

Doña Juana his wife; and those of Henry the Third, and Doña Catalina his wife.

Returning to the interior of the apse, and continuing in the direction of the north side, another small passage and anteroom lead to the principal sacristy, which communicates with the next chapel, called the Sagrario, and composed of three apartments. The great sacristy contains some good paintings, particularly the ceiling by Giordano—a modern tomb of the late archbishop, Cardinal de Bourbon, and a series of narrow doors, within which are recesses. The first of these contains the crown and bracelets of the Virgin of the Sagrario: in four others are preserved magnificent ornaments of silver, representing emblematically the four quarters of the globe. Each quarter is personified by a figure invested with the attributes which characterize the region she represents, seated on a large silver globe, on the front of which is traced the quarter represented. The globe is supported by figures of animals. In the last of these recesses is seen the sword of Alonzo the Sixth, who won Toledo from the Moors. It is small, and unornamented, except by a hilt of embossed silver, on which the arms are repeated four times. In the smaller sacristy within are several good pictures, but not so remarkable as to prevent their being eclipsed by the splendid robe

of the Virgin of the neighbouring Sagrario, here exhibited, extended flat on a semicircular board, such being the form of the garment.

No one knows the value of this treasure. During the Peninsular War, the archbishop, in order to spare the French Generals too great a temptation, conveyed it, together with whatever else deserved the precaution, to Cadiz. It is embroidered almost entirely with pearls on a tissue of silver; but none of the silver is visible without separating the pearls, diamonds, &c., with the fingers. Most of the larger pearls possess the irregular sort of beaten shape often observed in the best specimens. Some are enormous. Numbers of diamonds, rubies, and other stones are admitted in the upper part, to vary and enliven the effect of the different designs of the embroidery. In another case is extended the front-piece, worn together with the robe, which is open in front. The robe sits nearly in the fashion of a lady's cloak, but perfectly stiff, and widening as it descends, so much as to make the figure assume the appearance of a triangle, of which the base is longer than the two other sides. The opening in front corresponds with the outline of the two sides, being wider below than above, although not in as great a degree. This opening is occupied by the front piece, which is much smaller than the robe, but

still more valuable, being principally worked in brilliants. It contains also every variety of precious stones, introduced as their colours may happen to accord with the design.

In addition to these is shown the dress of the Bambino, similar in materials to the two others; but the pearls and diamonds more equally distributed.

But the marvel of this costume is the crown. This ornament adds to the splendour of its materials, the most exquisite and elaborate workmanship. It would require hours to appreciate the labour and taste displayed in all its details. Marshal Soult, could he but see it, would order masses for the soul of the prelate who spared him such a temptation. The diamonds, especially those which compose a cross surmounting the centre, are of the purest water, and of immense size. But in the midst of the dazzling and harmonious intricacy of this gem of all colours, there is a centre of attraction, which took my fancy more than the rest. Immediately under the centre ball, an immense spherical emerald, which supports the diamond cross), is a small bird suspended on a hook within the crown. All the parts of this bird are composed of white enamel, except the body, around which the wings, legs, neck, and head, are attached, and which consists of a pearl of an oval form, about the size of a sparrow's egg. The move-

ment of the statue during a procession, keeps the bird (hanging from its hook) in constant agitation, and produces the effect of a living bird enclosed in a cage of precious stones.*

A pair of bracelets, possessing no less magnificence than the crown, but rather too heavy and bulky to be graceful, are suspended in the same recess, and worn on the same occasions.

It should not be forgotten, as a proof of the judgment shown in the choice of ornaments, which, as far as regards the front, consist principally of diamonds, that the complexion of the Virgin of the Sagrario, is more than dark—in fact, quite black.† The innermost of the three apartments forming the chapel of the Sagrario is called the Ochavo, and is the deposit of a collection of relics of all kinds. It is an octagon, surmounted at an elevation of more than double its diameter by a dome ornamented with excellent painting. The walls are faced with the best Spanish marbles. Each of the eight sides contains an open recess reaching to the first cornice—an elevation of about twenty-five feet; and in these recesses are contained all the valuable relics belonging

* The crown was valued in Cadiz at a hundred and sixty thousand pounds, of which the emerald, which supports the cross, represents forty thousand.

† She is of a wood, whether artificially or naturally, of a tint between the darkest mahogany and ebony.

to the cathedral;—a rich display of silver statues, reliquaries, coffins, chests, and crosses of gold and silver, some containing jewels of great value. A silver statue of Saint Ferdinand wearing a golden crown is among the objects most worthy of remark; also a cross containing a portion of the true cross, presented to the cathedral by St. Louis. This and several other relics, such as a phial containing the Virgin's milk, a portion of our Saviour's purple garment, &c., were presented to the cathedral by St. Louis on his return from the east, and are here preserved, together with the letter in his own handwriting, which accompanied them.

The Virgin of the Sagrario receives by far the greatest share of devotion brought to the numerous shrines of this vast temple, even greater than that offered at the high altar. More masses are performed at her altar than at all the others added together. The aisles facing her antechapel are constantly filled with a crowd of kneeling votaries. She stands in the second enclosure, turning her back to the Ochavo. An iron railing separates her apartment from the first chapel, which is usually open to the aisles. She stands consequently in full view, magnificently robed in a *fac simile* imitation of her pearl dress, the original being only worn on one or two occasions during the year.

