

Amongst the reformers of taste must be mentioned Ponz, who had passed many years in Italy, and was an excellent judge of art in most branches. He travelled towards the end of last century, before the troubles commenced, in a sort of official manner, and criticised every branch, but especially the architecture, in a bold and free style, which would hardly be permitted at present. He possessed the power of dry ridicule, which is so much feared in Spain, and was the terror of the *cabildos*, where his criticisms and observations are carefully treasured up, and I have constantly heard them quoted.

The most considerable work of Villañueva is the building at Madrid now used for the Museum, the exterior of which has been much criticised, and cannot be defended. It is massy, but without convenience in proportion to the extent and expense of building. It is of brick ornamented with granite. The front is too long. The principal or central facade is outflanked by two unornamented projections, in the manner of bastions, which destroy the harmony of outline. There is in the centre, a hexastyle portico of Doric, of indifferent design, flanked by two Ionic colonnades of incomparable beauty, but of no utility, as they support nothing, whilst the heavy entablature of the body of the edifice is seen above and behind them. The interior is better, and the Ionic temple which forms the lateral entrance is unrivalled in beauty and fitness for its purpose.

The bridges, and other works on the roads, those of the *paseos*, or public walks, the fortresses, and public buildings of all kinds, are constructed with a degree of grandeur and solidity, which is admirable in the highest degree. At present, excepting the improvements on

the roads, few others are carrying on, but the elevations of buildings in the towns all over the country where any are making, are in good and correct taste, in the manner now common to all Europe, and do not require more particular notice. The branches of the Academy at Madrid, which are established in the provincial capitals, have been of the greatest use, in extending these ameliorations.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

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

## CHAPTER XXI.

### Sculpture.

Although it is indisputable that the arts of sculpture and painting existed from a very remote period in Spain, the early specimens of both which remain, rather tend to prove, not only that no great progress was made; but that there was little probability of their attaining more than a moderate degree of excellence, at the time all the great schools of Europe were already founded, and were gradually advancing by certain steps to the perfection of the sixteenth century. After a diligent search, both in their authors, in the cathedrals, and other ancient depositories of the arts, and having from habit and practice, attachment to the study of the early masters, and the progressive developement of art, I have come to the conclusion, that no school can be traced, in any part of Spain, analogous to those of Tuscany, of Venice, of Ferrara, and others of Italy, nor of the early schools of Germany and Flanders. It is to the intercourse with other nations that the Spanish schools are mainly indebted for their excellence in all departments of art. The progress of sculpture and painting is nearly similar. The first arrival of foreign artists were Germans and Flemings, who, after a temporary sway, yielded to the

superior genius of the Italians of the *cinque cento*. To their works, to the artists brought by Charles the fifth, and Philip the second, and to the natives who travelled to Italy for improvement, we are indebted for the developement of the mighty talents which have bequeathed to posterity some of the first productions of the human mind. This statement, which the ensuing analysis of the schools will prove, is no detraction from the merit of the illustrious men, of whom these pages give the imperfect sketch. The intestine troubles of Spain only ceased, and allowed a steady cultivation of the arts of peace, when the Italians were already in the meridian of their glory, and all the rest of Europe in a state of comparative barbarism, and it is infinitely more to their credit, that they should have drank at the fountain head, and not disdained the maxims and experience of the great masters of modern civilization, than by remaining in their own country, have attempted, by slow and uncertain steps, to reach a moderate elevation on the mountain, near the summit of which they are now placed.

The same plan will be followed in the arrangement of both sculpture and painting. A general view is taken of the whole art, from the earliest times, and it is divided into epochs, and schools respectively. The foreign artists, who have assisted, are kept separate from the natives. The great land marks or divisions are designated, and the name of each of the principal professors, who have come under the view of the author, is given, with a short description of his style, and where his works may now be found. Those of inferior rank are omitted.

