of these pay six, and some ten reals a day. The paupers receive meat, such as it is, twice a day. It is of about the same quality as people of that class would be able to get in their own homes, but not much better than the "clods and stickings" provided in an English workhouse. The *almuerzo*, or breakfast, is administered at eleven, and the *cena* at eight. All the food is of the very best description to be procured here, and seems abundant. The bread, which is white as snow, and of the first quality, is supplied from the *horno*, but the chocolate is manufactured on the premises daily. It looked most excellent. Rice, which is tolerably reasonable in price, being largely grown in Valencia, is extensively used here; so are other grains, such as semolina, sago, &c.; and we saw considerable stores of *garbanzos*, or dried peas, haricot beans, which answer to potatoes in England,

Digitized by Google

&c. Great order prevailed in the dispensing department, and all these stores were kept, in the neatest way, in drawers, ticketed with the names of their contents.

The wards appropriated to the *locos*, or lunatics, are on the ground-floor. The system on which they are managed does not seem to partake of any of the modern improvements adopted in our own country, in France, or Belgium, but they are, apparently, very kindly treated. The place is bare, and brick-floored, and looks as if it would be very cold in winter, but it is tolerably tidy. The furniture is of the plainest and roughest description. They are all kept together in one large room, except the *furiosos*, who are confined separately, in cages; these, as it happened, were all quiet, most of them being in bed; the others were at breakfast,—the men in one large room, the women in another. Besides the Sisters and Brethren, there is a considerable number of lay attendants, and there were several in these wards, many of the unfortunate inmates, of both sexes, requiring to be fed. The men sat on benches round the room, the women on what is called a "gallery," being a series of benches one above the other. Neither had any table, and they held their basins in their laps, and fed themselves more or less quietly. Some did not notice us, others appeared to eye us with great curiosity, and even went so far as to make confidential signs and nods; one poor fellow walked deliberately up to us, and, after a scrutinizing glance, which took our party in from head to foot, he turned to one of his fellow-patients and observed, "*Esos señores son Ingleses*,"—rather a shrewd guess, seeing that his saner fellow-countrymen always persisted we were Neapolitans. He had evidently a great deal more to say on the subject, but was called to order, in a very gentle way, by his keeper. We were taken into the *pharmacie*, the linen-room, the kitchens, the washhouse, where all the washing is performed by men. All these several depart-

Digitized by Google

ments were under the care of Sisters. On the whole, we were very much pleased with the aspect of this institution. Besides the architectural picturesqueness of the building and the arrangement of the glazed *solanos* round the courts, there was an air of primitive and substantial comfort in all the various departments; even the sick-wards seemed well attended, and there was not more misery in those narrow cribs than one meets in the hospital wards of other countries; their deaths do not show a higher average in proportion to the number of their inmates, and they appear to be treated with a great deal more kindness and consideration than we have often observed elsewhere.*

Besides this provincial establishment there are many others in Madrid, the results of private benevolence. We passed to-day, in the Atocha Street, a homely-looking house which, from several indications, we guessed to be a house of charity of some sort. We entered; and, on requesting to see the interior arrangements, we were shown in with the most amiable alacrity, albeit our application was evidently an unusual one.

This was the Hospicio de Sta. Maria del Carmen, founded about a hundred and fifty years ago, and endowed by a Spanish nobleman, for the reception of two hundred aged and infirm men and twenty idiot children. Among them are several lunatics, but none who are violent are admitted. The house is entirely under the management of sisters of the order of S. Vincent, of whom there are twenty-two in the house. It very much resembles a house of "Little Sisters of the Poor," but it is greatly wanting in comfort and cleanliness. The floors

* The following official report, dated December last, will give an idea of the statistics of this institution:—

"At the end of October there were in the Hospital General 1,533 patients: 32 were taken in in November, 6 went out convalescent, 10 died. On the 1st December there were 1,549 patients."

Digitized by Google

are of brick, and the ventilation not very first-rate, the house being old and ill-constructed for the purpose it serves. Neither here nor at the Hospital General are there any curtains to the beds; but between the beds a circular rod supports a white drapery, intended, when drawn, to form a little dressing-place round the locker which stands between every two beds.

The kitchen is the cleanest part of the house, and looked comfortable and genial, with its paved floor and its large stove in the middle of the same, from which issued the bright and smoking copper caldrons. They showed us, with some pride, a new acquisition, which they evidently considered would be a novelty to us also, being neither more nor less than a boiler with a tap! They have no idea of a self-supplying apparatus, and thought it canny to have the *fuente* of cold water handy to fill it from. They, too, had one of the machines we mentioned before, for slicing bread into shavings for soup. The diet of the inmates is meat daily, soup, *soupe au lait*, and, besides fresh vegetables, rice, peas, and haricots. In the morning and evening the meal consists of chocolate. Here also is used the same fine white bread. They have a chapel, and two chaplains; sometimes mass is celebrated at the small altars which adorn the extremity of each ward. The house stands in a garden, where the old people toddle about and bask in the sun. The Sisters seem very kind to them, and they appear grateful.

Close by this, in the same street, is an infant school, which we thought it well to see. Some old women sat gossiping in the doorway, and to our inquiry, as to whether they thought we could see it, they replied that they had no doubt we could, but that there was nothing to see, and it is evident the applications for such permissions are not very frequent. They recommended us to go in, and showed us the way to the schoolroom, down a long cor

Digitized by Google

ridor; when near the end we turned to the right, and found ourselves in a short but broad passage, hung on either side with model drawings of mathematical and other figures, maps, plans of towns, elementary drawings for instruction in naval architecture, building, natural history, &c., &c.; in the midst of this on the left was another opening, leading into the schoolroom, where school was going on. The children were all seated in the gallery in rows, and were repeating precisely the same versified lessons, in grammar, history, mechanics, &c., which we hear in other infant schools, in other languages. Each sentence was repeated in chorus as usual, and the various other processes they afterwards went through seemed precisely the same. The master and mistress, who were particularly intelligent, and apparently conscientious people, seemed much pleased at exhibiting the capabilities of their youthful pupils before us, and made them show off some of their best rhymes, &c., for our edification. There were about 150 of these children, boys and girls, all under seven; the types were curious and suggestive, and the *coup d'œil* was strikingly different from a *degrés* full of French *espiégles*, or a "gallery" filled with fair, chubby, golden-haired English children: the little pupils quite understood they were expected to do their very best, and entered with spirit into the exhibition: at its close, after marching them all, down and round the school to a rhyme to which they trod in measured cadence, he dismissed them. The whole of this room was hung round with pictures of plants, of animals, of "common things," and uncommon things, and in fact all the regular appliances used in such schools; they have a black-board like our own schools, and in fact seem conducted in precisely the same way. The master entered into various particulars with us, and showed us the copy-books and drawing-books of the children; he also took down some boxes of models of the globe, of geometrical figures, and of simple

Digitized by Google

objects for drawing from, and talked very sensibly of education in general and infant education in particular. He next showed us a room he had organized for a dining-place, in order that the children might not have to go home between morning and evening school. Each had a peg marked with a number round the wall, for its clothes, and below this another on which to hang the basket containing its dinner; down the middle of the room were two long tables, with benches on either side. He said he found this a great advantage, and that previously to this arrangement, the children constantly played truant on their way home and back, and were tempted into intercourse with other children more idle than themselves, to the great prejudice of their advancement. He also called our attention to the garden he had taken great pains to make into a playground, and to supply with poles and swings, and other gymnastic contrivances. All the books, maps, models, pictures, &c., came from Paris, but were translated into Spanish. We were very much pleased with this good old schoolmaster, whose *bonhomie* no doubt made him a favourite with his juvenile pupils. As we left we handed him a sufficient sum to give them a scramble of sweetmeats next day, to his great satisfaction. The children pay nothing at all at these schools, which are regularly established by the municipality in every parish. This schoolmaster, however, was a model of his class, and very superior to the generality, who, especially those distributed over the provinces, are passed and get their certificates very often rather by favour than by merit.

The next house we visited was the Hospicio, a grand old institution, also on a colossal scale. The buildings cover a very large piece of ground, and stand in the middle of the Fuencarral. It is supported by the province, and admits 2,000 old men, old women, and an unlimited number of children. There are two distinct *corps de*

Digitized by Google

bâtiment, and the women's side is under the care of Sisters of S. Vincent de Paul: the marked difference in the cleanliness, neatness and general order, is very striking. The Señor Director himself accompanied us over the institution, and was most amiable in his explanations. It is of immense advantage to such places not to be stinted for room, and the spacious dimensions of the dormitories, schools, workshops, refectories, kitchens and gymnasiums are most favourable to ventilation, while the gardens and courts round which they are constructed, contribute greatly to the airiness and salubrity of the premises.

This institution may be regarded as working admirably. The boys received here are for the most part those sent from the foundling hospitals. They are instructed in general knowledge in the educational department, with which are combined a school of design and a music room, where they learn to play brass instruments. The workshops are numerous and complete; they comprise painters, locksmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters, weavers, printers, tailors, and shoemakers, and the boys are apprenticed respectively to these, according to their tastes and aptitudes. It is singular that whereas in English, French, and Belgian institutions the tailor's trade is the most popular, here it is the iron-manufacturer's which attracts the most hands. All down the walls of the long corridors and wards, and on those of the dormitories, refectories, and *ateliers*, are painted up in large letters moral maxims and sentences, generally two lines in verse, and *all* different. The girls have, on their side, a school, and *ateliers*, where they are taught dressmaking, embroidery, plain needlework, and glove-making. All, cut out and make their own clothes, and assist in the kitchens and in the house work. They execute orders from shops, and thus furnish a considerable source of revenue to the house.

The department of the old and infirm people is likewise

Digitized by Google

double, and each of the four sections of the house is supplied with separate infirmaries, kitchens, washhouses, dispensatories, &c.

The lavatories are furnished with metal basins fixed in a long white marble trough, which runs round each room; the water is turned on and off all the basins at once, by a spring tap in the floor, and as there are not enough for all to wash at one time, the children are sent in, in detachments; the floors are paved with black and white marble in squares. Meat occupies a very insignificant place in the dietary, which consists chiefly of potatoes, lentils, haricots, vetches, and peas; these and the bread are all of the best quality, and abundant in quantity. All the cooking is done with charcoal.

A very large square room, extremely clean, and well fitted with cupboards, shelves, presses and pegs, is appropriated to the *ropa* or wardrobes of the young girls. The neatness and order which prevail here are admirable, and such as we see only attained under the management of Sisters of Charity. Each child has a number, and all the belongings of each number are kept in one place. It is quite extraordinary, among those hundreds of frocks—all precisely similar in material and make—and still more among the stockings, pinafores, and underclothing, to find the arrangements so perfect that no mistake is ever made. Their garments vary in texture according to the season, and for Sundays and *fiestas*, they have *vestitos de gala*, which are extremely neat, and the holiday toilette is even finished off with little black silk mantillas and veils! The beds are particularly clean, and the bedding is excellent, especially on the *lado de las mugeres*, and even the floors and staircases are washed. The children seem to be treated with great kindness, and the good old "Director," in speaking of them, always called them his *chiquitos* and *chiquititas*.

They have occasional treats and holidays, and very

Digitized by Google

attractive *nacimientos* are got up among them for the celebration of Christmas. The infants are separated from the older children. We saw their dinner laid out in the refectory: the floor was of brick, but the deal tables were very bright, and a clean mug and plate marked each place.

We have enumerated here but a very few of the charitable institutions which exist in Madrid; all, however, we were informed on good authority, are managed with equal efficiency and success; our time being limited, we were fain to content ourselves with the above specimens, the organization and working of which we confess most agreeably surprised us.

The dwellings of the poor—an eyesore and a grievance in all capitals, if not in all places—are not the most pleasing feature in Madrid life; but we cannot say they are much below average. Paris and London have improved so very much of late in this particular, that, notwithstanding they still contain some frightful dens, it is hardly fair to expect more progress in either as yet, and they are therefore out of the category of such cities as Madrid. We have described the poorer quarters of the Spanish metropolis in other parts of these volumes, but we ought to mention here, that Spain is not altogether oblivious of the condition of the lower orders, and in Burgos we found a scheme was actively set on foot for constructing model lodging-houses, the first instalment of them to be capable of holding 200 people. The sites will be given gratuitously to those who will agree to maintain the tenements in repair, and for the use of the poor, for ten years.

One of our most interesting visits was to the Atocha, or military hospital, an establishment of old date, and one in which the Queen takes a lively interest. It can hardly be said to correspond to the "Invalides" of Paris, or to Chelsea Hospital in England, though there are some points of resemblance between the three. There are here not

Digitized by Google

more than 200 men, all lame, blind, maimed, or otherwise damaged. The wards are long and not very wide, being mere glazed corridors, with bedrooms opening out of them, each room having two, three, and sometimes four beds.

They are ventilated into the corridor by circular openings. In the wards, which are by no means comfortable-looking, are benches, tables, and stools, and these are the common sitting-rooms of the inmates. The floors are paved with large square red tiles, and would look better if they were kept cleaner. The windows open into balconies, but there is no attempt to adorn them with flowers, or any of the neat devices and ornamentations so striking in the men's own little domains at the "Invalides." There are Venetian shutters to the windows, and they overlook the gardens attached to the house, wherein the inmates walk, smoke, and bask in the sun. It is, however, an untidy, scrubby place, and by no means attractive to the poor old fellows, some of whom hardly have the strength or energy to prolong their strolls beyond the prescribed limits. They have meat twice a day, and seem satisfied with their food, but the kitchen did *not* look particularly inviting, and the *comedor* was very comfortless.

Another wing of the building is appropriated to the officers, 100 of whom are pensioned off here. Each has his private suite of apartments, but there is a common solano or promenade, where they meet for walking exercise when the weather is wet. They have their own kitchens, &c., and dine within their own premises.

On Saturdays, while the Court is at Madrid, the Queen attends *salut* every Saturday at the Atocha chapel, when all the men are mustered, and join in the office. Her tribune is covered in with glass, so that she is scarcely seen. Here is the miraculous image of Nuestra Señora de Atocha; it is draped with silk and tinsel, and almost buried beneath waxen *ex votos*.

Digitized by Google

There is a great deal to see in the chapel and sacristy. Among other objects of art a very finely executed wood carving of our Lord in the tomb; opposite is a corresponding figure of our Lady in a coffin, of which angels are lifting the lid; both were under large glass cases. The chapel is hung with flags. Here are the monumental tablets of General Palafox and the great Duque de Bailen, who are buried here: this Wellington of the Spaniards was a great man as well as a great hero, and Spain is justly proud of her Duke. The "*invalides*," however, actually affected to ignore *our* Duke, for when we asked the maimed veteran who showed us the place whether he had ever seen Wellington, he replied somewhat evasively, "*No,—no vien aqui*"! For the rest, however, he was a good-natured, communicative old fellow, and but for him we should have made a "*voyage pour le Roi de Prusse*," as his shrew of a wife, who kept the door, was for denying us admission on some plea we could not very clearly make out; while we were insisting, her better half appeared, and silencing his Xantippe with some difficulty, he led us into the *parloir;* hence he conducted us over the place. There is a fine olive-yard close to the Atocha.

On a rising ground near here, called San Blas, has been placed the cemetery, or Campo Santo, the Père la Chaise of Madrid. It is the most ancient of the three general cemeteries which the city has to boast, the others being that of the Puerta de Toledo and the Puerta de Bilbao. It was the first Spanish cemetery we had seen, and it interested us much, being altogether a "thing of Spain," and quite different from those of any other country.

The chapel stands at the entrance, and is of Grecian architecture: on the pediment, supported by columns of the Doric order, is the following inscription:—

"Templo de Verdad es el que mirao,
No desojas la voz con que te advierte
Que todo es illusion menos la muerte."

Digitized by Google

> This that thou beholdest is the temple of Truth;
> Turn not a deaf ear to the voice with which it admonisheth thee
> That all is illusion save death.

On either side is a gate and gatekeeper's lodge, and passing through these we entered a garden, surrounded by walls; from these walls a tiled roof, supported by columns at intervals, shelters a pavement some three feet wide, and the surface of the walls is honeycombed with *dos d'âne* shaped openings, into which are thrust the coffins of those who prefer a catacomb resting-place to the bosom of mother earth; when the coffin is deposited, a tablet, on which the inscription is always very brief and simple, closes the orifice: the lapidary art is altogether excluded, there is not a single epitaph; the tablets are more or less richly decorated, according to the wealth and quality of the deceased; some of the tablets are faced with a glass, a space of three or four inches being reserved between that and the tablet, in which are sometimes enclosed garlands or bouquets of *immortelles*, and, if children, their toys or other mementos are placed here; sometimes a portrait or a curl of hair is the touching souvenir suggested by the affection of survivors: the middle of this garden, which is planted with flowers and divided by paths, is filled up with graves, of the simplest and most unmonumental character; there is one all the more striking, therefore, from its proportions and its design; it is a marble chapel, covering the remains of a noble family; in the next court—for there are a succession of them, all very similar—the centre is marked by a fountain. The first two and most ancient are quadrangular, and the columns which support the verandah-like roof that surrounds it, are mere wooden posts; the next courts are octagonal, and the columns of granite, with handsome Ionic capitals: there is an obvious improvement in the construction; marble and granite are used for the pavement, and the

Digitized by Google

centre of the court being lower than the rest, the two steps which surround the court and descend into it are of granite; in the centre of the fourth court is a handsome white marble monument, to the memory of Mendizabal and other generals of the same period: branching out from these courts are smaller quadrangles, from which flights of granite steps communicate with the catacombs below. *Campos santos* naturally lead to funerals,—more properly speaking, funerals lead to them, as the last act of that drama, of which every scene is a nearer approach to the grave:—

> "Our birth is but our death begun,
> Our cradles rock us nearer to the tomb!"

Passing along the Geronimo, we observed an open hearse and four, proceeding at a moderate pace down the middle of the wide street. It was an open car, unlike a French hearse, and still more unlike an English one. It was black but profusely befringed, bestarred and decorated with gold ornaments in the way of laces, fringes, spangles, cords and tassels; massive groups of carved figures representing mourners, nearly life-size, and painted to imitate white marble, were fixed at the head and foot; the drapery covering the canopy was drawn into the four corners, where bunches of black feathers were fixed. The horses were not very fine specimens, but were draped with black velvet housings; it was unattended by mourning coaches, but two solemn-looking officials walked beside it, and it drove up to the fine handsome church of S. Isidoro, in the Geronimo Street, and stood before the door. A number of gentlemen who belonged to the funeral, but were not dressed in mourning, were standing about in groups talking to each other. We ascended the steps of the large portico, which we might more correctly call a terrace or *solano*, and found a great many people, whom the occasion had called together, either sitting on the stone

Digitized by Google

seats or walking about as if curious to see what was to follow; at one extremity of this wide colonnaded terrace was the mortuary chapel, where, surrounded by four large yellow lighted wax tapers, in candlesticks some four feet high, lay the corpse of a woman in a brown serge dress, and with a hood round the face, the hands crossed, and shoes on the feet, fully exposed to public gaze, for there was no lid on the coffin. At the feet was a stoup of holy water, with which those who came and looked at the deceased, sprinkled the coffin, crossing themselves, and repeating a *De profundis.* The woman, it appeared, had died the day previously, and had been lying here about three hours. Presently came the four bearers, with two attendants, carrying a slightly made *dos d'âne* shaped lid, with which they very unceremoniously covered the coffin, drove in a nail or two, and the bearers carried it off to the hearse in waiting. The hearse started at a gentle pace, and was followed by seven or eight street *coches de colleras,* into which the funeral party distributed themselves; as the coffin passed, the crowd at the door lifted their hats, but no others showed this mark of respect, so rigidly observed in "infidel France." The hearse proceeded down the Calle Major, collecting other *coches* as it went along, so that by the time we lost sight of it, it had lengthened into a motley procession of about four times the original length.

A curious but by no means illogical custom prevails in Spain on these occasions; when a death occurs, the friends of the survivors during the first few days, supply the house with food of all sorts: the supposition being that the family must be so overwhelmed with grief that they cannot attend to the economy of daily life.

On All Saints' day the cemeteries of Spain are visited as are those of Paris. They are crowded throughout the day with persons dressed in black, and among them are

Digitized by Google

often sincere mourners, the silent, unobtrusive expression of whose sorrow causes many a touching episode amid the somewhat boisterous demonstration. The cemeteries here are differently constructed from those of Paris. They are smaller, more open, and although sometimes laid out with winding paths, trees, and hedges, are for the most part mere walled quadrangular spaces, like the one we have described, often devoid even of central monuments, offering no little retired nooks, where private and individual sorrow can be indulged unobserved. With few exceptions, therefore, these anniversary inroads on the tranquillity of "God's acre" partake of the nature of a general and public gathering for a common purpose, and the theoretical sacredness of the object is at length lost sight of, becoming merged in the practical formality to which it is reduced. The annual visit to the Campo Santo is limited by most, to the prescribed act of adorning the last resting-place of the departed with a fresh wreath, and lighting the taper which stands before it. In the evening, when these twinkling little lights are all illumined, like so many meteoric "wisps," the effect is strange and impressive.

Besides the sixteen parish churches, and eleven *anejos*, or chapels of ease, there are in Madrid twenty or thirty *iglesias* and *ermitas*, of which some are small and insignificant, others shabby and neglected, and a few very handsome; of these, perhaps the finest are those of S. Tomás, San Juan de Dios, San Isidro, Cármen Calzado, and that of the Atocha. Some of these are elaborately illuminated at night; and even for Benediction every Sunday, as well as on grand occasions, it is customary to light all the chandeliers, which are very numerous. There are neither benches nor chairs; but in some parts of the church the marble pavement is covered with matting, and where it is not, the large circular mats are used. Almost all the

Digitized by Google

churches of Madrid are dimly lighted by day, the windows being small and very much elevated. The entrances are all protected by a heavy carpet or matting *portière*, which, as it is a great weight to lift, is generally attended by an expert boy or an enterprising mendicant, who good-humouredly gets a *cuarto* out of you for raising it on his back as you enter and retire; and the service is well worth the money, for the surface is so greasy you could not touch it without being defiled.

The interior of a Spanish church always affords a picturesque sight. There are no distinctions of rank; the women, all habited in black, and tastefully draped from head to foot, sit in the most graceful and Oriental attitudes on their large circular mats, shuffling their fans, while the men stand or kneel in positions and costumes which also seem made for the canvas. The congregation generally testify considerable devotion during the offices, but it is exhibited in a mode peculiarly their own, and one which would pass for the expression of a less reverential feeling anywhere else. The preaching is very energetic and effective, and generally attracts a large concourse of people. Sermons do not last very long, but the listeners remain standing the whole time, except on Sundays, when a few are seated on a moveable nest of benches pewed round, brought in for the occasion, and occupying a comparatively small space in the middle of the church. The music is always pretentious, and often too loud to be even tolerable; sometimes, however, it is really fine and impressive. Some of the services, especially those for prescribed occasions and particular devotions, are invested with almost a dramatic character. For example, during the month of November, specially appointed to the devotions relating to Purgatory, there are exhibited in the churches, transparencies representing in colours and attitudes calculated to impress the minds of the million, the souls lingering in an intermediate

Digitized by Google

state, and whose condition forms the subject of the sermons given during the time. We have already spoken elsewhere of the *nacimientos* of Christmas-tide, which, together with other similar appeals fitted to the respective seasons, are well calculated to impress an imaginative people.

The marriage ceremony in Spain is conducted very differently from our own. Among the higher classes it takes place at night, at the bride's house: and if from any special circumstance it be deferred till the morning, it is fixed for a very early hour, and in neither case is there any display, though wedding feasts are provided. The guests are confined to the family or immediate friends, and are all, including the bride, dressed in *black* (!) which does not prevent their being often very costlily attired. Second marriages are looked upon *torvo vultu*, and discouraged in every way. Popular feeling is so opposed to them, that a second-hand bride and bridegroom are considered legitimate objects of practical jokes and most annoying petty persecutions. It is all done in a good-humoured way, but so is the ceremony performed by sailors on an unfortunate land-lubber when crossing the Line for the first time; and as in the one case Father Neptune exacts a rigorous tribute, so in the other must a handsome fine be paid to Hymen or his self-constituted representatives.

On the other hand, facilities exist for those who desire to marry neither once nor twice, in the three-and-twenty convents which Madrid contains, belonging to various orders, active as well as contemplative.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

MODERN LITERATURE.

"Dios te libre, libro mio
De las manos del librero
Que cuando te está alabando
Entónces te está vendiendo."
POPULAR EPIGRAM.

"True wit hath its walks and purlieus, beyond which it may not stray so much as one hair's-breadth, upon pain of being lost."—RALEIGH.

ENDOWED with a rich and glowing fancy, an imagination of Oriental origin, nursed century after century in the land of flowers and fertility, and breathing the very atmosphere of love, chivalry, and romance, how is it possible that the Spanish nation can ever altogether sink into literary obscurity?

That poetry should even temporarily slumber in the soil which gave birth to the *seguidillas* and *tiranas*, and still maintains a luxuriant fund of popular and national ballads and epigrams, is surprising enough; but we know that *bonus Homerus* himself is sometimes caught napping; still to believe and to promulgate the notion that literature has had her day in the Peninsula, appears to us much too summary a mode of disposing of so interesting and comprehen-

Digitized by Google

sive a question. We venture to assert, and shall be able to prove to our readers, that not only authors but authors of great merit exist, and even abound at the present day, and we consider that literature is in no way behindhand in the tardy, but, we hope, coming regeneration of the latent energies of the country.

There is this remarkable difference between the *belles lettres* of Spain and our own, that whereas the perfection of the latter is due to gradual development, the condition of the former is the very natural consequence of demolition and reconstruction.

We do not deny the difficulty of ascertaining the state of letters in Spain, and we are not surprised at the conclusion at which it seems customary for the mere passing traveller to arrive: it would appear to be the business of a Spanish bookseller to keep the public in the dark as to contemporary writers, and to impede as much as possible, instead of promoting, the sale and circulation of their works. In this he follows most rigidly the *lucus à non lucendo* principle, and why he opens a shop and calls himself a *librero*, as well as, what are his means of subsistence, constitutes one of the mysteries of every-day life in Spain. We have already touched upon this unaccountable obstacle to the success of modern authors, and on the great difficulties thus thrown in the way of their publicity.

It had been a special object with us to throw light on this mystery, and to discover what vitality there is in the department of letters: but although we found it a work of patience and perseverance, we ended by satisfying ourselves that Spain possesses at this moment a very promising staff of authors on all subjects, nearly all of whom may be said to have sprung up since the cessation of the civil wars: Let not therefore the republic of letters despair. It will one day draw the imaginative people of Spain once more within the influence of its magic sway; and the temporary

Digitized by Google

discouragements we shall find in the literary annals of our country will afford no unfitting precedent to animate our anticipations of the future poets, romancists, and historians of Spain.

It was no longer ago than the end of the seventeenth century that in our own country, now animated by the very soul of intelligence, and itself almost the nucleus of literature, the tide of letters was at so low an ebb, that, as Lord Macaulay tells us—"the sale of books was so limited that a man of the greatest name could expect only a pittance in the copyright of the best performance. There cannot be a stronger instance than the fate of Dryden's last production—'The Fables.' That volume was published when he was universally admitted to be the chief of living English poets. It contains about 12,000 lines. The versification is admirable: the narratives and descriptions full of life. To this day Palamon and Arcite, Cymon and Iphigenia, Theodore and Honoria, are the delight both of critics and of schoolboys. The collection includes 'Alexander's Feast,' the noblest ode in our language. For the copyright Dryden received £250; less than in our days has sometimes been paid for two articles in a review: nor does the bargain seem to have been a hard one. For the book went off slowly, and the second edition was not required till the author had been ten years in his grave."

Keats is not the only poet who, in the justifiable bitterness of his dying hour, might have dictated the touching epitaph we lately read on his rude and nameless tombstone in the outskirts of the Eternal City,—

"Here lies one
Whose name was writ in water."

Akin to this, and illustrative of the same neglect and want of appreciation on the part of his fellow-countrymen, is the witty and cutting epitaph on the talented author of "Hudibras," whose genius has since been so widely recognized,—

Digitized by Google

"While Butler, needy wretch! was doomed to live,
No generous patron would a dinner give;
But when departed hence, and turned to dust,
He's honoured with a monumental bust.
The poet's fate is here in emblem shown,—
He asked for bread and he received a stone."

It is almost superfluous to remind our readers of the price Milton was content to accept for his "Paradise Regained."

Now, there is in contemporary Spain, unquestionably, a growing taste for all that tends to mental cultivation; the number of private libraries in Madrid is very considerable, and the noblemen who possess these treasures know how valuable they are; they do not merely content themselves with allowing them to be seen, but with great liberality, and an evident desire to promote the interests of knowledge, they courteously and liberally throw them open to the perusal of students and others, on proper application. The defective machinery for giving publicity to such works as do appear, and the supineness of the booksellers in assisting their circulation, is only to be accounted for by the natural indolence of the national temperament, so that whatever the talent and energy of authors, there is no doubt but that their position is a most discouraging one; publishers either are really ignorant of, or choose to ignore, all works not published by themselves, while booksellers are often totally unacquainted with the productions of their own country, and when they do know anything about them, they do not choose to take the trouble to impart the information.

The grand drawback to the success of modern works is, we consider, to be found in the deficiency of that great auxiliary to circulation supplied in other countries by periodicals. Without really clever reviews and magazines —the contributors to which, can command the respect and confidence of their readers—the spread of literary information can be but very limited. Even the system of adver-

Digitized by Google

tising is scarcely understood in Spain, yet it cannot be dispensed with, without seriously compromising the career of a rising author. In this matter we often see an illustration of the fable of the mouse and the lion, and we are afraid that the Spanish lions of the press will never be able to disentangle their limbs from the *reticulum* of obscurity in which they are now cabined, cribbed, confined, or to startle the unconscious world with their roar, until they obtain the services of a Grub Street mouse to gnaw them a passage to fame.

For all this, there *is* a certain stir even in the production of ephemeral publications. Very recently we have observed the appearance of a spirited *Charivari* of political tendencies, illustrated with caricatures, called *El Gil Blas;* of another new periodical called *La Esperanza;* of one in Zaragoza entitled *El Eco de Aragon;* of one in Valladolid called *El Fandango;* and of one in Madrid, by name *El Leon Español;* another entitled *La Soberania Naçional,* and another called *La Reforma.* The *Cascabel* is a new satirical weekly periodical published in Madrid,—not a very brilliant specimen,—and *El Tramposo* is one of yet more recent date, making, at the beginning of this year, 137 political and non-political periodicals published in the capital:* a weekly journal has just appeared under the somewhat ambitious title of *El Tiempo!* perhaps it is intended as a compliment to the Leviathan of the press; let us hope it will not follow the example of the frog in the fable.

The most tumid expectation we have heard of yet, on the part of a journalist, is that expressed in the following motto just assumed by an Andalusian paper,—"El pueblo es Dios, y nosotros su profeta."

It appears that M. Landrin, the "*paysagiste,*" and one of the

* There are now in Madrid, reading-rooms where newspapers and periodicals are to be read on the premises; and several of these include circulating libraries, subscribers being privileged to have books at their own homes.

Digitized by Google

successful exhibitors at the Paris Palais d'Industrie, has been appointed Spanish correspondent of *La Presse*, *L'Artiste*, and *L'Union des Artistes*,—a hopeful sign for the lovers of modern art. The appointment seems to have given great satisfaction in Spanish art-circles, M. Landrin having long inhabited Spain, and being a man of taste as well as a distinguished appreciator of Spanish talent.

Of all the periodicals we have enumerated, none, however, are calculated to answer the purpose of a literary review, although some of them profess to include literature among their subjects. If, therefore, any one, inspired by an impulse of public benevolence, or by a venturesome aspiration at private speculation, were moved to promote the emancipation of letters in the Peninsula, and to give scope to the ventilation of ideas and extension of knowledge, the best expedient he could adopt with a view to the creation and spread of modern works, whether practical or imaginative, would be to establish a sound, judicious, and discriminating Review, penned in a terse, compendious, and at the same time attractive style, calculated to form, as well as to *in*form a reading public, not as yet conscious of its own moral and intellectual needs. This, while according a merited approbation and affording an encouraging celebrity to such authors as have contrived to sustain their efforts even under the depressing influences of neglect and indifference, would no doubt inspire others with a desire to test their unfledged wings, and to throw themselves into an honourable rivalry with those who already soar above them.

Well may the unappreciated modern authors of Spain exclaim, "Ah, ingrata patria!" How their books get sold is a marvel. We cannot guess how many mute, inglorious Miltons, children of that land—the very cradle of romance and of poetry—may, at this very hour, be lost to their contemporaries and to fame, while we are deprived of the

Digitized by Google

achievements of their unfulfilled destinies, because the blighted germs of their literary greatness have never been fostered into life.

Such names as those of the talented Espronceda, graceful, spirited, and original, snatched away in the midst of a promising career; of Martinez de la Rosa, historian, poet, and dramatist; of the poet Valdez, whose genius burst the trammels of his official position, and has proved the assertion, "Poeta nascitur, non fit;" of Moratin, the re-creator of the Spanish stage; of Tamayo and Luis Eguilaz, whose dramas are full of genuine Spanish spirit; of Quintana, philosopher, biographer, and poet; of Lista, poet and periodical writer; of Hartzembusch, who has risen into eminence by his efforts to reveal the genius of others; of the elegant and romantic Zorilla, the bard of Moorish legends; of Iseo, Jiulio Mombelo, Balaguer, Augelon, Anton Flores, Don Sebastian de Migrano, and other writers of history and fiction,—such names, we contend, with others we shall mention presently, according to their *spécialités*, ought to become more familiar to the literary world, and at all events deserve more publicity in their own country than they have yet received. We do not altogether endorse the hyperbolical statement of Don Francisco de P. Mellado, that the celebrated literary characters of Madrid are so numerous that "it would require several volumes merely to catalogue their names;" but we are ready to allow, without any figure of speech, that those we have enumerated are only a few of such as have, since Spain rubbed her eyes preparatory to opening them, contributed to the revivification of letters and to the intellectual development and moral elevation of the apathetic Peninsula.

Espronceda's private history, like that of Byron, creates for him an interest of a personal character, and gilds his poems with a *prestige* of romance. He was born at the

Digitized by Google

small town of Almondrolejo, in Estramadura—likewise the birthplace of Pizarro,—in the year 1810, his father, who was a colonel in the army, being engaged with his regiment in that province. As soon as the war was over, the young José was brought by his parents to Madrid, and in due time was placed under the care of Professor Lista, from whose instructions he derived so much benefit that he soon became a very distinguished scholar. Unhappily, as he advanced towards manhood, he yielded to the then prevailing manners of the day among young fashionables, and while supporting liberty fell into libertinism. Espronceda took a warm and active part in the politics of his country, and the adventures which befell him in consequence of his strong party-feeling are too numerous to be related here; we will briefly touch upon that incident which became, so to speak, the turning-point in his life, and coloured his subsequent career. At an early age Espronceda formed a passionate attachment for a young Spanish lady of exquisite beauty; and, unlike Byron's first love, the Andalusian *houri* reciprocated the affection of her worshipper. Our good friend Washington Irving would have considered this, rather a misfortune than otherwise—to a poet. If we remember rightly, he takes a great deal of trouble to prove that it was to our own noble poet's disappointment in winning the affections of his fair, that we owe one of the finest veins in his rich imagination, which, but for this *affaire de cœur, manquée*, he might never have been led to explore.

Espronceda, however, managed to think, and feel, and write very tenderly and expressively, despite the responsiveness of his lady-love, who shared his impatient hopes that they should one day succeed in winning her father's —there was a hard-hearted father in this case—consent to their union, when the latter intimated to his daughter there must be an end of this intimacy, for he had pro-

Digitized by Google

vided another husband, and she must abandon all idea of becoming Espronceda's wife. To make, as he thought, assurance doubly sure, he brought her away from her own sunny clime, to *la brumeuse Albion*, where she had been educated, and where he resolved to carry out his plan, thinking, by a speedy marriage with the husband of *his* choice, to frustrate Espronceda's designs upon his daughter. Espronceda, however, was not to be thus daunted; he had no idea of giving up his love, and, unhappily for himself as it afterwards proved, he pursued her even to the altar, and on the very day of her marriage, seized and carried her off with him—a willing prize—to her native country.

His happiness, however, was short-lived. The fair one proved frail; and as she had "deceived her father," likewise deceived him. This was a severe blow to the sensitive mind of the poet, who sought, in political distraction, to dissipate the memory of his sorrows.

He was elected, in 1833, a *diputado*, and represented the city of Almeria in the parliament of his country. He was as distinguished in his senatorial as in his literary career; and when, in 1842, a premature death overtook him, at the early age of thirty-two, it not only cut short his successes and his aspirations, but deprived the literature of his country of one of her most promising geniuses. A valuable contribution to it which he left unfinished, under the title of "El Diablo Mundo," has been published in its fragmentary state.

Espronceda was a wild, reckless fellow, full of life and spirits: but he was unappreciated by his country as well as by the object of his affections, and in his disappointment he may be said to have thrown himself away. He died, leaving behind him many years of unfulfilled promise. Whether the *piquante* Sevillana ever really loved her romantic adorer seems questionable. It is presumable that, for a time, she fancied she did; and he, blinded with

Digitized by Google

Cupid's bandage, was only too glad to believe in what he wished. Although, however, other admirers, in their turn accepted and cast off,—the caprice of to-day and the scorn of to-morrow,—succeeded him in the temporary sunshine of her smiles, Espronceda remained true to his own loyal affection, and, no longer destined to possess his charmer as a living reality, he enthroned her—an ideal divinity in his poetical imagination. His "Letter to Teresa," which is to be found in the second canto of the "Diablo Mundo," is as touching as elegant; it must be read in the graceful and expressive original to be felt. It opens to us a suggestive page in the history of his life, and enlists our sympathies in his behalf; snatched away at too early an age, Espronceda still survived his lady-love: his was an excitable temperament; and though his death has been attributed to the effects of a winter passed in Holland, there is no doubt that the trying events of his life, and the pressure of straitened circumstances, contributed to shorten his days.

According to some, the greatest modern Spanish poet is Ventura de la Vega. Men of taste set great store by his works. The most admired of these are "El Hombre del Mundo," and "La Muerte de Cesar." He is now engaged on an elaborate translation of the "Æneid."

Of sparkling satirists—to whom we call especial attention, because theirs is a style of writing which must be considered national—we may mention Ramon Mesonero de los Romanos, and Mariano de Larra, as types of their class, and as excelling in the smart criticism, ready wit, original humour—not always *good* humour—for which it is remarkable: there is often great aptness in the point, resulting from keen observation and a lively intelligence.

Poor Larra was a singularly clever fellow, and may be considered the Hood of Spain; but, as is often the case with those whose gibes can set the table in a roar, he was,

Digitized by Google

when alone, subject to fits of depression and melancholy, and on the unfavourable issue of a love affair, he ended his life by his own hand—a most unusual occurrence in Spain, and one which seems to have been altogether unexpected in *his* case.

The following is worthy of Larra himself, and we insert it as affording a sample of this essentially Spanish style of writing. The anecdote we quote from a graceful modern Spanish writer, is put into the mouth of a garrulous muleteer, and is one among many with which he wiles away the weariness of the road, for the entertainment of the traveller he is conducting.

"An inhabitant of the Sierras," said José, "had suffered great injuries at the hands of a relation, who, assisted by a rascally *escribaño*, had contrived to appropriate, and to share with his accomplice all the poor fellow possessed. Being about to die, the unfortunate victim sent for the rapacious pair, who, supposing the old man might still have some property of which they were unaware, and might be able to secure, made haste to obey the summons. As soon as they arrived, he bade them sit down one on either side of his bed, and took no further notice of them. Impatient at the delay in the revelation they were expecting, the newly arrived couple made free to ask whether the sick man had anything to communicate to them. "Nothing," replied he; "I simply sent for you that I might die like our Lord, between two thieves."

The same author expresses himself wittily, and with some bitterness contrasts the traditional old conservative feeling of the mountain-population with the utilitarian and more liberal views of their "advanced" fellow-countrymen. He thus satirizes the indiscriminate prodigality with which, in these degenerate days, orders and decorations, like the *légion d'honneur*, so long regarded with envy and veneration, are bestowed on the *premier venu*:—

Digitized by Google

"Cuando a oscuras andaban las naciones,
Calgábanse á las cruces los ladrones;
Desde que se encendieron tantas luces,
A los ladrones cuelganse las cruces;"

which might be rendered thus:—

"While yet the world in darkness lay,
Our felons were on crosses strung;
But by the lights we have to-day,
Our crosses are on felons hung."

Trueba gives a little specimen of the same description of point in the form of a colloquy with his "*public*." He excuses himself for a long digression by begging his reader to regard him with indulgence as an amateur; on his supposing the reader to object to his thus classing himself, he requests him to define what he understands by the term. "An amateur," replies the supposititious reader, "is a gentleman who is good enough to entertain you without payment." "In that case," says Trueba, "all Spanish authors may rank themselves under that category, as I am not aware they ever get paid."

Ayala may be mentioned as another rising author.

It is curious to observe the appreciativeness of these modern Spaniards; although their literature has only now arrived at a tardy *renaissance*, and they have never ventured to tread in the footprints of the mighty Cervantes, they are yet fully conscious of his transcendent genius. The dazzling fame he has left behind him has never been veiled, and we can find no period since he wrote his immortal work, during which the sense of his superiority has been lost upon his, generally, apathetic countrymen.

The delicate raillery of his wit, the exquisite edge and finish of his satire, the polished ease with which he runs a vice through, and the precision with which, in attacking the follies of mankind, his rapier-point enters the *défaut de la cuirasse*, impart a dignity and a value to every sentiment he utters. His keen eye penetrates, with what we

Digitized by Google

may call a benevolent severity, the depths of human nature, while the experiences of his life and the results of his observation are not without their value for others, for they are vividly reflected in his writings.

Cervantes respected himself and respected his reader; he has left scarcely anything for the most fastidious to excuse, and his elegant pen has bequeathed to us a model-style.

His refined taste, chastened as it is by an admirable judgment, never suffers his imagination to overstep the bounds of decorum; and although living and writing in an age when other authors were wont to indulge in coarse expressions and indecent jests, the polished wit of Cervantes will almost bear the application of Cowley's admirable test,—

> "Neither can that have any place
> Whereat a virgin hides her face."

It has become an absolute truism to repeat that no imagination ever yet produced a work of fiction worthy to compete with "Don Quixote de la Mancha," whether for gracefulness of composition, terseness of diction, pungency of satire, brilliancy of fancy, or intensity of feeling; and we willingly endorse the assertion that had Spain never produced any other author, she might still claim a prominent position in the annals of literature.

Of his forerunner, and in some few points his model, the versatile Quevedo, we are tempted to say a few words, because of the marked position claimed by his writings.

The literary career of Don Francisco de Quevedo was singularly influenced by the events of his domestic life. He was one of the brightest luminaries of that galaxy which illustrated what may be called the intellectual period of the history of Spain, and heralded the coming of the great Cervantes, in whom that period culminated. Quevedo, born in 1570, was a man of unusual intelligence

Digitized by Google

and powerful grasp of mind, and very early manifested abilities which foretold what he would one day become. In the vicissitudes of after years, his pursuits were neither abandoned nor slackened; but the character of them varied with his altered circumstances, and those who are not acquainted with his life must be surprised to see the pen of the clever and amusing satirist gravely producing pious meditations worthy of the patristic calamus.

Quevedo was one of the most wonderful linguists of his or indeed of any times, and an adept in sacred and profane letters, in civil and canonical law, and in natural science: his knowledge of Oriental languages was profound, and in Greek he was thoroughly proficient; he made an elegant translation of "Anacreon."

An affair of honour, which proved fatal to his adversary, obliged Quevedo to pass into Italy, where he was made secretary to the Duke of Osuna. Later he went to Naples, and was able to render great services to the Government; but becoming implicated in the ruinous disgrace of the Duke of Osuna, his patron, to whose fortunes he adhered with fidelity, he suffered great persecution and privation. In 1632 he recovered the favour of the King, and was rewarded with the title of private secretary to his Majesty, and Ambassador to the Republic of Genoa.

At length, disenchanted with the world, and broken down by the recent loss of his beloved wife, Doña Esperanza de Aragon, a woman of noble birth and cultivated mind, he sought occupation in the pursuit of letters, and retired to the Torre de Juan Abad. In 1641, this peaceful life was disturbed by the malice of his enemies, who charged him with attacking the Government in his writings; a second incarceration was the consequence, and on his ultimate release, he again buried himself in the obscurity of a studious life at Villanueva de los Infantes, where he closed his days on the 8th September, 1647, the anniversary of the death of

Digitized by Google

S. Tomás de Villanueva, to whom he had always had a special devotion, and of whom he compiled an elegantly-written biography.