The interior of the Capilla Mayor, is ornamented with several rows of statues, and some handsome funereal monuments, forming together a sort of transparent wall of sculpture on each of its sides. In the midst of a series of mitred archbishops, and coroneted princes, the figure of a peasant occupies one of the most conspicuous positions. It stands on the left side, as you face the High Altar, and about twenty feet from the pavement. This statue represents a celebrated historical personage. Alonzo the Eighth, when penetrating across the Sierra Morena into Andalucía, in search of the Moorish army under the King of Morocco, Mahomed ben Jacob, was in danger of losing the fruit of his exertions, in bringing together the forces of the Kings of Aragon and Navarre, together with numerous other confederates. He had led the combined army into a defile, in which he would have had to receive the attack of the Moor at an insuperable disadvantage. The hostile forces occupied a height called the Puerto del Miradal.

It was at the moment that retreat was the subject of deliberation, that a peasant presented himself, and offered to guide the army out of the pass. Having assured himself of the man's sincerity, Alonzo put himself under his conduct, and was led to the summit of the mountain, where he

found himself on the border of an immense plain. This decided the great victory of las Navas de Tolosa gained over the Moors on the 16th of July, 1212. Alonzo ordered a statue of the peasant to be placed in this cathedral. He is represented in a costume not unlike that of an ancient Roman rustic, a sort of tunic reaching to the knees, and his face is covered with a profuse beard.

The interior of the choir is the work of Felipe de Borgoña, and Berruguete; the latter having been employed, after the death of Felipe de Borgoña, in 1548, in continuing the sculptures. The entire south side was left for him to complete; after which he added a group in marble, representing the Transfiguration, placed rather injudiciously, since it out-tops the screen or back of the choir; thus presenting to the view of those who enter from the western or grand entrance, and who are more likely to have come with the intention of viewing the ornaments, than the canons who are seated in the choir—the back of the subject, or rather, forms which represent no subject whatever. There is a Virgin on a pedestal in the centre of the eastern end of the choir, turning her back to the bronze railing which separates it from the transept. This statue has occupied its present position ever since the erection of the cathedral; and it is probable

would long since have quitted it, but for a still greater inconvenience consequent on its removal. The attempt was recently made, when a mass of water issued with much violence from beneath the pedestal, and putting to flight the canons who were assembled to preside at the operation, instantly inundated the whole church. The virgin occupies probably the site of the fountain which must have been the centre of the court, at the period of the existence of the mosque. However that may be, the spot is the exact centre of the present edifice.

At the two eastern angles of the quadrangle, formed by the intersection of the transept and principal nave, close to the railing of the capilla mayor are two pulpits of bronze, excellently wrought; supported on short pillars of rare marbles.

A tall pyramidal Gothic edifice* of gilded and painted wood, rising to the full height of the ceiling, stands in front of a column of the second nave from

* The Author has in every instance made use of the word Gothic, in preference to the employment of any sort of periphrasis; considering that the chief intention of a name is, not that its application should accord with its derivation, but rather that it should present to all who know it, or have dictionaries, an identical meaning, in order that the idea of the individual employing it may be speedily caught. Now the word Gothic having always been applied to this architecture, it is comprehended. A dismounted highwayman is termed a pad. The oblong area in the centre of Madrid is called a door. "What's in a name?"



N.A. Wells del.

W.F. Stirling sc.

INTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL, TOLEDO.

the north side. All its sides are open, and furnished with bronze railings, through which is seen an altar, raised on three or four steps. In the centre of the altar is inserted a marble slab—a highly prized relic, being the stone on which the Virgin placed her foot, on the occasion of her appearing in the cathedral in *propria personá* to the Archbishop San Ildefonso. This peculiar favour bestowed on the saint—and a robe with which she invested him with her own hands, were bestowed, according to the historian Mariana, in recompense of his zeal in opposing the doctrine of the two Frenchmen, Pelagio and Helvidio, whose writings and preachings tended to shake the belief in the virginity of the Saviour's mother. The occurrence is thus described :

“The night immediately preceding the feast of the Annunciation, the archbishop entered the church, surrounded by several of the clergy. As they entered, the cathedral appeared filled with a brilliant light. Those who accompanied the saint, overcome with terror, turned and fled. Remaining alone, he advanced to the foot of the high altar, and fell on his knees ; when, on the chair from which it was his custom to deliver his exhortations to the people, —clothed in more than human majesty—appeared the mother of Christ, who addressed him in the following words :—‘ This gift, brought from Heaven,

shall be the reward of the virginity which thou hast preserved in thy body, joined with purity of mind, and ardour of faith; and for having defended our virginity.'

"Having thus spoken, she placed on him, with her own hands, a robe, which she commanded him to wear on the celebration of her festivals, and those of her Son."

The representations of this scene, from which is derived the claim of superior sanctity assumed by this cathedral, are multiplied both in marble and on canvas in all parts of the edifice, as well as in almost all the churches of Toledo. In most cases, the execution of them has been intrusted to unskilful hands. The best specimen is that executed in marble over the small altar I have just noticed. It is remarkable for the graceful and good-humoured expression of the Virgin, and the easy, almost merry, demeanour of her celestial attendants.

