

This screen is very beautiful, being composed of two ogival windows in the richest style, with eight statues occupying the intervals of their lower mullions. A fourth story, equally rich, terminates the towers, on the summits of which are placed the two spires.

These are all that can be wished for the completion of such a whole. They are, I imagine, not only unmatched, but unapproached by any others, in symmetry, lightness, and beauty of design. The spire of Strasburg is the only one I am acquainted with that may be allowed to enter into the comparison. It is much larger, placed at nearly double the elevation, and looks as light as one of these; but the symmetry of its outline is defective, being uneven, and producing the effect of steps. And then it is alone, and the absence of a companion gives the façade an unfinished appearance. For these reasons I prefer the spires of Burgos. Their form is hexagonal; they are entirely hollow, and unsupported internally. The six sides are carved *à jour*, the design forming nine horizontal divisions, each division presenting a different ornament on each of its six sides. At the termination of these divisions, each pyramid is surrounded near the summit by a projecting gallery with balustrades. These appear to bind and keep together each airy fabric, which, everywhere transparent, looks as though it required some such re-

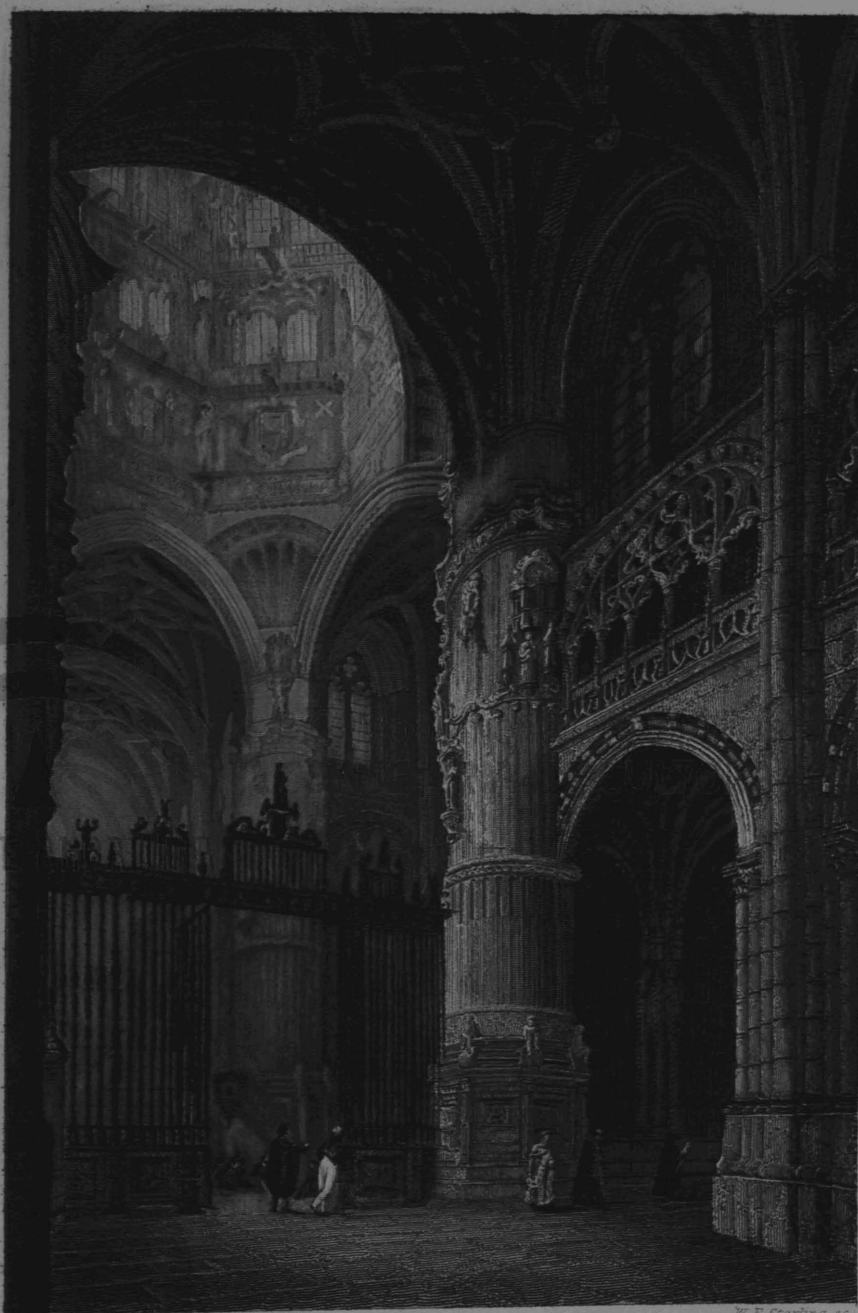
straint, to prevent its being instantaneously scattered by the winds.

On examining the interior of one of these spires, it is a subject of surprise that they could have been so constructed as to be durable. Instead of walls, you are surrounded by a succession of little balustrades, one over the other, converging towards the summit. The space enclosed is exposed to all the winds, and the thickness of the stones so slight as to have required their being bound together with iron cramps. At a distance of a mile these spires appear as transparent as nets.

On entering the church by the western doors, the view is interrupted, as is usual in Spain, by a screen, which, crossing the principal nave at the third or fourth pillar, forms the western limit of the choir; the eastern boundary being the west side of the transept, where there is an iron railing. The space between the opposite side of the transept and the apse is the *capilla mayor* (chief chapel), in which is placed the high altar. There are two lower lateral naves, from east to west, and beyond them a series of chapels. The transept has no lateral naves. Some of the chapels are richly ornamented. The first or westernmost, on the north side, in particular, would be in itself a magnificent church. It is called the "Chapel of Santa Tecla." Its dimensions are ninety-

six feet in length, by sixty-three in width, and sixty high. The ceiling, and different altars, are covered with a dazzling profusion of gilded sculpture. The ceiling, in particular, is entirely hidden beneath the innumerable figures and ornaments of every sort of form, although of questionable taste, which the ravings of the extravagant style, called in Spain "Churriguesco" (after the architect who brought it into fashion), could invent.

The next chapel—that of Santa Ana—is not so large, but designed in far better taste. It is Gothic, and dates from the fifteenth century. Here are some beautiful tombs, particularly that of the founder of the chapel. But the most attractive object is a picture, placed at an elevation which renders difficult the appreciation of its merits without the aid of a glass,—a Holy Family, by Andrea del Sarto. It is an admirable picture ; possessing all the grace and simplicity, combined with the fineness of execution, of that artist. The chapel immediately opposite (on the south side) contains some handsome tombs, and another picture, representing the Virgin, attributed by the cicerone of the place to Michael Angelo. We next arrive at the newer part, or centre of the building, where four cylindrical piers of about twelve feet diameter, with octagonal bases, form a quadrangle, and support the centre tower, designed by Felipe



N.A. Wells. del.

