

particular juncture to please the Constitutionalists; and while the investigation I have mentioned was proceeding, every one knew that his majesty dared not venture upon a repetition of this.

A few years ago, a curious exposé was made at Cadiz, which, as I am upon the subject of friars, I shall mention in this place. There was, and still is, a banker named Gargallo, one of the richest men in Cadiz, whose magnificent dwelling-house is separated from the wall of the Franciscan monastery only by one small house; and this house also belonged to Sr. Gargallo, although it was not inhabited. The master of the house, who though a rich man, looked closely into his affairs, perceived that his cook's bill greatly exceeded the sum necessary for the subsistence of the family; and after bearing this during a considerable time, he at length discharged his cook. The cook applied for service elsewhere; and upon his new master applying to Gargallo for a character, he refused to give one, alleging as a reason, the dishonesty of his servant: the cook enraged at this injustice, and more solicitous

to preserve his own good character than that of the friars, returned to Gargallo's house, taking witnesses along with him; and aloud in the court-yard told this story: that every day he had carried a hot dinner into the house adjoining, where Gargallo's wife and daughter entertained a select party of Franciscan friars; and what was worse still, his late master's money had been expended in the support of three children and a nurse, who all lived in the adjoining house. The truth of this story was easily put to the test; the three children and a nurse were found in the house, and the whole affair was brought to light. The especial favour of the ladies was reserved for only two of the friars: the very reverend father Antonio Sanchez de la Camissa, Sacristan Mayor, was the favourite of the wife; and another, whose name I forget, but who was next in rank to the prior, and had formerly been confessor in Gargallo's house, was the selection of his daughter. These had the entrée of Gargallo's house at all hours; and in order to keep quiet a few others, who were supposed to be in the secret, a savoury dinner was provided every day for the self-denying Francis-

cans. Gargallo married his daughter to an old apothecary, at Chiclana, where she now lives a widow; and he confined his wife during two years in an upper room in his own house; but she now lives again with her husband. At the first disclosure of the affair, he wished to send both offenders to the Penitentiary; but the captain-general of the province interfered, to prevent so much publicity in an affair compromising the character of the Franciscans. No notice whatever of this disgraceful transaction was taken in the convent. Both reverend fathers continued to bear the character of good Franciscans; and doubtless returned for a time, to the austerities of the order,—and when I was in Cadiz, one of them every day accompanied Manuel Munoz, the superior, and Cerrillo, who had been banished to Seville, in an evening walk.

But these immoralities of the friars, although some such are occasionally brought to light, and although much that exists is hidden, are yet far more rare than the immoralities of the priests; and, it is without doubt, the greater immorality of the clergy, and the greater belief in that immorality,

that are the primary reasons why the influence of the friars diminishes more slowly than that of the priesthood.

Several other reasons might be given, why the influence of the friars maintains itself better than that of the clergy, in the minds of the people,—especially the lower orders: one may be stated to be, the known austerities practised by some of the orders, particularly by the Franciscans, the Capuchins, and the Carthusians; another, the greater alms given by the convents than by the church; another, the mystery that involves the lives and habits of the friars,—for mystery recommends any thing to the ignorant; and a fourth, which addresses itself to all classes, is, the direct tax which the support of the clergy imposes. The friars, whether poor or not, have the semblance of poverty; at all events, the sources of their revenues are not seen to flow into their treasury; and, although the nation at large groans under the weight, individuals feel no part of it. Such are a few of the causes which, in my opinion, operate in supporting the influence of the friars; and in diminishing that of the clergy.

Comparatively with the rest of Spain, there is little attention paid to the ceremonials of religion in Madrid. I often strolled into the churches at all hours; and, excepting at time of mass, few were to be seen at prayer. One morning I walked into the collegiate church of St. Isidro, and found the pulpit occupied by a priest, who was exclaiming, apparently extempore, and with great vehemence, against the sin of religious infidelity. St. Isidro is the principal church of Madrid, and yet I do not believe there were 300 listeners to the discourse; and of these at least five-sixths were women. It is a curious spectacle to see the women all sitting upon the ground *à la Turque*, on little round mats, and every fan in quick motion. The entrance of a stranger into a church during mass, always creates a sensation: a hundred eyes may at any time be withdrawn from the contemplation of either a preacher or an image, by the slightest possible cause.

CHAPTER V.

MADRID.

The Profession of a Nun; Reflections; Description of the Interior of a Convent; the Monastic Life; Description of a Bull-Fight; Sketches of Spanish Character; a Horse Race.

No one ever visited a Roman Catholic country, without feeling some curiosity upon the subject of nuns and convents, monks and monasteries; and there is certainly no country in the world that affords so many incitements to this curiosity, or so many facilities for gratifying it, as Spain. Among all the ceremonies belonging to the church of Rome, none perhaps possesses so much interest in the eyes of a stranger, as that which is denominated "taking the veil;" chiefly, because it is the only one of them all, that addresses the heart more than the eye. I had always felt great

curiosity to witness this extraordinary sacrifice of reason and nature, at the altar of bigotry and ignorance; but I found the gratification of this curiosity more difficult than I had imagined. Heretics are no welcome guests at such times; and during the first month of my residence in Madrid, I made two unsuccessful attempts to witness the ceremony of taking the veil! It fortunately happened, however, that the priest whom I had engaged at my arrival in Madrid, to speak Spanish, and read Don Quixotte with me, and with whom I passed much of my time, was the officiating priest in the convent of *Comendadoras de Calatrava*; and as I had often expressed a strong desire to see a profession, he came one day with the welcome intelligence, that in that convent, a profession would take place on the Sunday morning following; and as it was his duty to officiate on the occasion, and to administer the sacrament to the new sister, he had it in his power to gratify my wishes, and to admit me at an early hour: and he also all but promised, that after the ceremony, I should be permitted to see the interior of the convent—a privilege even greater than the other.

The chapel of the convent is separated from the other apartments by a wide iron grating—so wide, that every thing which takes place on the other side, is seen as distinctly as if there was no separation whatever. I placed myself close to this grating some little time before the ceremony commenced.

How many strange, wild, and romantic associations are connected with “taking the veil!” The romances of our earlier days,—the tales, that professed to reveal the mysteries of the cloister, crowd upon our memory: we see standing before us the creatures of our imagination—the inflexible lady abbess—the trembling nun—we hear the authoritative question, and the timid reply—we see the midnight procession, and hear the anthem of sweet and holy voices—and a crowd of mysterious and half-forgotten dreams and visions float before us. Some of these early visions I had learned to doubt the reality of,—I had already caught occasional glimpses of those mysterious creatures who inhabit convent walls, without finding any realization of my vision of charms more than mortal. I had learned to know that nuns grow old, and that the veil does not

always shadow loveliness ; but having understood that the victim about to sacrifice herself was scarcely seventeen, I dismissed from my mind all the realities that warred with my romantic illusions, and recurred to the dream of my earlier days.

