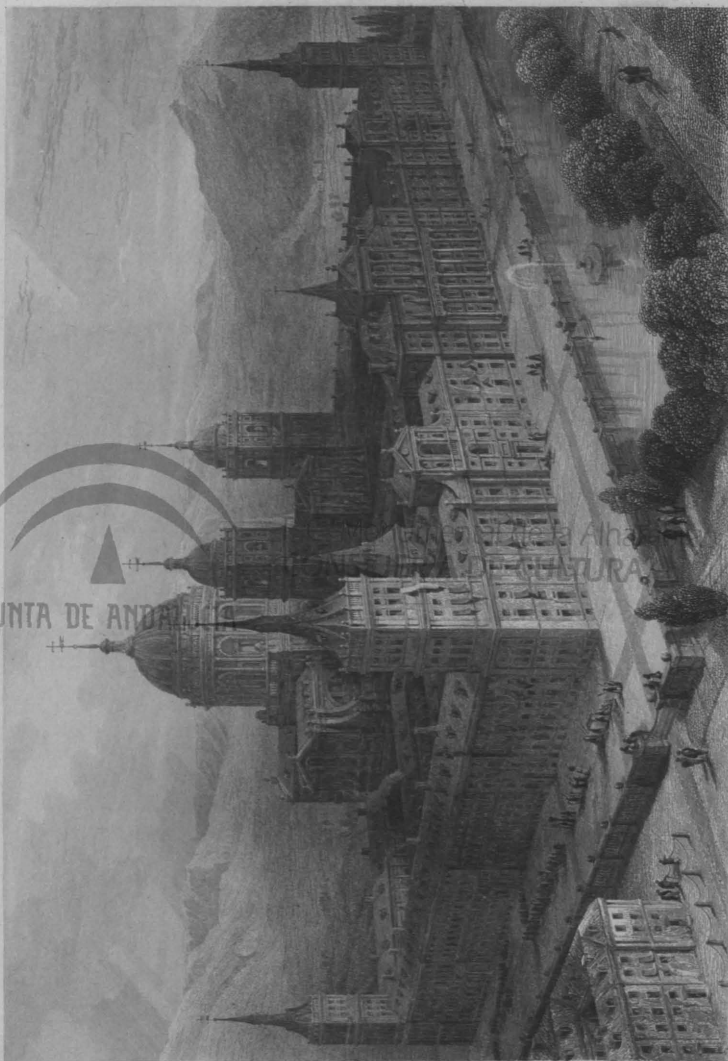


Silence, and shapes mysterious as the grave :
 Till the broad sun sheds, once more, from the wave
 His lively lustre, beautiful and pure ;
 Such shapes were in the night, and such ill gloom
 At thy departure ; still tormenting fear
 Haunts, and must haunt me, until death shall doom
 The so much wished-for sun to re-appear
 Of thine angelic face, my soul to cheer,
 Resurgent from the tomb.

* * * * *

' Poor lost Eliza ! of thy locks of gold,
 One treasured ringlet in white silk I keep
 For ever at my heart ; which when unroll'd,
 Fresh grief and pity o'er my spirit creep,
 And my insatiate eyes, for hours untold,
 O'er the dear pledge will like an infant weep :
 With sighs more warm than fire, anon I dry
 The tears from off it ; number, one by one,
 Thy radiant hairs, and with a love-knot tie :
 Mine eyes, this duty done,
 Give over weeping, and with slight relief,
 I taste a short forgetfulness of grief."





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PALACE OF THE ESCURIAL.

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Drawn by David Roberts

JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

la Alhambra

Generallife

CHAPTER VII.

ST. ILDEFONSO AND THE ESCURIAL.

Apology for Digressions—Diego's Mules—Monks of Burgos—Barren Plains—Change in the Landscape—Approach the Mountains—Palace of St. Ildefonso—Tomb of Philip—Variable Climate—the Escorial—the Pantheon—the Gardens—Works of Art—Funeral Procession—Treasures of Learning—Portraits—the Tabernacle—Road to Madrid—Silent Palinodia.

It is much to be feared that, what with our learned dissertations on wool, and delectable disquisitions on bucolic poetry, arising out of our partiality for sheep and cattle, the reader has ere this made up his mind to sleep during the rest of the journey. Should this, however, be his determination, let him lay no blame on us if he learns nothing of St. Ildefonso, the Escorial, or the Seven Peaks, upon the subject of which we may, perhaps, prove excessively eloquent, before we take our coffee at Madrid. It may, moreover, be confessed, *inter nos*, that we found the shepherds beginning to become a bore, even to us, who are gifted with the patience of Job; and therefore reserve for next year the remainder of our diatribe upon their poetical manner of life, on their feeding, like hogs or Arcadians, upon acorns, with sundry other particulars, some few of which, we find, Cervantes has purloined, without acknowledgment, from our "Adversaria."

During the many days we remained at Segovia, collecting materials for the above chapter, Diego's mules had been feeding like aldermen, and by the day of our departure were grown so exceedingly frisky, that we more than once apprehended the overturning of our vehicle from their unruly movements. In fact, they reminded us strongly of the crowd of sleek citizens who, after divine service, crowded round us close to the cathedral of Burgos, admiring the tramontane cut of our coats, laughing at our heretical boots and breeches, and the narrow brims of our hats, which they seemed to regard as something smelling strongly of Martin Luther. However, off we went, the vast mountains of Castile rising before us, and amusing our fancy till the pinnacles of the palace itself bristled up in the distance, inviting our eye to descend, for the present, from the mountains to contemplate them.

There are but about six miles to travel from Segovia to St. Ildefonso. Nevertheless, the pilgrim of the picturesque would scarcely feel any regret if the distance were still considerably less, the whole foreground of the landscape which meets his eye consisting of mere barren plains, with a few hungry hamlets sparingly scattered over them. Nothing can well be more unfertile than this district, which must, moreover, remain so for ever, unless art can be made to supply the deficiency of water with which nature has cursed it. But the folly and weakness of former governments contributed greatly to improve the native barrenness of the land. Consulting only their own pleasures, and basely trampling on the rights of the

people they were designed to serve, they let loose upon the province numerous herds of deer, which, overspreading the country, ate up every thing edible that the industry of the peasant had culled into existence. To the honour of Charles IV. it should be added, however, that he had no sooner ascended the throne, than he took measures for delivering the husbandman from this scourge.

As we advance nearer to St. Ildefonso, a change almost magical takes place in the landscape. Imperceptibly we find ourselves transported from an arid flat into the midst of hills and valleys, watered by numerous sparkling rivulets, and clothed with delicious herbage. Woods, rising along the heights, and opening into vistas of emerald green, disclose from time to time the scanty descendants of those mischievous herds of deer above commemorated; while here and there, emerging from clusters of verdant oaks, a beautiful villa presents its classic front to the eye. Farther on, the palace itself, partly embosomed in trees, and flanked by mountains of sublime grandeur, unites with the surrounding objects in forming a picture not to be contemplated without profound interest.

This palace, the favourite residence of Philip the Fifth, was greatly embellished by that monarch; who, reckless of his duties, or ignorant of the high trust Providence had reposed in him, lavished upon his private pleasures the riches of Spain. The great object of his ambition is supposed to have been,—if we can believe historians at least,—to rival the vaunted wonders of the gardens of Versailles. Here, surrounded

by rugged precipices and solitary woods, he loved to spend the days bestowed on him for much higher purposes than indulging in useless gloom; and here, when death had gathered him to his fathers, his ashes were deposited. We visited his mausoleum. It is constructed, in a style of much simplicity, of various kinds of marbles, with ornaments of bronze. The tomb itself, resting on a massive pedestal, supports an urn surmounting a lofty abacus. Two statues, one representing Charity, the other a weeping figure, are placed one on either side of the urn. Above these are two medallions, containing the portraits of Philip and his queen, both enveloped with a veil, which Fame is endeavouring to remove. A pyramid supporting a vase of perfumes rises behind the tomb, on the pedestal of which is the following inscription:—

PHILIPPO V.
 PRINCIPI MAXIMO,
 OPTIMO PARENTI,
 FERDINANDUS VI.
 POSUIT.

But Ferdinand, having erected this monument to his father's memory, abandoned the palace to his mother-in-law. The court, however, long continued, and I believe still continues, to spend the hot summer months in this wild retreat, which is defended from the sirocco and other southerly winds by a very elevated ridge of snowy mountains, and lies in a sheltered vale open to the north. Like all places in the immediate vicinity of lofty mountain chains, Saint Ildefonso is liable to sudden and frequent

changes in the temperature of the atmosphere, so that, in the course of the twenty-four hours, persons of delicate constitutions are sometimes obliged to change their dress two or three times. These fluctuations in the state of the air are occasionally productive of colic, and other acute disorders.

The exterior of the palace has nothing magnificent in its appearance; though the garden front, adorned with pillars of the Corinthian order, is not inelegant. From several of the royal apartments there is a splendid view over a parterre, adorned with marble vases and statues, of a cascade unrivalled for the richness of its decorations and the limpid purity of its waters. A romantic stream breaks over the rocks at no great distance, and rolls along through an extensive tract of thickets, where the king, when disposed to imitate Isaak Walton, used to amuse himself with the rod and line. One of the principal recommendations of St. Ildefonso arises from the abundance and excellence of its water. These it owes to the mountains which, towering aloft into the clouds, intercept vast quantities of vapours on their way towards the scorching plains of New Castile, and convert them into springs and rills that flow northward, and fertilize and render beautiful this solitary spot.

The grounds, which are three miles in circumference, and of very broken and unequal surface, exhibit an endless succession of novel scenes. They are laid out with much taste. Each of the principal walks corresponds with one of the peaks of the neighbouring mountains, and, like the vistas in the Isola Madre, forcibly fixes

attention upon the most striking objects. One in particular every visitor must notice. Opening forward from the grand façade, it carries the view over five fountains, adorned with exquisite groupes of sculpture, rising with the ground tier above tier, to the mountain peak which crowns the whole.

The water-works are universally acknowledged to excel those of Versailles, which, therefore, need not be disparaged below their merit to heighten the praise of these. One traveller ventures to describe the water thrown up in the gardens of the French king as of a muddy colour, and as falling down like a noisome thick fog. He is wrong. They are less crystalline indeed than these; but, to make this discovery, it is necessary to observe them very narrowly. No doubt the streams thrown up by the Castilian fountain are clear as crystal, and the sunbeams falling through them play before the eye in the most exquisite prismatic tints, while the spray falls around like the finest dew. The sweetness of the atmosphere, the odours of the flowers, the murmuring waters, and the blue sunny beauty of the heavens above, make you imagine yourself transported to the fabled gardens of Irem, and a gentle melancholy seizes you as a multitude of historical associations rise before the mind.

Nature itself never meant an earthly paradise to arise in this spot. The soil is hungry and shallow, and the rocks are so compact and uniformly near the surface, that, in order to obtain depth for the trees to take root, the king had square pits blown in the rock with gunpowder, and worked with tools, after which

they were filled with earth brought hither from a distance. His industry, indeed, would have been commendable had his whole kingdom been a rock, like Malta, where the knights were compelled to have recourse to similar contrivances to create a few scanty gardens; but Spain abounds in fertile and pleasant undulations, where, with little labour or expense, scenes of surpassing beauty might be called into existence.

Distance, however, in all cases, enhances the beauty of objects. Delille, in his "Jardins," speaks of the grounds of St. Ildefonso with an enthusiasm, which probably would not have been increased by a visit to the spot; but, it may be remarked that he dwells with most delight on that which is furthest removed from nature. He seems, indeed, to speak with some degree of disrespect of artificial springs; but after all, what is there here that is not artificial? "*Toi,*" he exclaims:

"Toi, surtout, Ildefonse, et tes fraîches délices
 La ne sont point tes eaux dont les sources factices,
 Se ferment tout à coup, par leur morne repos
 Attristant le bocage et etrompent les échos.
 Sans cesse résonnant dans ces jardins superbes,
 D'interissables eaux, en colonnes, en gerbes,
 S'élancent, fendent l'air de leurs rapides jets,
 Et des monts paternels égalent les sommets :
 Lieu superbe où Philippe, avec magnificence,
 Defait son ayeul et retraçait la France."

