

every hat in the presence of such unmistakable tokens of royalty.

One of the characters in "Contarini Fleming," the hero's stepmother, has great respect for furniture. The Spaniards entertain the same feeling towards carriages; and as we travelled from Irun to Madrid in the lumbering old Coquette, a vehicle that exhibited a good many Peninsular peculiarities of construction, bows seemed to come by instinct from almost every wayfarer we passed.

As soon as Lord Portarlington had left his name at the English Embassy, an invitation to dinner for the same evening was sent immediately, in which I was kindly included, Sir Andrew Buchanan being at the moment so much engaged with urgent business, that he could not call till next day. Feeling unwell, I did not avail myself of Lady Buchanan's kindness, but enjoyed afterwards the pleasure of joining her party twice, spending each time a very agreeable evening. Indeed, most of our enjoyment while at Madrid was owing to the great kindness received at the Embassy, where the national hospitality is maintained with as much refinement, as liberality, in the midst of a society, where dinner-giving is unknown. It

is a real satisfaction to an Englishman, to observe how much his country's representative is respected, among a people by no means disposed to regard foreigners with too favourable an eye.

One of the evenings we dined at the Embassy, Don P. Gayangos, the author of "Mahommedan Dynasties in Spain," and, to use the words of Ford, "the first Hispano-Arabic scholar of his day," was of the party.

When, for the first time, I went *up* to the *table d'hôte* (for, contrary to the wont of any other hotel I was ever in, the *salle-à-manger* of the Peninsulares is at the very top of the house), I found eight or ten compatriots at table. Next to one of these, a fine, well-grown specimen of the true Englishman, of frank simple manners, and open countenance, I had a place assigned me. Judging from his moustache and beard, I set him down as an officer from Gibraltar. He turned out, however, to be a clergyman, of the name of Southwell, and had acquired those soldierly appendages in the Crimea, where he served as an Army-Chaplain. He and I soon struck up an acquaintance, and we saw a good deal of him, both at Madrid, and afterwards at Seville; for he was one of those kindly, warm-

hearted natures, so peculiarly attractive among strangers; and when we parted for the second time, it was in the hope of meeting him once more at Gibraltar, where he purposed going before he sailed from Cadiz for the Havannah. From some cause, however, we never saw him again, and the other day, greatly shocked were we to hear, that while on a tour in Canada, he was thrown from his horse, and killed on the spot, in the very prime, and flower of his age. He had travelled much, both in Europe and in the East, and his genial disposition seemed to have won friends wherever he went. He gave promise of eventually settling down into a very useful country clergyman.

I never look back to that dinner, without melancholy feelings, as another of the merry party, with whom I spent so agreeable an hour, and he one of the youngest and most animated of the company, a Mr. Blakeway, who resided permanently at Madrid, has long been numbered with the dead, having fallen a victim to one of those deadly fevers, so common to that climate, in the course of last winter.

Indeed, even during our short stay of ten days, we had a fatal proof of the extreme unhealthiness of Madrid, in the death from typhus of a young

Englishman, named Waring. He was an engineer of considerable distinction and more promise, and had gone there on business connected with some of the railways in progress. There being at the time no Chaplain attached to the Embassy (a deficiency that I understand has since been supplied, chiefly by the liberality, and exertions of Sir Andrew Buchanan), I was requested to officiate at his funeral. It took place at the English Cemetery, which Lord Howden had so much difficulty in securing for the use of our countrymen. It is still unconsecrated, nor is there, I fear, much probability that Spanish intolerance will grant to the reverential feelings of Englishmen, a boon they would grieve to have denied to themselves. It is, however, properly enclosed with a high wall, and the authorities (especially our Consul, Mr. Brackenbury) take great pains to have everything about it kept up with scrupulous care.

The first portion of the Burial Service was celebrated in a vaulted room within the gateway (which a trivial outlay would soon convert into a very tolerable substitute for a cemetery chapel), and, as the glorious words of St. Paul fell on the ear, like the notes of a trumpet, the bonds of a common religion, and country, seemed to come

home with peculiar force, while I remarked the presence of several persons (Sir Charles and Lady Eastlake among the number) totally unconnected with the deceased, except by the ties of Christian brotherhood in the Church of England, who, in spite of rain and storm, had come that day to express their sympathy with his sorrowing relations, and whose demeanour gave proof, that, go where one may, there are still to be found tender, loving hearts, which can weep for them that weep, even though they be utter strangers, and "from their own, have learnt to melt at others' woe."

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA



JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

CHAPTER X.

OUR first enterprise, in the way of sight-seeing, was a visit to the magnificent Museo, the finest picture-gallery in the world, which is said to contain a larger number of good paintings, and a smaller proportion of indifferent ones, than any in existence. As far as regards the convenience of strangers, nothing can be better managed, and every day, and all day through, the massive portals of the Museo open to your touch, without the intervention of a silver key, and, once in, you find a number of most civil attendants, who appear to take a pride in making your visit as agreeable as possible.

No gallery can be better adapted for the quiet study of pictures; and as you wander through those spacious, shady rooms, far away from the din of the town, you not only feel yourself to be in the presence of some of the noblest works of Art in the world, but to have besides everything you require for the thorough enjoyment of them.

Your sole difficulty arises from the overpowering array of beauty meeting the eye on every side, which makes selection impossible, until the first burst of excitement has somewhat subsided.

It has often been remarked, how vividly the grandeur of Nature, as it is revealed in some of her sublimest scenes, brings home the sense of man's insignificance. But there is no situation where I so keenly realize my own limited powers of observation, as when brought face to face, for the first time, with such a multitude of master-works, as are contained within the walls of some great picture-gallery. I long to have every faculty multiplied tenfold, so as to possess in some adequate measure the capacity for apprehending, and mastering, the myriad impressions produced by contact with those glorious emanations of genius; and as one idea crowds upon another, and image chases image in rapid succession through the mind, I wander about in helpless despair, feeling as if "Chaos were come again," and had taken entire possession of my poor brain.

Let not that worthy individual, the reader, to whom so much deference is justly due, imagine for a moment, that in making the following observations on some of the contents of the

Museo, I am going to be guilty of such unpardonable presumption, as to attempt anything like a catalogue of its treasures, an undertaking none but a Ruskin could safely venture upon. I crave no more than the permission accorded to every traveller, simply to put down what I saw, and the impression left on my memory by the few paintings I had time to examine.

Our first visit was devoted to the room on the right hand as you enter, which may be truly called a National Gallery, as it contains none but Spanish paintings, by Velasquez, Murillo, Ribera, Joanes, Zurburan, and others: Velasquez, however, is the glory of this saloon, and here he may be seen in every phase of Art—portraits, landscapes, historical subjects, animals, and even the lowest scenes of common life—and in all he seems equally at home. His religious subjects are considered the least effective, and Ford, in his charming *Life of Velasquez*, published in the "Penny Cyclopædia," is daring enough to say that his sacred subjects are holy only in name. Yet one of his works in this room, a "Crucifixion," marked 51, appears to me to be absolutely perfect.