W. F. Staring. sc.

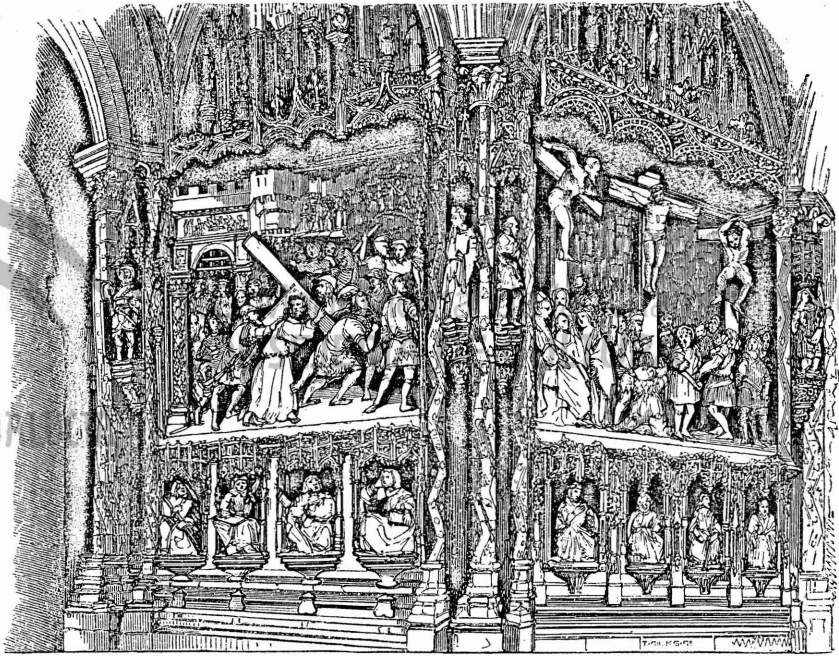
TRANSEPT OF THE CATHEDRAL, BURGOS.

de Borgoña. These pillars are connected with each other by magnificent wrought brass railings, which give entrance respectively, westward to the choir,—on the east to the sanctuary, or capilla mayor,—and north and south to the two ends of the transept. Above is seen the interior of the tower, covered with a profusion of ornament, but discordant with every other object within view.

The high altar at the back of the great chapel is also the work of Herrera. It is composed of a series of rows of saints and apostles, superposed one over the other, until they reach the roof. All are placed in niches adorned with gilding, of which only partial traces remain. The material of the whole is wood. Returning to either side-nave, a few smaller chapels on the outside, and opposite them the railings of the sanctuary, conduct us to the back of the high altar, opposite which is the eastern chapel, called “of the Duke de Frias,” or “Capilla del Condestable.”

All this part of the edifice—I mean, from the transept eastward—is admirable, both with regard to detail and to general effect. The pillars are carved all round into niches, containing statues or groups; and the intervals between the six last, turning round the apse, are occupied by excellent designs, sculptured in a hard white stone. The subjects are, the Agony in the Garden, Jesus bearing the Cross, the Cru-

cifixion, the Resurrection, and the Ascension. The centre piece, representing the Crucifixion, is the most striking. The upper part contains the three sufferers in front; and in the background a variety of buildings, trees, and other smaller objects, supposed to be at a great distance. In the foreground of the lower



SCULPTURE IN THE APSE.

part are seen the officers and soldiers employed in the execution; a group of females, with St. John supporting the Virgin, and a few spectators. The costumes, the expression, the symmetry of the figures,

all contribute to the excellence of this piece of sculpture. It would be difficult to surpass the exquisite grace displayed in the attitudes, and flow of the drapery, of the female group; and the Herculean limbs of the right-hand robber, as he writhes in his torments, and seems ready to snap the cords which retain his feet and arms,—the figure projecting in its entire contour from the surface of the background,—present an admirable model of corporeal expression and anatomical detail.

In clearing the space to make room for these sculptures, the artist had to remove the tomb of a bishop, whose career, if the ancient *chronique* is to be depended on, must have been rather singular. The information, it must be owned, bears the appearance of having been transmitted by some contemporary annalist, whose impartiality may have perhaps been biassed by some of the numerous incitements which operate upon courtiers.

Don Pedro Fernandez de Frias, Cardinal of Spain, Bishop of Osma and Cuenca, was, it is affirmed, of low parentage, of base and licentious habits of life, and of a covetous and niggardly disposition. These defects, however, by no means diminished the high favour he enjoyed at the successive courts of Henry the Third and Juan the Second. The Bishop of Segovia, Don Juan de Tordesillas, happened by an

unlucky coincidence to visit Burgos during his residence there. The characters of the two prelates were not of a nature to harmonise in the smallest degree, and, being thrown necessarily much in each other's way, they gave loose occasionally to expressions more than bordering on the irreverent. It was on one of these occasions, that, the eloquence of the Cardinal Bishop here interred being at default, a lacquey of his followers came to his assistance, and being provided with a *palo*, or staff, inflicted on the rival dignitary certain arguments *ad humeros*—in fact, gave the Bishop of Segovia a severe drubbing. The Cardinal was on this occasion compelled to retire to Italy.

Turning our backs to the centre piece of sculpture last described, we enter the Capilla del Condestable through a superb bronze railing. In these railings the Cathedral of Burgos rivals that of Seville, compensating by number for the superior size and height of those contained in the latter church. That of the chapel we are now entering entirely fills the entrance arch, a height of about forty feet; the helmet of a mounted knight in full armour, intended to represent St. Andrew, which crowns its summit, nearly touching the keystone of the arch. This chapel must be noticed in detail. Occupying at the extremity of the church a position

answering to that of Henry the Seventh's Chapel at Westminster Abbey, it forms a tower of itself, which on the outside harmonises with peculiar felicity with the three others, and contributes to the apparent grandeur and real beauty of the exterior view. The interior is magnificent, although its plan and style, being entirely different from those of Henry the Seventh's Chapel, prevent the comparison from going further. Its form is octagonal, measuring about fifty feet in diameter, by rather more than a hundred in height. Its style florid Gothic of the fourteenth century. The effect of its first view is enhanced by its being filled, unlike the rest of the church, with a blaze of light introduced through two rows of windows in the upper part.

Two of the sides are furnished with recesses, which form lesser chapels, and in one of which there is a fine organ. Between the centre of the pavement and the principal altar, a large square block of mixed marble covers the remains of the founders of the chapel, and bears on its surface their recumbent figures executed in great perfection.*

* The following inscriptions are placed at the feet of the respective statues :

“Aqui yace el muy Ilustre Señor Don Pedro Hernandez de Velasco, Condestable de Castilla, Señor del estado, y gran casa de Velasco, hijo de Don Pedro Hernandez de Velasco, y de Doña Beatriz Manrique, Condes de Haro. Murio de setenta y siete años, anno de mil cuatro

This is the finest tomb in the cathedral. The embroidery of the cushions, the ornaments on the count's armour, the gloves of the countess, are among the details which merit particular notice amidst the beautiful execution of the whole. The high altar of this chapel does not accord with the general effect, being designed in the style of the *renacimiento*. In the centre of it is nevertheless fixed a treasure that would compensate for worse defects. A small circular medallion represents the Virgin and Child, in an attitude very similar to that of the Madonna della Seggiola, executed on porphyry. This delicious little work, of about nine inches in diameter, forms the centre of attraction, and is the most precious ornament of the chapel. On the right hand, near the altar, a small doorway admits to the sacristy.