The palace contains a very fine and large collection of pictures, several of which are by the most celebrated masters. There are travellers who appear to acquire, during their passage through Spain, a taste for its scenery, its manners, and its artists; who,

accordingly prefer the productions of the native painters before those of the greatest men of Italy. But, with every disposition to do justice to Murillo, Velasquez, and other Spaniards, I constantly, in all their collections, found my eye wandering towards the works of the Italians, who, in art, appear to have imbibed more of the Hellenic spirit than any other people of modern times. Among the most remarkable pictures here, however,—where there are some by Michael Angelo, Claude Lorraine, and Guido Reni,—is one of Murillo, “Saint Anne teaching the Virgin to read;” in which, united with the greatest fidelity to nature, there is a softness, a delicacy, a force of expression perfectly Titianesque. Not far from this splendid work of art is a head of Portia, by Guido, mentioned by several travellers, into which the artist has infused all the dignity of a Roman matron, tempered by the graceful tenderness and impassioned melancholy of an Attic maiden.

Among the sculptures, which I believe are wholly antique, are several very splendid groupes and statues. We were particularly struck by an Aphrodite kneeling on a tortoise, and pouring a phial of essences over her plaited tresses. Here we find embodied that placid loveliness which the Hellenic sculptors appropriated to their representations of divine beings; visible in Herè, Athena, Dameter, and Artemis, but shining forth in none so resplendently as in the daughter of Dionè, in whom all the grace and sweetness of the old mythical poetry appear to be clothed with form and expression.

But it is by no means my intention to enter into critical remarks on the works of art to be found at Saint Ildefonso; properly to do this, we ought to have remained there at least a month; whereas we viewed the whole in a morning. Proceeding thence towards the mountains, in less than an hour we traversed the Eresma and reached Balsain, a village lying in the depths of a woody hollow, where the kings of Spain had formerly a hunting-seat. The view now assumes a magnificent character. Bleak pine-clad mountains, covered deeply on their loftier slopes with snow, and lifting their numerous peaks far into the clear sky, broken into chasms, ravines, and torrent beds, in one place barren as the ocean, in another teeming with gloomy vegetation, stretch right and left like the battlements of some vast fortress reared by the Titans. At first view it seems, as among the Alpine ridges, impossible to climb the impending steeps. No hold for the foot of man or beast appears. But as we advance, the road, shaded by enormous-pine trees, works its way upwards among the rocks, until you at length find yourself on the level summit, with the interminable plains of New Castile stretched out like a map beneath your eye.

Madrid, about whose extent and magnificence the Spaniard makes such a continual boast, every Castilian should view from this elevated spot. He would then see what it is,—a circumscribed dot upon the map of the plain, which scarcely makes a break in the vast sweep of the horizon. One enjoys extraordinary pleasure in contemplating a scene like the one

now before us from so great a height. There is an elastic spring in the air which imparts a buoyancy to the spirits, already put in brisk motion by exercise and the sun. The sight, too, pursuing its objects over so boundless an expanse, unobstructed by mist, or haze, or cloud, appears to enjoy a grasp unknown in more northern latitudes, and luxuriates on a multitude of fine points at once. But if such a scene presents all the characteristics of a map, it will of course be understood that among them want of life and animation must be included. There is the grave-like stillness of the desert, accompanied by a consciousness of imperfection on your part; for you are sure there is life with all its concomitants below, if the obtuseness of your organs did not prevent its being revealed to you. Soon, therefore, you are glad to quit this aerial observatory, and drop with satisfaction into the plains of New Castile.

During our descent we noticed here and there upon the brown sun-burned plain, dense volumes of smoke rising from spots where appeared no other signs of population; and learned, upon inquiry, that they proceeded from the kilns of charcoal-burners, who in this necessary operation destroy the few copses and thickets which might otherwise rescue this dreary landscape from the charge of utter nakedness. The road, meanwhile, is exceedingly good; and ere we have achieved one half of the descent, the eye, plunging down a hollow of the mountain, alights with surprise and pleasure on the famous monastery of the Escorial.

Even from a distance, the appearance of this edifice is remarkably striking. It looks a forest of lofty domes, towers, spires, and pinnacles. The gridiron plan,—of which the hint was taken, not from the frontispiece of Cobbett's Register, as many sage and learned antiquaries might perhaps suppose, but from the instrument used by the ancient pagans in grilling St. Lawrence,—is not discoverable from the overhanging mountains, or indeed at all, unless it is pointed out, or recalled by an effort of the memory. You behold balconies, balustrades, hanging galleries, domes, roofs of all heights, columns, windows innumerable, with broad esplanades, sheets of water, walks, and shady trees below; and the impression, if not that of beauty, which, alas! is every where rare, is at least that of power aiming blindly at the sublime, and stumbling in its way on barbaric grandeur and magnificence.

But much of the effect produced upon the imagination springs from the wild and singular situation of the place. Secluded in a recess of these savage mountains, midway up their steep acclivity, it seems to be one of those edifices raised by enchantment in unfrequented spots to amaze and bewilder the traveller. Yet it is not out of harmony with the scene. Gloomy in its site, it is itself gloomy, and calculated to beget that feeling in all who behold it. I beheld it, nevertheless, with much pleasure. The rich mellow tints of autumn were on the woods which clothe the slopes of the mountain beyond it; the warm rays of the sun streamed between its spires and domes, heightening infinitely their picturesque effect; and

there was an air, I know not from whence arising, of soft melancholy repose diffused over the whole, which, no doubt, constituted its principal charm in the eyes of the atrabilious monarch who chose it for his favourite abode.

Though I had read many descriptions of this extraordinary edifice, I found, as usual, that none of them had exactly prepared me for what I saw. Every thing had been exaggerated, except the beauty of the site, which, though striking at first, is not properly appreciated till one has strolled leisurely through the grounds, and studied, from every point of view, the character of the encircling landscapes. Above all things that Spain has to show, the scenes round the Escorial, contemplated in the soft hour which precedes twilight, are perhaps the most truly poetical, and the best calculated to leave a lasting impression on the heart. One feels all around the approach of evening. Massive shadows thicken among the trees, where the breezes become fresher and louder, swinging to and fro the huge boughs, and rustling the innumerable leaves. The birds sing cheerfully, though taking their farewell of the day; and as we listen, the forms of friends beloved, but now far distant, crowd around us, and impart an unearthly flavour to our enjoyment. And if the eye wanders upwards, through some long leafy vista, towards the over-hanging sierras, it beholds the golden sunshine, which has left the plains and valleys, lingering among their skyey peaks, and likening them, in their serene and tranquil beauty, to those Olympian summits, where the poetical imagination of the pagan placed the home of his gods.

The palace, or monastery,—which ever it may be called,—though doubtless it pleased me, did so much less than the site. Within and without it betrays marks of effort, aiming laboriously, and, I must add, ignorantly, at effect. The general body of the edifice is much too low; the towers, spires, and domes, in comparison, too high; and accordingly their union, instead of producing one grand whole, instinct with harmony, gives the idea of a piece of architectural patchwork tastelessly put together. The portico, for example, of the principal front, is timidly, as it were, thrust into the building, and rests on a basement elevated unmeaningly above the esplanade. What it is intended for, no one can tell. Above it, moreover, you discover a weight of building, which every moment appears about to crush it into the earth; and then, if you contemplate it from the height close at hand, your eye runs along the roof until it is obstructed by masses of littleness. On the contrary, though deficient in beauty, the square towers and the dome have, from their mere height, an air of grandeur, which helps to rescue the general impression from the charge of tameness and insipidity.

Many travellers, captivated by mere magnitude, seek to dazzle the reader by dwelling upon the vast dimensions of the structure. The building, it is observed, is a long square of six hundred and forty feet by five hundred and eighty; so that allowing, in addition, four hundred and sixty for the projection of the chapel and king's quarter, the whole circumference amounts to two thousand nine hundred

feet. Granted: but what is the height? By exact admeasurement fifty-one feet eight inches to the cornice, not more than a twelfth of the length of the front, which looks, therefore, more like one side of a street than the façade of a palace.

Its erection was commenced in 1557, under the auspices of Manegro, a Toledan architect; who dying in ten years, left the work to be continued by Juan Herrera Bustamante, one of his pupils, an Asturian, who died thirty years afterwards at Madrid. The stone of which it is constructed is of a poor gray colour, brought from the neighbouring mountains. Some writers pretend, not perhaps without reason, that it was erected by Philip the Second, in consequence of a vow made to St. Lawrence before the battle of St. Quentin, which was fought on the 10th of August, 1557. Whether the vow be apocryphal or not, the battle of St. Quentin was the cause of its erection; for Philip, desirous of commemorating so signal a victory gained by his troops over the French, reared this monastery and dedicated it to St. Lawrence, the patron saint of the day on which the victory had been achieved. And now follows the chief absurdity. St. Lawrence having, according to popish legends, been broiled to death on a gridiron, Philip, to propitiate his manes, accommodated the plan of his building to the form of that martyrological instrument of cookery, appropriating to himself the handle, and the remainder to the monks; to intimate, possibly, that he would much rather they should be grilled than he.

The church, which occupies the centre of the whole pile, is spacious, lofty, and very richly decorated, and surmounted by a light cupola. The high altar, on which, in Catholic churches, we find the principal care generally bestowed, is composed of sumptuous marbles, agates, and jaspers of extreme rarity, all found in Spain. Two catafalquos occupy the side arcades of the sanctuary; on one of which the Emperor Charles the Fifth, with his wife, daughter, and two sisters, are represented in colossal bronze figures in the attitude of prayer; and on the opposite side are those of Philip the Second, his unnatural son, with his three wives, likewise in bronze, and in a kneeling posture. At perceiving them thus put in juxtaposition, one remembers how diligently the father flogged himself; partly as penance for his numerous crimes, partly for his folly in yielding up the reins of government to a son, who more than once refused him the stipend necessary for his maintenance.

Beneath is the burial-place of the royal family, heathenishly styled the "Pantheon," and not unaptly applied, considering the character of the majority of the princes of Spain. We descend to this vault by a flight of twenty-five steps, and read over the door a Latin inscription, which informs the curious traveller that the place is sacred to the mortal remains of the Catholic kings of Spain:—

"HIC LOCUS SACER MORTALITATIS EXUVIIS
CATHOLICORUM REGUM HISPANIARUM," ETC.

The original idea of this family vault, the last retreat of vain-glory and pride, was conceived by the

Emperor Charles; his son Philip, more inclined to do honour to his memory than to his person while he lived, determined to carry the design into execution, but took no active steps towards it. Philip the Third inherited the project, and made a beginning; and the fourth Philip, more fortunate in this than his predecessors, completed the royal tomb. Weak and frail as we are, some apology may be made for the solicitude we all experience that our bones may repose in a peaceful, if not a sumptuous retreat, when death shall have laid his hand upon us. Kings share this feeling with the peasant. If virtuous, therefore, while they live, I would willingly excuse their vanity and weakness in this particular; seeing, as the pagans expressed it, that the tomb is our true dwelling-place, to which life is but the passage, or scanty vestibule.

The staircase by which we descend to the Pantheon is covered, like the building itself, with marble. This subterraneous building, which strongly calls to mind the descriptions given by travellers of the tombs of the Egyptian kings at Thebes, is one hundred and eight feet in circumference, and nearly forty in height. There is little here to remind us of being in the burial-place of Christian princes. The example of our Saviour, too generally forgotten by them during life, has not been imitated by the Spanish kings in their graves. The simplicity of Christ suited not with their ideas of sepulchral magnificence. They would render Hades a place of delight, a place where the disembodied shade, if still cheered by the sight of marbles, bronze, gold, and the other gewgaws with

which human vanity seeks to conceal or disguise our mortality, might love to wander, through halls dim and shadowy, but occasionally lighted up,—when another inmate is added to that silent throng,—by a superb lustre shedding its beams, like an infernal sun, from the cupola, upon that gorgeous nook of the nether world.

This imperial abode of death is divided into several chambers, each appropriated to some particular purpose. In one, significantly denominated the *podridero*, or “place of putrefaction,” the bodies of kings and queens are consigned to the first ravages of corruption. Close to this is a chamber set apart for such personages of royal stock, of both sexes, as have not participated in the delights of sovereign power; and among these a French traveller discovered, with some satisfaction, that the ashes of the Duc de Vendôme had obtained a place on the 9th of September, 1712.

“ But far within,
And in their own dimensions, like themselves,
The great Castilian lords, and conquerors,
In close recess and secret conclave sit.”