If we go back a very few years—no farther than the generation which preceded us, and with which we may have been partly contemporary—we may glance at the singular history of Don Juan Nicasio Gallego, a writer of no small merit. He was a native of Zamora, born in 1777. He received a liberal education, and was instructed in civil and canonical law. From the earliest period of his life he showed a decided taste for poetry: it is much to be regretted that his early effusions should have been lost, but he was remarkable for the modest indifference with which he regarded all his own productions. Having decided on becoming a priest, after preliminary study, in 1805 he received ordination, and subsequently competed for the Royal Chaplaincy; but having failed to obtain it, the King, Ferdinand VII., consoled him with the appointment of "Directeur des Pages." He employed much of his leisure in the pursuit of the accomplishment in which he excelled, but his writings were of a character one does not expect to see signed by the name of a priest; Horace and Catullus were his favourite models, though he appreciated and admired all the classical writers: his biographer, judging from the touch of truth and nature which pervades his writings, maintains that "his heart must have been pierced by an arrow which did not proceed directly from the quiver of Divine love. Unfortunately," he adds, "chronology—that inexorable witness—does not permit us to date the erotic pieces, which betray his tendencies, at any period previous to his entering the priesthood." His genius, however, was not confined to this description of composition, and his patriotic and political inspirations won for him a high place in the consideration of his admirers. The Comte de Haro, afterwards the illustrious Duque de Frias,

Digitized by Google

was on intimate terms with him, and respected him as a father while he trusted him as a friend.

Popular as a political writer, a firm and courageous adherent of the legitimate Sovereign, he gained immense applause by his efforts—when elected by public suffrage a *Diputado*, in 1810—to secure the liberties and privileges of a constitutional government. The freedom of the press was an object he used every endeavour to introduce; but such views were too advanced for the condition of the Spanish mind, and when the Government of Ferdinand came to be established, and Nicasio had least reason to expect a reverse of his hitherto steady fortunes, he suddenly found himself snatched from his studies, from his aspirations, from his friends, and thrown into a narrow cell, where he lingered during eighteen months. For a poet, this situation ought not to have been a desperate one, and many imaginative and philosophical minds would have found in it the elements of a lasting celebrity; but Nicasio was a man rather of firm character than of large mind. He was not of a nature to develop under persecution; he could resign himself with magnanimity to his fate, but captivity did not make him greater. He only left his prison for a scarcely less tolerable banishment of four years to the Carthusian monastery of Xeres: there is a cell there, which overlooks the battle-field of the Guadalete; it is a spot for contemplation and meditation, and that may have been the scene of his secluded hours, but none can unveil them now, and the history of that hidden period of his life is known to God alone. The river, which bears the same name as this vast and beautiful plain, rolls beneath the walls; it was through the reeds which mask its banks, that Roderick, the last of the Goths, fled from his fortress-palace at Toledo, scouring hill and vale till he reached the frontier of Portugal: a little farther on is the sea, whence rises the brilliant city of Cadix. There was enough in that view to

Digitized by Google

inspire the most sluggish, or satisfy the most exacting fancy: it would seem, however, to have produced no effect on the mind of Nicasio, whose pen became sluggish in this poetical atmosphere, and, if we except a graceful and touching elegy on the premature death of the youthful Duchess Fernandina, his chief production during that time—we deplore the woeful bathos of the revelation—was an ingenious letter in verse, to thank a lady who had sent him a butt of "capital sherry"!

The biography of Nicasio is a very interesting and eventful one, and is made up of political efforts, poetical and other literary successes, and periods of melancholy. He was in some respects the spoiled child of Fortune, and if that fickle dame sometimes deserted him and delivered him over to unjust persecution, she gave him compensations which no doubt reconciled him to their endurance, and rendered his chequered existence more than tolerable. He was a man of handsome face, elegant figure and commanding presence, and although an ecclesiastic whose morals have never been impeached, he enjoyed the favour, friendship and valuable encouragement of duchesses and princesses. He lived to the respectable age of seventy-four, and died, in 1851, "Senadore del Reino," member of the Academy, Canon of Valencia, and Archdeacon of the "Pilar" at Zaragoza. His writings have been collected; they are various in style and in matter, and are well worthy the research of those who are interested in the literature of this singular country.

The young, interesting, and lamented Queen Isabella, Princess of Portugal, and third wife of Ferdinand VII., who was a special protectress of art, science, and literature, and whose premature decease deprived Nicasio of a patroness and friend, was mourned by him in a tender and pathetic plaint, supposed to be uttered by a grey-haired old man, who has tottered by night into the church where

Digitized by Google

the precious remains of the royal deceased lay in state, and whose sons were pining in exile.

The last poetical effort of Nicasio was an ode on the birth of Ferdinand's eldest daughter by his fourth wife, Christina—the present Queen Isabella. Shortly before this, he had thrown his whole soul into a dirge written on, and while deeply and sincerely lamenting, the death of the second Duquesa de Frias: she had been faithful to him throughout all the persecutions he had undergone, and had purchased the satisfaction of visiting him and supplying his wants in prison, at the risk of compromising her own security: this friendship and attachment Nicasio returned with true devotion, and deeply felt the loss. All the poets of Spain vied with each other in expressing their regrets, but Nicasio's lament included that of two mourners, for he was, as we have said, the Duke's most valued friend. An honourable episode in the life of Nicasio was his disinterested regard and admiration of the graceful and elegant poet Melendez Valdez: he had died in 1817, in exile, and his ashes reposed in an obscure village near Montpelier. Nicasio and his friend the Duque de Frias, a poet like himself, could not but remember with humiliation that the remains of an author of such distinguished genius, and who may be said to have created a new æra in Castilian poetry, were deposited unhonoured in an unrecognizable grave, and on a foreign soil. By the united efforts of these kindred spirits, leave was obtained to erect over them the marble mausoleum which now marks the consecrated spot in the cemetery of Montpelier. It is a shrine for a poet's pilgrimage, and we feel sure that the graceful thoughts and elegant finish of the verse of Valdez must be appreciated by all men of taste.

The following is slight, but will serve as a specimen of his odes:—

Digitized by Google

"Preciados son, Dorila!
Los vinos regalados
Que á la feliz España,
Rico dió el padre Baco.

"El uno al gusto brinda
En la copa saltando;
Y aquel muy mas lo enciende
Con su punzante amargo.

"Pues qué diré, si osara
Nombrarte solo tantos
Como dulces se cuecen
En términos extraños?

"Todos me agradan; todos
En los pechos humanos
El libre gozo engendran;
Alejan los cuidados.

"Pero aquel que tú libas
Y en que mojas tus labios;
Aquel es á los mios
El mas sabroso y sano."

It is gratifying to find that there has been just published the eighth edition of a poetical work by Don Ramon de Campoamor, entitled "Las Doleras;" the preface is by Don Ventura Ruiz Aquilesa, and the book is brought out with great care. It is enriched by the critical notes of Don Damian Menendes Raymon. This is a significant literary incident, and testifies to an appreciative capacity on the part of the public: but we do not know what number of copies go to an edition.

One of the most attractive writers of the day in a light and narrative style is Fernan Caballero, who under this (masculine) pseudonyme conceals the name of Faber. She is of mixed German and Spanish parentage, and in her intelligent pictures of social life has done for Andalusia what Trueba and Ayala have for Castile and Biscay, and both what Henri Conscience has for Flanders: she is far better known beyond the Pyrenees than within her own country. Fernan

Digitized by Google

Caballero still writes, although married; Seville is her present residence.

The Marquesa Guadalcazar ought not to be passed over; for a cultivated woman is still a *rara avis* in the Peninsula, as she was in our own country some hundred and fifty years ago. The Marquesa, however, unfortunately died at the beginning of this century, at the somewhat premature age of thirty-three; but not before she had attained to literary honours, with the degree of "Doctora en Filosofia y Letras Humanas," F. R. A. (of Spain), and other dignities.

It may be regarded as a favourable sign of advancement in this important branch of civilized life, that authors should have sprung not so much from among the needy—who are so often represented as taking up the pen,

"Obliged by hunger . . . and *request* of friends"—

as from the indolent and *désœuvré* class, which in Spain is almost recognized as not only physically but morally effete. Among the Spanish aristocracy a spirit of literary ambition has of late sprung up, which seems almost to have adopted for its motto "*noblesse oblige.*"

Of these, the Duque de Rivas has gained an honourable celebrity for his success in lyric romance, of which "El Moro Exposito" is a most favourable specimen. El Señor Conde de Villa-Creces has likewise merited distinction in the happy efforts he has made to elevate the literary tone and reputation of his country. His taste and genius will at once be recognized by those who peruse his works.

Of more serious writers of rank, we have an example in the elaborate History of Spain—the result of many years' labour, and which appeared in 1861—by Lafuente, and the "History of the Legislation" by the Marques de Montera, a still more recent publication. Of the celebrated Donoso Cortés, Marques de Valdegamas, we may mention, among other works, his valuable biographical contribu-

Digitized by Google

tion to Galiano's very complete History of Spain; while of Galiano himself, we have some clever historical essays and compilations, besides this comprehensive and painstaking work, in which he has been assisted by men of energy and talent, who have supplied information in the various departments; Señor Galiano was recently elected *academico* of the Real Academia de la Historia in Madrid, and was highly complimented on the occasion by the Señor Director, Don Antonio Benavides, the Ministro de Estado, and other distinguished members.

Of historical works, we have those of Cavanilles and Rios, a contemporaneous memoir of the reign of Isabella II., in six volumes; by Burgos, Conde's "History of the Arabs in Spain," compiled from old chronicles, and that comprised in Olózaga's valuable and important works; while Colmenares's "History of Political Economy" has a promising reputation. A new work is just appearing in numbers, entitled "El Defensor de los Maestros de Obros," purporting to be "a biographical compilation of the lives of architects." One Señor Peon has produced a work, the appearance of which is expected to make an epoch in the annals of science and literature: it is given out as a "Cronologica Universal," and is the result of many years' study and labour. The prospectus which announces it conveys the idea of a most compendious and comprehensive work.

There exists, it appears, a Spanish *Lancet*, known as the *Siglo Medico*, in which, chemical and physical phenomena and discoveries are announced and discussed. There is at the present time a controversy going on in this periodical, on the subject of mineral waters, in which El Dr. D. José Salgrado takes an active part: another medical journal, called *El Pabellon Médico*, has a good circulation.

An important botanical work has recently come out by D. Primo Comendador, professor of chemistry, intended

Digitized by Google

not only to be scientific but practical, and showing great study and research on the part of the author.

In philology we have an elaborate dictionary, the second volume of which, by Don Luis del Barco, has just issued from the press. The title it bears is "Diccionario Español de la Sagrada Escritura." It is from Spanish into Latin, and the compiler is regarded as a man of considerable erudition. This biblical encyclopædia, quite unique of its kind, consists of more than a thousand pages quarto: it is patronized by the episcopate, and may be regarded as a valuable adjunct to scientific as well as ecclesiastical literature.

Of new novels, tales, *zarzuelos*, and other dramatic pieces, we could give a very ample list; we also find that comic almanacks, after the model of those so popular in France, are being produced. This is the third year of the "Almanaque Humoristico, el Tiburon."

Dramatic literature, like the rest, has passed through a lengthened decadence, and very far it has travelled on its downward road. We have but to refer to the condition it had attained in the palmy days of Lope da Vega, and the immortal Calderon de la Barca, between whom and Michael Angelo, some have thought it not robbery to find a "mighty and mysterious analogy." "The *Moses* of Michael Angelo and the *Hercules* of Calderon," says an intelligent and judicious critic, Don Eugenio de Ochoa, "are different expressions of one and the same conception. The 'Autos Sacramentales' of our great Madrileñan poet, and the 'Last Judgment' of the sublime Florentine artist, are two immense torrents of the same genius, branching into two distinct channels."

If we examine any of the plays of Calderon (take for example his "Fieras Afemina Amor") we shall be able to judge not only of the perfection of refinement which dramatic literature had reached in the palmy days of Spain, so

Digitized by Google

that we may almost venture to say, without heresy, that Spain and England each possessed her Shakspere contemporaneously; but we shall see that the stage directions appended to these pages evince the attention then paid to scenic effect, and demonstrate the ingenuity of the mechanical contrivances by which they were carried out. There are some, indeed, almost as minute as those in Canning's burlesque, in which the performer is directed to "strike his head against the wall until he produces a *visible* contusion;" but in the present condition of theatrical arrangements we find no trace left of the attention once paid to these minutiæ, still less to the introduction of those marvels of scenic art which have developed so rapidly and brilliantly of late years in our own country, but which can scarcely exceed such as were once matters of course on the Spanish stage. The retrograde movement imparted to the drama and its representation in Spain is no doubt attributable, in a great measure, to the discouragement it suddenly underwent during the reign of one of her imbecile kings, Charles II., who maintained, but for a very brief period, the brilliant array of talent fostered and invigorated by the munificent patronage of his more intelligent father, Philip IV.; and the senseless decree promulgated by the Queen-mother, to the effect that all dramatic representations were to be suspended till the minor King was of an age to enjoy them, was no doubt the blow which proved fatal to its natural progress.

So much for the *manner*, now as regards the *matter*. The Spaniards of to-day have acquired the character of performing more translated pieces than original dramatic compositions, and of lacking in those they do produce, as well as in many other ways, the advantages of an inventive genius. This is another instance in which they have, in these latter days, turned the tables on themselves. Formerly it was *they* who supplied ideas to *other* nations; and

Digitized by Google

there is a curious admission, to this effect, in Voltaire's writings, worth quoting from the pen of one so jealous of his country's superiority. "No Spanish author," he says, "before the reign of Philip V. was ever known to translate or borrow from any French author; we, on the contrary," he adds, "since the reigns of Louis XIII. and Louis XIV. only, have stolen from the Spanish *répertoire* more than forty dramatic compositions;" and Fontenelle observes, that in the time of Corneille it was customary to take all the pieces performed on the French stage from the Spaniards. Possibly, as the Spaniards assert, the "Cid" was one of these, and it has never been very difficult to believe the Spanish tradition that Le Sage was the translator and not the inventor of "Gil Blas," of which, say they, he ferreted out the MS. in some old Spanish monastery.

We have the opinion of Schlegel on this subject in the following words:—"The noble and independent character of early Spanish poetry and literature is one of its most attractive characteristics. The national feeling boasted at that time so much vigour and spontaneity, that it never occurred to the authors of that age to plagiarize the originality of other countries. As for romance, properly so called, Spain was its birthplace, and at one time it may almost have been said to own no other home."

Macaulay states that in the year 1685 "our theatre was indebted for its plots and its characters to Spain, to France, and to the old English masters;" and he adds that which sounds strange to modern ears,—"but whatever our dramatists touched they tainted (!) In their imitations, the houses of Calderon's stately and high-spirited Castilian gentlemen became styes of vice. . . . Nothing could be so pure or so heroic but that it grew foul and ignoble by transfusion through those foul and ignoble minds." Such was the state of the drama in our own country!

One of the earlier Spanish dramatists of genius, to

Digitized by Google

whose lively pen we owe some of the cleverest pieces that have found their way into the *répertoire* of his country, was Alarcon. His family was noble, and he took his name from that of the town of Alarcon, where they owned considerable property; his full style and title being Juan Ruiz de Alarcon y Mendoza.

He was not appreciated in his own day,—possibly, it has been thought, from a petty jealousy his rivals entertained of his superior birth; also perhaps because, having been born in Mexico, they regarded him as a colonist, and for such, the Spaniards always affect great contempt. The time of Alarcon's birth is not known, but he died in 1639. Cervantes and Alarcon wrote conjointly the famous play "La Verdad Sospechosa," the history of which is very curious. Corneille partly imitated and partly translated from it, in 1642, his "Menteur," the foundation of the classical French comedy. Even Molière used to say it had inspired him with his first idea of writing comedy. Corneille himself, who admired this special production so much that he said he would prefer having written it to any two of his own pieces, did not know it was Alarcon's, and attributed the authorship to Lope de Vega, while his own countrymen—who, when it was translated back from "Le Menteur," and published at Madrid under that title, received it with enthusiasm—had refused even to notice it in its previous dress. Schlegel, in his elaborate critique on Spanish dramatic literature, has not even mentioned Alarcon; and Sismondi passes over this great genius in silence.

To Hartzenbusch is due his restoration to the honourable place he is entitled to hold in the literary annals of his country; he has, so to speak, disinterred the works of Alarcon, and has brought out an admirable edition of them; in consequence of the notice they have attracted in this new and attainable form, several have been translated into

Digitized by Google

other languages, and have won the admiration of men of letters. M. Roger has translated four or five of Alarcon's plays; each is remarkable for some peculiarity in the author's character, and they comprise in the aggregate, most satisfactory proofs of his ability, whether in his delineation of character, his keen observation and minute detail of the customs and feelings of the time, or the originality of his plots and the exciting nature of his *dénouements*. A tone of loyalty, honour and truthfulness pervades his works, and one cannot read them without feeling that if his heroes and heroines are types of the men and women of their day, the Spaniards were a noble race.

It appears that in 1632 there were little short of eighty dramatic writers in the Castiles only, and it has been calculated that a century and a half ago there were upwards of thirty thousand pieces in Spanish. Of course, among so many, a great proportion must have been of inferior quality; but when we consider that people of all classes, down to sheep-shearers and mechanics, contributed to this dramatic lore, we can only wonder that the stage has not degenerated even more. Cervantes states that he himself wrote thirty, and Lope de Vega one thousand five hundred pieces: and five of these he wrote in fifteen days. We can only deplore the period of degeneracy which has succeeded to one of so much promise.

The Spaniard is partial enough to dramatic pastime. It is an idle way of killing the evening hours, and suits the habits of a people who have enjoyed little cultivation, and possess few resources in themselves. They are willing to lounge into a theatre and to suffer themselves to be amused; but their love for it has not hitherto been sufficiently powerful to incite among their writers a vigorous cultivation of the drama as a literary pursuit, although there is at present some hope of witnessing its revival as a modern classic in Spain. Of the Spaniards of to-day it

Digitized by Google

is true, we may say, as of the *profanum vulgus* of Rome in the days of Juvenal, "Duas tantum res anxiùs optat," &c.; and there is no doubt that, taking them collectively, the less spiritual and less intellectual entertainment of the circus offers far higher attractions to their comparatively unrefined tastes, and will probably always claim their first attention, and engross their warmest interest.

Poetry and music are essential components in the Spanish character, and singing and movement seem to be natural accompaniments to many if not all of their occupations—we had almost said "manual" occupations; but the feet are as active as the hands with them; and in cases where the feet are specially employed, such as in dancing the *bolero* and other national figures, or in treading out the wine, national catches and ballads always accompany the action.

National ballads are always a suggestive test of national character, and some of those of Spain are very idiosyncratic and peculiarly graceful. We give the following as being a good sample of the style, which, it will be seen, is somewhat Anacreontic, not to say Don-Juanitic:—

"Yo me enamoré del aire
Del aire de una mujer;
Como la mujer es aire
En el aire me quedé.

"Eres tu la que la quitas
El color a la manzana
Y la blancura a la nieve
Y la frescura a las aguas.

"Sosas eran en lo antiguo
Todas las aguas del mar;
Pero escupió mi morena
Y se volvieron salás.

"Las estrellas en el cielo
Estan alumbrando á Dios
Y tu, como eres mi estrella
Alumbras mi corazon.

Digitized by Google

"Para rey nació David
Para sabia, Salomon
Para llorar Jeremias
Y para quererte, yo.

"Si oyes que tocan á muerto,
No preguntes quien murió;
Porque ausente de tu vista,
Quién puede ser, sino yo?

"Valgame Dios de los cielos,
Qué penosillo es mi mal!
Suspirando tengo alivio,
Y no puedo suspirar!"

Of popular epigrams we subjoin one or two which will give an idea of the spirit of the nation to which they are peculiar; there is grace, wit, sparkle, and *finesse* in every one, and they afford an admirable view of the lighter side of Spanish character.

"Quisiera ser por un rato
Perla de tu gargantilla
De tus zarcillos arete
De tus zapatos hebilla."

"A gem, on that fair throat I'd shine,
Or pearl dependent from that ear,
Or clasp on fairy foot of thine,
So I might be for ever near."

Romeo has not more tenderly or elegantly wished that he were "the glove upon that hand."

What a homage to blue eyes we find in the following!—

"No hay ojos mas hermosos
Que los azules
Y sino mira al cielo
Cuando no hay nubes."

"Eyes, made to win the heart are those
Which beam on us with heaven's own hue,
Whose limpid depth and calm repose
Reflect th' expanse of cloudless blue."

There is a tolerably smart hit in the next:—

"De la costilla de Adam
Crió Dios á la mujer
Por en tienen los hombres
Ese hueso que raer."

And a charming little point of Hibernian, rather than Iberian, wit in the one that follows:—

Digitized by Google

"Las estrellas del cielo	"The glittering gems of Night,
No están cabales,	Complete no longer shine;
Porque están en tu cara	Two, brightest of the bright,
Las principales."	Illume that face of thine."

The following is graphically poetical, and exhales the odour of the atmosphere which suggested it:—

"El naranjo de tu patio	"In thy fair court the orange tree,
Cuando te acercas á él,	Whene'er it feels thy presence nigh,
Se desprende de sus flores	Casts down its blossoms tenderly
Y te las echa á los piés."	Beneath thy fairy feet to lie."

And the next is a blossom from the land of flowers—"*cela sent son Andalousie à dix lieux:*"—

"El dia que tu naciste	"Thy natal day, to flow'rets choice
Nacieron todas las flores;	Gave birth, as well as unto thee;
Y en la pila del bautismo	And nightingales, with tuneful voice,
Cantaron los ruiseñores.	Around thy font made melody.
"Si supiera que con flores,	"They knew that flowers and blossoms sweet
Te habia de divertir.	Thy fittest toys would prove.
Yo te trajera mas flores	I'll lay Spring's treasures at thy feet,
Que crian Mayo y Abril."	To show my constant love."

These *canciones* or *poesias* are varied for all occasions; those which are sung during the dancing of the *bolero* are very characteristic. The following shows that Pope was not the only poet who thought that "Beauty draws us by a single hair:"—

"Dáme de tu cabeza
Siquiera un pelo
Para atarme una herida
Que amor me ha hecho.
Pero es locura
Pues mas ha de inflamarse
Con la atadura."

The one we next transcribe is worthy of Othello:—

"Al sol es parecido
Quien celos tiene
Que levanta vapores
Que lo oscurecen.
Y las tormentas
Se forman de las nubes
De las sospechas."

Digitized by Google

Here is an old idea, and one that has haunted all poetry more or less in all times, but it is prettily and wittily turned,—

"A la sala del crímen
Llevé tus ojos,
Porque son dos ladrones
Facinerosos.
Y cuando entraron
Se ha quejado el regente
Que le robaron."

The following is the emanation of Spanish feeling throughout, and wonderfully well expresses the feminine vengeance of one of the weaker sex, who can only have recourse to the obvious defence with which nature has endowed her:—

"Delicada es la rosa,
Mas, si la ofenden,
Tiene en el tronco espinas
Que la defienden.
Para cogerla
Es necesario tiento
Y no ofenderla."

We might give examples of many more such. Of the couplets sung during the various dances, some are very expressive, others are those used to serenade the fair beneath their casements by night, as for example:—

"Si esta noche no sales
A la ventana
Cuéntame entre los muertos
Desde mañana."

Or,—

"Bien pudiera la luna
Ser campechana
Y alumbrar con sus rayos
A tu ventana."

Some are purely *amorosas*, as:—

"Los dientes de tu boca
Me tienen preso,
Quién ha visto cadena
Hecha de hueso!

Digitized by Google

"Los dientes de tu boca
Me tienen asi.
Quién ha visto grilletes
Hechos de marfil!"

Sometimes there is a little smart irony, as in the following:—

"No pienses de que te quiero
Porque te miro á la cara,
Que muchos van á la feria
A ver, y no compran nada."

"Because I say thy beauty's rare,
Think not, vain maid, I seek to wed;
Ofttimes we saunter through a fair,
And leave, with purse unopened."

Another such runs thus:—

"Amigo Blas, he intentado
Poner mi mujer en venta
Para compar un caballo,
Porque me tiene mas cuenta."

Their cradle songs have a simplicity and a spirit of piety which tells of the religious confidence of their belief, and speaks well for the sentiments in which the children are nurtured:—

"A la puerta del cielo
Venden zapatos
Para los angelitas
Que están descalzos,"—

if equally pointless, is decidedly more graceful and poetical than "Shoe the horse and shoe the mare," &c.; and such a verse as—

"A los niños que duermen
Dios los benedice
Y á las madres que velan
Dios las asiste"—

is an undoubted improvement upon the meaningless "Hushaby baby upon the tree-top," &c.; while the next is still better adapted to the capacity of a child:—

"Duermete niño chiquito,
Duermete y no llores mas,
Que se irán los angelitos
Para no verte lloror."

Digitized by Google

Again there is a reproachful significance in the following, equivalent to, only more poetical than, the allusion to a "silver spoon" common to English nurseries :—

"Duermete, niño en los brazos
Y dormirás con descanso
Duérmete, niño, en la cuna
Y dormirás con fortuna."

The *seguidillas* may almost be considered proper to La Mancha; it was there they originated, and thence that they have spread; the words are generally of a tender and amorous character, but sometimes they are caustic and satirical: the national poetry, national dances, and national music of Spain, however, vary with every province, as do the customs, the costume, and the physical type of the people. Each dance, as each song, has a distinct nomenclature and a distinct character.

In Biscay it is the *zatica*, in Castile the *habas verdes*, in La Mancha the *zapatado* and the *seguidilla*, in Arragon the *jota*, in Valencia the *rondalla*, in Andalusia the *cachucha*, the *fandango* and *bolero*.

The guitar—that universal instrument of Spain—is "pinched" by every one; high-born or low-born, blue blood or black blood, *hidalgo* or beggar, all are more or less apt at strumming this hard, irresponsive instrument; the click of the castagnet, which breaks the monotonous vibration, is a positive relief, and the tinkling of the tambourine helps to overcome it. The combination of the three, and the droning tone of the voice which generally accompanies, seem wonderfully in character with the very peculiar music prevalent here, and form a *tout ensemble*, which one neither wishes nor is likely to hear out of the country. The dance, which is sure to follow these sounds, is *en suite;* and perhaps the strangest and most interesting feature of the case is the intense delight, not to say enthusiasm, with which it is joined in by the dancers,

Digitized by Google

and gazed at by the bystanders, who are by no means idle, and never fail to take their part in the chorus, and to testify by the clapping of their hands, and the measured beating of their feet, that they too claim their share in the proceedings.

It is the wildest performance that ever was effected by people professing to be civilized; there is neither rule nor order, reason, nor certainly *rhyme* in the whole exhibition: this latter accessory is dealt with in the most arbitrary style: in Spanish as in Irish prosody, the rhyme of the penultimate is considered amply sufficient, and where this cannot easily be obtained, it is dispensed with altogether; the guitar lends itself with an obligingness which no other instrument would accord, to this free and easy style; a few chords struck with a little tact at the right moment, a sweep of the hand over the strings, and—treating the key-board like a tambourine—the application of a few well-timed taps on its vibrating surface, produce all the accompaniment required to support the singular melody, which—as well as the words—is generally extempore.

It is the Andalusian women who excel at this, and they are declared irresistible when they attack with this weapon. The sparkling Sevillana, with the broad bright ribbon of her guitar floating over her shoulder and round her waist, stands a perfect model of grace; the characteristic instrument seems a part of herself. Her eye glances round her with self-conscious triumph. She feels mistress of herself, of her instrument, and, we may add, of her audience. Her improvised poem is the inspiration of the moment; the fascinated spectators devour every flash of her velvety eye, every whisper that passes her curled lip, and every movement of that symmetrical form, as it sways with supple *abandon* to the strains. Her words are often full of wit and meaning, and the rhythm flows on in its own wayward wildness, unrestrained by the trammels of precedent

Digitized by Google

or the laws of conventionality. If it happen to rhyme, so much the better; if not, an arch look or a languid *rallentando* replaces, while it masks, the deficiency, and the accidental flat becomes a *concordia discors*, and an effective incident: the audience sit round in attitudes as graceful as her own—bewitched: their eyes are fastened upon her with a sympathetic *entrainement* of which they are only semi-conscious; and, without being aware of it, they fill up the intervals with their unanimous chorus; their very attitudes and gestures interpreting the absorption of their thoughts.

The origin of the guitar is lost in the obscurity of Moorish and Egyptian antiquity; it has always been a thing of Spain, and remains part and parcel of their own proper music: their passion for it is one of the foundation-stones of their quaint and idiosyncratic nationality.

"Few foreigners," says the Duchesse d'Abrantes, "ever attain the mode of singing the *seguidillas;* when they attempt it, the monotonous inflexions alone are heard; but let a Spaniard try the same *seguidilla*, and all listeners are entranced. It is the same," adds this lady, "with the *bolero*: dansé comme je l'ai vu danser en Espagne, c'est en vérité une délicieuse chose. Il en est, du reste, de la danse et de la musique Espagnole comme de plusieurs choses qu'on ne peut imiter hors du pays; il faut que le pays lui-même donne son air de feu et de parfum à cette danse, qui n'est autre chose qu'une conversation muette dans laquelle se révélent non-seulement des sentiments, mais des sensations."

Boleros and Fandangos are national dances, but they are among the *délassements* of the *plebs*, and are not maintained by society: drawing-room dances among the upper classes are much graver in style, and waltzing is by no means congenial to the national character.

Digitized by Google



CHAPTER V.

MADRID TO TOLEDO.

"A ti mañana, á mi hoy:
Yo soy punta y tú eres mango,
Este mundo es un fandango
Tú vienes y yo me voy.'

ESPRONCEDA.

"These stones, alas! these grey stones: are they all—
All of the famed and the colossal, left
By the corrosive hours, to fate and me?"

EDGAR POE.

THE morning fixed for our departure from Madrid arrived, and fortunately we had not placed much reliance on poor Gregorio's promise to arouse us betimes.

Digitized by Google

It was we who had to awaken *him;* and well it was, for he assured us he had gone to bed very fatigued, and in his anxiety to keep his word, had scarcely closed his eyes all night. He had, however, dropped off just after the sereno had called out "Las cinco y sereno," and when we disturbed him he had just been dreaming most vividly that he *had* got up and *had* called us, and in this belief he had curled himself up again most snugly, with the duty quite off his mind. We dressed by candle-light, and groped our way down to the *portone;* as we closed it for this, the last time, it banged behind us with a hollow, reproachful sound, echoing again through the dark, still sleeping street, of which we found ourselves sole masters, making our way to the Puerta del Sol, preceded by our faithful Gregorio: the *mozos* followed with the boxes; Gregorio's lantern guided our steps. Anywhere but in the Calle del Desengaño he might have looked as if he were searching for an honest man, but *there,* unless perhaps it were himself, we doubt if the pursuit would not have been a futile one. As we emerged from the Puerta and turned into the Alcalá Street, we experienced a practical evidence of the brevity of the twilight in these latitudes, by suddenly finding ourselves in full daylight, and we were unanimously struck by the peculiarly beautiful colour and quality of the pure and pearly *madrugada,* as it illumined first the deep blue sky and fleecy clouds, high, high above our heads, and then the handsome, lofty edifices on either side the broad street, with their delicate pink, grey, and stone-coloured façades, relieved by white stone copings, pilasters, and other architectural adornments. The wide pavement was entirely free of passengers; there was scarcely any trace of traffic in the road; and for the first time during our stay in the Spanish capital, we understood its character and appreciated its beauties.

We passed down through the trees which skirt the

Digitized by Google

lower extremity of the Calle de Alcalá, and between the Palazzo of the Duca de Medina Cœli on the one hand and the handsome Corinthian façade of the Cortes on the other, and turned into the Prado, where the delicate silvery effect of light and colour was perhaps yet more magical; and now the idle inhabitants were beginning to stir; here and there a telling figure, draped in his striped blankets, and seated athwart his mule, or a dispenser of "*déjeûners aux pieds humides*," established beneath the shelter of the foliage, or a quaintly-costumed group of labourers, male and female, gave life and interest to the scene.

By day, and especially by night, the streets and *paseos*, including the Prado of Madrid, are so inconveniently thronged with the masses of people who seem to live in the outer air, and to have little to do beyond sauntering along the streets, that it is almost impossible to obtain a clear idea even of the *triviology*, much less of the æsthetical characteristics of this unique capital; and it was literally the first time—after a stay of nearly three weeks —that we realized its singular architectural advantages. We had the place entirely to ourselves, and enjoyed it uninterruptedly, so that on the whole we had reason to congratulate ourselves on the incompleteness of the local arrangements, which had left us to perform our transit to the station on foot.

The *mozos de cordel*, or porters—generally Gallegos—who here carry your luggage, literally "knotted" to their heads, and whose sole stock in trade consists of a rope, which, after enabling them to earn their living, might very fairly be used to terminate their lives—are the gainers by this defective management. Having called a couple of these fellows, we insisted on agreeing with them beforehand, and bade them make a price for their services. As four reals each trunk is the regular charge for a *course*, be it longer or shorter, there was not much difficulty here; but

Digitized by Google

like true Matritenses they gave us a specimen of their mode of cheating which was tolerably characteristic. The "knotting" was so clumsily executed that their burdens were continually slipping from the girth, and they had to stop at least half-a-dozen times to adjust them; however, they at last arrived safely at the Atocha station. As soon as the boxes were landed, we proffered them the stipulated sum, adding a small *gratificacion* over and above the bargain; and this generosity very probably excited their cupidity, for on perceiving it they laid the money down again, and declared that they must have four times that sum before they would go. We were at first astonished at the attempt, and treated it as a facetious impertinence; but they persisted with so much determination that we saw there was but one alternative, and calling to a porter to carry away the boxes, we told them mildly but firmly that having paid what we had agreed, we should simply withdraw the *buona-mano*, for which we had *not* stipulated, and that not one *ochave* more would they get from us; and suiting the action to the word, we left them completely disconcerted. Their assumed pluck was soon exhausted; they did not even attempt a reply; but with crestfallen mien they quietly picked up the coin and slunk away. This is the only method to adopt with a Spaniard when he attempts to "do" you. It is but fair, however, to add that this spirit of extortion is fostered only in large towns, amid the corrupting "hum of men," and these overreaching tricks are confined almost exclusively to hotel-keepers and their myrmidons, to whom we may say, with reproachful veracity, "I was a stranger, and ye *took me in*." It is nevertheless much to be regretted, seeing that these being the people foreigners chiefly come in contact with, they go away with a false impression of the whole nation. As regards our dealings with the natives in other capacities, we have real pleasure in recording

Digitized by Google

that we were most agreeably impressed with their generosity of feeling and noble disinterestedness, characteristics which, rare as they are in the humbler classes of most countries, will, it is to be hoped, survive the introduction of civilization, and resist its usual consequences.

On proceeding to the *guichet* to take our tickets we found the spacious station crowded with passengers, among whom were mingled an equally considerable number of *flâneurs* of both sexes and all ages, idly lounging about, as if the departure of a train were a novel sight. Few were first, or even second-class travellers, but a numerous body of the labouring population were evidently there to avail themselves of the train. They certainly were the queerest lot of navvies one can well imagine, and the appearance they presented could only be realized in a country where ideas of national costume still hold their sway. There must have been some sixty of them, and they were attired in the strangest—not to say the most comical—fashion, each being an exact counterpart of the rest.

Their hats were pointed and broad-brimmed, moderately the worse for wear, and not unlike that by which we designate the conventional wizard: below came the unbuttoned waistcoat, dingy shirt sleeves, and loose hanging jacket, with one arm passed through the sleeve; the *haut de chausse*, as loose, wrinkled, and picturesque as all the rest, was tied on with strings below the knee, meeting the interlaced straps of the list sandals, with slipshod white stockings beneath. Over all this was thrown the more or less dilapidated cigar-coloured cloth cloak, with its collar and short cape—the inseparable wrap of the Castilian peasant. The most striking feature, however, in the *tout ensemble* was the hump formed behind by the wallet and tool-bag which each carried, strapped round his waist, beneath this external integument. In short they might

Digitized by Google

have passed for a stage chorus, representing a gang of crippled beggars.

The train, as usual, was about half-an-hour behind time in starting, and as it halted very frequently at stations along the road, besides "standing up" once or twice to allow other trains to pass, the journey, which we had intended should just whet our appetite for breakfast, bid fair to carry us on at least to lunch.

The scenery, which had been flat and uninteresting as we left Madrid, began to show some pleasing varieties as we advanced, and whereas it was now and then mountainous and rocky, was also interspersed with patches of cultivated land, plentiful vineyards, and attractive little hamlets. As we approached Aranjuez, we perceived walking statelily among the *broussailles*, a herd of camels. The sight was so unexpected, that we inquired their history, and learned they were the domestic animals of the Palace gardens and the property of her Majesty, who employs them there, as at the Buen-Retiro, and in all the farms and pleasure-grounds attached to her several palaces.* They were remarkably effective in the solitary landscape and amidst the local vegetation and foliage, and seemed quite at home as they stood out against the glowing sky which served for their background. There is little cultivation here, and the traces of man are few and scattered. The sight of these peculiarly Oriental quadrupeds seemed to carry us still farther than we had travelled from the European world of common things; but we may now echo as a universal principle the fatal boast of Louis XIV: the power of steam has annihilated the trammels of time, space, and boundary, and when we can calmly talk of so anomalous a combination as is implied by the "railway

* We find mention made of camels in the royal demesnes as much as a century ago, when they were in use there for carrying burdens; buffaloes were likewise employed, but their occupation was drawing carts, ploughs, &c.

Digitized by Google

station of Toledo," we may expect one day to find camels and giraffes walking about on our English lawns. It was reserved for the nineteenth century to realize as a fact, "Il n'y a plus de Pyrénées."

A few more miles, and the broadly-rolling Tagus came in sight: as we followed its graceful windings through rushy banks and fresh meadows, varied and interspersed with gardens of sober-foliaged olive trees, we were recalled from our contemplation of its present abandonment to a retrospect of the importance it enjoyed when it watered the finest city in Spain; for, before our eyes now rose, in all the majesty of their solemn and enduring massiveness, the denuded ruins of the once great and glorious Toledo:—

"Proud city on her royal eminence,"

she still seems to reign, as, towering from the steep, rocky foundation of her seven hills, she surveys "hill and plain and dale," and rugged heights themselves, which stoop to recognize their vassalage;—

"For there she stands, as stands the lofty mind,
Worn—but unbending to the baser crowd."

Her desolation wears a mournful dignity, and commands the veneration rather than solicits the sympathy of the beholder: she is well named "*Toledo, la Pintoresca*"—though there is a fascination beyond that of mere beauty in her aspect;—it is more than winning—more than imposing—it is absolutely touching, in its suggestiveness.

The first view of the solemn picture of still life, is altogether so attractive that it is impossible not to linger beneath the shade of the maple trees, planted within either bank of the bending road by which this classic ground is approached, to drink in the ideas to which it gives rise. We could not but regard this intervening effort of engineering skill as affording a most fortunate interruption to divide the two heterogeneous extremes it was constructed to connect. It

Digitized by Google

requires a little reflection to realize to oneself the actual proximity into which modern practical science has brought the railway terminus, with all its matter-of-fact appliances, and this especially ancient and æsthetical city, filled with its retrospective associations — associations all the more inseparable from it, because, once within the range of those old stone and stucco walls, and beneath the dilapidated old *fortalices*, there is nothing to disturb the reflections they evoke—nothing even to recall the existence of the nineteenth century, or to remind us that we belong to it. Every object that meets the eye—from the rocky promontory where—

> "Tagus bends his sickle round the scene
> Of Roderick's fall,"—

or the crumbling walls and terraces of the proud, but tottering Alcázar, down to the humblest ass patiently bearing his porous and—he little dreams how—classically-picturesque jars of *agua fresca*, or the yet more subdued and obsequious *mozo* of the *fonda*, who, in his primitive simplicity, thinks it his duty to bear you company while you feed, to entertain you with his artless observations, and to watch all your movements with respectful curiosity —all is of a bygone age: all is idiosyncratic, as all is picturesque, in Toledo. It is a very paradise for the poet and the painter; while the antiquary and the geologist may indulge and gratify their avarice of lore, and the harmless visionary may let his imagination loose into the boundless realms of retrospective fancy. It may—nay, it *must* conjure up the brilliant phantoms of the past, and re-create, along with the pageants of the times, those scenes of contest, during which this loyal capital of two dynasties was wrested from one conqueror by another, and saw itself successively won and possessed by Israelites, Romans, Goths, Moors, and finally regained by Christians.

If the loosening stones could speak, what strange tales

Digitized by Google

could they relate! The history of Toledo is well-nigh as intricate as those narrow, hilly, tortuous, labyrinthine old streets, forsaken palaces, and silent colleges, the mute yet eloquent witnesses of its stirring and vicissitudinous details.

There is an inexpressible charm—perhaps because an obvious harmony—in that strange, dull, tawny hue which tints every object within range of the sight, and seems to pervade the very atmosphere of Toledo. Even the pastures are subdued in tone, and the peculiarly chastened grey-green of the gardens of olive-trees, patching at intervals the valley of the winding Tagus, form the only relief to the universal brown. All bright and showy colours would seem as if by common consent to have been here excluded from the work of Nature no less than the handicraft of man; the severity of the pale bistre is in keeping with the present aspect of bygone magnificence of this "*mater dolorosa*" of cities.

It overspreads impartially the castellated towers, ridge-tiled roofs, and verandahed *solanos*, the foliated horseshoe arches, the dwarf colonnades, and rough stucco walls, as they rise one above another on the varying gradients, emulating the steeps which Nature constructed there, and amidst which the edifices have been raised.

This pervading buff covers alike the grim Moorish postern and the narrow but massive stone bridge; it tints the cloaked or blanketed groups we descry passing over it at rare intervals, and it reflects itself in the waters of the Tagus as they flow smoothly along, emulating the colour of the "*flavum Tibrim*," till they boil over the ruins encumbering its bed, ere they dash through the old buttressed arches; neither does it spare the steep and rugged declivities at once forming the river-banks and constituting the formidable natural defences of the city.

Livy's oft quoted description of Toledo—"*Urbs parva sed valde munita*"—is justified in the latter respect, if only

Digitized by Google

by the completeness of Nature's batteries; as regards its size, Livy knew not the extent it was destined to arrive at, under its Moorish possessor.

As if to intensify and make *more* utter, the nudity and desertion which reign supreme, Nature seems for once to have assumed the invidious prerogatives of a step-mother, and grudging the "fatal gift of beauty" she had erst bestowed on this her favoured daughter, to have withdrawn from her in her hour of adversity those mitigations we are accustomed to see her accord to the victims of time and war, adorning, with maternal solicitude, the mouldering remains "where Ruin *greenly* dwells."

Not so here; and if Toledo is not without a desolate poetry peculiar to herself, that poetry is to be found in her very desolation. No mantling ivy twines its caressing tendrils round the broken column, no graceful vine clings about the gaping arch, no mossy verdure suggests the thought of a renovated vitality among these hopeless ruins. "The glory hath departed" altogether from them.

"Ichabod" is written by the stern finger of Fate upon every stone that constitutes what is still called Toledo. There she sits—a mute and widowed queen—great even in her fall, for there is dignity in her desolation, and a mighty helplessness in her abandonment. The fragments lie, there where they have dropped from time to time, scattered around, and heaped up, beneath the tottering walls of which they once were part. As for those that have not yet followed their fate, they seem to remain behind, as if only to hand down to another generation or two, the tradition of their former grandeur.

To trace the origin of this proverbially ancient and interesting city would be a matter almost of impossibility, especially as even "History, that great liar who never spoke the truth," is herself at fault here; and those who have endeavoured to record the events of her existence *ab*

Digitized by Google

ovo, have been obliged to rest content with the accepted phrase, to wit, that the birthday of Toledo "se perd dans la nuit des temps." This is, after all, the safest solution of the archæological mysteries of a Welsh pedigree or a Spanish dynasty.*

Its earliest masters are stated by various historians to have been Almanices,† Greeks, Romans, and Jews. It would be futile to pursue our researches into these remote times, and we will only mention one more opinion, which attributes the possession of this portion of Spain, during a certain period of her early history, to the Turanians or Mongolians.

That the Jews held Toledo for a certain time there can be no reasonable doubt, and if we consult her architectural archives, the two beautiful and elaborate buildings formerly used as synagogues stand prominent, among other remains, to attest the presence of this people. There are also many Roman remains, within, as well as without the walls, and we have no reason to doubt the assertion that this city was in possession of that powerful nation during a period of some two hundred years before the birth of Christ, having been taken by the Prætor Marcus Fulvius Novilior in the year 193 B.C. The Romans appreciated the importance and value of this powerful and central city, and constituted it the capital of the kingdom of Carpetana. They invested

* Abbé Valmont, in his "Elémens de l'Histoire," charges the Spaniards with declaring that Adam was the first king of Spain, and that, at the creation, God placed the sun over Toledo. This boast does not seem a very improbable one, whether we consider the conservative notions or the figurative language of the Spaniards; nevertheless Don Tomé Lopez has taken up the statement somewhat warmly, and denies that his countrymen ever made such an assertion.