This contains several relics of the founders. A small portable altar of ivory, forming the base of a crucifix of about eighteen inches in height, is an exquisite model of delicate workmanship. Here

cientos y noventa y dos, siendo solo Virey de estos reynos por los Reyes Catolicos."

"Aqui yace la muy Ilustre Señora Doña Mencia de Mendoza, Condesa de Haro, muger del Condestable Don Pedro Hernandez de Velasco, hija de Don Inigo Lopez de Mendoza, y de Doña Catalina de Figueroa, Marqueses de Santillana. Murio de setenta y nueve annos, anno de mil y quiniento."

also has been treasured up a picture, behind a glass, and in a sort of wooden case; a bequest likewise of the founders. Unfortunately they neglected to impart the name of its author. The nebulous sort of uncertainty thus made to surround this relic has magnified its merits, which might otherwise perhaps not have claimed particular notice, to the most colossal dimensions. They scarcely at last know what to say of it. At the period of my first visit to Burgos, it was a Leonardo da Vinci; but, after a lapse of two years, the same sacristan informed me that it was uncertain whether the painting was executed by Raffaele or Leonardo, although it was generally supposed to be by Raffaele; and a notice, published since, gives the authority of an anonymous connoisseur, who asserts it to be far superior to Raffaele's "Perle." It is now consequently decided that it cannot be a Leonardo, and is scarcely bad enough for a Raffaele.

Without venturing *tantas componere lites*, I may be allowed to give my impression, on an inspection as complete as the studied darkness of the apartment, added to the glass and wooden case, would permit. It is a half-figure of the Magdalene. The execution is very elaborate and highly finished, but there are evident defects in the drawing. In colouring and manner it certainly reminds you of

da Vinci—of one of whose works it may probably be a copy; but, whatever it is, it is easy to discover that it is *not* a Raffaele.

This chapel does not occupy the precise centre of the apse. A line drawn from the middle of the western door through the nave would divide it into two unequal parts, passing at a distance of nearly two yards from its centre. An examination of the ground externally gives no clue to the cause of this irregularity, by which the external symmetry of the edifice is rendered imperfect, although in an almost imperceptible degree; it must therefore be accounted for by the situation of the adjoining parochial chapel, of more ancient construction, with which it was not allowable to interfere, and by the unwillingness of the founder to diminish the scale on which his chapel was planned.

Before we leave the Chapel del Condestable, one of its ceremonies deserves particular mention. I allude to the *missa de los carneros* (sheep-mass). At early mass on All Souls day, a feast celebrated in this chapel with extraordinary pomp, six sheep are introduced, and made to stand on a large block of unpolished marble, which has been left lying close to the tombs, almost in the centre of the chapel; near the six sheep are placed as many inflated skins of pigs, resembling those usually filled

with the wine of the country; to these is added the quantity of bread produced from four bushels of wheat: and all remain in view during the performance of high mass. At the conclusion of the final response, the sheep are removed from their pedestal, and make for the chapel-gates, through which they issue; and urged by the voice of their driver, the peculiar shrill whistle of Spanish shepherds, and by the more material argument of the staff, proceed down the entire length of the cathedral to the music of the aforesaid whistle, accompanied by their own bleatings and bells, until they vanish through the great western portal.

Returning to the transepts, we find two objects worthy of notice. The cathedral having been erected on uneven ground, rising rapidly from south to north, the entrance to the north transept opens at an elevation of nearly thirty feet from the pavement. To reach this door there is an ornamental staircase, of a sort of white stone, richly carved in the *renaissance* style. This door is never open, a circumstance which causes no inconvenience; the steps being so steep as to render them less useful than ornamental, as long as any other exit exists.

A beautifully carved old door, of a wood become perfectly black, although not so originally, gives access to the cloister from the east side of the

south transept. The interior of the arch which surmounts it is filled with sculpture. A plain moulding runs round the top, at the left-hand commencement of which is carved a head of the natural size, clothed in a cowl.



HEAD OF SAINT FRANCIS.*

The attention is instantly rivetted by this head: it is not merely a masterpiece of execution. Added to the exquisite beauty and delicate moulding of the upper part of the face, the artist has succeeded

* The above woodcut may, it is hoped, serve as a guide to future travellers in their search for this head, of which it has no pretension to give an adequate idea.

in giving to the mouth an almost superhuman expression. This feature, in spite of a profusion of hair which almost covers it, lives and speaks. A smile, in which a barely perceptible but irresistible and, as it were, innate bitterness of satire and disdain modifies a wish of benevolence, unites with the piercing expression of the eyes in lighting up the stone with a degree of intellect which I had thought beyond the reach of sculpture until I saw this head. Tradition asserts it to be a portrait of Saint Francis, who was at Burgos at the period of the completion of the cathedral; and who, being in the habit of examining the progress of the works, afforded unconsciously a study to the sculptor.

The two sacristies are entered from the cloister: one of them contains the portraits of all the bishops and archbishops of Burgos. Communicating with this last is a room destined for the reception of useless lumber and broken ornaments. Here the cicerone directs your attention to an old half-rotten oaken chest, fixed against the wall at a considerable height. This relic is the famous Coffre del Cid, the self-same piece of furniture immortalised in the anecdote related of the hero respecting the loan of money obtained on security of the supposed treasure it enclosed. The lender of the money, satisfied by the weight of the trunk, and the chivalrous honour

of its proprietor, never saw its contents until shown them by the latter on the repayment of the loan : they were then discovered to consist of stones and fragments of old iron.

One is disappointed on finding in this cathedral no more durable *souvenir* of the Cid than his rat-corroded wardrobe. His remains are preserved in the chapel of the Ayuntamiento ; thither we will consequently bend our steps, not forgetting to enjoy, as we leave the church, a long gaze at its elegant and symmetrical proportions. It may be called an unique model of beauty of its particular sort, especially when contemplated without being drawn into comparison with other edifices of a different class. Catalani is said, on hearing Sontag's performance, to have remarked that she was "la première de son genre, mais que son genre n'était pas le premier." Could the cathedral of Seville see that of Burgos, it would probably pronounce a similar judgment on its smaller rival.

The profusion of ornament, the perfection of symmetry, the completeness of finish, produce an instantaneous impression that nothing is wanting in this charming edifice ; but any one who should happen to have previously seen that of Seville cannot, after the first moments of enthusiasm, escape the comparison which forces itself on him, and which is not in favour of this cathedral. It is elegant, but deficient

in grandeur ; beautiful, but wanting in majesty. The stern and grand simplicity of the one, thrown into the scales against the light, airy, and diminutive, though graceful beauty of the other, recalls the contrast drawn by Milton between our first parents ; a contrast which, applied to these churches, must be considered favourable to the more majestic, however the balance of preference may turn in the poem.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

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

LETTER V.

TOMB OF THE CID. CITADEL.

Burgos.

