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R. 465

SPAIN.

ART-REMAINS AND ART-REALITIES,

PAINTERS, PRIESTS, AND PRINCES.

BEING

NOTES OF THINGS SEEN, AND OF OPINIONS FORMED, DURING NEARLY THREE YEARS' RESIDENCE AND TRAVELS IN THAT COUNTRY.

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JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

BY

H. WILLIS BAXLEY, M.D.,

Author of "What I saw on the West Coast of South and North America, and the Hawaiian Islands."

Donativo del Sr. Cónde de Romanones á la Biblioteca de la Alhambra. 1909

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HARRISON AND SONS.
PRINTERS IN ORDINARY TO HER MAJESTY,
ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

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FROM Jerez to Seville by railway is about three hours in time. The road passes first almost due north to

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Cabezas: then north-east to Utrera: next north-west to Dos Hermanas; and finally nearly west to the queen city of Andalucia: following for a great part of the way the valley of the Guadalquivir. This river is frequently in view at a distance—especially when in flood; its banks being then overflown, and much of the adjacent country inundated. After passing the vineyard and garden region near Jerez, the railway runs over large tracts of pasture-land and grain-fields; and finally immense olive orchards appear—forests, indeed under high cultivation—sources of vast wealth to their owners. Nearly the whole of the Guadalquivir valley has been famous for its fertility, from the time it was known as the garden of ancient Bœtica, down to the present day. And the great river winding through it, was nature's magnificent channel by which its products reached the sea; not merely as now from Seville, but from distant Cordova—nearer the centre of the rich mineral region. Valuable as this navigable river still is to commerce,—its importance was much greater as a drain to this rich region ere the building of the present railway; and in the olden time, especially of Moorish dominion, when, by the greater industry and skill of that people, agricultural production was commensurate with an unsurpassed soil and genial climate, it was an indispensable outlet, without which Andalucia would not have been known abroad as the Eden of Spain. However attractive the verdure and blossoms of spring, along the line of this valley railway, even now, it must not be supposed that all parts of this celebrated Province—particularly at other seasons—present equal charms and proofs of industry. The

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earth, the sky, the air, are the same as of old; but tillage is wanted—the hand that should give it is enervated by debasement and indolence. The Spanish proverb nearly covers the case—"El Cielo y suelo es bueno, el entresuelo malo"—*the sky and earth are good, that which lies between is bad.* Means of irrigation made by the Moors have been allowed to go to destruction. Canals which formerly drained low and marshy lands, are now filled up; and pernicions miasmata, as a consequence, have come, to teach by sickness and death, through large districts, the lesson, that laziness and safety cannot co-exist. While thousands of villages are said to have formerly adorned the banks of the Guadalquivir, a few hundreds only are now found; most of these being in a state of dilapidation. And looms may be counted by the score where once many made music for the lovers of "purple and fine linen." With a territory nearly equal in size to that of France, and certainly not inferior to it in fertility, Spain has not half the number of inhabitants. This decadence of a country, once rich, populous, and powerful, saddens the observing and thoughtful traveller. It is seen whithersoever he goes; but nowhere do depopulation and impoverishment affect him, more painfully than in Andalucia, however nature's green and gold may help to hide waste and neglect, for nowhere else has Creative Bounty done more for man. In plainest characters one sees written on all around, the truth, that absolutism in government and religion—that monarchy and monkery—have ruined Spain. The really honest hearts and enlightened minds of the country, are sensible of this fact, and are striving to reach a better destiny. But

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the struggles of a rotten royalty, and corrupt church, to hold control of the lives, liberties, and consciences, of the people, on the one hand; and on the other, of the masses, studiously kept by tyranny steeped in ignorance the more easily to subdue them to its selfish and wicked will, but now, made desperate by oppression, making the chances of relieving themselves from humiliation and misery, without regard to means; these two reckless, though conflicting agencies of mischief, embarrass the efforts for good of the loyal. *Loyal,* not in the mean and pitiful sense of subservience to a crowned puppet, to a human creed, or to an unrighteous popular clamour; but in its ennobling and dignified meaning of duty to government founded on truth, justice, and liberty regulated by law. Happily the small band of real Spanish patriots, is not without encouragement to labour and to wait. The example of other countries is before them to show that truth and knowledge, human rights and their safeguards, however their progress may be arrested for a time, turn not back in these latter days. Their check serves but to give new strength for onward movement. May faith in this fact, perfect the work of patience and perseverance, and achieve a better destiny for Spain!