† It is presumable that these Almanices are the Allmanni stated by Bruce to have been seen in Central Germany about 214 B.C., between the Danube and the Maine, and to have been very successful in the wars they were constantly waging against the Romans, but whose progress was finally checked by the Franks in 496.

Digitized by Google

it with various privileges,—among others with that of coining money,—while to its own natural defences they added their own efficient and indestructible fortifications.

It was not until the fifth century that Toledo came under the dominion of the Goths, who mastered the whole of Spain. They again erected Toledo into a royal city, making it the seat of government and capital of the province.

If, however, these vicissitudes were prejudicial to her peace, to them Toledo is indebted for the variety of, and continual additions to, her architectural treasures. It was during the dominion of the Goths that her gorgeous cathedral and magnificent churches rose into being; and "Roderick, the last of the Visigoths," built his palace there. And what a palace! for we can still trace its extent in its remains. If effeminate and luxurious, Roderick knew how to defy attack, to entrench himself within his banqueting hall, and to shut out the discordant sounds of war, that he might enjoy his silken pleasures in security.

At once citadel and bower, the noble and, perhaps we might justly add also, *ignoble* retreat of the Sybaritical chieftain stood firm and defiant as the rock which was its foundation. Alas! the spacious edifice, of which now scarce one stone remains upon another, what a sad tale of the vanity of our loftiest achievements does not its ruin tell! That palace, so vast that the wildly-rushing Tagus was its moat, and the living rock, steep and rugged, its rampart — is gone, and the place thereof knoweth it no more! The defenceless bat hovers by night, and the bright-winged insect floats at noonday, through the limpid space those massive walls once occupied, while the grasshopper chirps its shrill cry in the vacant courts. We paused long contemplating the suggestive picture before us. The sun's meridian heat poured down from a sky of intense and fleckless blue, and the broad-cast shadows were of that rich, deep quality which serves to show the beauti-

Digitized by Google

ful transparency of the shade on the darkened side of the object which throws it; the air was still and soft, and scarce a sound of "busy life" disturbed the murmuring splash of the water as it broke over the irregular masses of stone formed by the ruins of the old Moorish bridge which intercepted its flow.

Here and there, travelling along the mountain tracks, we could discern groups of peasants, accompanied by ass or mule, the beast being sometimes ridden by a mountaineer with his wife *en croupe;* or, now and then, a quaint, antiquated, massive-wheeled cart, drawn by fawn-coloured oxen, yoked by their handsome horns; and thus gazing around us, we reached the postern, and set foot on the ancient stone bridge. But for a solitary figure, costumed as if for an artist's *pose*—an old fellow selling chesnuts,—not a living creature appeared, and, facing the second solemn stone gateway tower before us at the other extremity,—a relic of the Moors,—we seemed to be entering a city of the dead.

A little farther on, a characteristic incident occurred, which deserves mention. On crossing the threshold of the old gateway, we saw before us, to our right, a new broad road, apparently cut in the rock, with a low stone parapet-wall on the right side, overhanging the cliff, and winding up by an easy ascent towards the highest point of the town, piled on our left. It was in course of completion, and had just been laid with fine gold-coloured sand; barrows and tools partly blocked up the road, and a pole was tied across to prevent traffic. A couple of workmen were employed beside this "*encombrement.*" They saw the difficulty we found ourselves in, with wonderful quickness, and begging the ladies to wait a moment, they instantly removed the obstacle, and cleared a passage for our party. One of us was about quietly to slip a small coin into the hand of one of the poor fellows, but to our surprise they

Digitized by Google

drew back, and decidedly, but courteously, declined accepting any gratuity, asserting that it was simply from a very natural consideration for the ladies, and "no por interesse" that they had done it, and, bidding us a graceful God-speed, they resumed their work. As for ourselves, we toiled up and up, looking back from time to time at the view around us, as it increased in extent and interest; but so deserted and wild, and denuded of the ordinary details of life, did all appear, that we could not repress some anxious forebodings as to where we were likely to find a breakfast here in the wilderness! Nothing, in the least resembling the barest *fonda* had as yet greeted our eye, and we began somewhat uneasily to thread the narrow, mysterious-looking streets—which, but for the bright sun pouring down upon them, would have looked gloomy and hopeless—in the expectation of reaching some open square or other central point. In this we were not disappointed; it was precisely the Plaza Zocodover, or market-place, that we turned into—a large, irregular colonnaded square, with small, primitive, indifferently-stocked shops beneath the arcades. There was an untidy heap of building stones and rubbish in one corner, where the pavement was up, and a number of idle, unemployed fellows—uncommonly picturesque and dirty, ragged and characteristic — were standing about, but there was no appearance of a market; and such groups as gave movement to the scene consisted of mule-drivers, asses, and carts drawn by bullocks; cattle as well as men either basking and reposing, or sauntering lazily through the great square, as if time were a matter which held no place within the scope of *their* philosophy: this is called, by courtesy, the market-place.

Through an archway in one corner of this venerable old arcaded square, and at the corner of a street unusually wide for this part of the world, and especially for Toledo, we saw a sign-board announcing the Parador Nuevo,—and

Digitized by Google

something new it certainly was to us in the way of hotels, whether as regarded the construction, the *ameublement*, or the *personnel* of the establishment.

The master of this hotel was a mistress,—a stout, substantial-looking widow, something above middle age; and the assistants in the *ménage* consisted of a chambermaid, a man-cook, and the *mozo*, Manuel, who appeared to be a sort of factotum—though he looked more like a *tee-totum*, a square-built, good-natured, simple-minded old fellow of the Sancho type, who waited on us with much obsequiousness and assiduity.

The house, which, no doubt, was once a monastery, was built, as most Spanish houses are, round a quadrangular court, the upper gallery open, and supported on the columns of the lower corridor; on this abutted the broad brick staircase, and from it opened the half-glazed doors, which gave access respectively to the kitchens, to the *comedor* or dining-room, and to the rooms reserved for the stores and the occupation of the family, comprising two or three children and kittens. Above was an open gallery or *loggia* all round the four sides, over which the slate roof projected sufficiently to shelter it from the weather; and from this, the doors opened into the several sleeping-rooms: the floor of this corridor, as well as those of all the rooms, were covered with matting, and the walls were all whitewashed. The furniture was scanty and of the simplest description, but, as well as the bedding, it was scrupulously clean.

This very Oriental-looking *intérieur* was rendered more interesting by the circumstance of the hotel being built against, or rather into, one of the walls of the ruined Alcázar; the crumbling remains of which, as seen from the gallery and staircases, formed a very picturesque object. Here, as an exception to the remainder of the old city, some few creepers had sprung up, and gracefully hung

Digitized by Google

about the openings which once were windows, or fell from the broken cornices and masked their asperities; the deep green mingled well with the rich time-embrowned hue of these mutilated details, while the deep blue of the sky was intensified by the warm stone-colour of the irregular framework through which it was seen.

Having chosen our rooms, we began to remember we had not yet breakfasted, and to inquire what could be had, worthy of that meal. Manuel, who was evidently making his *premières armes* in the feat of discovering what English tastes were likely to be, proposed all the most impossible dishes, and thus gave us an insight into the untutored state of his native ideas on the subject. Having negatived all his wild suggestions, we begged we might have a few eggs, with Spanish bread and *café au lait*. At the mention of eggs and milk, poor Manuel stood aghast, but after a few minutes' serious reflection, he seemed to think these articles might possibly be obtainable, and he promised to try for them; but the problem appeared so dubious, we replied that we would prefer falling back on whatever the house afforded. The house, however, afforded *nothing;* "the cupboard was bare!" and whatever we might fix upon would have to be *procured!* This is the "hand-to-mouth" way in which Spaniards live; and how hotel-keepers, when they do business in this way, can make it pay, it is difficult to understand.

It was evident we should have to wait some little time, and we accordingly amused ourselves with watching the operations of a wine-vendor, who had just brought into the court a wine-skin, which he was proceeding to draw off into bottles for the consumption of the *fonda*. These pig-skins, or *borrachas*, are the most uncouth looking vessels imaginable, and as they hang up outside the wine-dealers' shops, the sight almost disgusts one with their contents; add to this, that they are never dressed or prepared in

Digitized by Google

any way, within, any more than without, consequently, the flavour they impart to the wine is positively atrocious. They are covered with bristles, and besides being swollen out to an enormous size, are rendered stiff and grotesque in form, by the liquid they contain; one fore-leg is always taken off, as also the head, and they are strongly sewn up, so that there can be no escape; a metal ring with a screw-stopper is inserted, and through this the wine is poured in and out.

After the wine had been disposed of, there was another matter for observation in the primitive draw-well of the inn. Access to the spring was obtained through a small door in the wall beneath the arcades, and here the cans and buckets were let down and drawn up again.

At last we perceived Manuel hurrying to us across the court, with his white apron and a napkin in his hand, to say that breakfast was ready. He had succeeded in procuring the not very complicated meal we had ordered; but as we had not mentioned sugar, it had never entered into his round unsophisticated head to provide any, and *azúcar* being an article of luxury not kept among the stores of the Parador Nuevo, Manuel trotted out to buy a half-pound, which he placed before us in the simplest manner in a bit of Spanish newspaper, just as it had been screwed up by the chandler who served him, and of a very unusual colour.

To exhibit the skill of the *chef*, Manuel had converted our eggs into an *ommelette*, the appearance of which did not much exalt our opinion of that gentleman's talents; but as it was kindly intended, we swallowed it, much with the grace affected by Madame du Barri and the Comte Jean, when Louis XV. insisted on cooking this same dish with his own royal fingers. Manuel, whose sole aim was evidently to please us, had further added a dish of fried slices of *jamon con dulces*, or ham and sugar, a very favour-

Digitized by Google

ite compound in Spain, and one we did not find it difficult to approve, albeit somewhat incongruous to an English palate. The Spaniards are uncommonly proud of their chesnut-fed swine, and consider the flesh very fine eating.

During our repast, we perceived that we had become objects of considerable interest to Manuel, who continued to hover about the table, going backwards and forwards to the cupboard where his scanty store of glass and china was stowed, and arranging his blunt knives and two-pronged forks by way of an excuse. At last he could bridle his curiosity no longer, and stopping suddenly short at the end of the table, on which he rested his two hands, he respectfully but vehemently inquired what country we belonged to. When we told him we were English, he could hardly contain, first his surprise and then his joy. He too had taken us for Neapolitans! though apparently he attached no geographical signification to the idea, and the moment he found we came from England, he discovered a powerful bond of sympathy. . . . He had once been *on the point of going to England* with an hidalgo who had had some idea of visiting that country, but had eventually changed his mind! *N'importe*, Manuel in his simplicity considered himself as "a man and a brother" at once, and proceeded to busy himself about our dinner, which he undertook to provide, himself, if we would tell him what it was to consist of, and when it was to be served. This produced a long discussion, which, in its course, initiated us into the strange commercial and domestic condition of the country. Toledo is evidently a very out-of-the-way place, and is consequently indifferently supplied, especially with *denrées de bouche*. It was curious, when Manuel had shaken his head the required number of times, at each fresh demand, to perceive the very narrow limits to which our choice was reduced. When a cauliflower was mentioned the poor fellow was positively humiliated, and at the suggestion of

Digitized by Google

a turkey, he raised his eyes with a look which seemed to say, "*Juste ciel, quel aplomb!*" Seeing the position, we resolved to accept it, so telling Manuel we would leave it to him to cater for us, on the sole condition that he was to avoid garlic—a recommendation which appeared to astonish him more than anything we had yet said or done—we set off on an exploring expedition.

Our first visit was to the Alcázar, or palatial citadel, the summit and watch-tower of Toledo, and unquestionably the most striking object which adorns the panorama of this grand old city—now, alas! congenial with the rest—a ruin among ruins, but still overlooking all—as a venerable but enfeebled patriarch surviving to mourn over the fallen fortunes of his house.

. . . . . "Quis talia fando
Temperet a lacrymis"?

The history of this impressive edifice is, so to speak, inscribed upon its stones, and the varieties of architecture we detect amidst the general devastation attest the changes through which it has passed. Colossal in its proportions, it is built on the loftiest height within the city; its foundation is the solid rock, and it overhangs the steep and dull red cliff whose base is washed by the encircling Tagus. The ground-plan is that of a square, solid, turreted fortress, and each façade, massive and elaborate, represents a different period of architecture. The material is solid granite, and even in its mutilated remains it exhibits a power of resistance which tells its own story, and gives a grand idea of the people who required and could execute such buildings.

In front of the north façade is a broad, handsome terrace with a parapet-wall, along which are planted cannons; and between this and the building are laid out flower-beds, with their trim box borders. From this noble esplanade,

Digitized by Google

commanding the whole town and surrounding country, one of the finest and most perfect views the imagination can picture, presents itself. As we stood fascinated by its beauty, in that still air, looking down on the perfectly motionless old city—for it was the hour of *siesta*—it was scarcely possible to say whether the calm, reposeful scene lying before us, in all its rich, sunny depth of light and shade, was a living, breathing reality, or a beautiful panorama, limned by the hand of some orientally-inspired painter. At our feet were the flat-roofed, quadrangular houses, each with its *patio* or court in the middle, some with a fountain tranquilly plashing, others overspread with a sheltering vine; the high walls of mixed *tapia* and stone, with their characteristically small windows, the cool *alcobas* and arcaded *solanos* beneath the roofs; the ruined edifices, with their *debris* lying scattered and heaped around them; the narrow streets and tall houses, so narrow as to be almost entirely bathed in the transparent shade; then, of more prominent objects, the grand, storied Gothic cathedral and Archbishop's palace, the interesting old palace of S. Juan de los Reyes, the Mosarabic churches, mosques, and synagogues, the public squares, colleges, and hospitals; then, again, the Moorish gateway and bridges, and the large vacant space, now overgrown with turf, marked by the still visible foundations of the Castle of Don Rodrigo: embracing all this, came next the broad, golden ribbon of the Tagus, meandering through the meadows, and disappearing here and there between the olive gardens: beyond, again, and between its windings, green mounds, on which the castellated remains of fortresses told of the vigour with which this province had once been defended, while the ancient sword-manufactory carries on its now diminished trade of war in the most peaceful tranquillity: on this side, which takes in the famous Hospicio de los Niños Recogidos, a large general hospital standing on an emi-

Digitized by Google

nence, and the Campo Santo, the ground is for some distance flat, while on the other, from the steep red sandy banks, intermingled with rocky cliffs—between which flow the ensanguined waters of the Tajo—to the wild outline of the grey distance, which almost melts into the deep blue of the sky, the undulations of the hills are bold and grand; and as the eye follows the winding thread of their mountain paths, we obtain some idea of their scale. The lines of cattle, some most picturesquely panniered and laden, and the groups of Oriental-looking peasants, gracefully draped in their brightly striped and coloured costumes, descending these tracts, or crossing the bridges to come into the town, formed a wonderfully effective feature, and served to show that life was not quite extinct in this forsaken region.

It is a sight to see at all hours, and whether in the pearly light of early dawn, in the sultry stillness of noon-tide, in the rich glow of sunset, or under the mysterious majesty of moonlight, the mind will receive a new, but always a delightful and a suggestive impression.

The Eastern Terrace is gained, from the Northern, by a short flight of broad steps, and is chiefly disposed as an extensive gymnasium for the soldiers quartered here; for one wing of the Alcázar has been repaired, and being of gigantic dimensions, serves as a barrack; the ground-floor is appropriated to a library and museum for the infantry; while the extensive vaults or *bovedas* below are uninjured, and remain just as they were left by the Moors who constructed them.

This library is of small dimensions, and the supply of literature is meagre. The objects offered to public attention in the museum consist chiefly of models of towns, of fortresses, and of instruments of war, apparently not very correctly described, to judge by one which caught our eye:

Digitized by Google

this was an Armstrong bullet labelled as the latest invention of "Whitworth"!

The grand gateway, in the centre of the north façade, is a noble arch, elaborately ornamented, and displaying carved heads, escutcheons, and mouldings, while it is supported on either side by two colossal figures of *Reyes Godos*, or Gothic monarchs, named respectively *Recesvindo* and *Chindasvindo*. This façade was planned under the direction of the celebrated Covarrubias, and finished by Enrique Ezas in 1551, whilst the opposite side of the quadrangle is the work of Juan de Herrera, to whose talent also are due the elaborate, ingenious, and noble staircases, and the chapel. This is rather later, and dates from 1584. The east and west sides are of more vigorous construction, and of a much earlier date. The latter is thought by some to have undergone some modifications under Juan el II., and both received some additions in mouldings, pilasters, and heraldic escutcheons from Covarrubias when the building was augmented by Charles V.

It was a relief to pass from the intense heat of the terraces into the shade of the silent, spacious, paved court of the Alcázar, and meditate on its eventful history.

Whether under Jewish or Roman, Gothic or Moorish or Christian sway, this bulwark and watch-tower has from time unreckonable constituted at once the pride and the defence of Toledo. Perhaps one of the most singular fortunes of its most singular existence consists in its strength having been turned against those who made it so strong for their own selves. Once the glory and the defender of its Moorish owners, who from its massive battlements were so long invincible that they thought themselves for ever secure of their territory, it no sooner passed into the possession of the Christians than that very power became the means of excluding them from their beloved Toleitola;—it was by

Digitized by Google

this endearing diminutive that the Moors loved to designate the capital of their extensive domains.

Alonzo VI., the first Christian monarch who owned the Alcázar, gave it into the keeping of the immortal hero of Spain, Rui Diaz de Vivar, better known by his *alias* of "El Cid Campeador," whose feats of arms constitute one of the luminous points in the annals of Spain. He seems to be, to her martial history, what Don Quixote is to the chivalrous literature of the country, and the two are the very foundation-stones respectively of its military and its literary glory.

El Cid, however, did not, it seems, take up his abode within the edifice, but occupied a residence adjoining, and then standing on the spot where was since erected the Hospital of Santiago. The two succeeding Alfonsos, seventh and eighth of the name, added new fortifications and beautified the dwelling-rooms, for they made it a royal residence.

Don Fernando el Santo, and after him, his son Don Alonzo X., surnamed "el sabio," added still further to the habitable portion, so that in his time it assumed the character rather of a palace than a citadel, although still maintaining the form of one of those really formidable castles which in the Middle Ages corresponded to the requirements of feudal times and customs. His successors by no means neglected this regal abode, and during the reigns of subsequent Catholic monarchs—but more especially that of Juan II.—it became one of the finest palaces of any European sovereign. Of those portions added respectively by Don Alonzo X., by Don Juan II., and by "Don Ferdinand and Doña Isabella los Catolicos," there still remain some halls and corridors; and the two façades called "of the East" and "of the West" are almost as left by their constructors.

The more considerable, however, as well as the finest,

Digitized by Google

part of this vast and celebrated monument, owes its existence to the taste and liberality of those great and powerful monarchs, Charles Quint, and his son and successor Philip II.

The former of these sovereigns had thoroughly imbibed that liberal spirit—a characteristic of the kingly office in those days—which induced him to give his unreserved patronage to all that was great in art and distinguished in genius. He pulled down, *de fond en comble*, a large proportion of the then existing edifice, and retaining thereof the *rez-de-chaussée* and vaults beneath, together with the outer walls of the eastern and western façades, rebuilt the remainder from the plans of his architects Luis de Vega and Alonzo de Covarrubias, assisted by the equally celebrated Francisco de Villalpando, Gaspar de Vega and Hernan Gonzales de Lara; and when, of these two, the former had succumbed to infirmity, and the latter had paid the debt of nature, Charles appointed in their room Juan de Herrera, whose designs were carried out by the brothers Ezas, Juan Aranda, Francisco Garnica, Geronimo Gili, Martin Barrena, and other architects of equally high repute. The work was begun in 1534, and finished in 1584.

On the death of Charles, his son Philip carried on this grand work, on a still more costly scale, and the Alcázar at length became a gorgeous palace, worthy of the importance of the Spanish crown, "at that time," says the patriotic and ingenious Don Sisto Ramon Parro, "the most powerful and the most commanding in Europe. He made it, in fact," continues this writer, "a rich and precious jewel, enriching and embellishing it with all the curiosities and gems of art he could collect: it thus became a fitting dwelling-place for the mighty monarch who was acknowledged by two worlds as their sovereign."

It was in 1710 that this interesting relic of many ages and many races, was barbarously fired by the allied troops

Digitized by Google

under the command of General Staremberg, during the Wars of Succession. We can scarcely compute the loss which succeeding generations, and among them the antiquary, the artist, and the archæologist, have sustained by this modern Vandalism: the curious and suggestive details which yet survive, are a mournful testimony to the mine of valuable lore thus for ever consigned to oblivion.

To restore so vast and so wealthy a treasure-house of art to its pristine splendour would have been an almost hopeless attempt, but during the reign, and with the permission of Charles III.—who at the request of the Cardinal de Lorenzana ceded the Alcázar, or rather a wing of it, as a Real Casa de Caridad, or "work-house" in the proper acceptation of the term,—Don Ventura de Rodriguez, the architect, with great ingenuity, patched up the dilapidated building, so that, judging from the exterior only, a casual observer might gaze upon it long, and scarce "perceive where the wide wound was made."

The object of the benevolent prelate was, at all events, fully answered, and from 1773 until 1810 the tottering fortress, shorn alike of its warlike glory and its regal magnificence, served as a shelter to the needy; and, fallen itself, might have adopted for its motto,—

"Haud ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco."*

But a still further change was written in the destinies of the hapless Alcázar; and to the eternal disgrace of the

* More than 200 children were employed within its walls, and, rescued from idleness and beggary, pursued a useful and thriving occupation in the weaving of silk and cotton fabrics, besides many other manufactures, entirely suggested by the benevolent ingenuity of this excellent prelate. To this more active department, the Archbishop added a refuge for elderly persons, who were employed in such works as were suited to their strength and capacity; and in a third, aged and infirm men and women were supported and tended: the Toledans do well to honour the memory of Cardinal Lorenzana.

Digitized by Google

French, who had some time before ejected the pauper silk-weavers, and converted the place into a *caserne*, the soldiers of Soult, as a last act of vengeance, ruthlessly set fire, for the second time, to its remains.

This catastrophe was to prove fatal,—

"No patron, nor intercessor! none appeared."

No generous philanthropist, no chivalrous champion arose to rescue it for the furtherance of his utilitarian schemes; no munificent prince interposed to take compassion on the fallen fortunes of the desolate palace; it stands, the shadow of itself—the ghost of its departed pride. Its walls still bear the semblance of something noble and imposing, that was and is not, for within there is nought but hollowness and desertion, and its ruins bear a mute but eloquent testimony to the indignities that have been heaped upon it.

So we strolled round the open cloister of the silent court undisturbed, and we wandered up the broad granite staircase—a marvel of architectural art, occupying one entire side of the vast paved sunny quadrangle, and from which the two flights of stairs ascend right and left,—and taking one of these we reached the wide gallery supported by those noble Corinthian granite columns which form the corridor below; but when we were about to land upon what we expected would be a paved terrace, we perceived there was nothing whereon to tread, though the massive balustrade still stood, giving it the semblance of solidity! Another step would have precipitated us on to the pavement below: it was characteristic of the rest! Above was the lofty, solid wall, bearing traces of other galleries, torn from it by the hand of destruction, and above that clear broken outline was spread the calm, genial, deep blue sky, softening and canopying all the rents that man had made.

In the middle of the court we saw a deep draw-well of sparkling water. It was a tempting sight in the sultry

Digitized by Google

scene, so we drew and drank, sitting beside it, much in the way in which Rachel may have refreshed herself when she was watering her father's flocks. The only verdure mingling with the glowing surface of the stone and bricks in this interior court—the only vestige of vitality amid these ashes of the past—was that of a small collection of tall tropical plants in one corner of the cloister, shaded from the glare of the sun by a picturesque awning of matting, supported on poles of gracefully-unequal heights, apparently giving occupation to the old *concierge*, whose lodge was beneath the gateway; our sole companion in this strange, solitary ramble was a friendlily-disposed peacock, who, in the absence of any other *amo*, walked beside us and did the honours of the roofless and deserted halls. As he strutted along, he dropped at our feet one of his richly gilded blue and green feathers, which we accepted and brought away as a souvenir of the Alcázar of Toledo, proud and glorious even in its fall.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VI.

TOLEDO.

"If this won't turn out something, another will; no matter, 'tis an essay upon human nature. I get my labour for my pains. 'Tis enough; the pleasure of the experiment has kept my senses, and the best part of my blood, awake, and laid the worst to sleep." —STERNE.

WE had lingered away so much of our time unawares, in exploring this wonderfully attractive spot, and in sketching some of its most telling points, that the hour we had fixed for dinner had long slipped by before we remembered it. We began, therefore, to turn our steps in the direction of the Parador Nuevo, and were no sooner in sight of it than we perceived the sturdy form of our faithful Manuel impatiently watching for us at the threshold of the *porte cochère*. As soon as he caught sight of us, the anxious frown relapsed into a smile, and he trotted away to the kitchen to give notice of our approach, so that by the time we entered the *comedor*, all was ready. We found the *menu* of our dinner a very simple one, but all was fairly eatable. It consisted of a dish of *lomo de cerdo*, or pork chops, a considerable bowl of very accurately boiled potatoes, and a flamboyant *tortilla al' rhum*. Our beverage was detestable,—*Val de Peñas*, no doubt from the identical

Digitized by Google

pig-skin we had seen bottled off in the morning! Poor Manuel, however, hovered about us, and looked so hot and excited that a word of dissatisfaction would have annihilated him; so we swallowed our displeasure and his viands together, and put upon it all, a face as smiling as his own broad, good-humoured countenance, which expanded yet more under the sunshine of our content.

Manuel, who was no doubt anxious to render our stay in Toledo agreeable, having informed us that there was a very excellent *troupe* performing here, we determined to increase our experience of Spanish life by a visit to the theatre of Toledo. The hour at which the performances were to begin was eight o'clock, and there was a tame apology for a "*queue*" before the door, when we arrived. We took our places in the orchestra-stalls, which were exceedingly roomy and comfortable, and turning round, thence surveyed the house.

It was not a great deal larger than the "Royalty," and somewhat shabby in condition. The "*composition*" was very curious, and must have consisted almost entirely of shopkeepers and their wives, as there are very few private families residing here.

The stage-arrangements were of the most meagre description, and might answer to those of a third-rate country town theatre in England. As for stage-effects, they do not seem to have the remotest idea of any such accessory in the Peninsula, and the properties and machinery seem to be of the very simplest kind.

The principal piece on this occasion was, curiously enough, the Spanish version of that which has made so great a sensation in England under the name of the "Streets of London," here translated "Los Pobres de Madrid," and no incident could perhaps better serve to demonstrate the contrast between the geniuses of the two nations than the results, respectively, of these two

Digitized by Google

efforts. While in the English version, the French original is augmented in the matter, embellished in the scenery, and intensified in the effects,—in the Spanish, it is impoverished in every way, and shorn down to its simplest proportions, so that the story is presented in its very barest and poorest outline, while the scenery undergoes no changes but those absolutely necessary to make the piece barely comprehensible. The following is a fac-simile of our quaint Toledo play-bill:—

TEATRO.

FUNCION PARA EL DOMINGO 30 DE OCTUBRE DE 1864.
(19.ª *de abono.*)

1.° SINFONÍA.

2.° El magnífico y popular drama en seis cuadros y un prólogo, arreglado del francés por D. Manuel Ortiz de Pinedo, titulado:

LOS POBRES DE MADRID.

Títulos de los cuadros.

Primero. El Banquero de Barcelona.—Segundo. El Mendigo.—Tercero. Los pobres de levita.—Cuarto. Riquezas mal adquiridas.—Quinto. Una limosna por amor de Dios!—Sesto. Una casa en la calle de Lavapiés.—Sétimo. Los pobres vergonzantes.

Desempeñado por la Sras. Castillo, Guantér, (D.ª P.) Saavedra, Pinos y Diaz; y los Sres. Gomez, (D. F. de P.) Mendoza, Cérvi, Diaz, Córcoles, Lastra, Francesconi, Arellano y acompañamiento.

Dando fin con el baile:

LA JOTA ARAGONESA,

por la Srita. Hernando, Sr. Tenorio y cuerpo coreográfico.

Á LAS 7 Y MEDIA. Á 2 REALES.

NOTA.—Se está ensayando la lindísima comedia nueva, en tres actos, *El Amor de los Amores.*

The "2 reales" require some explanation, as that notification only signifies that you may be admitted within the

Digitized by Google

doors for the sum of fivepence, *after* which you look round the house and choose your seat, which is charged for according to its value. This custom prevails likewise in Italy, excepting, we should add, in Rome.

The acting was excellent, and the enunciation peculiarly distinct, but the lack of enthusiasm was as apparent in the actors as in the spectators; indeed, things in general are tamely conducted in Spain. When, as was occasionally the case, it occurred to the company to manifest any impatience at the length of the intervals between the acts, the stamping was beaten to a measured cadence, and soon became unanimous; but for the most part there is very little objection made, and, indeed, this is accounted for; the moment there is a suspension of the performance, all the men from all parts of the house rush out to smoke in a large saloon provided at every theatre for that purpose, and there they remain till the shrill note of the call-bell reminds them to resume their places. Smoking is not allowed within the theatre, but the company return strongly enough impregnated with tobacco to betray that they have been indulging their favourite pastime. At the fall of the curtain it is customary for the principal actors to be "*llamados in escena*," when they advance to the proscenium, and bow their acknowledgments.

This piece was followed by a *ballet divertissement*, a thoroughly national and characteristic dance, in which the costumes and the choregraphy, the dancers, and the *corps de ballet*, were essentially and entirely of the *cosas de España*. Anything more graceful than the movements, more pliant than the figures, more elegantly voluptuous than the attitudes, and more *agaçant* in its bewitching ease and simplicity, than the *tout ensemble*, can scarcely be conceived. The *prima ballerina* was a charming little Andalusian, a perfect type of her race, with delicately rounded contour, and a form of faultless symmetry, a

Digitized by Google

face whose mingled archness and languor words would be feeble to describe, while the dorsal suppleness and play of limb represented the very poetry of motion. So much for the *pas seul;* but when the *cavalier* joins, and the dance becomes a duet, there is a power of intelligence in the corresponding gestures which has all the sparkle of repartee, and a perfect dialogue of movement is maintained. There is a coy dallying expressed by a series of slow, exquisitely balanced and harmonious bends, a rivalry of attitudes in which the human figure is thrown into all the forms which the most graceful fancy can suggest; a petulant coquetting succeeds, followed by one of those pouting lovers' quarrels which only serve as a "*redintegratio amoris,*" and destined to be crowned by a reconciliation; then the music becomes more exciting, and the dance increases with it in rapidity and earnestness; they fly from each other, to meet again with a vivacity and a significance which tells the story more eloquently than speech, and the dance terminates in a *tableau* worthy of the plaudits it extorts, for it is curious to observe the phrenzy of enthusiasm to which a *scena* of choregraphic imagining can work up even a phlegmatic Peninsular audience. They applaud with hands, feet, and tongue, and the genuine and hearty "*bravos*" issue from all sides with a spontaneity which is absolutely inspiring; the more so, perhaps, that we scarcely expect it of the apathetic nature which seems to walk, *equo pede,* over all that other men regard as emotional phases of life.

During the whole of the ballet, we observed, standing within the "*bastidores,*" and eagerly watching the stage, a wrinkled old woman, wearing the same costume as the *danseuse,* only in a very different state of preservation. As soon as the *pas* was concluded, the jealous mother—for such she doubtless was—enveloped her fascinating little daughter in a white cloak, and led her away along the

Digitized by Google

coulisses, lest she should be profaned by an unhallowed look *behind* the scenes. Whether the fair young creature relished this dueñism we could not discern.

We returned frequently to the theatre at Toledo, taking advantage of this opportunity of hearing the noble language of Spain well spoken.

All the pieces we saw were well chosen, and highly "proper" in tone. In one, we were struck with the moral especially put forward, which was directed against the admission of priestly influence into families. The idea was worked out with vigour, and the performers acted with spirit: but excellent as we always found the acting, there can be no doubt that the dancing is the *bonne bouchée* of the evening, the object for which the chief part of the *assistans* attend. It is only when this begins that they rouse themselves from their normally lethargic state, and seem to bear patiently the temporary privation of the cigar. There is little or no plot in a Spanish ballet; indeed, none is needed, and the national dances which they generally represent, are so well understood that they are sure to be popular. Of course they are more or less varied; the costumes, one and all, were very beautiful, and all the more interesting from being the genuine national dress of the wearers. In one of the *pas de deux*,—a Valencian dance—executed by a Valencian couple, the *danseuse* was remarkably fair, with a Saxon tone of colour as to hair, eyes, and complexion, but she had a far more expressive type of countenance, and was infinitely more graceful, both in form and movement, than any specimen we ever met with of that northern race. Her partner, no doubt expressly chosen, presented a thorough contrast in every respect, and the effect certainly was very striking.

Besides theatrical amusements, Toledo is supplied with ambulant circuses, paying occasional visits to its inhabitants. The announcement of one shortly to exhibit was placarded here, and seemed to excite considerable interest

Digitized by Google

among the population. The bill of the performances was so quaint and antiquated, that we made a point of securing one, which we give, together with a reproduction of the cut that adorned (?) it :—



GRAN FUNCION

DE LUCHA DE FIERAS Y JUEGOS HERCÚLEOS

EN EL PICADERO DE SANTA ISABEL,

Para el Domingo 30 de Octubre, si el Tiempo lo Permite.

Con permiso de la Autoridad.

El Sr. Fuerte, agradecido del inteligente público de esta ciudad, ha determinado dar la tercera é irremisible última funcion, en la cual tomará parte Jaime Beltran, que ejecutará varios juegos de sorprendente fuerza.

ÓRDEN DE LA FUNCION.

1.° SINFONIA.

2.° El Oso de Rusia ejecutará habilidades que llamarán la atencion de público.

3.° Todas las demás fieras trabajarán variada y distintamente.

4.° Jaime Beltran levantará del suelo con una mano un peso equivalente á 5 arrobas, el cual sostendrá poniendo el brazo horizontal.

5.° Levantará una mesa regular con una pesa de 2 ó 4 arrobas encima, y cogiéndola con los dientes, se paseará con ella.

6.° Descanso de quince minutos, en que tocará la música.

7.° Levantará de 8 á 10 hombres de una vez encima de los hombros.

8.° Sostendrá la fuerza del tiro de un caballo, y además ejecutará otras distintas habilidades.

Digitized by Google

El dueño espera complacer al público como en las demás funciones.

PRECIOS.

Entrada general 2 rs.—Niños que no lleguen á 10 años 1 real.
El despacho de billetes en el mismo local.
La funcion empezará á las 3 de la tarde.

Another species of performance we saw ostentatiously posted up throughout the town, to wit, that of a troupe of highly educated quadrupeds, who were to go through the representation of a bear hunt in the circus for the edification of the Toledan bipeds.

As we came out of the theatre, we found Toledo veiled in all the stillness of a clear and mild, but moonless night, one of those nights when the stars—"the poetry of heaven"—beam forth all their lustre—doubly bright in this transparent atmosphere; the streets were lighted with lamps of *petrolio* at rare intervals, and, every now and then, we met a solitary *sereno* singing out the hour, and the *Ave*, just as in other Spanish towns; but we did not observe that they made more noise through the night here than elsewhere; otherwise it might be supposed that the origin of the expression, "*Noche Toledano*," meaning what the French style "*une nuit blanche*," or a sleepless night, was due to this disturbing cause.

On approaching the *parador*, we found our obsequious squire waiting on the threshold: as soon as he saw us he scampered off with great alacrity to fetch the primitive classical-looking brass lamps with which he lighted us to our rooms. As in all Continental hotels, the ablutionary arrangements were on a very diminutive scale, and when we inquired of Manuel whether any baths were to be had, either in the hotel or the town, we found it difficult even to make him understand what we meant. We could not find so much as the trace even of a *Roman* bath, much less any that could be made available. In a city so long in possession of that luxurious people, this is almost unaccountable. One fancies that their traces must still lurk

Digitized by Google

in some hidden corner, where they remain to be yet one day excavated by coming generations.

At an unearthly hour next morning, we were awakened from our golden slumbers by masons laying the pavement in the street below; besides the chipping and sawing and fixing, there was the rumbling of a low truck laden with heavy flags just below our window, drawn by a team of powerful oxen, but their efforts were insufficient to drag it up the hilly street; after a great deal of goading and coaxing and swearing, there was no accomplishing the feat but by discharging part of the load, an act of humanity which would not perhaps have been performed in any other country.

It was another glorious day, and Toledo presented a new and beautiful aspect in the early morning sun. We turned our steps to the cathedral, that gorgeous monument of Gothic art, taste and skill, which has seen so many changes, and has witnessed so much strife and bloodshed, yet remains almost scathless itself.

It is of magnificent proportions, being 404 feet in length and 204 wide; it has double aisles on either side the nave, supported by eighty-eight Gothic columns, in groups of six, eight, and ten columns each; and it is paved with noble squares of blue and white marble. There are some elaborately carved bas-reliefs in the choir, and a fine fresco painting of the "Conquista de Oran" in the Mozarabic chapel. The majority of the numerous windows in this fine cathedral are filled with painted glass; among these are three "*rosaces*" of colossal magnitude, situated respectively at the west end of the nave, and at the extremity of each transept; the subjects introduced are scenes from the New Testament and the lives of the Saints, with various heraldic devices, and figures of "canonized saints;" this glass, besides being richly coloured and elaborately executed, is extremely valuable from its antiquity; they were begun as early as 1418,

Digitized by Google

by Maestre Delfin, and were completed only in 1560, by Nicolas de Vergara the elder, and his sons, Nicolas and Juan, several eminent artists in this branch of painting having assisted in the work during this period. In the intervals between the pillars forming the outer aisle, are twenty-three chapels. There are eight doors, without reckoning a small one to the sacristy; on one side of this, is a colossal figure of St. Christopher; there is also a private door communicating with the Archbishop's palace by a viaduct over the street. We might occupy pages with a mere simple and technical account of this costly and elaborately decorated cathedral, for it is a mass of enrichments within and without, and weeks would scarcely suffice to explore all the treasures of art collected here, and in unusually fine preservation; it is a very museum, and well repays a careful and attentive study.

The existence of the first Bishop of Toledo dates from the first century; but as Don Sisto Ramon Parro shrewdly observes, it is not probable that in those times of persecution of the religion of Jesus Christ, there should have been any attempt to build a cathedral; it is supposed, however, that as soon as Constantine gave it his powerful sanction and support, the apprehension which had till then militated against such a demonstration was removed, and it is presumable that the first cathedral in Toledo was built as early as the fourth century. Whether this edifice endured any length of time, or was reconstructed at a later period, there is no record to show, but in the present chancel is preserved a stone, recognized by all "orthodox" antiquarians, bearing a very ancient and almost effaced inscription, which states that *a* cathedral was constructed on this spot at the end of the sixth century. Another history assures us that in those remote days the cathedral of Toledo was rich in gems and jewels, and that when the city was sacked in 542, by Childebert, son of Clovis, that

Digitized by Google

monarch plundered it of a magnificent golden cross, enriched with precious stones, the value of which was enhanced by its singular history, for it was made to the order of King Solomon! It could only be in Toledo that such an antique could be found! This cross was so highly esteemed by the King, whose loot it became,—and, no wonder—that he built in the environs of Paris, a cruciform church, taking the ground-plan from its outline; and when completed, he presented to it this rare curiosity. Besides this, Clovis robbed the Toledan cathedral of thirty chalices, fifteen patens, and twenty caskets, in which were preserved the Holy Scriptures.

It was under Recaredo el Piadoso, King of the Goths, that the Cathedral of Toledo was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, on the occasion of his abjuring Arianism, and embracing Catholicism. After various changes and chances, additions and improvements, which rendered this magnificent cathedral, as we have said, a veritable museum of ecclesiastical art, we may date the origin of the *actual* edifice from the thirteenth century, when the first stone of this impressive and singularly beautiful pile was laid, with a pomp and ceremony worthy of the occasion, on the 11th August, 1227, by San Fernando and Don Rodrigue Ximenes de Roda, brothers: 266 years slipped away during the construction. Pedro Perez was the original architect; but, though he lived to a very advanced age, he was not destined, either in himself, or even in his children, to witness its completion. His epitaph may be read on a stone to be found below the ancient chapel of Sta. Marina, stating that he was the first who directed the construction of this church, and that he died on 10th November, 1285.

There are no records extant of the architects into whose hands the building of the cathedral fell after the death of Master Perez, until the year 1389, when we meet with one Rodrigo Alfonso, who was in his turn succeeded

Digitized by Google

by Alvar Gomez, or Gonzales, at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Some portions are attributed to the celebrated Anequin Ezas, after whom came Martin Sanchez, who had for successor his assistant, the famous Juan Guas, the architect of that splendid and immortal monument, S. Juan de los Reyes, and there are records to show that during the whole period this magnificent edifice was building, none but the most distinguished artists were employed in its erection and decoration.

The interior is entirely of a very beautiful white stone, drawn from a quarry distant two leagues from Toledo, called that of Oliguelas—soft and easy to carve when first quarried, but acquiring by lapse of time a wonderful consistence capable of resisting any attack. The exterior is of granite, except the ornamentation of the great doors, which is of the same white stone as that used within. There is some exquisitely elaborate carving within and without, and the whole building is singularly free from dilapidation. Beneath the whole edifice is an enormous crypt, conformable with and divided like the cathedral into five naves, separated by colossal pillars, corresponding in position and number with those of the temple itself.

This huge church, with its numerous chapels and richly buttressed apse, forms a massive and imposing feature in the general view of Toledo; and we anticipated with something like enthusiasm the treat we promised ourselves in examining its interior beauties.

The number of churches in Toledo is altogether disproportioned to the present number of its inhabitants, which, it is lamentable to reflect, within two hundred years has dwindled from 200,000 to 20,000. Many of these sacred edifices are necessarily disused; but we did not find any desecrated to other purposes, as is so often the case in France,—witness Tours and other cities once famous for their piety; not to speak of those of Italy, in our own day.

Digitized by Google

The Mozarabic churches are the most curious. There are six of these; and they are those which, when the Moors took possession of the city, they abandoned to the use of the Christians, and allowed them to carry on their worship there.

One of the chapels of the cathedral, formerly the Chapel of Corpus Christi, but since called the Capilla Muzarabe, was purchased of the chapter (who used it as the chapter-house) by Cardinal Cisneros to carry on the ancient Gothic rite which had been maintained by those Christians, but which, in the meantime, had been superseded in the rest of the Catholic world by the Latin formula as now practised.

A century later, Jorge Manoel Theutocopoli, the capitular architect, was employed to construct a cupola over this chapel. Above the altar is a mosaic, made in Rome, in 1794, by the order of Cardinal Lorenzana for the sum of 400,000 reals, representing a Virgin and Child piercing the Evil Spirit with a cross-headed spear. In the same chapel, and above the *retablo*, is a crucifix larger than life, carved out of a single root of *hinojo*, brought from America by a Dominican, named Fr. Gabriel de San José Villataño, in 1590.

There are also six *ermitas*, or oratories, the histories of which are ancient and curious; these are respectively dedicated to Sta. Maria la Blanca, Cristo de la Luz, San José, San Eugenio, Sta. Leocadia, and El Tránsito.

The first of these was originally a Jewish synagogue, and was built in that part of Toledo—from the time of the Goths—appropriated to the occupation of the Jews, and called the Juderia. This building may have been built about the beginning of the twelfth century, to judge from the architecture, which may be called transition-Arabic, or of the second period of Saracenic art. There were apparently, on this spot, formerly, many other buildings appropriated to Jewish worship, but this is almost the only one

Digitized by Google

of them which has survived to the present day. There is still a Jews' quarter in Toledo, but its population has diminished proportionably with the rest; this singular people, true, everywhere, to the characteristics of their race, in order at once to maintain their antiquity, and to escape reproach among Spaniards, assert that the Spanish Jews are not descended from those who crucified the Lord. It appears that, about the beginning of the fifteenth century, the Toledan Christians, but more especially the parishioners of Santiago, being aroused to a high pitch of religious frenzy by the preaching of St. Vincent Ferrar, they seized this church, and converted—not its congregation, but itself, making it serve as a place of Christian worship, dedicating it to Nuestra Señora de la Blanca. Accordingly, it remained in this condition till the year 1550, when the Cardinal Archbishop Don Juan Silicéo erected here a house for penitent women, of which it became the chapel; but this excellent institution only lasted until 1600, from which time until 1791 it was restored to its former purpose, as a public but not a parochial church. In this year, however, the fortunes of war devastated the country, and the Church of Sta. Maria la Blanca became, with the adjacent building, a barrack for the troops. In 1798, it was used as a magazine for military stores, and continued to be profaned by these vile uses until about fifteen years since, when the "Comision Provincial de Monumentos historicos y artisticos,"—a very valuable institution, especially in such a country as Spain—by means of a subscription they set on foot, repaired and restored it, but merely as a monument, and not for ecclesiastical objects.