The Rotunda, or Pantheon properly so called, is appropriated entirely to the remains of royalty. No dust is there but what once felt pleasure or pain upon a throne, and heard courtiers and poets-laureate babbling of its greatness and immortality. The flickering light of a torch now guides your footsteps through this dumb and motionless assembly of sovereigns, who once wielded the destiny of millions, while the dust

of their satellites has long mingled with the clods of some common cemetery. By the aid of this dim light, rendered still more chilling and melancholy by that which descends through the gratings from above, you discern, opposite the principal entrance, an altar and a crucifix of black marble on a pediment of porphyry. This is the most beaming ornament of the whole; there is a language in the crucifix; it suggests a train of ideas that softens the features of death, and sends the thoughts, oppressed by a sense of helpless mortality, bounding upwards to Him who brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.

The royal sarcophagi are arranged on either side of the altar in three rows, one above another, like the coffins in an Egyptian tomb, and in different compartments, divided from each other by noble fluted pilasters of marble. Of these sarcophagi, which are of bronze and of a chaste and classic form, many, still empty, are ready to receive the ashes of kings yet to be. Moralists declaim, on the occasion of such visits, of the lessons humanity may learn from spectacles of this kind; but I have never heard that people's humanity was disposed to turn them to any good account.

The ornaments which adorn this subterranean palace are tasteful and elegant. Both the walls and arches are encrusted with marbles exquisitely assimilated and shaded; the entrance is adorned with ten polished marble Doric columns, with bases, capitals, and medallions of gilded bronze; and, placed one on either hand, are two allegorical statues, the one of Human Nature, the other of Hope.

But if we remain longer under ground, we shall become gloomy and tomb-like as the mausoleum itself. We, in fact, found the shadows of the grave closing over our imaginations; and, ere examining the pictures and other works of art here brought together by the Spanish kings, found it necessary to shake off the dreary feeling by a walk in the gardens. The weather was beautifully clear, but, as the wind blew from the north and came sweeping down from the mountains in violent gusts, there was a chill in the air difficult to reconcile with the sunny look spread over every thing around.

Our guide, however, a gossiping septagenarian, whose hale complexion did great credit to the climate of the Escorial, assured us that the cold we complained of was nothing compared with what is sometimes experienced even in July, when the wind happens to sit in the same quarter. He spoke much also of the prodigious fury of the winds. If we might believe him, miracles are every year performed at the Escorial by Boreas, who not only blows old women from one end of the *Lonja* to the other,—a distance of three-quarters of a mile; but whisks carriages-and-four across a court or avenue with an ease and celerity peculiar to Spanish winds. Once, he said,—and he liberally exhibited the remainder of his teeth while he spoke,—he remembered to have seen a state minister taken up in the coolest manner imaginable by the breath of an insolent tornado, and deposited, stars and ribands and all, in a thicket hard by. And it was his firm opinion that the wind would not spare even the

king himself, should he venture out while it is blowing. Perceiving the little respect of these plebeian blasts for the attendants, &c. on royalty, and reflecting that it is sometimes necessary to venture abroad even on such occasions, a subterraneous corridor, called *la Mina*, has been carried from the palace to the village, where most of the courtiers have their mistresses, by which even women, or the king's guards, may pass to and fro without fear, let the wind blow as it pleases above. The sage and ingenious politician, whose profound genius suggested this method of outwitting the north-wind, has thereby obtained a kind of immortality in Spain, where every thing which promotes the comforts of the great is regarded with unceasing admiration. Let us, therefore, aid in handing the name of this illustrious individual down to posterity. Reader, he was known in Castile by the glorious appellation of Don Jayme Massones; which henceforward, we hope, will be as celebrated as that of Antinous, Hephestion, or any other king's favourite renowned in history.

But the winds, we find, are blowing us away from the gardens, which we quitted the cemetery on purpose to enjoy. They differ greatly from those of St. Ildefonso. Here there is much more of nature; and the solitude and quiet which brood over every thing, enhance the beauty of the landscape, or, at least, give additional force to its effect upon the imagination. The walks are exceedingly rugged. One broad alley, in particular, leads through a deep valley towards a woody and shaggy projection of the mountains,

terminating in precipitous cliffs, which have an appearance wild as the rocks of Savoy or the Upper Valais. The ground you traverse, being exceedingly broken and rugged, now ascending and now sinking abruptly, in some places clothed thick with trees, in others bare, presents you every moment with new features in the landscape. Here a cluster of tiny waterfalls breaks upon the eye at once, dashing, foaming, and plunging with hissing sound down natural or artificial steeps; there green slopes, thickly sprinkled with wild flowers and encircled by umbrageous trees, disclose to us a herd of fallow deer, grazing, lying down, or glancing sportively through the sunshine.

These gardens have a general slope, which is that of the mountains, towards the south, and descend, terrace below terrace, towards the plain. This gives them, when viewed from a little distance, either below or above, the appearance of hanging gardens, piled up artificially one above another like the diminutive gradations of the Isola Bella. From the sweep, also, of the semi-hollow in which they are situated, they have something of the appearance of the gallery of a theatre, and the very site looks almost artificial, without losing any of the beauty which nature has bestowed on it.

From all this, it will be easy to conceive how delightful was the contrast we felt on coming forth from the damp gloomy sepulchre into these glad some walks, where every thing looked so cheerful and sunny, that it was somewhat difficult to believe in the existence of death.

By the advice of the guide we walked up to the village, where, he assured us, we should behold a procession of great pomp and splendour. Though this kind of show,—in which, judiciously or injudiciously I know not, the Catholics have imitated the pagans of antiquity,—was by no means new to us, we judged it to be our duty as travellers to see whatever was to be seen; and accordingly put ourselves under his direction, to lead us whithersoever he might think proper. Of the village itself nothing need be said; except that it certainly seemed, at least in its holiday trim, somewhat less dirty than most other villages. The windows of the street through which the procession was to pass were all hung with tapestry, or, as my companion thought, with coverlets and other bed-clothes, which looked very well at a distance. About the procession itself there was undoubtedly considerable splendour; moving along with flags and streamers waving, bands of music playing impressive airs, and a large image of the Virgin borne by four monks, while six grey friars found employ in supporting the awning which protected it from the sun. The flags, which had once been extremely beautiful, though carefully furbished up for the occasion, could not conceal the fact that they had seen much service, and were now far advanced in years; a remark which will still more strongly apply to the antique vehicle that closed the procession, and had doubtless seen the light before the Moors were driven out of Granada. It probably belonged to the bishop.

As they were proceeding to the church of the Escorial, we fell into the train of old women and ragged urchins who composed the majority of the spectators, and strolled very devoutly among them, adapting our looks and paces to the occasion. Several honest peasants from the neighbouring hamlets had taken care to desert their field-labours to be present at this august ceremony, and the figures they cut were by no means unpicturesque. They wore a short doublet over a tight black waistcoat, and a good cloak, which the wind made very free with, over all. As these modern Abantes wear the hair long, something is found necessary to keep it in order; and accordingly, every man appeared with his head in a bag of black silk netting, called *recezilla*; which, being filled with profuse and well-matted elf-locks, hung gracefully over the shoulders, moved from side to side as the owner of the bag looked this way or that. Their large round hats, more for show than use, were carried in the hand. Two or three Castilians from beyond the mountains formed a striking contrast with their neighbours, disguised in their dark-coloured frocks, strapped round the waist like a friar's sack, and gloomy pointed *monteros*.

On arriving at the monastery, they deposited in the chapel a figure of a friar holding a cross, which I had not previously noticed, and then retired to the adjoining cloisters, whither we also followed. One of their corps was now selected,—for his *resemblance*, it was said, to our Saviour!—and a cord having been bound about his body, and a crown of thorns placed

upon his head, he took up an immense crucifix,—in imitation of Christ's bearing the cross,—and the procession continued, the monks chaunting and parading round the cloisters.

We now left the friars to continue their exhibition, and directed our attention to the conventual part of the edifice, in which there are numerous objects worthy of observation,—as the old church, the priory, the chapter-rooms, refectories, cloisters, and library. Perhaps, however, there is nothing in the Escorial more worthy of notice,—excepting the library, which a passing stranger can make no use of,—than the superb collection of pictures, dispersed about the various parts of the church, sacristy, and convent. In many respects they may be said to surpass every other gallery in Europe, except that of Dresden. Here the English traveller beholds with considerable interest, pictures which once belonged to England, having been collected for Charles the First, who whatever may have been his political errors; was not devoid of taste. By the side of these are such of the spoils of Italy as the rapacious sovereigns of Spain could gather together during their odious domination over the southern portion of that most beautiful land; consequently we have here, as might have been expected, works of art of the highest grade,—of the highest, at least, known to modern times.

In a portion of the edifice called the *Antilla*, there are several pieces by Titian, all remarkable for that truth of outline and richness of colouring for which

this great artist is distinguished. Among these, the one most generally admired is a *Glory*, in which he has introduced the emperor Charles the Fifth and his son Philip, not as saints, but as suppliants. The composition of this picture no doubt contains something grand and striking; but it comes less strongly recommended to the imagination by inventive grace than a *Saint Margaret*, which the monks, however, have contrived to spoil, by painting a cloth to cover the naked limbs. This reminded me of the anecdote of the Italian painter, who was engaged by one of the more scrupulous pontiffs to drape the figures of his more distinguished predecessors, and hence acquired the appellation of "the master-tailor,"—the head of a new school of masters. But, rather than mutilate so fine a work of art, it would have been better to have transferred it to some other building. Here also is a fine original picture by El Mudo, representing a number of Christians coming by night to bear away the body of Saint Lawrence, who, as we have already observed, had suffered martyrdom on a gridiron. The subject was admirably well suited to the painter's genius, and he has accordingly made the most of it. You discover the pious company advancing stealthily by the light of a single torch, which casts a startling glare upon their faces, where courage and apprehension, reliance upon Providence, and a desire to escape the notice of their enemies, are exquisitely blended.

Proceeding into the chapter-house, where there is a *Saint John playing with a Lamb*, by Spagnoletto,

distinguished for its extraordinary merit, our whole attention was engrossed by the Annunciation of Barroccio. The Virgin, whose true character none but the artists of Italy have seized, is a being full of sanctity and poetry, beautiful, yet not merely on that account remarkable. Informed of her high destiny, believing, yet amazed, she stands an incarnation of meekness, and innocence, and perfect submission; and the sentiment, recorded with inimitable beauty by the Evangelist, "I am the slave of God!" breathes from her features, and appears to be fluttering upon her lips. Idolatry is, no doubt, in all respects hateful; but if any modification of it be less guilty, less condemnable than another, it is doubtless the worship of the Virgin, of that purest, and brightest, and holiest of created things, in comparison with whose loveliness even the liquid light of Hesper is pale and dim.

But I am growing half a pagan, and must hurry on to the vicar's hall, where we find what is regarded as the master-piece of Velasquez: "the sons of Jacob showing him the bloody garment of Joseph, and bidding examine him and see whether it was his son's coat or not." This is certainly a splendid work of art. The grouping is highly natural, the characters of the several personages are legibly written on their countenances, and the dumb agony of the father, not wholly unmingled with self-reproach, has all the force and energy of life. Murillo has never, perhaps, produced any thing equal to this; but I speak with hesitation, as his works have afforded too much

genuine pleasure to allow of my giving my vote against him without regret.

There is a Dead Christ, by Rubens, in the prior's hall, which professed connoisseurs consider in his best manner, and very greatly admire. I find little to please me in the works of this painter, excepting their rude vigour, indicative, no doubt, of much energy in their author. The fault may be in me, or peradventure in him; but in my eyes, he always appears to have been deficient in the art of directing his energies into a proper channel, and even in the taste required to keep clear of coarseness and vulgarity, than which nothing can be more adverse to high art. However, the figure of Mary Magdalen kneeling before the corpse of Christ, is executed in a fine striking style, and there is considerable majesty in the august body of the dead. In the same hall is a magnificent picture of Paolo Veronese, the Centurion kneeling to Christ, in which we admire both the character of the figures, and the classic majesty of the architecture.

I pass over many other works of genuine merit, in order to say one word of a Holy Family by Raffaele. Nothing can be more touching than the pictures of this class from the hands of masters. The most perfect harmony pervades the composition: dignified old age in Saint Joseph; youth, beauty, spotless innocence, the timidity of a girl, the tenderness of a mother, in the Virgin; and in Christ whatever is most winning, lovely, soft, and attractive in childhood. Heaven itself is suffused about them like a

cloud. The heart is elevated and chastened while we gaze. There is a religion in them distinct from that of art. We admire, we love, and grow better as we gaze. Much of this character belongs also to a Madonna in Glory, by Guido, which is one of the most exquisite creations of art any where to be found in Spain. It breathes of a divine and quiet majesty, almost peculiar to this artist, who was doubtless a poet, if ever artist was. The Virgin is distinguished for that meek elevation of character which belongs to unconscious greatness; and there is in the expression of the Christ, in addition to the sublimity inherent in his nature, a calm concentrated thoughtfulness altogether supernatural.