Boldly relieved against a sky of deepest gloom, our Lord's figure stands out in solitary sublimity,

His face partially concealed by long tresses of dishevelled hair, falling upon it like a veil; and the mind, undistracted by the presence of any other object, is absorbed in awe-struck contemplation of the greatest event man's eye ever beheld. An indescribable air of desolation pervades the whole picture, as if it were intended to represent that moment of unknown agony, when our Saviour cried out, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"—while the perfect simplicity of its composition, gives it far more reality and grandeur, than if the canvas were encumbered with a number of figures: it is indeed the Son of Man treading the wine-press alone.

This room contains some of Velasquez's finest portraits, among which 299 and 303 stand pre-eminent, representing Philip IV. and his Queen, Isabella, on horseback, in which the king's stately war-horse, and his wife's high-bred jennet, together with the countenances, figures, and costumes of the royal pair, and a charming background to the King's portrait, are painted with as much freedom and grace, as if such perfection of Art were the easiest thing in the world, and you could do it yourself, if you set about it. Indeed, this is one of the most remarkable

characteristics of Velasquez, that he seems to have done everything with as much facility, as if the skill of a master came to him, like Dogberry's reading and writing, by nature, and he had been born a painter.

If you wish to understand the decline and fall of Spain, go and study its portraits, which, bridging the space of two centuries, set you down face to face with Kings and Queens, Infantes and Infantas, so that you see Spanish royalty in all its childishness and imbecility, exactly as he saw them; and you will soon cease to wonder how it came to pass, that "the first of nations" has so utterly lost her pride of place, as now, in the year 1860, to be obliged *to beg* for admission, as a first-rate Power, into the councils of European statesmanship.

Each countenance wears that peculiar expression, so noticeable in a good portrait, which convinces you, even when you do not happen to be acquainted with the features of the original, that you have before you a veritable likeness.

Some of the Kings and Infantes appear in their shooting dress, and the dogs at their side are painted as by one who knew, and appreciated, the nobleness of their nature.

Dwarfs, so much in fashion at the Spanish

Court in those days, have on his canvas, to a startling extent, the malevolent, elvish expression peculiar to such deformed creatures; and as, with instinctive repugnance, you avert your eyes from their repulsive figures, you feel almost afraid of exciting their enmity by the action, so painfully real and life-like do they appear.

But perhaps the predominating impression, created by the portraits of Velasquez, where the subject is worthy of him, is, that no master ever appreciated more keenly, the innate dignity of man, apart from mere position and conventional circumstances. Let Vandyck be the limner of princes and nobles, let Titian portray the lineaments of genius and intellect: Velasquez is still the painter of man as he stands forth in his true character—the noblest work of God.

In the same room are multitudes of pictures by other masters, most of which we had not time to look at, though well deserving a careful study. One of the most remarkable is No. 16, "Jacob's Dream," by Ribera (Spagnoletto), a work of marvellous power, and naturalness, though Jacob is a mere clownish peasant in the garb of a monk, nor does his heavy, coarse countenance exhibit the slightest indication of the rapturous feeling that would be kindled by the glories of such a vision.

At the further end of the room, to your left on entering, a Magdalen caught my attention immediately, as a picture of rare expressiveness, and I returned to it again and again, with ever-increasing pleasure. It is labelled as of the school of Murillo, but I cannot now recollect its number. I never saw such a delineation of intense, overwhelming sorrow, which absorbs the whole being of the penitent, and renders her totally unconscious of all else; as if in the whole universe there existed but two objects of thought—her own sin, and the Saviour's love.

Our next and subsequent visits were devoted with almost equal exclusiveness to another portion of the Museo, the room opening on the left side of the great central gallery, which is called, if I mistake not, the Queen's Cabinet. This room possesses more general interest, than the former, as it contains masterpieces of nearly every school. Here the eye lights at once on the finest equestrian portrait in the world, Titian's Charles V. It is indeed a superb picture, and Charles, with his grave, thoughtful face, and firm, easy seat, rides forth, lance in hand, like some Paladin of old, in quest of knightly adventure, and looks every inch a King. You never think of Art, or painter, while gazing at this marvel. You have the very

man before your eyes, and if he moves not, it is because for the moment he stands spell-bound, awaiting your pleasure.

Near it is Velasquez's reputed masterpiece, No. 155, called "Las Meninas" (the Female Pages). To those, who are conversant with the mechanical difficulties of painting, it must be an endless delight to study such a triumph of art, which a non-professional eye cannot sufficiently estimate. But the subject is so disagreeable, that I found my attention continually drawn away by the fascinations of the neighbour-picture, of which I have just spoken.

Velasquez has here painted himself in his studio, on the point of taking the portrait of the Infanta Margarita, the central figure, while her two ladies, *Las Meninas*, are doing their best to coax the little body, a girl about twelve, fair and inanimate as a wax doll, into good-humour, a task of no small difficulty, to judge from the ill-conditioned peevishness of her countenance. On her left, two dwarfs, male and female, are teasing a noble mastiff lying on the floor, who, thoroughly worried, and disgusted by their impertinence, is yet evidently determined not to be put out of temper by such caricatures of humanity, though you expect every moment to

hear his muttered growl of indignation. On the other side of the Infanta, withdrawn a little from the foreground, stands Velasquez himself, brush and pallet in hand, waiting with dignified patience, and gravity, for the desired expression, while in the background a door opens upon a landscape, to let out a retiring figure. It makes you sad to see two such natures, each, man and dog, so noble of his kind, at the mercy of beings so infinitely beneath them, as the spoilt child of royalty, and those misshapen butts of a silly court. You feel that Art is degraded, when one of her greatest masters is condemned to such a task; and yet out of those unpromising materials, the genius of Velasquez has wrought one of its most lasting monuments. For this picture has been called "La Teologia," the Gospel of Art; and our own Wilkie declared, that its power amounts almost to inspiration.

On the further side of Charles V., hangs another of Velasquez's portraits, with a background of exquisite freshness and beauty, Don Balthasar, a boy on a pony, sitting as if he were glued to the saddle, and galloping bodily out of the canvas.

Just opposite, on the other side of the room, is 319, another grand work, which to me was

the most interesting of all his historical subjects. It represents the capitulation of Breda, in June, 1625, after a siege of ten months. Spinola, the Spanish commander-in-chief, with his refined Italian face, and high-bred, elegant figure, occupies the centre of the picture, and as he receives the keys of the town from the governor, it is quite charming to observe the almost feminine expression of respect, and sympathy, with which he meets his gallant antagonist, taking away all the humiliation, and most of the pain, of being obliged to surrender to so generous a foe. Right in the fore-ground, on one side, bristles a whole forest of lances (from which the picture derives its name of "Las Lanzas"), an audacity of Art few could have ventured upon, but producing, by the magic of Velasquez's handling, a rare, and striking effect.

The gallery teems with magnificent portraits, some few of which I could mention. No. 1515, is marked in Ford as Rubens's portrait of Sir Thomas More, which must have been copied from some earlier likeness, as Henry VIII.'s great Chancellor had been beheaded more than forty years before Rubens was born.

No. 992, by Albert Durer, seems absolutely on the point of speaking, while another (972,) by

the same, inscribed with his signature, represents the painter himself, with a lovely bit of landscape, gleaming through an open window in the background. 905, Raphael's "Cardinal Julio de Medici," brings before you a master-mind, the *beau idéal* of an Italian Churchman. No. 1446, is a portrait of our Queen Mary, by Antonio More, a most forbidding, peevish countenance, admirably painted; 734, a young Italian, by Bronzino, pensive, and full of expression; while 765, and 769, are Titian's portraits of Charles V., with his Irish wolf-hound, and of Philip II. when young, clothed in a suit of armour, which is still preserved in the Armeria Real.