A thorough inspection of a traveller's baggage on entering Spain, does not exempt it from examination when passing from one interior town to another, on the pretended assumption, that it may contain something subject to the payment of the *octroi*—a local municipal tax. Any one but a Spanish official could see at a glance that you are neither a producer, nor a dealer, in poultry and vegetables, and such like commodities. But

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he can see nothing but the peseta you put into his palm, to save you the annoyance of opening your trunks, and having a pair of dirty hands thrust among your personal effects after chickens and eggs, and the like dutiable things. A better policy governs the municipal regulations of some of the towns, in which it is seen to be their interest to welcome visitors. But Seville presumes upon her attractions, to be arrogant and exactious, Hence he who comes here will find it conducive to his comfort to comply promptly with official requirements. A little complaisance goes a great way with a Sevillano. Resist or complain, and he will put you to all the trouble he can.

Cabs await at the station, the coming of the regular trains; and omnibuses also will be found to take passengers to the hotels. The latter are usually attended by commissionaires, who speak English. Although they are hotel-runners, and it is their duty to facilitate the getting of your baggage, avoid them at the station, and everywhere else, if possible. They seem to think, that from the moment they lay eyes on you, and during your stay, they have a pre-emption right to you—body and soul—person and purse. And woe will betide him who gets into their clutches in Seville, for a viler set of rascals cannot be found. Born in Gibraltar of Spanish mothers, without responsible fathers, their training is in vice, and their sole capital that of the mongrel Hispano-English lingo, which enables them to impose upon foreigners as professional interpreters. And thus they scatter themselves over the Peninsula with no reliable information about things of which they claim to instruct others—except what they occasionally pick

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up from some well read traveller, to whom they are playing Cicerone—and with an amount of conceit, cunning and extortion, surpassing the belief of those who have not been their victims. However liberal the wages to one of these impostors, there is not a purchase one makes that a commission is not paid to him by the salesman, and this is added to the bill of the purchaser. And thus with carriage hire, entrance fees, and so on to the end of the chapter. They are well called at Gibraltar "Rock-Scorpions," and are now recognized as such all over the Peninsula. Let travellers avoid their sting—especially those at the Hotel de Paris-Seville. The Fonda Madrid, the Fonda de Londres, and the Fonda Europa, divide with the Fonda de Paris, the patronage of foreign travellers. The Madrid and Europa, are desirable in summer, because of their spacious court-yards filled with flowers and shrubbery. In winter the Fonda de Londres is perhaps preferable, because many of its rooms are fitted with small grates for burning coke. In the event of illness this proves an advantage not possessed by either of the other hotels. And fronting the great square of the city —the Plaza Nueva—the best opportunity will be there afforded to see the parades, processions, carnival, and general gatherings. It must be confessed, however, that it might be better conducted than it is at this time.

A first night in Seville is apt to remind the Anglo-American traveller of Pope's couplet dedicated to Dr. Franklin's poetic friend Ralph,

> "Listen, ye wolves, while Ralph to Cynthia howls,
> And makes night hideous ; answer him ye owls !"

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For from eleven P.M. to six A.M. in winter, the "Serenos" —*watchmen*—as great disturbers of the public peace as the night brawlers they coerce to silence, cry at every corner in most discordant accents, the Hail Mary, hour, and condition of the weather—"Ave Maria-Purisima, las once han dado, y sereno." And thus through the other hours, cloudy or rainy—"nublado" or "lloviendo"—as the case may be. So that if there are many corners of streets near his hotel, one may be told to his misery—as was our case upwards of one hundred times in a single night—what no one wants to hear but the burglar, who is thus notified where his enemy is, and when to hide himself. And ere the expiration of the Sereno's reign of terror, church bells, and asses bells—calling the devotee to prayer, and the consumptive invalid to his panacea—join the discord. Oh, the gentle air of night, how it trembles with affright! Soon to be followed by those of market-donkeys, water-donkeys, coal-donkeys, and carrier-donkeys of every description of over-burthened misery; for that patient and plodding little beast is the beginning and the end, of most forms of industry at this day seen in the streets of Seville. Had Edgar Poe known this city of "sounding brass," he would have added still others to *his* melodious, "Bells, Bells, Bells, Bells, Bells, Bells, Bells."

A stroll through Seville for general sight-seeing brings one to the conclusion, that this pearl of Spanish cities is one of those contented, slothful places, left standing by the spirit of progress for the enjoyments of indolence, and a captivating sensualism. And this is especially the case after the passage of the brief winter

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—for such they have here, when wet and cold call for water-proofs and fire. The breath of spring is warmed by a most genial sun, and perfumed by orange blossoms everywhere flinging fragrance abroad; and he, who, yielding to the delicious enthralment, submits himself to sensual pleasures, rather than to the chances—often delusive—of improving his condition by changes, however high their pretension of progressive civilization, should not be too severely judged of. Indeed the native of a harsher clime, coming at such a time amid the allurements of scene and sense of Seville, is apt to be overcome by their seductions; and if he but stay long enough will find himself a willing votary of that delightful serenity, and even languor, coming of a pure, warm, and balmy Nature. Yet this voluptuous charm of a Seville spring—voluptuous, but renewing impaired constitutional forces—is not the characteristic of summer. Then, extreme heat brings an absolute enervation; so prostrating indeed as to make removal to the sea-side, or to the mountains, necessary to the safety of many.

