and there a scattering tree relieved the monotony. Presently after, we drew near some country inns, where groups of people had halted to refresh themselves on their way to or from the city; and hard by was a fountain, at which horses, goats, and asses were slaking their thirst; whilst a young girl came, like Rebecca of old, with a stone jar upon her head in search of water. Being unwilling to enter Toledo, where I was to remain a few days, in the same state in which I had sallied from Aranjuez, whither I might never return again, I now slid down from my rocin, as he stood drinking from the full curb of the fountain, and discharged Jose, with many good wishes on both sides. Then having shaken off the dust which had gathered about me, I took a long draught from the cool jar of the maiden, and crossed the road, to take a nearer view of the coarse and defaced statue of the good king Wamba.

The road now wound up a rocky eminence, and presently after came to an abrupt precipice, connected with a similar one, which stood opposite, by a convenient bridge. These precipices were the banks of the Tagus. On reaching the middle of the bridge, I paused to look down upon the stream, and could hardly persuade myself that the Tagus, which at Aranjuez glides so peacefully through a level valley amid groves and gardens, was indeed

the same with the noisy torrent, which now foamed and fretted its way between rocks and precipices, and at such a fearful distance beneath me, that I grew dizzy as I gazed. From the bridge the road led, by winding approaches, along the rocky cone upon the pinnacle of which Toledo is situated, until it brought me at length to one of the portals of the city. Over the centre of the arch was a two-headed eagle, reminding me that I was about to enter an imperial city, the residence of two emperors, Alonso el Sabio and Carlos Quinto. Having traversed a huge square, enclosed by ranges of buildings with arcades and balconies, I found comfortable quarters in the Fondadel Arzobispo.

Lady and gentleman of Castile with Moorish girl.

CHAPTER XII.

KINGDOM OF NEW CASTILE.

Toledo.—Present Condition.—Father Thomas.—Cathedral.—Private Habitations.—Alcazar and other Buildings.—Vega.—Sword Manufactory and Quemadero.—Evening Ramble.—Leave Toledo in a Coche de Coleras.—Amusing Ride.—Venta Scenes.—Return to Madrid.

TOLEDO is a very old city; so old, indeed, that there is a vulgar tradition among its inhabitants, that Adam was the first king of Spain, and that Toledo was his capital; nay, more, at the moment when the machine of creation was set in motion, the sun started from the meridian of Toledo.

Under the Roman domination, Toledo was the capital of the Carpitania, and had the privilege of coining money, though it never rose to the dignity of a colony. The people of this province were among the bravest in Spain; for it included within its limits that Numantia so famous for its bloody and terrible resistance against the Romans, and which was at length annihilated by Scipio Africanus. The long residence of the Goths in Toledo accounts sufficiently for the existence of so few remains of those noble monuments with which the Romans were used to mark their dominion; for

the Goths are said to have been so eager to destroy all record of the Roman power, that they would demolish the finest columns, and even throw medals into the Tagus. Traces of an amphitheatre may, however, be seen near the city. A single arch is still standing, and the outline of the whole may yet be discovered.

It was in the neighbourhood of Toledo that Taric, the Moslem general at the time of the conquest of Spain by the Arabs, found that precious table adorned with hyacinths and emeralds, which Gelif Aledris, in his description of Spain, calls the table of Solomon ben David. This table is supposed to have been saved by the captive Jews, with other precious and sacred vessels, from the pillage of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, and brought with them into Spain. It was probably the same table of the shew-bread * spoken of in the book of Kings and by Josephus, and which, with the candlestick and

* There can be little doubt that this was the original table of shew-bread made by Solomon, and that it was secreted by the Jews when the treasures of the temple were carried by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon. That table which Titus brought with him on his triumphal return to Rome was not the same; for when the city and temple were rebuilt, after the first destruction, by the order of Cyrus, the sacred vessels were made anew, similar indeed to the old, but of inferior excellence, wanting, as they did, the anointing oil, which Moses had compounded at the divine command. See Prideaux's Connexions; Horne's Introduction; Book of Exodus.

the altar of incense, constituted the three wonders of the temple *.