At the hour appointed, the abbess entered the room on the other side of the grating, accompanied by all the nuns, and by several ladies, friends and relatives of the novice. She entered a moment after ; and immediately knelt down, with her face towards the grating, so that I had a near and distinct view of her. She was attired in the novice's robe of pure white, and wore a crown of flowers upon her head. She seemed scarcely more than sixteen. Her countenance was gentle, sweet, and interesting ;—there was an expression of seriousness, but not of sadness, in her face ; and a skin, fairer than usually falls to the lot of Spanish women, was sensibly coloured with a fine carnation,—the glow of youth, and health, and happiness, yet lingering on her cheek ; and connecting her with the world of light, and life, and freedom, about to close upon her for ever.

The administrator now entered by the chapel, and placed himself in a chair close to where I was stationed, and at the side of an opening in the grating of about a foot square. The novice then rose, and walking forward to the grating, presented him with a paper, which he read aloud : this was the act of renunciation of all property, then and for ever ; and during this ceremony the novice retired and knelt as before, holding in her hand a long lighted taper, with which the abbess presented her. The preparatory service then commenced by reading and chanting ; and this, although monotonous, was pleasing and impressive, according well with the solemnity of the scene that had introduced it ; and in this service the novice joined, with a clear sweet voice, in which nothing of emotion could be distinguished. When this was concluded, the novice again rose, and advanced to the grating, and pronounced slowly and distinctly the three vows that separate her from the world,—chastity, poverty, and obedience. Her voice never faltered ; nor could I perceive the slightest change of countenance ; the colour only, seemed to be gradually forsaking her.

The lady abbess, who stood close by her side, wept all the while. Ah! if each tear could have told why it flowed; what a history might have been unfolded. Indignation was the feeling produced in my mind. I wished for the cannon of the Constitutionalists, to throw down these most odious of prisons; and even to the priest, who stood by me in his crimson and gilded surplice, I could not restrain myself from saying; half audibly, “*Que infamia!*”

When the vows that could never be recalled had been pronounced by this misguided child, she stepped back, and threw herself prostrate upon the ground,—this is the act confirmatory of her vows,—symbolical of death, and signifying that she is dead to the world. The service was then resumed,—a bell continued slowly to toll; and the priest read; while the nuns who stood around their new-made sister, responded,—“dead to the world—separated from kindred—bride of heaven!” and the nun who lies prostrate is supposed, at the same time, to repeat to God in secret, the vows she has already pronounced aloud. When this was concluded, a slow

organ peel, and a solemn swell of voices rose, and died away; and the abbess then raised the nun from the ground, and embraced her; and all the other nuns and her relations also embraced her. I saw no tear upon any cheek, excepting upon the cheek of the abbess, whose face was so full of benignity, that it half reconciled me to the fate of the young initiated who had vowed obedience to her. When she had embraced every one, she again knelt for a few moments, and then approached the grating along with the abbess; and the priest handed to the abbess through the opening, the vestments of a nun. Then came the last act of the drama:—the crown was lifted from her head; the black vestment was put on, and the girdle and the rosary; and the black hood was drawn over her head;—she was now a nun, and she again embraced the abbess and all the sisters. Still I could not discover a single tear, excepting on the cheek of the abbess, who continued to weep almost without ceasing to the very end: the countenance of the young nun remained unmoved. The crown was again replaced upon her head, to be worn all that day; the sacrament was administered,

and one last embrace by friends and relations terminated the scene.

I had thus seen what I had long felt so much anxiety to see,—“taking the veil;” and I found it, at the same time, a stirring and a melancholy spectacle: stirring, because it filled the mind with indignation against those whose cruel and insidious counsel had misled an innocent girl; and melancholy, because it pointed to a life uncheered by life’s sweetest charities,—unblest by its holiest ties,—life without interest, without change, without hope; its sources of enjoyment dried up; and its wells of affection frozen over.

It is not difficult to account for such sacrifices as this. A young person enters a convent as a novice at fifteen or sixteen: this requires little persuasion,—the scene is new, and therefore not without its attraction. Mothers, sisters, and friends are occasionally seen; and no vow prevents a return to the world. During the noviciate, she forms attachments among the nuns, who exert themselves to the uttermost to please her. The attractions of the world are not presented to her, and they are, therefore, not felt to be attractions; and all

the while, the priests and confessors have been labouring to impress her with a notion of the excellence of a religious life,—its pure enjoyment in this world, and its certain and great reward in another; and these arguments are enforced by strictures upon the vexations and evils of the world without, and the lack of enjoyment to be found in it. Such reasoning cannot fail to produce its effect upon the mind of a young person who has never known the world, and who is daily assured by the sisters in the convent that they are happy: add to this, a certain éclat in taking the veil,—extremely captivating to a youthful mind,—and it will scarcely seem surprising, that when the noviciate expires, there should be nothing terrible, or even very affecting in the ceremonial that fixes the destiny of the novice. She feels that she is vowing a continuance of the same life that she has already led, and for which habit may even have taught her an inclination; and her days are to be spent with those whom she probably loves more than any others without the convent walls. And what are the vows, to a child who has entered a convent at fifteen? She vows obedience to

one whom she feels pleasure in obeying. She renounces property she never enjoyed, and whose uses are not understood; and in vowing chastity, she knows only that she is dedicating herself to heaven. The profession of a girl of sixteen or seventeen, is an abomination; and admitted so to be, even by the priests. A canon at Seville—nay, more, a Dominican friar near Alicante, agreed with me in opinion, that no woman ought to be permitted to take the veil at an earlier age than twenty-four. If a woman who has tried the world, and knows its enjoyments and its dangers, chooses to renounce it, and retire into a convent, she can only accuse herself of folly, or bigotry; but it is altogether a piece of villany when a child leaves the nursery to begin her noviciate.