In this character it offers some most interesting, and perhaps matchless, archæological details. Externally the building has nothing to invite inspection; it is extremely plain and unornamented, and is approached by a *patio* of no pretensions. It belongs to the period at which the

Digitized by Google

Arabic was merging into Byzantine architecture; and the ground-plan is a parallelogram of 81 feet by 63, divided into five naves, the centre one reaching 60 feet in height, and about 15 in width, while the lateral naves or aisles vary gradually from 50 to 40 feet in height, and are 12 in width, sustained by twenty-eight Moorish arches, supported on thirty-two octagonal columns. The capitals of these columns are unique; they are of stucco, and worked in the finest and most elaborate patterns, all varied and extremely graceful in design: between each arch is a small rose window, similarly ornamented. There is a great deal of rare and elaborate enrichment bestowed on the interior of this peculiar building—perhaps one of the most curious and suggestive in Spain. The walls dividing the nave from the aisles exhibit above the arches, and in the place of a clerestory, more of this lace-like stucco work, a distinguishing characteristic of Moorish architecture; and it is a remarkable circumstance, that in this church there are none of those ornamental legends or inscriptions which are worked into the enrichments, and form the borders, the friezes, or the panellings, of most of the Arabic or Jewish interiors. We can only conjecture that this edifice was designed at a period prior to that at which it became the custom to introduce them. Many additions have been made from time to time to the original edifice. Of these the most remarkable are, the entrance in the south wall, made as a means of communication with the convent of S. Silicéo; then the Gothic court or portico, vaulted and crocketed after the custom of the fifteenth century; and also the exterior doorway, the only one in fact that is seen from without; all constructed in stone, with fluted pillars and a Corinthian cornice,—bearing on its frieze the sculptured inscription, "*Sancte Maria, succurre miseris.*"

Further than this, when the good Cardinal founded his *beaterio*, he prolonged the nave and aisles respectively by

Digitized by Google

the addition of three small chapels. In that forming the centre of these is situated the high altar and the *retablo;* these, as well as the *bas-reliefs* of the cupola and other enrichments, among which we see the escutcheon and arms of the founder, are of the richest plateresque style, and the work of Berruguete himself, remarkable for the grace and delicacy of the detail. The floor is tiled, and many of the original tiles are still visible. The rest have been matched to them by modern manufacturers.

There is a second building of this class, also originally built for a synagogue, and named "El Tránsito." Two derivations have been given to this name, some attributing it to the "passing-bell" hanging in its tower, which was tolled on the death of any of the Knights of Calatrava, for it was in the possession of this order at the end of the fifteenth century; others, again, ascribe the name to a picture of the Assumption, and assert that when first given to the Christian worshippers, it was called Nuestra Señora del Tránsito. The name of San Benito has also been given to it.

Like Sta. Maria la Blanca, it is a most significant, interesting, and beautiful fabric. It was first built by an opulent Jew, Samuel Levi, treasurer to Pedro the Cruel. The plan was designed, and the process of construction directed, by another Rabbi, Don Meir Abdeli, and it was finished in 1366: the Jews retained possession of it rather longer than a century, being expelled in 1492, after which the Catholic monarchs (by this designation Peninsular history specially distinguishes Ferdinand and Isabella) gave it to the monks of the order of Calatrava of the priory of Santa Fé. Ultimately it served and still serves the purpose of an oratory or non-parochial church, under the name of "Ermita del Tránsito de Nuestra Señora."

This church consists of a single nave, of about 80 feet in length and 36 in width, Its height is 46 feet up to the

Digitized by Google

spring of the roof, the extreme altitude of which gives 16 feet more.

The architecture of "El Tránsito" is what the Spaniards call *Arabe-Andaluza*, which signifies that of the third and most florid period of Saracenic art. The exterior is constructed of fine bricks, and within, the whole surface is coated, we might almost say enamelled, with the whitest stucco—a material peculiar to Moorish architectural art, and capable of being worked into the exquisitely elaborate and delicate tracery. The most luxuriant fancy seems to have revelled here, and the artist has found the fittest medium for handing down this evidence of his fearless genius and singularly refined taste to a remote posterity. It is scarcely conceivable how the fragile and minute ramifications of these delicate and infinitely varied Moresque enrichments can have been executed by the hand of man. In the centre of the east wall is a niche of some size, where once stood the "*cathedra*," from which the Doctors of the Law pronounced their interpretations of the same. It is now masked by the high altar and its retable. The whole interior is covered with, as it were, a web of fine designs of the most graceful character; the panellings are divided by borders equally rich, which, as well as those round the frieze, on closer examination, we discover to be sentences embossed in the Hebrew character. On either side of the altar are two large tables of inscriptions in Hebrew, similarly executed, in praise of the King, Don Pedro,—of his secretary, the founder, Samuel Levi,—and of the architect, Rabbi Meir. At the western extremity are, among other ornaments, three open arches serving as windows to the building, and all along the north and south walls runs a narrow frieze of the most delicate Arabesque pattern, above and below which are more of the Hebrew inscriptions mentioned before, consisting of parts of the eighty-third and ninety-ninth Psalms, made into ornamental borders. Here may also be discerned escut-

Digitized by Google

cheons, blazoning the arms of Leon and Castile, quartering the three *fleurs-de-lys* of France, or, on an azure shield, for Blanche de Bourbon, sister of Charles le Sage, and Queen of Pedro the Cruel.

Above this rich and exquisite frieze, and round the four sides, is another limb or story of the building, of Mussulman architecture, composed of a row of small arches, supported and divided by proportionately small columns, all the capitals being varied, and forming a hidden gallery, through the arched openings of which the female portion of the congregation was permitted to assist at the religious rites. Just above this, springs the magnificently pitched roof, a marvel of art in itself, and the beauty of which can scarcely be exaggerated.

The principal *retablo*, a work of the fifteenth century, is of Gothic style, and exhibits paintings of considerable merit for that epoch. It was placed there by the Cistercians of Calatrava, to whom was entrusted the suppression of the original congregation and the introduction of the new. Other additions, including that of a choir, were made in order to adapt the building to the purposes of Catholic worship. An elderly female sacristan or guardian showed us this curious monument of antiquity, and entered warmly into the description of the various portions of the building. We were agreeably impressed by the genuineness of her remarks, which were evidently original, and in no way partook of the stereotyped character one is accustomed to meet with among persons who hold a similar position, and whose information, in fact, is so much a matter of rote, that if by chance one would turn to the right or the left of the beaten path to ask an adventitious question, the reciter is immediately unhinged, and no satisfactory reply can ever after be obtained.

Another of these "oratories," to which we would call attention, is a little *bijou* specimen of that intricate Moorish

Digitized by Google

work not only beautiful and elaborate in itself, but having the property of giving size and importance to buildings executed on a comparatively insignificant scale. It is dedicated to "Cristo de la Luz," and is apparently of great antiquity. The ground it covers, is not more than 20 feet square. The capitals of the four columns which divide it are of scroll-work, but much less delicate and elaborate than those Moresque remains we see so exquisitely executed in the old hard white and apparently indestructible stucco with which Toledo makes us familiar. Some have attributed to these columns a Visigothic origin. Specimens of this peculiar character are extremely rare, and with the exception of those supporting the arcades of S. Roman, they are the only remains of it we came across in Toledo.

Each capital, which is very low, and about 3 feet in circumference, supports four Moorish arches, and above these is a string-course ; above these arches, the walls, which are all of the same height, are arcaded, and all the ornamentations vary in design. The roof consists of a series of little concavities, or cupolas, of most fanciful construction. The arches of some of the arcades are foliated, and the bricks employed are of the neatest finish—some are red, some green—and being skilfully placed, form a very unique ornamentation. One celebrated event in the history of this church is connected with the triumphal entrance into Toledo of the King, Don Alonzo VI., who, being conducted by the Puerta Visagra—itself a fine old Moorish relic—made a halt here, as being the first sanctuary encountered by him on his road. The day on which this royal visit took place was the 25th May, 1065, and — possibly because it was Sunday — having heard mass, the King ordered his shield to be appended to the wall. The whole story is recorded in a painting still extant in the church. A miraculous image in

Digitized by Google

this church has long commanded the veneration of the faithful.

A building of greater historical and also of peculiar architectural interest is the Basilica of Sta. Leocadia, also called Cristo de la Vega (Christchurch-in-the-Fields), a remarkable instance of the mixture of Moresque and Romanesque. It was originally a very small chapel, dating from the fourth century. Three hundred years later, Sisebuto, King of the Goths, at the instance of San Eladio, the then Archbishop of Toledo, converted it into a sumptuous temple. Subsequently many important councils were held here, and it became the burial-place of monarchs and nobles of the Gothic race as well as of archbishops and other ecclesiastical dignitaries.

This church formerly boasted some valuable marbles and jaspers, but these were abstracted at different epochs, and it is affirmed that the fifty and odd columns now standing round the exterior of the cathedral were taken from hence. The Hospital of Sta. Cruz—at the present time used as a college for infantry, is also adorned with some of these columns, which form its *patio*, or court.

Such wholesale dismantlement was of course a great drawback to the restoration of the Basilica, yet, about the middle of the eighteenth century, this ancient temple was reinstated, but only to be again demolished anew during the war of independence, no part of it remaining but the apse of the Chapel del Santissimo Cristo. This was repaired in 1816, augmented and brought into use in 1826, and finally, in 1846 it was beautified and decorated by the Metropolitan Chapter, its patrons, who disposed around it a cemetery for the interment of the cathedral clergy, or any other persons they might permit to repose there.

At the present time the edifice is reduced to three or four courts, planted with flowers, one of which is the cemetery mentioned above; it consists, like all Spanish cemeteries,

Digitized by Google

of an arcaded quadrangle, the arches supported by stone columns, and beneath the shelter of the quadrangular roof are the tablets, arranged like the hexagons of a honeycomb, placed at the foot of each coffin which it encloses. Fronting these is the "Ermita." At its entrance stands a valuable white marble statue, about three feet high, the work of Berruguete, executed simultaneously with those of the patron saints of the city, and placed at the gates. Within, there is nothing noteworthy; even the image of Cristo de la Vega, although of so late a date as 1816, and placed there as a substitute for the former one, destroyed by the French, is of small merit. We may likewise mention the oratory or *ermita* of S. Eugenio: its early history is obscure, but there is a tradition which mentions it as having passed into the possession of Alonzo VII. in 1136. It was enlarged and beautified, in 1569, by the celebrated Hernando de Avila, who has left some choice samples of his genius in the cathedral, and by Francisco Comentes, who enriched it with six large frescoes, the subjects being taken from the life of Job and other passages of the Old Testament. This church also contains an historical record of the first Bishop of Toledo. Among all the architectural treasures which this wonderful old city can boast, there are two—and those certainly the finest of her remains—essentially Gothic specimens; these are the magnificent and, by no means sufficiently, well known cathedral, which is in an unusually excellent state of preservation, and the old ruined church and monastery of S. Juan de los Reyes, dating from 400 years after the conquest of Toledo, and so called because built by the monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella, as an *ex voto* for the victory gained by the Spaniards over the Portuguese at the battle of Toro, in 1475.*

There is something that would seem almost idiosyncratic in the character of Spanish monarchs which induces them

* In 1808 there were in Toledo thirty-eight convents and monasteries.

Digitized by Google

to look forward, with so much forethought and preoccupation, to the magnificence of their *post-mortem* resting-places, and the same spirit which prompted the erection of the Escorial found its prototype in that which created this beautiful building. Ferdinand and Isabella — always designated as "*Los Reyes*" *par excellence*, when not "*Los Reyes Catolicos*"—originally destined the Church of S. Juan de los Reyes as a mortuary monument for their own occupation after death; but, subsequently to the conquest of Granada, they fixed upon that sunny and romantic spot, and built there the chapel that was to cover their remains.

That they made the Church of S. Juan peculiarly their own, is evident from the frequent repetition, among the ornamentations, of the eagle, emblematical of the saint whose dedication it bears, but also the royal crest. The most striking feature in the interior of the church is, perhaps, the gallery (supported on corbels) before the clerestory on the south side, apparently answering to what in French ecclesiology is called the *jubé*. There is a canopy above the altar of blue velvet, ornamented with stripes of gold lace. A great deal of delicate carving and fine elaboration has been expended in the detail, and the general effect on entering, is light and open. The altar is visible from all parts of the church, and the absence of screen, parclose, and other obstructions, gives length to the whole area of the building. This is rare in Spain, where the *coro* is generally a bulky mass of masonry in itself, filling up great part of the nave, and intercepting the view of the interior, whether as regards its length or its breadth.

The exterior of this church is curiously adorned, and we might travel over the world without meeting with anything similar, unless in the cloister of the Campo Santo at Pisa: on the south transept wall, are festooned a series of rows of rusty iron chains, which completely puzzled us: we asked their history of a little *chico* who

Digitized by Google

was playing at throwing stones—a very favourite game with the *gamins* of Spain—and who informed us, with great readiness, that they were those used in Granada by the Moors to manacle their Christian captives, so that, according to tradition, they have been preserved for upwards of four centuries at the least.

But the most interesting and suggestive portions of this edifice are perhaps the cloistered quadrangle, with its contents, and the upper and lower galleries, forming what we may term a museum of old Spanish pictures and a few collected antiquities. The former are mostly of the early Spanish school, and invariably treat of sacred subjects, while the latter consist chiefly of fragments of the ruined portions of the building itself. On the upper floor is shown the cell—now thrown into the gallery, and, like the remainder of it, hung with pictures—formerly occupied by the great Cardinal Don Francisco Jimenez de Cisneros, who was the first novice ever received in this convent, where he took his habit. The cloister which remains, is a beautiful specimen of most elaborately decorated Gothic. It consists of two stories, surrounding the quadrangle, or court, which is open to the blue sky, and is planted with richly coloured flowers and luxuriant creeepers, twining, in abundant and graceful festoons, about the exquisite tracing of the arches. There are here many figures of saints in niches; the canopies above their heads, as well as the brackets or corbels beneath their feet, are most delicately manipulated. The now broken arches open to the quadrangle are surrounded with richly carved foliage, intermingled with quaint representations of animal life. It is an imposing ruin, and its beauty is very fascinating under the effective light and shade of a southern sky. This is decidedly one of the attractions of Toledo, and is as interesting to the artist and the poet—"*pictoribus atque poetis*," for are they not one?—as to the archæologist and the anti-

Digitized by Google

quarian. At the extremity of the refectory, which is also hung with pictures, is a fine Crucifixion group; but having been mutilated, like the rest of the building, by the French soldiers, the principal figure is absent,—a circumstance the more to be regretted as the attitudes of the standing figures of St. John and the Blessed Virgin, on either side of the colossal cross, which remains, are very effective: they are said to be portraits of the royal founders.

As we turned our steps from this fine old ruin we found ourselves on the site once occupied by the palace of Don Rodrigo, the last of the Goths. The few stones which still stand one upon another to mark this once famous spot enclose an enormous area, and great, no doubt, was the luxury and magnificence of the edifice, of which imagination alone can now conjure up as a vision—

> ". . . Those bowers which overhung
> The glen, where Tagus rolls between his rocks."

The devastation here is utter and complete. We cannot even say, "Seges est ubi Troja fuit!" for nought remains here but the rugged ground, barely clothed with parched and stunted turf. It reminded us of the spot on which once stood the not less famous palace of Plessis les Tours, whose vast extent is only indicated by the few foundation-stones not yet ploughed up!

Between the two monarchs who respectively owned these two colossal residences, which have so completely passed away that they can only claim an existence in the airy regions of retrospective fancy, we can draw no parallel; still, a comparison with the wily, cruel, and superstitious Louis XI., of historic memory, must needs prove favourable to the character of almost any sovereign, and would elicit much that is noble in that of Don Rodrigo, whose fame we accept from the same (always dubious) source. He is a far more interesting hero, at all events, and Lope de Vega deserves our gratitude for the highly-coloured

Digitized by Google

picture he has drawn of his loves and adventures, putting the romantic episode into the mouth of a Christian captive of Saladin. From the troublous times of Leodigild to the days of Roderick, he tells us, Spain enjoyed a *dulce paz* of a hundred and fifty years.

"Ma el amor, que a templos, que a palacios
que a cetros, libros, armes no perdona
quitéle de la pente, la corona."

Spain supplied a Helen, in Florinda, Count Julian's daughter, to whose "fatal gift of beauty" was due the ruin of her country:—

". . . La disegual Florinda,"—

says Lope de Vega, was the most virtuous as well as the most beautiful of her sex,—

"No fué de Grecia mas hermosa y linda
la que le dió por su desdicha fama
ni desde el Sagitario a Cynosura
se vió en tanto rigor tanta hermosura."

Roderick, however, managed to triumph over her "*desdenes*,"—

"Riudióse al feir la femenil flaqueza."

But alas! possession of the coveted treasure destroyed its value; and, once obtained, the ardour with which he had pursued it, ceased.

"Why is a wish far dearer than a crown?
That wish accomplished, why the grave of bliss?"

But so it was! The "Christian warrior" is careful to call attention to the fact that it was the King's indifference and not his passion which enraged Count Julian. Determined to avenge the insult to his daughter and himself, and powerless to carry out his furious designs, he trampled alike on country and religion, and called to his aid the help of the infidel. The poet-narrator pauses to disown compatriotship with Count Julian, and introduces parenthetically, an N.B. to the effect that—

Digitized by Google

"Su padre de Florinda, era *Romano*
no era Español."

Roderick, it appears, heroically resisted the Moorish invasion; but his forces were wholly disproportioned to those of his foe, and a defeat was the necessary consequence.

The "last of the Goths" is painted as a hero who, doomed to destruction, was nevertheless imposing in state, and majestic in form and countenance. He was arrayed, on this last fatal day which was to seal his ruin, in his rich purple mantle, beneath which might be seen his gilded armour. Carried on a gilded car, and bearing his sceptre and other regalia, his presence was that of a king; and Lope compares him to a stately elm, stripped of its mantling foliage by the rigours of the "*lluvioso Octubre.*"

The last decisive battle was fought on the banks of the river, which, from the desire the Spaniards have to forget their disasters, has since borne the name of Guadalete, or Waters of Lethe. The torrents of Spanish blood shed during the horrors of this battle so reddened the stream that it is, he affirms, to this circumstance that must be attributed the "*rojo humor*" it retains to this day, and his poetical imagination discerns, for ages after, traces of the arrows and other arms buried "*cruentis fluctibus.*" The Spaniards have never overcome the indignation with which they regarded this disastrous event; and to testify their detestation of the frail fair one who was its cause, they have ever since excluded the name of Florinda from their baptismal registers, reserving it for their dogs.

As for Roderick, his ultimate fate remains a mystery. That he fled from the battle-field on his famous charger, Orelia, is pretty well agreed, and tradition adds that he passed the remnant of his days, be it longer or shorter, in penitential solitude; but there is no record to show the period or manner of his death:—

Digitized by Google

"Quién hay que ignore a donde fu su Oriente?
Ma quién sabrá su fin y su occidente."

Yet our own poet, who has sung the exploits and the weaknesses, the loves and the misfortunes of Roderick, the last of the Goths, seems to have arrived at a satisfactory conclusion as to his last resting-place, so long merged in obscurity:—

"Days, months, and years, and generations passed,
And centuries held their course, before, far off,
Within a hermitage near Viseu's walls,
A humble tomb was found, which bore inscribed
In ancient characters, King Roderick's name."

It was in the small village of Viseo in Portugal, then, that the vanquished Roderick—once known by the proud title of "El Godo Marte"—lay him down to die; and with so little noise did this great warrior (who, like many heroes before and since, "*res humanas miscuit olim*") make his silent, solitary exit, that it was only when King Don Alonzo took this place from the Moors, that his vassal, Carestes, son-in-law of King Don Pelayo, "the Knight of God," found in a field before the little church outside the town the "humble tomb," on which were roughly traced the following lines:—

"Here lies the King, Don Rodrigo, the last of the Goths.

"Cursed be the wrath of the traitor Julian, for it was of long endurance; and cursed be his anger, for it was obdurate and evil; for he was mad with rage, and stomachful with pride, and puffed up with folly, and void of loyalty, and unmindful of the laws, and a despiser thereof. Cruel in himself, a slayer of his Lord, a destroyer of his country, a traitor to his countrymen: bitter is his name; and it is as grief and sorrow in the mouth of him who pronounces it; and it shall always be cursed by those who speak of him."

So true is the declaration of the poet,—

"Man's highest praise must end in 'Here he lies,'
And 'Dust to dust' concludes his noblest song."

Digitized by Google

It is a curious style of epitaph, referring less to him whose remains the stone purported to cover than to the character of his revengeful foe; however, it seems to have been Roderick's fate to be remembered rather for the injuries of which he was the victim, than for the virtues by which he ought to have been distinguished. The Archbishop Roderick of Toledo, who lived somewhere about the year 1200, has recorded his opinion of the discovery of the Gothic monarch's grave in somewhat similar terms:—

"Quid de Rege Roderico acciderit ignoratur: tamen corona, vestes et insignia, et calceamenta, auro et lapidibus adornata, et equus, qui Orelia dicebatur, in loco tremulo juxta fluvium sine corpore sunt inventa. Quid autem de corpore fuerit factum penitus ignoratur, nisi quod modernis temporibus apud Viseum civitatem Portugalliæ inscriptus tumulus invenitur, 'Hic jacet Rodericus, ultimus Rex Gothorum.'"

And then follows the curse on the memory of Julian in Latin—of which we have given the translation above—here quoted from Carestes, by the Archbishop.

Lope de Vega has honoured Roderick with a more circumstantial epitaph in two Latin stanzas, as follows; but in the second he falls into the same tone, and devotes one-half of his elegy to the execration of Roderick's enemy:—

"Hic jacet in sarcophage Rex ille
Penultimus Gothorum in Hispania
Infelix Rodericus; viator, sile!
Ne forte pereat tota Lusitania
Provocatus cupidinis missile
Telo tam magna affectus fuit insania
Quam tota Hiberia vinculis astricta
Testatur mœsta, lachrimatur victa.

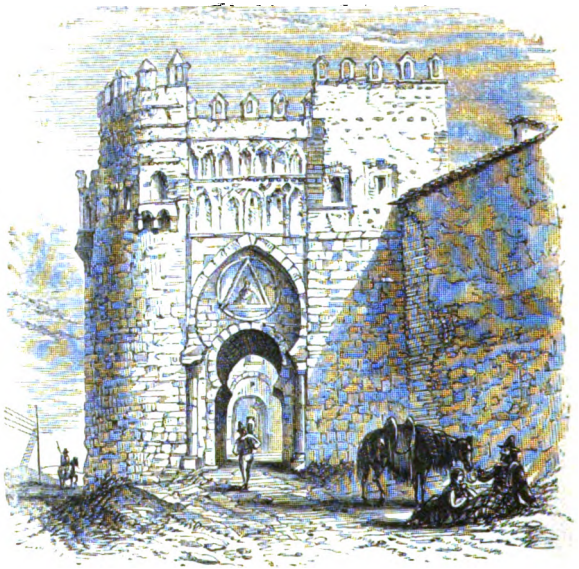
"Execrabilem Comitem Julianum
Abhorreant omnes, nomine et remoto
Patrio appellent Erostratum Hispanum,
Nec tantum nostri, sed in orbe toto:

Digitized by Google

Dum current cœli sidera vesanum
Vociferant testante Mauro et Gotho
Cesset Florindæ nomen inmane
Cava viator est, a Cava, cave."

"Cava,"—be it known, in order to justify the pun with which these melancholy lines conclude—was the Moorish translation of Florinda's name, and is again held up *in terrorem* here, like the "*Cave canem*" of the Romans.

Digitized by Google



THE PUERTA DEL SOL.

CHAPTER VII.

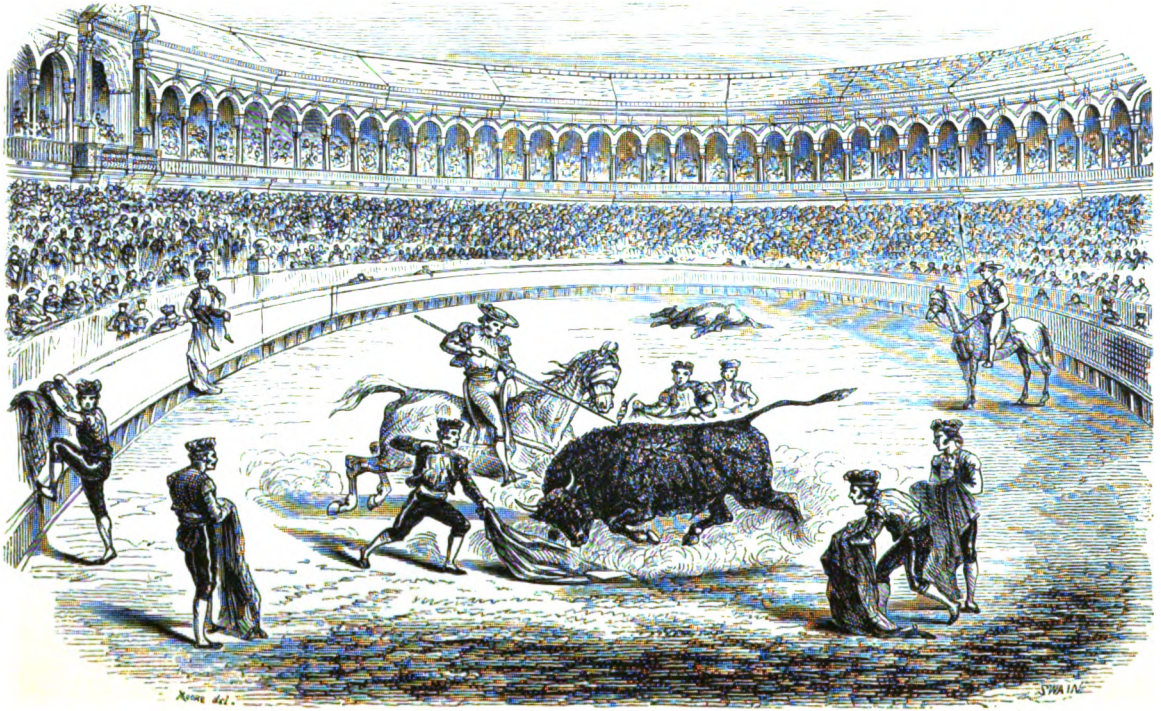
TOLEDO.

"Prophetic sounds, and loud, arise for ever
From us and from all Ruin, unto the wise,
As melody from Memnon to the Sun.
We rule the hearts of mightiest men: we rule
With a despotic sway all giant minds.
We are not impotent, we pallid stones;
Not all our power is gone—not all our fame—
Not all the magic of our high renown—
Not all the wonder that encircles us—
Not all the mysteries that in us lie—
Not all the memories that hang upon
And cling about us as a garment,
Clothing us in a robe of more than glory."—EDGAR POE.

"I wandered through the wrecks of days departed."—SHELLEY.

AGAIN and again we were drawn within the magic influence of the grand old cathedral, fraught with historic memories, and eminently attractive from its own

Digitized by Google



CORRIDA DE TOROS.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

intrinsic beauty; and early on the last morning of our stay we wended our way up and down the narrow, hilly, sun-lit, but shaded streets, till we reached this interesting central point. Low masses were proceeding at several of the altars as—having lifted the heavy mat, similar to those which muffle the church doors in Italy—we entered the edifice. Vast and imposing are the proportions of this fine and admirably-preserved structure, and whether viewed from within or without, it cannot but fire the enthusiasm of the lover of Gothic art. Here, that period of architecture is admirably represented, and may be studied in full perfection. It is greatly to be regretted that there is no possibility of getting a sight of the exterior of the whole edifice; the narrow, intricate streets, built up almost against it, entirely intercept the view, so that the west front is the only one that can be properly examined. The doorways are strikingly perfect. It appeared to us a circumstance almost without precedent, that the figures of saints which fill up the moulded arches over the door are not even chipped. Indeed, the whole edifice seems to have passed unscathed through the ravages of time, war, and violence. The stone has a fine, hard surface, and besides being of a very beautiful texture, is admirably adapted to uses where durability is an object.

The only injuries it has received are such as suggest the deprecatory exclamation, "Save me from my friends!" The modern architects of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, who certainly must have entertained a very mistaken notion of their own vitiated taste, have overlaid the original exterior elevation with additions of their own, and no doubt with the kindest intention, and the most self-approving industry, have deprived succeeding generations of many invaluable incidents in early Gothic art, such as would have been peculiarly interesting to examine, in a building constructed under the unusual

Digitized by Google

circumstances which must have attended the fortunes of the Toledan minster.

There is great uncertainty as to the origin of this noble temple, and the very name of its architect is clouded by the obscurity of a mysterious and unrecorded past. When we look upon the countless treasures of bygone times and races which surround us here, we feel that we owe something more than the tribute of a sigh to the unrequited memory of those whose genius created, and whose hands laboured to execute, the marvels of strength and beauty which survive, even in these ruins.

Gothic remains are in a very small minority in Toledo, where everything contributes to recall the Moorish influences which so long held sway here. Even after the Goths came into possession, they seem to have taken no means to perpetuate the traces of their presence, and to have consigned to their Moorish contemporaries—who, if numerically subdued, still remained in sufficient force to exert a power of their own within the realm—the task of carrying on all the art and science which existed in the country. Seeing how worthy are the scarce specimens left in Toledo, by the Goths, of their æsthetical fame, it is the more incomprehensible that they should have pursued the course of employing the Moors as designers and architects, and should have suffered them to construct for them not only secular buildings, but even churches. Thus the ruins of Toledo may be said to offer in themselves an absolutely matchless combination of silent but incontrovertible evidence of changes and chances to which history and tradition have refused their testimony: all that we meet with is, however, so eminently suggestive, that, with the help of the few inscriptions we find, we can almost weave our own web, and embroider it with the rich and glowing colours reflected from valorous deeds and chivalric exploits. We can trace the hands through which it has passed, in

Digitized by Google

the devastation wrought by the struggle for possession, and we can, at all events, pass many a thoughtful and perhaps improving hour in meditating here, in this city of tombs, on the vanity of the loftiest ambitions.

To do justice to this interesting and rare old Gothic monument, its details ought to be described technically and architecturally, but as our notes are those of a traveller and not of a professional critic, we willingly consign the red tape *à qui de droit*, and if we beg the use of it for a moment, it will only be to take a measure or two which may give our readers an idea of the dimensions it encloses. This will enable them to compare it in their mind's eye with other ecclesiastical buildings with which they are more familiar, and to judge of its vastness. Its whole interior length, then, is 395 ft., its breadth 178 ft., and the width of the nave between the columns (eighty-eight in number, and forming the aisles) is 51 ft.; its height is 113 ft., and not 160, as some have asserted. For those who do not carry figures in their heads, we will assist the comparison by reminding them that Notre Dame de Paris, with which most of us are acquainted, is 400 ft. long, 110 ft. wide, and that its nave is 48 ft. between the columns; while Westminster Abbey is 505 ft. long, 75 ft. wide, and the width of the nave is 38 ft.

It is lighted by numerous windows, of which three are unusually fine *rosaces*, or wheel-windows, pierced with exquisite tracery, and situated respectively at the extremities of the nave and transepts. All are filled with superb painted glass of early date; the colouring is of the richest hue, and the subjects comprise a consecutive series of events from the New Testament. The Toledans regard these windows as of inestimable value. They were begun as early as in 1418, under the care of Maestre Dolfin, and were not completed until 1560, long after Maestre Dolfin had passed away, and his successor, Nicolas di Vergara, had

Digitized by Google

in his turn been succeeded by his sons Nicolas and Juan. There are twenty-three chapels in this cathedral, each enclosed by its own iron gates, and all richly and elaborately finished, and the cathedral has eight doors. There is a gallery of communication with the archiepiscopal palace, which is very conveniently situated with regard to it. There is a remarkable little Moorish door communicating with the Sala Capitular, and an arched recess of the same style in one of the chapels.

As for the chronology of the original foundation, history tells us that there was a cathedral in Toledo, and that it occupied the site of the present edifice, even before the Moors called this city theirs. Indeed, a stone which was discovered in the sixteenth century testifies by its inscription that a church stood here in 587. When the Moors took Toledo, they converted this church into a *mezquita*, and added to its dimensions as well as to its ornamentation. In 1085, Don Alonzo came to an understanding with them that they might continue in the enjoyment of it on certain conditions, but his Christian subjects refused to ratify the treaty; and, not only considering it their rightful property, but regarding the Moorish possession of it as a desecration, took it from them *vi et armis*, and restored it to its original uses, reconsecrating it as a Christian cathedral.

It is supposed that not a stone of this building survives in its original place. The foundations of the new cathedral were laid in the reign of Don Fernando III., who, uniting his own regal state with the ecclesiastical pomp of the then archbishop, himself placed the first stone, in the year 1227, on the Vigil of the Assumption. This monarch had, six years before, performed the same office at Burgos, and has thus transmitted his name to posterity in connection with two noble and surpassingly beautiful edifices.

This same cathedral of Toledo is said to have occupied a period of 266 years in building, as we learn from an

Digitized by Google

inscription placed over the "Puerta de los Escribaños." When we say "cathedral," we do not include within this protracted epoch the Mozarabic chapel, that of the Reyes Nuevos, and Del Sagrario, that of Del Ocharo, the sacristy, the residence of the Tesorero, the Sala Capitular or chapter-house, and the offices Della Obra y Fabrica, the porches De los Leones, De la Presentacion and De la Llana, besides a multitude of adornments, and, indeed, all the moveable accessories, such as altars, retables, choir-seats, misereres, &c., all of which were added by degrees, long after.

The relics contained in this church are numerous and highly esteemed; the church-plate is extremely valuable, so are the embroidered and jewelled gala robes of the figures of saints which adorn the several chapels.

The original architect is asserted by some to have been one Pietro Perez, whose name, together with some details of the history of the edifice, has been discovered inscribed on a stone found beneath the chapel of Sta. Marina, and which asserts that he died in November, 1285. No other is mentioned as having succeeded Perez, until 1389, when we fall in with a certain Rodrigo Alfonso, who was followed by Alvar Gomez, or Gonzales, and flourished in the fifteenth century. The names of Anequin Egan, of Martino Sanchez, and the famous Juan Gnas, architect of the incomparable monastery of S. Juan de los Reyes, are mingled more or less with the details of the cathedral, and it is asserted that during the whole period of its construction none but the most famous artists and architects then living were suffered to take any part in its completion.

The stone employed is of a very beautiful white and fine texture, and is taken from the quarries of Oliguelas, about two leagues from Toledo. It is the same stone we see used in this part of Spain for all purposes where fine and deli-

Digitized by Google

cate carved work is bestowed, and no material could be better adapted to the purpose.

As the cathedral would for man elaborate, not to say profound archæological and ecclesiological study, and would, to the architect, be replete with interest and information scarcely to be procured elsewhere, we recommend our readers to direct their attention to such guide and class-books as have undertaken minutely to describe the treasures of art which it contains, for we must not do to this wonder of architecture the injustice to pass it by thus briefly without an explanatory clause. If we are compelled to content ourselves with expressing the assurance that we were profoundly impressed, whether as regards the grandeur of the general effect or the marvellous richness and beauty of the detail, we must add that it is a place in which the ordinary traveller might pass hours; the artist who appreciates effects, and loves to transfer them to his sketch-book, days; and even the most unpoetical, the technical man, weeks.

The lofty arches which canopy us as we stand within this spacious area have been, not inaptly, likened to a bower of stone; and indeed the intertwining foliage, which enriches and mantles the architectural lines and angles, is a marvel of art, and cannot fail to be an object of universal admiration. The light, as it flows in through glass of wondrous richness whether in design or colouring, tints every stone on which it falls, and imparts a depth and a glow to the marble fretwork.

One of the monuments to be looked at here, is that of the harmless but weakminded Cardinal Porto-Carrero, Archbishop of Toledo, and, unhappily for Spain, prime minister under Charles II., who was not unlike him in character. His body lies at the entrance of the Lady-chapel, which is of course the richest in the cathedral; the altar is covered with the precious metals, and it is said

Digitized by Google

that untold jewels are interspersed in the embroidery of the robe which clothes the figure of Our Lady on festivals. It is an object of great attraction, and renders the spot chosen by the Archbishop an excellent site for a tomb, as it cannot fail to keep the memory of him whose bones it covers before all who frequent the church, and there can now be little left *besides* his bones. This is as it should be —"De mortuis nil nisi *bonum*,"—and we are sorry that historical conscientiousness obliges us to add, that the extreme nullity of his character converts his epitaph, which is *meant* to be a serious one, into a pun:—

"Hic jacet
Pulvis,
Cinis,
Et *nihil!*"

Behind a richly fretted and gilded grating is preserved a stone on which Our Lady is said to have stood, when, S. Ildefonso being too infirm to don his chasuble unaided, she appeared to him and helped him on with the vestment. The relic is inscribed with the following sentence:—

"ADORABIMUS IN LOCO UBI STETERUNT PEDES EJUS."

The grandest monument in the church is that of Cardinal Mendoza, the Tercer Rey as he was styled; he was treated with the greatest confidence and kindness by the "Reyes Catolicos," and died about 1494. The style of his monument is plateresque, and from the hand of Covarrubias, whose first work, within these walls, it was. The statuettes are beautifully executed, and the number of choice marbles which enter into the entire mass, render it a costly piece of work. The effigy of the "Great Cardinal Archbishop" lies on the sarcophagus. The Archbishop of Toledo is—after the Pope himself—the greatest dignitary in the Church.

There are several royal tombs here, characterized by the

Digitized by Google

beauty of their designs and materials, and the magnificence of the work which enriches them.

The *transparente* behind the high altar is a marvel of art, and so unique that it must be seen and examined to be appreciated. It is altogether *churrigueresque*, and we do not remember to have seen anything resembling it out of Spain.

The costume, the attitudes, and the grouping of the worshippers scattered over the vast expanse of inlaid marble, have a very peculiar *cachet;* they add inexpressibly to the foreign and impressive effect of the interior, and rivet the eye of a stranger.

The fan and mantilla, those graceful and inseparable accessories to a Spanish woman's toilette, which characterize her *silhouette*, and become part of her personality in all our recollections of her; the easy *abandon* of her gait, and the idiosyncratic position into which she drops on the large flat circular mat which serves her for pew, bench, chair, and cushion, impart a tone of picturesqueness and romance to the place, which carries it out of the category of common things, and suggests as much another age, as another land. The beggars who sit within the doorway have a bearing of their own—a mode of calling the attention of passers-by, as if to remind them of their presence rather than to crave their charity. The stick on which they lean, the rosary they hold, the groups they form, fill up the little details of the quasi-Oriental *tableau*, which chains all our ideas with its own peculiar fascination.

Within this church, and fitted to one side of its massive clustered columns near the entrance, is a curious accessory we do not remember to have seen in any other church. It is a shell-shaped shelf, fitted with a cushion,—the leather which covers it, it must be admitted, is rather blacker and greasier than it need be,—forming a receptacle for deceased infants whose parents are too poor to pay the expenses of

Digitized by Google

their burial. The little corpses are deposited here to indicate their necessitous circumstances, and are then buried by the *parroquia*.

Before quitting the precincts of the cathedral—the ornament and glory of Toledo—itself the pride of Spain,—we must pay our tribute to the bells, of which tradition tells strange legends. Their reputation is of old standing, and their tone so fine, clear, and mellow, that the first time they were rung, it is said they arrested the ear of St. Peter, who was struck with the surprising sweetness of the sound as it was wafted aloft. "That," exclaimed the saint, who apparently did not belong to any church-building association, and was too busy to take cognizance of what was doing in that way on earth,—"that," said he, "can be no other than the silvery voice of my beloved and admired shrine in Rome;" and he stroked his beard with a self-satisfied air, as if he claimed at least half the glory of the perfections of that wondrous monument.

But his pardonable vanity was soon checked when one of the celestial attendants informed him that the voice might be the voice of Rome, but the bells were the bells of Toledo. "Bless my soul!" said St. Peter, who apparently would have used an exclamation very much the reverse of this, but that his social position protected him from those abuses of language into which the *commun des mortels* are liable to fall,—"you don't say so?" "I thought I did," replied the other. "I can't stand that indignity," pursued St. Peter; "I can't let *my* church come in, second best; so here goes; . ." and with all the power of his apostolic arm he hurled the bunch of keys he held in his hand, down upon the offending bell. Strange to say, the bell resisted this mighty blow, but although the sound continues to charm all hearers, the mark of the saintly wrath is visible on the metal to this day.

The largest of the bells of Toledo is said to be roomy

Digitized by Google

enough to admit of fifteen cobblers seating themselves within it, with space enough to draw out their threads, after the fashion of cobblers, without elbowing each other: it is a curious simile, a rhetorical *cosa de España!*

The bells of churches have at all times a peculiar attraction for poets and romancists, who love to invest them with a personality of their own, and to make them, with their iron tongues, "discourse most eloquent music."

Some of the most stirring scenes in "Notre Dame de Paris" are those in which Quasimodo is introduced as holding mysterious converse with his bells, or wildly swinging himself upon them as they rocked to and fro, turning their clappers upward again, in their frenzy; and while Schiller's "Glocke" would have alone sufficed to immortalize its author, the "Belfry of Bruges" is certainly one of Longfellow's most genial inspirations.

The legend which attributes to the great Flemish tocsin the exclamation,—

> "I am Roland, I am Roland,
> There is famine in the land,"—

brings to mind a passage in Lope de Vega's "Jerusalem Conquistada," *àpropos* of the bells of Toledo, which seems to find a place here:—

> "Como en las torres altas nos parece
> que dicen las campanas las razones
> que el son imaginado nos ofrece
> que tienen lengua y hablen por los sones
> el atambor las aguas estremece
> y el mar, y el son, y el viento en los pendones
> le dice al Rey que de embarcar se tarda
> 'Jerusalen, Jerusalen, aguarda!'"—

and he adds facetiously, "En la Iglesia de Toledo, hay una campana pequeña que *parece* que lo dice."

Our next duty was to explore that venerable, interesting, and comprehensive building, in close proximity to the cathedral, known as the archiepiscopal palace.

Digitized by Google

This edifice forms one side of one of the rare *plazas* that are found in Toledo; this *plaza* not only stands on hilly, unlevelled ground, but it is irregular in form, no two of its sides being at right angles. An unpretending garden, consisting of a grass-plot surrounded with flowers, and railed round, but intersected by paths, occupies the centre; on the opposite side to the cathedral, stands the Hotel de Ville, a quaint and picturesque old building, with an open *loggia*, or colonnaded gallery, of handsome proportions, on the first floor; the stone balustrade in front of this appeared to be in a somewhat shaky condition.

The Archbishop's palace is mixed in style, but it is an extensive and imposing building, and serves to lodge Royalty on occasions; for her Majesty, at rare intervals, visits Toledo, and as she has no palace there, must needs occupy that of the Archbishop. It has been augmented and improved at various periods, for it was originally, *i. e.*, in the thirteenth century, nothing more than a group of houses given by Alonzo VIII. to the then Archbishop, Don Rodrigo Jimenez de Rada; courts and galleries and additional stories were added, and it was Sr. Gonzales de Mendoza who built the arched viaduct over the street, uniting it with the cathedral. El Sr. Cisnéros, known to fame as Cardinal Ximenes, built to it a private chapel, but as he gave it an entrance from the street, the public attended the services there. El Sr. Silicéo incorporated with the primate's residence the Comedor de los Pobres, a relic of yet more primitive times; but El Sr. Sandoval y Rojas effected the greatest reforms and changes. He added greatly to the convenience, not to say the luxury, of this edifice, which from being merely a residence for ecclesiastics, became under his auspices a veritable palace; and from his time we may date the Ionic columns, façade, and escutcheons bearing the arms of Sr. Tavera we now see. Sr. Lorenzana, his successor, was in the midst of

Digitized by Google

making further improvements when he died prematurely in Rome, so that it has remained half old and half new. In the chapel are some good frescoes over the altars, two being the work of Ramon Sieiro; and of the other two, one appears to be by Bayen, while the other is after the manner of Conrado. There is an "Immaculate Conception," a good picture, artist unknown; and the Doric façade and entrance, all in stone, are well designed and well preserved.