Under the Arab domination, Toledo rose to a high degree of prosperity. The Christians were protected in the possession of their property and in the exercise of their faith; and the Jews found in the Moslems a people of more congenial origin and of a spirit infinitely more tolerant, and were allowed to give full scope to their diligence and industry. The system of agriculture which the Arabs introduced into Spain was likewise calculated to increase the productiveness of a country, where cultivation is greatly retarded by the extreme dryness of the climate. The soil was every where irrigated by calling in the aid of streams and rivers, where they were convenient, and elsewhere by the digging of wells and the construction of nórias. Thus some tracts were rendered very fertile which had hitherto been little so, and verdure was introduced amidst rocks and ravines.

Toledo declined in prosperity after it was conquered by the Christians in 1085, owing to the unwise oppression of its Moorish inhabitants. According to the terms of the capitulation, the Moors were to be allowed the free possession of their property and exercise of their faith; but the sti-

* Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, book viii. chap. 2.

pulations were gradually forgotten by the conquerors. Their churches were taken from them, one by one, and purified, and their property plundered by force or fraud; until, at length, they were glad to escape from a city, which, though dear to them as the place of their nativity, was embittered by the recollection of ruined privileges and lost liberty.

After a considerable lapse of time, Toledo again rose from its ruins, and became a most flourishing commercial and manufacturing city. At the beginning of the seventeenth century it had a population of not less than two hundred thousand souls, and there is even extant a petition of the inhabitants for a redress of some grievances, which states that manufactures were in such a fallen condition, that there no longer remained more than thirty thousand artisans. In the present century, the entire population of Toledo does not amount to twenty thousand. This unexampled decay is partly owing to the removal of the court, partly to the bloody persecutions of the descendants of the Jews, who had become Christians, in order to save their property and remain in their native land, at the time of the general expulsion of that vagrant and unhappy people. They were among the most industrious and richest of the inhabitants; and it is, perhaps, to this fact that they were mainly in-

debted for the solicitude of the Holy Office. The loss of its liberties and privileges in the time of Charles V., and the gradual enslavement of the whole nation under his successors, are, however, the chief causes of the decline of industry and wealth in Toledo, where it is even more remarkable than in any other part of Spain.

But though the prosperity of Toledo has passed away, though the industrious classes have dwindled, and well nigh disappeared, the priests and friars still remain, and maintain themselves without diminution. There are now in Toledo near one hundred religious establishments, whether parish churches, convents of monks and nuns, chapels or hermitages. Many of these are endowed with rich estates in the city or surrounding country, and are supported in a style of great magnificence. The Cathedral alone is said to have six hundred people connected with it, including priests, singers, and familiars. Previous to the Revolution, the archbishop's share of the *dismes* and other revenues belonging to the Cathedral amounted to the enormous sum of six hundred thousand dollars. Though doubtless much reduced by the alienation of their estates, by the imperfect payment of the disme, and by the heavy subsidies annually granted to the king, in his present emergency, yet, according to the admission of the clergy themselves, it is still

worth two hundred thousand dollars. The canons, inferior dignitaries, and servants, are all provided for on the same princely scale.

Toledo, indeed, furnishes a striking epitome of the national decay. Here you may see the monuments of past magnificence crumbling to pieces, and ready to crush the squalid habitations of modern times. If you go forth into those streets, which were once thronged with busy artisans and bustling soldiers, you are met by burly priests in unwieldy hats and sable garments, or filthy friars, with shaven crowns and robes of dirty flannel, their well filled and sensual faces giving a flat denial to the humility of their attire. These, with the realistas and hordes of able-bodied beggars, who receive their regular meals at the convent doors and bring up families without labor, compose no inconsiderable part of the population of Toledo. Instead of the noise of the loom and the shuttle, and the voice of cheerful labor, which announced the presence of an industrious and happy people, you may now hear the tinkling bell of the host, or the louder tolling of some convent clock, calling the lazy inmates to the daily duties of the refectory. The stirring sounds of martial music are exchanged for the nasal monotony of perpetual masses. But though there is much religion in Toledo, there is very little morality. There is, on the contrary, a