Some of these hang in the great central saloon.

The Queen's Cabinet contains several interesting works by the early Flemish masters, the Van Eycks, Hans Hemling, &c. Among them I particularly noticed a triptych, by Hemling, the "Adoration of the Magi," in which a quaint little market-place, half unthatched, shelters the Infant Saviour, the two folding panels containing a "Nativity," and a "Presentation in the Temple." The colouring is gorgeous, and the finish equals that of a miniature.

Another "Adoration" by the same hand, No. 467, is treated in a much plainer manner, as if the three Kings had gone to worship our Lord, in their every-day dress, while the colouring is more sober, and subdued.

I remarked also a series of subjects, catalogued as belonging to the German school of the fifteenth century, extremely beautiful, illustrating religious Art in its earlier, and more reverent days.

The Annunciation comes first. When the Archangel appears, the Virgin is on her knees in a Gothic oratory. The countenance of each forms quite a study, exhibiting that elevated heavenly expression so rarely observed, except in the older masters; while, with a touch of that almost comic quaintness peculiar to the art of that age, Gabriel's wings glisten with the motley splendour of a peacock's plumage. In each of the four paintings the foreground is framed-in with a pointed arch of great elegance, and the subject withdrawn with excellent effect into the recess thus formed.

The second represents the meeting of the Virgin and Elizabeth, with a German medieval house, and pretty landscape.

In the third appear Angels, with the Virgin, and Joseph, adoring our Lord, Who is painted as

the most diminutive infant imaginable, (by way perhaps of realizing more vividly His humiliation in taking upon Him our nature,) and on a hill in the blue distance stands Jerusalem. In the fourth, and last of the series, the Adoration takes place under a shed, in shape like a lych-gate. I found these paintings full of interest, not merely on account of their extreme beauty, and the reverential spirit with which the subjects are treated, but from the introduction of so many details of Gothic architecture, a feature very rarely to be noticed in the compositions of later masters, when the Renaissance style had become almost universal.

In the same room (the Queen's Cabinet), there is a most curious painting from the Escorial collection by Patenier (a master I had never heard of before), the "Temptation of St. Anthony." The Saint is on his knees, surrounded by demons in every form, each more grotesque and hideous than his fellow, from which you turn with pleasure to an exquisite background suffused by a strange, and almost ghastly tinge of green — a landscape taken from Dream-land, exhibiting one of those enchanting scenes of idealized beauty, which the early painters delighted to depict.

On the other side of the doorway are two hunting pieces, 1006, 1020, by Lucas Cranach, one of which represents a herd of deer being driven into a lake, where they are slaughtered wholesale by the cross-bows of sportsmen posted on the banks. The figures, countenances, costumes, buildings, and other details are all German, and the two pictures exhibit a disregard of perspective, that makes one quite uncomfortable, as you feel afraid the whole scene, lake, sportsmen, and game, is on the very point of slipping down bodily, to descend like an avalanche on your toes.

In an Englishman's mind, however, that magnificent collection awakens some very painful thoughts, as several of its choicest treasures once belonged to Charles I., and were sold after his death by the Puritans. Ford states, that Philip IV. bought so largely at the sale through his ambassadors, that eighteen mules were required to transport the purchases, when landed in Spain. One of them, the famous "Perla" of Raphael, a Madonna and Child, alone cost £2000, a very large sum to be paid for a picture in those days. It is said to be much damaged by cleaning, both at Paris and Madrid; but to my mind it still appears a masterpiece. The

Virgin's face is full of such tender sweetness, and maidenly modesty, while the background is one of those landscapes of deepest blue, with which Perugino, and painters of his date, loved to invest their imaginings of the heavenly Jerusalem.

Close to it hangs 741, another by Raphael, "La Virgen del Pez," Tobit presenting a fish to the Virgin. This is probably an earlier work, as its style is more severe, while the countenance of the Virgin wears an expression almost of sternness, and her figure exhibits the lofty dignity of a matron, rather than the flexible grace of a maiden. Many prefer this to the "Perla," over which it possesses the undoubted advantage of having suffered less from the barbarism of picture-cleaners.

A third of Raphael's great paintings, 784, called "El Pasmo de Sicilia," from having been painted for a Church in Sicily, stands at the upper end of the Queen's Cabinet. It represents our Lord, Who is bearing His Cross, as having sunk exhausted on the ground, while the Virgin and three other women kneel beside Him, Veronica being in the background. Priests, and officers, follow on horseback, while foremost in the procession come soldiers, one of whom is in

the act of striking our Lord with a scourge. Calvary with its three crosses, and groups of spectators, rises in the distance. I was most pleased with the figure of Veronica, whose countenance expresses sympathy, and reverential pity, too deep for utterance.

This painting, too, has undergone cruel treatment from the picture-cleaners, who seem at Madrid to carry on their work of destruction on a fearful scale.

I will conclude this hasty notice of some few of the Museo's treasures (for several of its rooms; filled with gems of Art from almost every continental master, I had not time even to enter), with 229, a "Conception" of Murillo's, the most beautiful, I thought, of all his paintings I saw anywhere in Spain. The Virgin's face is radiant with a look of perfect innocence and purity, mingled with childlike wonderment at the unspeakable honour vouchsafed her; and the figure, while it has sufficient firmness, and substance to represent humanity, has yet marvellous lightness and buoyancy, as if she scarcely pressed the wreaths of cloud floating under her feet.

CHAPTER XI.

WHILE we were at Madrid, a bull-fight took place, the eighteenth, and last of the season. Though feeling the greatest repugnance to witness such a spectacle, I went nevertheless; and in spite of many revolting incidents, that made me heartily glad when it was over, I do not altogether regret to have been present, as the sight has enabled me to understand some points in the national character, which would otherwise have been quite unintelligible.

It came off on Monday, the 17th of October; this day of the week being most in fashion at Madrid; whereas, in the provinces, those exhibitions, so utterly unbecoming a Christian people, take place on the day, which above all others is associated in an Englishman's mind with everything that is sacred and peaceful. What is still more singular, religion has taken under her

especial patronage the national sport of Spain, and in that very arena, which more vividly than any other place of modern amusement recalls the bloody Roman circus, and the slaughter of the early Christians, the Spanish Church erects her altars, and celebrates the highest mystery of the Catholic faith. It will be thought almost incredible, being all the time only too true, that a chapel forms one of the various offices attached to a bull-ring, and whenever a bull-fight takes place, there mass is regularly said, and attended by all the performers; while a priest is at hand during its continuance, to administer the last rites of the Romish communion in case of any serious casualty. The chapel belonging to the Plaza de Toros at Madrid, which we visited the morning before the bull-fight, actually stands in the stable-yard, a strange situation for such a building.

No one, I suppose, would ever think of instituting a comparison between the bull-ring, and the stage. Many persons, whose judgment is entitled to the highest consideration, have thought a good play, well performed, calculated to produce a direct moral effect on the spectator; while the most enthusiastic votary of the bull-ring would hardly venture to say as much in

behalf of his favourite amusement. But the Church of Rome, while she excommunicates actors simply as such, *ex officio* in fact, without the least reference to their private character, is inconsistent enough to sanction, in this marked manner, and with the most solemn act of her worship, the spectacle of a bull-fight.