THE Ayuntamiento, or Town-hall, presents one façade to the river, and the other to the Plaza Mayor, being built over the archway which forms the already mentioned entrance to the central portion of the city. The building, like other town-halls, possesses an airy staircase, a large public room, and a few other apartments, used for the various details of administration; but nothing remarkable until you arrive at a handsomely ornamented saloon, furnished with a canopied seat fronting a row of arm-chairs. This is the room in which the municipal body hold their juntas. It contains several portraits: two or three of kings, suspended opposite to an equal number of queens; the two likenesses of the celebrated judges Nuño Rasura and Lain Calvo, near which are seen the simple square oaken chairs from within the angular and hard embrace of which they administered the laws and government of Castile;

a full-length of Fernan Gonzalez ; and lastly, one of the Cid.

Owing to the singularity of this last portrait, it is the first to attract attention. The hero is represented in the most extraordinary of attitudes : the head is thrown back, and the face turned towards one side ; the legs in a sort of studied posture ; a drawn sword is in the right hand, the point somewhat raised. The general expression is that of a comic actor attempting an attitude of mock-heroic impertinence ; and is probably the result of an unattained object in the mind of the artist, of producing that of fearless independence.

Beyond this apartment is the Chapel, a plain, not large room, containing but two objects besides its very simple altar, with its, almost black, silver candlesticks. Over the altar is a Conception, by Murillo ; and, in the centre of the chapel, a highly polished and neatly ornamented funereal urn, composed of walnut-wood, contains the remains of the Cid : the urn stands on a pedestal. On its two ends in letters of gold, are inscriptions, stating its contents, and the date of its application to its present purpose. I was told that the bones were contained in a leaden box, but that a glass one was being prepared, which, on opening the lid of the urn, would afford a view of the actual dust of the warrior.

The remains of the Cid have only recently been conveyed to Burgos from the monastery of San Pedro de Cardenas, about four miles distant. They had been preserved there ever since his funeral, which took place in the presence of King Alonzo the Sixth, and the two Kings, sons-in-law of the hero, as soon as the body arrived from Valencia.

This monastic retreat, if dependence may be placed on the testimony of the Cerberus of the Alcalde,—the cicerone (when duly propitiated) of the municipal edifice,—did not turn out to be altogether a place of repose to the warrior. According to this worthy, an amusing interpreter of the popular local traditions, the exploits performed subsequently to the hero's interment were such as almost to throw a shadow over those he enacted during his mortal existence. One specimen will suffice. Some twenty thousand individuals, including the monks of all the neighbouring monasteries, were assembled in the church of San Pedro, and were listening to a sermon on the occasion of the annual festival in honour of the patron saint. Guided by curiosity, a Moor entered the church and mingled with the crowd. After remaining during a short time motionless, he approached a pillar, against which was suspended a portrait of the Cid, for the purpose of examining the picture. Suddenly the figure was seen by all pre-

sent, whose testimony subsequently established the fact, to grasp with the right hand the hilt of its sword, and to uncover a few inches of the naked blade. The Moor instantly fell flat on the pavement, and was found to be lifeless.

You would be surprised at the difficulty of forming even here, in the midst of the scenes of his exploits, a definite idea of this Hercules of the Middle Ages. For those who are satisfied with the orthodox histories of the monks, he is without defects — a simple unsophisticated demi-god. But there have been Mahometan historians of Spain. These are universally acknowledged to have treated of all that concerned themselves with complete accuracy and impartiality; and, when this happens, it should seem to be the best criterion, in the absence of other proof, of their faithful delineation of others' portraits.

However that may be, here is an instance which will give you an idea of the various readings of the Cid's history.

Mariana relates, that an Arab expedition, headed by five kings (as he terms them) of the adjoining states, being signalized as having passed the mountains of Oca, and being occupied in committing depredations on the Christian territory, Rodrigo suddenly took the field, recovered all the booty, and made all five kings prisoners. All this being done

by himself and his own retainers. The kings he released after signing a treaty, according to which they agreed to pay him an annual tribute. It happened, that on the occasion of the first payment of this, Rodrigo was at Zamora, whither he had accompanied the King of Castile; and he took an opportunity of receiving the Arab messengers in presence of the court. This was at least uncommon. The messengers addressed him by the appellation of Syd (sir) as they handed over the money. Ferdinand, delighted with the prowess of his courtier, expressed on this occasion the desire that he should retain the title of Syd.

This anecdote undergoes, in the hands of the Arab writers, a curious metamorphosis. According to them, the expression Syd was employed, not by tributary kings, but by certain chiefs of that creed whose pay the Catholic hero was receiving in return for aid lent against the Christians of Aragon.

They attribute, moreover, to this mirror of chivalry, on the surrender of Valencia, a conduct by no means heroic—not to say worthy a highwayman. He accepted, as they relate, the pay of the Emyr of Valencia to protect the city against the Almoravides, who at that period were extending their conquests all over Moorish Spain. The Cid was repulsed, and the town taken. After this defeat he shut himself

up in a castle, since called the Peña del Cid (Rock of the Cid), and there waited his opportunity. On the departure of the conquerors from the city, in which they left an insufficient garrison, he hastened down at the head of his campeadores, and speedily retook Valencia.

The Cadi, Ahmed ben Djahhaf, left in command of the place, had, however, only surrendered on faith of a capitulation couched in the most favourable terms. It was even stipulated that he should retain his post of governor; but no sooner was the Cid master of the place than he caused the old man to be arrested and put to the torture, in order to discover from him the situation of a treasure supposed to be concealed in the Alcazar; after which, finding he would not speak, or had nothing to reveal, he had him burned on the public place.

The Citadel of Burgos, at present an insignificant fortress, was formerly a place of considerable importance, and commanded the surrounding country; especially on the side on which the town—placed at the foot of the eminence—lay beneath its immediate protection, and could listen unscathed to the whizzing of the deadly missiles of war as they passed over its roofs. During the various wars of which Castile has been the theatre at different periods, this citadel has, from its important position, occupied the

main attention of contending armies; and, from forming a constant *point-de-mire* to attacking troops, has finally been almost annihilated. The principal portion of the present buildings is of a modern date, but, although garrisoned, the fortress cannot be said to be restored.

The extent of the town was greater than at present, and included a portion of the declivity which exists between the present houses and the walls of the fortress. At the two extremities of the town-side of the hill, immediately above the level of the highest-placed houses now existing, two Arab gateways give access through the ancient town-walls, which ascended the hill from the bottom. Between these there exists a sort of flat natural terrace, above the town, and running along its whole length, on to which some of the streets open. On this narrow level stood formerly a part, probably the best part, of the city, which has shared the fate of its protecting fortress; but, not being rebuilt, it is now an empty space,—or would be so, but for the recent erection of a cemetery, placed at about half the distance between the two extremities.

Before, however, the lapse of years had worn away the last surviving recollections of these localities, some worshipper of by-gone glory succeeded in discovering, on the now grass-grown space, the situa-

tions once occupied by the respective abodes of the Cid and of Fernan Gonzalez. On these spots monuments have been erected. That of Gonzalez is a handsome arch, the piers supporting which are each faced with two pillars of the Doric order on either side; above the cornice there is a balustrade, over which four small obelisks correspond with the respective pillars. The arch is surmounted by a sort of pedestal, on which is carved an inscription, stating the object of the monument. There is nothing on the top of the pedestal, which appears to have been intended for the reception of a statue.