The marble box which contains the Host is let into the altar-piece, of which it appears to form a part of the surface, only projecting slightly as its sides are convex. Turning on a pivot, it presents four different fronts, each representing, in well executed relief, a different scene in the Virgin's life.

LETTER X.

CAFÉS. WEDDING CEREMONY. CATHEDRAL CONTINUED. ALCAZAR
 HOSPITAL OF SANTA CRUZ. CONVENT OF LA CONCEPTION.
 MYSTERIOUS CAVERN. CONVENT OF SANTA FE, OR OF SANTIAGO.
 SONS-IN-LAW OF THE CID.

Toledo.

ONE of the first contrasts between this and other countries, which forces itself on the observation, is the amalgamation of the different classes of society in public places of resort. The grandee is far too sure of his personal importance and consideration, to entertain any fear of its being diminished by contact with those of inferior rank; and the peasant is far too proud to importune his superiors by any indiscreet efforts at familiarity.

At Burgos I found the *Gefe politico*, or governor of the province, sipping his lemonade in the evening at the *café*; his elbow brushing the back of a mayoral of a diligence, and surrounded by an assemblage of all classes of the male inhabitants of the town. These *café*s are curious establishments; they

are divided into two classes—the Café, properly so called, and the Botilleria—in which tea and coffee are not usually called for, but all the other refreshments of the café; such as *helados* (frozen beverages of all sorts), *sorbetes* (ices), liqueurs, wines, &c. These latter are the resort, in some towns, of both sexes, and indeed the cafés also in a less degree. But the etiquette in these things differs in the different provinces.

At Madrid, where foreign customs first penetrate, ladies are rarely seen in these resorts; by which they are considerable losers. No doubt, were the attractions of French cafés sufficiently powerful, your sex would not have withered them, by their disdain, into the uncivilized dens which they are. You are not of course invited by the billiard tables, or by the allurements of black coffee and cognac; but were the waiters to set before you a tumbler of frozen lemonade after a July evening's dusty walk, you would speedily bring such habits into fashion.

Much as the refreshments of Spanish cafés have been celebrated, their fame is surpassed by the reality. It is only when you have panted through a southern summer's day, and breathed an atmosphere of fire, that you are disposed to receive the illustration of the full sense of the word refreshment; and it is then they hand you a brobdignag goblet, brim

full of frozen orange-water or lemonade, or snow-white orgeat—which, from the imperceptible inroads made by the teaspoon on its closing-up surface, appears likely to last you the whole night. These and other similar luxuries, including the ices, at which those of a Grange or Torton would melt with jealousy, are plentiful in second and third-rate towns, and rank among the necessaries of life, rather than as objects of indulgence. They are of course cheap, or it would not answer.

The poor apply to the distributors of iced barley-water, who carry about a sort of cask, strapped between their shoulders, and containing ice in the centre, to maintain the frigidity of the beverage. By lowering and advancing the left shoulder, the vendor pours the contents of the cask through a small neck or pipe into the glasses, which he carries in a flat basket with cellaret partitions. A tumbler of this costs a halfpenny; its imbibing occupies two or three minutes, and assuages for hours the sufferings of the thirstiest palate.

At Madrid, the cafés have each its political colour; except that called del Principe, after the adjoining theatre. In this, politics are less characterised, literature having here taken up her quarters. It is probable that she is a less profitable customer, being habitually less thirsty. Accordingly, on put-

ting your head into the door, you see a saloon far more brilliantly lighted up than the others; but the peripatetic doctrines seem to prevail. Few persons are seated at the tables; and instead of the more profitable wear and tear of broken glasses, the proprietor probably finds substituted a thankless annual item for worn out floors. In the same street there is a club; but this is an exotic importation and on the exclusive plan, not quite of London, but of the Paris *cercles*.

In the cafés of Toledo, on the days of *fiesta*, the fair sex predominates, especially in summer. The great resort is, however, the Zocodover, from nine to ten in the evening. This little irregularly formed *plaza* is crowded like an assembly-room, and possesses its rows of trees, although a respectable oak would almost fill it.

A *soirée* has occasionally been known to be given in Toledo, but it is an occurrence of much rarity, and mostly occasioned by some unusual event,—the arrival of a public singer, or, still more unusual, a newly made fortune. The other evening I was admitted to one, the pretext for which was a wedding. This ceremony takes place at the residence of the bride, and although a subsequent formality is necessary in the Church, its delay does not defer the validity of the union, nor its consummation. The wedding-

day arrived, the families and friends of both parties assemble at eight in the evening.

The bride was distinguishable by a white veil or *mantilla* in the middle seat of a sofa, between her mother and sister, who rose to receive the guests. A narrow table had been dressed up into a temporary altar, and furnished with a crucifix and candles. All the party being arrived, a priest left his chair, and entered an adjoining room to robe; on his reappearance the company rose and flocked round the bride and bridegroom, who stood together before the priest, doing penance each with a long wax-light in the right hand, held in a muslin handkerchief.