vast deal of libertinism in this same sainted city. Indeed, how can it be otherwise, when so large a number of robust and high fed men are interdicted from the open enjoyment of domestic and family endearments, and, at the same time, provided with money to purchase the gratification of every desire? Many of the clergy, doubtless, observe their vow of celibacy, many have domestic establishments and families, many lead a roving life, and prey upon the community. Hence the privilege of legitimating three hundred misbegotten children, conceded in the thirteenth century by the papal see, to that great prelate, Don Roderic, though inadequate to the wants of Toledo, must, if it still exist, be very useful*. The offspring of this clerical intercourse furnish monks and nuns for the convents of Toledo; just as the mendicants rear their hopeful offspring, to nourish and keep alive the beggarly fraternity.

On the afternoon of my arrival I went to see the *Canonigo*, to whom Father Patrick had addressed me. The people of the inn gave me the name of his street, and, after inquiring my way through many very short, narrow, and crooked lanes, and up and down several hills, I came at length to the one I was in search of. It was not more than five or

* Mariana.

six feet wide, and there are many such, not only in Toledo, but in all the old Moorish cities of Spain. I had not penetrated far into this dark defile before coming to the house of the Canonigo. The inner door, at which I knocked, was opened, after the customary challenge and reply, by a cord from the upper corridor, connected with the latch. Having asked for the Canonigo, the housekeeper said she would see if *Su Merced* had finished his siesta, and returning in the next moment, bade me pass on, and ushered me into his study.

I found Father Thomas a tall, thin man, about sixty years of age, with a dried up abstemious look, as of one who had ever been true to his vows. His outer cloak was thrown aside, and, instead of the long hat, he wore a square cap of black velvet, surmounted by a tassel. He sat at an antique table covered with books and papers; and was arrayed in a long gown of bombazet, from beneath which emerged his well polished shoes, decorated by a pair of large silver buckles. The serene and benevolent aspect of Father Thomas impressed me favorably from the first; and this feeling increased, when, after reading the note of his old friend Father Patrick, he inquired with much interest after his health, and welcomed me to Toledo, making the usual offer of his dwelling with great kindness. Having offered me chocolate, he proposed a walk,

and taking his hat, cloak, and staff, he led me to the esplanade north of the city, and showed me the magnificent hospital of San Juan Bautista. Learning, in the course of our ramble, that my stay was to be very short, Father Thomas promised to set at once about showing me all the curiosities of Toledo, and accordingly made an engagement to meet me the next morning in the Cathedral, ere we separated at the door of the Posada.

The next morning found me in the Cathedral, agreeably to appointment. The ten o'clock mass was not yet concluded; but I did not regret the detention, for the music that accompanied it was indeed heavenly. In addition to one of the noble organs, placed beside the central nave, which are among the finest in Spain, there were a variety of bassoons, viols, and violins, and a powerful choir of voices, among which three or four, from their silver and flute-like tones, had evidently been purchased at no trifling sacrifice. The association, though painful, had become familiar, and I listened with admiration to a sublime and exquisite harmony, which borrowed a grave, foreboding, and melancholy cast, from the approaching solemnities of the Passion.

The mass over, I found Father Thomas near the baptismal fount, where he soon deposited in a chest the sacred vestments, in which he had been officiating.

Then, having resumed his ordinary garb, he began the circuit of the Cathedral. It appears that, so early as the sixth century, there existed a church on the site of the present edifice. At the period of the conquest it became a mosque; and when Toledo was again restored to the Christians, it returned to its original destination, although guaranteed to the Moors by an express article of the capitulation. Scarce, indeed, had King Alfonso departed from the captured city, which he left in possession of Constance his queen, when she, at the instigation of Bernard the archbishop, sent a party of soldiers, who entered it in the night, and drove out by force the Mussulmans, who were at their prayers. The whole was then carefully purified, altars were erected, and a bell being placed in the tower, the faithful were the next morning convened by its sound to their matin devotions. When Alfonso came to hear of these things, he was very indignant at this open violation of his royal word. He returned towards Toledo, resolved to punish the turbulent priests; nor would he be appeased, though they went forth to meet him dressed in mourning, until the Moors themselves, dreading the further vengeance of the clergy, sent an alfaqui to soothe the anger of the king. Since then the Cathedral has ever maintained its original destination, and in the thirteenth century was greatly enlarged and rebuilt,