Within the palace, which covers a great deal of ground, are halls, courts, reception rooms and dormitories, and all offices necessary for the transaction of public business connected with the administration of the diocese.

The library—"Biblioteca Publica" as it is allowed to be, although long since called "*arzobispal*," and now likewise "*provincial*"—stands in high repute. We found it occupied by readers, lay and clerical, who, though studiously engaged, seemed somewhat scared at our invasion, for a visit of this sort is an event in Toledo. It occupies three large chambers or halls within the palace on the ground floor; to these are added three other rooms for supplementary volumes. This collection of books dates from the time of the expulsion of the Jesuits in the reign of Carlos III. and the pontificate of Sr. Lorenzana. Till within the last twelve years the library has been considered to be at the charge of the episcopate. Since then the provincial funds, which have been added, having contributed greatly to the increase of the number of volumes as well as the luxury and magnificence with which they are classified and disposed, the care of them has been committed to a regularly appointed librarian and staff. Among the 30,000 volumes of which it consists, are a select number of historical and literary works, valuable for their rarity. There are some curious Bibles, and various editions of the Councils and the Fathers, all the minutes of Spanish

Digitized by Google

Synods, and a complete collection of Castilian poets, among which we find poems known only to the most erudite scholars, and to be found nowhere else. Among the Bibles is one of the twelfth century, in MS., illuminated with vignettes, in wonderful preservation, said to have been a present to the cathedral from St. Louis of France. A great many other rare MSS. were presented by Cardinal Lorenzana, who purchased the most curious of them at the sale of Cardinal Celada in Rome. The rarest of these are the Talmud, written on palm-leaves; a valuable Koran; the Book of Esther, on a roll of parchment; and a book of devotion in French, used by Charles Quint.

There are also books in Chinese, on silk paper; and among some very ancient volumes, "Los Misales de San Gregorio," a folio work written in 988, by a monk named Florencio; some illuminated works by Juan and José de Salinan, are shown; a complete collection of the works of Pliny; and among a considerable number of Italian works, an Italian metrical version of the comedies of Aristophanes, name of the translator unknown. We find here, further, the complete theatre of Lope de Vega, of Calderon, Marto and Alarcon, also some curious MSS. on America.

In the second of these halls are hung about seventy portraits, in oil, of Toledan authors.

The museums of natural history and antiquities likewise owe their origin to the same Cardinal de Lorenzana, who united them to the library and enriched them by the addition of globes, scientific apparatus, maps, &c., and a valuable collection of coins.

In the natural history department have been collected with much industry, valuable specimens of marbles, jaspers, and metals of Spain, and no less of foreign countries, including America. With this we find a rare assemblage of plants, choice and ordinary woods, as well as stuffed birds,

Digitized by Google

reptiles, fishes, and even quadrupeds, besides cases of entomological specimens.

In the museum of antiquities and curiosities, there is an interesting collection of ancient stones, bearing on them respectively inscriptions in Hebrew, Arabic, Greek, Roman, and Gothic characters, Roman vases and amphoræ, coins of the Empire, of the Colonies, and the Spanish municipalities, of the Gothic kings, of the Arabs, and of the early Castilians. Besides these, are masses of curiosities discovered by excavation, in times more or less remote, in this city and its environs. There is here a curious physiological series, painted in oil, of the different races of man, with its variations and degenerations, together with the results of mixtures of races, especially discernible in the form of the skull; near these are some authentic portraits of distinguished men, with a marble bust of Juanelo Turriano executed by Berruguete.

There are some few pictures on the walls of the gallery, but those considered to belong to the archiepiscopal collection are scattered about in different churches, establishments *de beneficiencia*, and offices of the State, besides the cloister and galleries of S. Juan de los Reyes, so that out of 704, only 359 remain on the premises. They are of the Spanish, Italian, and Flemish schools. An insignificant collection of sculpture concludes the list of contents of this extensive building, perhaps itself as curious as any of the interesting and varied objects it shelters.

In the same square with the archiepiscopal palace—the only level spot in all Toledo, but not quite a rectilinear figure, either—we spied another most interesting old building. The façade is rendered highly picturesque by the *solano*, or *loggia*, which forms the first floor; the balustrade is of stone, and its columns support a pediment of the same material, on which are carved, on an escutcheon, the arms of the city; the lower story is of granite. This is the Casa

Digitized by Google

de Ayuntamiento; it was built by Domenico Greco, and is of mixed Doric and Corinthian orders. There are fourteen columns in the façade. We took it during the hour of the *siesta*, when, as usual, finding the entrance-door open, unguarded, and all the defences withdrawn, we walked in, and along, and up, and admired, at leisure, the old stone passages and walls and staircase of the Mansion-House of Toledo, and then, through a large glass door, we made an issue into the *loggia*, a fine, spacious, stone-paved gallery, and from its moss-grown balustrade we looked down on to the Plaza below; but though grand was our elevation, our proud position was fraught with danger, and as we observed the caducity of the old building, which seemed to shake beneath our tread, we thought of the "*turris tabulata*" of Juvenal. In fact, we believe, had we had but the courage of Samson, we should not have needed any very fabulous strength to stand between two of these columns, and shake the edifice about the ears of the inmates.

Among the several inscriptions borne by the venerable old walls is one transferred hither from the old Casa Consistorial, which was built in the time of the *Reyes Católicos* (*i. e.*, Ferdinand and Ysabella), by Don Gomez Manrique, the first *corregidor* Toledo ever boasted. The lines are as follows, and are attributed to his cousin, the "great" Jorge (George!) Manrique:—

"Nobles, discretos varones
que gobernais á Toledo
en aquestos escalones
desechad las aficiones
codicia temor y miedo.

"Por los comunes provechos
dejad los particulares;
pues vos fizo Dios pilares
de tan requisimos techos
estad firmes y derechos."

As we have intimated, the walls are now, anything but

Digitized by Google

"firm and upright," and the sustaining "pillars" are uncommonly shaky; we must suppose they were in sounder condition, and their present rickety state quite beyond Jorge Manrique's horizon, when he held them up as a metaphorical model.

There are here two colossal equestrian portraits of Charles II. and his Queen, Doña Mariana de Neobourg, painted on canvas by the royal painter in ordinary, Don Juan Carreño de Miranda. On the wall, hangs a large and accurate map of Toledo, full of detail, with its mountain range, by *El Greco*. There are two lofty halls, serving as Salas de Lesiones, the one being used in winter, the other in *verano* —the late spring. They show you here, with a feeling akin to veneration, the cut velvet hangings which drape the walls in cold weather, and cover the fine Mosaic tiles encasing views of various battles between the Spaniards and Flemish in the famous wars of the Low Countries.

One of the most remarkable buildings in Toledo is the Hospital of San Juan Bautista, founded by the Cardinal de Tavira, opposite the gate of Visagra, just outside the walls, and called hence "Afuera." The chapel is an exceedingly handsome domed edifice, and under the centre of the cupola is placed the tomb of its founder, executed by Berruguete, who it may be said "*y a mis de son cœur.*" It is 200 feet high, and is grand in its simplicity. This so strongly marks its character that one regrets the introduction of the legendary bas-reliefs, which, to our taste, interfere with the unity of the idea.

That of Santa Cruz also deserves a visit. It was founded by the "Great Cardinal," Don Pedro Gonzalez Mendoza, for the reception of forsaken children, but has since been used as a military hospital, and is now under the brothers of St. John of God. It has grand features, and the staircase is particularly fine. The courts are spacious and handsome, and the walls of the double gallery are rich in

Digitized by Google

arabesques; the principal court is about ninety feet square.

The lunatic asylum now existing is not the original one built in 1490 by Francisco Ortiz, a canon of Toledo, and nuncio of the Pope, and thence called, "Casa del Nuncio:" that has passed away, and the one which now occupies its site was erected by the same "*Gran Cardenal*" to whom Toledo owes so much. This house has been much calumniated. We do not mean to assert that it is conducted on a principle which includes all the modern discoveries and appliances for alleviating the miseries of the insane, but there is no ground for the charges of cruelty and harshness brought by superficial tourists against the managers and their subordinates; nor could we ferret out a single case that would furnish a scene for the Chamber of Horrors.

The proportion of insane persons in Spain is very small. The Spaniards are not excitable enough to be troubled with mental maladies, and many of the passions which rack the inhabitants of a more conventional and sophisticated state of society are never aroused among them. Those who wish to satisfy themselves of this significant fact can consult the official statistics, where the figures will doubtless surprise them. In Greece, where there is still less education, insanity is said to be altogether unknown.

The feeling against capital punishment is very strong in Spain; the consequence is that, having no other place for respited criminals, they are consigned to the Casa de Dementes, as "acquitted on the ground of insanity." As, however, they have never graduated in lunacy, they are not entitled to take their place among the demented, and their position is an altogether false one.

If all the modern improvements adopted at Bethlehem, Hanwell, or St. Luke's, have not yet made their way hither, at all events we saw much less to sadden us than at the Salpêtrière, where, when we visited it, not very long

Digitized by Google

ago, many of the patients were obviously the worse for the treatment they were under, and indeed, to our notions, it was surprisingly antiquated.

There are still, in Toledo, the remains of many of the religious houses which once existed here; that of Santa Fé, an uncloistered house for women of noble birth, is one of those best known. There are said to have existed here formerly sixteen monasteries and twice as many convents for women.

The bridges, the old walls—"*les murs, murant*" Toledo, which, unlike the *enceinte* of Paris, do not appear to render Toledo "*murmurant*,"—together with the turrets and the grand old gateways, which break their continuous but irregular line, are of considerable monumental interest. There can be no doubt of their very early origin, and the soundness of their condition is positively astonishing. The solidity of construction of edifices of this date is, however, proverbial, and these have given good proof of the excellence of the work to which they owe their stability.

Around that portion of the city overlooking the Vega, and therefore less protected by the natural defences with which nature has bristled it on the opposite side, is a double wall, the outer of which was built by the King Don Alonso VI., about the beginning of the twelfth century, while the inner is supposed to have been the work of the Visigoths, who are said to have raised it in 711, before the victory of the Moors. These walls follow each other, and extend from the Puente San Martino to that De Alcantara. The side of the hill on which it is built, rises very irregularly from the valley, and below, the curve of the Tagus sweeps round the imposing eminence, crowned by the closely-built lanes and streets of the ruined old city. Alone of moving things in the savage solitariness of the channel it has worn for itself, the river—rolling, if not "on orient pearl," tradition would at least have us believe "on

Digitized by Google

sands of gold"—seems to interpose its waters as a moat to defy the approach of invaders.

"El dorado Tajo," says Lope de Vega,—

> "no solo lleva en su cristal sagrado
> arenas de oro, hombres de acero cria
> entre sus muros de peñascos hechos
> de que parece che fornió los pechos."

The same author, in another stanza, denominates this famous river "El hidalgo Tajo," because, through all the changes of dynasties, it has always retained its original name; and indeed it is a noble stream, straying across two countries, with reckless disregard of the slender geographical and more effectual moral boundaries, which divide them.*

The rubicund tint of the water, as it rushes through the arches of these singularly picturesque old half-Moorish bridges, has been variously explained by the poets; but to the practical eye the ruddy hue of the steep and crumbling cliffs, between which it flows, seems a sufficient cause:—"nec deus intersit," &c.

When Lope de Vega, therefore, speaks of the "cristalles puros del Tajo," he must allude to some portion of its course far distant from Toledo, where the stream is not only "encarnadined" enough to justify the legend of its being still stained with the blood of contending Moors and Christians, but is also much too turbid to please the eye that would fain trace its silvery meanderings through olive and vine-yard, as it approaches and passes beyond the old city it embraces with its encircling curve.

But we have other objects to visit, and must close our lingerings on the bridge, interesting as it may be to watch the river's foam rushing through the beautiful arches,

* Current events have given rise to the opinion that political science will one day follow the example of the Tajo, and cease to recognize either. We do not foresee a very speedy accomplishment of this prophecy.

Digitized by Google

which rise superbly from its bed, and unite the rocky defile.

The "dorado Tajo" is, we regret to feel, not a navigable river; though it once was available for communication and commerce, and up to the year 1581, it is said that ships used to sail nobly up to Toledo, then towering like a river-queen in her glory over the surrounding country—the proud capital of the Castiles. Now, alas! this, like her other advantages, has disappeared, and the navigation of the Tagus is the heritage of Portugal alone: from Lisbon to Braganza it still maintains this grand prerogative, and contributes to the wealth and prosperity of that section of its banks.

From the quaint, antiquated bridge, supported as it were on either side by the solid old wall, constructed to follow the rocky rugosities of the cliff, we get an admirably picturesque view of the Puerta del Sol. It stands before us with a certain self-consciousness of its dignity and its beauty; and the mixture of the rounded horseshoe and foliated Moorish arch, gives it a character as interesting as unique. The battlements, the turrets, and the interlacing arches of the galleries which join them, are essentially Moresque, and the materials are part and parcel of the style. They would be rough and unsightly anywhere else; here they are in their place, and form a most striking, solid, ornamented, picturesque and finished production. The form of the road by which it is reached—first a winding and then a sudden turn—shows that it was placed at this angle advisedly, and with due regard to its defensive utility, while the effect, artistically speaking, is most happy, and the softness of the view over the Vega beyond, makes it as beautiful a background as could have been devised.

Various dates are assigned to this gateway, as also to the Puerta antigua de Visagra, some traditions pronouncing them to be purely Arab, and of the earliest period of Moorish architecture, while others maintain that the latter,

Digitized by Google

at all events, was built by the Moors (under the compulsion of the Christians) on the purest *vos non vobis* principle, with a view to securing the city from any further invasion by their own people. The Puerta de Visagra is apparently of a later period; it has been pronounced by connoisseur architects to bear indications of having been erected about the beginning of the twelfth century, and is altogether a rougher structure.

Looking down from the spot distinguished by the ruins of Don Roderick's palace, we contemplate one of the most striking and beautiful views that Toledo affords. Immediately beneath and around, on the sandy and irregular gradients of the cliff, are the desolate-looking and poverty-stricken dwellings standing amidst the broken stones which lie scattered in all directions; at the base of the cliff flows the river, across which, at this point, is thrown the noble Moorish bridge, with its ancient, formidable-looking posterns at either extremity, as grim, as suggestive and as Moorish, as the bridge they were constructed to defend. So Oriental indeed is the whole scene, that it is no effort to imagine an army of mounted and turbaned Moslems pouring over the colossal undulations which face us, backed by mysterious mountain peaks—disappearing beneath the turreted gateway, to reappear again—defiling through the foliated arch, and galloping across the bridge. To add to the picturesque effect of this site, we have, at a short distance lower down the river, the remains of a yet older bridge, entirely in ruin, the piers alone being indicated by the mounds of building-stones which mark the spots whence the arches once sprang; over these, the water breaks with its unconscious pour, forming a miniature rapid, as it disappears foaming round the curve.

Among the wild and desolate hills which succeed each other in ranges of different distances, and which, viewed from within the city, form so grand and imposing a pano-

Digitized by Google

rama, a fearful event is *said* to have occurred within a few days of our arrival. A youth who was crossing these solitary mountains unaccompanied, was attacked by an eagle, who flew at him with such fury that he fell insensible from the alarm and the struggle; no one being at hand to render him assistance, he was found expiring a few days after.

Of the Moorish remains we meet with in Toledo, there are some which have a special interest,—we allude to those samples of domestic architecture which give us an insight into the daily life and habits of this singular race. The construction, indeed, in a general way, has been maintained in most continental cities, as far as regards the inner court or quadrangle round which the house is built; but there are other details here, which appertain more especially to Oriental customs, needs and tastes, and are altogether fresh to a mere European eye. Almost every house in Toledo has the appearance of having been constructed either by the Moors or the Jews, both of which people inhabited it long, and in large numbers; and even after they ceased to claim it as their possession, it was to them, as we have before stated, that all the architectural additions, repairs and improvements, were committed: so that in almost every house we enter, we find the same ground-plan, if not an equally similar elevation. There is the entrance-passage, generally dark,—darkness, not without gloom, may be said to be the prevailing characteristic of a Moorish interior,—which is always decorated with profuse and rich Arabesques, and is protected by a stout, defiant-looking door, profusely covered with rows of formidable bosses, or boss-headed nails, the central point of each door being usually a heavy knocker, often of a grotesque design. A clenched fist of bronze is a favourite pattern, and in the more modern houses an open female hand, with the back turned outwards. Sometimes they are of severer aspect;

Digitized by Google

indeed, this department of door-furniture, as well as that which comprises locks and hinges, would form a study of itself. The doorways are generally extremely quaint, massive and handsome in their antiquity. The passage we have entered, and which divides us from the *patio*, or court, into which it opens, is generally paved with small rough stones, of different colours, and formed into patterns, which from their roughness we can scarcely term mosaic; the roof is panelled, and the walls are of stone or stucco. In hot weather, an awning partially shades the quadrangular court, and adds greatly to the picturesqueness of the effect: but often a vine is trained over it, twining up the columns which support the upper story, and forming a luxuriantly verdant bower, at once the most refreshing and picturesque of shelters in this sultry climate: these columns are sometimes of granite and sometimes mere posts of timber. Our hotel, the Parador Nuevo, *e.g.*, was built exactly on this principle, the galleries surrounding the courts, and the rooms issuing from them, being reached by a staircase from one angle of the *patio* below. There are in some of the houses many wonderful relics of yet more distinctive Moorish taste, giving evidence of great luxury and magnificence. The most surprising circumstance is the almost incredible durability of the very fragile-looking material in which the enrichments are worked; so that, although the whole city has the appearance of a vast ruin, many of these interesting details indicate a duration of as many ages to come, as those they have already existed. As we had not time to explore many of these attractive interiors, we inquired for one specially indicated by the patient and patriotic Don Ramon Parro, called "Casa de Mesa," from the name of its owner. It stands opposite the old Church of S. Roman, and in former days was the property of Don Esteban de Illan. In this house is preserved, in the

Digitized by Google

entirety of its pristine grandeur, a Moorish hall, the most beautiful and characteristic that is to be seen not only in Toledo, but in any of the principal cities of Andalusia. It measures 60 Spanish, or about 55 English feet in length, by 20 feet in breadth and 34 feet in height.

A very delicate and beautifully designed cornice surrounds the upper line of the wall, and is finished by a broad band of tracery work. There is a very handsome doorway, which, with its ornamentation, occupies the greater part of one side of the room, and a not very large arched window of two lights breaks another side, while it affords an opportunity for introducing other carved borders and elaborate panels. The walls are finished with a skirting of glazed encaustic tiles, in rich colours and elaborate patterns, 4 feet deep, reminding one of the Alhambra and other Moorish buildings with which the eye is familiar. The roof is what is here termed *artesonado, i. e.*, it consists of a curve terminating in a large panel, and is very effective. There is a great deal of taste displayed in the way in which the patterns are marked out; and the lines and borders employed to mark and ornament the panellings, as well as the colours employed in the work, give us a high opinion of the powers of those who executed it.

The Taller (or *atelier*) del Moro, originally called *Calle* or "Street of the Moor," turned into a workshop for repairing the cathedral, preserves three rooms, which are invaluable as specimens of the style they perpetuate.

In the afternoon we took a walk to the celebrated sword-manufactory, or Fabrica de Armas Blancas. This is an extensive place, consisting of several *corps de bâtiment*. It stands on the "*rive droite*" of the Tajo, and is about three-quarters of a mile distant from the Puerta de Visagra. There is a good road and pathway to it, across an uneven and apparently unproductive portion of the Vega. It is a royal foundation, and was established by Charles III. The

Digitized by Google

principal motive power on which it relies is that of the river, which, when employed, sets all their machinery in movement. Besides this, there is a steam-engine, in order that there may be a resource to fall back upon when either is out of order. The great extent of these *ateliers*, as also the abundant supply of forges, is almost a mockery of its present activity, for which they are truly "a world too wide."

One of the liveried *concierges*, a genial old fellow, showed us over the several departments, but the occupations of the various workmen scattered through the establishment seemed at a lamentably low ebb. Though swords are the chief arms manufactured here, the fashioning of bayonets, daggers, spear-heads and scabbards is also carried on. Cutlery is, however, quite beneath the dignity of the royal *fabrique*, as regards the smaller kinds of hardware; this is imported from Sheffield and Birmingham; and even those formidable "pig-stickers," and other equally treacherous weapons, invented and executed expressly for the Spanish market, and wearing a certain Spanish disguise, which a respectable English arm destined for open and honest warfare would disdain to assume, are of Brummagem birth, for though the Spaniard is expert enough in using the *cuchillo*, he lacks either the ingenuity or the energy to manufacture it for himself.

The Spanish army is supplied from the manufactory at Toledo, but that supply occasions no very extravagant demand just now: so super-excellent, however, are the Toledan arms esteemed to be, that a considerable number of presentation swords and "*armes de luxe*" are produced to meet the orders of French connoisseurs.

The engraving and damascening has been brought to great perfection, and is executed with much taste and technical skill: but there were only four artists at work in the *atelier* reserved for this department.

Digitized by Google

Toledo has always been famous for the quality of its steel. Steel and iron were known to abound in the Peninsula in the time of Pliny, who says, "Ferri metalla ubique propemodum reperiuntur." He also speaks of the different qualities, and of the tests applied to them, one of which we saw practised here on the blades as soon as they are fashioned: "Summa autem, in aqua est, cui subinde candens immergitur;" and with a utilitarian sentiment worthy of the nineteenth century, he adds, "Hæc alibi atque alibi utilior nobilitavit loca gloria ferri."

Horace, in allusion to the coats of armour manufactured in his day in Spain, is ready "mutare, loricis Iberis," the learning of Panætus and the wisdom of Socrates; in such high estimation were held, not only the metal but the skill with which its artificers turned it into arms, whether offensive or defensive. If the royal establishment exists only since the time of Charles III., the work was carried on here from time unreckoned, but in a "hugger-mugger" way, in separate *ateliers* scattered all over the town. The improvement of the present arrangement is obvious.

The Toledans are proud of their manufactory, and the zest with which they relish the interest manifested in it by visitors, is one of the most refreshing as well as one of the most hopeful signs about them. It is, in fact, a phenomenon to find this one solitary evidence of vitality amid the general stagnation of the decayed and tottering old town, which in other respects might have been laid asleep by the wand of some ancient magician.

The sword-blades turned out here, certainly possess wonderful suppleness and elasticity. They might almost be tied into knots. In one of the *ateliers* is a sheath made in the form of a coiled snake, very skilfully imitated, into which every blade, as it is finished, is slipped as a test of its pliancy, and some are sold in small circular flat boxes, into which they are curled. Another trial to which they

Digitized by Google

are subjected is holding them, point downwards, on a plate of lead, and bending them till the hilt almost touches the ground; again, they are made to touch at the two extremities, and then the point is released; or they are struck with force against an iron target, the point remaining unharmed.

These blades receive a very high polish. We may doubt if the famed Damascus blades had a finer surface, and certainly they would equally well serve the purpose to which La Broquière tells us those scimitars were put, viz., that of a mirror for arranging the turban or the beard,—for we must remember the Moslem *petits-maîtres* had no looking-glass in the back of *their* pocket-combs.

The motto formerly damascened on a Toledo blade was as follows:—

"No me saques sin razon; ni me
envaines sin honor."

On those of Albacete, where there is an almost equally famous sword-manufactory, the motto borne by the excellent, but self-conscious blades, is more concise, but expresses a similar sentiment:—

"Soy difenso di mi dueño."

Some old Spanish swords now existing in the Highlands of Scotland are said to have been presented to Henry VIII. by Catharine of Arragon. They are called by the name of Andres Ferrara, whose mark is perceptible on the blades; he was a very early Toledan manufacturer. Those of Zaragoza, called "del Perrillo," from the figure of a little dog with which they were stamped, were made from the ore of the same mine, viz., that of Mondragon in Guypúzcoa. The Zaragoza blades were sharper than those of Toledo; and their long, broad shape found greater favour with connoisseurs, so that, for some time, they superseded all others, until Charles III. revived the handicraft of

Digitized by Google

Toledo. Besides the figure of the "Perrillo," the Zaragoza blades bore two other equally distinct marks,—"El Morillo," or Moor's head, and "La Loba," the wolf. Those with the Loba mark bear the name of Andres Ferrara. One of these is still shown in the Tower of London. Cervantes mentions the name of Ramon de Hoces as a Sevillano famous for his poniards. The *montante* was a sword wielded "with huge two-handed sway," and no doubt, like the weapon of St. Michael,—

> ". . . the horrid edge came down
> Wide wasting."

Covarrubias, in his "Tesoro de la lengua Castillana," derives "montante" from the Italian; he calls it an "'*Espada de dos manos*,'—arma de ventaja, y conveida de '*Montar*'—palabra Italiana, que quiere decir *subir*, o porque el montante excede la estatura del hombre, o porque se juege per el alto."

As we turned our steps homewards, our attention was arrested by a square, Oriental-looking building at a little distance on our left, having a small mosque-like dome in the front wall, forming a gateway, but the quadrangle not roofed in. We made our way to it across some very rough ground, and on passing through the open *porton*, discovered ourselves to be in a *campo santo* of very humble pretensions, though of considerable size; a high stone wall surrounds the enclosure, within which there is not a vestige of turf or any other vegetation. The side by which we entered forms what may be termed a piazza, and beneath the roof, supported by thin wooden posts, rises a cloister about four feet wide. The wall is pierced, honeycomb fashion, with apertures for the admission of coffins, which are generally of *dos d'âne* shape, and are pushed in endways. These openings are closed with very simple marble, stone, or wooden tablets, generally inscribed in the briefest form

Digitized by Google

with merely the name, age, and date of the death of the person whose remains they cover, with a statement that his "*caddver*"—such is the Spanish epithet!—lies within.

Sometimes in front of the tablet a small space is contrived in which to place a mortuary wreath or some such *souvenir*, which is then covered with a glass. The coffins are roughly made boxes, lightly put together, and covered with black cloth, sometimes ornamented with bands of yellow calico, edged with tinselly-looking gold lace.

On the other three sides, the walls are perfectly bare—not a tree, not a shrub, not a trace of anything green takes from the dreary aspect of this little community of the dead. There are some graves in the ground itself, and on either side, somewhere about the centre of the whole square, are two rather large monuments, railed in. One is of stone; the other, a clumsy sarcophagus-shaped structure, of wood, in a very dilapidated state, and roughly veined to look like white marble. There are others whose memorials consist of patches of red tiles, about six inches square, laid close to each other, flat on the ground, so as to cover a space about the size of an ordinary gravestone; one tile in the middle of the second or third row is replaced by a glazed Dutch tile, usually white, on which, in a very contracted form, are printed in blue letters the name, age, and date of birth and death of the deceased, with the initials E. P. D. (*en paz descanse*); on some were the letters G. I. D., on others R. C. P. A.

This denuded city of tombs has nothing attractive,—nothing even soothing, about it. Its barren, deserted, unadorned aspect recalls the long and solemn separation between the living and the dead, in all its gloom and all its harshness. We find here few, if any, of those little tender indications of a sentiment which survives the grave, and loves to linger around its melancholy portals. A single floweret, a solitary "*picciola*"—all the more touching from its

Digitized by Google

rarity—may arrest the eye here and there, but the essential features of the place of Christian repose and consoling hope are altogether wanting, and it is very remarkable, among a people whose belief partakes of the strength and undoubting simplicity of childhood, that the symbols of that faith should be scattered with so niggard a hand.

As we were turning to leave the uninviting spot, an aged man, having the appearance of a decayed gentleman, wearing a bent hat and threadbare coat, passed in, and, looking abstractedly about him, proceeded to examine, one by one, all the graves in the centre of the square; at last he apparently found the one he sought, for he fell on his knees before it, uncovered his head, clasped his bony hands, and appeared overwhelmed with grief and despair. We could not but feel interested in the poor old man, whose thin grey hairs scantily covered his hollow temples. No one was near him; he seemed to be alone in the world for the short remnant of his days, and no doubt it was wife or child, or perhaps both, over whose remains he bowed his hoary head and poured out the lament of his broken spirit. It was a touching sight, for he was beyond such consolation as we might have offered, and his grief was too respectable to admit of being noticed by strangers, so we reluctantly left him to his mournful solitude, and regained the road.

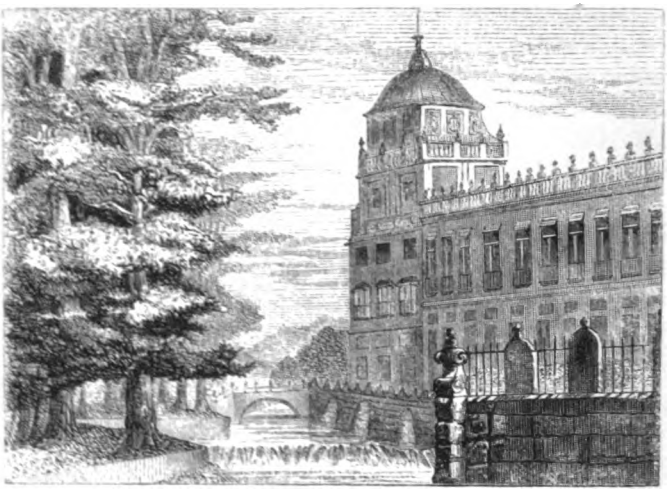
Just as we were approaching the old gate of the town we were startled by the loud clatter of horses' hoofs, and saw, coming towards us, two mounted cavaliers, evidently starting on a journey. The steeds were fat and well-liking, and the riders seemed to have prepared themselves for any adventure or adventures they might meet with, from a turbulent eagle to a marauding brigand. They wore broad-brimmed and rather pointed *sombreros*, and substantial circular cloth cloaks—complete dreadnoughts. Beneath these, they were "boutonnés jusqu'à par-dessus le menton," and begaitered down to the heels; moreover, they

Digitized by Google

carried pistols in their holsters, as well as ponderous blunderbusses hanging beside them, and seemed altogether very comfortably accoutred. Each had his pack strapped on to the front of his saddle, and we could not help thinking that, provided the weather held up, the journey before them must be a very agreeable one.

It was altogether a very primitive-looking group, and, like so many other "things of Spain," might perfectly well have trotted out of the pages of "Gil Blas." This is the native mode of travelling, and will continue until the spread of railways entirely displaces the old customs.

Digitized by Google



THE PALACE, ARANJUEZ.

CHAPTER VIII.

ARANJUEZ.

"En lo mejor de la felice España
Do el Rio Tajo tersia su corrida,
Y con sus cristalinas aguas baña
La tierra, entre las tierras escojida,
Está una Vega de bellesa extraña!
Toda de verde yerba entretejida,
Donde Natura y arte en competencia,
Lo ultimo pusieron de potencia."

GOMEZ DE ZAPIA.

"It was a shady and sequestered scene,
Like those famed gardens of Boccaccio,
Planted with his own laurels, ever green,
And roses, that for endless summers blow;
And there were fountain-springs to overflow
Their marble basins, and cool, green arcades

Digitized by Google

Of tall o'erarching sycamores, to throw
Athwart the dappled path their dancing shades."
HOOD.

"And is all this to be lighted up in the head for a beggarly account of three or four Louis d'ors, which is the most I can be overreached in? Base passion! said I, turning myself about as a man naturally does upon a sudden reverse of sentiment,—base, ungentle passion! thy hand is against every man, and every man's hand against thee."—STERNE.

WE left the stern but attractive old capital of the Goths with real regret. Our farewell to its storied walls was one of those which make the thoughtful "linger;" for, if our first, we felt it was in all probability our last adieu to its attaching details.

Manuel, it must be allowed, did his little best to detain us; he was "sure we could not have seen all that the superb old city had to show;" he had hoped we should have spent "at least another fortnight there." Had we not been comfortable under his care? Was there any inducement *he* could offer to persuade us to pass a little more time in a place which offered so much attraction? Alas! no. We reassured the poor fellow as to his own conduct, which we told him had been all we could wish, and impressed upon him our own readiness, as far as we were personally concerned, to prolong our visit, but our letters were addressed to Aranjuez, and we were obliged to pursue them.

"Aranjuez! Es posible! Aranjuez!" exclaimed Manuel, with a look of reproach, if not of contempt. "Is it possible that any one could tear himself away from such a place as Toledo for the sake of seeing that miserable, flimsy toy, Aranjuez?"

We had evidently fallen very low in Manuel's estimation, and we thought his regret at losing us might be partly reflected from the untenanted guest-chambers and deserted corridors. Nevertheless, whatever the cause, we remained firm to our intention, and having taken a part-

Digitized by Google

ing dinner, we started for the train. Our last view of the *parador*, as we looked back, contained the disconsolate figure of Manuel, framed by the arch of the *porton*, as, with his hands listlessly folded, and thumbs revolving round each other, he took his final glance at us, and turned away with a sigh. We made our way out through the Puerta de Alcantara, and met more live-stock coming into the old town, than we had seen within it during our whole visit. It was quite a lively sight, and the flocks, the herds, the teams of mules, and yokes of oxen, the peasants, draped in brightly striped blankets, and sitting on the very cruppers of their asses, the clumsy wooden carts, and paniers of water-jars slung upon the beasts of burden, were all essentially Toledan.

On the banks of the Tagus, between Toledo and Aranjuez, it is, that grows that species of reed formerly used for writing by the Romans. Martial's epigram addressed to Macer, who was prætor in Spain, thus alludes to these vegetable pens:—

> "Nos Celtas, Macer et truces Iberos,
> Cum desiderio tui petemus,
> Sed quocumque tamen feretur, illic
> Piscosi Calamo Tagi, notata
> Macrum, pagina nostra nominabit."

A bright starlit *trajet* brought us at a somewhat belated hour to the aristocratic, but at this season "deserted village" of Aranjuez, the seat of Spanish royalty during the vernal months. In all things an antipodeal contrast to the imposing and mountainous Escorial, Aranjuez lies lapped in the valley of the Tagus, and while its more frivolous character forbids us to qualify it by the venerable epithet, antique, its style is unquestionably old-fashioned.

We do not mean to hint that the collection of vacant habitations which constitute Aranjuez proper, in the least recall such a "deserted village" as Goldsmith's; indeed we

Digitized by Google

can scarcely term it a village at all; neither is it a *pueblo*. The palace is its centre and the cause of its existence, and both palace and village rose from a small beginning, out of an accidental circumstance. If it has attained, at this time, considerable dimensions and regal importance, it is owing to the simple fact that the smile of Royalty once rested upon its natural and artless beauties.

The spot at which two rivers meet, is one where we almost expect to find clustered the dwellings of men, and the confluence of the Tagus and the Jarama was peculiarly favourable to such a purpose. As long ago as four hundred years, a convent-castle held its solitary sway over this delightful territory; at a respectful distance from its walls, were the scattered huts of a rude and rustic people, and the vine and the olive surrounded it with their luxuriance. The monastic edifice stood in the midst of a domain, at that time in the possession of the wealthy Order of Santiago, and when subsequently the Crown possessed itself of the lands of the order, this attractive spot became the summer residence of the kings of Spain.

After the death of the "Reyes Católicos," Charles Quint used the house—then very little altered—as a shooting-box. Philip II. employed his architect, Juan de Herrera, to add to and improve it, and at the end of the tenth century the château had become a palace, surrounded with extensive gardens, and standing in the midst of a *mar* (*Anglicè*, a pond) or lake, formed artificially by the waters of the golden Tagus, which escape in graceful falls and cascades, making a really effective whole. As has been the case with nearly all the palaces in Spain, the original building was, in course of time, burned down, so that when Philip V. decided on planting one of the royal retreats on the site, he had to begin again almost *ab ovo*, and according to his well-known predilection, introduced a French design, taking the palace of Fontainebleau for his model. Of succeeding

Digitized by Google

kings, each added his quota to the edifice, and it was left as it now stands by Charles III. "At that time," we learn from Talbot Dillon, "there was here a famous stable, in which the King kept his stallions, called *Casa de Monte*, and the celebrated jackasses called '*Burros-padres*' were kept at Villa Mayor, about three leagues off, on the road to Toledo. Besides these he had camels and buffaloes. Amongst the fine trees in the palace gardens were many *lote*, or nettle trees, named 'Celtis' by Linnæus; it has a beautiful and very effective foliage." He tells us "there were also at that time at Aranjuez twenty-one *depositas*, or magazines for corn,—a very simple contrivance, being simply inverted cones made underground, merely by digging out the earth. They contained 1,000 or 1,500 *fanegas* each, and preserved the grain dry for several years." The streets which have sprung up about it constitute a little hamlet of altogether unique aspect. It is a perfect Dutch-toy town, and looks as if it would take to pieces and pack into a box. The streets are all at right angles to each other, unflagged, and so wide as to remind one of the Parades at Châlons and Aldershot. None of the houses are more than two stories high, and as the shutterless windows are small, and the roofs very sloping, there is an utter absence of all architectural symmetry and proportion. All round the town are Boulevards, consisting of a series of avenues of scrubby trees, lighted by a very scanty supply of dim oil lamps. There has been an attempt to give to the palace the appearance of a rallying-point, by forming a *plaza* in front of its gardens, but it is large, rambling, and desolate, and all the buildings are so low that it is impossible to give it any grandeur; this irregular space is bounded on two sides by mean arcades, forming two quadrants, and separated by a broad road, while on the third, stands a staring domed church of some *pseudo* order of architecture. In the centre is a very large

Digitized by Google

fountain, but though the basin occupies considerable space, it has no height, and looks poor, on this disproportionately extensive flat, which is not laid out in any way, and the sand covering it is only broken by the clusters of weeds with which it is overgrown.

The season at Aranjuez lasts six weeks, and is regulated by the residence of the Court; it is then that the Aranjuezites make their harvest; if ever these ugly, unattractive tenements are inhabited, it is during this brief period, so that it is necessary their owners should take advantage of every opportunity in order to make the most of the fleeting occasion. Ambassadors and their attachés, ministers of state and employés, and the satellites and hangers-on of the "Corte," with their dependants, and all those who flock to any scene of unusual stir or bustle, then take up their temporary abode here, and the place is turned inside out; rents are trebled, prices of all marketable wares rise, and all is alive and astir. The people of Aranjuez are not improved in their moral appreciations by this unnatural and unhealthy contrast between short-lived fits of commercial activity and long intervening periods of listless idleness and prejudicial *chômage*. They have the character of being both grasping and dishonest, and there is no doubt that, like many others in whose case "opportunity makes the thief," they are the victims of these untoward circumstances. Be the cause what it may, the result is not the less unpleasant; the few hotel-keepers are little better than harpies, and visitors being entirely at their mercy, find themselves precisely in the position of the unhappy traveller travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho; unfortunately, at Aranjuez, every one passes by on the other side, and there is little chance of a good Samaritan to come to the rescue. There is, in fact, no appeal, and as the rascally innkeeper certainly would not care twopence for any remonstrance short of an *argu-*

Digitized by Google

mentum ad hominem, we strongly advise our readers who may care to see the scene of Schiller's drama, and to walk in the gardens trodden by the august feet of monarchs and grandees, to make their visit an excursion, and to avoid an Aranjuez hotel as they would pitch; it would be far wiser to pitch a tent of their own for the occasion.

Our equanimity was sorely tried here, not more by the extortionate charges of both the landlord and the restaurant we employed, than by the cool impudence with which they tried to victimize us, the barefaced audacity with which they denied their own words, and the personal violence with which they were about to lay hands on our belongings as hostages for the payment of their unconscionable demands. It was fortunate these were so portable, or we should have had but little chance, and but for the firmness of the gentlemen of our party, we might have found ourselves in an uncomfortable position.

That this state of matters is of long standing appears from the testimony of a traveller of the last century, from whose diary we quote. "This town," he says, "is prettily laid out; the houses are peculiarly built, and consist of one story with garrets above; they are all painted on the outside; house-rent is so exorbitantly high that the traveller becomes very heavily taxed; though indifferently served, we were outrageously charged."

The result of all this was that we left the place protesting against the corruption of its inhabitants, upon whom we shook off the dust of our boots,—a bootless and unsatisfactory vengeance, it is true, but any other would have involved more trouble and time than we had to spare.

Out of the season, everything naturally wears a gaunt, comfortless aspect: it reminds one of a ball-room the morning after an entertainment, or a large rambling

Digitized by Google

London mansion when "the family is out of town,"—when the shutters are covered with old supplements of the *Times*, the marble chimney-pieces are encrusted with a rough white paste, and the chairs and sofas have got on their brown holland pinafores.

The palace itself is shown, but admission is rendered as difficult as possible. Those who wish to see this "*real casa*" must be willing to be bandied backwards and forwards from one ticket-distributor to another, and very likely, after all, find they have been sent on a fool's errand. At Madrid you are told to apply to the "Señor Intendente del Real Sitio," and when you arrive at Aranjuez ticketless, and repair to the residence of the said functionary, you are informed you ought to have procured your ticket in Madrid; when you seek redress and desire to explain the case, you are coolly told that it is quite impossible to get tickets that day, as the *intendente* is away, but you may try at the palace itself. This is only by way of getting rid of you, for when you return to the flunkies of the palace, they disclaim all power of this sort, and declare it is not true the *intendente* is away, and that you had better return to his house, and tell the servant you insist on seeing him. The fellow is quite hardened to this, and does not even think it worth while to disturb himself, or even to rise while he speaks to you. Why should he? He is as good as you, and he likes to let you see he knows it. So he sits in his hall-chair making cigarettes, and even smoking them also, while he informs you that it is quite useless to apply there, that it is in Madrid you have been deceived, and that unless you have brought your *tarjeta* from there, your only chance of getting in, is to apply to the landlord of the Fonda de los Infantes, who, if he should be in the humour—and if you make it worth his while—will help you through the difficulty.

So here was the *mot de l'énigme;* no doubt this gentle-

Digitized by Google

man has found out how to secure to himself this very useful privilege, which assists him in attracting guests to his inn, and keeping the whip-hand over them when he has got them.

When you do get in, there is little enough to see; stiff, ugly, old-fashioned furniture, tastelessly arranged in awkwardly-shaped rooms, uninteresting portraits and indifferent pictures, are among the contents. There is one little room called "*Gabinete de China*," an exquisite boudoir of most *recherché* taste and finished style. Nothing in the way of costly material has been omitted in the fitting of this elegant little *tocador*, but the principal attraction is the exquisitely painted china with which it is fitted up. Charles III. added this *bijou* of a room to the palace, as well as some Moresque decórations, to be found in the construction and fitting up of two other occasional apartments. In those used by her Majesty are one or two good Dutch pictures, and some handsome mirrors.

The prettiest view the palace commands is on the side turned away from the town. The confluence of the Tagus and Jarama is extremely beautiful, and, as we have said above, the peculiar charm of this spot first suggested the idea of erecting a palace here. Some of the avenues of trees which shade its banks are imposingly stately and grand, and the water, after forming several islands, rushes with considerable violence under the palace windows, and boils over the large stones in a foaming, dashing cascade, on to the level below, where it glides into a glassy-surfaced pool, and flows along, calm and dignified, bounding one entire side of the palace gardens. Here it is so still and so clear that it reflects every leaf like a mirror.

The front façade offers an entirely different view. It is extremely Dutch in appearance, and not unlike the Château d'Eu. The garden is an unmitigated French importation of the ugliest period, and the trees are all stunted and arti-

Digitized by Google

ficially grown. There is a large piece of garden ground, but laid out in a style so quaint and formal that it can only be described as appearing to have been cut out of a doubled piece of paper and then opened. The whole is disposed in small, regular, stiff-shaped parterres, with broad gravel walks to divide them. Opposite one box-tree stands another of so exactly the same shape and size and colour that you could swear they were twins. Next come half a dozen orange or lemon trees at precise intervals, and with their doubles on the opposite side; we believe, if we were to count the fruit, we should find that every orange matched another. As of these clipped and shaped-out trees, so of the parterres, which, however broad the trim gravel path that divides them, are sure to have their counterparts opposite. The whole of the grounds partake of the most fantastic character immediately around the palace; and the terraces, fountains, balustrades, bridges, and more or less mutilated statues, are in keeping with the red-brick building, coped and covered with white stone. The dome of the chapel corresponds with another dome, precisely similar, on the opposite wing, but which is chapel-less. There is but a poor show of flowers for such extensive gardens, but the old gardener, who seemed to take a great fancy to us, was very proud of them. He picked us a large bouquet of all the choicest roses, telling us their names as he presented them, not without a certain grace. He also showed us, with a paternal smile, a pretty little bronze life-sized figure of the present Queen, taken when she was four years old. It stands in the midst of a railed enclosure, and is surrounded by flowers, which he takes great delight in keeping in order.