The ceremony lasts about ten minutes without any change of posture. The priest departs to unrobe; the miserable bride and blushing bridegroom receive felicitations; and all resume their seats, and look at each other.

Presently chocolate was handed round, and an attempt at conversational murmur commenced, afterwards ices. And now the minister took a formal leave of the company, after complimenting the bride. Two or three other holy men, obedient to the signal, carried out their interminable hats before them: when a sudden revolution broke out. At the closing of the door on the hindmost ecclesiastic

the bridegroom rushed to the altar, and grasping with one hand the crucifix, and with the other two of the candlesticks, ran to the apartment that had assumed the character of vestry, and deposited them there, followed by officious friends bearing the remaining articles, until every awe-compelling symbol had disappeared. One or two guitars were extracted from their hiding-places under sofas, and sent forth careless but lively preludes. The men stood up and circulated; the women talked and laughed; a quadrille was speedily formed, and concluded; waltzing followed, and forfeits, and whatever you like, and—"the arrangements were on a scale of costly magnificence, and the festivities were prolonged, &c."

But these events are rare in Toledo. The everyday amusements consist in an infamous theatre, and the promenade; this is only on Saints' days; but these are almost every day. On six or seven occasions in the year, these promenades are absolute events, and much looked forward to. It is necessary to inquire which is the promenade patronised by the saint of the great day, whoever he is, and take your place in the tide, for no one absents himself.

Dresses for these celebrations are things premeditated; and the effect produced, and all the little events and rencontres of the day form for each belle, thrilling subjects of retrospection. *Man-*

tillas may be trimmed, and innocent plots woven for these occasions, without danger of disappointment by clouds or storms; and instead of the Virgin being implored that the sun may shine, who never disappoints them, she is sometimes requested to inspire some ruse for a momentary escape from his too searching effulgence.

Here may fair foreigners feast their eyes on fawn-coloured *majos*, whose every step (although no more exalted beings than butchers, postilions, horsedealers, and such like) would be envied by Antinous and Apollo. I should advise no veils, nor winkings, nor blinkings on these occasions, but eyes wide open—for never more (the Pyrenees once repassed) will their orbits expand to the forms and costumes of blackguards half so beautiful.

But these are subjects slightly unsuited to the interior of the cathedral, of our presence in which we are evidently forgetful. The Mozarabic Chapel, founded by Cardinal Ximenes de Cisneros, is situated under the southern tower, and contains a Virgin and Child executed in Mosaic, and a curious old fresco painting, representing the battle of Oran, at which the Cardinal was victorious over the Arabs. This chapel is set apart for the performance of the Mozarabic ritual, still retained by a portion of the population of Toledo, and the exercise of which

was continued in several churches, until the closing of some of them at the recent revolution.

The Arab conquerors of Spain exercised towards the religion of the country, the most complete and liberal tolerance. All who preferred remaining in the conquered towns to flight and exile, were allowed to retain a sufficient number of places of worship for the free exercise of their religion. On the subsequent introduction of the Italian missal, those who retained the ancient gothic forms were called Mozarabes (mixti Arabes, according to some, from their service being the same as that in use during the co-existence together of the two creeds). A more probable origin is attributed to the expression by some antiquaries, who derive it from Muza, the name of the Moorish general. The mass of the Christians who had taken refuge in the Asturias, applied the term to their brethren, who preferred accepting from the Arabs what they considered a degrading tolerance. The following singular mode of decision was adopted for the purpose of settling the question between the two missals.

The King, Alonzo the Sixth, the Archbishop Don Bernardo, and the court, were among the advocates of the new missal, which, being adopted in Rome, they were very desirous of establishing on the occasion of the restoration of the Christian supremacy

at Toledo. The mass of the people were attached to their ancient forms. It was resolved that the question should be decided by an appeal to a sort of neutral power; and Mars was selected, probably on account of his being a person disinterested in the affair. A champion was chosen by each party, and a day appointed for settling the difference by single combat. Accordingly, the court, the clergy, and the people being assembled, the representatives of the two missals took their station, lance in rest, and on the appointed signal spurred to the encounter. The ancient missal was approved of by the warlike god; but the King and his party were dissatisfied with the result, and resolved on another trial. A large fire was lighted in the principal plaza, and the two missals were thrown into it.

Again the ancient forms conquered, the rival parchment having caught the flame and being drawn out in a blaze. The populace now commenced a cry of triumph; but, to their great disappointment, the King, in his quality of umpire, pronounced a judgment which he might as easily have put in execution before the trials: namely, that considering that the Roman Missal, although on fire, was not consumed, they were both equally agreeable to the deity — they should therefore both

be preserved, and that some of the more ancient churches should continue the exercise of the Mozarabic service, while the Roman ritual should be established in the metropolitan temple, and in the greater number of the parishes.

Before we leave the cathedral, the cloister claims our attention. It is a spacious and handsome quadrangle, inclosing a garden. The eastern wall is adorned with excellent frescos of comparatively modern date, and all bearing the same signature—Francisco Bayeu. There are seven subjects on that side, being the number of intervals corresponding with the arcades, and three more continuing down another side. The best are two, taken from the history of Saint Casilda; and three from that of San Eugenio, first archbishop of Toledo, martyred in France. The arcades on the east side are shut in by large pieces of sail-cloth, in order to protect the paintings against the sun's rays.