In the midst of the rare enjoyment afforded by these masterly productions of art, the shadows of evening began to be perceived creeping silently through the halls of the Escorial, suspending a thickening veil over the pictures, and admonishing us to pause in our admiration. It became necessary to retreat to the village, from whence we might return early on the following morning. We effected our retreat through the *Mina*, or subterranean passage, whose fine free-stone arch promises to endure as long as ever it may be wanted, and found our posada of a much more comfortable and quiet description than the inns commonly to be met with.

Next morning, just as the girl had brought in our coffee and mutton chops, we learned from the ringing of bells, chaunting, &c., in the street, that a funeral procession was approaching. The chops, therefore,

were left to cool on the table, while, accompanied by our familiar maritornes, we adjourned to the balcony to observe the sight. It was highly characteristic. The cortège was headed by a boy, bearing a black banner; four youths followed, chaunting the burial service; and to these succeeded persons carrying tapers, crucifixes, incense-vessels, &c. Next came the bier containing the corpse, which, for the purpose of making an impression on the spectators, was exposed to view. It appeared to be that of an elderly person, but constituted an appalling sight, more particularly to persons about to sit down to breakfast. It spoiled the taste of our mutton chops, and even the coffee seemed, to our imagination, to have been cooled in a charnel house.

But this was not all. Just as we were preparing to start for the royal monastery, a person came in to inform us that a house was on fire in our neighbourhood. As conflagrations are not every day to be seen in Spain, except in the north, where the calamity of civil war rages and destroys every thing in its course without discrimination, we for the present postponed our visit to the Escorial, in order to observe how they manage to extinguish a fire in this loyal country.

The few regular troops in the neighbourhood, accompanied by the volunteers, had already turned out for the purpose of lending their assistance, whether in putting out the fire, or in plundering the houseless unfortunate, is more than I can say. At any rate, a more dirty and ragged set of vagabonds

could not most assuredly be found in Europe. They bore off the bell, in this respect, from the military recruits whom we saw drilled at Valladolid; as also in another respect, being for the most part as thin and lantern-jawed as Don Quixote, while the aforesaid Valladolidians had every appearance of being "fat, ragged, and saucy."

We quickly discovered that there were no fire-engines. In fact, such contrivances as these, belong to a people farther advanced in activity, and must therefore be discouraged where the spirit of the good old times is to be kept up. This seemed greatly to the satisfaction and convenience of the flames,—the only things in Spain that are not lazy,—for they spread round, darted forth their tongues like adders, curled, mounted, and drove the smoke before them, as if they intended to devour the whole Peninsula. Meantime the water was some way off, and had, moreover, to be all carried in the common stone pitchers of the country. It resembled very much the labours of the Danaïdes. The more the soldiers whisked their scanty pints of water upon the conflagration, the more it raged, threatened, and looked big. In a short time, the flames communicated from one house to another; and the whole village, which was as dry as tinder, might have been reduced to ashes, had not some ingenious old woman, the only person in the place who appeared to have any brains, suggested the propriety of pulling down a house or two between the conflagration and the uncaught houses. To this many objections were made by the owners of the

houses to be demolished, who could not see the propriety of sacrificing them to save their neighbours; but those who were interested constituting a large majority, the hint was no sooner given than it was adopted, and thus the fire was brought to reason by the cutting off of its supplies. On this occasion we were more than ever led to admire the fertility of the Spanish soil in watermen, regular and irregular, if there were no firemen with their grand engines; for I every where found them around the conflagration

“Thick as in spring the flowers adorn the land,
Or leaves the trees.”

In consequence of this episode in our history, we did not return to the monastic palace till somewhat late in the day, when, instead of continuing the pictures, we turned into the library. Here the principal riches consist in the manuscripts, which amount, it is said, to four thousand three hundred, in Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, and Latin. No one, I believe, has ever thoroughly examined them; so that perhaps some ancient works, supposed to be lost, may still exist in this monastery, I mean among the palimpsests, which, I make no doubt, many of them are. To discover this, however, must be the work of a resident, not of flying visitors like ourselves, whose thoughts were too little concentrated upon any one subject, even to allow of our making the best use of the little time we had to bestow.

Of this superb manuscript collection nearly six hundred, it is said, are Greek,—probably the most valuable of the whole. Those in Hebrew are few, not

exceeding sixty-seven; but in Arabic, Latin, Castilian, &c., the number is very great. Among the leading curiosities in the collection is reckoned the Greek Bible of the Emperor Cantacuzene, with a copy of the Four Evangelists seven hundred years old, magnificently embellished with miniatures; and a Greek Liturgy, supposed by many to have been written by St. Basil.

On entering the principal apartment of this library, I was forcibly reminded of a remark of Paulinus à Bartolomeus, who, in treating of Hindoo schools, commends the simplicity of their appearance, and says that in this, at least, they are wiser than some other nations, who seem more solicitous to possess spacious schools than great men. Something similar may here be applied to the Spanish kings, who were certainly more desirous of enshrining in sumptuous cabinets the literature of past ages, than of surrounding themselves with the quick and breathing creations of men of their own times. The reason, however, may be easily understood. By amassing the works of the dead, clothing them sumptuously, and surrounding them with costly decorations, they exhibited their own riches, and obtained, peradventure, a reputation for taste; but, in calling forth the energies of a new literature, they might indeed be complimented for their sagacity in discovering and rewarding genius, but the principal glory would not be theirs.

However this may be,—though it be a reflection of no trifling importance,—the grand saloon in which the manuscripts above enumerated are contained, is mag-

nificently adorned with fluted Doric columns; and the roof and frieze are covered with a series of allegorical designs intended to embody views honourable to the arts and sciences. On a large table in the centre of the apartment, is a miniature octagonal temple, in which Charlemagne is represented surrounded by all his princes and paladins. The design is extremely ingenious, and the execution is not unworthy of the original conception. But, as was intended, the principal admiration is commonly bestowed on the materials, which are of the richest kind; the temple itself being constructed of silver, while its ornaments consist of gold filigree, lapis lazuli, agates, emeralds, jaspers, diamonds, and other precious stones. The whole expense, as will easily be credited, was very considerable; but the most distinguished monarchs having invariably been the most magnificent and lavish upon matters of this kind, have also been fortunate enough to obtain the praise of those persons, upon whose shoulders the foundations of such edifices may be said to be raised.

It has been justly remarked that the colossal figures on the vaulted ceiling by Tibaldi, the master of Michael Angelo, serve to throw a littleness over the appearance of the book-shelves below, which though of costly wood and beautifully carved, seem insignificant in contrast with the vast creations of art by which they may be said to be, as it were, overshadowed and eclipsed. In the vacant spaces beneath are paintings by Bartolomeo Carducci, which every traveller has observed to be also cast into the shade by

the gigantic and often extravagant productions of Tibaldi.

In the intermediate spaces between the shelves are the portraits of the fifth Charles, and of the three Philips who succeeded him. The most remarkable is that of Philip the Second, by Panteju de la Cruz. Of this bigoted man we can read the whole character in his countenance: sombre, superstitious, fanatical, cruel; ungrateful towards his parent, oppressive towards his subjects, disobedient, yet cringing towards his Maker; unfit to live, afraid to die, a curse to his country, and a blot upon her history. But enough on this head. In the same hall with the manuscripts you find such books as the bigotry of the clergy forbids to be read by the profane, and reserves for themselves; well knowing that, whatever they may contain, there can be little fear of its rendering them worse. The walls are hung round with portraits of Spaniards who, either by their swords or their pens, have rendered themselves illustrious; and their number is by no means so inconsiderable as one might, under the circumstances of the country, have expected.

The stranger, on entering the library of the Escorial, is always struck by the singular appearance of the books, that, instead of presenting their backs, as elsewhere, which the Castilians perhaps supposed would have been unpolite where a prince might perchance sometimes take it into his head to look at them, are all placed the wrong way, and have their titles inscribed at full length on the edge of the leaves.

The librarians explain the circumstance differently. They tell the traveller that Arias Montanus, a learned Spaniard of the sixteenth century, whose library served as a nucleus for that of the Escorial, had arranged and titled all his books after this fashion, and afterwards introduced the practice into the royal library, where, for the sake of uniformity, it has ever since been observed. But this is only the old story of the Hindoo, who tells you that the world rests on an elephant, and the elephant on a tortoise, and so on. The question always arises, why did Arias Montanus adopt this plan? At present, perhaps, even those who conform to the practice know no more than we of the true reason of its adoption, and merely follow established custom because it has been established. But other subjects of greater interest will be found to engage the visitor's attention in this grand emporium of learning.

To return, however, to the pictures; in the sacristy we find the celebrated *Madonna della Perla*, of Raffaello, which, having been included in the collection of Charles the First of England, was afterwards sold to the Spanish king, who called it *Perla mia*, which has at length become its distinguishing appellation. Even were it an inferior production, the name of the artist would ensure it praise from the greater number; but there are some, ambitious of being thought to see farther than their neighbours, who would not fail to aim at originality by belying the decisions of their judgment. Truth, however, is better than originality. We must

therefore re-echo the common cry, and join in the praise of our "Lady of the Pearl." But it is far easier to praise than to describe a picture such as this, where the principal excellence and merit consist in an indescribable harmony breathing through the whole composition, and causing itself to be felt rather than perceived, even by the most enlightened spectator. The Virgin is represented sitting in an attitude of perfect repose; the infant Christ, whom she supports upon her lap, has one leg carelessly thrown across her knee, while the other rests on a linen garment cast negligently over a cradle. St. Anne, who kneels at her daughter's left side, is represented leaning upon her hand, which is supported on the lap of the Madonna; who, in turn, has placed her left hand upon her mother's shoulder, thus, at the same moment, cherishing her divine son and her own aged parent. The group resulting from this disposition of the figures, combined with the cradle, that symbol of infantine happiness, is one of the most perfect that can be conceived. The accessories, likewise, are replete with beauty. Saint John the Baptist, approaching on the right, holds out some fruit in a skin towards Jesus, who, while stretching forth his hand to take the offering, turns round towards his mother with a look of simple and graceful joy, such as childhood, perhaps, only knows. The eye, accustomed to Holy Families, still finds something wanting; and looking behind the group, discovers St. Joseph apparently moving among ruins. Flowers of rich and varied tints adorn the foreground,

while a landscape of highly poetical character stretches back into the distance. Even from this rough inventory of its component parts, the reader will be able to perceive something of the nature of the picture; but of the beauty inherent in it, language lacks the power to convey a full idea, so harmoniously are the colours blended together, so truly and admirably are the lights and shadows distributed, and so full of life, and grace, and nature are the attitudes and the figures.

Many other pictures of this collection might justify a detailed description, particularly a Virgin suckling the Infant Christ, by Guido; our Saviour washing the feet of his Disciples, by Tintoretto; other Holy Families, by Raffaele and Andrea del Sarto; and an Apparition of Christ to Mary Magdalen, by Coreggio; but we must no longer linger among the treasures of this paradise of art, except to cast a parting glance over their choir and high altar, celebrated for their riches throughout Spain.

Projecting from the door into the nave of the church, directly opposite the principal altar, is the choir, the awkward position of which, though in itself it contains much to command admiration, must unquestionably be allowed to diminish the symmetry and beauty of the edifice. What was wanting, however, in simplicity and grandeur of design, the architect has sought to compensate for by the exquisite finish and embellishment of the interior. The wild, but gorgeous and striking pictures of Luca Cambiaso cover the walls and ceilings; but, while we admire

the masterly execution of this painter, we lament his want of judgment and taste, which led him into absurdities innumerable; for, in his representations of heaven, the angels and beatified spirits, instead of being occupied in peaceful avocations, are ranged in rank and file, like an army drawn up ready for battle.

In the centre of the choir stands a magnificent pulpit, constructed of cedar and ebony, resting on four bronze columns, and adorned with numerous ornaments of the same metal. It terminates above in a sort of temple, formed by twelve columns of the Doric order. Two superb rows of stalls, likewise of cedar and ebony, occupy the sides of the choir, and contain two hundred and twenty-eight seats. The upper tier is adorned with fluted columns. You discover the prior's seat placed in the centre of the twelve columns, above which is a picture of Christ bearing his Cross, by Sebastian del Piombo, the artist who painted—from the designs, it is said, of Michael Angelo—the Christ raising Lazarus in the National Gallery.