The first period is the Gothic, which will be passed



rapidly over, as it is involved in much uncertainty as to the names of the artists, and is of little comparative interest, differing very little from the rest of Europe in the middle ages, or *bassi tempi* of the Italians. This style was modified, about the latter end of the fifteenth century, by German and Flemish artists, who gave a temporary turn and stimulus to the art, but were soon succeeded by the Italians, and natives who had visited Italy. This is the second or classic epoch, during which time Michael Angelo, Raphael, or Julio Romano, and other great Italians were the object of imitation. Sometimes, though rarely, the severe forms of the antique are found in the works of this period.

The third period is that more particularly national or Spanish, which lasted through the seventeenth into the eighteenth century, and was succeeded by the last or academical style, formed by the institution of that body, and which still continues, differing very little from that of the rest of Europe.

The materials used, and manners of execution, are extremely varied. They comprise marble (rarely), alabaster, stone, plaster, *barro* or clay; but by far the greatest part is of wood, painted, or plain. Sometimes oak is used, sometimes the *encina* or Spanish ilex; cedar, and other fine woods from America, were sometimes but rarely used. The greatest proportion by far is of pine. The painting and gilding these statues and their draperies, was, in the great time, an art of itself. The most exquisite specimens are found in Andalusia, where the mode of finishing the draperies resembles oriental work, and bears strong evidence of being derived in some way from the Moors. The painting the hands and faces, and other parts of the figure required the ut-

most skill, and was generally done either by the master himself, or under his immediate inspection, and many eminent artists did not disdain to work on the productions of the chissel of others, in this necessary and important branch of finishing. When these statues are repainted, they are generally utterly and irretrievably ruined, as will be pointed out in some which have had the misfortune to undergo this operation. The government should take some strong and energetic means to prevent even the cleaning of them, which is attended with the greatest danger. It is impossible to conceive the destruction caused by daubing paint over them. It is like ordering a sign painter to go over the transfiguration or other painting at his own fancy, or casing Waterloo bridge with brick. These inestimable productions then assume the appearance of Gog and Magog of the Guildhall, and all possibility of preserving their forms, even to the practised eye, is often lost, by the optical delusion produced by bad colouring. Where it has been unfortunately done, the only remedy is to go over both flesh and draperies with sober uniform colours imitating the general tones of the master, without shading, and leaving the effect to the play of light on the figure. All that are attempted to be done, otherwise are ruined. I saw a most beautiful bust of Cano, which had belonged to a sculptor of some eminence, who repainted it, and pasted in eyelashes of his own manufacture, giving it exactly the appearance of the figures which are exhibited to set forth their wares, in barber's repositories. The *carcoma* or worm, which has invaded many of them, and destroyed the wood, is easily arrested in its progress, and it seldom I believe, molests the painting or gilding. The painted sculpture is that which particularly cha-

racterizes the Spanish school. As some of the finest specimens of this interesting art are in the convents, besides the orders for their preservation, strict charge should be laid on the present holders of them, to prevent the possibility of their alienation, and, when the inevitable doom, which awaits those establishments at no distant period, falls on them, to secure the immediate reception of them in provincial as well as a central museum at Madrid. Severe orders are also required to prevent them whitewashing them, which is sometimes done with the most laudable intentions, to the ruin of the statue.

It fortunately happens, that most of the finest works of these masters have been preserved, which is by no means the case with the painters. They were unsaleable, and not easily removed, and they were happily not aware of their being combustible, and that they might serve the purposes of firing for boiling kettles during a bivouack. Some have remained uninjured; where the church they are in has served for cavalry stables, and other uses of the same description.

The sculptors of the first order who have equalled the Italians, and excelled every other school, since the revival of the arts, are Pedro de Valdevira, Felipe Vigariny, Pedro Machuca, Xamete, Gregorio Pardo, Alonzo Berruguete, Diego de Navas, Francisco Villalpando, Diego de Siloe, Bartolomeo Morel, Gaspar Becerra, Miguel Ancheta, Esteban Jordan, Manuel Pereyra, J. M. Martinez y Montañes, Alonzo Cano, Pedro Mena y Medrano, Pedro Roldan, and some of nearly equal ability. It is needless to observe that in pointing out and criticising those who adopted for a short period the style of Michael Angelo, no reflection is intended to be con-

veyed on that great man, but it is well known his imitators seldom succeeded. His chissel and his pencil in the hand of others, were like the arms of Achilles, or the shield of Ajax in those of inferior warriors, which were calculated to incumber rather than protect or defend them.