One of Shakspeare's most charming characters, Rosalind, propounds a theory, that lovers do not meet with the treatment they deserve—"a dark house, and a whip, as madmen"—simply because the lunacy is universal. Does the Church of Rome in Spain extend her sanction to that brutalizing exhibition for the same reason—the universality of the passion for bull-fighting among all classes in the Peninsula, high and low, secular and clerical? Has she compromised her mission as a Church—to humanize and soften the rugged nature of man—out of worldly wisdom, knowing that the Spaniards would have their beloved sport at all cost; and, for the preservation of her temporal influence, does she sacrifice her essential principles, as the professed representative of Him, whose mercy is over all His works?

This, however, is not all. According to Ford, who is anything but a bigoted Protestant, she

turns the national pastime to her own ends. In his "Gatherings from Spain," p. 287, he thus writes:—"In Spain, the Church of Rome, never indifferent to its interests, instantly marshalled into its own service a ceremonial at once profitable, and popular; it consecrated butchery by wedding it to the altar, availing itself of this gentle handmaid, to obtain funds in order to raise convents. Even in the last century, Papal bulls were granted to mendicant orders, authorizing them to celebrate a certain number of Fiestas de Toros, on condition of devoting the profit to finishing their Church; and in order to swell the receipts at the doors, spiritual indulgences, and releases from purgatory (the number of years being apportioned to the relative prices of the seats), were added as a bonus to all that was paid for places at a spectacle hallowed by a pious object."

Imagine our venerable Primate, his Grace of York, and the other Bishops of the Church of England, advertising, under their distinguished patronage, a set-to between Sayers and the Benicia Boy, for the benefit of the Sons of the Clergy, the Foundling Hospital, or any other charitable institution! Or, to put the case in another point of view, let us fancy the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, renting the

Grand Stand at Epsom on a Derby Day, as a pious speculation, with a view to raising funds for the restoration of the Abbey!

Surely charity-balls, fancy-fairs, and bazaars, and other questionable substitutes (now happily all but exploded) for genuine almsgiving, lose much of their objectionable character, and almost acquire an aspect of religion and virtue, when contrasted, as expedients for wheedling money out of Christian pockets, with the horrors of an eleemosynary bull-fight.

Nothing can prove more incontestably the hold gained over the Spanish mind by the Fiesta de Toros, "The Feast of Bulls" (as the bull-fight is called with grim irony, the poor victims having anything but a festive part to play), than the large sums of money expended upon it in a country, where funds are so much needed for important national objects. Each exhibition costs about £400, and lasts about three hours!

More than twelve performers are required, and as many towns possess a bull-ring, without being able to support a local company, they go about from place to place during the season, a term of five or six months, from Easter to the middle of October.

Readers of "Pickwick" will recollect Sam

Weller's interesting statistics respecting the London piemen, who, according to his account, adapt their comestibles to the time of year, meat-pies being in season at one period, while at another fruit tarts are all the fashion; or, to quote the pithy language of the original statement, "When fruit is in, cats is out."

In Spain the pig and the bull bear a similar relation to each other, the former never dying a legal death between Easter and the Feast of All Saints, during which period the sale of pork is strictly prohibited; while the slaughters of the bull-ring take place only from about Easter to Michaelmas, as the bulls do not fight well in cold weather.

In the forenoon preceding the performance, we went to see the bulls driven into the stalls, where they are kept till they make their first appearance, and their last, before the public. We heard so much about this ceremony, that we naturally expected something of no common interest. It proved, however, almost as tame a business, as driving a dairy of well-conducted English cows to their milking-ground; and were the *encierro*, as this affair of driving the bulls to the Plaza is called, ever introduced, with appropriate music, among the incidents of an opera, I would humbly suggest that the "Ranz des

Vaches" would be a strain much more "in accordance with the sentiments of the scene," as it appeared to us, than the *torero's* ballad, "Estando toda la Corte," so highly praised by Ford, and rendered into English with so much spirit by Lockhart.

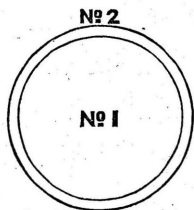
We took the opportunity of inspecting all the arrangements of the Plaza de Toros, which, in addition to the amphitheatre, contains quite an extensive range of buildings, among which we particularly noticed a small infirmary, where "casualty cases" (to adopt the language of Mr. Robert Sawyer) are taken direct from the bull-ring; and in the stables we found sixteen or twenty poor horses, the sweepings of cab-stand, and post-house, destined for that day's slaughter.

But really the most patient of readers will complain (and with justice) of being detained so long on the outside of that "charmed circle," which contains the *summum bonum* of a Spanish mob.

Let us enter then, and as the kindness of a gentleman we met at the Embassy has supplied us with tickets, our entrance will cost us nothing. We received at the same time a printed paper, which, combining in a measure the characteristics of a play-bill, and that peculiarly English document, "a list of all the running horses," gives

not only the names of the performers (who at Madrid, "the Court," are always the foremost men of their craft), but the colour, breeders' names, and birth-place of all the bulls, in the order of their appearance.

Our tickets being first-class, we mount to the upper story, on the shady side of the building, enter a box of the plainest description, and at once find ourselves in a vast circle, face to face with ten thousand human beings, the greater part of whom are "sitters in the sun," the price of places increasing in proportion to their shadiness. The ground-plan of the amphitheatre may be described by two concentric circles, of which the inner one, No. 1, forms the battleground, and is pierced, at intervals, by openings large enough to admit a man sideways, through which the men on foot, when sore pressed and unable to escape in any other way, dart into the outer space, marked No. 2. The actual ring encloses an area of about two acres, covered with the fine white sand, so common in most parts of Spain, and its surface, now so smooth and spotless, will soon be crimsoned by many a stain of blood.



Scarcely have we taken our seats (and uncommonly hard are they) before a flourish of trumpets is heard, the barrier opposite us is withdrawn, and in marches the entire troop of performers (the bull alone excepted)—*picadors*, *chulos*, *banderilleros*, and *matadors*, a team of four handsome mules, gaily caparisoned, and hung with bells, (whose office is to drag out the carcasses of bulls and horses) closing the procession, which forms the prettiest feature of the whole performance.

The appearance of the *picadors*, who alone of all the actors engaged are on horseback, is a ludicrous caricature of the gay, active, well-mounted *caballero* of ancient Spanish knight-hood. By way of protection against the horns of the bull, their legs are encased in a species of leathern overall, stuffed to such a degree, that as they ride in they look exactly like a row of dropsical patients, very much in need of tapping. Nor do their steeds cut a better figure, being the sorriest-looking jades imaginable, as they come limping in with one eye blindfolded, having been relieved from the knackers, only to be butchered in the bull-ring.

There are some ten, or twelve performers on foot, *chulos* and *banderilleros*, and being

all active, well-made men, dressed in the old-fashioned Spanish costume, something like a court-suit, consisting of silken coat, embroidered waistcoat, spangled breeches, and silk stockings, they form a most brilliant, picturesque group, and light up the scene with their flashing colours.

The matador, or *espada* (as it seems now to be the fashion to call him), the performer *par excellence*, who closes each fight by despatching the bull single-handed, is dressed much in the same style, and has his hair gathered like a woman's into a thick mass at the back of his head.