The library of manuscripts belonging to this cathedral is distinguished rather by the quality than the quantity of its contents. It is approached by a staircase communicating with the cloister, and is a handsome room. It contains a copy of the Talmud on the papyrus leaves, and in the Coptic dialect. The following are also among its treasures: The Book of Esther in Hebrew, on a single piece of

parchment ; two bibles of the seventh century, one of which belonged to St. Isidore ; the missal used by Charles the Fifth in the monastery of Yuste ; the poems of Dante, manuscript of the poet's time, with illustrations ; the laws of Alonso the Tenth (surnamed the wise), and a volume of his poetical works, with the music opposite those intended to be sung : two ancient Chinese volumes, one on botany, the other on natural history, both illustrated.

The next edifice I visited was the Alcazar, the largest and most conspicuous building in Toledo. I expected to find there some Arab and Roman remains, having so read in more than one tour. It was not until some time after my visit that I obtained the information that the Moorish palace occupied a different site. The present comparatively modern building is principally of two epochs. On the east is the original portion erected by Alonzo the Sixth. The entire north and south fronts are probably additions of Philip the Second. The whole partakes of a divided character between castle and palace : it is not remarkable for any architectural merit, possessing neither beauty as a palace, nor solidity as a fortress ; and having been occupied as a military position during the war of the succession, and more recently in that of independence, its being already a ruin, before its modern appearance would seem to legitimize such

a state, causes no surprise. But its position is superb. Occupying the most elevated point of the town, it far exceeds the whole by the immense height of its walls, and commands an admirable view of the surrounding country. The only object deserving notice in this ruin is a colossal staircase, which occupies an entire side of the court,—a length of about two hundred and fifty feet,—and is ornamented by a light and elegant colonnade. This edifice ceased to be a palace on the final establishment of the court at Madrid, and after some time became the manufactory whence issued the famous silk and velvet brocades, the fabrication of which has now ceased, but with which Toledo formerly supplied the wardrobes of the court, and the well-garnished sacristies of Spain's wealthiest cathedrals.

Descending from the Alcazar through the Plaza de Zocodover, and thence towards the bridge of Alcantara, a few yards from the Plaza bring us in view of the façade of the Hospital of Santa Cruz, or "de los niños expositos,"—foundling hospital. The institution owes its origin to the Archbishop, Don Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, called the Great Cardinal of Spain. Although death prevented his witnessing the execution of his project, his fortune, administered by his next relatives and executors,—the Queen Isabella, and the Duke of Infantado,—was

employed in the erection of the buildings, and in the endowment of the establishment. The plans and conditions were not even drawn up until after the Cardinal's death; and they were never entirely put in execution. The church consists of one nave, of a length out of all proportion to its width and elevation. It was to have been crossed by another of the same proportions, with the exception of the elevation, which was to have been eighty feet in both. This combined with the length—about three hundred and fifty feet, as is seen in the existing nave,—would have rendered the edifice one of the most extraordinary in existence. The altar was to have stood in the centre of the intersection of the two naves. As it is, the long bare interior looks as though it had been destined for a picture gallery or library, but rather for the latter from the low-coved roof of cedar, and from the inadequate distribution of light. To the left of the altar is seen a portrait of the founder; and on the opposite side, about a hundred feet further down the nave, a large Adoration,—a superior painting, especially with regard to the colouring: the author unknown.

There are two large courts surrounded by arcades: one of them is a model of lightness and beauty, and contains in one of its angles an admirably ornamented staircase. The architect of the Santa Cruz

was Enrique Egas, who also built the celebrated hospital of the same name at Valladolid. He designed the whole according to the style then introduced, after the pointed style had been abandoned, and which in Spain received vulgarly the appellation of Plateresco, from the ornaments resembling the embossing of a silversmith. It is also confounded with the Renacimiento. The Plateresco style, from the too great liberty it afforded the architect, of setting aside the classic models, and following his own inventions, has produced in Spain, more than in any other country, (from there being at that period more wealth devoted to the construction of public monuments there than elsewhere,) the evil effects resulting from ill-guided and unrestrained powers of imagination. Fortunately, however, a few architects existed whose more correct taste kept them within some bounds; and who, in deserting the old models, replaced them by a style, if less pure, yet by no means inelegant. The architect Egas appears to have partaken of both natures at different moments; for, while his court above-mentioned is a specimen of consummate grace and good taste, the entrance front of the building is one of the bad examples of the style of the period.

The establishment covers a large space, about half the extent occupied by the double palace of the

Arab kings of Toledo. The remainder of the site contains two convents,—that of Santiago, and that of the Conception. The hospital was conducted formerly on a scale proportionate to the extent of its accommodation; but it is now no more than a reminiscence; the revenues having probably been incorporated in the recent registrations of national property. The number of inmates at present enjoying the benefits of the foundation amounts to fourteen only.