The monument in memory of the Cid is more simple. It consists of three small pyramids in a row, supported on low bases or pedestals; that in the centre higher than the other two, but not exceeding (inclusive of the base) twenty feet from the ground. On the lower part of the centre stone is carved an appropriate inscription, abounding in ellipsis, after the manner usually adopted in Spain.

It is not surprising that these monuments, together with the memory of the events brought about by the men in whose honour they have been erected, should be fast hastening to a level with the desolation immediately surrounding them. The present political circumstances of Spain are not calculated to favour the retrospection of by-gone glories. Scarcely is time

allowed—so rapidly are executed the transmutations of the modern political diorama—for examining the events, or even for recovery from the shock, of each succeeding revolution; nor force remaining to the exhausted organs of admiration or of horror, to be exercised on almost forgotten acts, since those performed before the eyes of the living generation have equalled or surpassed them in violence and energy. The arch of Fernan Gonzalez, if not speedily restored, (which is not to be expected,) runs the risk, from its elevation and want of solidity, of being the first of the two monuments to crumble to dust; a circumstance which, although not destitute of an appearance of justice,—from the fact of the hero it records having figured on an earlier page of Castilian annals,—would nevertheless occasion regret to those who prefer history to romance, and who estimate essential services rendered to the state, as superior to mere individual *éclat*, however brilliant.

You will not probably object to the remainder of this letter being monopolized by this founder of the independence of Castile; the less so, from the circumstance of the near connection existing between his parentage and that of the city we are visiting, and which owes to him so much of its celebrity. Should you not be in a humour to be

lectured on history, you are at all events forewarned, and may wait for the next despatch.

Unlike many of the principal towns of the Peninsula, which content themselves with no more modern descent than from Nebuchadnezzar or Hercules, Burgos modestly accepts a paternity within the domain of probability. A German, Nuño Belchides, married, in the reign of Alonzo the Great, King of Oviedo, a daughter of the second Count of Castile, Don Diego Porcellos. This noble prevailed on his father-in-law to assemble the inhabitants of the numerous villages dispersed over the central part of the province, and to found a city, to which he gave the German name of "city" with a Spanish termination. It was Don Fruela III., King of Leon, whose acts of injustice and cruelty caused so violent an exasperation, that the nobles of Castile, of whom there existed several of a rank little inferior to that of the titular Count of the province, threw up their allegiance, and selected two of their own body, Nuño Rasura and Lain Calvo, to whom they intrusted the supreme authority, investing them with the modest title of Judges, by way of a check, lest at any future time they should be tempted, upon the strength of a higher distinction, to make encroachments on the common liberties.

The first of the two judges, Nuño Rasura, was the

son of the above-mentioned Nuño Belchides and his wife, Sulla Bella (daughter of Diego Porcellos), and grandfather of Fernan Gonzalez. His son Gonzalo Nuño, Fernan's father, succeeded on his death to the dignity of Judge of Castile, and became extremely popular, owing to his affability, and winning urbanity of deportment in his public character. He established an academy in his palace for the education of the sons of the nobles, who were instructed under his own superintendence in all the accomplishments which could render them distinguished in peace or in war. The maternal grandfather of Fernan Gonzalez was Nuño Fernandez, one of the Counts of Castile who were treacherously seized and put to death by Don Ordoño, King of Leon. The young Count of Castile is described as having been a model of elegance. To singular personal beauty he added an unmatched proficiency in all the exercises then in vogue, principally in arms and equitation. These accomplishments, being added to much affability and good-nature, won him the affections of the young nobles, who strove to imitate his perfections, while they enjoyed the festivities of his palace.

It appears that, notwithstanding the rebellion, and appointment of Judges, Castile had subsequently professed allegiance to the Kings of Leon; for a

second revolt was organized in the reign of Don Ramiro, at the head of which we find Fernan Gonzalez. On this occasion, feeling themselves too feeble to resist the royal troops, the rebels had recourse to a Moorish chief, Aecipha. The King, however, speedily drove the Moors across the frontier, and succeeded in capturing the principal revolters. After a short period these were released, on the sole condition of taking the oath of allegiance; and the peace was subsequently sealed by the marriage of a daughter of Gonzalez with Don Ordoño, eldest son of Ramiro, and heir to the kingdom.

The Count of Castile was, however, too powerful a vassal to continue long on peaceable terms with a sovereign, an alliance with whose family had more than ever smoothed the progressive ascent of his pretensions. Soon after the accession of his son-in-law Don Ordoño, he entered into an alliance against him with the King of Navarre. This declaration of hostility was followed by the divorce of Fernan's daughter by the King, who immediately entered into a second wedlock. The successor of this monarch, Don Sancho, surnamed the Fat, was indebted for a large portion of his misfortunes and vicissitudes to the hostility of the Count of Castile. Don Ordoño, the pretender to his throne, son of Alonzo surnamed the Monk, with the aid of Gon-

zalez, whose daughter Urraca, the repudiated widow of the former sovereign, he married, took easy possession of the kingdom, driving Don Sancho for shelter to the court of his uncle the then King of Navarre. It is worth mentioning, that King Sancho took the opportunity of his temporary expulsion from his states, to visit the court of Abderrahman at Cordova, and consult the Arab physicians, whose reputation for skill in the removal of obesity had extended over all Spain. History relates that the treatment they employed was successful, and that Don Sancho, on reascending his throne, had undergone so complete a reduction as to be destitute of all claims to his previously acquired *sobriquet*.

All these events, and the intervals which separated them, fill a considerable space of time ; and the establishment of the exact dates would be a very difficult, if not an impossible, undertaking. Various wars were carried on during this time by Gonzalez, and alliances formed and dissolved. Several more or less successful campaigns are recorded against the Moors of Saragoza, and of other neighbouring states. The alliance with Navarre had not been durable. In 959 Don Garcia, King of that country, fought a battle with Fernan Gonzalez, by whom he was taken prisoner, and detained in Burgos thirteen

months. The conquest of the independence of Castile is related in the following manner.

In the year 958, the Cortes of the kingdom were assembled at Leon, whence the King forwarded a special invitation to the Count of Castile, requiring his attendance, and that of the Grandees of the province, for "deliberation on affairs of high importance to the state." Gonzalez, although suspicious of the intentions of the sovereign, unable to devise a suitable pretext for absenting himself, repaired to Leon, attended by a considerable *cortége* of nobles. The King went forth to receive him; and it is related, that refusing to accept a present, offered by Gonzalez, of a horse and a falcon, both of great value, a price was agreed on; with the condition that, in case the King should not pay the money on the day named in the agreement, for each successive day that should intervene until the payment, the sum should be doubled. Nothing extraordinary took place during the remainder of the visit; and the Count, on his return to Burgos, married Doña Sancha, sister of the King of Navarre.

It is probable that some treachery had been intended against Gonzalez, similar to that put in execution on a like occasion previous to his birth, when the Counts of Castile were seized and put to death in their prison; for, not long after, a second

invitation was accepted by the Count, who was now received in a very different manner. On his kneeling to kiss the King's hand, Don Sancho burst forth with a volley of reproaches, and, repulsing him with fury, gave orders for his immediate imprisonment. It is doubtful what fate was reserved for him by the hatred of the Queen-mother, who had instigated the King to the act of treachery, in liquidation of an ancient personal debt of vengeance of her own, had not the Countess of Castile, Doña Sancha, undertaken his liberation.