In the observations on these styles and manners, the comparisons are made with acknowledged models, which have stood the test of ages, and no assumption of conaissanceur ship is intended. Practice and habit are required to be able to judge of these objects, like every other department of knowledge, neither quackery or mystery are required, nor will be attempted. The work chiefly used as a guide for the dates and localities, is that of Cean Bermudez, which is a modern compilation, or catalogue raisonné, from all the the best written and many manuscript communications from the ecclesiastical bodies, on the works of art in their possession.

Besides the regular and progressive division of the sculpture into four epochs, the Gothic, Classic, Spanish, and Academical, as before mentioned, I have distributed it into three schools, Castile, Seville, and Granada, which last is more modern than the others. There are many detached artists of great merit, in Aragon, Navarre, Catalonia, and other provinces, but none in sufficient numbers, or connected so as to form a school of themselves, and they are added to the others, their country being always specified. The destruction of the contents of the churches at Valencia, during the war of Napoleon, was so great, that it is to be feared the works of many sculptors have perished entirely. I should have willingly made a school from the sculpture

of that celebrated seat of art, but the statues which came under my observation there were insufficient to justify it.

## SCHOOL OF CASTILE.

The cathedral of Toledo is the great repository of this ancient and illustrious school. There is a prodigious list of artists in the archives of the early period, who assisted in ornamenting the church, but they are massed together in accounts kept of the result of works undertaken by several together, who respectively performed the painting, gilding, and sculpture, and are not separately designated. It is needless to drag the reader through the long list of these names. So little progress had been made, that the reliefs of the conquest of Granada, which were executed in 1495, by the *maestre* Rodriguez, and are in the choir, exhibit a very bad specimen of the *bassi tempi*. From their situation, and the importance of the subject, they were naturally by the best artist who could be procured. They still remain, and afford a curious comparison with the admirable works of Berruguete, and Vigarny, which are immediately above them, and were executed a very few years afterwards. Some works of the style of Durer, from whose prints they might be supposed to be copied, are to be seen on the *fachada de los Leones*, in the same cathedral, and at San Juan de los Reyes, a beautiful Gothic church in the same city, where the chains of the Christian captives taken from the Moors are appended. Some of these statues yet remain, although the church has been devastated, and most of the specimens of art it contained destroyed. At Valladolid, others of the same manner

may be found, but they have generally been replaced by works of the second or great era.

At Leon, which is the finest of the early cathedrals, the sculpture is extremely bad, in the worst style of the Gothic manner of the north of Europe. There are works in the same church, which are more modern, but are incorrect in drawing, which is extremely rare in Spain, where the rudest specimens are in general not faulty in that respect.

DIEGO COPIN DE OLANDA.

His manner is classic, with a mixture of the Gothic. His works are in the cathedral at Toledo; the principal being the inside face of the gates of the Lions, which are in wood, in bold relief, with the strange subjects, for such a place, of centaurs fighting, and other profane histories. Some of the sculpture on the walls, on both sides of the transept, is also by him. He was assisted in these and other works in the church by his son. The name affords a strong presumption that he was not a native of Spain.

JUAN MORLANES, FATHER AND SON.

A Biscayan, settled in Zaragoza. His chief work is the *portada* or portail of the church of Santa Engracia, which has been miraculously preserved, all around it being destroyed, the great mine having passed through the church. There is a great deal of sculpture in the style of Durer, and most of it is uninjured. It is in alabaster. Some parts are by his son, and are easily distinguished.

The son, Juan, had a much better style; he was the friend of Becerra, who gave him a beautiful relief, representing the resurrection, which is placed in the chapel of S.-Bernardo at the Seu, and the works of the artist below it. They are extremely dirty, and the chapel very dark, but are in a good style, not unlike that of Becerra.