The priest, who had led me to hope that I might be permitted to visit the interior of the convent, did not disappoint me. This convent is one of the most complete, and the best fitted up of any in Madrid. No one enters it who cannot bring to its treasury a considerable fortune; and its accommodations

are accordingly upon a scale of corresponding comfort. In company with the priest and the portress, an old nun, I went over the greater part of the building. The accommodations of each nun consist of a small parlour and a dormitory adjoining, and a small kitchen. The nuns do not eat in company. The dinners are separately cooked, and the whole is then carried to a public room, where it is blessed; and again carried back to the separate apartments, where each nun eats alone. The little parlours of the nuns are plain and clean; the walls white-washed, and the floors generally matted; but the room is without any fireplace, and contains a table and two chairs. The beds are extremely small, and extremely hard; and upon the table, in every dormitory, there is a crucifix. Among other parts, I was conducted to the chamber of the new-made nun. The bed was strewn with flowers—marigolds and dahlias,—and a crown of jilly-flowers lay upon the pillow. Here every thing was new; yet all would grow old along with the inmate. A new bright lamp stood upon the table; and as I looked at it, I could not avoid the picture that presented itself in

fancy,—the dull light falling upon the white wall; and the silent inmate of the chamber with her book and rosary, through the long chill evenings of winter;—what a contrast from the picture of a cheerful home!

The rooms of the nuns all look into the garden. Those in front are occupied by ladies who have not taken the veil, but who have retired from the world, and who live there in tranquillity and seclusion. Many of these rooms are prettily fitted up, and contain small libraries, altogether of religious books, and a few pictures of the same character. In going through the convent, I saw two of the nuns,—old, disagreeable, ill-favoured women,—the younger sisters were not visible, excepting the new-made nun, who seemed that day to be allowed the range of the convent; for I saw her, with her crown still upon her head, in her own chamber, in one of the corridors, and in the garden: she looked quite happy. After having been conducted through almost every part of the convent, I was introduced into the refectory, and presented with wine and cake. I shall never forget the taste of that cake; it

seemed to me, to taste of the tomb ; and crumbled in one's hand like something touched by the finger of decay.

The order to which this convent belongs, is not so strict as many others. The chief difference in strictness between one order and another, consists in the more rigid observance of fasts, the number of meagre days, the obligation to night prayers, and the rules as to solitude and society. In some of the orders, dispensation from the vows of poverty and obedience may be obtained ; and such dispensations occasionally *are* obtained,—if, for example, the labour or service of a nun should be required for the support or comfort of a destitute or aged mother. Dispensation from the vow of chastity is scarcely to be obtained ; yet even this has sometimes been known. Last year, a lady of high family who had taken the vows in Barcellona, obtained a general dispensation, and married,—it is said that she was never happy ; and she died a few months afterwards. It may easily be supposed, that long accustomed prejudices, and a superstitious bias, acting upon the imagination, might produce disastrous effects both upon mind and

body. In the case of the late Countess Ofalia, a dispensation was also obtained. She was five years a nun. She entered the convent at the age of fourteen; and the dispensation was granted upon the ground of her youth, and also because her consent was supposed to have been extorted. This lady had, fortunately, less superstition than the other. She left the convent at nineteen; and married the Count Ofalia, with whom she lived happily.

During the French government in Spain, under Joseph Buonaparte, and also during the time of the constitution, the doors of the convents were open to whosoever might choose to go again into the world: it is said, that not more than two in Madrid, and four or five throughout the rest of Spain, availed themselves of this privilege. This is scarcely to be wondered at; superstitious fears, and conscientious scruples, interfered no doubt with the wishes of many; others had grown grey within their convent walls, and to whom could they return? Some, who might yet have found enjoyment in the world, had no means of living in it, having renounced their inheritance; and many, no doubt, had con-

tracted a partiality for a religious life, and were actuated by pious motives.

Next to the curiosity I had felt to witness the profession of a nun, was my curiosity to witness an exhibition of a very different kind: the spectacle of a bull-fight. This is one of the many things that are to be seen in Spain, and in no other country in the world; and, however barbarous the spectacle must seem to every one but a Spaniard, it is, nevertheless, one of so stirring and so extraordinary a kind, that I think it would almost repay a journey to Madrid, even if the traveller set off next morning upon his return.

The bull-fight is the national game of Spain; and the love of the Spaniards for this spectacle, is almost beyond belief. Monday, in Madrid, is always, during the season of the bull-fights, a kind of holiday; every body looks forward to the enjoyments of the afternoon; and all the conversation is about *los toros*. Frequency of repetition makes no difference to the true amateur of the bull-fight; he is never weary of it; at all times he finds leisure and money to dedicate to his favourite pastime. The spectacle is generally an-

nounced, in the name of his majesty, to begin at four o'clock; and, before three, all the avenues leading towards the gate of Alcala, are in commotion; the Calle de Alcala, in particular, throughout its whole immense extent, is filled with a dense crowd, of all ranks and conditions, pouring towards the gate: a considerable number of carriages are also seen—even the royal carriages; but these arrive later: and there are also many hack cabriolets, their usual burden being a peasant, and two girls, dressed in their holiday clothes; for there is no way of shewing gallantry so much approved among the lower orders, as *treating* to a bull-fight; and when this is carried so far as to include a drive in a red and gilded cabriolet, the peasant need sigh no longer.

I had been able to secure a place in one of the best boxes, through the kindness of one of my friends; and, some little time before the fight begun, I was comfortably seated in the front row, with quite enough to occupy my attention, until the commencement. The spectacle was most imposing. The whole amphitheatre, said to contain 17,000 persons,

was filled in every part, round and round, and from the ground to the ceiling; carrying the imagination back to antiquity, and to "the butcheries of a Roman holiday." The arena is about 230 feet in diameter; this is surrounded by a strong wooden fence, about six feet in height, the upper half retiring about a foot, so as to leave, in the middle of the fence, a stepping-place, by which the men may be able, in time of danger, to throw themselves out of the arena. Behind this fence, there is an open space about nine feet wide, extending all the way round, meant as a retreat; and where also the men in reserve are in waiting, in case their companions should be killed, or disabled. Behind this space, is another higher and stronger fence bounding the amphitheatre, for the spectators; from this fence the seats decline backward, rising to the outer wall; and above these are the boxes, which are all roofed, and are, of course, open in front. Those on the east side, which are exposed to the sun, (for the spectacle always takes place in the evening), have awnings; but these are insufficient to screen the spectators from the heat; and accordingly,

the price of the places on the west side, is considerably more than the price of those exposed to the sun. Below, in what may be called the pit, the difference in price, according to sun or shade, is still greater, because there are there neither coverings nor awnings: so important, indeed, is this distinction considered, that there is not only one price for places in the sun, and another for places in the shade, but there is an intermediate price for places partly in the sun and partly in the shade,—exposed to the sun during the first part of the evening, but left in shade the latter part of it. The best places in the boxes cost about 4*s.*; the best in the amphitheatre below, about 2*s.* 6*d.*; the commonest place, next to the arena, costs four reals. In the centre of the west side, is the king's box; and scattered here and there, are the private boxes of the grandees and amateurs, distinguished by coloured silk drapery hanging over the front. In the boxes, I saw as many women as men,—and in the lower parts, the female spectators were also sufficiently numerous; all wore mantillas: and in the lower parts of the amphitheatre which were exposed to the sun, every spec-

tator, whether man or woman, carried a large circular paper fan, made for the occasion, and sold by men who walk round the arena before the fight begins, raising among the spectators their long poles, with fans suspended, and a little bag fixed here and there, into which the purchaser drops his four quartos ($1\frac{1}{4}d$).