as we now see it. It is four hundred feet long by two hundred broad, and has five distinct naves, sustained by the walls and by eighty-four gothic columns, placed in four rows. This edifice is lower than gothic churches usually are; but the central nave rises to an elevation of one hundred and sixty feet, and would appear to great advantage if the whole extent were seen. Being, however, cut up into a variety of divisions, for the choir and for altars, the grand effect is entirely destroyed. Upon the whole, this Cathedral metropolitan of all Spain is a noble and imposing edifice.

The Cathedral possesses few fine paintings on canvas, those which were good having disappeared during the war of Independence, when the French and Spaniards plundered every thing promiscuously. During that period of licence, the church treasure was carried to Cadiz, and thence brought back again, on the downfal of Napoleon. Its value is inestimable. Among the mass of gold, silver, and precious stones with which my eyes were dazzled, I was particularly struck with a large custodia for the exposition of the sacrament. It weighs seven thousand ounces of silver and gold, and is studded with precious gems. In the centre is a shrine of gold, weighing fifty pounds. Its chief value consists, however, in its elaborate workmanship, being constructed in very small pieces, which, when screwed together, form a

gothic tower, covered with the most beautiful fret-work. The most remarkable object among the treasures is an ample robe of state for the image of the Virgin. It is of satin, but so richly embroidered with pearls and studded with emeralds, amethysts, rubies, topazes, and diamonds, that the silk is entirely concealed. Clad in this robe, and holding an infant of solid gold, adorned with eight hundred jewels, the image of the Virgin is placed on certain occasions on a silver throne, weighing more than half a ton, and borne through the streets upon men's shoulders.

But if the treasure of the Cathedral be valuable, its reliquiary is, by the devout, esteemed still more so. Not to mention sundry pieces of the true cross and other relics, which may be found anywhere, it may be sufficient to name the veil of Santa Casilda. The story connected with this relic is very singular, and carries one back in imagination to a distant and peculiar age. San Ildefonso, one of the most distinguished worthies of the Spanish church, when archbishop of this same Cathedral, wrote a book in defence of the immaculacy of the Virgin, which had been attacked with much force of reasoning by the cavillers of that day. The Virgin, well pleased with this zeal of Ildefonso, sent her confidant, Santa Casilda, to signify her high satisfaction. The sainted patroness of Toledo appeared accordingly before the

archbishop, whilst performing mass in presence of the king and court, and paid him a very handsome compliment in Latin. Ildefonso, far from being terrified at this apparition, called to the king for the knife which he wore in his girdle, and cut off a piece of the veil, lest skeptics should set his story down as an invention. This fragment of the veil, and the king's knife, have ever since been preserved among the most sacred relics. Not satisfied with this honor conferred upon the defender of her reputation, the Virgin appeared publicly to Ildefonso in the church, and threw over him a garment of heavenly manufacture. This precious gift was carried to Oviedo at the time of the invasion by the infidels, and there it still remains; for the people of that city would by no means consent to relinquish their prize, and were once ready to revolt at the mere mention of such a thing. The stone upon which the Virgin alighted received the impression of her feet. It is still preserved in a chapel of the Cathedral, and is much worn by the hands of the faithful, who touch it with the ends of their fingers when grieved by disease or affliction. It would seem, however, that, notwithstanding all these miracles, this question of immaculacy is still in dispute, and has given rise to the watchword, common in Spain, of "*Ave Maria purissima!*"—"Hail, Mary most pure!" which must be replied to with "*Sin pecado concebida!*"

—"Conceived without sin!" In Toledo they have a very ingenious way of repeating these ejaculations frequently during the course of the day, and of gaining the annexed indulgence conceded by the holy see. Every person, before entering the door of another, instead of knocking, utters the exclamation, "*Ave Maria purissima!*"—The rejoinder of "*Sin pecado concebida!*" is considered a fair invitation to come in. In the fonda, where I lodged, every chamber had this watchword painted on the outside of the door, so as to remind the person about to enter of the sacred obligation. This singular salutation embarrassed me greatly at first; but having informed myself of the matter, I presently learned to shout the required response as loud as any *.