This gay procession, strange precursor of the bloody scenes that follow, having advanced with flourish of trumpets to the centre of the ring, halts, and makes obeisance opposite the box of the president, who, by throwing to an alguazil the key, which admits the bull, gives the signal for the commencement of the performance.

The door, on which twenty thousand eyes are fixed in steadfast gaze, now opens, the bull comes bounding forth towards the centre of the ring, and there, stunned at once by the sudden burst of sunshine, after the darkness in which he has been immured, and the novel scene upon which

he has made so abrupt an entrance, he pauses for an instant transfixed, and glares around in fierce amazement. It is a moment of intensest excitement, but before you fully realize the tumult of emotion compressed into those brief seconds, the bull, breaking the spell that enchained him, has charged one of the chulos full tilt, and presses him so closely that he has barely time to vault over the barrier, a height of at least six feet, which the bull clears after him with an activity, that seems impossible to so large an animal, only to find himself, however, carried back by his own impetuosity into the ring, by one of the side passages provided for such an emergency.

One of the three horsemen, always in the ring, riding forward now plants himself in front of the bull, and couching his lance, armed with a steel point, something like the spike of a boat-hook, aims at the junction of neck and shoulder-blade. The bull, eager to be at somebody, accepts the challenge, and, dashing at the horse with his tremendous horns, pierces him through the heart, and as steed and rider roll over in the dust, a fountain of blood (one of the most horrible sights imaginable), spouting forth, with the force of a jet, two or three feet high into the

air, soon drains out the poor horse's life, and releases him from misery.

The chulos have already darted forward to the rescue of their comrade, and distracting the bull's attention by waving their scarlet flags and cloaks in his face, they extricate the picador as he lies entangled and helpless under his horse; the other horsemen take up the game, placing their horses always so as to cover their own persons; chulos dart here and there, and everywhere, and when, maddened and confounded by so ubiquitous a swarm of foes, the bull singles out any one, and charges home, he finds him as unassailable as a ghost, so perfect is the coolness and self-possession, with which these consummate artists evade the charge, stepping aside with graceful ease at the very moment, when you expect to see them tossed into the air.

In ten minutes two more horses are struggling in their death-agony, while those that are still able to continue the fight, move about half disembowelled, treading on their own entrails, and the sand is covered with many a pool of blood.

The bull, too, now begins to show symptoms of distress, and, with neck and shoulders wounded and gory, he pauses, poor creature! a moment

for breath. One would think such a spectacle had power to move the hardest heart, and that the noble beast having "proved the mettle of his pasture," might be allowed to retire, and enjoy the life his courage had thus redeemed. In all that throng of ten thousand, not a dozen voices would be found to give expression to such a sentiment, and the victim of man's cruelty must furnish to the uttermost his portion of the entertainment, the first act of which has alone been exhibited as yet!

And now the banderilleros, each armed with a pair of the light, gaily-ornamented darts, from which they take their name, come forward, and, with astonishing dexterity, plant in the bull's neck these instruments of torture, to which fireworks are attached, and as they explode one after another, a new ingredient of horror is thrown into the scene; while the poor bull, in the midst of fire and blood, bellows with pain and dismay, and, goaded into fresh efforts, rushes wildly through the ring, without presence of mind, or strength enough left to make a successful charge; till at last, black with sweat, and foaming at the mouth, he stands at bay, with the sullen determination of despair, as if, having at length found out what it all meant, he

was resolved to die like a hero. The crisis has come, and with one of those ruthless cries, that carry back the mind to the butchery of the Roman Circus, and the martyrdom of the early Christians, the matador is called for, and you feel he comes almost upon an errand of mercy, to terminate so horrible a spectacle.

Armed with a bright rapier, a trusty, well-proved weapon of admirable temper, and with a flag in his left hand, he advances towards the president's box, and, bowing, obtains permission to exhibit his skill. Calmly taking his station right before the bull, he waves his crimson streamer across his eyes, an insult which in a moment concentrates every energy of departing life, and as the dying beast lowers his front for a final onset, the flag drops over his head, the death-stab passes through his spine, and, staggering like a drunken man, with streams of blood gushing forth from mouth and nostrils, the vast mass settles down like a sinking ship, and in a few moments all is still. The gaily-caparisoned mules come cantering in, the bull, and the horses he has slain, are dragged out at a gallop, the pools of blood are effaced by basket-loads of fresh sand, and, with a speed unknown

in other Spanish transactions, the ring is cleared for a fresh encounter.

Sometimes the matador is unlucky, or nervous, and, as we saw, does not succeed in giving the *coup de grâce*, until he has made several fruitless attempts. In such a case, no matter how great a favourite he may usually be, loud and angry are the taunting cries, that assail his ears from every quarter of the amphitheatre.

On this occasion, eight bulls, and fifteen or sixteen horses, were killed, and blood enough flowed to satisfy the most truculent Englishman, for the rest of his days. Anything more horrible, and utterly revolting, than the whole spectacle, I cannot conceive, and it seems to me impossible to overrate the brutalizing influence exercised by the bull-ring upon the nation at large. Nor do I wonder, after witnessing such an exhibition, and the frenzy of delight excited by its most shocking incidents, that in Spain even human life is lightly esteemed, among a population, to whom blood-shedding is an amusement, and the murderous use of the knife, on the smallest provocation, has ever been so fearfully common.

The operation of the same influence may be

traced in the domain of Art, where the most painful subjects are delineated with a reality, that leaves nothing to the imagination; and a Figure literally drenched with gore is one of the most customary representations of the suffering Redeemer, when the artist does not possess sufficient refinement to elevate his conception of the subject above the level of the national taste.

In the midst, however, of the horrors, that surrounded us, as we sat that afternoon in the Plaza de Toros, one incident occurred that afforded a momentary relief.

Six bulls had already been killed, and when the door opened for the seventh, he walked in with so pompous a solemnity of manner, worthy of the stateliest alderman in a civic procession, and looked so intensely peaceable, that he was welcomed with screams of laughter from every side. Had he been a deputation from the Peace Society, commissioned to remonstrate against so barbarous and cowardly a sport, he could not have acted his part better. He was a wise bull, the wisest of his race, and gave us all an eminent example of the magic potency of good-humour. A punster would affirm he must have come from the shores of the Pacific, so perfect

was his temper, so indomitable his love of peace.

Many and ingenious were the expedients employed to provoke him to pugnacity, but every one signally failed. Falstaff himself had not a more decided objection to fighting. He had evidently come into the ring, with his mind made up not to break the peace against any of her Majesty's subjects, no matter what provocation and insult were heaped upon him. His demeanour was a living comment on Horace's description of the model citizen, and the words, with one alteration, exactly represent him:—

“*Tenacem propositi bovem*

Non civium ardor prava jubentium,

Non vultus instantis Tyranni,”

(a line that will apply to the President of the day, as he looks down from his stately box on the arena,)

“*Mente quatit solidà.*”

Banderillas were tried in vain, and cracker after cracker exploded without eliciting the smallest spark of combativeness. In Falstaff's phrase, he was “cold-spur” all over; and so hopeless a subject for the ring did he appear, that dogs, auxiliaries frequently called in to rouse an inert, spiritless bull, were not intro-

duced on this occasion. The amphitheatre rose *en masse*, the fierce tumult of man's animal instincts, as they burst forth from that vast crowd, producing a savage grandeur, that made one shudder ; and amid scornful cries of indignation, and a fluttering of handkerchiefs, " thick as leaves in Vallombrosa," demanded another bull.