The people now began to shew their impatience, and shouts of *el toro* were heard in a hundred quarters; and soon after, a flourish of trumpets and drums announced that the spectacle was about to commence. This created total silence,—one of the results of intense interest,—and the motion of the fans was for a moment suspended:—First entered the chief magistrate of the city, on horseback, preceded by two alguacils, or constables, and followed by a troop of cavalry, who immediately cleared the arena of every one who had no business there; next, an official entered on foot, who read an ordonnance of the king, commanding the fight, and requiring order to be kept; and these preliminaries having been gone through, the magistrates and cavalry retired, leaving the arena to the two picadores, who entered at the same moment. These are

mounted on horseback,—each holding a long lance or pike, and are the first antagonists the bull has to encounter; they stationed themselves on different sides of the arena, about twenty yards from the door at which the bull enters; and at a new flourish of trumpets, the gate flew open, and the bull rushed into the arena: this produced a deafening shout, and then total silence. The bulls differ very widely in courage and character: some are rash,—some cool and intrepid,—some wary and cautious,—some cowardly. Some, immediately upon perceiving the horse and his rider, rush upon them; others run bellowing round the arena,—some make towards one or other of the Chulos, who at the same moment that the bull appears, leap into the arena with coloured cloaks upon their arms; others stop, after having advanced a little way into the arena, look on every side, and seem uncertain what to do. The blood of the bull is generally first spilt: he almost invariably makes the first attack, advancing at a quick trot upon the picador, who generally receives him upon his pike, wounding him somewhere about the shoulder. Sometimes the bull, feeling himself

wounded, retires, to meditate a different plan of attack; but a good bull is not turned back by a wound,—he presses on upon his enemy, even if in doing so, the lance be buried deeper in his flesh. Attached to the mane of the bull is a crimson ribbon, which it is the great object of the picador to seize, that he may present to his mistress this important trophy of his prowess. I have frequently seen this ribbon torn off at the moment that the bull closed upon the picador.

The first bull that entered the arena, was a bad bull: he was deficient both in courage and cunning: the second, was a fierce bull of Navarre, from which province the best bulls are understood to come; he paused only for a moment after entering the arena, and then instantly rushed upon the nearest picador, who wounded him in the neck; but the bull disregarding this, thrust his head under the horse's belly, and threw both him and his rider upon the ground: the horse ran a little way; but encumbered with trappings, he fell,—and the bull, disregarding for a moment the fallen picador, pursued the horse, and pushing at him, broke the girths and disengaged the

animal, which finding itself at liberty, galloped round the arena—a dreadful spectacle, covered with gore, and its entrails trailing upon the ground. The bull now engaged the chulas: these young men shew great dexterity and sometimes considerable courage, in the running fight, or rather play, in which they engage the bull,—flapping their cloaks in his face,—running zig-zag when pressed, and throwing down the garments to arrest his progress a moment, and then vaulting over the fence,—an example which is sometimes followed by the disappointed animal. But this kind of warfare, the bull of Navarre seemed to consider child's play,—and leaving these cloaked antagonists, he made furiously at the other picador, dexterously evading the lance, and burying his horns in the horse's breast: the horse and his rider extricated themselves, and galloped away; but suddenly the horse dropped down, the wound having proved mortal. The bull, victorious over both enemies, stood in the centre of the arena, ready to engage another; but the spectators, anxious to see the prowess of the bull directed against another set of antagonists, expressed their desire by a mono-

tonous clapping of hands, and beating of sticks, a demonstration of their will perfectly understood, and always attended to.

The *banderilleros* then entered : their business is to throw darts into the neck of the bull ; and in order to do this, they are obliged to approach with great caution, and to be ready for a precipitate retreat ; because it sometimes happens that the bull, irritated by the dart, disregards the cloak which the *banderillero* throws down to cover his retreat, and closely pursues the aggressor. I saw one *banderillero* so closely pursued, that he saved himself only by leaping over the bull's neck. The danger, however, is scarcely so great as it appears to the spectator to be ; because the bull makes the charge with his eyes shut. The danger of the *picador* who is thrown upon the ground, is much greater ; because, having made the charge, the bull then opens his eyes, and the life of the *picador* is only saved by the address of the *chulos*, who divert the attention of the victor. Generally, the *banderilleros* do not make their appearance until the bull appears by his movements, to decline the combat with the *picadors* ; which he shews by scraping the

ground with his feet, and retiring. If the bull shew little spirit, and the spectators wish that he should be goaded into courage, the cry is "*fuego*," and then the banderilleros are armed with darts, containing a kind of squib, which explodes while it sticks in the animal's neck.

When the people are tired of the banderilleros, and wish to have a fresh bull, they signify their impatience in the usual way, and the signal is then given for the *matador*, whose duty it is to kill the bull. The matador is in full court dress, and carries a scarlet cloak over his arm, and a sword in his hand: the former he presents to the bull; and when the bull rushes forward, he steps aside and plunges his sword in the animal's neck; at least so he ought to do, but the service is a dangerous one, and the matador is frequently killed. Sometimes it is impossible for the matador to engage upon equal terms a very wary bull, which is not much exhausted. This was the case with the sixth bull which I saw turned out: it was an Andalusian bull, and was both wary and powerful. Many times the matador attempted to engage him, but without success; he was constantly upon the watch, always

disregarding the cloak, and turning quick round upon the matador, who was frequently in imminent danger. At length the people were tired of this lengthened combat, and seeing no prospect of it ending, called for the *semi-luna*, an instrument with which a person skulks behind, and cuts the ham-strings of the animal: this the bull avoided a long while, always turning quickly round; and even after this cruel operation was performed, he was still a dangerous antagonist, fighting upon his knees, and even pursuing the matador. The moment the bull falls, he is struck with a small stiletto, which pierces the *cerebellum*; folding doors, opposite to those by which the bull enters, are thrown open, and three mules, richly caparisoned and adorned with flags, gallop in; the dead bull is attached by a hook to a chain, and the mules gallop out, trailing the bull behind them: this is the work of a moment,—the doors close,—there is a new flourish of trumpets; and another bull rushes upon the arena.