The site of the city, on the left bank of the Guadalquivir River, is nearly level; slight undulations alone being found, sufficient to carry off falling water. The streets are narrow and crooked, the disadvantage therefrom for ventilation, being compensated by the security of shade in the hot season; while many squares, from the demolition of convents and churches in later years, make municipal lungs for this otherwise too compact city. How 400,000 Moors contrived formerly to stow themselves in a space, where 140,000 Christians only are now accommodated, is an enigma.

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Not the streets alone, but the houses likewise are Moorish. Indeed no Spanish city retains as fully as Seville, the traces of its former masters—Granada, perhaps, excepted. Large and small, for the rich and poor, the houses are built on the Arabic plan; though not always now, with the full measure of Arabic decoration. And nothing can be more appropriate for the extreme summer heat; while its beauty and seclusion are beyond comparison. Ornamental balconies in front, on the second story, are a beautiful feature, and as convenient for coquetries as for the enjoyment of passing breezes; and yet their privacy is provided for by lattice and curtain. The entrance from the street—always open—leads through a vestibule to an—usually elegantly ornamental—iron-grated gate. The opening of this gives access to the "patio"—a courtyard—open at top—except when the midsummer sun requires to be excluded by an awning, the "velo"—paved with marble, a fountain in the middle distilling dews to temper the heat, and surrounded above and below by a colonnaded arcade from which the various apartments of the mansion are entered. The patio is the refuge of the family in the heated term. Here they receive visitors, sip chocolate, drink *agua de azucarillo* and *horchatas;* smoke (the men) the never-extinguished cigarette however fierce the summer solstice; take their siesta, and awake to games of cards; to "strike the light guitar;" to dance among marble columns, palms, citrons, and oranges; or dress for the evening promenade on the *Delicias,* fanned by breezes from the bosom of the beautiful Guadalquivir. Such is summer life in the better class of Seville houses and families; and the lower partake

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largely of this inner arrangement and habitude. On the Plaza del Duque is a magnificent example of this Moorish architecture, and the neighbouring street—the Calle de las Armas—abounds in them. The so-called Casa de Pilatos also illustrates the style. This palace owned, but not now occupied, by the Duke of Medina Celi—who lives in Madrid—was built by one of his ancestors, to commemorate a pilgrimage made by him to Jerusalem in 1519. The fancy-story of its being a *fac simile* of Pilate's house is for the entertainment of the credulous. Proofs of its former luxury of fitting up still remain—though its olden glory is departed. As a relic of Seville's prouder days, however, it should be visited. The courts, saloons, and galleries, are still rich in arabesque, carved ceilings, gildings, and azulejo—wainscoting. Box-bordered paths wind among orange and citron trees, which shed beauty and perfume over weed-grown gardens. While marble fragments of antiquity, disinterred from old Italica in the neighbourhood, mirror themselves in the still crystal fountains, revealing a tale of Old Roman provincial taste and grandeur.

But indeed one cannot fail to see on all sides, even in otherwise repulsive suburbs, pretty specimens of Moorish houses, if in his strolls about town he will not "march to the double quick," and will look attentively at what he is passing. These, and most matters in Spain, are unlike the realities of other parts of Europe, and will well repay observing, by him, who wishes to garner knowledge of men and things.

Of the sights of Seville, most lovers of the fine arts will consider its paintings best worth seeing. Murillo

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was born, lived, laboured, and died here: and so highly was he appreciated where best known, that twenty-one of his undoubted works are in its museum; and churches, hospitals, and private galleries, estimate their wealth by their possession of his paintings.

In the Plaza del Museo stands on a fine monumental pedestal, a bronze statue of the great master, before the entrance of the former Convent de la Merced, now converted to the uses of a museum. In the patios of this building are preserved fragmentary remains of marble statuary, columns, capitals, and mortuary mementos, dug from the site of the old Roman city Italica, a few miles from Seville: and in the sacristia and church, hang about two hundred and fifty pictures by Spanish painters. The best of these are in the church; entering which by a door at the transept end of the nave, and turning to the left, after passing a few common-place productions, one finds himself facing *Saint John the Baptist*—No. 44—by Murillo. The messenger "crying in the wilderness" is seen in mature manhood, standing with clasped hands, and leaning on a rock, while looking upward in expression of reverential acknowledgment of Him, who gave that immoveable support of faith, by which he was enabled to withstand the assaults of adversaries. Storm-clouds gather about, forming the cold surroundings and contrasted colouring of the messenger's warmer weather-beaten flesh tints, of body and limbs—but partially draped. An uplooking lamb maintains the warmer tone and expression of purity and trust of the central foreground. This picture presents Murillo as an originator of conceptions and treatment, not as a copyist of other men's work.