This Cathedral contains the sepulchres and remains of several of the kings of Castile. They are rudely represented by statues placed upon the tombs in a recumbent posture. The choir is surrounded within by a singular assemblage of uncouth figures. One of them represents the Moorish shepherd who was compelled to guide Alfonso VIII. and his army through an hitherto unknown pass of the Sierra Morena, where he fell unexpectedly upon the in-

* This salutation is in fact universal throughout Spain; and the mode of summoning the inhabitants of a house is to shout "Ave Maria" at the portal, or in the vacant chambers.

fidel host, and gained the bloody battle called Las Navas de Tolosa. Here is also a statue of the alfaqui who went forth to meet and pacify the irritated Alfonso, on his way to Toledo to punish the archbishop for breaking the capitulation.

On one side of the Cathedral is a square court, enclosed by ranges of columns and a covered cloister. The walls are beautifully painted in fresco by Bayeux; and it is greatly to be regretted that such noble specimens of the arts should have been placed in the open air, where they must suffer premature decay. The lives of Saint Eugenia and Leocadia, two patronesses of Toledo, furnish the subject of most of these pieces. There is one, however, placed beside the principal door, in which I admired not less the singularity of the group, than the excellence and vivacity of its execution. It represents a number of men in the old Spanish costume, who are busily employed in crucifying a lad not more than ten years old. One man stands upon a ladder, in the act of drawing the heart from an incision which he has made in the child's side. After some hesitation, Father Thomas gave me the history of the painting.

It appears that, some two centuries before, there were in Toledo many descendants of those Jews who had become converts to Christianity at the time of the expulsion. These, though they con-

formed to the outward observance of the faith, were believed to lean secretly to the religion of their fathers. They were seized upon from time to time by the Inquisition, plundered of their property, which was often great, subjected to many terrible tortures, and often roasted in the *Quemadero*. Whilst these persecutions were raging, one of the most zealous inquisitors chanced to die suddenly. It was at once said and circulated, that he had been poisoned by the *marranos* or porkers. Many of the new Christians, as they were also called by way of distinction, were at once seized upon and made to confess, in the secret dungeons of the Inquisition, that they had kidnapped a boy who disappeared suddenly about that time from the village of Guardia; that they had crucified him, as their ancestors had done with Christ, and taking out his heart, had prepared a powder from it, which they caused to be administered to the inquisitor. This extorted confession was enough to cause the sequestration of much property and the roasting of many *marranos*. I was astonished that so absurd a story should, scarce fifty years before, have formed the subject of a piece painted in the most public part of the Spanish metropolitan; and not less so a week after, when, on my way to Andalusia, I passed through the native village of the supposed victim, to learn that El Niño de la Guardia—the

Little-one of Guardia—was still an object of great adoration.

It was pleasing to turn from this disgusting painting to the uncovered area in the hollow of the court, which is laid out in a delightful garden, planted with odoriferous shrubs and fruit-trees, and having a fountain in the centre. It was the beginning of April—the shrubs were strewed with flowers, and the trees with blossoms, whilst numberless birds poured forth their melody in unison with the ceaseless falling of the fountain. This custom of having a garden beside the church is, doubtless, borrowed from the Arabians, who usually had a court like this at the entrance of their mosques. It is indeed more than likely that the one in question, like those of Cordova and Seville, was of Arab origin.