And how do the Spaniards conduct themselves during all these scenes?—The intense interest which they feel in this game is visible

throughout, and often loudly expressed; an astounding shout always accompanies a critical moment:—whether it be the bull or the man who is in danger, their joy is excessive; but their greatest sympathy is given to the feats of the bull. If the picador receives the bull gallantly, and forces him to retreat; or if the matador courageously faces, and wounds the bull, they applaud these acts of science and valour: but if the bull overthrow the horse and his rider; or if the matador miss his aim, and the bull seems ready to gore him, their delight knows no bounds. And it is certainly a fine spectacle to see the thousands of spectators rise simultaneously, as they always do when the interest is intense: the greatest and most crowded theatre in Europe presents nothing half so imposing as this. But how barbarous, how brutal is the whole exhibition! Could an English audience witness the scenes that are repeated every week in Madrid?—a universal burst of “shame!” would follow the spectacle of a horse, gored and bleeding, and actually treading upon his own entrails, while he gallops round the arena: even the appearance of the goaded bull could not be borne,—panting,

covered with wounds and blood, lacerated by darts, and yet brave and resolute to the end.

The spectacle continued two hours and a half; and during that time, there were seven bulls killed, and six horses. When the last bull was dispatched, the people immediately rushed into the arena, and the carcass was dragged out amid the most deafening shouts.

The expenses of the bull-fights are great; but the receipts far exceed them, leaving a very handsome sum for the benefit of the hospital, which, it is said, draws a revenue from these entertainments of 300,000 reals, (3000/ sterling). Some persons begin to affect a dislike of the bull-fight, but they go to it notwithstanding; and I think I may venture to say, from my own observation, that this national entertainment is not yet on the decline. The king occasionally goes; Don Carlos rarely; but Don Francis and his wife are generally to be seen there; and I noticed, that the private boxes of the nobility were as well filled as any other part of the house. On leaving the amphitheatre, I counted forty-five private carriages in waiting.

A few weeks afterwards, I was present at

another bull-fight. I have no intention of describing this also; but I gathered some information from it that had escaped me upon the former occasion. This time, I paid more attention to the demeanour of the people, than to the fight; and instead of securing a place in the boxes, I took my seat in the commonest division, that I might the better observe the character of the lower orders. It is not at all unusual for those of the nobility who are amateurs of the bull-fight, to place themselves among the lowest classes; a true lover of the bull-fight likes to be under no restrictions, but to express his delight as loudly as a peasant. In that place he is at his ease; he gives himself up to the full enjoyment of his passion; he applauds, he condemns, and gives vent to his joy like the people that surround him. This is true happiness to him. It is said that Don Francis occasionally disguises himself; and enjoys, even though Infante, the pleasure of a water-carrier.

At this fight, all the bulls were indifferent excepting one; but he proved himself a perfect master of the science. He rushed first

at one picador and then at the other, and overthrew both the horses and their riders; killing both horses, and wounding one of the picadores. Two fresh picadores immediately appeared; and these, he served in a precisely similar way: but the overthrow was more tragical—one of the horses and his rider were raised fairly into the air; and the horse falling so as to crush the rider between its body and the fence, he was killed upon the spot. The bull was now master of the arena; he had cleared it of men—three horses lay dead—and he stood in the midst, lashing his tail, and looking round for another enemy. This was a time to observe the character of the people. When the unfortunate picador was killed, in place of a general exclamation of horror, and loud expressions of pity, the universal cry was "*Que es bravo ese toro!*" Ah, the admirable bull!—the whole scene produced the most unbounded delight; the greater horror, the greater was the shouting, and the more vehement the expressions of satisfaction—I did not perceive a single female avert her head, or betray the slightest symptom of wounded feeling. Accidents do not occur so frequently as a spec-

tator would be apt to imagine: danger is in fact more apparent than real, because those who engage the bull are well trained to the combat. There is, both in Madrid and at Seville, a regular school of instruction, where those destined for Las Corridas, practise the art with young animals; and excepting the matadores, who are occasionally killed, no other of the combatants runs great risk from the bull. When the picador is killed, the catastrophe is always occasioned by the horse falling upon his rider, or crushing him against the inclosure.

Every time I attended a bull-fight, I was more and more impressed with a conviction of its cruelty and brutality. It is improperly termed a fight, because the bull has never a chance of victory and escape; it is merely a massacre,—and the series of abominable cruelties exhibited in the treatment of the horses, stamps the whole with a character of brutality and barbarism, sufficient, in my opinion, to separate Spain from the list of civilized nations. It is not merely the atrocities that an interested contractor for the bull-fights may permit,—not merely that the pica-

dor continues to ride upon an animal bathed in blood, and whose entrails trail upon the ground,—but that the Spanish people can witness and tolerate such barbarity. I do not wish to seem prejudiced; but I cannot believe that there are many among the very lowest ranks in this country who would not, at such a spectacle, cry out “kill him!” It was proposed by the present queen to envelope the horses in a net, by which the most disgusting part of the exhibition would have been concealed; but this was a refinement which it was thought would not be relished by the mob, and I believe it was never attempted. By the horses having no power of defence, and by their being deprived of the means of consciousness of their condition, the cruelty of the spectacle is increased. Townshend, that very respectable and accurate writer, is in error when he speaks of the courage shewn by the horses in facing their enemies: this, if true, would give a character of greater nobility to the entertainment; but the horses know neither their enemies nor their danger; their eyes are blinded, and their ears are tied up. If the horses were netted round

the body, and if they were led off the arena when wounded; if their eyes were uncovered, that when the rider was unhorsed, they might have a chance of escape, in place of standing to be gored, unconscious of the vicinity of the enemy,—if the semi-luna were discontinued;—and, above all, if a valiant bull, which could unhorse two picadores without being wounded, and parry two or three thrusts of the matador, were allowed the reward of its victory—life: then the bull-fight would be divested of much of its barbarism, without losing, but, on the contrary, greatly adding to the interest which it at present possesses.