A flight of twelve marble steps leads to the chancel, which is decorated with bronzes, and has its ceiling covered with paintings in fresco. Here are two magnificent mausolea, already described. Three doors inwrought with crystal, bronze, and precious stones, lead under an arch into this part of the building, which is divided into three compartments incrustated with marbles of various kinds. Two of these compartments contain altars and altar-pieces; and here the royal family, when at the Escorial, attend divine service.

The high altar consists of four piles of architecture. The first of these is adorned by six columns of the Doric order; an equal number of fluted Ionic pillars form the ornaments of the second; the third pile has four Corinthian columns; and two of the Composite order surmount the whole. Distributed among this pyramid of pillars are fifteen statues and numerous paintings, of various degrees of excellence, which we shall not now pause to describe or enumerate.

The centre of the altar is occupied by a circular table of Corinthian architecture, about fifteen feet in height, and seven or eight feet in diameter. This superb table is adorned with statues of the twelve apostles in bronze gilt, and eight pillars of red jasper so exquisitely veigred with white, as to be scarcely distinguishable from the finest Ethiopian or Egyptian agates. The capitals, plinths, medallions, and other ornaments, are also of gilded bronze. This costly and gorgeous structure terminates above in a dome of jasper, which contains a statue of Christ, and a topaz, nearly the size of a man's hand, enchased in a golden rose. Within this tabernacle is placed another, of a square form, constructed entirely of precious stones, and decorated on every side with columns and pilasters, of which the bases and capitals are of gold enamel, and the cornice of silver. The whole is crowned with diminutive pyramidal spires, placed on pedestals of vermilion stone embossed with gold. On either side is a door of rock crystal, studded with gold. This smaller shrine terminates above, like the

larger one, in a dome, the apex of which is marked externally by an emerald, inserted in a rose of gold ; and, on the inside, by a topaz of exquisite beauty, set in gold enamel. Notwithstanding the costliness of its materials, however, and the elaborateness of the workmanship, this little tabernacle must be regarded merely as a splendid toy, which must be closely examined before the riches of its design and the beauty of its ornaments can be discovered. It appears, too, as if attached to the wall, and loses, from its height from the ground, nearly the whole of its effect.

Having passed another night at the village of the Escorial, we next morning set forward at an easy pace for Madrid, our heads still aching, and our memories confused and bewildered by the innumerable curiosities we had beheld. We knew, however, that a still greater variety of objects was to be encountered at the capital ; but there would be some respite afforded by the journey, the search after lodgings, visiting, &c., so that time would be allowed for our taste for *vertu* to revive.

Our road at first lay through a noble wood, where the deer were continually crossing and recrossing before us, while our eye wandered delightedly through long vistas and wider openings in the forest, until the sight was lost in the distance, or some new object presented to it by our moving forward. A sort of charm, moreover, was cast over the whole landscape by the beauty of the weather, and still more, perhaps, by the lightness of our own spirits caused by the

constant exercise and excitement we enjoyed. Every person whom we met or overtook appeared, however, from their happy looks, to be in exactly the same mood, excepting a single horseman, whom we found watering his beast by a brook side. Dressed like a peasant, his low-necked jacket, cloak without cape, slouched hat, breeches, and leggings, hung on him uneasily, as if unacquainted with his limbs. His horse too, though rough and neglected, was powerful and high-mettled, and had evidently been accustomed to good living. Altogether his appearance was such, that we at once concluded either that our friend was one of those knights of the road so common in Spain, or a cavalier from the seat of war, who found it convenient to approach Madrid in disguise.

He saluted us courteously as we came up, and having learned whither we were journeying, expressed a desire to join our party, and proceed under our convoy to the capital. To this arrangement, notwithstanding our suspicions, we of course made no objection; and he accordingly fell into conversation with Diego, who doubtless let him as far into our history as the extent of his own researches enabled him. From these confidential communications with our muleteer he gradually slid into a tolerably free conversation with us, neither ostentatiously introducing political topics, nor avoiding them. It was soon clear that he was a person somewhat above the common. He was one of those men who, from their intimate acquaintance with care and misfortune, seem prematurely old. There were wrinkles about his

forehead, and his dark locks were mingled with gray, though he had not reached that period of life when time would of itself have wrought those changes.

Conversation with this singular cavalier in the peasant's garb beguiled the tediousness of the way, so that we had already completed the descent of the mountains and found ourselves on the plain, before we thought of bestowing a glance upon the landscape around us. Now, however, on halting and looking back, we were struck with admiration at the scenery of the hills. Skirted with picturesque villages, and covered with immense forests of pines, oaks, and ilexes, they rise gradually, like vast buttresses, against the sierras of Guadarrama, and present the traveller with a series of landscapes of extraordinary interest.

We halted to breakfast at the village of Guadarrama, and instead of patronising, as perhaps we ought, the new hotel, turned into an old-fashioned *venta*, the landlord of which was evidently a near relation of Falstaff. He was likewise good-humoured as well as fat, and assured us we should breakfast at his *venta* in as substantial and tasteful a manner as at any *parador* in Castile. There was truth in what he said. Our breakfast was really excellent, consisting of stewed mutton and tomatas, poached eggs, bread of the whitest and most delicate kind, and, to wash the whole down, some exquisite Val-de-Peñas of the right age. The introduction to all this, which would elsewhere have formed of itself a meal, was composed of several cups of superior chocolate, with those small rolls of the *pan pintado*, of which Sancho Panza com-

memorates the excellences. These delicacies formed a striking contrast with the rude features of the posada; but we had travelled long enough to be aware that the best fare is not always to be found in the most showy inns.

We partook not of all these good things alone. Three other travellers, besides our stray cavalier, sat down along with us, and entertained each other, while the meal was in progress, with recounting the histories of their lives. If the reader, however, apprehends we intend inflicting them upon him, he is mistaken; though perhaps, were this the proper time and place for the introduction of such narratives, he might find them no less amusing than descriptions of Spanish scenery or Spanish palaces. One of these worthies was a friar, who, instead of having spent his better years in shouldering crucifixes or telling beads, had devoted them to killing men. In a word, he had been a soldier. His history would make a very good ground-work for a romance; but as the reader expressed considerable alarm when we first entered on this adventure, lest he should be compelled to listen to three men's lives, narrated by themselves after the manner of Gil Blas, we shall pass it over, merely remarking that our cavalier interrupted him thrice during the developement of it, as if about to propose some correction, but each time checked himself, and apologized for the apparent rudeness.

There are but about thirty miles from the *Puerto de Guadarrama* to Madrid, and of these we had disposed of six before breakfast. We were, there-

fore, in no violent haste to be gone from our breakfast-table companions, and should doubtless have continued to listen much longer to their amusing and instructive relations, had not our friend, the peasant-cavalier, started up suddenly; and observing that since we seemed to be interested in the history of the travellers, he would take his leave of us there, as business of a pressing nature required his presence that evening in Madrid. Feeling no disposition to part with him, however, we also bade adieu to the story-telling knot, and continued our journey.

We had now turned our back on trees and fine scenery, and were fain, for the rest of the way, to admire, or at least tolerate, very homely flats, which, at the proper season of the year, contribute by their rich harvests to support the unprofitable population of Madrid. There was little to amuse us, henceforward, save such sage reflections as people are apt to make when they have nothing else to employ their wits upon. At length we drew near the Manzanares, and found that its brisk lively current communicated something of its own alertness to our ideas. There were, moreover, many trees upon its banks, and its little shrunk and shrivelled stream which, though sprightly and active, seemed scarcely gifted with force sufficient to turn a mill, was spanned in two places by bridges apparently designed to accommodate the Tagus at least.

However, the absurdity of turning arches of large dimensions over streams so diminutive is more apparent than real. They are, in fact, necessary in

countries like Spain, which, being intersected in all directions by ridges of mountains, whose summits are often covered with snow, its brooks and rivers receiving their supply from these sources are liable to sudden risings, and would sweep all the bridges before them to the sea, unless constructed with capacious arches. These floods over, the streams again sink into insignificant brooks, and on all other occasions present a ludicrous image of disproportion between themselves and the bridges which traverse them. The architects, however, wisely provide against these emergencies, though perfectly well aware of the ridiculous appearance their works must commonly present.

As we advanced nearer and nearer to the capital, our companion's countenance seemed to assume a darker shade of anxiety, until at length it grew painful to regard him. No effort,—and he evidently was making all he could,—sufficed to conceal the struggle, whatever it might be, which was passing within. Had he been going to certain execution, he would hardly have exhibited more outward indications of mental perturbation. It was clear to me that he must be engaged in some conspiracy, of which Spain has long been the constant theatre, and felt, perhaps, very serious misgivings respecting the faith of his associates, or the wisdom of placing his life in their hands. Occasionally, as the road exhibited greater signs of life and bustle, he would rally, and put on a cheerful look; but the change was momentary, and always ended in increased gloom.

At short intervals we passed the embouchures of smaller roads, which poured their passengers, mules, carts, waggons, and other vehicles into the great highway, that, like an immense river, went rolling on its living flood towards the capital. Every moment the noise was augmented, and the smoke of cigars along with it. My spirits rose with the growing bustle. Expectation was on tiptoe. Every moment brought us nearer the scene of many a romantic exploit celebrated in those veracious chroniclers, the novelists; and my imagination was half on fire with a dim forethought of adventure.

The crowds which now met the eye on all sides would, with their grotesque exterior, have afforded us matter, under any other circumstances, for remark and observation for a week. On one hand was a party of Galician muleteers, some singing, others smoking, laughing, or cracking jokes at the foot-passengers, who moved sulkily along under the influence of a warm sun and sultry atmosphere. At a short distance we should overtake a string of laden carts, proceeding with ungreased wheels towards the centre of Spain, creaking so fearfully as they moved along, that I more than once envied the deaf, if indeed there be any ears that would be deaf in the midst of such piercing sounds.

At length, as a light friendly breeze cleared away the clouds of dust in which we had for some time been enveloped, we cast our eyes forward, and beheld the glittering domes and towers of the Spanish metropolis rise before us in all their grandeur. Though

beyond all things addicted to travelling, and delighted with locomotion, the prospect of a long rest in that renowned city, in the midst of a thousand romantic reminiscences, was quite exhilarating. We were, therefore, in extremely good humour with every thing around. The road appeared superb, the people gay and affable, and the city, as its beauties one after another unfolded themselves before the eye, seemed worthy of all the praise usually bestowed on it. We now began to recant the unflattering decision we had come to on the top of the mountains of Guadarrama, from whence Madrid seemed a place of very trifling importance. No one, however, heard us chaunt our palinodia, nor would any person have listened had we chaunted it ever so loud; for, as near all capitals, every man, woman, and child here appeared to be absorbed in the consideration of their own importance. We proceeded therefore in silence, feasting, in imagination, on all the sights we were to behold, and all the mirth, extravagance, and other good things we expected to enjoy; and in this temper approached the termination of our journey.

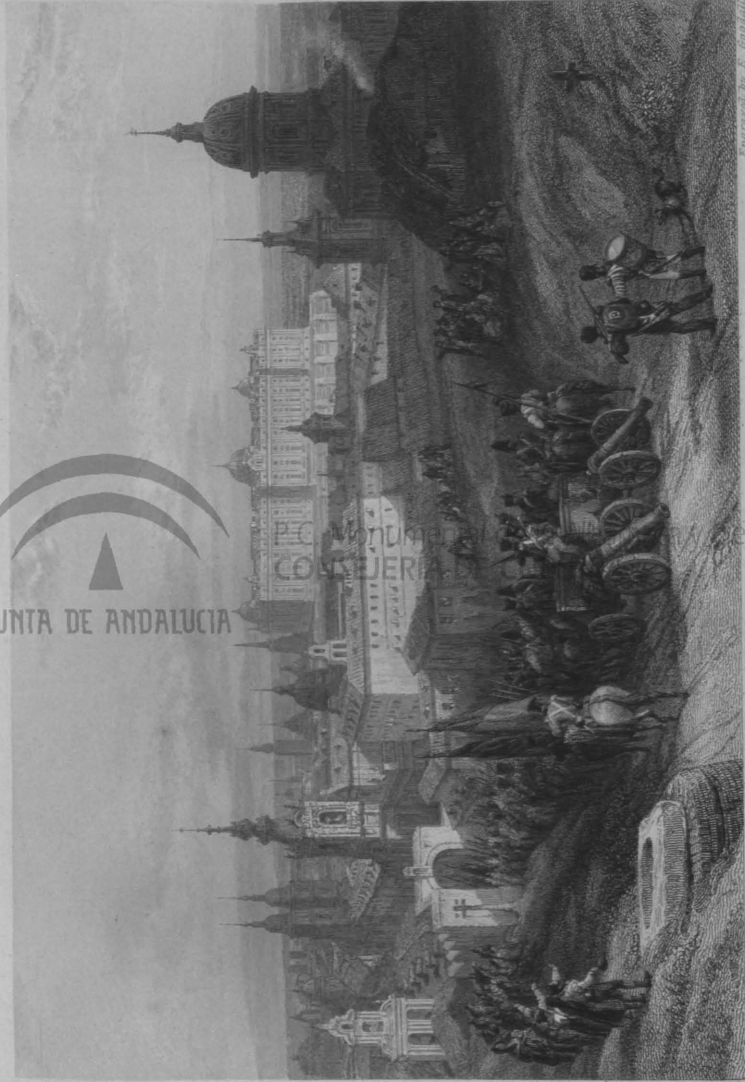
CHAPTER VIII.