## DAMIAN FORMENT.

A Valencian. The *retablo mayor* of the Pilar at Zaragoza is by him, a large work in alabaster, in the manner of M. Angelo. The *retablo* of the church of S.-Paul, attributed to him, appeared to me to be of older date, and inferior work.

## JULIO AGUILES.

An artist of Castile, whose works are at Valladolid. Amongst them is probably the *retablo* of the Angustias, which is in the classic manner; or that of Becerra, and of painted wood.

## GUIOT BEOGRANT.

A native of Bilboa, where he executed the *retablo* of Santiago, which I thought inferior to the praises bestowed on it.

## ESTEBAN OBRAY.

Supposed to be a Navarro, but resided in Zaragoza, where he executed the *sillera* or chairs of the choir, in oak, in the classic manner, and of respectable work.



## GASPAR DE TORDESILLAS.

Better known as an architect, executed the *retablo mayor* of S.-Juan de los Reyes, at Toledo, now lost, and the *retablo* of San Antonio Abad in S.-Benito el Real, Valladolid, which resembles the work of Berruguete.

## ALONZO BERRUGUETE.

An old Castilian, went early to Italy, and was established and well known in the great republic at Florence, being intimate with Buonaroti, whom he accompanied to Rome, and the other celebrated artists of that time. He returned to Spain in 1520, bringing back the true art of painting in oil, as then practised by the Italians, and the principles of the great style of sculpture of the new school. His favorite manner is that of Buonaroti, whom he followed too much. Many of his works are only a meschine imitation of his master. His finest production is the side of the *silleria* \* of the choir, in the cathedral of Toledo, which is in a style more approaching the antique. These figures are in two ranges, of marble and alabaster. The transfiguration, over the seat of the archbishop, is also by him, but the nature of the subject is unsuited to sculpture from the impossibility of giving the necessary perspective. The gates of the city have several statues by him, and his last work, finished by his son, is a tomb in the church of the hospital de Afuera, in which the decay of his powers is very

\* The seats of the canons in the choirs of the cathedrals.



evident. At Cuenca, is the half of a door, leading to the *sala de Cabildo*, with good reliefs and ornaments. The adoration of the kings appeared to be his work, and not the transfiguration, as stated in the books, which is by an inferior artist. The *retablo mayor* of San Benito el Real, at Valladolid, is in the worst style, as is that of the convent of la Mejorada near Olmedo. The beautiful ornaments and busts of the inner *patio* of the archiepiscopal palace at Alcala de Henares, are of his best manner. The celebrated reliefs of the palace at Granada, so long attributed to him, are now known to be by some other artist. They do not the least resemble his style, but in many parts it was the fashion to attribute every unknown work to him, before the names of several excellent artists, fully his equals were ascertained. See Machuca.

FELIPE VIGARNY.

Of Burgundian family established at Burgos. Beyond all doubt he had studied in Italy, his style mixing the antique with that of M. Angelo, and some remains of the Gothic. His principal works are those of the half of the *silleria* of the choir in the cathedral of Toledo; opposite to those of Berruguete; the descent of the Virgin under a canopy in the great aisle, over a work of his brother; and the *retablo mayor* of the chapel of the kings at Granada, which is in the Gothic style of architecture, of which the statues partake.

GREGORIO VIGARNY.

The brother, and assistant of Philip, whom his style

resembles so as to be hardly distinguishable. In the cathedral of Toledo are, by him, two medallions, one on each side the transept, representing the coronation of the Virgin, and Santa Leocadia rising from the tomb. The relief of San Ildefonso receiving the *casulla* \* from the Virgin, said in the books to have been at the back of the seat of the archbishop, is now under a *dais* or canopy, forming an altar, near one of the *pilones* of the great aisle.

## XAMETE.

This great sculptor, whose surname alone has emerged from the obscurity, in which his history is unjustly involved, has very probably a Moorish descent. He is placed in this school, because in Castile only are his works or name known. He worked at the entrance of the chapel of the Torre, or the canons, in the cathedral of Toledo; but his finest work is the magnificent arch of the cathedral at Cuenca, of which the style of design and execution, place him in the first line of these great artists. It is of immense size, in form resembling a triumphal arch, and leads into the cloister, running to the height of the body of the church. It contains an infinite number of reliefs, *caprichos* or grotesques, angels, and every description of subject, with a luxuriance of fancy like the ablest of the Italians and of the finest design and execution. It is doubtful whether it be not the best sculpture in Spain. The statue of the Virgin appears of much older time, and by an artist of a different epoch.