It is impossible to witness a spectacle like this, without being impressed with a conviction that such exhibitions must produce some influence upon the character of a people. One would naturally argue that there must be an affinity between the character of a people and their amusements, especially since we actually find this affinity among several savage nations; and yet I should be doing gross injustice to the Spanish character, if I said that any such affinity existed in Spain. There is nothing of deliberate cruelty in the character of a

Spaniard,—less hard-heartedness than I have found among most other nations:—he invariably treats his mule with the utmost kindness, he is mindful even of his dog and his cat. The murders which are so frequent in the south of Spain, are the result of an irascible temper, brandy, and a hot climate; but are never deliberate: and the robberies, which originate in poverty, and which bad laws encourage, are rarely attended by violence. All this is a riddle,—nor is it less a riddle, that the females who can look unmoved, and even with pleasure, upon scenes from which a woman of any other nation turns away disgusted, do not possess less refinement than the females of other countries. Generally speaking, the character of the Spanish woman is kind and compassionate; and even among the lower ranks, I have heard sentiments that would do honour to the women of those countries that are esteemed the foremost in refinement.

The first attempt at a horse race in Madrid, was made last autumn; and as I am upon the subject of diversions, I shall give a slight sketch of the Spanish mode of conducting these things. The ground chosen for the race,

was a sandy road, extending from the bridge of Toledo along the canal. The road is a common cart road, covered with stones, and full of ruts; and the distance was about two miles. A large concourse of persons was attracted to the spot by the novelty of the entertainment. There were between two and three hundred horsemen, and upwards of twenty carriages on the ground; among others, the handsome equipage of the Duke of San Carlos, the owner of one of the horses, an English mare, called Pensive. Her only opponent was a Spanish horse. Pensive was ridden by a jockey, dressed in the English fashion; the horse, by a Spanish groom, in the dress of a peasant. Pensive was a very indifferent animal, but had seen better days, and would have been distanced at a sixth-rate English race. Before starting, the horses were held by a man at the head of each, and at a signal, they were let go. The greatest possible anxiety was shewn by the spectators, that the English mare might be beaten; but it came in two or three lengths before its opponent. This created extraordinary disappointment; but the crowd resolved that the next heats

should be different; and they carried their resolution into effect. They formed an avenue just wide enough for the horses; and as the Spanish horse passed, every one struck it with a stick, a whip, a stone, or whatever was at hand, and so urged it on; and partly owing to this, and partly owing to some carts intercepting the road, the Spanish horse gained both heats. This triumph was followed by loud acclamations; and so intemperate was the mob in its joy, that the grossest insults were offered to the carriage of the Duke of San Carlos as he left the ground. I heard it reported, that the Duke intended to take the field again with better horses, and upon better ground; and that horse races in Madrid would re-commence at a future time, under the patronage of one of the Infantes.

CHAPTER VI.

MEMOIR OF MURILLO.

A slight sketch of the life of Murillo, will not be considered an inappropriate introduction to some notice of his principal works, yet to be found in the Picture Gallery of Madrid, and in the churches, convents, and hospitals of Seville.

e/ ESTABAN MURILLO, the prince of painters, was born at Seville, on the 1st of January, 1618. The small town of *Pilas*, in Andalusia, has disputed this honour with Seville; but the claim of *Pilas* to this distinction has probably arisen from the fact, that his mother was from *Pilas*, and that he inherited, through her, some property in that neighbourhood. But it is of little importance whether the courtly Seville, or the lowly *Pilas*, gave birth

to Murillo ; they may feel equally honoured in his name, for the name of Murillo belongs to his country. How he acquired the name of *Estaban*, has also been matter of dispute : some say he derived it from his father, who, it is said, was called Gaspar Estaban Murillo ; and others are of opinion, that he took the name of his maternal uncle ; but this dispute is of even less importance than that respecting the place of his nativity. Neither of the Estabans are now alive, to claim the honour of such a name-son ; and Murillo's honours are independent of his kindred.

Great painters, more than any other class of eminent men, have given intimation, during childhood, of the distinction to which they have afterwards attained ; and if the chronicles and traditions of Murillo record truly, his infancy did not form an exception. This fact is not difficult to account for ; because, at the earliest age, the genius of the painter finds facilities for displaying itself. The infant musician to whom nature has denied a vocal talent, cannot, without an acquaintance with some instrument, convey a knowledge of his powers ; still less can the infant poet embody

poetic conceptions, without an acquaintance with language: but the painter finds, every where around, the means of giving expression to his thoughts: a dark and a light substance are all he requires; and in Spain, where the walls of the rooms are almost universally white-washed, the infant Murillo could find no obstacle to the indulgence of his genius.

The parents of Murillo saw no good likely to arise from an inclination for daubing the walls, and scratching the brick floors; and did all that lay in their power to discourage it; but the boy knew his calling, and still continued to disappoint the hopes of his father, who had destined him for the church; and to exhaust the patience of his mother, who, as it is said, returning one day from mass, found that her only picture, which she prized highly—an infant Christ and a lamb—had suffered an extraordinary transformation. Murillo had taken the glory from the head of the Christ, and substituted his own little hat, intending to represent himself; and the lamb he had converted into a dog—an animal in which he took great delight. Murillo was then too young to be conscious of any impiety in this

transformation; the bent of his mind through life, was wholly averse from this: but his parents, despairing of a cure, thought it advisable to let him have his own way, and sent him to the house of his kinsman, *Juan de Castillo*, who undertook to teach the youthful Murillo the first principles of design and colouring.

This Castillo was no despicable hand; especially in the art of colouring, for a knowledge of which, he was partly indebted to Luis de Varjas, who had sometime before returned to Seville from Italy, bringing along with him the knowledge which he had acquired in Florence. Besides the youthful Murillo, Castillo could boast of several other disciples in his school; particularly Pedro de Moya,—of whom, more hereafter,—and Alonzo Cano, whose freedom of touch, natural design, and charming colouring, afterwards secured for him a high rank among Spanish painters. But Murillo, whose genius was of still a loftier kind, soon supplanted his companions in the favour of his master, by the yet more rapid progress which he made in the art; but he continued, notwithstanding, to discharge the

menial offices of grinding the colours, cleaning the brushes, and preparing the canvas,—such being the original conditions upon which he had been admitted into his relation's workshop.

There was at this time much rivalry among the masters in Seville, each of whom had a school in his own house,—and this rivalry was fully partaken by their pupils; for the reputation of the schools necessarily depended, in a great measure, upon the proficiency of the pupils. Murillo felt deeply interested in the honour of his kinsman's school; and he, probably perceiving in his young disciple, a promise of excellence that might afterwards reflect honour upon himself, was the more assiduous in his instructions; so that, after a few years, Murillo had well nigh exhausted the information which his master was able to communicate.