Having seen all the wonders of the Cathedral, Father Thomas took me home with him. As I had expressed much admiration of the extreme cleanliness observable in the houses of Toledo, which was the more striking from the poor and decayed condition of the city, he took a pleasure in showing me the whole economy of his own dwelling. It was two stories high, built round a square, and having a double corridor within, sustained upon columns of marble. The roof was flat or nearly so, and at one side was a small open belvidere, over-

looking the city and surrounding country, and offering a cool and pleasing retreat. The most remarkable part of the house, however, was under ground, consisting of several arched vaults, now used as cellars; but which the Arabs, who constructed them, inhabited during the noontide heats. The space immediately beneath the court-yard was occupied by two brick *algibes*, or cisterns. One served as a reservoir for the drinking water, brought upon the backs of asses from the Tagus, and which, soon depositing its sediment, became cool and pleasant. The other received the rain collected by the roof; and, when full, the lifting of a plug at one corner of the court sent the residue into a conduit, and thence into one of the many subterranean canals of Moorish origin leading to the river, which carry off the filth of the city. The whole establishment of the Canonigo was, by the aid of an antique housekeeper and her daughter, maintained in a state of neatness and polish comparable to any thing to be met with in Holland. This was especially the case in the study of the good man, where he sat enclosed by a well-ordered collection of parchment-covered tomes, in Latin and Spanish, with a small French library and some odd volumes of English; for he had partly mastered our obstinate language during his intimacy with Father Patrick. The small oaken table, upon which stood an ebony

cross, flanked by a painting of the Virgin, and the heavy arm-chair beside it, were waxed and rubbed to an exquisite polish.

In the afternoon we went to the Alcazar, a stupendous pile, first erected by Alfonso X., to serve as a palace and strong-hold. It had long been abandoned as the residence of the Spanish kings, when that learned and benevolent prelate, Cardinal Lorcuzana, the last archbishop but one of Toledo, caused it to be refitted at an expense of two hundred thousand dollars, which he paid from his own income. He then established manufactories of silk and woollen, where the poor were voluntarily received and entertained, or else taken by force from the doors of the churches and convents, and made to work according to their abilities. They received the product of their labour after defraying their maintenance. This wise and beneficent institution soon became very flourishing. Upwards of six hundred persons were maintained in it by the produce of their own exertions, and many idle vagrants were won to the pursuits of industry. Several branches of manufacture came at length to attain a high degree of perfection in the Alcazar.

The next afternoon we went to the noble building erected by the Cardinal Lorcuzana for the university; next to the hospital for the insane, a charitable institution, for which Toledo is indebted

to the same benevolent prelate. On our way to the western gate, Father Thomas explained the object of a series of iron links, festooned round the cornices of the church of San Juan de los Reyes. The church was built by Ferdinand and Isabella, in fulfilment of a vow made by them during the siege of Granada. The iron links were the chains found upon some hundreds of Christians, released from captivity by the taking of that magnificent city.

Leaving the western gate, we now descended into the famous Vega of Toledo; a beautiful and highly cultivated plain, which forms the right bank of the Tagus, and is every where divided into gardens and orchards. After walking a mile or two, we came to the Royal Manufactory of Arms, re-established by Charles III. at the close of the last century. Here are made all the swords, halberds, and lances required for the royal armies. The establishment is on an admirable footing, and the weapons now made in it are said to be nowise inferior to those famous *Toledanos*, which, in more chivalrous times, were the indispensable weapon of every well-appointed cavalier. Toledo was celebrated not only in the time of the Moors, but even under the Romans, for the admirable temper of its swords, which is chiefly attributed to some favorable quality in the water of the Tagus, used in temper-

ing the steel. As a proof that this is the case, one of the workmen told me, that in the early period of the French invasion the manufactory was removed to Seville, where the National Junta then was; but the swords manufactured on the banks of the Guadalquivir were found to be very inferior to those which the same workmen had made in Toledo.

Returning from the Manufactory, we passed the site of the old Roman amphitheatre. Only one arch remains perfect. With the lapse of twelve centuries, the materials have been gradually removed as from a quarry, to build or repair the neighbouring city. They have likewise been freely used in the construction of a convent which stands hard by, now also in ruins, and which will doubtless disappear entirely, as the *Quemadero* of the Holy Office has done, before the fall of the remaining arch of the amphitheatre. For the Quemadero, of which I had read in Llorente's History of the Inquisition, I looked in vain. It had been utterly demolished in the revolution of 1820. The place where it stood was still marked by a small hollow, over which we walked, and which Father Thomas pointed out, without looking back or stopping. The Quemadero, or furnace, was substituted for the stake and faggot by the illustrious Torquemada, because it was found to save fuel; since a number could be roasted by a single fire. It consisted of a huge

hollow statue of plaster, erected upon a stone oven. The fire was kindled beneath, and the victims being let down from above perished slowly, rending the air with horrid yells.