\* An habiliment of bishop, and a subject often treated in painting; it seems it was conferred by the Madonna in person.

GREGORIO PARDO.

The *Caxoneria* or wardrobes of the anteroom of the winter chapter house at Toledo, long attributed to Berruguete, are carved by him. They are exactly in the style of that artist.

FRANCISCO DE VILLALPANDO.

Equally illustrious as architect, sculptor, and *rejero*, or designer of the ornamented iron gates, a native of Valladolid. He executed the pulpits which are in front of the great altar in the cathedral at Toledo. They are of bronze, gilt, and brazened or fixed by fire, as used at that time. The work is equal to that of Cellini, and equally beautiful are the gates of the great altar, which are by him, with figures and ornaments. The brazen gates of the fachada de los Leones, of which the inside is by Copin de Olanda, are by him. They are plain, but above are beautiful reliefs placed high up. These are not mentioned in the books, but most probably they are from his designs\*. In the choir at the further end are two reading desks, or facistoles, the fronts of which have each a bronze gilt relief of some sacred history. They are not mentioned in the descriptions, but have every

\* There is some deficiency in the description of this part of the church. The gates of the fachada de los Leones are on one side of the transept. They are by Copin de Olanda, and Villalpando. On the opposite side is the *fachada del Relox*, called from the clock which is placed there. They correspond, but the artists are different and are not named. I have no doubt the outer gate, which is bronze, and of very fine work, is by Berruguete. The founder or caster of one part of it was Zurreno of Madrid. The insides are unknown but I thought them superior to those of Copin de Olanda, which are opposite. They are of wood, like his works, and correspond with them.

appearance of his hand. They are of the greatest beauty. He was assisted by his brother, who is called Ruy Diaz de Corral, in these works. There are occasionally met with, enchased or gilt plate, and other ornaments, used in houses at that period, made by these great artists, which equal any thing of the Italians.

#### DIEGO DE SILOE.

The great architect, has also left specimens of sculpture, which place him in the first rank in that art. At Granada, the statue of S.-Onophrio which looks like a St.-Jerome, in a niche in the *calle* de los Gomeles, leading up to the Alhambra, is by him. It is badly seen, and a disagreeable subject, but the anatomy and drawing are perfect. An Ecce Homo, placed in a niche outside, near the door of the sacristy of the cathedral, is also his, and a S.-Jerome, on the other side of the same building, is in a more free and pleasing style, resembling the antique; unfortunately it is of a soft stone, and being exposed to the injuries of the weather, will be destroyed, if some means be not taken to preserve it.

#### TUDELILLA.

An artist of whom nothing is known, but that some part of the *trascoro* or back part of the choir at the Seu, Zaragoza is by him. There is a great deal of work, of different styles, chiefly classic, but heavy.

#### TORRIBIO RODRIGUEZ.

The sculpture about the gate which leads into the

cloister, at Toledo, nearest the street, is by him, consisting of ornamental work, and in the style of Berruguete, to whom, until lately, it was attributed. It is quite as good or better than the best of his works of similar description. He was assisted by an artist named Mancano.

## MIGUEL ANCHETA.

A native of Pamplona, where he wrought the sculpture of the choir, an extensive work, the whole of English oak, imported for the purpose, and the more remarkable, as the country abounds in the same tree. It has done justice to those who recommended its being used, for I could not discern any marks of worm, or of any decay, after nearly three hundred years. He studied in Italy, and has adopted the style of design of Donatello, Perugino, and other early Florentines, with a little improvement; some of the heads are of great beauty. The assumption, in the *retablo mayor* of the cathedral of Burgos is also by him, and there are other works, which I have not seen. A statue of San-George, on horseback, in alabaster, which was at Zaragoza, was lost in the siege.