Such a demand is irresistible ; two oxen are turned into the ring (for without these no bull can be driven), and in their company, to *our* great delight, Don Pacifico disappeared, amid the laughter, and jeers of the audience, to live, let us hope, according to the story-book phrase, " happily ever afterwards," while the unfortunate proxy died in his stead.

It was really the greatest conceivable relief, when the whole affair came to an end, and with very much the same sensations, most people feel on going away from a dentist's at the conclusion of some unpleasant operation, we found ourselves once more in the Calle de Alcalá, nor do I think either of us will ever again take a seat within the enclosure of a bull-ring.

CHAPTER XII.

THE first time Lord Portarlington dined at the Embassy, he met Mr. Christopher Sykes, of Sledmere, who, having made a tour in the northern provinces, was now staying at Madrid, on his way to the South of Spain. As it turned out, on comparing notes, that Mr. Sykes' intended route coincided, in all material respects, with the ideas sketched out, in a somewhat indistinct outline, for our future proceedings, it was soon arranged we should all combine into one party, and travel together as far as Seville. This arrangement, by giving fixity and definitiveness to our plans, was a great advantage to us, as Mr. Sykes, having spent some weeks in the country, had carefully studied the various routes laid down in Ford, and had thus been able to settle what he purposed doing, with more distinctness than was yet possible in our case, amid the conflicting attractions presented

by the pages of that most agreeable author, drawing us simultaneously to every quarter of the compass.

It was therefore decided, that on Saturday, October 22nd, we should, please God, leave Madrid by rail for Toledo, and there commence our riding tour, taking Yuste and Placentia on our way over the Sierra Morena, down to Seville.

Our party would thus consist of six, including Swainson and Mr. Sykes' servant Elfick, with David Purkiss, an Englishman, very highly recommended by Ford, who had lived for some years at Madrid, and was perfectly acquainted with the language, and ways of the country.

From the first I took an interest in Purkiss, partly because he is one, like Dogberry, "that hath had losses;" and partly because he is a descendant of the charcoal-burner of the same name, who carried the body of William Rufus from the New Forest to Winchester, and of whom local tradition reports, that, through all the intervening centuries, a direct heir has never once failed him, while the very same house and land, occupied by him at the time he paid the last act of piety to his Sovereign, is now (or was at least quite recently), in the possession of his family.

I little thought, while conversing on the sub-

ject with some ladies in the train, as we passed through the New Forest on my way to town, that in a short time one of that family would belong to our party, and for so considerable a period have so much to do with our daily wants and comforts. But, as that eminent moralist, Mrs. Gamp, remarks, "Sich is life!" and in travelling it is impossible to conjecture with whom one may come into contact.

Now that our plans had become settled, great preparations for the journey were immediately initiated, more especially in getting up such a costume for the road as would comply with the directions of Ford, who most urgently counsels travellers in Spain to dress like the natives; and while our talk was of Andalusian hats, of *fajas* (sashes for the waist, of silk, or worsted, universally worn by the peasantry) and *zamaras* (jackets of black lambskin), high boots, and buttons of silver filigree, we never went out of our apartment at the Peninsulares, without encountering some bootmaker, or tailor; one of whom, being painfully deaf, used to tax all the patience of the waiter, Alphonse, a good-natured Frenchman from Bourdeaux, while he tried to convince him of the various short-comings of his tailoring, which, like a genuine Spaniard, he

considered absolutely faultless, simply because it was his own.

I alone ventured to disobey Ford's injunctions, though various were the arguments employed in persuading me to adopt some portion, at least, of Spanish clerical costume for my travelling dress, and much ingenuity, and perseverance were expended in recommending the use of the enormous shovel-hat, not much less than a yard from end to end, which crowns the pericranium of a Spanish priest. Feeling, however, that, apart from the weighty consideration of expense, our group would be none the worse, in an artistic point of view, for a little toning down, I was quite satisfied with my ordinary garb, and preferred the freedom and ease of my old battered wide-awake, to the ponderous dignity of a clerical *sombrero*.

Lord Portarlington and Mr. Sykes thought it best to purchase horses at Madrid, not wishing to trust to the contingencies of the road; and for those who can afford it, and have fully made up their minds to use their purchase long enough to work out the price, a period of some two or three months, such a plan is unquestionably the best, because it involves no greater expense,

than the hire of a horse for a journey of that duration.

A mule, however, is on the whole the more serviceable animal; not only on account of his greater powers of endurance, and freedom from ailments, but because, in many of the out-of-the-way districts, the bridle-track is often so narrow, that his smaller hoof finds "ample room and verge enough," for safe action, while the broader foot of a horse, as I afterwards used to remark, will sometimes absolutely stick fast in deep holes, so that he extricates himself with no small difficulty, and occasionally loses a shoe.

Many were the consultations held on the matter of horse-flesh, and kindred subjects, with the coachman at the Embassy, who gave us useful hints for the road, highly necessary in such a country as Spain, where the diet, and general management of horses are so different from what we are accustomed to in England. Being a Yorkshireman, he regarded Mr. Sykes with a deference and respect, it was pleasant to remark, in consequence of his being the son of one standing so high in public estimation, as the venerable Sir Tatton Sykes.

We spent a morning at the Armeria Real, one

of the finest armouries in the world, with poor Mr. Southwell for our cicerone. I never saw anything in the least approaching the variety, and exquisite workmanship of its contents, the only drawback to our enjoyment of them arising (as usual) from the impossibility of doing justice to more than a few objects, during the time we were able to stay there.

The room, being long and narrow, 227 feet by 36, is admirably adapted for its purpose, and the effect, on entering, is most striking, when, after mounting a dark staircase, you emerge into that stately gallery, and find yourself in the presence of those memorials of Spain's prosperous days (when her troops were the best in the world), stretching out before you in long perspective. Around us hung armour of every shape and device, from the plainest suit of the common man-at-arms, up to the profusely-ornamented panoply of noblemen and princes; while lances and spears, swords and pikes, muskets and pistols, gleamed in bright array on every side.

Viewed simply as an accumulation of art-objects (if so newly-coined a phrase may be introduced into the company of so many representatives of antiquity), this collection of warlike plenishing is marvellous; nor can anything pro-

duce a more forcible conviction of the all-pervading influence of Art during the Renaissance period, than the singular fact, that in the very region most hostile (as is supposed) to her very existence—the battle-field—she has achieved some of her most enduring triumphs. The warrior of that day went out to battle, not only protected from many of its dangers, but clothed with apparel of almost imperishable beauty; and Vulcan's craft became again, as in Homeric days, the handmaid of poetry and grace.

If any would fully appreciate the beauty, and refinement of ancient armour, let him lay the headpiece of a modern Guardsman, with its common-place ornamentation, and device, which are worthy of a coppersmith's invention, alongside some helmets of the fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, all rich with exquisite chasing, enamel, damascene-work, and gold, and he will not be long in perceiving the difference between the results of mechanical contract-work, and the creations of living Art.