ROUTE AND ENTRANCE TO MADRID.

A pleasant Prospect—Diego's good Humour—View of Madrid—Character of the Scene—National Groupes—Philosophy of Travel—Political Strictures—Gravities and Gaieties—Our solemn Procession—Gate of Fuencarral—Street of San Bernardo—Custom-house Officers—Varieties—National Characteristics—Ranks—Causes of suffering and degradation of the People—Exterior View of the Royal Palace—Unexpected Meeting—German Dialogue—an Adventure—the German's Tale—Visit to the Prado—the Royal Palace—Botanic Garden—Museum, &c.

It is surprising what buoyancy and lightness of step are infused into man and mule by a near view of some church spire, the sound of a sheep-bell,—renewing ideas of coolness and a good supper,—of any thing, in short, which awakens associations connected with the Spanish posada, towards the close of a long and wearisome route over the Castilian plains. It was now some time since we had reached the dead level flat, at once elevated, monotonous, and desolate—one of the least pleasant characteristics of central Spain, and which, contrasted with the glories of the southern and western vegas, makes one imagine its old invaders must have imported some part of their burning desert with the arts and arms of the East.


JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA



Engraved by E. Goodall.

Drawn by David Roberts.

ENTRANCE TO MADRID, STATE OF PONCE DE LEÓN.

Engraved by E. Goodall.

London: Published Oct. 26, 1836, by Robert Jennings & Co. 83, Cheapside.

Along with the vast barrier mountains, valleys, pass, and dreary wild, without a tree, a hamlet, or a farm to give an idea of even vegetable life, we had at length also left the seat of war behind us. The vivacity of Diego, for a Spaniard, grew quite amusing, and he bore the jests of all upon the sudden loss of that seriousness and dignity becoming a *mayoral*, when danger frowns from behind some olive-bush, with infinite ease and good humour.

Madrid, with all its magnificence, its treasures of learning and of art, its excitements, and its solemnities, lay before us; and not one of us but felt momentarily happy in the prospect of exchanging the more laborious progress of our way for the comparatively dignified ease and the lion-seeing of this most princely of southern capitals. Yet there is nothing, till we draw very near, which at all conveys the impression of being in the immediate vicinity of the most wealthy among modern cities, belonging to a once great and victorious people. A barren half-cultivated soil, without shade or verdure, wretched inns, an air of desertion and almost savageness of aspect, mark the country nearly as far as the banks of the Manzanares, of which the superb bridge first raises the expectation of something better at hand, though one could scarcely help asking the rather puzzling question of, "where is the river?" at least one any way meriting the embrace of so bold a bridge, or to throw grace round the approach to a royal residence.

Our next view of Madrid,—from an eminence in the

vicinity,—with its forest of spires, its golden domes and peculiar towers, seen through the deep clear sun-light of a brilliant evening which brought every object in closer contact with the eye, was certainly picturesque, but it is one already too often dwelt upon to call for repetition; and I know of no description more than another which succeeds in impressing a feeling of the reality upon the mind, which, like the eye, must rest on the long dark outline of the Guadarrama chain, so richly contrasting with the variety and splendour of the objects more near, to appreciate any thing like the effect of such a scene. It is the same with the capital itself; it must be seen to form an idea of its interior character and appearance: while other splendid cities have fallen into the obscurity of deserted villages, it towers with so bold and proud a look from its desert plain,—an arid and ungrateful soil,—as to put all attempts at mere description out of countenance.

On your approach, you look around in vain for the usual signs of some great metropolis—the heart of a wide-spread land; but it bursts at once, as it were, upon the sight, a strange, boldly grouped, and almost confused mass of magnificence, brought sudden as some oriental palace by the genii's wand from the centre of the dismal wild. No succession of lordly woods and castles,—no bright gay environs, teeming with luxuriant gardens, groves, and fountains,—the blooming vega, with smiling fields and pastures such as ought to adorn the estates and villas of men who succeeded the conquerors of the luxurious Moors.

From the stately gate of Fuencarral, opening on the Segovian road, you behold on one side the bare unbroken flat, extending far beyond the bridge erected by the celebrated Herrera in the reign of the second Philip; on the other, all the gorgeous pomp and circumstance of stately towers, and gates, and squares, the very names of which have a full oriental sound that makes you gaze on the rich and splendid architecture which surrounds the Plaza Major, the Gate of the Sun, and the noble street of Alcalà, with more than common regard. Our drooping spirits began to revive the nearer we drew nigh the ancient gate of Fuencarral. And we now seemed to attract the attention of various groupes lounging to and fro—as numerous, but not as busy as bees—pouring in and out of the great hive, where the drones, as in most capital cities, invariably feast upon the labourers' honey. Here were specimens enough to make the most sedate of unadmiring philosophers wonder at the many Proteus shapes that can be assumed by that most indescribable of biped animals, called man. Amusingly characteristic of every thing Spanish, no succession of mummers and mimers could more decidedly fix your attention than that of the different parties who throng the public resorts on a fine evening, such as it now was, and who, by their diversity of pursuits, manners, and dress, admirably illustrate the poet's idea, that "motley is your only wear." Mingled with the modern Madrid *majos* and *maias* of aristocratic *ton* and *tourneur*, were seen the old mustachioed dons, officers of the line or the

national guards, more proud and fiery in look than firm and decided in the field; here and there a knot of citizens in earnest converse—on the last lies from the army—the fall of the old ministers—the rise of the new; a civilian or provincial sent fresh from the provinces, not to make laws, but to humour the notion of a popular constitution, followed hard by some mechanic, deputed perhaps to furbish up the Chamber of *Proceres* as some little counterpoise to the high-soaring democracy of the day, and the grandiloquent menaces of ministers, who might otherwise annihilate their enemies at a single blow, and many an Othello's occupation, in the art of scheming and corruption, be entirely and for ever gone.

Again, as we threaded the gay and spacious street of San Bernardo, the veiled beauties in twos and threes were bending their way amid "signs, and becks, and wreathed smiles" to keep their appointments at the Prado or elsewhere; escorted by the élite of the brave gallanting guards to the new play, the carnival, a bull-fight, or high mass, just as the time or the humour might prescribe. Here the streets and shops seemed to teem with all imaginary products,—wares of every variety, for wants and convenience no less than luxury and parade; fruit-women of every colour and pitch of voice, with shapes straight as an arrow and jet black eyes,—half Spanish languor and half Moorish fire, and as Lord Byron has said of their more aristocratic countrywomen—we had like to have said sisters—"at once mystical and gay." Then the robust water-men in their quaint dress and style of serving one of


JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA



Engraved by James H. Allen

Drawn by Daniel Roberts

STREET OF SAN BERNARDO, AND CHURCH OF THE NOVITIATE OF THE JESUITES, MADRID.

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London, Published Oct. 26 1835, by Robert Jennings & Co 62, Chesapeake.

P.C. Monumento de la cultura general
CONSEJO

the greatest luxuries of the capital, and joining in the little Babel of shrill sounds, strange at first to any English ear, with all the rich gusto that a thirsty man could partake of the favourite beverage they so unweariably ply. It is still old Tantalus's cry of "Water, water!" and very properly, to obtain an answer, they take care to add, "Who drinks, who drinks?" The water, however long in keg or skin, is ever "fresh and cold;" the chestnuts are just as "hot and fat;" the oranges and eggs as cheap as the most fastidious customer could desire.

Nor was it less characteristic of the industry of the people to observe the easy dignified way in which even the sturdy Gallician carrier contrived to get along; the slow or sulky Asturian as leisurely filled his vessels at the fountain, stopping like many less busied passengers to gaze at our solemn progress, for it was become sad and solemn from sheer fatigue; so that between our steady pace, and the numerous vehicles flying now to this side and to that, the foot-goers—in particular the tight-laced and booted dandies if they had any fair object in their eye—ran a woful risk of bespattering, or complete demolition.

From the entrance to Madrid, by the gate of Fuen-carral, the coup d'œil over the street of San Bernardo, its numerous curious and handsome edifices, with the royal palace, the no distant church of San Isidore, the grand street of Alcalà opening far beyond, with an infinite variety of spires, towers, domes, and spacious courts and squares, is at once brilliant and impressive. Not such, however, was the appearance of our motley

cortège; we might well be termed indeed a diligence by the pace and perseverance with which we "wound our toilsome march" towards the long wished-for Fonda de San Bernardo, now prayed for with the zeal of all the saints put together by our good Diego, as if it had been the very seventh heaven instead of his earthly inn of rest. But we had a visit yet to encounter, only less disagreeable than one from the Carlists; for it was from custom-house officers, the very antipodes of your ancient contrabandistas, and smugglers of all times,—and as extremes of party, like other extremes, mostly meet, there was little to choose between the politeness of the two professions as regarded us. And it would have been no slight task to haul us regularly over, unpack and ransack our various and piebald equipages; for we had been joined the latter part of our way, for the sake of general sociality and security from flying bands—those light-fingered squadrons of the hills,—not only by travellers and trains of mules, but by private equipages and no trivial escort of horsemen. In short, we had the look of having come fresh from a mountain skirmish, in which we had had the worst, or as fresh from the dust of La Mancha, by the length of our own faces at the sight of the *anti-contrabands* as we entered the court-yard, and by the no less elongated necks, the downcast air of our steeds, and the soiled, red pulverized, travel-worn aspect of our whole retinue. The process of examination of any kind, especially a man's goods and chattels, is none of the pleasantest in the world, and the Spanish are a wise

people not to lend themselves to the performance of so tedious and annoying an operation when they once fairly understand you. No people, of all ranks, are more amenable to the authority of reason, if placed in a taking point of view; though we felt much the same as if we had had the honour of paying an involuntary contribution to the bullets of some brigands.

As we entered the court of the inn, the contrast we cut with a sprightly and brilliant company of the guards, or the "Queen's Own," just passing on their mettlesome bloods, with shining helm and rich accoutrements, made the very passengers smile as they looked on "this picture and on that;" and our bold mayoral, for his credit-sake, gave his leader a sharp touch in the flank, as much as to say, "we are not so completely done up, my fine fellows, as you seem to think." But it was the magnanimous effort of a high-minded mule, for no sooner had the soldiers gone by, than he stood stock still; and his master, throwing himself off, thanked Heaven and San Jago with a fervour quite edifying to travellers, after surmounting all the perils of the high-ways and by-ways of a country in the singular condition of Spain. The weary beasts, with panting sides and outstretched heads, followed the guide, and ranged themselves with military precision in order to undergo the willing operation of unpacking and applying themselves to food and rest. It was an example not lost upon their masters; and the whole of the travellers of different ranks, bag and baggage, betook themselves to the interior of the new hotel, which rising from the simple *venta*, through the

meson and the *posada*, has at last reached the most dignified appellation of all,—the modern *fonda*.

The pleasures of a Spanish *table d'hôte*,—a genuine Quixotic supper,—with whomsoever your adventures bring you into contact, and the odd oriental phrases and modes of salute, are now too generally familiar to the tourist to call for remark; and it is not here that the characteristics of the people, mingled with strangers and foreigners of different rank, can be seen to the same advantage as in many parts of the provinces. From the middle and higher orders many of the loftier qualities, with the genius and manners which distinguished older Spain, have disappeared, leaving in their place much of the grasping avarice and cruelty of their forefathers without their bravery, a ludicrous pride of lineage no longer supported by merit, political intrigue and profligacy, almost universal corruption, and a mean national jealousy which would rather sacrifice its allies than contend with its enemies. Of this treacherous and degrading system a whole people are made the victims, and we gladly turn from the contemplation of so horrible a picture, as the gradual dissolution of society, and of all ties which bind men or citizens in civil compact with their government, now offers for an example to other nations less unhappy than Spain.