The last evening of my stay in Toledo, I rambled alone in the environs, clambering among the ruins which skirt the bold bank of the Tagus. Here I found a battered column surmounted by an old stone, with an inscription setting forth that it had been erected on the site of the demolished dwelling of Don Juan de Padilla and his wife Donia Maria Pacheco, and stigmatizing them as traitors to their king and country. It had been newly restored as a beacon to warn the patriots of modern times. This monument, meant as a stigma, called at once to my remembrance the noble self-devotion of the young nobleman in defence of Spanish liberty; his affectionate appeal to his wife, when waiting for the summons of the executioner; and above all, the glorious conduct of Donia Maria herself, who, smothering her griefs and rejecting all womanish fears, fought in the same noble cause, and even outdid the noble actions of her husband *.

Crossing the bridge, I ascended the rocky mountain that lies opposite, and having gained the summit turned to look on Toledo. Beneath me lay the

* Robertson, Charles V.

city, placed on the pinnacle of a round hill, and well-nigh encircled by the Tagus. This stream would seem to have taken its course originally to the right, and subsequently to have opened itself a narrow pass through the rocky bulwark which lay opposed to it; for the opposite banks are very similar, and bear evident marks of having once been connected. After escaping from these straits, the Tagus expands its bed; its course becomes more quiet, and verdant islands rise midway between its banks. The left, upon which I stood, gradually lost its rugged and rocky character, and was thrown into a pleasing succession of swelling hills, covered with orchards of olive. In front lay the delicious Vega, irrigated in every direction by the fertilizing waters of the Tagus, and divided as far as the eye could discover into verdant strips running backward from the river. The declining sun sent his departing rays obliquely upon the tranquil surface of the stream, which showed itself from time to time in its meanderings, like a succession of glassy lakes, shedding, at the same time, a warm and mellow lustre over the varied vegetation of the Vega. The scene had remained unaltered by the lapse of centuries; but how changeful had been the fortunes of that ancient city!

Where once appeared a fair combination of domes, and columns, and arches, I now looked upon an

uncouth mass of misshapen tenements, many of which were already abandoned and fallen, and many preparing to follow. A few listless inhabitants, lazily enveloped in their cloaks, were seen passing through the crazy gates of the city; whilst groups of dusty asses, looking as old as Toledo, moved down the steep hill-side, picking their way carefully amid the ruined fortifications, to have the earthen jars with which they were laden filled from the waters of the Tagus. The ruined piers of the many bridges that, in times gone by, gave access to a great city, are now converted into mill-dams, to prepare the hard-earned bread of a small and needy population. The wide road, too, beneath me, which has been trod in succession by the Carthaginian and the Roman soldier, the fearless Goth, and the rapid Arabian, or by the steel-clad warrior of the days of chivalry, going forth with poised lance and closed visor in search of adventures, now offered no other company than a few loitering priests and friars, dressed in their unmanly garb, and moving onward with slow and solemn composure; while here and there a student, hidden under a sable cloak and cocked hat, sat, like a crow upon a parapet, conning his lesson from a ghostly volume, or gazing on the trembling waters of the Tagus.

On Saturday morning, being the 7th of April, I took leave of the good Canonigo and of Toledo.