But at this time Castillo suddenly quitted Seville to reside in Cadiz; his school was broken up, and Murillo was left without a master. It is probable that the most important moment of his life,—that upon which has hinged his future character,—was, when feeling

the helplessness of his condition, he meditated upon his future prospects, and present necessities; and asked himself that plain question, which must be put and answered by all who are situated like him, "What shall I do?" How much depended upon this resolve! for often has genius been extinguished because no friendly hand was by, to fan the flame yet struggling for existence,—often discouraged, by being left to grope its way in darkness. Some in Murillo's condition, might have abandoned a profession that held out no solid advantages; and others, would have sought a new master. But Murillo, whether from a confidence in his own powers, or from an unwillingness to enter any of those other schools which had been rivals to Castillo's, came to a resolution more fortunate for himself and for the world: he determined to throw himself upon his own resources, and to trust in his genius.

It happened, at this time, to be the fair at Seville, at which season there was always a demand for devotional pictures, both for the uses of the pious at home, and for exportation to America. But these pictures were always

of the most wretched description, and painted by the lowest artists ; and with so much haste, that it not unusually happened that some favourite saint was painted during the time that the devout purchaser bargained for the price ; nor was it a rare occurrence that the painter should be required to change a Magdalen into a Madonna ; a Virgin into St. Anthony of Padua ; or a group of cherubs into the souls in purgatory. Murillo took his place in the fair, and painted whatever was required, at whatever price was offered ; and there can be little doubt that this varied and rapid practice gave a freedom to the pencil, and a facility in the expression of ideas, which years of study under a master might have failed to produce.

Murillo had now attained his twenty-third year ; and at this time a circumstance occurred, which had an important influence upon his future career ; this was, the arrival in Seville of Pedro de Moya. It will be recollected, that Pedro de Moya was a co-disciple with Murillo, in the school of Castillo ; but he had, some years before, and while Murillo was still a pupil, left it and Seville ; and had subsequently

gone to Flanders as a soldier, with a greater disposition to see the world than to paint. But his natural propensities had only been suspended by the desire of novelty, so natural to youth: for meeting in Flanders with the works of Van Dyk, and other eminent Flemish masters, he returned to his profession, and became a disciple of that great painter, under whom he acquired those graces, with which he returned to Seville, to excite the admiration and the hopes of Murillo.

Murillo, struck with the improvement of his former companion, set himself to imitate his style; but fortunately for Murillo, who might otherwise have degenerated into a copyist, Moya soon quitted Seville, and he was left to his aspirations and his difficulties. Conscious of his own great imperfections, he had obtained a glimpse of what might be the reward of courage and perseverance; and his desires suggested many projects for their gratification. It is a trying, and yet a happy moment for genius, that in which humility and pride arise together, bringing with them the discovery, that the past has been a blank leaf in existence; but begetting a desire to

turn over another, and to fill it with things that shall never be blotted out. Such was, doubtless, the state of the young painter's mind, when he resolved upon quitting his native city, and seeking in Flanders, or Italy, the opportunities by which he might hope to realise his dream of fame.

But Murillo was without money, and without friends; and how could he travel to Flanders or Italy? His reputation in Seville, as a painter, was small; for although his practice of working for the fair, had in reality increased his powers, it was little likely to add to his respectability; and it was a question, therefore, not easily solved, how he should obtain the means of effecting his design. But even in this extremity, courage did not desert him; and an expedient was found, by which he might modestly replenish his purse. He purchased a large piece of canvas; primed it himself; and dividing it into unequal parts, painted upon it, every possible variety of subject,—saints, landscapes, animals, flowers,—but particularly devotional pieces. With this treasure, he went to Cadiz, to tempt the masters.

of the India vessels. Among so many subjects, the taste of every one could find something to gratify it, and he returned to Seville without any of his canvas, and with a little stock of pistoles.

Murillo did not now delay a moment longer the execution of his purpose. Communicating his design only to his brother, who lived at Seville in the house of an uncle, he left his native city at the age of twenty-four, to return, and afterwards enrich it with undying memorials of that genius which is the glory of Spain, and the just pride of the city where it was chiefly exercised.

It is a long and toilsome journey from Seville to Madrid; and many must have been the anxious thoughts that filled the mind of the adventurer; but the predominating feeling would doubtless be buoyant, for youth and genius are fertile in hope. We think we see the young painter leave his native town,—long visible in the majestic tower of the cathedral, at which he often turns round to gaze. We follow his steps (for his journey was performed on foot) up the banks of the *Guadatquivir*, flowing towards his home; we see him

with his scanty supplies toiling up the defiles of the *Sierra Morena*, and looking upon the other side, over the wide plain of *La Mancha*; and we see him with a quickened step, hasten towards the capital, when he first descries its towers in the midst of the desert that surrounds it.

Velasquez was, at this time, first painter to the king's bed-chamber, and highly esteemed at the court of Philip IV.; he was then past the prime of life, and almost beyond its vicissitudes; and surrounded by friends, and full of honours, he could feel no jealousy of the friendless boy who came to him for advice and protection. Murillo no sooner arrived in Madrid, than he bethought himself of waiting upon Velasquez; and he found in this good man, and excellent painter, a friend who instantly became his guide; and who never deserted him, even when the progress of the pupil seemed to point out a rival of his own immortality.

Velasquez questioned Murillo as to his family, his studies, his knowledge, his motives, and his wishes; and, like a true lover of his art, admiring the spirit and enthusiasm which

were disclosed in the answers of Murillo, and approving the motive of his journey,—and, doubtless, discovering in his conversation, tokens by which a man of Velasquez's experience and knowledge, might draw a presage of his future greatness, he took the young painter under his roof as a pupil, a friend, and a countryman. Murillo did not accept the hospitality of Velasquez without immediately proving himself worthy of it. The object of his journey was uppermost in his thoughts; and Velasquez, without delay, afforded him the requisite facilities for prosecuting his design. He sent him to the different palaces, and to the convent of the Escorial, that he might see, and study, the pictures of the great masters; and directed him to select such as he might be ambitious of copying; and by this, Velasquez could not fail to obtain farther insight into the bent of his genius, and would even be able to judge better of its extent. What a moment for Murillo, when, entering the sacristy of the Escorial, he first beheld the works of Raphael, and Da Vinci, and Titian, and Paul Veronese!

The three years that followed the arrival of

Murillo in Madrid, afford little incident for the biographer. During these years, he was no doubt laying the foundation of his future eminence, by practising his pencil and his eye among the excellent models to which he had access; among whom, no one was a greater favourite with Murillo than his kind friend and patron, Velasquez. It is certain, that he also highly esteemed the genius of Titian; and although he adopted no exclusive model, his admiration of that great head of the Venetian school is discernible in many of his works.