Still it is not the crime of the people themselves, but of those who prolong their sufferings as a stepping-stone to their criminal ambition, their factious enmity, and love of empty parade. It is not among such that any of the brighter qualities, the popular traits

or dispositions which marked the Spaniards of better days, are to be sought for, while the furies of civil strife have driven them from their old pastoral homes, and pursued them into the meanest haunts of the towns and villages. That the seat of the wide-spread national calamity should lie,—not in the Biscayan hills in the equal strength of contending parties, but in the wretched intrigues and jealousies at Madrid, is a truth which in future history will make the Spaniard blush for his country, and denounce the weak unprincipled supporters of a tottering throne as the real authors of its fearful sufferings and its unmerited wrongs. After the scenes we had recently witnessed in the provinces, I could not view Madrid, its proud aspiring edifices, its royal residences, with the thousand attractions of its splendid foundations,—churches, libraries, and delightful walks, without a melancholy interest, as when you gaze on some bright and lovely being, no longer pure and noble, fallen from truth and honour; and you feel impelled to utter the terrible malediction of Dante upon the crimes and excesses of papal Rome. With a change of names, all the violences, the same disregard of the duties of humanity, of nations, and of society,—those horrors which are the bitter fruit of long misgovernment, may with equal justice be said to characterise the political partisans of modern Spain; as they actuated the conduct of the Catilines and the Borgias of other days.

But calmer and pleasanter reflections came to my relief, as I strolled along the street of San Bernardo towards the house of the English ambassador, catch-

ing a glimpse of objects and peculiarities novel to the eye of the stranger, the elegance or imposing appearance of the streets and modern structures, with the singular effect of the open view and the general perspective in that clear atmosphere, which the artist also remarked, and has with graphic power exhibited upon his canvas. Glancing, however, only rapidly at the less striking points of the prospect here presented to me, I took the direction of the palace, so conspicuously situated,—as every palace ought to be,—looking down from its master-height upon its subject realm of buildings below, reminding the Spaniards, perhaps, of the superior happiness of possessing a government founded upon wars of succession, ever followed by the peacefulness of supreme sway. It stands out boldly from its seat at one extremity of an elevated bank, which flings its shadow over the Manzanares; it has an air not at all symmetrical, but ~~massy~~ *massy*; all is on an extended and magnificent scale, though to me it appeared less interesting either in its exterior grandeur or its internal attractions, than for the fine views which its lofty position affords. From the terrace of the esplanade, stretching in front, you catch a pleasant view of the stream quietly meandering below, a succession of hanging gardens adorning its track, of the several bridges that span its waters, of the public walk and its no distant relative,—one of the *rural* palaces of the Spanish kings. After enjoying the prospect of the various scenes, and the thousand objects of interest which lay around and below us,

we took an ample survey of its general aspect, and of its particular details, sufficient to convince me of the extreme accuracy, as well as the beauty of its representation as it here appears.

Engaged in a similar employ I met a German traveller, an artist, whom I had previously known in England,—a true enthusiast, and, as I subsequently learnt, rather a martyr to the picturesque; along with him a Spanish colonel who had served under Cordova, *invalided* at Madrid; and a Transatlantic, (vulgarly called a Yankee,) also a soldier, but in another guess sort of service, and under a different *chef de bataille* to the Spaniard, since become so illustrious for *not* fighting. Accosting me with a degree of deference and frankness of manner, which it is gratifying to perceive an Englishman now almost invariably receives at the hands of strangers wherever fortune may cast him, I quickly recognised my travelling artist, who gave me an amusing account of his rambles since he left England; how he had crossed the Morena hills, and the plain of La Mancha, tracking the footsteps of the great Don with the laudable purpose of publishing a new geography of Don Quixote. Our meeting was one of unexpected pleasure. Like the Don, it seems, he had met some adventures, for he had his arm in a sling, a large black patch over one eye, a halt in his gait, and wore rather a rueful countenance. However, he introduced me to the Christino colonel, who introduced me in turn to the tall republican officer, whom from his slang air and decided duelling look,

I strongly suspected of having roughly handled my poor friend G., and that *el gran colonello* had been playing second fiddle while the others "exchanged shots." I said nothing, (*non ego tantas componere lites*,) but I was puzzled; for I knew my good German G. was as great a friend to peace as O'Connell himself, though related to a field-officer, and would any time rather crack an innocent joke than a foolish man's skull.

It was curiosity, therefore, as much as the gregarious law, which made me comply with their request to return and sup with them at their old posada in the grand street of Alcalà, instead of going, as I was, to join my fellow-travellers in the more illustrious Hotel de San Bernardo, under the wing of the said royal palace,—at which I was determined to have another peep,—devoting the rest of the evening to the native study of ease with dignity, to the social instead of the picturesque. So I submitted to be taken, like a prisoner, hand and heart-bound by my old German guard, who for some time kept exclaiming, "Tausend teufel! my gut sare; what for von vonder I fine you in Madrid?"

"Is it more surprising than your visit to the Venta de Cardenas, and your hunt after the knight, that pink of all knighthood, over hill and plain? Is not that as extraordinary as that you now see me where I am?"

"Is it not?" was the reply. "In dis purgatory, not only of de dum animal, as Voltaire say, but of dat vociferous, ravenous oder animal, de man, vat your poet say? Man, dat here before all parts of

earth ‘do play his fantastic tricks before high heaven, dat make de leetle angels for to veep.’ Is not dat someting he say?”

“Speak lower,” said I, “or you will be having one other duel.”

“Vat you say?” and he looked on me with unfeigned dismay.

“You are wounded, I think,” I rejoined. “How comes it?”

“Not in de vars, nor in de two-fight vat you call de duel. It vas de great teeves and robbers in dat pass of de Sierra vat comes into de knight’s plain, —La Mancha, ven ve leave our leetle inn. Come vid us now to de *big* inn, and dare you can hear de vole of dis ting,” and he pointed to the black patch upon his eye.

As we bent our steps back, we observed several groupes of people, and among them a party of soldiers, apparently amusing themselves with watching the laundresses, or washerwomen, busily at work in the stream, and spreading their fine linen, or coarse, to bleach and whiten in the sun. The whole appeared in good humour, laughing and joking with these dulcineas, or with one another; but all at once, on some jest which raised a loud laugh at the expense of one of the party, the soldiers proceeded from bandying words to blows. A man belonging to the guards drew his bayonet, his comrades ranged themselves on his side; the party insulted, some of a regiment of Madrid, did the same; and proceeding to action, the women dispersed on all sides with horrible

cries, while we hastened towards the nearest station to give notice of the affray. A detachment from the garrison soon reached the spot, but not until some blood had been shed; as we saw, from the windows of the inn, one of the national guards borne to the hospital, followed by two others belonging to the old regiment, between whom the dispute, touching some point of honour, had originated.

We returned to our supper without making any remarks; only a single exclamation from our hostess, the padrona. "Jesu Maria! and all good saints, especially San Jago, take care of us! What brutes some men are!" met our ears as she turned to scold her handmaids for venturing to follow her example, and look out of the window. Over an excellent bottle of Alicant, and a dessert such as would have graced the table of Sancho Panza when governor of the island of Barrataria, we were treated also to the German's adventures since we parted, a year before; and which it will be as well to interpret from the broken German, which can only be relished when heard from the lips of a voluble enthusiast of that artistical land.

"Ah, well! it will be no use to tell you how I came one evening to the Venta de Cardenas, and the amusing dialogue between the good Father Antonio and the padrona, upon the most approved method of roasting a Spanish onion, and the exact ingredients necessary to the true flavour of the olla. And what a curious contrast it offered to the affecting meeting between the two brothers,—the priest and the soldier, who eyed each other so fiercely and were coming to

fiercer words, when they were recognised by the affectionate instinct of their little sister: Who indeed can forget the look of horror which that officer cast on his sword, when he found against whom his fury had been excited?—how he cursed a war engendering all evil passions and crimes, as by turns he embraced the calm benignant being whom he had insulted, and his weeping sister?

“ But we have witnessed too many scenes like these, even more fatal and terrible, and I hasten to satisfy your curiosity as to the part I played in a small guerilla affair; in other words, being robbed among the mountains. In a little time, the brothers and I becoming acquainted, and bending our steps the same way, they agreed to join our party as far as Carmona. Ramon, our old conductor, a stirring fellow as you will find for an Andalusian, summoned us betimes, and ere the sun had gilded the snowy peaks of the Nevada we were passing the pleasant valley of Guadalquivir, by the old ruinous colony of La Carlotta and over those bare weary hills, except here and there dotted with the olive, which bring us to the renowned city of Ecija; close upon the Xenil. There we sojourned for the night, not a little pleased, as our bold pioneer assured us we had reason to be, at having reached so safe and respectable a town unmolested. The officer laughed, and his brother, the priest, offered to give poor Ramon absolution, if it would ease his conscience before he went further. This our mayoral cheerfully accepted, and went to rest with his mules happier by half at the idea of being roughly handled by friend or

foe,—man or demon,—now they could not send him to purgatory. So the next day he was again up with the sun, thinking withal his confession, that we should consequently reach our destination earlier towards night-fall. Not liking the aspect of the hills and holly-bushes by which we had to pass, he kept his galeras like a city in a state of siege, without allowing the jokes of young Rojas or the officer to interfere with his precautions for a moment. Two of his cafilah were sent down some fifty yards in advance to keep a look out, and outposts were established about the same distance upon either of our flanks. Our flints and Mantons he inspected with the eye of a sportsman intent upon hitting his bird, and every now and then he cried out, ‘Stand!’ to use us to the voice of the robbers, so that we might not tremble, and miss our men. ‘Why, my good fellow,’ cried Rojas, ‘at this rate we shall be fit to encounter the seven sons of Lara himself, who played such fiery pranks with the Moors.—Nay, I think the seven children of Ecija, renowned in marauding annals as they are, would be glad to get out of our way.’

“About the first two leagues we pushed through an

* The seven sons of Lara, so celebrated in the old ballads of the time. They were of high and heroic lineage, as we learn by their exploits in our former volume, when betrayed by their treacherous uncle into the power of the enemy. A little hill about two leagues from Cordova is still pointed out to you by the guides and peasants as the spot where the seven sons of Lara fell in mortal combat. They were afterwards avenged upon their cruel uncle by their half Moorish brother Mudarra, who became a hero worthy of his father’s fame.

ill-looking broken road, half hill half ravine, with rock and bush here and there conveniently situated for hiding a thief, or witnessing a deed of blood. Nothing could be worse for the safety of our vehicle, and Ramon was now doubly on the alert. But at length the beautiful open plain burst upon our view, in the midst of which rises the isolated cone, upon whose summit stands the ancient Carmona, covered with the fragments of those mosques and towers once considered the inalienable inheritance of the invincible Moors.

“The plain is here almost wholly denuded of trees—only a few half-stunted shrubs, bearing a remarkable resemblance in every thing but size to the aspiring palm. Upon reaching this open ground, the laugh against the good Father Ramon—as he was familiarly termed—was loud and universal; and he certainly began to relax something of his generalship in the idea that he had, for once, stolen a march upon the enemy. His advanced posts were called in, the scouts on our flank quietly resumed their position, and discipline was no longer the order of the day. We were just approaching a solitary court and garden on the site of an antiquated castle, partly surrounded by a little olive wood, not more than a few steps from the road-side. Scarcely had we set eyes on it, when the old startling cry of ‘Stand!’ made us draw back, and every one looked hard at Ramon, thinking he had been repeating his old experiment upon our courage. But his look convinced us it could not be so, and the appearance of a horseman,—a perfect cut-throat from

head to foot,—assured us that Ramon's extreme uneasiness was by no means feigned. 'Halt! back!' was again repeated, as our guide turning to us observed, 'Now do your best, gentlemen, for the devil is broken loose. What is your good pleasure, cavalero?' he continued addressing the horseman. 'Father Ramon,'* replied the other, 'give us no useless trouble. You have a certain quantity of gold by you—I think ten ounces, besides other valuables. Hand us two thirds, and an order on your banker at Seville for one hundred pounds. You can then quietly pursue your journey, less encumbered, and more agreeably to the company.'