Beyond these gardens (called "de la Isla"), so princelily laid out, is a vast expanse of forest, thickly planted with trees of various foliage: labyrinthine avenues and tortuous alleys ending in, here and there, a *clairière*, where rustic

Digitized by Google

tables and seats, and vine-spread canopies, indicate the scenes of royal pic-nics *au frais*. There are acres on acres of this woodland, and closely adjoining, is another vast territory of precisely the same description, called the Jardines del Principe; in the heart of these gardens, and at a distance which it seemed we should never reach, stands the Casa de Labrador, a fanciful palace, built by Charles IV. as a *casa de recreo*. It is another of those *breloques*, the why and the wherefore of which it is difficult to explain. However, such as it is, it is a costly little toy, offering a *tout ensemble* of shabbiness and magnificence which renders it a *cosa de España*.

Some of the rooms were not only rich but gorgeously extravagant in their furniture and decorations; the chasings on the mouldings of the doors, dados, and walls being of solid gold and platinum. The cielings are elaborately painted in subjects, and the spandrils round the medallions are tastefully embossed and gilt. In one room the walls are hung with an embroidered white satin, in which the work is so choice and elaborate that it is only on close inspection the mode of execution can be discovered, and it would perfectly well pass for the finest miniature painting; the subjects are small landscapes, and every one is different from the rest. The woods and marbles with which the floors and walls are panelled and inlaid, are all of the most valuable description, and it is said that the banisters contain gold to the value of £3,000 sterling. The furniture, though of the severe style, is very expensive, and there are bronzes, mirrors, lenses, vases, and curious mechanical clocks in profusion, besides malachite furniture and ornaments, solid silver washing basins, &c.

The back stairs have received a certain amount of attention, and on the walls are painted scenes and groups of figures. The staircase terminates with a painted or simulated balcony, on which stand a group of figures leaning

Digitized by Google

over, said to be portraits of the wife and children of Velasquez the painter. The billiard-room, ball-room, salons, boudoir, &c., are all paved with the finest *marqueterie*, in Spanish marbles. The chandeliers are of superb *cristal de roche*, and the staircase walls of marble and scagliola; the banisters are, as we have intimated, of gold. The place is now never inhabited, and is of no use, and the gardens are a wilderness. We noticed some fine specimens of cedars of Lebanon, and planes, sycamores and elms, of colossal size. Aranjuez is a refreshing holiday-resort for the parched Madrileños, who enjoy the sight of a patch of grass or a green tree, and the songs of the feathered denizens of the woods, as much as the *marchand* of the Rue S. Denis, or the Cheapside Cockney.

With the exception of the rides and drives they may take, varied by cool strolls in the forests when the bird of evening tunes her throat, or an occasional pic-nic in these wild pleasure-grounds, we do not exactly see what the *Corte* can find to do here for six mortal weeks, and we imagine they are all glad enough when it is over: it is about as objectless a place as can be imagined, and we found part of two days quite enough for *our* purpose. The market-place is really large, and looks vast from the breadth of the roads leading into it, and the low roofs of the surrounding houses, scarcely more elevated than the canvass booths. The show of stock was very poor, and the bareness of the shops indicates a very low and weak class of commercial transactions. The rapacity of the innkeepers may almost be excused under the circumstances in which they are placed, but the people of Aranjuez bear a very indifferent character, and a French vendor of trinkets who has been long resident here, as well as better authorities we have since met, makes them out also, to be little better than a colony of pickpockets and extortioners.

Digitized by Google

There is a considerable foundling-hospital in this little place, and one or two other charitable institutions.

The world has gone on a very long way in its ideas of what a palace ought to be, since that of Aranjuez was finished, and even since a much later period, viz., in the time of the French occupation, when Madame Junot describes it in such *féerique* language that one hardly recognizes it, in the exquisite picture she has limned.

Talbot Dillon also describes Aranjuez as "one of the most beautiful spots in Europe, especially in spring, when all the gardens are in the highest bloom and perfection." He adds that "rare and delightful singing birds abound in these leafy groves, and break the stillness which reigns in the thinly populated locality and its isolated gardens."

Madame Junot speaks, too, of the beauty of the inhabitants of this province, which must either have been seen by her, through rose-coloured spectacles, or they have lamentably changed since her day. If we transcribe her seductive sketch it is rather for the sake of the glowing word-painting than because we endorse the opinion:—

"Les femmes de la Manche sont, selon moi, plus agréables que les Andalouses; elles ont, en marchant, une grâce indéfinissable; c'est une grâce qu'on ne peut pas expliquer et encore moins copier. Que peut-on faire pour imiter ce *meneo*, comme on appelle en Espagne la bonne grâce des femmes Manchegas? C'est à la fois un mouvement rapide, une attitude molle et langoureuse, une flexibilité, et tout cela avec des petits pieds d'enfant, des bras arrondis et si voluptueusement, sans que le moindre manége même rende cette manœuvre désagréable! . . . Ajoutez à cela des mouvemens si variés, si justes, si gracieux, qu'avec une femme Manchega, l'homme le plus sévère ne sait que faire de sa sagesse et de sa philosophie."

Digitized by Google

As far as *we* could observe, the type of the women of Aranjuez offered no very remarkable feature, neither has their costume anything very striking; but that of the men is most peculiar; their legs are perfectly bare up to the knee, the shoe being a mere sandal strapped on to the naked ankle. Instead of trousers or breeches, they wear loose white linen drawers, reaching a little below the knee. The dress is by no means becoming, and has the appearance of being miserably uncomfortable on a cold day.

They have a small, insignificant-looking theatre here, where there are performances during the only two months in the year that seem endurable, *i. e.*, from the middle of April to the middle of June; before that period it is too cold, and after that, too hot, while the miasmata from the water render the place very unhealthy: they talk of "steeple chases" when you ask how the great folk amuse themselves, but it is impossible to make out what they mean; they have, however, a Plaza de Toros of fine dimensions, and the *corridas* are said to equal those of Seville.

Mineral springs exist in the neighbourhood; but the Spaniards have not had the wit to make capital out of them here, or elsewhere, as have the inhabitants of such neighbourhoods, in other countries. Perhaps, after all, there are neither so many fools, nor so many rogues, in this unsophisticated land; and to produce such results as we see on this score, it requires a good many of both.

We were disturbed by few regrets in turning our backs upon Aranjuez. There was a certain dreamy interest, it is true, in repeopling those quaint old gardens with the personages of Schiller's aristocratic tragedy, and in letting loose the reins of imagination, as we sat beside the limpid Tagus, till we fancied ourselves among the pageants which must once have reflected themselves on that glassy surface. As

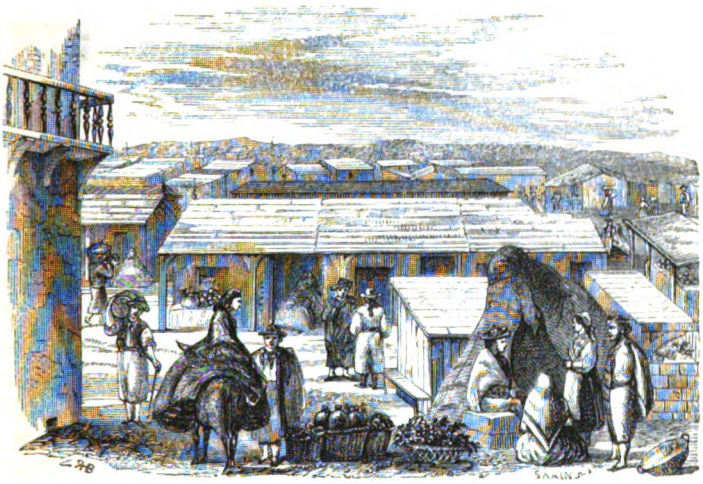
Digitized by Google

regarded the royal domain, too, we felt glad we had seen it; but here ended all the attraction the place had to offer, and another day would have been positively wearisome; its jejune emptiness was a marvellous contrast to the exhaustless beauty, and its gilded finery to the lone grandeur, of Toledo.

It was a dreary night, not overwarm; the train was late in starting, and the halts were extremely disagreeable. No sooner had we composed ourselves to the sleep we needed, than we came to a sudden stop, and were told we were at Alcazar, and must turn out and wait for another train. Half awake we groped our way on to the platform, and from the platform we were driven into a draughty *sala de descanso*, very bare of furniture, such as it was, where, as we had not the resource of smoking with which our fellow-travellers amused themselves, we were fain to walk about the brick floor, annoyed by the cold, the damp, and the detestable odour, mingled with the disagreeable sensation of being compelled to keep awake when we felt inclined to be asleep: fully three-quarters of an hour did this vexatious process last, and then the glass-door on to the platform, which had been kept locked, was thrown open, and the whole mass was set free at once. Of course, a scramble for places followed; but at length we got our party together, and rolled ourselves up into our respective corners, in a humour which was not improved by the rawness of the air and a loud pattering of rain, which now came pouring down on the top of the carriage, and lashing the window. This was not a very pleasant prospect for our to-morrow's journey by diligence; and we began to entertain vague apprehensions of what might be coming upon us. This gloomy state of things was brought to a climax when the train stopped once for all, in the midst of the pitchy darkness, and we found ourselves at Santa

Digitized by Google

Cruz de Mudela, and no mistake; it was therefore half-past four, for that was the hour marked for our arrival, and the *diligencia*, by which we had taken places at Madrid a fortnight before, was fixed to start at half-past five.



MARKET AT ARANJUEZ.

Digitized by Google



A PUEBLO BY THE WAY.

CHAPTER IX.

LA MANCHA.

"Notandi sunt tibi mores." HORACE.

"Heyday, call you that a cabin?
Why, 'tis hardly three feet square!"
BYRON.

ANYTHING more wretched than that turn out, in the cold, raw, rainy, dark and dismal morning at the inhospitable little station we had reached, we scarcely ever remember to have realized; the position seemed to be attended with every conceivable aggravation, and yet we had not foreseen the new vexation that awaited us. On leaving the train and passing through the dirty *despacho*, where we had to stand, jostled by the other passengers of all classes, till we had obtained possession of our luggage, we reached the platform on the other side, where all the rest had now also assembled, and were groping about in the most comfortless obscurity: two or three enterprising half-

Digitized by Google

dressed *commissionaires* with lanterns, were busying themselves among the passengers, and trying to persuade them to betake themselves to one or other of what they called the two "*fondas*," both close together, and about two hundred yards off, down the road which faced us. The station was in a very incomplete state, and just in front, a quantity of newly broken up pieces of granite had been laid down to make the road; on to this we now stumbled, for it was time to be preparing for the start, and the *diligencias*, to the number of three or four, having as many destinations, were drawn up in the midst of it all waiting to be loaded; we could just discern the massive *silhouettes* of the cumbrous vehicles through the drizzle and darkness; their bulky, most uncomfortable-looking forms becoming now and then visible as the flicker of one of the passing lanterns shot across the road. The *mozos* were attempting to pack the trunks and portmanteaus on them in the dark, and we apprehended some annoyance from the not at all improbable mistakes which might occur in sending the luggage to one destination and the owners to another. The noise, the talking, the hallooing and general confusion rendered both inquiry and remonstrance unavailing, and all the while the inn-touters were persuading, coaxing, nay, almost forcing us to follow them to the *fonda*, where they declared breakfast was ready, assuring us it was the only meal we were likely to get for the next eight hours at least. Add to this a whole swarm of beggars and hawkers, who surrounded us like locusts, whose drone would alone have been bewildering had there been no other sound, and whose contact, as they crowded in, pushing before each other, was anything but desirable. One fellow pestered us with *narvajas* which they profess to manufacture here, but we happened to know they are all made in Birmingham; at last we freed ourselves from their importunities by a resolute withdrawal, and followed one of the *mozos* down the road to see what these said inns were like. We found the other passengers had

Digitized by Google

preceded us, and were crowding the inner rooms, some of the lower class having even had the courage to seat themselves at the table; a most "*sordida mappa*" covered it, and the greasy tumblers and mugs, bent and broken, and blunted knives and forks, which were set round, mingled with clay pipes, were in character with the repulsive dishes laid ready for the expected guests; the atmosphere reeked with a mingled odour of damp earth, stale tobacco, bad spirits, beer, garlic, and wet clothes! We looked in to the other "hotel," as they had the audacity to denominate them, and found a precise counterpart: to give our readers a faint idea of either of these places, let them be good enough to imagine a mud hovel with a mud floor, the entrance being like that of a barn, and divided into *cocina* and *comedor;* in the latter, at the farther end, beyond the dining-table we have already described, was a broken-down wooden staircase leading to a rough story above; in the former division, one corner was occupied by a peat fire, over which two or three lusty peasant men and women, in a sort of savage *deshabille*, and with bare legs and feet, were busy cooking. As there was no chimney, a very small portion of the smoke escaped through the hole in the roof above the fire, and the rest, dispersing itself below, made one's eyes smart, so that it was difficult to discern the details of this more uninviting, but not altogether unpicturesque, interior. The poetry of it, however, was grievously damaged by the practical difficulties it presented to a party of cold and hungry travellers, with a long and hazardous journey before them, and perhaps it was still more hopelessly compromised by the deafening noise of a squalling child, which nullified every effort to hear anything else.

We beckoned the shaggy hostess into the road, and asked what she had for breakfast; she told us we could have chocolate (which was by no means what we should have selected on such an occasion) at *ten reals a cup!*—the

Digitized by Google

highest price, in Madrid itself, being two reals,—or soup (the very thought of the cold, greasy liquid made us shudder) or coffee, at the same price as the chocolate, but it would be *negro*, as the *cabras* had not yet come in to be milked! We are as little particular as most English travellers, and quite understand how to rough it, but a second glance at the sickening hovel decided us, and we turned and went away, if not in a rage, at least very much puzzled as to what we were to do.

On our way back, a bright thought struck us. We had observed a very neat little table covered with a white cloth, close to the station, where sat a particularly clean, good-humoured, motherly-looking woman, with a charcoal fire beside her, a boiling chocolate pot, and some white china vessels. We resolved on adopting the alternative, and, hastening away from this repulsive and utterly impossible *fonda*, found her still there, and very glad to serve us. We bought up her stock of liquid, and diluting it to a wholesome consistency with some water we prevailed on her to fetch, and boiled in our own travelling kettle, we made a capital breakfast, for she had also a box of sponge biscuits, such as are always, in Spain, served with chocolate, and which we were obliged to fall back upon, being unable to get bread. The landlord of the *fonda* proved to be no other than the *mayoral* of the *diligencia* by which we had taken our places, and he was furious when he found we had submitted neither to the fare nor the fleecing of his "establishment," but we merely smiled at his impotent wrath, and did not know that he was going to force us to give him a second and more important defeat. Having thus caught our man, for whom we had till now been inquiring in vain, we desired to have the luggage put up, and requested to be informed which was the *diligencia* in which we had taken places, for whereas the ticket named the "Cordovesa," the only diligences among the number about to start for Cordova, were the "Vittoria" and the "Madrileña."

Digitized by Google

All the places in these were already occupied; the *mayoral* declared there must be some mistake on our part, and appeared disposed not to recognize our claim in any way. At length a French gentleman, who with his party was an inside passenger in one of the Cordova diligences, seeing our difficulty, addressed us, and his explanation made the whole plain.

Our ticket was dated correctly the 2nd of the month, and this was the 2nd, sure enough, for we had in some respects inconvenienced ourselves to suit our movements to it; but the traveller, who was up to the trick, *pour cause,* bade us observe that, whereas the day was "Tuesday the 2nd," the ticket was dated "Wednesday the 2nd," and therefore it was not valid for to-day; he added that the same imposition had been played off on himself, and that, like ourselves, he had only discovered it when pointed out to him by the traveller who thus had taken *his* place; he added he had no doubt whatever that it was a regularly organized system. The plot was patent at once when he told us the consequence had been that he had been compelled to stay a whole day and night in this detestable *pueblo,* where he had not only been made to pay a most extortionate price for everything, but that he had been in fear of his life in this cut-throat inn—a *bouge* of the vilest description; and rather than pass another night under such a roof, he would prefer sleeping in a barn. He ended by advising us to have nothing to do with it.

The mules, ten to each diligence, preceded by a cart-horse, on which sat the *adalantero,* or postillion, were now put to, and after but a brief delay, the start took place; smack went the long whips, and with a tremendous sweep each diligence whirled round and drove off. Some skill is required to keep these lightly harnessed beasts together; as there are no traces, their tails are all inclined to go different ways, and a great deal of draught-power is thus lost. The drivers are very proud of the

Digitized by Google

sweep they make at starting and arriving, and seem to consider it a great feat if they do it with *éclat*. Off they were, however, and we were left to our own unassisted resources.

Here was a pretty situation; there was no doubt whatever but that we were in for it, and seeing no possible redress, we began to consider how we could make the best of it. The *mayoral* now pretended to be very civil, declared his regret for our *contretemps*, and urged that it was in no way his fault. He begged we would go down to the *fonda*, and make ourselves comfortable! and that we should start the first thing to-morrow morning. Moreover, he showed us our ticket was for the "Cordovesa," which went every other day, and that this was the day for the "Madrileña" and "Vittoria." It was evident we were "done" thus far; but we determined that the fellow should take nothing by his roguery, and that, happen what might, we would *not* go to the *fonda*. Meantime, the *mayoral* (who was to drive us to-morrow, and did not start to-day) called to one of the *mozos*, and desired him to carry off our luggage to his hovel; a measure which we forthwith opposed. "Oho!" said the *mayoral*, "you won't go to the *fonda*: very well, we shall see how you will manage. There is no other train all day, and stay here you must."

Fortunately for us, the rain had cleared off, and the day broke splendidly; we had our boxes to sit down upon, and a fine sky and sun over our heads. We resolved to request the station-master to take charge of the luggage, and to make an excursion into the village, about a mile off, to explore this strange uncivilized *pueblo*, and see what the buildings were which made such a pretty group on the horizon; but here we were thwarted again; the station-master, to whom the other "hotel" belonged, was an unmitigated barbarian, and he not only refused to keep our luggage, but declared he would not even have it left on the platform, and that it must and should go to one of the two *fondas*, where we must sleep, whether we liked it or not.

Digitized by Google

"Not so fast, not so fast," said we; "you don't seem to know exactly what sort of folk you have got to deal with, but you will find that out; the luggage shall *not* go to the *fonda*, and we shall not sleep there either." The station-master looked daggers, and going within, banged the door to, and locked it. It was now six o'clock; and we thought it might not be a bad plan to make our way to the village, where possibly we might find a *curé*, a *corregidor*, or some other civilized being, to whom we might open our griefs. The problem we had to solve was something like that of the fox, the goose, and the peck of corn. We settled it by leaving two of our party to guard the luggage, while two undertook the exploring and foraging expedition. The village appeared close at hand; and on taking a survey of the broad road which led to it, we observed that it made a considerable sweep, so, judging that the chord would be shorter than the arc, we cut our way across a ploughed field, and made for the village church, which stood out—a goodly spire—from among the hovels at its foot.

It was not the pleasantest walking in the world, but preferable to the road, which was knee-deep in mud, and where we saw before us a desperate case of *charrette embourbée*. The wheels were set completely fast, two of them being sunk up to the nave, and the driver and some half-dozen ragged peasants, who stood round, seemed to have no idea how to extricate it.

We were not far wrong in our estimate of the distance, but we had not reckoned on the obstacle we encountered, and which now came to view, consisting of a broadish stream, dividing us entirely from the village, and along the length of which, as far as we could see, either way, not a plank was thrown! This rather staggered our resolution; still it had to be traversed, and the question was, how to do it. We walked along the edge for some distance, till we reached the shallowest and narrowest part,

Digitized by Google

and then, picking up some loose stones, we threw them in to fill up a passage among those already there, and round which the water was breaking and splashing. In this way we managed to cross, and on we went again in pursuit of our object. It was a *fiesta;* the bells were ringing; the church, which was of large dimensions, was open, and mass was going on; there were some score and a half of villagers attending it. We entered and joined the worshippers; but that mass was no sooner over than another began, so that there was little hope of getting at the priest; we pushed on, therefore, through some of the dirtiest and most abject little streets imaginable, till we came to a square or market-place of the very poorest description. We discerned a baker's shop, which, as it had no *étalage,* was not easily distinguishable; here we got some bread, two or three days old; and on inquiring if there were any honey to be obtained, learned there was one hut on the other side where they had some, but the she-baker did not know if it would be sold. We made our way thither, and found that, although the idea was quite a new one, the old woman who owned the honey had no objection to part with a small quantity for a con-si-der-a-tion. We gave her double her price, and even then it only came to a few *cuartos!* A pound or two of grapes that we found in the market-place, at four cuartos the pound, included all we were able to meet with in the way of food, and filled our basket. We were proceeding *à la recherche* of M. le Curé, whose mass we supposed would be over by this time, when we met, coming out of the church door, a respectable, not to say a gentlemanly-looking man, wearing over his dress a holland *blouse,* whom we immediately recognized as a Frenchman. By way of introducing ourselves, we asked him if he happened to know what trains there were running from Santa Cruz to-day, when, to our great relief, he replied the next was at half-past

Digitized by Google

eleven. He then courteously inquired whether, as we were strangers, he could help us in any way, in this inhospitable place. He told us he was a French engineer on the line; and as we walked on together, entered into an account of the place, where he had resided some time, and which he disliked more and more every day. He said the state of the population was inconceivably rude and savage; that the amenities of life, and even the simplest usages of civilized society, were unknown among them; that religion had little or no practical effect upon them, and they were swayed entirely by their inclinations. He described his own life among such people as one of complete isolation from human intercourse, and assured us he was impatiently looking forward to the day when some fortunate chance should remove him to any other locality. No change, he added, *could* be for the worse, as it was impossible to have any dealings, social or commercial, with the inhabitants. His two little daughters he had sent off, as soon as they were old enough, to a French convent, as it was impossible to keep them here. Presently, we found he had taken us for French people all this time, and we began to fear that a feeling of compatriotism had been the secret of his civility, and that when he discovered we were natives of *la perfide Albion*, he would perhaps abandon us to the tender mercies of the obdurate station-master; however, we could not honestly leave him in an error which, as he must have found it out when he saw our luggage, would have made us seem to him as deceivers; we therefore boldly declared our nationality; and to our satisfaction found he was only more desirous than before to show how much more refined and obliging a Frenchman can be than a Spaniard; on our stating to him, therefore, the merits of the case, he undertook to set it all to rights. Our embarrassment was already considerably diminished by the fact he had just made known to us, as to the mid-

Digitized by Google

day train, for we, of course, resolved to avail ourselves of it, and, by going back to Val de Peñas, sleeping there, and returning by an early train in time for the "Cordovesa" at seven the next morning, to maintain our independence.

Our newly-found friend, who seemed delighted to have met with a party of human beings to whom it was possible to talk, told us his name was M. Babillot; he offered us the hospitality of his roof, which we gratefully declined; and told us, if the station-master persisted in refusing, *he* would take charge, if we pleased, of our boxes. He then accompanied us to that very evilly-disposed functionary, who, despite M. Babillot's eloquence and good-will, continued doggedly fixed in his refusal, no doubt thinking thereby to gain his end.

In this he was sorely disappointed, for, seeing how matters stood, we told M. Babillot we should go all the same, and should take our luggage with us, as we did not wish to be the cause of any unpleasantness between him and a man with whom he must be in such constant communication. We told him we hoped to meet him again in the morning, when he promised he certainly would be in the way, and on the arrival of the train, much to the mortification of the station-master, took our leave of Santa Cruz and its beggars. The number and pertinacity of these idle able-bodied vagrants amused and astonished us. The importations of strangers into this place must needs be very scanty, and all who do arrive leave again immediately, so that there can be very little to be made out of *them*, while mendicancy must be an utterly hopeless profession among a population who have all the appearance of being paupers themselves. Possibly they considered our forced residence of five hours in their territory a *bonne aubaine*, for they clustered round us with ever increasing numbers, like flies settling on a lump of sugar, and never lost sight of us till we tore ourselves away from their importunities.

Digitized by Google

Val de Peñas is a *pueblo* distant about fifteen miles from Santa Cruz, and although its name has penetrated whithersoever the *gourmet* is wont to spread his napkin from his button-hole, it is in an altogether similar social condition.

About half-way between the two, lies the little town of Manzanares, where most of the Val de Peñas wine is manufactured. There are to be seen here some colossal old Moorish-shaped stone jars, or *tinajas*, now manufactured at Coria, near Seville; they are embedded in the earth, and hold from 800 to 1,200 gallons apiece. In form, material, and dimensions, they precisely resemble those used in early times by the Arab manufacturers of oil and wine, and have been perpetuated without alteration ever since. Manzanares numbers a population of above 10,000; but it is a mere mud village, showing no signs of progress, although this is both a corn and a wine-producing district, and the wine,—if they chose to take any reasonable amount of trouble in making it,—from the extraordinary grapes which nature has given them almost without cultivation, would command any price: it is, nevertheless, a miserable, poverty-stricken place.

There is a listless, idle, *désœuvré* tone about the population of this part of the country, generally, which indicates a wrong state of things, and we suspect that their coarseness and their lawlessness is chiefly to be accounted for by their want of active employment, and the industrious habits that would follow it. They are very much like what elderly children would become if they could grow old while they are young, from a total want of initiative in their character, and firmness in their purpose; and unfortunately this want is not supplied by the influence or authority of any superior moral power to suggest and direct a better system. They are consequently unemployed, ill-fed, worse clothed, and wholly untaught, and must possess a really valid and sub-

Digitized by Google

stantial *fond* not to have become universally vicious under such disadvantages as they have to contend with.

In some instances, no doubt, they have; and there are whole settlements where the restraints of traditional honesty and wholesome self-respect are entirely suspended; but this must not be supposed to describe the character of the Manchego in general: with these exceptions he is allowed by those whose experience in anthropological facts and inferences can be trusted, to be naturally laborious and faithful, courageous and temperate, and as a rule he has preserved his ancestral attributes. Sancho conveys an excellent idea of the Manchegan type, and no doubt was painted from life. Simple as a child, there is something inexpressibly touching in the generous devotion of his confiding nature, and though popular satire has made him the subject of the proverb,* "Dos Juanes con un Pedro hacen un asnon entero," his character has been somewhat misapprehended in this respect, and there is no want of intelligence in the feeling of wounded honour with which he perceives, and the sternness with which he resents, mistrust and suspicion.

Between Manzanares and Val de Peñas lie the "Ojos de la Guadiana," for thus are described certain small lakelets formed by that river, which after flowing lazily on for some distance, loses itself in the boggy land. Toboso, the birthplace of Dulcinea, is at no great distance from the road, and within a few miles is situated Arzamanzilla, where Cervantes was imprisoned, and where he wrote his immortal romance.

All around this neighbourhood are set windmills of the most extraordinary shape: so unlike anything that could be conceived to be a windmill are they, that it is no

* This proverb has its Gallican counterpart in the censure passed on the people of Champagne,—"Quatre-vingt-dix-neuf moutons et un Champenois font cent bêtes."

Digitized by Google

wonder that the "Don," seeing them here for the first time, should have taken them for living monsters.

These clumsy contrivances, however, which appear to us so rude and so antiquated, and which Cervantes has so ingeniously held up to ridicule, were considered by the labouring-people contemporary with their invention as models of perfection, and the results of consummate inventive genius and skill.

When we look upon this population and its means of life, it is melancholy to think of the waste of power, of time, and of sinew, which, effectually utilized, might render them as flourishing as they now are abject.

They have all the elements of wealth and prosperity within their reach, but like so many other victims of forfeited opportunities, "ils passent à côté de leur bonheur sans s'en douter!" Their waste and uncultivated lands ought to be covered with forests and clothed with verdure, instead of which, although the cold is great here during the winter, they remain bare and barren, and the people are terribly pinched for want of fuel, finding nothing better to feed their wretched *braseros* with, than chopped straw and dried vine-twigs, the result of the autumnal prunings. Even their wine is not husbanded; having no regular system of exportation, except in stated localities, there is no object in making it with a view to its preservation, so that the quantity produced is either wasted, profusely drunk by all classes, or even allowed to spoil, if they have more than they know how to consume; for being habitually temperate, the Manchegan, even under these circumstances and in a thirsty land, does not drink to excess.

On arriving at Val de Peñas we were fortunate in finding a more obliging station-master than at Santa Cruz, and were able to deposit our luggage in his keeping while we started off to explore the town: and a very queer town it

Digitized by Google

was—the houses low, and built principally of mud and ragged stone, the streets deserted and gaunt, the people unprepossessing and slatternly, the interiors of their dwellings dirty, untidy, and uncomfortable. At last we reached the *venta*,—for there is only one in all Val de Peñas, a place of nearly 11,000 souls! Had there been any choice, we certainly should not have entered this one, unless, indeed, for its picturesqueness. We made our way into this strangely miscalled "hotel" by an arched gateway, and found ourselves within a paved *patio*, surrounded by an open cloister or corridor, the ridge-tiled roof of which was supported by rustic columns. Beneath this shelter sat a group of peasants round a table, compounding *mostillo*, a most delicious sweetmeat, made out of the grapes, after the juice has been expressed for the wine. They objected to *sell* this, as it was only manufactured for their own consumption, but offered to *give* us as much of it as we liked. Children and pigs were playing about, and several goats and kidlings added to the general friskiness of the scene. Opposite the archway by which we had entered was a similar opening, and beyond this we observed a sort of *basse-cour*; in one corner of the court was a wide doorway leading into the house. The room we were shown into, was passing strange to an English eye, and indicated no idea of comfort or even convenience. It was not lofty, and rather long for its width, with whitewashed walls of the roughest description. In the middle of one of the walls was a very small, square, deeply-sunken, unglazed window, contrived, as only Spanish windows are, so that the air could not be shut out without excluding the daylight also. The furniture of this uncouth loft was *à l'avenant:* it consisted of three or four chairs, of different heights, shapes, sizes, and materials; a bench covered with horsehair, and another of unmitigated oak, stood beneath the window, and in front of these was the rickety table, of a very incon-

Digitized by Google

venient height for most of the chairs. A very dirty, ragged carpet covered the brown brick floor, and completed the list of contents of what we were now informed was the *comedor!* The *amo* and *ama* were extremely civil, and looked like honest people, but they evidently knew nothing of the usages of civilized life. We told them we should require beds, which struck them aghast, and they seemed to deem it impossible to find so many as four; however, we were in a cleft stick, as the saying is, and saw we must be accommodating. We inquired what was the extent of their means, and when they replied they thought they *could* muster three, we requested to see them. "By-and-bye," said the hostess; "if you wish to dine, you had better let me see about that first, as I may not be able to buy any provisions at a later hour than this:" as to keeping any stock in the house, such a notion had never occurred to her.

The possibility she had suggested was an alarming one, and we began, with some apprehension, to inquire what was to be had. Seeing the general state of things in Val de Peñas, on the whole we thought we should prefer eggs, potatoes in their jackets, and melons, in their impenetrable rinds, to anything else; besides, we made sure these could be had without difficulty. Never was there a wider miscalculation. "*Huevos!*" ejaculated the *ama*, as if incredulous as to our meaning, "*Huevos!* why, there isn't an egg to be had in all Val de Peñas for the love of God or man." Potatoes were scarce, still they *might* be got, but melons decidedly not; market was over for that day, and no such thing was procurable.

"What *could* we have?" we asked, rather taken aback by this extraordinary revelation of the poverty of the resources of the world-famed Val de Peñas.

The *ama* didn't know; should we like a "*pollo*"? as, if so, she would *kill* one and roast it directly! The idea was odious, and the remembrance of sundry lanky, leathery

Digitized by Google

bipeds with which we had already been persecuted in the Peninsula lay heavy on our consciences, like "unpaid income-tax and buttered muffins," so we declined any further dealings with that class of animal. Not knowing the expedients of this famine-stricken place, we thought it best to leave it to our hostess to provide for us, and on her proposing *lomo de cerdo* (loin of pork), which she undertook to procure, we told her that would be quite satisfactory; meantime we inquired whether she could help us to find out any wine-presses, as we were very anxious to see the process.

The *amo* was very obliging, and offered to accompany us to a French wine-manufacturer who had recently settled here; so off we started, our Manchego guide trotting beside us, as ragged and picturesque a vagabond as the province could produce, and yet no doubt a well-to-do fellow in his way. It is said that some of these half-clad starvelings, whose happiness consists in smoking tobacco, basking in the sun, in singing *seguidillas*, and in dancing the *zapatado*, and who are quite above all those expensive luxuries on which we are so dependent, have yet gold and treasure to a large amount buried under their untidy, squalid dwellings, or stowed away in underground cellars:—

"Who lives to nature never can be poor,
And who to fancy, rarely can be rich."

Accordingly they are generally jolly, thriftless, devil-may-care rapscallions,—

"No thought have they for ills to come,
Nor cares beyond the day."

Like all Spaniards, they have enlisted under the banner of the "General No-importa," as their saying is, and philosophically snap their fingers in Misfortune's face.

Our good-natured conductor led us to the house and offices of M. Avansayes, for such was the name of the Bordelais wine merchant, who has ventured into the very heart of the "indocile Cantabrians" to introduce a more

Digitized by Google

advanced system of wine-making into their benighted province. All his machinery and apparatus—in fact, the whole mechanical "plant"—is French, and so is his system; but the grapes are the grapes of Val de Peñas, and "things of Spain," and this combination must be pronounced a success. It produces the very perfection of light wine, and is as superior to Bordeaux as Bordeaux is to the wine made by the natives of this *pueblo*, and called by courtesy "Val de Peñas."

M. Avansayes, like all foreigners settled in the country, detests Spain, and dislikes dealing with the natives. If he could grow Val de Peñas grapes at Bordeaux, he would not be long here; but such wine as he contrives to make can only be arrived at by grafting French industry, French machinery, and French skill on Spanish produce. All the casks used to be made in France, but the natives have succeeded in turning out a tolerably respectable article at Alicante. It was unquestionably the very best wine of any nomenclature or description that we tasted all the time we were in Spain; he showed us several kinds, some of them sweet wines, and partaking of the character of liqueurs; they were all of a particularly fine, bright colour. There is little doubt that these wines will ultimately take the place of those of France in the English market.

Having conducted us all over his premises, and having shown us his presses and extensive cellars, M. Avansayes next took us to see a Spanish *fábrica*, and a remarkable contrast it certainly presented. The place in which the process was being carried on was picturesque in the extreme, and reminded one of an interior by Rembrandt. We descended several stone steps into a large but not very lofty vault, paved with stone, and lighted only by the wide doorway by which we entered. It was some minutes before our eyes were sufficiently accustomed to the semi-

Digitized by Google

obscurity to enable us to distinguish the details of the singular scene.

One end of this vault was divided off by a low wooden partition some four feet high, behind which were heaped up a mass of grapes, picked from their stalks, and partly dried; these were in process of being trodden out by two half-clothed, ragged, good-humoured-looking fellows, who seemed thoroughly to enjoy the fun and the exercise. On their feet they wore sandals, tied on with leather straps laced up the leg. They were placed one behind the other, and held together by the shoulder, as with measured tread they crushed out the juice, singing their own quaint couplets as they trod, and treading to the tune. The pulp and juice, which were splashing about in all directions, mounted considerably above their ankles, and as the work went on they drew down fresh supplies from the huge heap behind them; the juice, as it was expressed, ran away by a narrow conduit, cut in the stone floor and terminating in an orifice, into one of the large stone jars we have before described, placed beneath. Here it is suffered to remain without any refining process, till it is draughted off into pigskins or goatskins for transportation to other parts of the country.

By the French operation the juice is trodden out in the same way, but after being passed through a wooden *passoire* into wooden casks, and being watched to a nicety during fermentation, it is fined several times, and carefully bottled at the proper moment.

The elaboration of this process necessarily adds to the price of the wine, and establishes a difference between that made after the French and that after the Spanish mode. This creates a feeling of jealousy, which the natives are not slow in showing; and there is no love lost between them and the French interlopers as they consider them.

The Spaniards, true in all things to their traditions, are

Digitized by Google

hopelessly unbusiness-like. Last year they had the folly to offer their wretched apology for wine at the price at which M. Avansayes and his partner had valued theirs; the consequence was, that the latter, being so very superior, it fetched its price, while no one would purchase the former at the advance, and the whole vintage was left on hand; it happened to be very abundant that season, and as, in the way they make it, it will not keep above a twelve-month, all that was not consumed was spoiled, and became a dead loss to the growers.

In another part of this cavernous recess were two or three more peasant men busily engaged in dissecting pomegranates; they were opening and dividing the fruit, and then separating the juice from the seeds by hand-pressure. This, they said, was to make a beverage for home consumption; a sweetmeat is formed out of the more solid part. An attempt has been made to produce wine from orange juice, but the citric acid contained in it, is fatal to fermentation, and the manufacture has been abandoned.

We next followed our indefatigable informant to a native spirit distillery, where a most nauseous kind of spirit, known as *aguardiente*, and the Spanish substitute for brandy, was being made. It was as rough and clumsy a place as could well be called a manufactory, such simple apparatus as was employed being in a very disorganized state, and the whole concern conducted on the most primitive principles; in fact, the unskilled practice of the Moorish predecessors of these people has descended in unimpaired inefficiency to our conservative contemporaries, who religiously preserve from modern inroad all the errors and inexperienced blunders of their forefathers, who at least recognized their ignorance, when groping about in unassisted obfuscation.

They were distilling their spirits from grapeskins, the

Digitized by Google

refuse of the wine. Here we saw another of those *norias*, or antiquated water-wheels, we have before described, by which the water is drawn up by means of little, rough, brown earthen jars, or *arcaduzes*, clumsily fixed on to its edge with coarse, roughly-plaited grass or reeds. Nearly all the rope used here is made in this way.

M. Avansayes and his son now invited us into their house and begged us to rest after our strolls; they ordered wine, grapes and biscuits to be brought in, and treated us most hospitably. There was a very beautiful dog in the room, of which he seemed very proud, and the dog appeared much attached to him; he told us he was of a peculiar breed, and was so refined in his feelings, that no amount of hunger would induce him to accept, even of the delicacy he appreciated most, unless offered by the hand—that he disdained even to look at anything thrown at him on the ground. A picturesquely attired maid of true Spanish blood came in to wait upon us, and seeing how politely her master received us, did her best to make us welcome on her part, and was as graceful in her movements as in her costume. When we were leaving, we offered her a gratuity, in acknowledgment of the trouble we had given her, but she was as un-English in this respect as in every other, and seemed quite at a loss to understand what we could mean.

We spent a pleasant half-hour with M. Avansayes, who told us he had been a widower some six years, and was now settled here to establish his son in business: they both dislike the place excessively. We learned from both a great many interesting particulars respecting the country and its inhabitants, against which, like all the French we have met with settled here, they seemed singularly prejudiced. Nothing could be more obliging than the readiness with which they assisted us, and on our expressing some curiosity about the agricultural progress of the

Digitized by Google

people, they took us an agreeable walk some little distance out of the town to an open-air threshing-floor, or *era*, where the corn is spread out, and where it is a very curious sight to see the *trillos* dragged over the grain: the horses are harnessed to this heavy machine, and are driven at a great pace in a circular course round and round it, in most spirited style, until the grain is thoroughly separated from the chaff. No one but a Spaniard would have thought of such a contrivance.

At length we found our way back to the *posada*, where it was by no means displeasing to learn that dinner was awaiting us. We were really hungry, and, we may add, it was as well we *were*. But for this, we could scarcely have overcome the repugnance with which we met the preparations which had been made. The tablecloth was absolutely unique, and it is devoutly to be hoped it will never have a fellow. A nankeen-coloured heap of linen lay in one corner, which we discovered to be table-napkins, and beside them two notchy old knives with very blunt blades, and four very dull and deformed metal forks. Beside each *couvert* was a thick blown-glass tumbler, filled with a muddy liquid, having the appearance of blacking and water, and in the middle of the table stood a half-baked loaf without a plate. Our hostess, who thought she had laid out a most attractive table, came in to say that dinner was quite ready, and should be served "*in un decir Jesus.*"

Accordingly, suiting the deed to the word, she shortly appeared, bearing a large homely-looking earthen bowl of un-peeled potatoes—"pots in skins," as they are entered in the classical kitchen-list at Christ Church, Oxford. A similar bowl followed, containing the promised *chuletas de cerdo*, but, alas! burnt to a stick, and smothered with garlic and oil. When will Spain begin to compete for the *cordon bleu?*—

Digitized by Google

"Their 'cooking' is messing,
The spinach wants pressing,
And salad in dressing
Is best with *fresh* eggs."

We were too hungry, however, not to excuse all shortcomings; and we even helped ourselves, *faute de mieux*, to the coarse grey salt with our knives, and passed the said knives from one to the other, so as to make them do double duty; we went so far as to taste the uninviting beverage before us, but, with the best will in the world, we were forced to limit our complaisance to that act; more would have been impossible; the combined flavour of pitch and goatskin was too powerful for any palate but that of a Spaniard.

The repast despatched, we thought it time to see the beds, and consequently asked to be conducted to our rooms; this was quite a poser, and elicited the most curious revelation. It turned out there were no rooms in the case! but the *beds*, we were told, should be brought in as soon as we wanted them; we begged to see them at once, on which, after a brief delay, three boards were brought in, and placed in an inclined position by resting one end on a bench; this proved to be the best they could produce; three extremely aged mattresses were added, and one pillow between the three beds: but the *tout ensemble* was so extremely uninviting that we began to think, all things considered, the waiting-room at the station would be both cleaner and more comfortable, especially as we should have to leave the inn at 4 a.m., and to find our way to the station in the dark by a muddy road. While deliberating on what we should do, a door at the end of the *comedor* was gently opened, and a very ladylike, matronly woman, wrapped in a large black veil, appeared. She introduced herself with native politeness, and expressed her desire to accommodate us in

Digitized by Google

any way she could. She was lodging in the *fonda*, it appeared, having come here with her daughter (who was an actress) for her health, and assured us she would be most happy to cede us her rooms for the night, if we would accept them; we thanked her heartily for her kind and amiable proposal, which we, however, declined, having decided on our course. The lady tried hard to persuade us to remain, offering us a free admission to the theatre, where her daughter was to perform that evening; and she showed us a spangled muslin dress they were jointly preparing for the occasion. She went on to tell us that her daughter had a magnificent voice, and was very much admired on the stage, but was not strong enough yet, after her illness, to take an engagement in a large theatre. We had a little private conversation with her in French, which she spoke tolerably, and found that her complaints corroborated the statements of M. Avansayes as to the character of the people, and the wretchedness and poverty of the place.

We were obliged to shorten the interview, and to take leave of the lady in black, as well as of our primitive and well-intentioned host and hostess, and then made the most of the remaining daylight to find our way to the station. Here we had the good fortune to meet with a most civil and accommodating ticket-collector, to whom we explained the case, and asked him if he thought we could remain in the waiting-room till the arrival of the four o'clock train. The ticket-collector bethought himself a moment, and expressed his regret that the waiting-room was closed, and would not be open again till within a short time of the departure of the next train, but he added, if we would accept of such accommodation as his own little *ménage* would afford, he should be only too happy to put anything he had at our disposal; he called his wife, and requested us to follow him into his own small department, consisting of a sitting-room, two bedrooms, and little *cuisine*,

Digitized by Google

all opening into each other; the wife was as hospitable as her husband, and after a few minutes' private conference, they actually offered us their own bed. We thanked them very cordially for this practical proof of their politeness, but told them, if they would give us a chair each, we would make ourselves very snug in the sitting-room, without disturbing them. However, it wanted two or three hours of bed-time; and being provided with books and writing materials in our travelling-bags, we established ourselves in one part of the room, while they occupied the other. The family consisted of the husband and wife—quite a young couple,—two small children, and the husband's father, a venerable old man, but almost childish, whom they treated with great respect. They told us they were Valencians, and altogether repudiated any connection with the Manchegos, of whom they spoke as if they considered them a very inferior race, whether in morals or intelligence. The husband went out to attend to the rare trains as they passed, and also employed himself with making entries in a ledger; the wife, who seemed a tidy *menagère* and a very intelligent woman of her class, busied herself with her household duties, occasionally chatting with us and replying to our questions. By-and-bye the husband came in, and he, his wife, and the little children, retired to the small kitchen to take their evening meal; but before seating herself, the wife brought in, on a neat tray, the *part du vieux grandpère*. It was a characteristic repast of chocolate, *biscochos*, and grapes, and the guests were not forgotten; a cup each was brought in for our party, and offered with so much grace and *naturel*, it would have been discourteous to have refused it. Then the little children were undressed and put to bed, having first been sent to kiss papa and grandpapa. It was a pretty little picture of domestic life, and left the impression of a happy family circle. After the babes, the poor infirm old man

Digitized by Google

was fetched out by his attentive daughter-in-law, who bade us good night, and led him to his room; the man came in and out once or twice, each time with a bow and a polite word for us; then the last night train arrived and departed, and the station was locked; the official, whose business for the day was now over, retired into the inner room, having replenished our lamp, and expressing his regret that we were not more comfortably lodged. All now was perfectly still, and we, too, composed ourselves to rest with some sort of success, the position being somewhat uncomfortable as time wore on. However, as all disagreeable incidents must come to an end, so did our night at Val de Peñas; and we were not sorry when we were disturbed by the noise of preparations for the train which now approached.