The Convent of la Conception adjoins the hospital of Santa Cruz. From the exterior are seen two churches, placed in close parallel contact, and each composed of a single nave. Both are evidently very ancient, one being in the Arab style; but the form of the other renders it probable that it is the more ancient of the two. You are disappointed after being shown this last, on being informed that the Moorish portion is forbidden ground, being appropriated by the nuns to their private use, and possessing no communication with the adjoining edifice, but a curtained grating, through which its secluded inmates assist at religious services. In the public church, a singular ornament figures on a conspicuous part of the wall near the entrance; it is the carcass of a large crocodile, fixed high enough to be

out of reach, although no one would be likely to purloin so unwieldy a curiosity. We are told the animal frequented the neighbourhood of Toledo; where, under cover of the pine forests, which formerly extended far over this mountainous region, its existence had long filled with terror the few travellers whom their mercantile pursuits compelled to pass within its accustomed haunts: that at length a knight (it was in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella) clothed in a full suit of armour, rode forth from Toledo, fully resolved to try conclusions with the monster, in order if possible to immortalize his name throughout the surrounding regions, by ridding them of so dire a scourge. The battle took place, and victory declaring for the knight, whose name unfortunately does not figure in the legend,—he assembled the peasants, and had his enemy's carcass borne in triumph to Toledo, where he made a present of it to the convent.

While on the subject of traditions, it is worth while adverting to a cavern, the entrance of which exists in this part of the town; and which is said to extend to a distance of eight miles, passing under the Tagus. It is related that somewhat less than a century back, the government ordered this cavern to be explored; but the exploring party was met at the commencement of the descent by so violent

a gust of wind, as to extinguish all the torches, and the courage of the explorers, for the attempt was never resumed. The failure by no means contributed to diminish the mysterious qualities attributed to the cavern, on the subject of which the wildest notions are currently entertained.

A worthy and excellent native of Toledo, to whose antiquarian enthusiasm (a quality doubly valuable here from its scarcity) I am indebted for some information and much entertainment, undertook one day to enlighten me with regard to the origin of this subterranean curiosity. Commencing by warning my credulity against the innumerable fables current on the subject, and which only resembled each other in their absurdity and impossibility, he added, "The real fact is this,—the cavern is the work of Hercules, who excavated it for the accommodation of the assemblies of the people, whom he instructed in the elements of magic."

The convent of Santiago, or of Santa Fé, or of Las monjas santiagistas, or Las cavalleras, occupies the portion of the ancient Moorish alcazar, remaining from the site of the two last-mentioned buildings. It is built round two courts, one of which is divided into planted parterres, intersected with brick-paved walks. The architecture of this first court is very simple; it consists of a plain arcade of semicircular

arches supported on square piers, and a repetition of the same on the first story. From this court opens the parlour of the Commendadora or abbess, and the choir, which forms a continuation of the public chapel. There is also under the arcade a folding door, which, when opened exhibits a collection of small pictures attached to it, as on the leaves of an album, and others suspended against the portion of wall it encloses. The centre painting of these last represents the Mater dolorosa weeping over the dead body of her Son. It has much of the manner of Alonza Cano, and is an admirable painting, more especially the dead body: the superior, however, did not know the name of the artist. She complained bitterly of the loss of a first-rate picture of the Divino Morales, which formerly occupied the place of her little collection, and which was taken possession of by Marshal Soult.

The second court is highly ornamental owing to the elegance of its architecture, and its magnificent proportions; it is a long quadrangle; the pillars below are very lofty, and support the gallery above without intermediate arches. They are not of a pure design, the shafts being too long for their diameter: in other respects they imitate the Tuscan order. Those of the arcade above are Ionic; but the effect here is destroyed by walls and windows, which have

been constructed in their intervals, for the purpose of converting the open gallery into a warmer corridor. The walls below are clothed to the height of about four feet with the *azulejos*, or porcelain mosaic, of the sort originally employed by the Arabs, and from which the ornament took its name, being blue and white, without any other colour.

Opening from this court is the Sala Capítular a handsome saloon used on occasions of elections of the Comendadora, or other solemnities, which do not take place in the church. It contains a portrait of the sister of St. Ferdinand,—a member of the community; and a curious picture of St. Iago leading to victory the christian army of Don Ramiro the First. In fulfilment of a promise made to the king the night preceding the battle of Albayde, the apostle, according to the historians, led the army in person, mounted on a milk-white charger, which cantered along at a sufficient elevation over the heads of the combatants, to be visible to all; thus inspiring, simultaneously, his *protégés* with confidence, and the Moors with terror. From that victory the Spanish war-cry of Santiago is said to derive its origin.

The buildings on the north side of the large court stand on the brink of a perpendicular rock, overhanging the *faubourg* on the Madrid side of

Toledo, and commanding right and left the luxuriant *vega*, to an extent of from forty to fifty miles. Over the highest story of this portion of the building, and forming a continuation of the rock, a Belvidere has been constructed, the roof of which is supported by piers, leaving all the sides open: it forms a promenade of about a hundred feet in length, by twenty-five in width.