## JUAN DE JUNI.

Who is said to have been a foreigner, but his name makes it difficult to assign him a country, wrought entirely in the manner of M. Angelo, exaggerated and overdone. His works are chiefly at Valladolid, and other parts of old Castile. In that city are the *retablo* of Santa-Maria de la Antigua, some statues at San-Francisco, and in other places. An entire chapel is by him in the

parish church of Santa-Maria at Rio Seco, consisting of an infinity of work, of painting and sculpture. Scarcely any of it is in good state.

RODRIGO AND MARTIN DE LA HAYA.

Brothers, resident at Burgos, to whom we owe the sculpture and architecture of the *retablo mayor* of the cathedral. It was painted by others, and the statue of the Virgin which is above, is by Ancheta. The style is of Becerra, but much heavier. The architecture of the *retablo* is bad. The painting of these statues is not good, but it was executed by other artists, and the effect is probably diminished by that circumstance.

ESTEBAN JORDAN.

One of the best of the school, in the style of Becerra\*, although he is said in the books to have followed that of Berruguete. At Valladolid, is the *retablo* of the Magdalena, and at Rio Seco, the *retablo mayor* of Santa Maria, which is better. The *retablo mayor* of the convent of Monserrat, in Catalonia, which unhappily no longer exists, was also by him.

ANTONIO DE HERRERA BARNUEVO.

On the town prison at Madrid are some statues by him, the only specimens I have seen. They are placed very high, and are injured by the weather. They appear to be of form like the antique.

\* This artist, whose works are principally in Castile, belongs by birth to the school of Andalusia, where he is placed.

## GREGORIO HERNANDEZ:

One of the best of the school of Becerra, whom he most resembles. He was a Galician, but settled at Valladolid, where his best works are. At the Angustias, the Virgin and her dead son; which has been repainted. At la Cruz, a pieta of detached figures, formerly at the altar, now on one side of the church, quite in the style of Becerra. At San Miguelare S.-Ignacio and two other Saints, in their *retablos*. At the Huelgas, a large *retablo*, with reliefs in many compartments. At Vittoria, the *retablo* of San Miguel, which is very large, is by him, and has some good work, but is much injured by the wax of the candles, which has fallen upon it.

## MANUEL PEREYRA:

A native of Portugal, but settled at Valladolid. His style is different from these artists, and more resembles the antique. His best work is the San Bruno of the Calle Alcala, at Madrid. At San Isidoro, in the same city, over the great entrance, the statues of the Saint and his wife; and at the great altar, many statues of what are called the *Santos Labradores*. These are all in stone. At San Martin, were the saint on horseback, dividing his raiment, and that of san Benedict, which were destroyed by the French during the war, a fragment only of the last statue being left. The celebrated Christo del Perdon, at the Rosario, which is in a glass case, and is badly seen, is painted, and appears to be of wood. The San Bruno is injured by being whitewashed, an operation nearly as fatal as repainting.



## LUIS FERNANDEZ DE LA VEGA.

A noble Asturian, who resided at Valladolid, and is supposed to have studied under Fernandez, whom, however, he did not equal. His works are at Gijon, in the chapels there. The best appeared to me to be San Antonio and San Jose, the heads being badly painted. In the cathedral of Oviedo are statues unpainted, but I could not find the San Martin mentioned in the books, nor did it appear ever to have been there.

## JUAN ANTONIO DE LA BORJA.

An Asturian, supposed to be a scholar of the last named artist, but inferior to him. His works may be found at Oviedo and Gijon. In the parish church of San Pedro, are several.

In this school is less, than in the others, of the style I have named peculiarly Spanish. Nearly the whole of it is composed of the classic or modifications of it, up to the present period.

The foreign artists who have worked in this school are not numerous. Some assisted in the early time at Toledo, but their history is obscure and uncertain; and the art may be said to have been raised to its perfection by the natives, with the assistance of those who had been in Italy. The Leoni, a Tuscan family, are the principal foreigners of the later time. Their works are at the Escorial; and about the royal palaces, and museum of Madrid.