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No. 45.—*San José y el Niño.* A companion painting to the last, represents Saint Joseph clothed in one of Murillo's rich brown, flowing robes, supporting the child Jesus—dressed in simple, delicate pink slip—standing on a fractured antique pedestal: while a dimly seen broken column and shattered base, near by—typical of the overthrow of classic paganism—with fading darkness, form shadowy contrasts to the fair, sweet, spiritual face of the young Redeemer. The differing complexions of Joseph and child—brunette and transparent blonde—the finely drawn hands of the former, and expression of thoughtfulness, tenderness, and dependence, in the face of the latter, are great merits of this picture. Murillo had three successively developed styles of art—to wit—the *Frio*, decidedly outlined and cold; *Calido*, clearly drawn and defined, but of warmer colouring; and *Vaporoso*, more blended, misty, and dreamily subdued and rich. The two pictures above named, appear of the transitional period from the first to the second style.

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No. 52.—*La Virgen de la Servilleta*—the Virgin of the Napkin. It is said that Murillo was forced to take refuge in the Capuchin Convent near the Carmona gate of Seville, from the persecutions of the Inquisition. The Holy Office sometimes hesitated to wrest a victim from a powerful brotherhood; even when, as was the case with Murillo, be was guilty of the sacrilege of painting the Virgin with her pretty foot exposed to the vulgar gaze. It was during his several years' shelter in that convent that he painted most of the pictures for his place of refuge, which now form the chief attractions of the museum. Nine of the works there executed adorned

the retablo of the high altar; eight grand historic subjects gave sanctity to lateral shrines of the church; and three smaller paintings were otherwise disposed of. When about to quit the Seville convent and go to that of Cadiz—where he finished his career—the lay-brother who had served Murillo's meals asked him for a souvenir. Whereupon, the master's stock of canvas being exhausted, the story says he took a napkin, and before night put upon it a picture of the Virgin and child, worth more than golden embroidery studded with gems. What the old brother wanted with the picture of a pretty woman and her baby, is beyond comprehension. Hanging in his cell, it was certainly well calculated to cause him regrets for lost joys. The mother's veil, robe, and mantle, in La Servilleta, are wrought in folds of rare grace, and richness of colouring. And the child, with look of mischievous intent, seems about to spring, in nearly naked charms, from her arms. Though hardly dealt with by the profane hands of the restorer, this picture still glows with traces of Murillo's genius. Its small size lends support to the story of its production.

No. 53.—*San Felix de Cantalicio.* This half length of St. Felix and the infant Jesus in his arms, with the exception of the monk's brown garb, is an example of Murillo's *frio* style; and has been so greatly injured by exposure and abuse, as not to receive the study usually bestowed on Murillo's works. And the same may be said of

No. 54.—*San Augustin.* This representation of St. Augustine unfolding the mystery of the Trinity—seen in the cœrulean—necessarily falls short of the expres-

sion of a supernatural inspiration; which, doubtless, Murillo proposed to himself. The dream of the saint was probably unthought of by the great painter when he undertook the task. *He* tells, that while wandering, in the reverie of sleep, by the sea-shore, meditating his "Discourse on the Trinity," a child appeared to him pouring water from the ocean into a hole he had dug in the sand. To Augustine's inquiry why he did so, the child replied that he intended to empty the great deep by putting the water thereof into the hole. "Impossible," said the Saint. "Not more so," replied the child, "than for you to explain the mystery on which you meditate." Murillo, also, undertook to give expression to something quite as far beyond the reach of his pencil, as of Augustine's pen. He sought to do what was "impossible." The painting is on wood; and is greatly faded, cracked, and otherwise injured by attempts at restoration. It should be said, and remembered in the examination of works of the old masters, that many blemishes now seen, and which may by some be deemed original imperfections, are in most cases due to incompetency or carelessness, in cleaning and restoring. Murillo's reputation has been censurably experimented on by folly and presumption, in this way. Many works of highest art have been thus travestied. An olden fragment, however faded and cracked by time, and damaged by handling, is preferable to one, sacrilegiously cleaned and daubed beyond the possibility of recognition.

No. 55.—*Concepcion de los Angeles.* This Conception of the Virgin, called *of the angels* to distinguish it from others by Murillo, is illustrative of his unequalled

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rendering of that subject. The ideality, composition, colouring, show the master's poetic sentiment and plastic touch. A golden atmosphere, in which the Virgin seems upheld by the buoyancy of celestial purity—clothed in floating drapery, with hands compressed on her heart to still its tumultuous throbbings, and upturned face of sanctified innocence and meekness —is encircled by a haze of flitting cherubs, in every form of grace and gladness, bearing palms, and lilies, and roses. So beautiful a vision makes one hold his breath for a moment, and listen for the song of the angel throng; their song of peace, and love, and joy, as they seem to flutter nearer and nearer, to proclaim the promise of redemption. This picture is an exquisite passage of art sentiment, coming of a poetic conception of scriptural revelation. It also illustrates the master's change of style from his first—the *frio*—to his second —the *calido;* in which his outline became less sharply defined, and his figures rounder; his colouring also gaining in richness and transparency, and his backgrounds in atmospheric depth.