The regulations of this convent are much less strict than those observed by all other religious communities. It would not otherwise have been possible to obtain permission to visit the establishment in detail. The *monjas cavalleras* (knight-nuns) of the military order of Santiago, take the white veil only, and not the black. If a nun inherits a property, she obtains permission from the council of military orders, sitting at Madrid, to absent herself from the convent for the purpose of transacting all necessary business. The same permission may be obtained in cases of illness. In taking the vows there is no prostration beneath the veil. The novice crosses her hands in a kneeling posture, and takes the oath on the Gospel. One is struck by something invincibly puzzling in this amalgamation of military regulation with religious hierarchy and female seclusion. They call themselves knights; their abbess, commander. The king, as Grand Master

of the military orders (since Ferdinand the Fifth) of Calatrava, Alcantara, and Santiago, is their recognised chief; and whenever military mass is required to be performed, the troops march into their chapel to beat of drum.

I was even assured that these recluses are not obliged to refuse a hand offered for a waltz, if it belongs to an arm having an epaulette at its other extremity; and that such scenes are known to occur in the presence of the commandress herself.

Our party, formed for the visit to this convent, having been presented to the superior, she gave directions to a nun to show us every part of the establishment. This sister, who, we were told, bore the title and rank of serjeantess (sargenta), possessed the remains of great beauty, and her (probably) forty summers had not injured her commanding and graceful figure. No sooner had she ushered us into the choir than she left us for an instant, and returned with her mantle of ceremony,—the costume in which they take the vow, and in which they appear on all occasions of solemnity. It was with evident satisfaction that she performed this part of her duties of cicerone; nor was it to be wondered at. No costume could have been invented better calculated to set off her natural advantages. It is composed of a sort of white serge, and appears

to have no seam. Attached round the shoulders it sweeps the ground with a train of four or five feet. A cross of scarlet cloth, bound with dark brown edges, and of a graceful form, figures on the portion which covers the left arm from the shoulder to the elbow. The white cap, gathered all over into minute plaits, rises into two parallel ridges, which passing over to the back of the head, imitate the form of a helmet. Two large lappets descend to the shoulders and complete the costume, which is entirely white, with the exception of the cross. In walking round the choir to display to us the effect of this dress, the fair *santiagista* was a model of majesty and grace.

To judge from her replies to our questions, it would appear that the system of softening the severity of monastic seclusion, and of partial and occasional communication with the beings of the outer world, instead of producing more contentment in the minds of the recluses, may possibly tend to unsettle them, and render them more dissatisfied with their lot. When asked how long she had inhabited the convent, she replied with an unrestrained and most pathetic inflation of the chest, more eloquent than the loudest complaint — “A very long time; nearly twenty years.” The white mantle, she told us, was an object the sight



COSTUME OF A MILITARY NUN.

of which always gave birth to serious reflections; since it was destined not even to quit her after death, but to serve also for her shroud.

The nun's choir is entirely separated from the public chapel, with the exception of two gratings, which admit to the latter the sound of the organ, and through which the nuns have a better view of the church than the public can obtain of the choir,

this being less lighted, and on a lower level. Near the choir a small oratory of no greater dimensions than about seven feet square, appears to be the only remains extant of the Arab buildings, which occupied the site. The ceiling is hemispherical, and ornamented in the Arab style; and one of the walls contains a niche surrounded by Arab tracery. I should mention likewise a fountain in the garden, which bears a similar character.

These nuns live less in community with each other than those of other convents; in fact, their life resembles in many respects that of independent single ladies. Each inhabits her own suite of apartments, and keeps her own servant. Her solitary repasts are prepared in her own separate kitchen, and at the hour chosen by herself. Once a-year only, on the occasion of the festival of the patron Apostle, the community assembles at dinner. The common refectory is at present let to strangers, together with other portions of the convent. The novice who wishes to enter this convent must be of good family, (proof of noble descent being demanded up to grandfathers and grandmothers inclusive) and possessed of property. Of the entrance of the present *comendadora* into the convent thirty years since, a romantic story is related. She belongs to a family of rank in the province of La Mancha,—and it is worth men-

tioning, that she recollects Espartero's father, who, as she states, served a neighbouring family in the capacity of cowherd.

A match, *de convenance*, had been arranged for her by her parents, on the accomplishment of which they insisted the more rigidly from her being known to entertain an attachment, the object of which was disapproved. No resistance being of any avail, the wedding-day was named ; and she was taken to Toledo for the purpose of making the necessary purchases for the occasion. It so happened that she was received by a relative, a member of the community of Santiagistas ; and whether she confided her pains to the bosom of this relative, and yielded to her persuasions—nuns being usually given to proselytism ; or perhaps acting on the impulse of the moment ; she declared on the morning after her arrival her resolution never to quit the convent ; preferring, as she resolutely affirmed, an entire life of seclusion, to an union with a man she detested. Instead, therefore, of the wedding dresses, a *manton capitular* was the only ornament purchased.

The property of this establishment remaining for the most part in possession of the respective original possessors, and not forming a common stock, the conscientious scruples of the revolution made an exception in its favour, owing to which it is not

reduced to so destitute a condition as that of the other unclosed convents. The nuns of San Clemente—the principal convent of Toledo, and of which the abbess alone possessed private property, are reduced to a life of much privation, as are also those of all the other convents. Some obtain presents in return for objects of manual industry, such as dolls' chairs, and other similar toys. Those of San Clemente had, and still have, a reputation for superior skill in confectionary. A specimen of their talent, of which I had an opportunity of judging in the house of a friend of the abbess, appeared to me to warrant the full extent of their culinary fame. They do not, however, exercise this art for gain. At San Clemente, and no doubt at all the others, the new government—besides the confiscation of all rents and possessions in money and land—seized the provisions of corn and fruits which they found on searching the attics of the building.