To the Madrid Armoury, however, an interest of even a higher nature attaches. Those magnificent suits, on which the armourers of Milan, and Germany, exhausted the choicest resources of their skill, are not mere creations of Art,

serving no other purpose than to give proof of her boundless powers. They have all done actual service in the midst

“ of plumed troop, and the big wars,
That make ambition virtue ;”

and were worn, not by nameless soldiers, but by such men of renown, as the Great Captain, Gonsalvo de Cordova, Columbus, Cortez, Charles V., and his son, the victor of Lepanto, whose names are consecrated in history.

The room contained besides a goodly display of banners, many of them won from the Infidel at Granada and Lepanto ; with two or three Union-jacks, taken, we conjectured, from Nelson at Vera Cruz, the sight of which, in the land of Talavera, Salamanca, and Vittoria, made us smile.

We took a turn afterwards through the royal stables, chiefly in the hope of seeing the carriages, which are said to be well worth inspection ; for the series descends in unbroken succession from the earliest date of state-coaches. We did not, however, succeed in our object, it not being the right day.

The stables would give a terrible shock to the notions of an English groom, being kept in a

very slovenly manner, and from their site and defective ventilation, they must be insufferably hot in summer. They contain a large number of fine horses, and mules, with the name of each animal painted over his stall. One of the mules, the most vicious beast in the stud, was marked out for public opprobrium, in this land of the Inquisition, by the title of "Protestant"—a master-stroke of satire, which penetrated us three Englishmen to the very soul. To be compared to a mule at all, is not complimentary to the feelings of "Britishers," with whom these mongrel quadrupeds are no favourites. But to be condemned to a place in the same category with the most vicious of the race was so perfectly annihilating, that, humiliated and crest-fallen, what could we do, but turn away and depart in silence, sadder and wiser men!

After so severe a blow to our religious feelings, who that has the spirit and heart of a Briton, will wonder, that we had no desire left for going through the interior of the royal palace, not knowing what further outrage to our national pride we might meet with there?

To prove, however, that, in spite of such aggravating provocation, we bore no malice, I will just add, that the exterior is imposing,

and the situation admirably adapted for setting it off to every advantage. But in winter it seems more fit to be the palace of an ice-king, than the abode of flesh-and-blood royalty; and so fearfully exposed is it to the blasts sweeping down at that season from the Guadarrama mountains, that sentinels stationed at one point have been frozen to death, while on duty. In cold weather they are changed every ten minutes, and when its severity increases seriously, they are altogether withdrawn, and Spanish royalty is left to the guardianship of its own circumambient divinity!

P. C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

CHAPTER XIII:

TUESDAY and Wednesday, the 18th and 19th of October, were devoted to visiting the Escorial. We had intended to have gone there by one of the diligences, which pass daily through the adjoining village, on their way to Segovia. But, on making inquiries, we found they started at such inconvenient hours, that it became necessary to hire a carriage on purpose, going one day and returning the next.

The weather, which, during the previous week, was rainy and tempestuous, had now become all we could desire, and the sun shone forth in his brightness, as we crossed the Manzanares, Madrid's only stream, its shallow current beset by hundreds of washerwomen, glad to take advantage of so fine a day, while its banks were sheeted, far and near, with linen of all sorts, our own probably contributing its

contingent to make up that miscellaneous collection of drapery.

In the immediate neighbourhood of Madrid the road is execrable, and its broad surface, seamed with holes, and ruts, makes any pace quicker than a walk a perilous venture to the bones. As the road improves, on clearing the suburbs, the country becomes deplorable, and we soon found ourselves surrounded by a wild waste, exceeding, in aridity and utter absence of trees and vegetation, anything we had yet encountered—a desert, in fact, of baked earth and sand, with nothing to give it variety but rain-worn, calcined ravines, bestridden here and there, as the highway approaches them, by those characteristic features of a Castilian landscape—bridges without a stream. Not that their channels are always waterless; for during the tremendous down-pours of the rainy season, the sun-scorched *barranco*, “where no water is,” becomes in a few hours the bed of a roaring torrent, which, if left unbridged, would for the time render the road perfectly impassable.

The drive through such a blank, where the most patient and hopeful of tourists looks in vain for anything to attract his attention, is tedious to a degree; and as the road ascends a great

part of the thirty miles between Madrid and the Escorial, you cannot even enjoy the satisfaction of shortening the tedium of such a journey by going fast. When, however, we had performed rather more than half the distance, the monotony of the scene was somewhat mitigated by the first glimpse of the Escorial, of which we caught sight on reaching the summit of a long ascent; and though we must still have been some twelve or fourteen miles off, yet even there its vast size asserted itself, as it rose, a gaunt, frowning pile, against the mountain side, forbidding, more than inviting, our nearer approach.

It was quite a relief, when, having at length traversed those dreary plains, we entered the royal domain, about two leagues from the Escorial, though for a considerable time we had nothing better to look at than the walls of the park, *El Pardo la Zarzuela*, with an occasional glimpse of the ilices scattered here and there, in straggling groups over its surface. This total want of interest in the route to the Escorial tells immensely to its advantage, and prepares the mind unconsciously for a favourable impression.

For a long time after you have entered the

royal domain, on the side towards Madrid, the building itself remains concealed, owing to the inequality of the ground; and when, wearied with that monotonous drive, you begin to feel impatient to see something, the park wall suddenly terminates, the road traverses an open space, studded with primeval boulder-stones, and before you have had time to realize the transition, you find yourself face to face with the eighth wonder of the world!

In a moment we were out of the carriage. Mounting the grassy pedestal of an enormous boulder, which, weather-stained, and lichen-marked, towered like a monarch over the rest, we commanded at one glance the whole extent of the south front, and the eye, fatigued so long with barrenness, rested gladly on the long-drawn ranges of terrace-garden, and the groves that fringe the precincts of the palace; while, as if to greet us with pleasant welcome, the mellow glow of sunset burst forth, diffusing an atmosphere of beauty on every side, and casting upon tower and dome a warmth, and richness of colouring, that overcame, for the moment, the chilling sternness of that granite pile.

We could not possibly have seen it to greater advantage. Not only was the whole landscape

bathed in sunshine, but the stately avenues of poplar beneath the terrace, were all golden with the tints of autumn, while along the slopes of the westward hills gleamed many a hue from copse-wood, fern, and lava-coloured soil, contrasting most effectively with the sober green of the ilex in the park below.

All this beauty took us completely by surprise; for most descriptions of the Escorial represent it as environed by the bleakest of landscapes, extending to its very walls, in unmitigated barrenness.

When, however, having entered its vast courts, now silent and untrodden, we began to examine the building more closely, I must confess my disappointment. Prepared though we were to admire, no amount of prepossession in its favour could transmute such unmistakable ugliness into beauty. Its gridiron ground-plan (an inspiration of pedantry and superstition combined) is fatal to simplicity and grandeur of design, and although no building of its vast proportions can be altogether destitute of a certain grandiose majesty, you still feel it has nothing to recommend it to your admiration, beyond mere bulk.

The windows, of which it is said to contain

about 4000, are positively hideous, the least objectionable of them having the form of those in a modern dwelling-house, while the upper stories are lighted by apertures, that resemble nothing so much as the port-holes in a man-of-war.