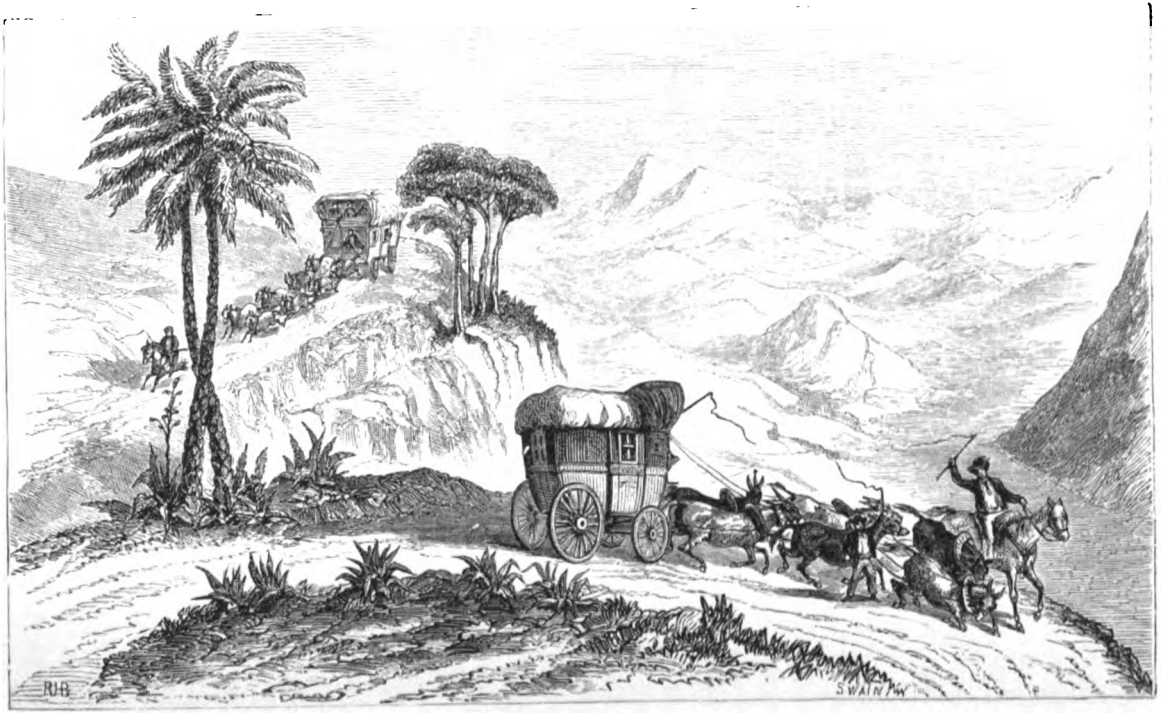
It was not particularly pleasant turning out into the raw, dark, early morning, and into the heavy rain which was falling, after a restless night; still we managed to preserve our equanimity, and to buy our tickets; and having taken leave of our good friend, and begged him to thank his wife in our names, we took our departure for Santa Cruz, arriving in good time for the *diligencia*.

We found that our friend M. Babillot had kept his word, and early as it was, was waiting for us on the platform; however, the station-master and the *mayoral* conducted themselves with propriety, and did not attempt again to dispute our rights.

The little breakfast-stall was again on the spot where we found it before, so that we provided ourselves with that meal without the intervention of the odious *fonda*. It was again a *déjeûner* "*aux pieds humides*," for the rain continued, and the terrace outside the station, in front of which the *diligencias* had stood, was in a most uncomfortable state. The beggars swarmed once more, the vendors of garters and hawkers of *cuchillos* again recommended

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



DILIGENCIA.

Digitized by Google

their wares, the touters paddled about with their lanterns. Soon the clattering sound of *grélots* was heard on the road, and up came, first one, then two, three, and four *diligencias* at intervals of a minute, each drawn by their twelve mules, with a clacking of whips and a most ostentatious sweep, and stood in a row before the platform or terrace on to which the station opened. Of the twelve beasts of draught that we have incautiously called mules, we ought to note that of the leaders in each case one was a horse, and that the off-leader was ridden by the *adelantero*, who is in most cases a mere boy. He had the roughest possible saddle, and stirrups with triangular wooden sides, almost as clumsy as those of a *picador;* his dress was both quaint in style and ragged in condition, and the harness of the rest of the team was in keeping. It can only be by a miracle that any two portions of this ill-contrived, cumbrous, crazy, clumsy, creaking concern hold together, as vehicle and cattle and harness, and above all, the top-heavy mountain of luggage which surmounts it, tumble, and jolt, and sway, and reel along the roughest roads, galloping up-hill and down-hill, after taking the sharpest turns, upsetting and churning together everything within them into one confused mass.

When we contemplate one of those veritable Noah's arks,—and in truth, when one considers the number of unsuspected specimens of animal life they contain, the comparison holds good in more senses than one,—we always admire the ingenuity by which so capacious-looking a cavity (or series of cavities) is made to contain so little. No doubt a considerable amount of human life does get stuffed into the several departments; the luckless travellers are—

"Stuck together close as wax,"—

and how they submit to endure their cramped position for so many hours is one of the wonders of this enlightened age, but the traveller has no choice.

Digitized by Google

As the "Cordovesa" appeared, we advanced and took our seats, resolved to be beforehand this time with any claimants who might interfere with us, one of our party remaining without, to see the luggage properly placed. It was as well we adopted the precaution, for no sooner had we secured our seats than up came a party newly arrived by train, and in precisely the same predicament we were in yesterday; the same scene was again enacted, we being on the other side this time. They produced their ticket, which was dated Thursday (instead of Wednesday) 3rd, just as ours had been misdated Wednesday (instead of Tuesday) 2nd. We showed them ours, and explained the deception to them; we further told them what we suspected to be the motive, and enlightened them as to the mode in which we had foiled the scheme; but they were stolid Matritenses, and as they had to deal with their own countrymen, we felt we were perhaps overstepping the obligations of good fellowship in going beyond a simple explanation, which should suffice to justify our own position. After all, the *fonda* was not so objectionable to them as it was to us, and as we drove away we saw them entering it with a gait which expressed the most philosophical submission.

We were not sorry to have detected this new *supercherie*, as it established our suspicions of a system which is singularly significant of the state of social transactions in Madrid, and we state it here at length, as a warning to English travellers.

As the sun rose the rain ceased, the sky cleared, and the air became genial and balmy. At last the operation of loading was completed. M. Babillot, to whom we had given an account of our yesterday's excursion, took a friendly leave of us: the passengers climbed into their seats, the doors were slammed to, the whips cracked (and so unquestionably did the whole machine), the *mayoral* mounted his

Digitized by Google

box, the *cascabels* began to rattle, and with another pompous and elaborate sweep, the massive "Cordovesa" whirled us away. *O si sic omnia!* but this was only a show-off to make a good start; we had gone but a very little way when the pace began to slacken; and on our arriving at the fatal spot in the middle of the road, near the entrance to the long, straggling *pueblo* of Santa Cruz, where we had seen the heavy cart stuck fast yesterday, it seemed likely we should soon be in a similar predicament. The *coche* came to a complete stand-still, and at length the passengers were requested to alight: the wheels were, after some little delay, only extricated *vi et armis*,—the *arms* being of flesh, and by a combination of the force of a considerable number of them, the lumbering *diligencia* was extricated, and we regained our places. By this time a second *diligencia* was behind us, and the two forthwith began racing, the *mayorals* chaffing each other the while. This lasted nearly the whole stage, one occasionally getting before the other, and each time this happened, the victor blew his horn in triumph.

We changed mules very often; still it was hard work, for the roads were hilly, tortuous, and deep in sand. The length of the journey was enormously increased by the winding of the mountain gradients; for we were passing over the wild and extensive range of the Sierra Morena, so that, after toiling up a steep ascent for more than an hour, we seemed to be retracing our steps by the next turn of the zig-zag road, and often found ourselves facing exactly the same view as before, only a few yards higher up.

The panoramic range around us was inexpressibly grand; the weather was magnificent, and it was fortunate the recent rain had laid the dust, which would have molested us terribly but for this. A more beautiful and varied road could not be imagined; now we were rolling along a wild and picturesque valley, with the steep rock making a mighty wall beside us, the sterile surface only

Digitized by Google

broken by a mountain torrent, or an accidental trace of bright-coloured lichen; while a roughly constructed bridge crossing the stream we were following—now smooth as glass, and now bounding over the rocks,—or a shepherd's hut, mingled itself with the vegetation, and gave incident and vitality to the unique picture. At another time, we were galloping along the edge of a deep and wide ravine where the sloping sides would show patches of underwood, in which the richest hues contended; but their character is one of severity, and the steep and rugged surface displayed some very beautiful and varied specimens of native marbles. Now and then a small and humble tile-roofed habitation would peep out of its lurking-place, as if to remind one of the existence of human life, and to show how scant is the population of these vast and magnificent tracts; a cow tethered to a post, or a few goats browsing on the mountain sides, indicated the mean circumstances and primitive occupation of the isolated inhabitants.

In some of these chasms, far down below the level we were traversing, we sometimes watched the excavating and tunnelling operations for the projected lines which are soon to desecrate these majestic solitudes, profane their imposing stillness, and destroy the charm of those untamed cordilleras which now fill the mind with their own tranquil and poetic beauty.

Wherever we discerned a distant hamlet, it was of the meanest domestic architecture: the agricultural processes that we observed were almost as primitive as the primeval rocks and fastnesses among which we were wending our way; while the rare groups we met, whether in their attire, their accessories, or their cattle, continually offered a varied phase of life, at once novel and antiquated.

About mid-day we stopped for half an hour at La Carolina for *almuerzo*, but a diligence *table d'hôte*, at no

Digitized by Google

time a very tempting repast, seemed here simply impossible; so we alighted to stretch our limbs, and also to take a peep at the interior of the inn. We had had no chance of providing ourselves with food, and were compelled to fall back on bread and melons, which we obtained in the queer old market-place. What a quaint old town it was, and how antiquated was everything that belonged to it! The street architecture was, to a certain extent, Moorish, and the mud walls, denuded *ventas*, jealously caged ground-floor windows, mysterious arched entrances, and colonnaded *solanos*, contributed to its Oriental character. The poverty of the inhabitants, and the hand-to-mouth system on which they carry on existence, is appalling to an English imagination, which cannot conceive how it is possible that even the special local produce of the country is not to be had in its own neighbourhood. As we were being tumbled through the Plaza, a suggestive incident met our eye: on the columns of the theatre, we saw posted up the play-bills, made out in MS.!

Our fellow-travellers, apparently, were not so fastidious as ourselves; when we got out of our moving cavern, they also descended from the various departments of the vehicle, and contemplated the table as it was spread; but the beef was only fit for *hippofagi*, and the chickens, which had every appearance of having died of starvation, failed to produce on the rest of the company the deterrent effect they had on ourselves; they came, they saw, and—they breakfasted. Meantime, having ventured, in a vain search for a better *fonda*, as far as we dared from the *diligencia*, which it was desirable should not start without us, we returned to head-quarters, but only to be completely surrounded by a crowd of squalid beggars, halt, maimed and lame, blind and palsied, ragged, dirty, and picturesque, all uttering simultaneously their wearying monotone: under these circumstances, we were not sorry to be off again. So the long

Digitized by Google

train of mules was whipped into a sweep, and dragging the ponderous machine after them, clattered over the stones, leaving the inhospitable walls of La Carolina behind us.

On we went again, at much the same irregular pace as before, frequently meeting and passing other *diligencias* on the road. The character of the scenery was not a little enhanced by the presence of these antiquated conveyances, so suggestive of other days, drawn by the long cavalcade of mules, and headed by the lightly-attired *adelantero*, dashing up or down, as the case might be, the winding road of some mountain-pass.

As we watched, from our own equally questionable *locale*, the unsteady, top-heavy old machine, and observed with terror the reckless whirls it took round a sudden turn in the road, and along the very edge of a fathomless ravine, we more than once gave it up for lost; but no—on it went; the troop of mules, simply tied together by the head, and seldom falling into a line, scarcely seemed to belong to each other or to it, presenting a confused mass of trotting legs and pointed ears; yet they contrived to drag it after them, over ruts, and hollows, and heaps of stones, but at the same time totally regardless of the comfort and security of the living contents.

An Andalusian traveller we met on a spirited palfrey, with his lady seated behind him on a pillion—this kind of seat always has a very insecure appearance; and on this occasion it proved to be so:—the horse shied at the diligence, reared, and in another moment both riders were rolling in the road. No one took any notice, or made the smallest observation—on we drove as if nothing had happened, the aggrieved parties uttered not a sound, simply re-mounting with philosophical equanimity.

We passed extensive plains of olive trees, with their fantastically shaped trunks, assuming attitudes which almost gave them a personality as they waltzed round one

Digitized by Google

another to the measure of our movement. The fruit of these trees is manufactured into oil at Cordova; and this being the olive harvest, the fields offered a most interesting and unusually animated appearance. Fine fun the young folk seemed to be enjoying in their scrambles after the berries as they fell, and in picking and collecting the rich crop. The farther south they are grown, the larger the fruit; in the north they are small and nearly round, while in Andalusia they are large, dark, and oval, in appearance very much like damsons, but the taste is atrocious. The general aspect of the vegetation, as we travelled farther south, became changed; the palm trees rearing their stately heads above hedges of aloes,—the fair palmito fringing the road, and the prickly figs adding to the Oriental effect.

We passed through the remains of one or two fine old towns, where extensive ruins and spacious churches survive to tell how important these places once were. At one such *pueblo*, Baylen, famous in the history of the Peninsular War, the *diligencia* stopped for dinner, and the same incidents occurred as at La Carolina; the meal was a failure as far as we were concerned, the beggars swarmed as before, the market was laid under contribution by our party,—only this time we managed to obtain a cold roast fowl and some capital bread, with a bottle of wine; and these precautions taken, we rattled on again as before. The roads are nearly always admirable, excepting those approaching and within the towns and villages, where they are inconceivably bad. The wheels sink so deeply into the mud that the vehicle is often in positive danger; and when it is extricated, the jolts and jerks it receives, as it tumbles out of one rut into another, are such that it is a wonder the whole concern does not go to "smithereens." As we were dashing out of Baylen, down we stumbled into one of these holes in the road, with a con-

Digitized by Google

cussion that made everything within and without shiver again, and literally smashed one window to atoms.

This, and many of the *bourgades* through which our road lay, though highly picturesque, are squalid-looking places; but the real practical misery is in a great measure softened to the eye by the hot glow of the autumn sun. What the fate of the inhabitants must be in inclement seasons, it is fearful to think. The girls in their graceful native costume, shouldering their earthen water jars at and about the fountains; the men draped in bright striped cloth, sitting athwart the haunches of their mules, whose faces are protected by their scarlet fringes and tassels; the busy markets and open cavernous shops; the tortuous, narrow, untidy streets, and the groups of ragged cripples who infest the inn door, are all *cosas de España*, and matters of contemplation for the traveller. Nor less engrossing to his attention are the bare and scanty shops, scarcely distinguishable from private dwelling-houses, unless we succeed in descrying the items of their stock, consisting, may be, of a few loaves of catacombal form and incredible colour, ghastly sausages, lanky, long-haired candles, heaps of shalots, bunches of grapes, or baskets of acorns and *garbanzos*. In all these *bourgades*, the houses wear a dull, grim, prison-like aspect; it is doubtful whether the amount of treasure they contain justifies the formidably solid cross-barred grating outside the windows, which certainly come very close to the street traffic, and almost invite a trespasser.

When passing Jaen ("Ghkaan!" as it is pronounced) a good-natured civil fellow jumped up on to the step of the diligence; he had been running for a long distance to try to catch us, and as he jumped up he contrived to touch his hat, and asked us so politely to allow him this little accommodation, that although he occupied part of our view we had not the heart to refuse him. He repaid our civility, for

Digitized by Google

we had a good deal of amusing talk with him, in which the genius of the country came out; he told us the names of the places we were passing, and of the different plants and trees we observed; he pointed out to us a large tract of country, all of which he told us belonged to the Marquis of Jaen, whose house he indicated in the far, far distance. The Marquis, it appears, is a man of enterprise, and has his own oil-mills, which he superintends, in the midst of his property: he owns, also, extensive vineyards. Our friend further showed us a large lead manufactory, and told us there were silver mines in the neighbourhood.

As he looked hot and thirsty after his long run, we gave him our bottle of wine to finish; he accepted it with much grace, and presently after, we saw him drop off the ledge on which he stood, and clear the hedge; we were rather puzzled at this abrupt departure, but he soon reappeared, like Noah's dove, bearing an olive branch laden with fruit—not in his mouth, but in his hand, which as soon as he had resumed his station, he offered us, explaining the varieties, and then digressing into particulars respecting the cultivation of the plant and the manufacture of the oil; he added there was a second and third kind grown in this part of the country, and a few minutes after, as we passed another olive-yard, he got down and snatched two other branches, which he brought us to compare with the first. He furnished us, what we may term, a really well expressed lecture on the natural history of the olive.

"They grow best," he said, "when planted at regular intervals, and therefore you generally see them in rows; but they cannot be made to look uniform, because they *will* twist themselves into such extraordinary shapes. They are propagated by slips, and must be planted in the beginning of the year; the grower takes a branch off a healthy tree, and after cutting it diagonally, he splits it an inch or two up in the form of a cross: this slit is wedged open by

Digitized by Google

means of a stone: during a period of two years," he continued, "it requires as much care as an infant, and does no more for you in return; for after banking it up you must water it and watch it, and in a little time, when the root has fairly struck, and it begins to put forth shoots, you must prune it discreetly, leaving no more than five branches at the most; when the young nursery is about half a score years old, it repays you something, but only in the way of loppings, for it is yet some time before you can look for a crop: three times this period must elapse before the trees can be considered to have attained their greatest vigour. The finest olives will generally be found to grow on wild olive stocks, grafted with the cultivated tree, and where the wild olive grows is considered by the sagacious Andalusian planter to be the most favourable spot for an olive-yard."

The fruit of the olive, he further told us, is the staple food of the poorer classes of the provinces which produce it, and the different qualities and growths are very marked.

The best or first-class are denominated *padronas* or even *reinas;* the second are called, on account of the black tint of their purple skins, *moradas*, and also *medianas*, or medium quality; and the third, which are very inferior, are designated as *rebusco* or *recuses.*

From the manner in which he spoke, our friend did not seem particularly to relish this essentially native provender, though he admitted it was nourishing food; perhaps, poor fellow! he had been condemned to the *rebusco*—the "refuse" of his betters.

Those that are to be served on the tables of the great, and must therefore please the eye as well as the palate, are gathered while yet green, and preserve their colour after they are pickled. The liquid in which they are immersed for this purpose is called *salmuera*, or "salt liquor," sea-

Digitized by Google

soned with garlic and aromatic leaves; in this they remain for about a week.

As far as we could make out, he seemed to say that the labourers employed on the oil farms are paid in kind—*i. e.*, they take out their wages, on the truck-system, in olives.

He strongly recommended us to visit an oil-mill in Cordova, although at this time of year the oil is not yet in process of making; still the apparatus he considered was well worth seeing, especially as he found, on inquiry, the English were such poor miserable creatures that they did not even know how to grow olives or make oil themselves! He wondered what the labouring classes could find to do in such a country, and it was evident we fell very much in his estimation as soon as he became convinced of our deficiency in this matter.

Hereabouts we came to the end of a stage, and as he did not seem to care particularly to be *cerné* by the *mayoral—pour cause*, he slipped down from his perch, and waving his hand gracefully, disappeared across a vineyard.

The country is so attractive that one cannot but deplore any mode of travelling which forces one to pass by so many attractive spots; such a journey, to be thoroughly enjoyed, should be made in a private carriage or on horseback, to admit of halting whenever the fancy might take one. Nothing can be more wildly beautiful than these mountain passes, and even the close proximity of the sometimes narrow road to the very ridge of the precipitous heights, down which the *diligencia* makes its way at a headlong pace, scarcely reconciles one to the idea of sweeping away all the poetry of such scenes, and levelling them down to the un-incidental prose of cuttings, embankments, and tunnels.

The projected railway works occasion a tremendous operation here; it is marvellous to see such an undertaking set on foot in a district where the stupendous scale on

Digitized by Google

which Nature has established herself, seems to mock the puny efforts of man; but if his faith be not powerful enough to remove mountains, his energy and intelligence defy their colossal proportions, and triumph over their size and their strength. Half of this tremendously difficult task is already accomplished, and the remainder is in progress. It is a curious sight, as one looks down from the dizzy height at which the road winds round the summit of one mountain into the valley which nestles down below at the foot of another, to observe the workmen busily engaged, like a colony of ants, in carrying on operations which, compared with the dimensions of all around them, appear as minute and as ridiculously insignificant as the pigmy exertions of those self-conscious insects.

The rocks here present the most beautiful hues; wherever they are cut they show a white micacious surface, veined with red and other colours; the various grey hues are soft, delicate, and transparent, while the lichens which have grown upon them are of many tints, chiefly green, yellow, and reddish brown, and harmonize exquisitely with the verdant colour of some of the rich foliage, and the warm autumnal glow of the rest. As we survey the *sierra*, peak behind peak, the numerous ranges of distant heights present browns, and greens, and madders of every shade, fading away into the distant, misty blue which melts and mixes with the sky.

There is a stillness and a repose shed over the whole which makes us doubt if it be a real or a painted scene that is before us; but although the labourers' cottages, the muleteers' sheds, and the huts of shepherds and goatherds show no sign of the living beings who have their dwelling within, and it is seldom that a curl of blue smoke rises from the depths of the chasm which embosoms them, a small grazing herd, or a *caravanserai* of laden mules, accompanied by peasants in their characteristic costume,

Digitized by Google

pursuing the windings of a threadlike path, appear at intervals to remove the deception, and clear our doubts. Sometimes a mountain stream traces its silvery line down the precipitous heights, and flows concealed behind a crag, to reappear among the olives and vines growing lower down, and then again it breaks its headlong way over a rugged rock, and forming a natural cascade, flows through the valley, bubbling along over the pebbles, and reflecting the blue sky, as, here and there, dammed up by heaps of fallen stone, it forms a miniature lake.

Throughout the journey we met, at regular intervals, armed patrols, sometimes on foot, but mostly mounted: they generally saluted us as they passed. This road is now considered almost safe, but within three years brigandage was rife here, and highway robbery, often attended with murder, was by no means rare; indeed the nature of the country is so favourable to the concealment and escape of these *desperados* that it is not surprising they should infest the highway. The frequent roadside crosses are an indication of the crimes that have been perpetrated here. That the continuation of the employment of the "Guardia Civil" is by no means superfluous, we gather from the accounts we now and then hear of highway robberies and deeds of violence in sequestered villages. Not long ago five *ladrones* were actually captured, and were identified as belonging to a gang by whom a road-maker had been murdered some time before; indeed, they frequently attack this class, but rarely kill their victim: the guards are not, however, always so successful as in this instance.

A terror-spreading *bandido*, known by the *sobriquet* of Rullo de Zucayna—that being the scene of his chief exploits ever since he assassinated the Alcalde of his *pueblo* in '59—has just added another crime to his previous enormities. A *pareja*, or pair, of Guardias Civiles were patrolling the road one night this winter when they

Digitized by Google

saw a dog which they believed to belong to Rullo; as they were always on the look-out for any traces of this bandit-chief, they followed the animal, in hopes he would conduct them to the haunts of his master; but as they approached a patch of underwood beside the road, one of the guards fell, shot by the robber, who was in ambush, and who, favoured by the consternation of the companion guard, the suddenness of the attack, and the darkness of the night, contrived to make his escape.

We cannot, however, but laud the general courage and efficiency of these keepers of the road. They were recently instrumental in bringing to justice the *zagal*, or assistant-driver of a *galera*, who had savagely assassinated the *mayoral* with twelve stabs; the cause of the violence was unknown. As soon, however, as the circumstance reached the ears of the "*juzgado*," they repaired to the spot, although it was the middle of the night and the weather very stormy.

We were much disgusted with the brutality of the *mayoral*, who, at one place where we changed mules, harnessed into the cavalcade a poor beast whose mouth was raw and bleeding, and at another, one whose off foreleg was tightly tied up; we had no idea it was to travel in this way, and when we saw it brought out with the rest, kicking violently, we concluded the limb would be released when it was put to. However, at the end of the long, wearisome, and arduous stage, we were horrified at finding that the poor brute had been limping the whole distance on three legs! It was a curious coincidence that the very last number of the *Times* that we received contained a police case, in which a driver had been called to account by the Society for the Protection of Animals for precisely the same offence; however, British humanity in this instance was no better illustrated than Spanish clemency in the other, for it appeared that the sitting magistrate dismissed the case, with a recommendation to the accused, not to

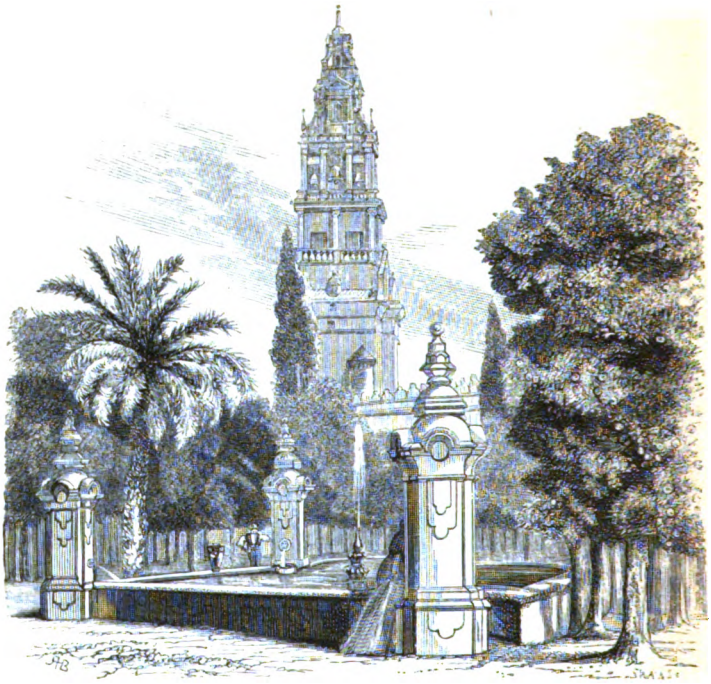
Digitized by Google

"offend public feeling" by treating his horse in this way "openly" in future: the inference being, that he is welcome to exercise the most atrocious cruelty, provided he only take care to perpetrate it in private!

On the other hand, the power of verbal communication between the muleteer and his team, suggests a generally good understanding between them; the brutes are made to work together, almost entirely by word of mouth. Each has its own name, and knows it perfectly: "Colonella," "Duquesa," "Marquesa," "Señorita," are among the favourite appellations, and they are called out in every variety of tone, sometimes followed by a gentle reproach—a sort of appeal to the self-esteem of the beast, sometimes by an oath—according to the gravity of the occasion *and* . . . . the humour of the *mayoral.*

We reached Córdova in pitchy darkness, for the moon had not yet risen, at nearly 2 a.m.,—a distance of one hundred miles in about eighteen hours, and at a cost of rather more than £5 each.

Digitized by Google



THE MESQUITA, FROM THE PATIO DE LOS NARANJOS.

CHAPTER X.

CÓRDOVA.

"Ten thousand columns in that quivering light
Distinct, between whose shafts wound far away
The long lab'rinthine aisles, more bright
With their own radiance than the heaven of day,
And on the jasper walls around them lay
Paintings, the poesy of mightiest thought."

SHELLEY.

SO here we were at last in the capital of the old Moorish Caliphate—the quondam lap of Eastern luxury and wealth; the heart and centre of a romance peculiarly its own.

Digitized by Google

An atmosphere of Oriental poetry pervades not merely the picturesque approach, the shady *alameda*, the wayside cactus and aloe, the gardens shaded by the feathery palm, the banana and palmito, and the marble *patio*, where the rosy-blossomed oleander flourishes in the perfume of the citron and the orange, and receives the grateful dew of the plashing fountain which it shelters; but we feel it equally in the low-storied houses and windowless walls, in the narrow, tortuous streets, in the fretted iron gates and balconies, in the striped awnings, and the shady, Moresquely-arcaded *solanos*.

This once-important city—the Caliphate of the Arabs, the Athens of Spain—has ceased to be the head-quarters of Spanish civilization as well as of Moorish luxury, and is as miserably reduced in population and in extent, as in social and commercial consequence.

Still, while she possesses the treasure of which she has so long been merely the casket—while stands the grand Mezquita, Córdova shall stand, for so long will the traveller, the artist, and the antiquary penetrate within her gates and pay their homage at her shrine.

It was the middle of the night when the crazy old *diligencia* came to a sudden stand-still after a last expiring jolt. Gruff voices seemed to be interrogating each other, and presently a dull lantern or two began to flit about. The passengers rose up one by one, and, amid the creaking and rocking of the vehicle, the luggage was dragged about on the roof, previously to being hauled down. The *mayoral* came to the door in no very pleasant temper, and told us we were "in Córdova," whither he had undertaken to deposit us and our belongings; but on looking out and seeing ourselves in the middle of a muddy road, and remonstrating accordingly, he barefacedly declared he had never intended to convey us any farther, and that there was "not more than half a mile" thence to the town. We now found we were near the railway station, a

Digitized by Google

wretched, unfinished shed, too slight to have kept out the weather had it been wet, but as we saw it would be useless to argue with the *mayoral*, we desired our luggage to be carried within this apology for a station: there was some demur to this on the part of the *mayoral;* but we had him in hand, and refused to pay the balance of the price of our tickets until our desire was complied with: this threat brought the fellow to his senses, and we had soon made our usual arrangements with the station-master to leave the heavier boxes in his keeping. We were now left to shift for ourselves, and began by declining the services of the omnibus, which, with the company already in occupation, did not look particularly inviting. Before us were the *alamedas,* for which Córdova is deservedly celebrated, leading to the walls and gates of the city, and as some of the passengers also went on foot, we followed their guidance. It was a pleasant moonlight walk through the long, straggling, wavy line of street, paved alike from one side to the other. There was a picturesque irregularity in the outlines of the houses, broken now and then by a wall enclosing some gardens in which plantations of Oriental shrubs were over-topped by the flowery sprout of the aloe, and the graceful branches of the palm, while the golden fruit of the orange and the citron "hung amiable," making "Hesperian fables true." Tradition tells us that the streets of Córdova, then in possession of its Moorish conquerors, were the first that ever were paved in any European city, and that it was in the year 851 that Abdur-rhaman accomplished this feat of civilization. What he did with the roads in this pre-(Mac)adamite period we know not, but we suspect that the Moorish idea of a paved street was altogether unconnected with provision for the heavy and continual traffic which the increase of population and the march of commercial activity condemns it, in other cities, to endure, and when

Digitized by Google

the Arabs flagged their *trottoirs*, like the Romans, they treated the middle of the thoroughfares in the same way.

There are long bare walls in Córdova, and windows are small and scarce; whitewash, on the other hand, is unsparingly spread over the *tapia* of which they are constructed, and the effect of the low huts is very Eastern.

With the exception of a stray *sereno* pursuing his rounds, the inhabitants were all wrapped in repose, and we seemed to be monarchs of all we surveyed, free to make any private observations we pleased, unmolested, on the sleeping town.

Our fellow-travellers having made for the Hotel Rizzé, we also went in and looked round us; but we were by no means taken with the appearance of things, and as the owners were extremely overreaching in their terms, seemingly taking advantage of the circumstances into which we were driven, we determined to have nothing to do with that hotel. Accordingly we returned to the street whence we came, and finding, close by, a *casa de huespedes*, we knocked boldly at the large door.

Knocking, however, was a very insufficient *modus agendi*, and we could not succeed in arousing any one *within* the hotel. As for those *without*, the only waking being besides ourselves was the aforesaid *sereno*, who, hearing the strokes, advanced at an increased rate, amounting in speed almost to a snail's gallop, to see what was up.

Perceiving a respectable-looking party of travellers thus seeking admission to the *fonda*, he ran to the rescue, and politely offered to knock for us: we assented to his offer, when a vigorous application of his mace soon brought an old woman to the door. Lanky, lean, and grizzly she was, and most excusably sleepy too, though evidently *supposed* to be "sitting up" for stray customers. She unbarred the door, and turned it cautiously upon its hinges, thrusting her lantern through the opening, and then surveying us from

Digitized by Google

head to foot. The *sereno* took upon himself to state the case, and we were admitted. We entered the *patio*—for all the houses in Córdova are on the Moorish plan. It was a mean-looking, quadrangular court, with a small, low, shabby, columned cloister round it, but paved with marble. Here the only rooms unoccupied were on the ground-floor, and opened out of the *patio*. They were not agreeable; the windows looked into the street, and, being on a level with the passengers, were necessarily closely barred, and had the effect of those of a prison. We made up our minds to this damp, uninviting *gîte*, and even then, had to wait some time for the *sábanas*. Meantime, we asked if anything in the way of food was to be had; but this was quite hopeless: the *amo* kept the key of the larder, and had been in bed some time! As it never entered into the old woman's head that this important person *could* be waked, we were obliged to content ourselves with things as they were, and to defer our supper till breakfast-time, especially as we were not sorry to get to rest.

Oh, the work we had, in that same *fonda*, to get washing-stands, water, and towels! The rooms were wholly unprovided with any furniture suggestive of ablution, and it was not easy even to make our need of such accessories understood: and this, in the city so long moulded by Roman domination,—the colony whence sprang so many of their greatest men: and great amongst these he whose melancholy fate testifies to *his* approval of that most luxurious and praiseworthy institution so constantly used by the ancient Romans, and so entirely ignored by the modern Spaniards. This detail of the last hours of Seneca is, however, not only suggestive of the habits of his life, but shows how impotent was the puny rage of the tyrant whose victim he was. His fame is young and vigorous as ever,—

> "While cruel Nero only drains
> The moral Spaniard's ebbing veins."

Digitized by Google

The name of a street in modern Córdova still shows that the old philosopher is not forgotten there. In this city of a thousand baths, only two remain to testify to the existence of the rest; and the inhabitants appear to have forgotten their uses. The Calle del Baño Alta and the Calle del Baño Baja each retain one specimen of the former luxury of Córdova, in this department of sanitary practice, but they are mere ruins; the "*meurtrières*" which light and ventilate them have been left intact, and the pillars of marble are still there to show the costliness of their original construction.

The elderly Córdovesa, who was busying herself about our rooms, at last terminated her *besogne*, and we were left to settle ourselves in our denuded-looking quarters. Although the beds were none of the best, and the accommodation almost the roughest and poorest we had met with in Spain, we slept very soundly, and somewhat far into the next morning. Our waking impression of Córdova was that it was an exceedingly tranquil place, and we were rejoiced to find that we had a bright blue sky above us as we peered at it from the interior of the *patio*, and congratulated ourselves on the probability of a fine day.

We peeped in at the *comedor* of the *fonda*, which was not particularly attractive, so, judging that a breakfast in some other part of the town would afford us an opportunity of seeing more of it, we sallied forth, and after visiting some of the streets and one or two of the smaller churches, found our way to the Suizo.

Here we got a tolerable breakfast, but we observed the same want of cleanliness as in Madrid; there were few *chalands* besides ourselves, and the waiters were very busy passing through from the kitchen with continual relays of pastry of various kinds, and other dishes, chiefly hams and sweetmeats (*jamon con dulces*); we understood it was all going away for the *almuerzo* of the hotel opposite.

Digitized by Google

Córdova has a dejected and deserted air; its extent is considerable, but its population has sadly dwindled, and the buildings being comparatively uninhabited, the low, whited walls, bare of windows, while they tell the tale of their Oriental origin, impart a wan and desolate aspect to the place; the site is in accordance with its general appearance, and is rather severe than picturesque. The horizon is bounded by the Sierra Morena, sometimes rocky and rugged, and sometimes clothed with dusky brushwood; the immediate landscape is tolerably verdant, being watered by the Guadalquivir, on the left bank of which this once important city was raised; around are thickly planted olive plains, and the valley is fertile.

Monastic buildings once abounded within these walls, and the great ones of the earth had their palaces in every street. Proud and sullen race, some few of their descendants still vegetate here in an independent seclusion, "the world forgetting," and certainly "by the world forgotten." All that Córdova contains, whether living or inanimate, is of a thoroughly un-European type, and we can almost believe the tales of fabulous magnificence which once adorned this favourite capital of the Moors.

In these Moorish dwellings the inmates still adapt themselves to the customs of those who originally constructed them, inhabiting the lower rooms in summer, and the upper in winter. In the hot season the sun is carefully excluded, but so also is the air; nevertheless they are cool and agreeable. The rooms are so much darkened, that in paying a visit, it is some time before the sight is sufficiently accustomed to the degree of light to be able to distinguish the features of the person one is addressing. The best houses in Córdova are the residences of the "Titulos de Castilla," an order of nobility of whom the number is limited. Some ten or twelve families, possessing incomes

Digitized by Google

CORDOVA.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

varying from one to three thousand a year, are almost constantly in occupation of these dwellings. The suites of apartments are handsome, but present the same incongruity so striking in the royal palaces. While the decorations and hangings, gilded mouldings and cornices, panelled ceilings and tapestried walls, and numberless mirrors, speak of a former magnificence, and, owing to the dryness of the climate, look fresh and durable, the costly furniture, which originally corresponded with these adornments, has been in the course of centuries worn out and replaced by cheap, roughly-made tables, commodes, chairs, &c., of the coarsest finish, even in the best rooms.

The Plaza de Toros was a very important edifice, the *corridas* were among the best, and the building covered a great deal of ground; we speak of it in the past, because it was burnt down some time ago, and is only now being rebuilt; so dilatory are the Spaniards, even in matters that touch their adored and indispensable amusement. It stands without the walls, where the *alamedas* are really beautiful and extensive. There is a theatre in Córdova, but it is of small account.

Besides rebuilding the Plaza de Toros, there is talk of other improvements; one of these is a new gate in the Plaza de la Maddelena: the Torre de Donceles is, if possible, to be retained; the municipality are, seemingly, impressed with some veneration for its antiquity and traditional history.

Of all the buildings of interest in Córdova the Puente is that of which this ancient city is proudest. The citizens of Córdova have taken for one of the chief charges on their coat of arms, a bridge, as if to call their own attention and that of all comers to the fact that they possess one. It spans the Quadalquiver, with its sixteen buttressed arches, and proudly boasts the parentage of Octavius Cæsar,

Digitized by Google

though it is said to have been so far rebuilt by the Moors, that no vestige of the Roman masonry remains: the Kalahorreah tower is a fine old building, and was the stronghold of the Caliph's troops when Córdova was besieged by Pedro the Cruel.

Tranquil and superannuated as the old city now seems, it has been the scene of stirring contests. Successively subjected to the sway of Romans, Goths, Moors, and Spaniards, and wrested by one from the other, during the most sanguinary struggles, Córdova may be said to have enjoyed its palmiest days simultaneously with the introduction of the palm into its soil. From the establishment of the dynasty founded by Abdur-rhaman I., who first planted this tree within its precincts, certainly date not only its wealth and prosperity, its importance and its civilization, all of which have passed away, alas! "as they had never been," but also that magnificent Moorish architecture, the remnants of which survive to this day, to tell us how great and how magnificent the Caliphate once was.

The name of this wise and beneficent sovereign is in itself auspicious. It signifies, being interpreted, "Servant of the Merciful." Abdur-rhaman owed his elevated position to his own courage and energy, and deserved the triumph he won. During the contentions which divided the rival houses of Ommiah and Abas, and ensanguined the banks of the Indus and the Euphrates, Córdova, an *apanage* of Damascus, had fallen into the power of the Abassides, when Abdur-rhaman, a young and then unknown scion of the opposite faction, eager for glory, and ambitious of a power he felt capable of wielding with honour to himself and benefit to his subjects, cast his eyes upon the rich and fertile province of Córdova; he saw its capabilities and deplored its misgovernment, determining to possess himself of it for better ends. He

Digitized by Google

assembled an army, entered Seville by surprise, and marched upon Córdova. The governor, Youssouff, in vain attempted to resist him, Abdur-rhaman carried all before him; he defeated the Ommiad faction in its own stronghold, and in 755 possessed himself of the province, founded the Caliphate and Kingdom of Córdova, and established his seat of government in the capital, in a short time elevating its position to one of rivalry with Damascus. It was from a patriotic sentiment, and to recall his native land, that he introduced and cultivated the date-palm, which now flourishes in that climate *sponte suâ*. He interested himself in the agricultural and commercial prosperity of his country, and exerted himself for the protection and promotion of both.

Art and science flourished under this monarch in proportion to the rapid increase of wealth, and Córdova may be said to have deserved the name of "*Dives Corduba*" given to it by Martial; it was now the seat not only of wealth but of civilization; Abdur-rhaman established throughout his dominions, schools for instruction in grammar, astronomy, medicine, and mathematics; he himself was an elegant scholar, and passed for one of the most eloquent men of his age; he embellished and fortified his capital, built there a magnificent palace, and began the great and world-famed mosque.

This mosque had four-and-twenty grand entrances, closed with costly bronze gates of exquisitely wrought workmanship; and some idea of the cost at which it was maintained may be formed from the fact that, of the 10,815 bronze, gold, and silver lamps suspended within it, 4,700 burned all night, consuming 25 arrobas of oil (1,250 lbs.) nightly.* The Christian population, unmolested, lived happily and peacefully under the wise government of

* It was early in the fourteenth century that this mosque was first consecrated to Christian worship.

Digitized by Google

the Moors, and forty-four years had sufficed to work out this marvellous metamorphosis. A cloud of barbarians, blown over from the scorching plains of Africa, had developed itself, as if by enchantment, into the most polished nation of Europe.

The reign of Abdur-rhaman was one continued succession of good fortune. He died honoured and lamented at Córdova, and left his crown to Hakkam, the third of his eleven sons.

Hakkam completed the grand mosque; but though he maintained some of the institutions founded by his father, his reign was disturbed by wars; and it was only on the accession of his successor, Abdur-rhaman II., that Córdova once more enjoyed the tranquil prosperity it had known under him who may almost be termed its founder. This prince knew how to keep his enemies at bay, and his exploits were so successful that he was styled "the Victorious;" but with him, the direction of warlike expeditions and the administration of government were not incompatible with the culture and patronage of art. To him the capital owed a second mosque, nearly equal to the first, and a superb aqueduct. His Court became the rendezvous of poets, musicians, philosophers, and the most celebrated orators of the time, and the seat, therefore, of *belles-lettres* and science, as well as of pleasure and gallantry. Abdur-rhaman died in 852, but not until he had, as we have before stated, widened and paved all the streets of his favoured capital, and in many other ways contributed to its improvement and embellishment. He left a tolerably numerous family of forty-five sons and forty-one daughters!

Córdova, under this monarch's successor, had been subjected to the disadvantages and drawbacks of civil strife, as well as of external attack; and it was not till sixty years later, when Abdur-rhaman III. came to be its master,

Digitized by Google

that it began to recover its former splendour. The traditions of this reign are extremely picturesque and romantic, and the period must have been replete with chivalrous incident.

Although harassed by unlooked-for invasions and by appeals from his allies for assistance, as well as weakened by occasional defeats, Abdur-rhaman was still often victorious, and his firm and noble character always commanded the respect even of his foes. He succeeded, in time, in repairing all his losses; and, taking advantage of the differences between the other petty states, he always knew when and where to attack with good result. His power increasing, he created a marine force, and with his newly organized fleet sailed to the coasts of Africa, and took possession of Seldjemesse and Ceuta.

The Greek Emperor, Constantine IX., desirous of offering a triumphant challenge to the Caliphs of Bagdad, sent ambassadors to Córdova to solicit the alliance of Abdur-rhaman. This sovereign, flattered at such a mission from a Christian people, resolved to receive his messengers with Asiatic pomp and regal honours. He sent beyond Jaen to meet them; troops magnificently equipped were drawn up on either side of their road *en haie;* the *patios* of the palace in which he was to receive his guests were spread with Persian carpets; the walls were hung with golden tissues. The Caliph, seated on a jewelled throne, glittering with the choicest stones, surrounded by his family, his vizirs, his courtiers, and his officers, signed the treaty presented to him by the ambassadors, loaded them with presents, and, on their return, had them escorted back to the very walls of Constantinople.