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No. 59.—*San Augustin y la Virgen.* In this painting of St. Augustine and the Virgin, Murillo represents the Saint kneeling before the Virgin, and holding a heart, which the infant Jesus, seated on her lap, is in the act of transfixing with an arrow. Though possessed of intellectual endowments of high order, Augustine's strong passions in early life greatly misled him. Extravagancies of error, both of opinion and practice, were the result. It was long before he was drawn, chiefly through his mother's tender and ceaseless efforts for his good, to accept the promised pardon and peace of

Christ's teaching. His penitence was long and painful. This picture is intended to show his submissive suffering, as well as its poignancy. To that end, and that only, it is a success of conception. In other respects, it is not a specimen of Murillo's high art.

No. 60.—*San Antonio de Padua.* St. Anthony of Padua was a Portuguese by birth; but on a voyage in the Mediterranean, being forced by stress of weather into an Italian port, he visited Assisi at a time when St. Francis was holding there a chapter of his Order. That founder of the celebrated Franciscans, encouraged Anthony in theological and scientific studies in which he was then engaged. For a time after that, he taught divinity with marked distinction in varous Universities, including that of *Padua*—whence the distinctive affix to his name. But impelled by desire for wider usefulness, he forsook scholastic honours, and the praises of the learned, and as a humble Franciscan friar went forth to preach the Gospel to the people. Being deeply versed in theology and logic, and having a fervid imagination and fluency of expression, his success in converting his hearers from evil ways was marvellous; and the miracles he is said to have wrought, were many. On one occasion, when expounding with wonderful eloquence the mystery of the Incarnation, it is traditionally related that the infant Jesus descended and stood on the Bible before him. This so-called "Vision of St. Anthony of Padua," long formed a favourite subject of art. And it is this that Murillo has represented in the picture which has led to these remarks. The rich brown of the habit and hood, contribute to relieve the somewhat severe, or at least, cold and in-

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expressive face of the friar; and the sternly dictatorial, rather than approving and winning look—as seems called for—of the Divine Child. Nevertheless, it is a painting possessing many fine points, although by no means the equal of one teaching of the same subject yet to be named.

No. 68.—*The Assumption of the Virgin*—a colossal picture at the end of the gallery, which has by some persons been erroneously called a Conception. With the terrestrial sphere under her feet, the posture, folds of drapery, downward look, and supplicating hands, imply the blessing of a separation—more mindful of those left behind than of personal glorification. The cold blue and white drapery, throw into bolder relief the glowing atmosphere, and transparent warmth of supporting angels. No. 65 and No. 72 on the sides of the last-named, and sometimes called Murillos, have not a trace of that master's Virgins and divine children about them.

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No. 67.—*St. Hugo,* detecting forbidden meat about to be eaten by Carthusian Monks; and No. 74—*the Virgin,* surrounded by Carthusian Monks; both near the last, and both by Zurbaran, are manifestly among his earliest efforts. He will be more justly judged of by his later works.

No. 75.—*La Piedad*—the "Pieta" of Italy. The Dead Christ rests, with his head in shadow on the lap of the sorrowing mother. His face expresses, not a last mortal agony, but the repose of sadness blended with resignation. Form and posture, tell of symmetry and rest. The anatomical culture, and refined sentiment, of Murillo inculcated an avoidance of shocking the feelings, either

by gross development and inaccuracies of physical proportions, or by a forced and repugnant expression of rigidity. The mother's appealing look for sustaining aid of heaven, reaches the depths of human pity. And the sympathizing angels near by, with wings still touched by celestial radiance, give tender warmth to a picture, which otherwise would, from the nature of the subject, be cold—though not in this case forbidding.

No. 80.—*La Virgen de la Merced y San Pedro Nolasco.* This picture of St. Peter Nolasco kneeling before the Virgin of Mercy, probably belonged to the Convent of La Merced, now used as the Museum. Peter Nolasco in early life, was a witness of the miseries of foreign war and of domestic injustice. The enslavements of one, and imprisonments of the other, were in his eyes sources of suffering and sin, which festered and matured in still other crimes and miseries, alike to agents and victims. Under the patronage of the king of Aragon—Jayme el Conquistador—then engaged in his Moorish wars, Nolasco founded the *Order of our Lady of Mercy,* for the redemption of captives and the release of the imprisoned. His was truly a Mission of Mercy, however little Our Lady—clothed by the Church with the attributes of the God of Mercy—had to do with it. It must be recollected that, in his time—the middle of the thirteenth century—the severities of captivity, increased by the fierceness of religious fanaticism, the oppression of the poor by power, and the dependence of the wretched on private benevolence, made individual philanthropy almost the sole agent of goodness. It was then, that the really labouring brotherhoods, who went to and fro in their Master's