Upon receiving the news of her husband's imprisonment, she allowed a short period to elapse, in order to mature her plan, and at the same time lull suspicion of her intentions. She then repaired to Leon, on pretext of a pilgrimage to Santiago, on the route to which place Leon is situated. She was received by King Sancho with distinguished honours, and obtained permission to visit her husband, and to pass a night in his prison. The following morning, Gonzalez, taking advantage of early twilight, passed the prison-doors in disguise of the Countess, and, mounting a horse which was in readiness, escaped to Castile.

This exploit of Doña Sancha does not belong to the days of romance and chivalry alone: it reminds us of the still more difficult task, accomplished by

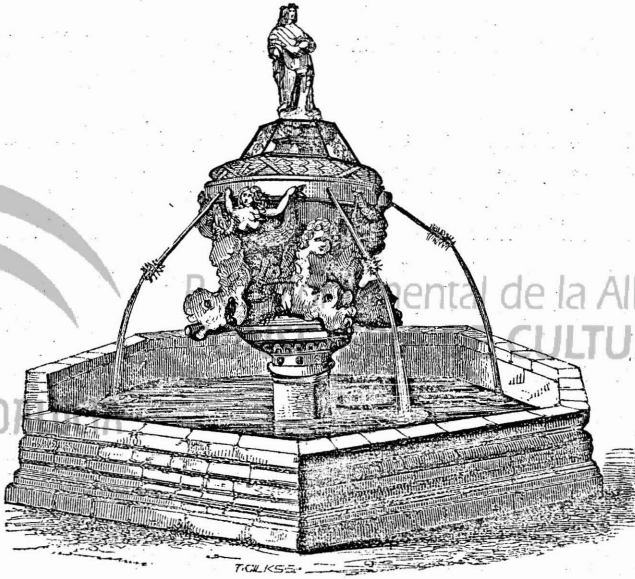
the beautiful Winifred, Countess of Nithisdale, who, eight centuries later, effected the escape of the rebel Earl, her husband, from the Tower, in a precisely similar manner; thus rescuing him from the tragic fate of his friends and fellow-prisoners, the Lords Derwentwater and Kenmure.

Doña Sancha obtained her liberty without difficulty, being even complimented by the King on her heroism, and provided with a brilliant escort on her return to Castile. Gonzalez contented himself with claiming the price agreed upon for the horse and falcon; and—the King not seeming inclined to liquidate the debt, which, owing to the long delay, amounted already to an enormous sum, or looking upon it as a pretext for hostility, the absence of which would not prevent the Count of Castile, in his then state of exasperation, from having recourse to arms—passed the frontier of Leon at the head of an army, and, laying waste the country, approached gradually nearer to the capital. At length Don Sancho sent his treasurer to clear up the account, but it was found that the debt exceeded the whole amount of the royal treasure; upon which Gonzalez claimed and obtained, on condition of the withdrawal of his troops, a formal definitive grant of Castile, without reservation, to himself and his descendants.

Before we quit Burgos for its environs, one more

edifice requires our notice. It is a fountain, occupying the centre of the space which faces the principal front of the cathedral. This little antique monument charms, by the quaint symmetry of its design and proportions, and perhaps even by the terribly mutilated state of the four fragments of Cupids, which, riding on the necks of the same number of animals so maltreated as to render impossible the discovery of their race, form projecting angles, and support the basin on their shoulders. Four mermaids, holding up their tails, so as not to interfere with the operations of the Cupids, ornament the sides of the basin, which are provided with small apertures for the escape of the water; the top being covered by a flat circular stone, carved around its edge. This stone,—a small, elegantly shaped pedestal, which surmounts it,—and the other portions already described, are nearly black, probably from antiquity; but on the pedestal stands a little marble virgin, as white as snow. This antique figure harmonises by its mutilation with the rest, although injured in a smaller degree; and at the same time adds to the charm of the whole, by the contrast of its dazzling whiteness with the dark mass on which it is supported. The whole is balanced on the capital of a pillar, of a

most original form, which appears immediately above the surface of a sheet of water enclosed in a large octagonal basin.



FOUNTAIN OF SANTA MARIA.

LETTER VI.

CARTUJA DE MIRAFLORES. CONVENT OF LAS HUELGAS.

Burgos.

THE Chartreuse of Miraflores, situated to the east of the city, half-way in the direction of the above-mentioned monastery of San Pedro de Cardenas, crowns the brow of an eminence, which, clothed with woods towards its base, slopes gradually until it reaches the river. This spot is the most picturesque to be found in the environs of Burgos,—a region little favoured in that respect. The view, extending right and left, follows the course of the river, until it is bounded on the west by the town, and on the east by a chain of mountains, a branch of the Sierra of Oca. Henry the Third, grandfather of Isabel the Catholic, made choice of this position for the erection of a palace; the only remnant of it now existing is the church, which has since become the inheritance of the Carthusian monks, the successors of its royal founder.

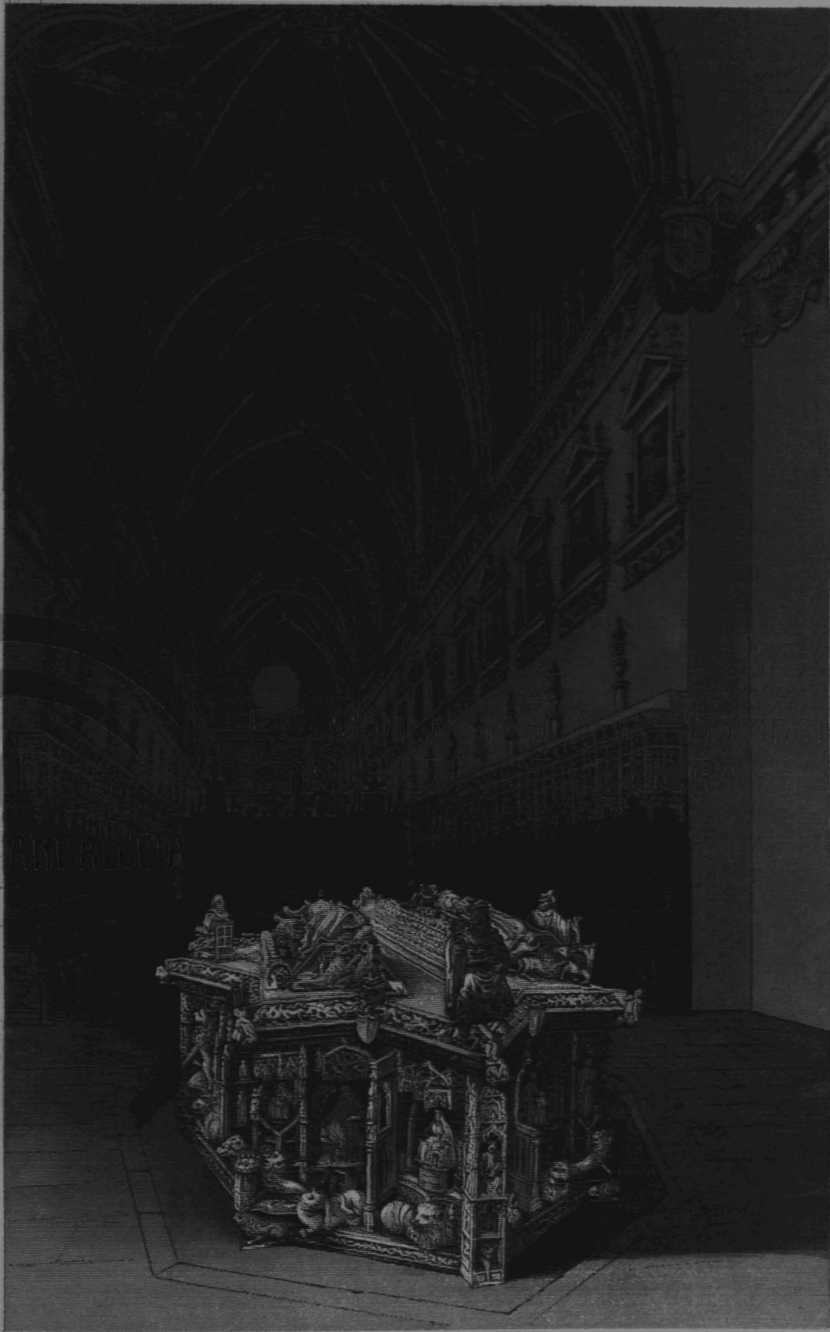
The late revolution, after sparing the throne of Spain, displayed a certain degree of logic, if not in all its acts, at least in sparing, likewise, two or three of the religious establishments, under the protection of which the principal royal mausoleums found shelter and preservation. The great Charreuse of Xeres contained probably no such palladium, for it was among the first of the condemned: its lands and buildings were confiscated; and its treasures of art, and all portable riches, dispersed, as likewise its inhabitants, in the direction of all the winds.