In fact, when I thought of the sums spent upon it, not less, it is said, than £10,000,000, and the different results that an architect of the 13th century would have achieved with such means, I could only lament so golden an opportunity had been thrown away, and a building worthy of that magnificent site had not been erected, which, not owing its effectiveness to sheer mass, would have combined in harmonious proportions those united elements of grandeur and beauty, characteristic of the best Pointed Architecture.

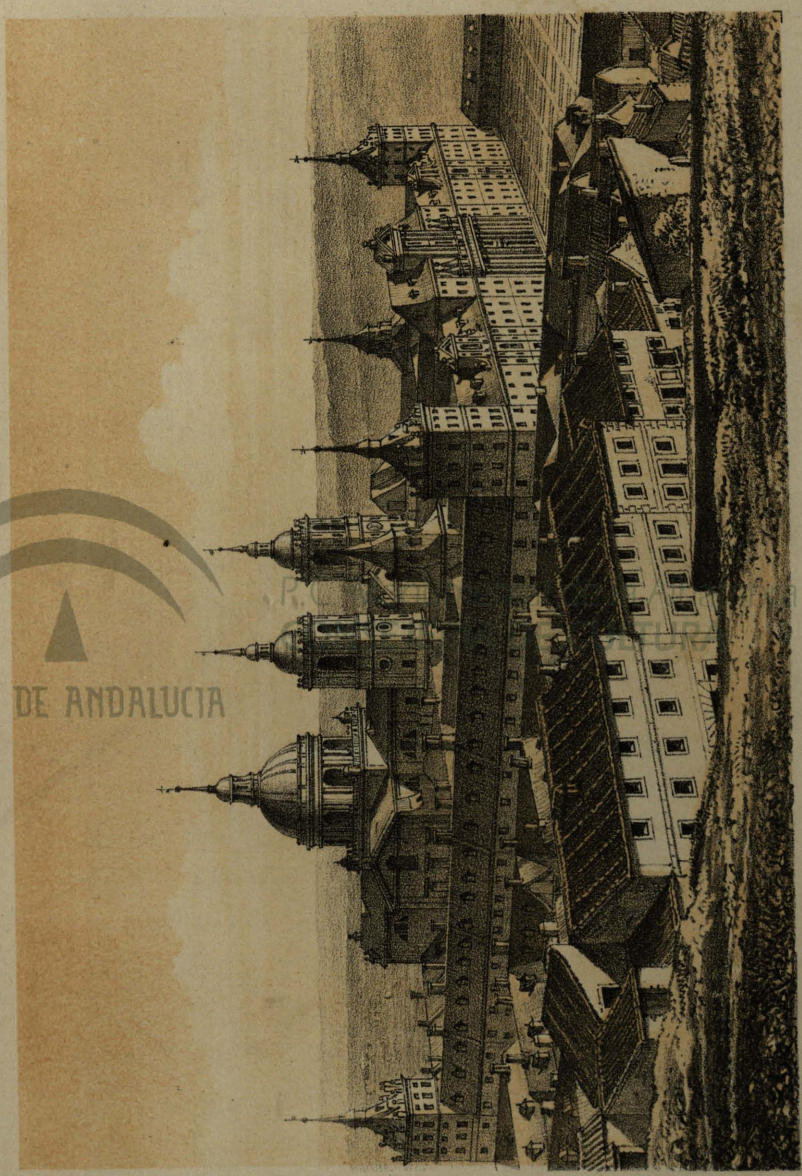
The effect on the mind is simply oppressive, without one grain of the elevating influence, that animates the creations of the great mediæval builders. Nor does this impression wear away, as you become more familiar with the various features of the edifice, and next day it was as much felt by us, as when we first trod its courts.

The situation, however, is superb. Backed by a noble mountain, an offshoot of the Guadarrama range, the Escorial stands in an attitude

of observation (so to speak), surveying the whole land, with the stamp of Spanish royalty, cold, ponderous, and stately, marked indelibly on all its features, while its mixed character of convent and palace, typifies the intimate connection between the Throne and the Church, existing in the days of its founder.

As we did not arrive at the Escorial until sunset, we made no attempt that evening to explore any portion of its interior, contenting ourselves with looking at it from various points of view, while the deepening gloom gradually descending on tower, and dome, veiled its ungainliness and lack of beauty, and imparted to the silent, darkling pile, a solemn, unearthly aspect, that harmonized perfectly with its double destination, as a sepulchre of Kings, and a refuge from the vanities of the world.

JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA



BIBLIOTECA DE LA ALHAMBRA

THE ESCORIAL.

BIBLIOTECA DE LA ALHAMBRA

CHAPTER XIV.

WE lodged at a very tidy little inn in the village, and our dinner introduced us, for the first time in Spain, to fresh pork, which was to be henceforward our almost daily *pièce de résistance*. The village, which stands under the very shadow of the Escorial, though small, seems to abound in posadas and lodging-houses, being a favourite resort for the gentry of Madrid during the intense heats of summer, when its fresh mountain-air and comparative coolness, make the neighbourhood a delicious retreat from the sweltering temperature of the capital.

In winter it must be frightfully bleak, exposed as it is to those terrific blasts from the Guadarrama chain, which, according to all accounts, can be scarcely less formidable than the hurricanes of the Andes. Stories almost incredible are told of the violence, with which the wind sweeps down upon the Escorial through a gap in the

mountains, to the north-west, eddying through its courts like some whirlpool of air, and upsetting everything it encounters. Ford mentions that upon one occasion an Ambassador's coach, a vehicle of some substance and weight in the last century, was turned topsy-turvy by one of those rushing mighty winds. In fact, so much did the inmates suffer from this cause, that in 1770 a subterraneous gallery, communicating with the village, was constructed by the monks. The Duc de St. Simon, who, in 1715, spent some part of the winter at the Escorial, speaks of its intense cold, and yet, though it froze fourteen or fifteen hours out of the twenty-four, the sun was so powerful from 11 A.M. to 4 P.M., that it was too hot for walking, while the sky was at all times perfectly serene and cloudless.

Next morning, taking my customary stroll before breakfast, and passing westward through the grove of English elms, planted by Philip, I presently found myself in front of the southwestern façade, and on the brink of a magnificent granite tank, some 400 feet long by 200 wide, spacious as the pools of Solomon, and fed by a perennial rill, whose pleasant murmur alone broke the silence of the scene.

It was a lovely morning, the atmosphere of

crystal transparency, and the landscape flooded with unbroken sunshine; nor did I wonder, as so many have done, while I walked up and down the warm, sequestered terrace, that Philip should have chosen such a spot for his home.

Whatever may be said against the dreariness of the road from Madrid, the immediate vicinity of the Escorial, as we saw it, is extremely beautiful. Close at hand, as I have already mentioned, rises a mountain range, highly picturesque in form and outline, and of a colouring singularly rich and vivid; while many of the upland slopes are clothed with thickets, and bosky patches of copse-wood, their autumnal tints thrown out into bright relief by the dark gray rocks cropping out here and there, along the face of the mountain. Immediately below, lies the park we skirted on our arrival, with its dark foliage of *ilex*, and *quercus robur*, sombre-hued amid the glories of the Fall, while eastward a tiny lake, where, in bygone days, the monks used to catch the finest tench in the world, glistens—the eye of the landscape—under the early sunbeams.

It was sad to see the fruit-trees on the terrace walls, once tended so carefully, now drooping in straggling, unpruned neglect, each in its niche