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vineyard doing his work, carried liberty to the captive abroad; and pardon to the penitent prisoner, and bread to the hovel of poverty, at home; before the days of hidden rioting and gluttony, debauchery and general violation of religious vows, drew down the vengeance of the Destroying Angel on both monastic and conventual establishments. The humble, pious, and humane Nolasco, merited his canonization. And bearing these facts in mind, we look with pleasure on Murillo's art-tribute to his worth; this picture of the Saint receiving the sanction of *investment* from the Virgin, as she sits enthroned on clouds in a golden haze, with attendant cherubs giving a charm of genial joy to the scene.

No. 84.—*San Leandro and San Bonaventura.* The former of these, one of the most resolute opponents of Arianism in Spain, and called "the Apostle of the Goths," was a Bishop and a Patron of Seville. The latter, born in Italy, and baptized by the name of Giovanni Fidanga, was afterwards called by his mother, Bonaventura; because, being ill, and the intercession of St. Francis having been besought for him, the good Saint on beholding the child, exclaimed "O buona ventura!" He became celebrated as one of the greatest teachers of the Church; and was as much distinguished for his humility, and personal ministry to the poor, as he was for his convincing eloquence in the pulpit. He is often called by theological writers the *Seraphic Doctor*. In the simple presentation of the *personelle* of these great ecclesiastics, Murillo found no scope for ideality. They stand in their appropriate robes. San Leandro in episcopal white, falling in full flowing folds about him,

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with crozier to proclaim his dignity; while a face of intelligence and firmness shows, that schism could not have expected to meet with lenity at his hands. San Bonaventura, in the brown garb of the Franciscan Order, with crimson cape denoting his Cardinal rank, and supporting a miniature church significant of his Doctorate. Bonaventura died at fifty-three years of age. He is represented in the prime of life, with a face of intellectual force blended with benignity. If the gazer on these "Defenders of the Faith," be not gratified with the perfection of drawing, modelling, and colouring, which makes them look as if they lacked not the breath of being, and were still participants in the polemical strife of men, let him turn his eye on the little fellow in the right hand corner, holding the Bishop's mitre; and if he do not long to own those limbs of life, and that face of supreme mischief and delight, it may be concluded that he . . . . faithfully obeys the Commandment, and does not "covet anything that is (his) neighbour's."

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No. 84.—*Santo Tomas de Villa Nueva.* The character of St. Thomas of Villa Nueva, is the purest, most self-sacrificing, and benevolent, recorded in Spanish ecclesiastical history. His charity was an inborn grace—the essential attribute of his being. Shown at eleven years of age, when he bestowed his own clothes to cover the nakedness of street beggar-children; it was further exemplified when he sent to the hospital for the sick poor, the five thousand crowns given him by the Canons of the Cathedral—when he was made Archbishop of Valencia—to furnish a becoming outfit for his new dignities: and still more singularly exhibited on his

death bed, when, sensible of his approaching end, and a life-long charity burning still brighter as he came nearer to the shadow of the dark valley through which all must pass, he sent away to the needy and afflicted everything he owned, except the pallet on which he lay. From the cradle to the grave his life was made up of acts of good-will to his fellow-man.

It is not surprising that religious art should have sought to illustrate such a character. Murillo, above all painters, has best succeeded. His picture of Thomas as a child, giving away his clothes to little beggars on the street, is an exquisite passage of art-eloquence. To a girl he gives his cloak, to wrap her fragile form from wind and wet. A boy pulling over his bare shoulders the velvet jacket of Thomas, is made joyful by the promise of comfort. Another proudly wears his cap. And still another is delighted with the prospect of receiving the trousers, which the young saint is preparing to take off. It is a marvellously speaking picture of want made happy by a pity, and an unselfishness, akin to Christ's. This precious picture—the "Mendigos"—the *Mendicants*—is in the possession of Lord Ashburton—Bath House, London. Don Ramon La Miyar of Seville, has a rare copy of it by Meneses, one of the three followers who aimed to imitate Murillo's style—the two others being Tobar and Villavicencio. The Archbishop of Valencia was entitled to this homage of art, for it was his patronage which contributed more than all else to found the School of Painting at that place, at the head of which stood Vicente Juanes, as distinguished for his piety as for his genius. The picture of Murillo in the Seville Museum,