"The latter had time to eye the speaker a little closer. He wore the smart cut of an Andalusian majo;† was well and handsomely mounted, with huge spurs, short stirrups—also of immense size, and high-pummelled saddle in the ancient Turkish style. A green light net, to serve as a fly-flapper, bedecked his steed, his horse-pistols glanced from their holsters, and he brandished a most formidable-headed lance,—looking altogether like the blunderbuss which hung

* The term Father is often familiarly used, and applied indiscriminately to different characters or professions. It carries with it a certain air of courtesy, and sometimes endearment, as here and in Germany; but from the lips of the bandit it bore with it a peculiar satirical sound, which is occasionally adopted when evidently out of place.

† One of the modern fashionables—a Peninsula dandy; offering much the same contrast to the old Spanish dons, as one of our own Almack or Opera sparks to the English country gentleman,—that descendant of Sir Roger de Coverley so rarely to be met with.

at his side. A cartridge-box (new pattern) of variegated leather, clasped round his body, held some fifteen charges in plated cases, shining in two rows one above the other.

“ At the friendly proposal to pay thirteen-shillings and sixpence in the pound and jog on, Ramon’s countenance fell, and he replied, ‘ You are very polite, cavallero; but will a dozen Castilian gentlemen, such as I have the honour to escort, approve of the dividend? For myself, I am no friend to squabbles. Show us how we can surrender with honour, and I promise you that we shall not fire the first shot. How many are you?—let us compare our strength.’ But before the horseman could reply, our young soldier, Rojas, had unsheathed his weapon, calling out, ‘ You rascal! By the holy Lady of Cavadonga, are you going to sell us like so many sheep?’—‘ Stand to your arms, then, gentlemen!’ cried the mayoral, assuming one of his boldest looks. ‘ Carajo!’ exclaimed the robber, wheeling round his horse, ‘ I will treat you better than you deserve;’ and taking aim at us from at least some hundred paces, he fired, and poor Rojas with a cry of vengeance fell the next moment to the ground. Other shots followed; two of the mule-drivers were stretched at his side, and some eight or ten more ruffians now issued from the wood. ‘ Carajo!’ again cried their leader; ‘ I will teach you to treat the children of Eciija with more respect.’

“ Our Castilian travellers, however, stood firm. We returned their fire, and Ramon, making a virtue of necessity, resolved to defend his property to the last.

He called most vociferously on every man to do his duty, and led up his discomfited muleteers to a second attack. Our pieces were in none of the best order, carrying neither so surely nor so far as those of the enemy; who, after a discharge, directly galloped off, reloaded, and came down upon us again. Seeing this, an old Castilian veteran, on our side, advised us to follow him and come to close quarters; a proposition no way pleasing to Ramon, who maintained it was his duty to guard the baggage and effects. Four of our company were now wounded, and one at least appeared to have given up the ghost. We had the worst in the next encounter, in which I received an ignoble blow from a stone, instead of a bullet, upon the eye. I had lost the use of an arm; and when the whole band burst in upon us with their drawn cutlasses, crying, 'Down with your faces!' they had no need to repeat the order, as far as I was concerned. 'How childish to give me all this trouble, Ramon,' exclaimed the leader. 'Come, down like the rest!' All quickly obeyed, with the exception of Father Antonio, who slowly and solemnly turned his reverend visage into the dust. What was Ramon's agony to hear the thieves rummaging over all his valuables, and every now and then chinking the gold! It had like to have fared worse with Father Antonio; for, in the last charge, he had unluckily shot the head bandit's horse, who now swore that, as he had assumed the military for the clerical, he should dispatch him, not as a priest, but as a layman who knew how to carry a musket, leaving him to settle

the matter as he pleased. 'No!' exclaimed another of the band, 'let him first say his prayers; he will not be long,—it is his special business.'—'Not the pope himself should interfere, the brute!' retorted the leader. 'He has killed the noblest beast ever bestridden since the days of Babieca* and the Cid. Ho! Christoval! bind these two villains who first fired to a tree; dispatch both, and let us be off.' At the name of Christoval, Antonio raised his head; and the next moment recognised in the robber his own foster-brother, and the lover to whom his sister had commissioned him to present a token of her regard. His appearance offered a favourable contrast to that of his companions: slight and elegant in his form, his eyes and hair were of that clear bright brown, which is esteemed a rare beauty by the Andalusian women. They were already binding my poor friend Rojas to a tree, being the less disposed to spare him from the cut of his cap, which showed he was a national guard. But, as they laid hold of Father Antonio for the same purpose, he cried out, while he held out his sister's love-token in his hand, 'Don't you acknowledge this, Christoval Moreno? Will you not save your brother, Antonio Lara?' At these words, Christoval rushed between his comrades, knife in hand:—'By our holy mother, I should like to see who dare touch one hair of your head! He shall answer it to me!'—'Back, Moreno, on your

* The name of the Cid's favourite war-horse, on which he made his desperate attack on Burgos, and rode down whole regiments of Moors.

life!' cried the chief. 'Much as I am thy friend, were he as a hundred brothers to thee, he must die!' He motioned to his band to drag Christoval away, and dispatch the prisoners; when that moment the cry of 'The queen for ever! down with the bloody villains!' and a strong party of horse, burst from the further side of the wood, and were in a moment on us. The robbers,—or Carlists,—as the troopers chose to term them, were taken so completely by surprise, that they had not time to fire a shot; and they were both too weak and dispersed to stand to their arms for a moment. Two were already disabled, like those they were tying to the tree; and a third was taken. But Christoval had thrown himself on his horse, followed by some half dozen of those nearest to him; while Pedro, their chief, had barely time to take refuge in the old house close by, and make fast the entrance. 'We have him! get round!' cried the captain of the troopers; and the ruined court and garden were filled at every outlet by his men. The officer advanced close to the door, summoning the robber to surrender, and come forth. The same instant it opened; and the desperado presented his piece within arm's-length of the captain's head.—'Let me pass, young sir: it irks me thus uselessly to shed your blood.' The young fellow had only his drawn sword. He hesitated one moment, and then shouting, 'Long live the Queen!' he threw himself on his terrible adversary, who snapped his musketoon; but it missed fire, and the next moment the bandit chief measured his length on the ground.

“ Father Antonio, the young soldier, and poor Ramon were already on their legs, and you may fancy how our deliverers, especially the gallant young captain, were regaled by us that evening, when we all reached Carmona together. Our sick and wounded were taken care of. Pedro ‘the terrible,’ as Ramon, while he was busily making out a new inventory, entitled him, was the only one left dead on the field, and a few arm-slings and black patches, as you see, put an end to our somewhat startling adventure.”

Each and every one present congratulated the German on his escape, for though he said not a word on the subject of his own exploits, I subsequently learnt that he had evinced considerable *sang froid*; and it was evident that he had stood fire. Being, moreover, a great *dilettante*, he proposed to accompany me to the Museum and other collections of art; and as the night was yet beautifully clear, to cool our lungs after “our wine and walnuts,” by taking a turn along the Prado. Our men of war volunteered to attend us, the Spanish colonel having there to meet some friends to whom he was anxious to show that rare sight at Madrid,—the uniform of a brother hero on a republican officer. It seemed, indeed, as if travellers from all parts had just agreed to meet on the Prado. The queen’s recognition of the liberals wore its newest popular gloss; festivities of every kind were the order of the day; you had facilities of seeing the handsome Neapolitan and her court as often as you liked; and it seemed odd enough to behold the faces of the old refugees and their friends, which I had

seen in England "gloomy as a November's sky," now lighted up with vivacity and wearing courtly smiles, as if to welcome a brighter future. They appeared to have made a leap, like their own bonds, from zero to blood-heat; and where it had lately been death for one of them to be seen, numbers thronged the great street of Alcalà, mixed with equestrian and foot of various nations, pouring from different sides to enjoy the evening breezes on their favourite *paseo*. I could not help admiring the wonderful freaks of fortune, and, I may add, the equanimity with which her favours were received; for not a single one of those whom I had met under very different circumstances, manifested the least desire to forget the past, or to shun my acquaintance. Far from it; they offered every sort of courtesy and attention, while those of the most opposite views and all shades of opinion, took equal pleasure in showing that political considerations had no influence on their manner of receiving an English stranger.

The colonel introduced his American guest to several officers of the guard, sauntering with the belles of Madrid, richly arrayed in their last court colours, their mantillas, basquiñas, and airy fans, most gracefully tutored to play their part, and bright satin sandals fitted close to the small foot, sparkling as they passed; their gay plumes and ribands, with that graceful waving motion, giving an indescribable air of enchantment to the whole person, and lighting up with fresh attraction the brilliant saloon. No more perfect *studio* for the painter of manners, as


JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA



Engraved by J. T. Williams.

Drawn by David Roberts.

STREET OF ANDALUÁ, MADRID.

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regards character and costume, could well be imagined,—no greater contrast of dress, physiognomy, and attitude, and the eye of the German artist absolutely sparkled with delight. “Ah,” he cried, “I like this: it is a real play, worth all the dramas in the world. Throw your eye along those vistas,—gradually receding with those indistinct forms, the old palace and gardens, and leafy walks, into dimmer light and far-off sombre shade. And here, how rich and varied the fore-ground of the picture against that shadowy distance and repose,—these gay variegated colours,—this brilliant contrast,—the easy natural grouping,—the masterly arrangement and whole composition with which nature clothes her canvas, and exhibits her ever fresh and moving scenes to the view. Mark that little cluster about the fountain; how characteristic of the people and the spot,—eager and earnest in pleasure, listless in labour, imaginative, grave and silent from intensity of feeling or passion, jealous and vindictive if provoked, sanguine in pursuit, inefficient in result and action. And how well the figures, the foliage, the play of the bright bubbling waters, and those white walls blend with the scene, and rise into stronger relief from their contrast with the green leaves and the deep blue sky.”

“Can we wonder,” I rejoined, “at the delightful descriptions we read in the old Spanish drama and the novel, when the writers of bold and chivalrous times had such materials, such a stage,—scenes, characters, and adventures to study on the spot and draw from the life? Hence the charm we find in

them; nor is the charm yet gone for the enthusiast, the citizen of the world, or the observer of mankind." Indeed, a succession of interesting or amusing objects kept our attention incessantly on the alert. The spacious walks,—the long shady alleys,—the open and more sequestered paths were alike filled with brilliant equipages, with equestrian or foot—loitering, conversing in groupes, saluting, laughing, or in deeper confab, as choice or circumstance might direct. Though formed in part of strangers, it was still a striking and characteristic scene, if not so strictly national as some centuries ago. There were no longer the tall-plumed cavaliers in their flowing *capas*, with their bright *toledos* and *dagas* concealed beneath,—the ancient doughty squire in his red velvet breechings, slashed doublet, and huge galligaskins following in the wake of some high-born *condesa*, or lynx-eyed *dueña*, with lovely charges bent on outwitting both, and keeping the appointed assignation instead of the nun's vows.

Fearful adventure, intrigue, and fiercer duel, and the thousand deep-laid plots—so happily worked up by the Lopes and Calderons of their day—to elude the vigilance of the jealous father, husband, or eldest brother, as it might be, intent on guarding the honour and dignity of some venerable house, had ceased to rule the destinies and actuate the motives and passions of the motley throngs that now graced the avenues of the Prado. Eager but to display their charms,—those of rank and equipage in the space allotted them,—and pour the stream of fashion in opposing tides,

saluting and saluted, seeing and being seen, all seemed here content with simple vanity and open pleasure,—less exciting and adventurous than of old, but perhaps not less joyous and awake to the pleasant influences of a social kind, deriving fresh zest from the cool refreshing air,—the cloudless sky,—the graceful play of the sparkling fountains,—and the dewy fragrance exhaled from herb, and flower, and tree. What a contrast in all things to the old times, when the secluded solemn state, the slow pace, and sombre countenance cast their shadow round the court of the elder Philips! And many a spot in these then unadorned retreats,—the neighbouring gardens of the Buen Retiro and the ancient palace, witnessed perilous rencounters; the sudden arrest,—the lover's last sigh, or woman's shriek,—or the struggle of the despairing heretic, even of princely lineage,—when the giant arm of the Inquisition stretched its grasp into the royal precincts, and paralysed alike the strength of nations and of kings.

And as if to bring the picture of the two periods more clearly before the eye, and to crown the brilliant attraction of the evening, the queen's equipage at a rapid pace, drawn by eight spirited Andalusians, made its appearance amidst the *vivas* of the surrounding throngs, and passed along the magnificent open space formed by Charles III., followed by the princes and a slight escort of the royal guard. The band of the same regiment struck up several national airs, the cuirassiers in their glittering armour drew up as a guard of honour upon either side, and numbers of