It appears, however, that Murillo did not confine himself to the study of these two masters, but that he also occupied himself with the works of Van Dyk, and of Rebera (Españoletto); for when Velasquez accompanied the king into Catalonia, Murillo, upon his return, shewed him three copies from pictures of Van Dyk, Rebera, and himself. These were presented to the king; and surprised equally the court and Velasquez, by their fidelity, and the excellence of their execution; so much so, that Murillo is said to have been

advised to occupy himself henceforward with the works of only these masters.

But the time now approached, when Murillo should no longer copy the works of others; but when he should himself become a model for the imitation of succeeding ages. At the return of Velasquez from a second journey, in which he had accompanied the king to Saragossa, he was so much struck with the progress of his *protégé*, that he told him he could gain nothing more by a residence in Madrid; and advised him to travel to Rome, to which city he offered to furnish him with letters of recommendation, and other advantages; not the least of these, being the command of his purse.

The true reason of Murillo's rejection of this advice, it is impossible to ascertain; but he had resolved upon returning to his native city. It has been commonly said, that the importunities of a brother whom he highly esteemed, and certain domestic causes, recalled him: but it seems more probable, that his determination was the result of an internal conviction, that he had already accomplished

the end for which he left the place of his nativity; and it is also possible, that a disinclination to be a farther debtor for the good offices of Velasquez, without which he could not have journeyed into Italy,—may have had its influence. Velasquez, although not approving the determination of his young friend, did not oppose his design; and Murillo returned to his native city.

It chanced, that at this time the Franciscan friars desired to have eleven historical pictures, to adorn the *Claustro Chico* of their convent; but, as the sum to be paid for these, arose solely from alms, which a devout person had collected for the purpose, it may be supposed that the painter who might undertake to execute the order, could not expect a very liberal remuneration. Accordingly, the principal painters then in Seville, shewed no great disposition to engage in the work; and the friars, failing to secure the talents of any of those who had the reputation of being the first masters, found themselves obliged to be contented with an inferior hand, and applied to Murillo, who, being then more needy than his brethren, willingly undertook the commission,

in which he no doubt perceived other advantages than the paltry remuneration proposed to him.

No sooner was this order executed, than Murillo found the reward of his perseverance, and a repayment of all his anxieties and difficulties. The utmost surprise was excited in Seville; he was universally courted; the performances of his pencil were greedily sought after; and he at once found himself the acknowledged head of the schools of Seville. This was indeed an hour of pride for the friendless artist, who, a few years before, had cast himself and his fortunes upon the wide world.

But another reward awaited Murillo,—the hand of Donna Beatrix de Cabrera y Sotomayor, a lady of Pilas, possessing many virtues, great sweetness of temper, and mistress of a considerable fortune. Her claims to beauty have been doubted; for no picture of her is known to be extant: the story, however, which is related respecting the manner in which he won her, is rather at variance with this supposition. It is said that Murillo, having occasion to visit Pilas, on account of some property which had

descended to him in right of his mother, saw the Donna Beatrix; and struck with the sweetness of her countenance, and her other graces, became enamoured of her. Her station in life, however, was higher than his own; and despairing of a successful issue, he was trying to efface the impression she had made, when a circumstance occurred that renewed the recollection of her, by suggesting a means of advancing his suit. He accepted an order to paint the altar-piece for the church of St. Geronimo, at Pilas; and in the countenance of an angel, he painted that of his mistress. This delicate gallantry is said to have won the heart of the Donna Beatrix. The story may, or may not be true; but it is chronicled in Pilas.

From the time of Murillo's marriage, he appears to have run a constant career of glory; advancing in true excellence, and in public estimation. His style suffered some changes during this career; but always towards perfection; improving in sweetness and delicacy, and in warmth and richness of colouring. The earliest celebrated picture of Murillo, after his first change in style, was *The Conception*, for

the Franciscan convent; from the archives of which, it appears that he received for it the sum of 2500 reals (25*l.* sterling); a small sum even in those days; but it is probable that Murillo might have taken into consideration, the reputed poverty of the order; and this is the more probable, since shortly after, in 1656, he painted the great picture of St. Anthony of Padua, for the baptismal altar of the cathedral of Seville, for which he received 10,000 reals (100*l.* sterling). But the most glorious epoch in the career of Murillo, was later in life: it was between 1670 and 1680, that he painted for the hospital *De la Caridad*, his *Santa Isabella*, the *Prodigal Son*, the *Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes*, *Moses Striking the Rock*, *John of God*, and others, that are looked upon as the most excellent of his works. The twenty-five celebrated pictures also, that adorn the Capuchin convent in Seville, were the production of his ripest genius; but they were painted antecedently to the pictures of the *Caridad*; and to those who are conversant with the works of Murillo, there is a still more perfect charm in the latter. The highest price that Murillo appears to have received for any

picture, is 15,975 reals,—a little more than 150*l.* sterling. This he received for the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes.

In the year 1658, eleven years after his return to Seville, Murillo projected the establishment of an academy of painting in his native city. This project was warmly opposed by many, especially by Herrera, who had newly returned from Italy, filled with high, and doubtless just notions, of the greatness of the Italian schools; and looking with suspicion upon a school, whose founder had never travelled beyond Spain. But the genius of Murillo, at length conquered the prejudices of Herrera; and the academy was opened on the 1st of January, 1660, with Murillo at its head, as first president. It may be mentioned, as an instance of the painter's modesty, that in the list of members of the institution, drawn out by himself, the name of Herrera appears at the head of the list.

There is one passage in the life of Murillo, connected, too, with some of the greatest efforts of his genius, upon which there appears to hang a mystery. I allude to that period during which he painted the twenty-five pic-

tures that adorn the Capuchin convent. The usual version of the story is, that Murillo, finding himself in some difficulty, took refuge in the Capuchin convent; and in return for the protection afforded him by the monks, dedicated his talents to the embellishment of their church. But it is difficult to give credence to this. Murillo led a blameless life; and ever after his marriage, his pecuniary circumstances were flourishing. What, therefore, could be the necessity that obliged Murillo to take refuge in a convent, it is impossible to conjecture. At the same time, it is certain that in that convent there are twenty-five of Murillo's pictures; and in the archives of the convent, there is no record of any sum having been paid for these. It is certain, too, that the tradition is steadily maintained within the convent, that Murillo was an inmate of it during two years. The monks even relate little traits of his character and habits; and a picture of St. John, the Virgin, and Child, is shewn by them,—painted upon a table napkin; and it is certain that the picture is Murillo's. The only solution of these difficulties is, that upon the death of his