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the name of which heads this article, was painted for the Capuchins, while Murillo was a partaker of their hospitality and protection. His genius, prompted by gratitude at the time of his great need, might well soar to its highest flight, in search of testimonials to the blessings of charity. St. Thomas, robed in black—the habit of the Augustine Order to which he belonged—wearing a white mitre, and leaning on his crozier, as he stands on a tapestried classic portico, is in act of handing to a kneeling cripple, alms from a table at his side, on which the glittering silver is spread. A little child to the right of St. Thomas, with face radiant with joy, is showing his mother a piece of coin,—the gift of goodness. Her sympathy with her young one's happiness seems on the eve of being told by a tear. The maternal heart melts at kindness shown to its helpless offspring. On the left of him who bore in mind his Master's injunction "sell that thou hast and give to the poor," affliction and old age, grouped in wretchedness, are moving forward, to him a welcome though sad procession, to receive God's bounty from His willing almoner. It is only the great painting—also by Murillo—of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, in Madrid, that presents so touchingly and graphically, a scene of disease and misery over which a celestial comforter has come to reign. Perhaps the kneeling beggar has no individual counterpart anywhere for powerful truthfulness of portraiture. The pen is incapable of describing him. Feet, legs, arms, and back, spread out their bronzed and haggard lineaments, as if the anatomist's scalpel had laid bare attenuated muscles and jutting sinews, bloodless veins and bony prominences. While the foreshort-

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ening of the upturned face below the bandaged brow, is a piece of incomprehensible art-mystery to those not schooled in the secrets of Correggio. The unlearned cannot explain this picture's technical perfection. But we feel, that we are in the presence of truth; and that he who has thus revealed it, must have felt, alike, its conviction and inspiration, or he could not thus have proclaimed the eloquent lesson. Large as is this painting, and comprehensive its composition, varied the drawing, rich the colouring, and finished its expression, the most difficult passages seem to have been overcome with an ease that leaves no trace of effort. In this, as in the painting of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Murillo used the "afflicted in body and estate"—the beggars of his street studies—as accessories to his subject, yet indispensable to the great lesson of Charity he sought to inculcate. At other times, as in his Beggar Boys,—at Munich and in other galleries where they have borne the master's name and fame—when he intended simply to present the mendicant phase of Spanish life, they were made the chief actors of his *dramatis personæ.* It is not surprising that Murillo should have been content with this representation of the Charity of St. Thomas of Villa Nueva, and called it—as he did—"mi cuadro," *my own picture.*

No. 86—*Nacimiento del Mesias.* Nativity of the Messiah. The same subject known and treated, often, as the Adoration of the Shepherds. This picture is next in position to the last named. The paintings are herein mentioned in the order in which they are hung; not being numbered consecutively. Indeed in many European galleries, numbering and hanging are fre-

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quently changed without apparent reason, unless to embarrass the carriers of foreign Hand-books, and force the purchase of gallery-catalogues. The Nativity of Jesus had been so frequently presented by the old masters of all schools before the time of Murillo that it was not easy to cast the subject in a new form. Indeed a lying-in manger and four-footed attendants, admit of no great variety of treatment either by parson or painter, unless a too licentious fancy, in seeking to mystify the simple minded multitude, takes leave of the plain biblical narrative altogether. Nevertheless there are some little points of detail introduced by this master, which give his picture features of originality; and of an excellence not to be met with except in a Nativity—also by him—now in the Madrid Collection. The style is transitional from the *calido* to the *vaporoso.*

No. 88.—*San Francisco.* Religious art has been more prolific of pictures of Francis, than of any other Saint of the calendar. We mean him of *Assisi,* in Italy; where every pilgrim should call, on his way to that shrine of St. Peter lifted amid those of ancient art. Yet so few were the great events of his life—real or fancied—inviting the aid of the pencil for their perpetuation, that the one of his reception of the stigmata has been repeated, we would say *usque ad nauseam,* but for the reverence felt for his purity of life, and the benevolence of his purposes—whatever may be thought of his too visionary tendencies, and the delusions into which his followers were thereby led. Murillo, prompted by his own susceptibility to religious impressions, and instructed of Church authority, was not likely to disregard the claim upon his genius, of

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one, of singular humility, and proved philanthropy. A tender enthusiast, St. Francis was suited to the task of serving the poor, and winning the ignorant and vicious from error. His labour was one of persuasive and exemplary love; not the driving dogmatism, and fierceness of persecution, characterizing the career of some—both monastics and friars—then, and since. Self-abnegation, and the work of charity, as taught of his Master, were the fitting rules of an Order established by him; and while fulfilled by his followers, they exercised an influence and power for good, perhaps never possessed in like degree by any other fraternity. The heart of St. Francis overflowed with devotion to righteousness: his prayers were for heavenly instruction: and his longing was for the Divine approval. Murillo appears to have seized these leading attributes, and efforts; and not being an abject follower of those who had gone before him, in any of the Schools of Painting, he sought to give an original, and daring delineation of them—one that would probably have failed in the hands of any other; yet, portrayed as they have been by him in this picture, showing a wonderful achievement; giving to the divinity of love another, and not before conceived of, art-expression. Christ, crucified, with right hand detached from the cross, rests it embracingly on the shoulder of St. Francis. While he, with a foot on a globe, in token of his renouncement of earthly things, throws his arms around the body of the Saviour; looking up in entireness of devotion to his most pure face; which reveals no sign of self-suffering, but only the sublimity of tender thought for another. The Revealed Word, supported in mid-air by cherubs, unfolds to the