In England the name of Xeres is only generally known in connection with one of the principal objects of necessity, which furnish the table of the *gastronome*; but in Andalucia the name of Xeres de la Frontera calls up ideas of a different sort. It is dear to the wanderer in Spain, whose recollections love to repose on its picturesque position, its sunny skies, its delicious fruits, its amiable and lively population, and lastly on its once magnificent monastery, and the treasures of art it contained. The Prior of that monastery has been removed to the Cartuja of Burgos, where he presides over a community, reduced to four monks, who subsist almost entirely on charity. This amiable and gentleman-like individual, in whom the monk has in no degree

injured the man of the world,—although a large estate, abandoned for the cloister, proved sufficiently the sincerity of his religious professions,—had well deserved a better fate than to be torn in his old age from his warm Andalusian retreat, and transplanted to the rudest spot in the whole Peninsula, placed at an elevation of more than four thousand feet above the level of the Atlantic, and visited up to the middle of June by snow-storms. At the moment I am writing, this innocent victim of reform is extended on a bed of sickness, having only recently escaped with his life from an attack, during which he was given over.

This Cartuja possesses more than the historical reminiscences with which it is connected, to attract the passing tourist. It owes its prolonged existence to the possession of an admirable work of art,—the tomb of Juan the Second and his Queen Isabel, which stands immediately in front of the high altar of the church. This living mass of alabaster, the work of Gil de Siloë, son of the celebrated Diego, presents in its general plan the form of a star. It turns one of its points to the altar. Its mass, or thickness from the ground to the surface, measures about six feet; and this is consequently the height at which are laid the two recumbent figures.

It is impossible to conceive a work more elaborate



N.A. Wells, del.

W.F. Starling, sc.

INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH OF MIRAFLORES,
NEAR BURGOS.

than the details of the costumes of the King and Queen. The imitation of lace and embroidery, the exquisite delicacy of the hands and features, the infinitely minute carving of the pillows, the architectural railing by which the two statues are separated, the groups of sporting lions and dogs placed against the foot-boards, and the statues of the four Evangelists, seated at the four points of the star which face the cardinal points of the compass,—all these attract first the attention as they occupy the surface; but they are nothing to the profusion of ornament lavished on the sides. The chisel of the artist has followed each retreating and advancing angle of the star, filling the innermost recesses with life and movement. It would be endless to enter into a detailed enumeration of all this. It is composed of lions and lionesses, panthers, dogs,—crouching, lying, sitting, rampant, and standing; of saints, male and female, and personifications of the cardinal virtues. These figures are represented in every variety of posture,—some standing on pedestals, and others seated on beautifully wrought arm-chairs, but all enclosed respectively in the richest Gothic tracery, and under cover of their respective niches. Were there no other object of interest at Burgos, this tomb would well repay the traveller for a halt of a few days, and a country walk.

At the opposite side of the town may be seen the royal convent of Las Huelgas ; but as the nuns reserve to themselves the greater part of the church, including the royal tombs, which are said to be very numerous, no one can penetrate to satisfy his curiosity. It is, however, so celebrated an establishment, and of such easy access from the town, that a sight of what portions of the buildings are accessible deserves the effort of the two hundred yards' walk which separates it from the river promenade. This Cistercian convent was founded towards the end of the twelfth century by Alonzo the Eighth,—the same who won the famous battle of the Navas de Tolosa. It occupies the site of the pleasure-grounds of a royal retreat, as is indicated by the name itself. In its origin it was destined for the reception, exclusively, of princesses of the blood royal. It was consequently designed on a scale of peculiar splendour. Of the original buildings, however, only sufficient traces remain to confirm the records of history, but not to convey an adequate idea of their magnificence. What with the depredations of time, the vicissitudes of a situation in the midst of provinces so given to contention, and repeated alterations, it has evidently, as far as regards the portions to a view of which admission can be obtained, yielded almost all claims to identity with its ancient self.

The entire church, with the exception of a small portion partitioned off at the extremity, and containing the high altar, is appropriated to the nuns, and fitted up as a choir. It is very large; the length, of which an estimate may be formed externally, appearing to measure nearly three hundred feet. It is said this edifice contains the tomb of the founder, surrounded by forty others of princesses. The entrance to the public portion consists of a narrow vestibule, in which are several antique tombs. They are of stone, covered with Gothic sculpture, and appear, from the richness of their ornaments, to have belonged also to royalty. They are stowed away, and half built into the wall, as if there had not been room for their reception. The convent is said to contain handsome cloisters, courts, chapter-hall, and other state apartments, all of a construction long subsequent to its foundation. The whole is surrounded by a complete circle of houses, occupied by its various dependants and pensioners. These are enclosed from without by a lofty wall, and face the centre edifice, from which they are separated by a series of large open areas. Their appearance is that of a small town, surrounding a cathedral and palace.