It was a ruinous and dull old place, yet I felt pleased with it in spite of myself—there was about it such an air of quiet repose and solemnity, so little of that stir and turbulence which I had associated with the idea of a warlike city, ever prone to revolt and mutiny. Having taken my chocolate and roasted egg, I was summoned to depart by the old hostler, who, having prefaced with an *Ave Maria purissima!* pushed the door open to tell me the coach was ready. On reaching the front of the posada, I found, drawn up before the door, the *coche-de-coleras* that was to take me to Madrid. It was an antique vehicle, just like those I had seen so often upon the Prado, except that instead of the postilions riding one of the wheel mules, it had a wide wooden platform, planted firmly between the fore wheels, for the accommodation of the drivers. The bag of barley, which was to furnish the beasts with provender during the journey, served as a cushion. The mules, six in number, were fat and valiant; furthermore, they were tattooed and harnessed like those of the Catalonian diligence. The master and owner was a dried-up, mummy-looking old man; but he had as assistant a merry young Biscayan, who had followed mules from his earliest youth, and who had been cast in his wanderings into the centre of the Peninsula, where he was now thoroughly established, having first become the

zagal of the old man, and afterwards his yerno or son-in-law. Both were dressed in velvet jackets and breeches, studded with brass buttons, gray stockings, long-quartered shoes, round hats, covered with brass points, and beads, and ribands, with red sashes round the loins. The most remarkable part of their dress, however, was an outer jacket of brown cloth, ornamented with patches of red and yellow, like those worn by the caleseros of Madrid. This dress, though strictly Andalusian, and not common in Castile, is worn by the fraternity of the whip all over Spain. Indeed, it would be deemed heretical to smack a whip in any other, and I have my doubts whether a Spanish mule would budge an inch for one not thus accoutred. The old man had his jacket fastened tightly about him, but the zagal's hung jauntily from his right shoulder. As I surveyed my present conveyance, I could not help thinking that it was vastly better than the carro that had taken me to Aranjuez, and the rocin and rucio that had brought me away again. I felicitated myself on the change. The old landlady of the Fonda del Arzobispo came out from her usual station in a large arm-chair within the doorway, to take leave of the *joven Americano;* the chambermaid brought my little sack, which she insisted upon conveying; and the hostler lent me his arm to mount to the step. I had no need of such

assistance, yet I gave it a thankful acceptance. The little man cried out, "*Arre yerno!*" and the young fellow, who had taken his station between the two head mules, gave way to their impatience, and away we went at a gallop. "Go with God!" was the universal greeting; and the ancient landlady and the chambermaid, as they stood shading their eyes from the sun with the left hand, shook the right in parting salutation, and added, "*Y con la Virgen!*" (and with the Virgin!)

I was not the sole occupant of the coche. It was brimming full of young girls, who were going a short distance from the city, partly for the sake of the ride, but chiefly to take leave of one of their number, who was to keep on to Madrid, whither she was going to serve a *Condesa*. I soon found, from their conversation, that two of them were daughters of the old man. The eldest, a close-built, fast-sailing little frigate, with an exquisitely pointed foot, a brilliant eye, and a pretty arch face —not at all the worse for two or three pock-marks —was the newly married wife of the zagal. The one who was now about to leave her home, for the first time, was a younger sister of the bride, and the rest were cousins and neighbours. They had all grown up together, and now, as they were whirled furiously down the hill-side that leads away from Toledo, were as merry as crickets, laughing,

giggling, and shouting to such of their acquaintances as they passed. By and by, however, we got to the bottom of the valley, and began to toil up the opposite ascent. The excitation of the moment was over, and they remembered, that at the top of the hill they were to part with Beatriz. Their laughing ceased, the smiles passed from their countenances, a painful expression came instead, and, when the coach at length stopped, they were all in tears. Poor Beatriz! she cried and kissed them all; and when they got down from the coach, and left her all alone, she sobbed aloud, and was half ready to follow them.

Margarita, the eldest sister, seeing poor Beatriz so much afflicted, begged her husband to let her go along and come back the next trip. Andres would not at first listen to the proposal, but fastened the door. When she began, however, to grow angry at the refusal, he took the trouble, like a thoughtful husband, to explain how inconvenient it would be for her to go without any preparations; if she had but spoken in the morning, or the night before, the thing would have been easily settled. All these reasons availed nothing. Margarita grew more and more vexed, until Andres was driven from his resolution. He slowly opened the door, saying with a half-displeased air, "*Entre usted!*" Contrary to all reasonable calculations, she stirred not a step