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Saint's yearning spirit the lessons of Divine wisdom. The drawing of the chief figure shows masterly knowledge of anatomical development and proportion. Neither a just sense of Christ's character, nor good taste is shocked by a gross obtrusion of human agony. Murillo's religious sentiment inculcated the expression of divinity, inseparable from, yet dominating Christ's human nature, and which lifted him above the frailties of earth to the patient endurance of all things. Scourging, a crown of thorns, and the cross, could not shake the sublime purpose of his commissioned soul. The conception of Christ leaning from the cross toward one of earth, is not only instructive of tenderest emotion awakened by duty done, but is suggestive of the judgment to come for righteousness. While it is also seen, that Murillo therein sought to give another expression of that divinity of nature, whose grace was extended to the repentant thief; and of that human love which was thoughtful of a sorrowing mother at the foot of the cross. The brown of the friar's habit, and the flesh-tints of the cherubs, tone the picture to sufficient warmth to neutralize the tendency to coldness in which such subjects are perhaps too commonly clothed—without reflecting that, even these solemn lessons are not without some sunshine of Divine beneficence. A transparent mistiness is likewise thrown over the whole, characteristic of the Spanish master's later works; and which gives to this picture a dreaminess of appearance in harmony with San Francisco's vision—traditionally told of—in which a seraph was seen by him supporting the crucified Saviour.

One can scarcely have come thus far in this gallery of

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paintings, without recalling some things said by Mr. John Ruskin of Murillo; and questioning what could have been the grounds of his judgment? Or, indeed, if he had any, other than a fertile imagination, given, at times, to somewhat rancorous growths? He divides artists into three classes. *First*—Those who perceive and pursue the good. *Second*—Those who perceive and pursue the good and evil. *Third*—Those who perceive and pursue the evil, and leave the good. And he adds —"Murillo, Zurbaran, Camillo, Procaccini, Rembrandt, and Teniers, all belong naturally to this lower class."

Possessing a strong and controlling, mind and spirit, no one more than Mr. Ruskin, should draw carefully his conclusions, and from ample and assured data; remembering, that while it is easy for the fluent to talk, it is not as easy to give a sufficient reason for what is said. Haste, prejudice, or passion, should have no part in shaping his opinions; none, in prompting his utterances, which are always influential in propagating widely what is right, or wrong. As an artist himself, in word and work, of rare powers, he should aim always to hold rank in his own *First* Class—among those "who perceive and pursue the good." If Mr. Ruskin had seen and studied Murillo, where alone he can be seen and studied, as all the Spanish masters should be, to be rightly estimated, in Seville and Madrid, his opinion would still be as surprising as it is singular. But he has not so seen and studied. And as he has at other times put himself before the public as a travelled and observing art-critic, it was due to fairness and candour, that he should in this instance have said, that he had not been in the field of Murillo's triumphs, that

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his opinion might be estimated accordingly. It savours of presumptuousness—as it certainly does of gratuitous dogmatism—to write, as has been quoted, of one, enthroned as is Murillo, by the art-judgment of many who have thoroughly studied his works, on an eminence of moral purity, religious sentiment, spiritual grace and tenderness, delineation, composition, and colouring, so high as to be beyond the reach of all—it may be—save him of Italy; who, though dead, yet speaks from the walls of the Vatican, in the tribune of the Uffizzi, and in that presence of the Sistine Madonna which illumines the Dresden Gallery with a most precious light. But the deliberate and approving judgments of Sir David Wilkie, Sir Edmund Head, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Stirling, Ford, and scores of other art-pilgrims to Spanish shrines, are more than sufficient to outweigh the vague, rambling, and unaccountably absurd opinions of one not unfrequently inconsistent, and unwarrantably dogmatic. As shown in his incoherent rhapsody on Tintoretto's Paradise in the Council Hall of the Doge's Palace, which he calls "the most wonderful piece of pure, manly, and masterly oil-painting in the world—the most precious thing that Venice possesses;" and yet admits, that he "has not been able to study but a few fragments of it," of course could know nothing of what might be the blasting influence of the *many* remaining *unstudied* parts. This is a strange piece of self-stultified, haphazard judgment, and of cool presumption of the stupidity of his readers—especially when it is considered, that he finally pronounces Tintoretto to have "grappled *in its verity*" with an "*unimaginable* event." But, to say nothing of the independence of *connoisseurs* of

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