The convent of the Huelgas takes precedence of all others in Spain. The abbess and her successors

were invested by the sovereigns of Leon and Castile with especial prerogatives, and with a sort of authority over all convents within those kingdoms. Her possessions were immense, and she enjoyed the sovereign sway over an extensive district, including several convents, thirteen towns, and about fifty villages. In many respects her jurisdiction resembles that of a bishop. The following is the formula which heads her official acts :

“ We, Doña, by the grace of God and of the Holy Apostolic See, Abbess of the royal monastery of Las Huelgas near to the city of Burgos, order of the Cister, habit of our father San Bernardo, Mistress, Superior, Prelate, Mother, and lawful spiritual and temporal Administrator of the said royal monastery, and its hospital called ‘ the King’s Hospital,’ and of the convents, churches, and hermitages of its filiation, towns and villages of its jurisdiction, lordship, and vassalage, in virtue of Apostolic bulls and concessions, with all sorts of jurisdiction, proper, almost episcopal, *nullius diocesis*, and with royal privileges, since we exercise both jurisdictions, as is public and notorious,” &c.

The hospital alluded to gives its name to a village, about a quarter of a mile distant, called “ Hospital del Rey.” This village is still in a sort of feudal dependance on the abbess, and is the only

remaining source of revenue to the convent, having been recently restored by a decree of Queen Isabella ; for the royal blood flowing in the veins of the present abbess had not exempted her convent from the common confiscation decreed by the revolution. The hospital, situated in the centre of the village, is a handsome edifice. The whole place is surrounded by a wall, similar to that which encloses the convent and its immediate dependances, and the entrance presents a specimen of much architectural beauty. It forms a small quadrangle, ornamented with an elegant arcade, and balustrades of an original design.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

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

LETTER VII.

ROUTE TO MADRID. MUSEO.

Toledo.

THE route from Burgos to Madrid presents few objects of interest. The country is dreary and little cultivated; indeed, much of it is incapable of culture. For those who are unaccustomed to Spanish routes, there may, indeed, be derived some amusement from the inns, of which some very characteristic specimens lie in their way. The Diligence halts for the night at the Venta de Juanilla, a solitary edifice situated at the foot of the last or highest *étage* of the Somo Sierra, in order to leave the principal ascent for the cool of early dawn. The building is seen from a considerable distance, and looks large; but is found, on nearer approach, to be a straggling edifice of one story only.

It is a modern inn, and differs in some essential points from the ancient Spanish *posada*,—perfect specimens of which are met with at Briviesca and

Burgos. In these the vestibule is at the same time a cow-shed, sheepfold, stable, pigsty,—in fact, a spacious Noah's Ark, in which are found specimens of all living animals, that is, of all sizes, down to the most minute; but for the purification of which it would be requisite that the entire flood should pass within, instead of on its outside. The original ark, moreover, possessed the advantage of windows, the absence of which causes no small embarrassment to those who have to thread so promiscuous a congregation, in order to reach the staircase; once at the summit of which, it must be allowed, one meets with cleanliness, and a certain degree of comfort.

The Venta de Juanilla, on the Somo Sierra, is a newish, clean-looking habitation, especially the interior, where one meets with an excellent supper, and may feast the eyes on the sight of a printed card, hanging on the wall of the dining-room, announcing that luxury of exotic gastronomy—Champagne—at three crowns a bottle: none were bold enough that evening to ask for a specimen.

There is less of the exotic in the bed-room arrangements; in fact, the building appears to have been constructed by the Diligence proprietors to meet the immediate necessity of the occasion. The Madrid road being served by two Diligences, one, leaving the capital, meets at this point, on its first night, the

other, which approaches in the contrary direction. In consequence of this arrangement, the edifice is provided with exactly four dormitories,—two male, and two female.

Nor is this the result of an intention to diminish the numbers quartered in each male or female apartment; on the contrary, two rooms would have answered the purpose better than four, but for the inconvenience and confusion which would have arisen from the denizens of the Diligence destined to start at a later hour being aroused from their slumbers, and perhaps induced to depart by mistake, at the signal for calling the travellers belonging to the earlier conveyance,—the one starting at two o'clock in the morning, and the other at three.

On the occasion of my *bivouaque* in this curious establishment, an English couple, recently married, happened to be among the number of my fellow-sufferers; and the lady's report of the adventures of the female dormitory of our Diligence afforded us sufficient amusement to enliven the breakfast on the other side of the mountain. It appeared, that, during the hustling of the males into their enclosure, a fond mother, moved by Heaven knows what anxious apprehensions, had succeeded in abstracting from the herd her son, a tender youth of fourteen. Whether or not she expected to smuggle, without

detection, this contraband article into the female pen, we could not determine. If she did, she reckoned somewhat independently of her host; for on a fellow-traveller entering in the dark, and groping about for a considerable time in search of an unoccupied nest, a sudden exclamation aroused the fatigued sleepers, followed by loud complaints against those who had admitted an interloper to this holy of holies of feminine promiscuousness, to the exclusion of one of its lawful occupants. The dispute ran high; but it must be added to the already numerous proofs of the superior energy proceeding from aroused maternal feelings, that the intruder was maintained in his usurped resting-place by his determined parent, notwithstanding the discontent naturally caused by such a proceeding.

We have now reached the centre of these provinces, the destinies of which have offered to Europe so singular an example of political vicissitude. It is an attractive occupation, in studying the history of this country, to watch the progress of the state, the ancient capital of which we have just visited,—a province which, from being probably the rudest and poorest of the whole Peninsula, became the most influential, the wealthiest, the focus of power, as it is geographically the centre of Spain,—and to witness its constantly progressive advance, as it gradually

drew within the range of its influence all the surrounding states; exemplifying the dogged perseverance of the Spanish character, which, notwithstanding repeated defeat, undermined the Arab power by imperceptible advances, and eventually ridded the Peninsula of its long-established lords. It is interesting to thread the intricate narrative of intermarriages, treaties, wars, alliances, and successions, interspersed with deeds of heroic chivalry and of blackest treachery, composing the annals of the different northern states of Spain; until at length, the Christian domination having been borne onward by successive advantages nearly to the extreme southern shores of the Peninsula, a marriage unites the two principal kingdoms, and leads to the subjection of all Spain, as at present, under one monarch.

It is still more attractive to repair subsequently to the country itself; and from this central, pyramidal summit—elevated by the hand of Nature to a higher level than the rest of the Peninsula; its bare and rugged surface exposed to all the less genial influences of the elements, and crowned by its modern capital, looking down in all directions, like a feudal castle on the fairer and more fertile regions subject to its dominion, and for the protection of which it is there proudly situated,—to take a survey of this extra-

ordinary country, view the localities immortalized by the eventful passages of its history, and muse on its still varying destinies.

Madrid has in fact already experienced threatening symptoms of the insecurity of this feudal tenure, as it were, in virtue of which it enjoys the supreme rank. Having no claim to superiority derived from its commerce, the fertility of its territory, the facility of its means of communication and intercourse with the other parts of the kingdom or with foreign states, —nothing, in fact, but its commanding and central position, and the comparatively recent choice made of it by the sovereigns for a residence; it has seen itself rivalled, and at length surpassed in wealth and enterprise, by Barcelona, and its right to be continued as the seat of government questioned and attacked. Its fall is probably imminent, should some remedy not be applied before the intermittent revolutionary fever, which has taken possession of the country, makes further advances, or puts on chronic symptoms; but its fate will be shared by the power to which it owes its creation. No residence in Europe bears a prouder and more monarchical aspect than Madrid, nor is better suited for the abode of the feudal pomp and etiquette of the most magnificent —in its day—of European courts: but riding and country sports have crossed the Channel, and are