The Oriental splendour and Moorish habits of Abdur-rhaman are illustrated by a characteristic episode in his romantic and eventful history. A slave of extraordinary beauty, named Zehra, *i. e.*, "flower, blossom, or ornament

Digitized by Google

of the world," had enslaved the heart of the magnificent monarch; he founded in her honour, two miles distant from Córdova, a town which he called by her name. Springs of living water meandered through the streets of this city of love, of which all the houses, constructed on an uniform model, and surmounted by flats, were embellished with gardens; and in these, bowers of orange trees were planted. A statue of the beautiful Sultana adorned the principal entrance of this retreat. In the palace where she had fixed her residence, there were twelve hundred columns, forty being of granite, and the walls were panelled out with gold mouldings and cornices. In the centre of the *patio* was a fountain, consisting of an alabaster basin, into which imaginary Arabesque figures, made of solid gold, threw streams of water. Over this basin was suspended the famous pearl presented to the Caliph by the Emperor Leon. The cieling of the apartment in which Abdur-rhaman was received by his favourite was decorated with ornaments of gold and steel incrusted with jewels, and in the midst of the glitter of lights, reflected by a hundred lustres of crystal, a jet of quicksilver fell into an alabaster basin. The sums expended in the construction of the town and its palace amounted to £120,000 a year, and twenty-five years scarcely sufficed to complete these works, so that the total expense may be estimated at £3,000,000. Scarcely a vestige remains to record where this fabulously magnificent capital once stood. The site now belongs to the Marquis de Guadalcazar, and there pieces of broken capitals and columns are sometimes dug up: these, alas! are all that now remain of the 4,300 marble columns which once stood there, and which, according to tradition, were "made to order" in Tunis, Nismes, and Rome itself.

Twelve thousand horsemen constituted the guard of the Caliph: the wives, the concubines, the black slaves, the

Digitized by Google

eunuchs, who peopled this seraglio, numbered 6,300. The dominions of Abdur-rhaman contained 80 large cities, 300 second-class towns, and a countless number of villages. Twelve thousand hamlets studded the banks of the Guadalquivir alone. Córdova, the capital of this empire, enclosed within its walls 590 mosques, 52 hospitals, 800 schools, 200,000 houses (of which 580 were inns), and 900 public baths. There was also a public library of 620,000 volumes. Abdur-rhaman had gradually possessed himself of Portugal, Andalusia, and the Kingdoms of Valencia, Murcia, and Granada,—in short, of the finest portion of Castile. His revenues amounted to more than £5,000,000 a year, and he was the richest and most powerful monarch of Europe. He encouraged, as we have seen, agriculture, commerce, science and art, and death summoned him, in the midst of active measures for the further advancement of his country, after a glorious reign of upwards of fifty years. Among his papers was found the following, in his own autograph. It is the expression of a wise and temperate philosophy:—

"Fifty years have I been Caliph. Riches, honours, pleasures; I have enjoyed all—exhausted all! Kings—my rivals—have esteemed, feared and envied me. During this protracted period of apparent felicity, I have calculated the days on which I have been really happy: *they amount to fourteen.* Mortals! appreciate at their just value, gratified ambition, the world, and life."

How many successful monarchs have testified to the same results, on closing the most prosperous career!

Abdur-rhaman was a noble prince; among other instances of his generosity on record, is his reception of Don Sancho el Gordito, King of Navarre, his mortal foe. Don Sancho, during his expulsion from the throne, being afflicted with a dropsy which had baffled the skill of the Spanish faculty, resorted to Córdova to consult the Arab physicians.

Digitized by Google

Abdur-rhaman, into whose power he thus trusted himself, forgot his previous hostility, and with true magnanimity, not only received him as if he had been still a Sovereign, but extended to him every demonstration of fraternal affection. The generous confidence of the one is as touching as the noble-minded forbearance of the other.

Córdova is rich in architectural remains of this very interesting period of her history, and the mosque is not only by far the most important of these, but it may fairly be considered one of the wonders of the modern world; towards this marvel of Moorish taste and Moorish skill we now turned our steps, threading the narrow, well-shaded streets, whose classical nomenclature is suggestive of their traditional celebrity: Seneca, Martial, Lucan and others have been made to contribute their names to streets and squares scarcely worthy of this distinction.

At length we reached a street, one side of which consisted of a high stone wall, the pavement being a terraced elevation, raised from the road by three or four steps; we followed the wall till we came to an entrance, and passing through a narrow back passage beneath the belfry tower, and with mysterious flights of dark stone stairs on either side, we found ourselves in an extensive *patio*, curiously paved, in mosaic patterns, with small round stones of various colours. The noble space is divided into three squares, marked by paved borders; in the centre of each of these *cuadros* is a fountain, but in the middle of the whole *patio* stands a large white marble Moorish cistern, oblong in form, and terminating at each corner in a marble column of minaret shape, whence the water pours into the basin; in the centre is a small sprouting jet, and the sound of the water-plash is very effective in this large, open sunny square. It is now frequented by picturesque groups, and the Córdovese maidens fill their water-jars at the stream. It is called the Court of Oranges; being planted with fine specimens

Digitized by Google

both of the orange and citron-tree—just now heavily laden with their golden fruit—as well as with handsome cypresses and date-palms. The youngest of these trees are said to be about three hundred years old; the marble basin was fixed here in 947 by Abdur-rhaman III., for the performance of the ablutions required by the Moorish ritual. The court itself dates from the same period, and was designed by Seyd Ben Ayub; it measures 431 × 210 feet. At a much later period—that is, in the time of the Christians—were added the marble columns supporting the arches, semi-circular in span, which form a cloister on three sides of the court. The whole impression, as one takes it in, on first entering the court, is one of delight and surprise; it is absolutely unique, and as the first unmitigated Moorish effect we had as yet seen in Spain, struck us with its peculiar beauty; we seemed to read its whole history upon its face; for there it stood—fit antechamber to the wonderful edifice beyond it, and having the clear, deep, glowing blue for its canopy, every stone bearing its lucid and undeniable testimony to the genuineness of the whole production.

We are told that the great Abdur-rhaman himself was the designer as well as the founder of this perennial edifice, which was to make Córdova the Mecca of the West; he devoted to the cost of its erection a large annual sum, and it is said, worked at parts of it himself for some hours each day. He died a very few years after the foundation-stone was laid, but the building was even then—in 788—very much advanced. Ten years after, it was completed and brought into use, under the reign of Hakkam. As may be supposed, this was by no means the building as it has been described at a later period. To the eleven naves of which the edifice consisted at the death of Hakkam I., eight more were added under Hakkam II., besides the beautiful Chapel of Villaviciosa, once paved with silver and decorated with corresponding magnificence.

Digitized by Google

The Mezquita was adapted to Christian worship by St. Ferdinand, who about the year 1320 took Córdova, purified the mosque, and dedicating it to the Blessed Virgin, proclaimed it a Christian church; subsequently, chapels, sacristies and other additions, the want of which soon became apparent by the requirements of the new ritual, were built, and the transept and choir were thrust upon it, to the displacement and destruction of whatever came in their way, by the Bishop Alonso Manrique, who persevered in his determination to erect those new portions, notwithstanding the protestations of the municipality. This body corporate was so strongly opposed to the proceeding that they appealed to the reigning monarch, Charles Quint, entreating him to forbid the execution of the barbarous design. Charles Quint, however, placed singular trust in the Bishop's judgment, and without further inquiry, persuaded that he was in the right, unfortunately gave to the plan a hasty sanction, which he soon afterwards repented, but not until too late to undo the mischief. It was only a very short time after the crime had been consummated—in 1526—that Charles Quint visited the spot, and great was his consternation at the irreparable disfigurement.

Whether as an antiquarian or a man of taste, the King was deeply mortified, and loudly deplored the introduction of the Gothic member. One of the chief attractions of this singular building had been its unity of design, and that was now gone! He reproached the Bishop in words which are still on record. "Alas!" groaned the monarch, "for the sake of building what might equally well have been erected anywhere else, you have destroyed that which was matchless in the whole world!"

From this period we have to date not only the disfigurement of the Mezquita, but the *décadence* of Córdova itself, which seems to have lost its vitality, and never again to have rallied. Throughout the pages of history, we no more

Digitized by Google

recognize it as the once magnificent Caliphate of Moorish creation.

This gorgeous and venerable edifice covers an area 620 feet long by 440 wide. It stands north and south. The walls, which are said to be 6 feet thick, are not more than 60 feet at their greatest height, while at the minimum they do not measure above 30. There are square towers at intervals along the wall, which serve to support it. These were originally fifty in number, and most of them still exist. The Puerta del Pardon is a handsome doorway, finely proportioned, but the doors, which formerly were all in use, are now blocked up, with one exception; they are built square, and within this line is worked the foliated Moorish arch, and richly ornamented spandrils. The doors are of elaborate bronze-work; the roof is concealed by what may be termed a battlement, but the form of the indentations is triangular, and these are about 3 feet high.

We now crossed the *patio*, and found ourselves within this mosque of mosques. There is something like witchery in the aspect of its marvellous interior. The eye is dazed with the labyrinthine maze of columns it in vain strives to unravel. To attempt to convey any idea of the effect in words would be utterly futile—we abandon the effort. These columns, including the pilasters against the wall, once 1,200 in number, are now 1,000—all monoliths, and of the costliest polished jasper, porphyry, marble, and verd-antique. We succeeded in discruciating the plan from amongst the perplexing confusion by finding the extremity of one nave, whence a vista can be obtained, and then the perspective of the rest became clear; we then counted twenty-nine naves running north and south, intersected by nineteen other naves, handsomely proportioned to the area. There are no bases to these columns, which, if shorn of half their beauty, at all events leave more space on the floor for circulation. The roof is low, only 35 feet from

Digitized by Google

the ground. The capitals of the columns are of various orders, some being Composite, some Moorish, and some African, but the majority are Corinthian.

Their history is as *bizarre* as the oft-changed destination of the edifice they have met to support. Some of these pillars once belonged to the ancient temples of Carthage and other towns of Africa; some were from Narbonne and Nismes, and some from Seville and Taragona; the remainder, 140 in number, were sent from Constantinople, a costly gift from the Emperor Leon. They were originally intended for the construction of a Christian church, which was to have been built at Córdova during the time the province was in the possession of the Goths. The Moors, finding these costly materials under their hands, naturally appropriated them, and worked them into their Mezquita. Strangely enough, after their long banishment from the purposes of Christian worship, they have now returned to the use for which they were originally destined.

It is to be regretted that, owing to the various *provenances* of these columns, their capitals are of different orders, the diameters are of different sizes, and the shafts, being often too long, have necessarily been cut off, and appear too thick for their height.

The arches supported by these columns are Moorish, and consist of double rows, each arch having a second above it. The effect is very fine, and the honeycomb pattern formed by the second piercing above the first, is very light and elegant; but fabulously beautiful as is this rich and intricate interior, it can convey but a faint notion of what it was on the day when the Moorish Caliph saw the finishing touch put to the unique and noble work of his own and his father's reigns.

We are told that "the roof was entirely overlaid with fretwork—such as the Arabs alone knew how to execute, with a wealth of design and a precision of detail unrivalled

Digitized by Google

by any other artists, in their wonderful stucco, of which we see such perfect remains at this day. This rich stucco ornamentation was illuminated in colours at once brilliant and mellow, and a value, obtainable by no other means, was given to the work, by the lavish interspersion of gilding, which covered every inch of the material. The walls were of such fine and delicate tracery that they could only be compared to a fabric of lace, the exquisite finish of which was shown by an ingenious system of illumination from behind. The graceful and picturesque Moorish arches were not only gilded, but were enriched with studs and bosses of glass mosaic, wrought with so much skill by the Arabs, that they had the effect of rubies and emeralds, topazes and sapphires, and like golden bows enriched with gems, were supported, as they still are, by columns of marble, alabaster, verd-antique, jasper, and porphyry. Amidst this gorgeous profusion of labour and material were suspended the countless gold and silver lamps which shed their brilliancy upon the costly detail, and illumined the remotest corners of this vast treasury of arts,—which no longer exists, except in the pages of tradition."

The Mih-rab or Sanctuary of the Arab worship—the holy of holies—was a refinement even on this. It is a domed recess, now carefully railed off, and not used at the present day. The summit of the cupola is twenty-eight feet from the ground, while the seven-sided floor measures fourteen feet each way. It is paved with a very fine and choice white marble, worn by the knees of devout pilgrims, who made a sevenfold circuit of its walls; and the cupola, which is shell-shaped—a very favourite design with the Moors,—is of the same material, and in one single block. The pulpit of Hakkam—a marvel of art, and inlaid with ivory, jewels, gold, marble, and the most precious woods, fastened together with gold nails—was preserved here. If, as some assert, it really was worth a million of our

Digitized by Google

money, we cannot be much surprised that modern utilitarian philosophy should have grudged so much sunken capital, and have appropriated its value to more profitable ends. The celebrated Koran was also kept within this elaborately beautiful little chapel, of the ornamentation of whose seven walls it would be difficult to convey any idea. The artist absolutely revelled in gold and alabaster and precious marbles, and his genius was worthy of such materials. "Materiam superabat opus." The box which contained the sacred roll was encased in a gold tissue cover, heavy with jewels, and the desk from which it was read was made of aloe-wood inlaid with gold. The vessels of the mosque were of gold, and were all in use at the time of the Rhamadhan, when the ceremonial observance included all the pomp and glitter of which the Moslem religion was capable. The mosaics in this chapel are of the choicest Byzantine work. On one of the pillars is shown a rude tracing, or rather scratching, of the Crucifixion, said to have been done by a Christian prisoner; but it does not appear *where* the column was at the time, nor whether the prisoner was confined within the mosque! If he really were incarcerated within these gorgeous and magic walls, we may consider he had a splendid dungeon, and might have been much worse off. We regard it as decidedly preferable to the Bastille.

To describe the detail of the work, the architectural masterpieces, artistic curiosities, or religious relics contained within this interesting building, belongs rather to the compiler of guide-books than to one who only attempts to record his impressions of travel, and to convey to those who "sit at home at ease" an idea of their beauty. We prefer depicting the noble grandeur of this marvellous mosque by intimating that our sight was bewildered by its vastness, to stating dryly in figures the number of square feet contained within its area; and we regard it as

Digitized by Google

more within our province to paint a glowing light and shade picture, of these venerable remains of another age, another faith, and another mind, and to try thus to bring the poetry of their aspect before our readers, than to inform them with technical precision of measurements and materials, or to furnish a dull list of chronological and historical authorities.

We can think of nothing to which we can compare this unique monument, but we would fain reflect upon their minds the magical impression created upon our own—an impression so vivid that our first gaze within that mystic Moorish portal, enhanced by all the crowding memories of a protracted past, in which it had taken so prominent a part, remains stereotyped upon the moral retina—an image full of beauty and romance. Most probably we have failed in this difficult attempt: it must be seen to be understood; but for all architectural particulars we must refer them to the more accurate descriptions of *guias* and hand-books.

After a long and lingering visit—one among many we subsequently paid to these consecrated precincts—we once more crossed the Court of Oranges, and faced the edifice, —formerly a minaret, now the belfry, which stands on the opposite side. This *muezzin* tower was once the pride and ornament, the "presidium et dulce decus," of the mosque. It was raised by Abdur-rhaman III., who spared neither cost nor taste in the execution of his designs.

When the Christians first got possession of the mosque, and sought to adapt it to their own worship, they gave themselves a great deal of trouble to dis-Moslemize this important *apanage* of the edifice, but to little purpose. A few years later it was destroyed by a storm, and in 1590, Herman Ruiz, the Córdovese architect, erected the present characteristic belfry, and surmounted it with a figure of S. Rafaele. The miliary columns dug up within the

Digitized by Google

Mezquita are curious and interesting relics, and are stored within the court.

We visited several other very fine churches, of various styles and various dates. That of Sta. Marina de Aguas Santas is one of the most ancient, and such of it as has not been rebuilt dates from the year 689. It contains the tombs of the Benarides; and the Marquesa de Guadalcazar, a modern blue, of whose attainments we have spoken elsewhere, lies buried here.

While wandering through the quaint streets of the older part of the town, we suddenly found ourselves in a very spacious colonnaded *plaza*, in shape, extent, and dimensions by no means unlike the Palais Royal, but in condition and destination what a contrast! As smart, trim, elegant, and polished as is the one, so dirty, dilapidated, neglected, and unattractive is the other. The Córdovese *plaza*, with its fine stone buildings, and handsomely-constructed series of arches, is used as a market-place, and may possibly be redeemed by its picturesqueness and vitality on a bright, busy, sunny market morning; but our visit to it was at night, after a heavy shower, and we found it dismal and dimly lighted, sloppy and muddy and puddly — for the pavement was terribly out of condition: remains of the morning's work were scattered about in disagreeable profusion; vegetable remains, oyster shells, broken baskets, fragments of earthenware, and offal soaked in wet and mud embarrassed our steps; and one or two belated vendors, with dimly-lighted lanterns, were congregated in one corner, trying to dispose of the remains of their wretched wares, beneath broken umbrellas. Under the arcades, idle fellows, with slovenly women, were lounging about in untidy costumes and slinking attitudes, and the pavement, though well-proportioned, was encumbered with lumber, such as tottering tables and chairs, used for market-stalls; empty cases and baskets, and sometimes

Digitized by Google

with wares belonging to the repulsive shops beneath the arcade, for which there might not be room within. It was the most unfavourable portion of the old town, and did not detain us very long after we had once become aware of its uninviting peculiarities.

There are in Córdova manufactories of silver, flax, silk, oil, paper, and soap—indeed, soap is wonderfully abundant in all parts of Spain, and the high price at which it sells is unaccountable. The oil manufactory is as rough a place as we ever visited, and all the machinery, like the process, is extremely simple and primitive; but the quantity produced and sent to different parts is 5,000 barrels. Wine is also made here; and the soil, which is very fertile, produces abundance of wheat, barley, fruit, and vegetables, but its greatest pride is in its horses; and the *potro*, which must live in the remembrance of the readers of "Don Quixote," is still the horse market of Córdova. The inmates of the *hospicio* are employed in producing cloths, linens, serges, braids, and cords.

The streets of Córdova, when they *are* lighted, are indebted to the oil made on the spot. "Huile a brûler, huile à manger," remarked a Frenchman we met here; "en Andalusie c'est toujours la même chose; les bons Cordovais n'ont qu'une idée à ce sujet."

The olives of Andalusia have always been celebrated, and greatly surpass, both in size and quality, those of other provinces. The "Bætican" produce (for the river Bætis gave its name to the valley of the Guadalquiver and adjoining territory) was celebrated in ancient times, and has always maintained its superiority. Pliny, and other nearly contemporary writers, have minutely described the process employed in their day in the manufacture of oil among the Iberians, and if we compare their accounts with those practised at the present day, we shall find that the Spaniard has in no way improved any of his oil-pro-

Digitized by Google

ducing any more than his wine-producing machinery. It is in the most primitive state, and its merits must rest entirely on the merits of ancestral approbation. We took advantage of the circumstance of passing fortuitously near a *hacienda* to turn in and examine the contrivance. We found a civil old fellow about the premises, who seemed to occupy the position of foreman, or clerk of the works, during the busy season, but just now was listlessly wandering about the place, as if he had no particular use for his spare time, and with one hand in his belt, was feeding some poultry with the other. He looked up as he saw a strange party invading the spot, but having surveyed us, he resumed his occupation, and walked on, the feathered bipeds following him at the same leisurely pace. We accosted him, on which, looking towards us again, and more benignly than before, he removed his hat and asked us what he could do for us. We told him we were strangers, and never having seen a Spanish oil-mill, we were very desirous of inspecting the machinery.

"That is easy," said he; "but it is unfortunate that you should have come at a time when there is nothing going on." We replied that we should perhaps come and ask to inspect it again when in action, but at the present moment, if he would let us see the different portions of the apparatus, and explain their uses, we should be able to form a very sufficient idea, for we were not going into the business. The old man smiled at this assurance, which, however, he needed not; his apathetic nature would not have kindled at the idea of rivalry, had it been much more formidable. He bade us follow him into a long vault or cellar, lighted by roughly-glazed windows, and fitted with capacious stone bins or receptacles, already full of olive-berries, some very recently picked, others a week or two previously, whereas some of the bins were quite empty. This in fact is, it appears, the season at which the berries are being gathered

Digitized by Google

and brought in, and stored away until ready for use. They had all been previously sorted and picked from their stalks.

The next process is that of placing them on the large concave circular millstone, over which another stone is worked round from a common centre, by a mule or ox. The olives are contained in flat baskets made of soft plaited grass, when subjected to the press, a most ponderous machine. As many as twenty of these baskets of olives are placed under the screw, one beneath the other, to be crushed, and then a quantity of boiling water is poured on them, after which the whole mass is again submitted to tremendous pressure; the oil then flows out, and passes through a sieve into a large earthen jar placed beneath; the refuse is subjected to a second pressure, when a coarser oil exudes from it, which is used in making soap; after this it is dry and brittle, and resembles our oil-cake; it is then used as fodder for pigs and cattle, and also as fuel.

As for the oil, it is carefully skimmed off the water, and committed to the custody of earthen jars, which are of so large a size as to be sunk in the ground; in fact, they precisely resemble that curious collection recently excavated at Ostia, which doubtless served the same purpose. The Spanish oil is rarely equal to that of Italy; it is made much more roughly, and the Spanish taste does not appreciate qualities which to a more refined palate are indispensable.

The pay of those employed is small, and generally in kind, besides which they are provided with such food as their simple habits require. Out of the season they are obliged to get other work, usually field labour, which pays no better.

The old man was communicative enough, and answered very readily all our inquiries. We had some difficulty in persuading him to accept any gratuity; indeed, as such he absolutely refused it; but on our putting it differently, and

Digitized by Google

requesting him to procure some cigars, which he was to smoke in our honour, he consented to accept a fee.

There is in Córdova a manufactory of cooperage, the tubs made there being destined for pickled olives. We were disappointed in finding, as we had expected, any Roman remains here; even the aqueduct, on which these masters of masonry prided themselves so justly, was removed in order to make room for a monastery of Hieronymites; the fine amphitheatre, too, has disappeared. Córdova possesses a public library and a museum, said to contain good specimens of sculpture and painting by native artists. We had not time to visit these or the coins.

At Andújar, in the neighbourhood, is a manufactory of the porous earthenware used for water-coolers all over Spain, and often carried into other countries. There are several very interesting excursions to be made in the neighbourhood of Córdova.

Extra muros, is situated a remarkably neat but still unpretentious *campo santo*. It is kept with more reverence, and is adorned with more taste, than we usually see displayed in a Spanish cemetery, but no doubt there is a spirit of emulation among those who have been called upon to erect these mournful memorials. The chapel is small, but extremely well appointed. Over the high altar is raised an image called Sta. Maria de la Salud, dug up near this place some four centuries back; and it is said that the present cemetery was formerly the site of a hermitage, which bore the same dedication as that now given to the *campo santo*, viz., that of La Vírgen de la Salud. It was first appropriated to its present use in 1834. Two priests who live in the modest residence attached to it have the care of it, and the order in which the whole place is kept, including the gardens, is highly creditable to their care.

The flat country in the midst of which Córdova stands,

Digitized by Google

is called the Campiña, but immediately around the town there are some very attractive rides, and the Sierra Morena is here covered with verdure, and studded with villas or *cortijos*, whither the nobility resort during the fine season. In these interiors there is far more luxury in the way of furniture and comfort than is to be found in any of the Queen's country palaces, and the inmates enjoy a very pleasant time of it while they occupy them. There is a sociable, neighbourly feeling among them, and they meet at each other's houses, and enjoy the pleasures of the dance *au frais*, besides making parties for drives and rides and strolls among the beautiful scenery that surrounds them. Rose-trees, myrtles, and oleanders adorn their gardens, and the graceful palm waves its feathery foliage over these wildly situated habitations, while the orange and citron groves exhale the perfume of the genial and attractive climate of smiling Andalusia.

There are some most picturesquely situated hermitages and monasteries in the neighbourhood of Córdova, and the remains of several more, testify to the fact that many holy anchorites, who, it is to be hoped, are now enjoying a heavenly, formerly occupied an earthly, paradise among this lovely scenery and rich vegetation. The land of flowers it is; and we felt almost sad to see the profusion of deep-coloured and sweetly-scented roses which grow unheeded, and—to quote a more poetical than philosophical figure of speech—now waste their sweetness on this desert air.

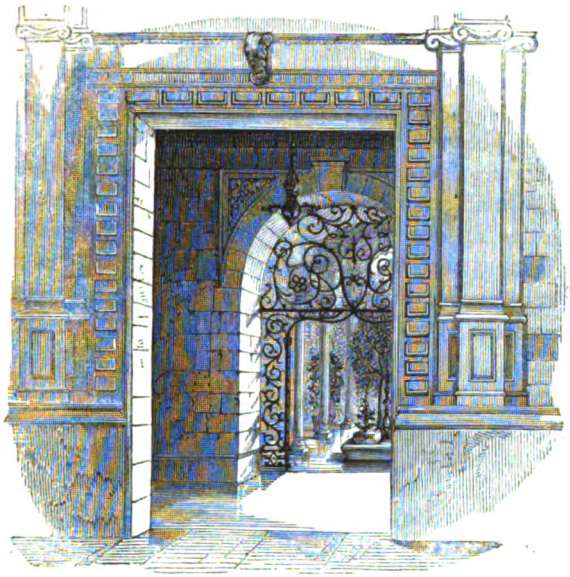
Our *souvenirs* of Córdova are a mixture of *mezquitas* and *mosquitos*, for if our days were devoted to the former, our nights were sacrificed to the latter: notwithstanding the precautionary nets, and the successful dexterity with which, inspired by vengeance, we at length learned to meet their attacks, these demons of the night contrived to scare sleep from our pillows during nearly the whole of

Digitized by Google

our stay. We sympathized heartily with M. Grénouillet, who avers that it is easier to bear a "bon, gros malheur qui vous assomme tout d'un coup, que ces petites misères de la vie humaine, qui vous assassinent à coups d'épingle."

Our next destination was Seville—a word of enchantment—and a spot which has always claimed its pre-eminence as the capital and nucleus of the delicious province of Andalusia, so called by corruption of Vandalucia, from the time when the Vandals, the most polished people of all Europe—who would believe it?—had possession of the territory.

Digitized by Google



CHAPTER XI.

SEVILLE.

"De quantas ciudades goza
El orbe en su redondez
La noble Sevilla es
La mas illustre y hermosa."

"Parvula, pumilio, *Χαρίτων μία*, tota merum sal."—LUCRET.

AFTER such a "*nuit agitée*" as it was our fate to pass here, it was not difficult to rise early, and although the daylight had not yet appeared, we were glad to leave our comfortless beds. Having dressed by the classically-shaped copper lamps which served us for *bougeoirs*, and

Digitized by Google

which, though decidedly elegant, we were in constant danger of capsizing, we begged the *moza*, who had "attended" upon us, to show us the way to the station. As the night had been moonlight, the street lamps of the once luxurious and extravagant Córdova had been left in mean obscurity, and this being the dark hour which preceded the brief crepuscule, we should have had some difficulty in finding our way without the help of a guide. She had talked, the previous evening, of a lantern, but when the morning came, was unable to produce one, and declared she knew the way "better without it!" The *serenos*, apparently, had sneaked off to their beds; we met no one —not even a belated cat! As we had entered the now unobtrusive Caliphate, so we left it, sunk in twilight, tranquillity, and repose, a state not unemblematical of its moral decadence. The sun rose suddenly, as usual here, and just as we reached the old wall and massive gateway: finding, therefore, that we recognized our road, we released the damsel and proceeded to the station. As the train was, for some reason or other, delayed considerably beyond the appointed time, we were condemned, by bad management, to wait minute after minute, till at least an hour had elapsed, and not until then, did we start. The day broke in great beauty, and we hoped for fine weather; we saw to much advantage the roadside scenery of our route, and observed the great difference between its character and that of La Mancha. Here, the vegetation is decidedly Southern, not to say Oriental, and the aloe hedges have a grand effect. Stately palms abound, and the cactus and palmito are as roadside weeds: there is good pasturage, and the cows we now saw for the first time in anything like abundance, seemed to enjoy the fresh meadows. We also observed that more oxen, and correspondingly fewer mules and asses, were used for agricultural purposes. This is the season for ploughing, and the activity

Digitized by Google

in this branch of farming was very considerable: in each field undergoing the process, were many, sometimes not fewer than twenty, ploughs at work at once, each in its own furrow, and each, the length of a plough behind the other, so that from the road the effect was that of a procession of ploughs, each drawn by one bullock, and having a man with a long stick at the head of each beast.

We passed some fine ruins, and several *châteaux* and monasteries, embosomed in trees and surrounded with verdure, in the midst of an undulating country, while along nearly the whole length of our journey, flowed, now on our right and now on our left, the winding waters of the Guadalquiver. The *tout ensemble* was extremely picturesque, and impressed us very favourably with the components of this sunny province.

Flores observes that Hispalis, or Sphalis, is a Phœnician term, derived from Sephela or Spela, which signifies a plain, and answers well for Sevilla, on account of its being situated in a flat country.

In the façade of the gate of Xeres, which was rebuilt in 1561, the following Castilian verses are cut on a white marble tablet:—

"Hercules me edificó,
Julio Cesar me cercó
De muros y Torres altos;
El santo Rey me ganó
Con Garci Perez de Vargas."

We reached Seville about mid-day, but to our disappointment the weather had changed for the worse, and this fairy city of "perpetual summer," instead of receiving us with genial smiles, as we had expected, seemed to repel us with a frown. A Scotch mist had begun to fall just as we came in sight of the grand old cathedral, and by the time we were fairly within the walls, it had deepened into a heavy, even rain, which now set in for the day. This was

Digitized by Google

a complete disenchantment at the outset, and as we were breakfastless and houseless, we felt ourselves altogether uncompensated, so that the world-famed Giralda reared its stately pinnacles aloft in vain, so far as our admiration, at that moment, was concerned. We made our way to the *casa de huespedes* to which we had been recommended, and were as well satisfied with its interior arrangements as with its external aspect. It was in the Calle de Barcelona, turning out of the Plaza de la Infanta, or Plaza Nueva as it is also called.

This square is constructed in a fine open space, and the enclosure is as handsome as any *plaza* in the Peninsula; the pavement that surrounds it, is broad and well flagged, and the road is wide; there is no fault to be found with any part of it, but with the houses which enclose it, and these are much too low and mean in design. They are built of stone, and that is all that can be said in their favour, for with this exception they recall one of our third-rate suburban neighbourhoods. The Plaza is an open promenade and thoroughfare; it is well gravelled and hard, and within it are marble seats at convenient distances. There is no grass, but it is planted with magnificent orange and lemon trees, the perfume of which is very delightful. Between these are some very handsome, richly-designed cast-iron lamps, on marble pedestals. We admired them particularly; but on close inspection detected the magic word "BIRMINGHAM" stamped upon one of the mouldings!

This square has been named in honour of the Infanta Luisa—Duchesse de Montpensier—who is a great favourite here; Seville is almost looked upon as her special city, and as she has a palace here where she passes the greater part of the year, she has the opportunity of making herself popular. The Infanta is very charitable, and patronizes many benevolent associations in Seville, besides being always ready to assist any well-authenticated case of distress.

Digitized by Google

But it is time we described "our street," which consisted of houses of a superior calibre to those of the Plaza. They were not only more tasteful as to elevation, but loftier and more substantial. The houses of the Calle de Barcelona are built on the native plan; the outer door, of filagree iron-work, opens into a short, wide passage leading into the *patio* or court, paved with marble, and generally adorned with a central fountain, more or less elaborate in design, surrounded with shrubs and flowers. At night, lamps are gracefully suspended from brackets round the walls: round this *patio* the house is built, often with an arcaded cloister, supported by marble columns, and adorned with marble vases and statues. Our suite of rooms was agreeably situated on the *rez de chaussée*, so that we had not a single stair to mount.

Au premier was the *restaurateur*, to whom we only had recourse when convenient to ourselves; and faithful to our English habits, we stipulated for a supply of hot water twice daily, a requirement which seemed quite incomprehensible to our landlady.

We had a remarkably pretty little damsel to wait upon us; the girl was terribly "untidy"—regard her as a housemaid—but put on an artist's *lorgnon*, and she was sweetly picturesque and charming: so subjective are all things! There was a grace, an artlessness, and a simplicity about her which no training or education would have imparted; it was Nature's self in one of her most attractive moods—and yet how more than simple was this child's attire; she wore a *saya* of coarse black serge, very long (for popular prejudice forbids the Sevillana to show her little feet), and utterly guiltless of that horrible conical steel armour into which our modern *belles* embell (without thereby embellishing) themselves: the upper part of her supple little figure was enveloped in a loose shawl-shaped drapery of striped Oriental-looking material, crossed over the breast, and

Digitized by Google

loosely tied behind, or beside, or anywhere where the knot chose to adjust itself, so that the rounded arms remained visible to show their dimpled and taper form; above this came the sweet little arch and innocent face, bright from its clear red and white complexion, and sleepy from its long, almond-shaped, black velvety eyes, with their long, sweeping, silken lashes.

When she opened her coral lips, it was the evenness of those small transparent teeth that gave the infantine expression to the whole countenance; and her soft raven-black hair, falling in its own natural coils, seemed caught up on the left side by the hand of one of the Graces, and held there by the fragrant white rose which, morning, noon, or night, held its own proper station behind the delicate little ear.

It was a curious costume for a housemaid, we admit, and one which, however delightful to the eye, we certainly should object to in our own establishment in London. We express this opinion here, in order to qualify any impression to the contrary which might invade the vain and indiscriminating notions of Sarah or Betty when she peruses these pages "some wet afternoon" in the 'all; at the same time we must add that, in Seville, we did *not* take any exception to Mariquilla's appearance; in fact, we liked to look at the fairy-like little creature, and were glad whenever she came into the room; but we did *not* at all like to find she was the drudge of the house—the willing Cinderella and maid of all work, who waited on all the lodgers, and sat up washing her mistress's and the children's clothes, singing over her hard work, after all the house was in bed, until the white rose drooped and faded over the steam of the soapsuds. That same white rose occasioned us a tolerably disagreeable alarm one night. "*Nox erat;*" we were within our alcove; the brass lamp was extinguished, and we were in the act "de nous mettre dans le portefeuille," when suddenly we felt beneath our *pied*

Digitized by Google

déchaussé something at once substantial, chill, and damp, and of course we fancied it moved! A cold shudder of momentary duration might be excused to the least imaginative, in a land where even scorpions have been known to lurk under beds. What could it be! We withdrew in horror from the contact, and hastily kindling a match, discovered on the matting, to our great relief, poor little Mariquilla's harmless white rose, which—though *she* was still fresh and smiling—had wearied of hanging on its stem, and of taking part in the uncongenial household drudgery in which she was condemned to consume her young life.

The first service we requested of Mariquilla was that she would give us wherewithal to dry and warm ourselves; for—take it all in all—the weather seems pretty much the same all the world over; but we had not expected we should need a fire in sunny Seville. Oh, what a treacherous world this is! and how are we to give credit to travellers' tales? Fireplace, of course, there was none. This constitutes a chapter in domestic economy unknown to the *penates* of the Peninsula,—no blazing hearth have they, round which to gather on the chill winter's night. They know not the mysterious power of that domestic magnet which draws the whole family circle, from grandsire to grandchild inclusive, within one small concentrated focus of sympathy, and unites, in one common bond of unity, the affection of three generations.

Here the *brasero* is the only recognized fireside; and it is, in the eyes of an Englishman, a sorry substitute for all that his own implies; it seems to acknowledge the necessity of a family centre, but it does not realize it. The warm glow, the cheerful crackle, and the bright blaze, which flickers its welcoming recognition to every well-known object in the room, not forgetting the remotest triglyph of the cornice, are all wanting; the dull, smouldering ashes,

Digitized by Google

—often of nothing more substantial than vine-twigs and chopped straw—is the melancholy exchange for all this. The *brasero* is neither more nor less than a flat brazen pan, shaped like a colossal soup-plate, and, including the edge, about two feet in diameter; this brazen pan fits into a circular mahogany frame six or seven inches wide, and raised on castors, so that it can be wheeled from one part of the room to the other; when quiescent, the pale and smouldering ashes it contains, are covered with a domed wire lid; and when the inmates of the room sit and gossip over this wretched apology for a fire, one of the company amuses himself or herself by stirring the embers listlessly about with a small shovel, or by fanning them with the leaves of the palmito. The only method by which to make the *brasero* really available is to place it under the table (when the legs of that piece of furniture are such as to admit of it), and to confine the warm air by means of the long green baize cover, with which it is generally provided for this purpose; the results, however, are very unsatisfactory, and the air of the room is always more or less vitiated by the products of combustion, which escape as they can, for there are no direct means provided for carrying them off. In some of the best houses, where there are fireplaces—*chémeneas Francesas*—olive-wood is employed, and it gives a bright cheerful blaze. It seems an unpardonable extravagance to burn this beautifully grained wood, but it is so abundant that this becomes its natural fate.

The morning after our arrival brought with it, as the French say, a "*changement de décoration:*" a bright blue sky was above us, and the sun shone benignly down, making Sevilla look like herself. We were in better humour with her to-day, and began to detect a justification of the description drawn of her by a popular Andalusian writer,—

Digitized by Google

"Joyous as a village maiden, Dignified as a queen,
Beauteous as a young bride, Meditative and graceful as an Andalusian,
Experienced as a matron, Chaste as a Castilian."

We were stirring early, and having been well satisfied with our dinner yesterday, established our *comedor* at the "Café Suizo," in the Limones, just at the extremity of the Sierpes, the fashionable shop-street of Sevilla. It is a curious street, paved with flags from one side to the other, and forming a gay promenade for the young "*à la modes*," who parade there every evening, showing off their finery and eyeing those they meet. Sometimes the Sierpes is so crowded it is difficult to get along. There are neat little shops on either side; and such as they are, they are the best in Seville, where the nature of shops is to follow the Oriental bazaar type, and carry on their dealings without the shop-front: when lighted, therefore, this street is attractive enough, and may entangle the stranger in its "windings bright and mazy, like the snake," whose name it bears.

At the "Suizo," then we generally breakfasted and dined, and found everything done decently and in order, and only regretted that the Madrid speculators should not have thought it worth their while to establish their *cafés* and *restaurants* on a similar principle of comfort, cleanliness, and economy.

Attached to the *restaurant* was a capital pastrycook's shop, where the varieties of delicate little compounds spoke well for the fertility of imagination of the Sevillan confectioners; they exceeded those of a Paris *pâtisserie*, or an Italian "*pasticceria*," and all had a particularly tempting exterior. All these various specimens of culinary ingenuity were *à prix fixe, cuatro quartos*, or a penny, being the price of the most elaborately finished delicacies. At Madrid, on the other hand, eatables of all kinds are very dear, and most meagre in variety. The cooking in

Digitized by Google

Seville was very tolerable, and far cleaner and more *soigné* than any we had hitherto encountered. It is true the *chef* does all his work with a cigar in his mouth, and even the *mozos* scarcely remove theirs while they wait upon the guests; but this is a "*cosa d'España*," and is equally indulged in by Sevillanos and Matritenses.

A Sevillan *parquet*, with its handsome marble *marqueterie*, bright and transparent, and polished so as to reflect every object that stands upon it, is a refreshing sight after the indescribably unclean and begrimed floors of the more northern provinces. The Sevillans take a just pride in their marble flags and their tesselated pavements, and although there is not less smoking than in Madrid, the different condition of the floors is very striking, and is a test of superior refinement which we record with satisfaction.

Talbot Dillon gives so characteristic a description of his reception at Seville, that we cannot resist transcribing it here:—"On our arrival in the capital of Andalusia," he says, "we found the bishop there, to whom I was presented, when he desired I would make the house my own, as both it and the gardens were at my service. And here I must observe that this is a common Spanish compliment; for if a Spaniard's sword, watch, ring, or anything else belonging to him, be praised, he immediately offers it with warmth, though nothing would disappoint him more than to accept of it." The "Bantam Ambassador," of Spectatorial memory, would find food for astonishment among this *poetical* people. Notwithstanding these remains of Orientalism, there is something very respectable in the Andalusian character; it has a bright and happy surface, which is justified by the virtues which form its basis.

The national code of honour has been thus detailed by one of their popular writers:—"Ese codigo hace que el

Digitized by Google

que es ingrato se le llame mal nacido." If a man be ungrateful, the people say of him, he is as one whose father is unknown.

If he be perjured, they mark him as "infamous," as with an iron brand.

If he deceive a woman, they point at him the finger of scorn, and cry, "Villain!"

If he abandon his parents in old age, they spit in his face.

Among the country people, the habits of life are simple and their morals very pure. The virtues of the village women have formed the theme of eulogium among social writers. They describe the "mujeres del pueblo sencillo catolico, Español—corazones delectos, minas de amores puros y santos modelos de esposas y de madres!"—"The village women of the single-minded catholic Spaniards have exceptional hearts; they are mines of love, pure and holy models of wives and mothers."

It is the wife who is always the depository of the family funds, from whatever source. The Andalusians are benevolent, hospitable, and charitable. Alms they call "*La bolsa de Dios*," the purse of God; they also entertain a respect and veneration for age, which is often a charming characteristic of a simple, unsophisticated people. They address any old person (though reduced to pauperism and become a *pordiosera*, as beggars expressively term themselves) as "*tio*," or "*tia*,"—answering to our "gaffer" and "gammer," corrupted from grandfather and grandmother; and if he approach their dwellings at the hour of a meal, they ask him to sit at table with them and "*echar la benedicion*"—say grace for them.

Among their simple customs is that of the village children, who go out on Midsummer eve to collect field flowers, with which they make a decoction to bathe their faces,

Digitized by Google

not as our maidens use the May-dew, "*para estar bonitas*," but "*para estar sanas, todo el año.*"

The Andalusians were formerly remarkable for their piety, the traditions of which still live among them. Up to the end of the last century, theatres were forbidden in Sevilla, and the number of little images and altars placed in niches at the corners of streets, and on the walls of houses, was so great, that the town required no other lighting than the votive lamps that burnt before them.

Very few of these survive to the present day, but of the prospects of religion in the Peninsula, a modern Spanish author writes thus:—"The tide has, however, now turned: at the present day there are numbers of men, and especially young men, who constitute among themselves what may be called an aristocracy of religion and virtue, giving promise that the day is not far distant when the cynicism of vice will fall under the contempt and ridicule which is already the lot of the old cynicism of infidelity."

Of the practical virtues of honesty, sobriety, and cleanliness, we found very obvious evidences in Sevilla itself; and in the course of walks, rides and excursions into the rural neighbourhoods, we observed them in a still greater degree. The cleanliness in some of the poorer suburban houses, and in the clusters of very humble cottages forming little villages of a very primitive character, is quite Dutch in its perfection, and gave us a favourable idea of the bright, happy Andalusian race, among whom we had come. Our readers will perceive that we have as yet only established ourselves in Sevilla, where we hope to sojourn for some time. Seville, with its present treasures of antiquity, and the past associations with which they are connected, deserves almost a volume to itself. It becomes an episode and a chapter in the life of him who visits it. As we stroll along

Digitized by Google

the streets of this unique and enchanting city, once one of the proud capitals of Spain, and obtain suggestive glimpses of its domestic history, through the mysterious *grillages* which alone afford any access to its dwellings, we meditate with poetical interest on the sunny memories of Oriental traditions which they recall; while imagination revels in the possible actualities of life going on at this hour, beyond those silent, marble-paved *patios*, cooled by the trickling of fountains, and perfumed with tropical flowers. They might give entrance to the bower of a Peri, to the harem of a Sybarite, or the palace of a Fairy Queen, so utterly disconnected do they seem from the prosaic routine of contemporary life. We know not whose are the magic hands which plant the brilliant flowers, nor the tasteful fingers which twine the graceful creepers round the columns of porphyry and jasper; we pass by at night and behold these attractive interiors mysteriously lighted by hanging lamps of silver, whose light borrows a rosy reflex from the glass vessels in which they burn, but we never see the form of mortal man or woman loitering about their precincts, and we people the beautiful halls that we imagine within, from among the charmed visions conjured up in our minds by the pages of "Lalla Rookh" or the fairy tales of the "Arabian Nights."

From these attractive reveries, we turn to the characteristic Plaza de Toros, the museums of native treasures of art and antiquity, the gilded spires, the Moorish palaces, and scented orange groves, which invite us to bask within their sunny mazes; we wander on to the Prado, and there we see modern Sevillan life, but how different from modern life elsewhere! and then again we find our way through the old, antiquated gateway, and beyond the sturdy old stone walls, and we meet with new and yet quainter pictures of

Digitized by Google

life of another sort, in the suburban hamlets and rural *pueblos*.

Of all this, and our journeyings homeward through the active Spanish population of the Southern and Eastern provinces, exhibiting an entirely different phase of the Spanish character, we propose to treat in another volume.

END OF VOL. II.

J. AND W. RIDER, PRINTERS, LONDON.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

This book is under no circumstances to be taken from the Building

Form 419

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google