Immediately below the ruined modern Alcazar, and facing the Expositos, is seen a vast quadrangular building, each front of which presents from twenty to thirty windows on a floor. It is without ornament, and is entered by a square doorway, which leads to an interior court. It is now an inn, called Fonda de la Caridad, but was originally the residence of the Cid, who built it simultaneously with the

erection of the Alcazar, by Alonzo the Sixth, shortly after the taking of the town; Ruy Diaz being at that time in high favour, and recently appointed first Alcalde of Toledo, and governor of the palace. It was on the occasion of the first cortez held in this town, that the hero demanded a formal audience of Alonzo, in which he claimed justice against his two sons-in-law, the counts of Carrion.

These were two brothers, who had married the two Countesses of Bivar. On the occasion of the double marriage, a brilliant party had assembled at the Cid's residence, where all sorts of festivities had succeeded each other. The two bridegrooms, finding themselves, during their presence in this knightly circle, in positions calculated to test their mettle, instead of proving themselves, by a display of unequalled valour and skill, to be worthy of the choice by which they had been distinguished, gave frequent proofs of deficiency in both qualities; and, long before the breaking up of the party, their cowardice had drawn upon them unequivocal signs of contempt from many of the company, including even their host. Obligated to dissimulate their vexation as long as they remained at the château of the Cid, they concerted a plan of vengeance to be put in execution on their departure.

They took formal leave, and departed with their

brides for their estate, followed by a brilliant suite. No sooner, however, had they reached the first town, than, inventing a pretext, they despatched all the attendants by a different route, and proceeded on their journey, only accompanied by their wives. Towards evening the road brought them to a forest, which appeared to offer facilities for putting their project in execution. Here they quitted the highway, and sought a retired situation.

It happened that an attendant of the Countesses, surprised at the determination of the party to divide routes, had been led by curiosity to follow them unobserved. This follower, after having waited some time for their return to the high-road, penetrated into the midst of the wood, in order to discover the cause of the delay. He found the two brides lying on the ground, almost without clothing, and covered with blood, and learned that they had just been left by their husbands, who had been scourging them almost to death.

It was against the perpetrators of this outrage that the Cid pleaded for justice. A certain number of nobles were selected by Alonzo, and directed to give a decision after hearing the accusation and the defence. The offence being proved, the Counts had nothing to urge in extenuation, and judgment was pronounced. All the sums of money, treasures,

gold and silver vases and goblets, and precious stones, given by the Cid with his daughters as their dowry, to be restored; and (at the request of Ruy Diaz) the two Counts of Carrion, and their uncle, who had advised them to commit the act, were condemned to enter the lists against three of the followers of the Cid. The last decision was momentarily evaded by the Counts; who urged, that, having come to Toledo to be present at the cortez, they were unprovided with the necessary accoutrements. The King, however, insisted that they should not escape so mild a punishment, and repaired himself to Carrion, where he witnessed the combat, in which, it is needless to add, the culprits came off second best. The marriages being, at the same time, declared null, the Cid's daughters were shortly afterwards married a second time; the eldest, Doña Elvira, to Don Ramiro, son of Sancho, King of Navarre; and the younger, Doña Sol, to Don Pedro, hereditary Prince of Aragon.

LETTER XI.

STREETS OF TOLEDO. EL AMA DE CASA. MONASTERY OF SAN
JUAN DE LOS REYES. PALACE OF DON HURTADO DE MENDOZA.

Toledo.

WE will now hasten to the opposite extremity of the city, where the monastery of San Juan de los Reyes lays claim to especial interest. But I already hear you cry for mercy, and exclaim against these endless convents and monasteries; the staircases, courts, and corridors of which cause more fatigue to your imagination, than to the limbs of those who, however laboriously, explore their infinite details. Infinite they are, literally, in Toledo; where the churches, the greater number of which belong to convents, are not seen, as elsewhere, scattered singly among the masses of the habitations, but are frequently to be found in clusters of three or four, whether united by the same walls, or facing each other at the two sides of a street. It may, perhaps, afford you a short relief to pick your way over the

somewhat rugged pavement of a few of the Toledo streets, and take a survey of the exterior town, which our present destination requires us to traverse in its entire extent. I must inform you that, for the success of this enterprise, the stranger stands in absolute need of a pilot, without whose assistance his embarrassments would be endless.

Toledo scarcely boasts a street in which two vehicles could meet and continue their route. Most are impassable for a single cart; and, in more than one, I have found it impossible to carry an open umbrella. Such being the prevailing width of the streets, their tortuous direction causes a more serious inconvenience. He who has attempted the task of Theseus, in the mazes of some modern garden labyrinth, will comprehend the almost inevitable consequence of relying on his own wits for finding his way about Toledo,—namely, the discovery that he has returned to his point of departure at the moment he imagined that half the town separated him from it. This result is the more favoured by the similarity of the streets and houses. No such thing as a land-mark. All the convents are alike. You recollect at a particular turning, having observed a Moorish tower; consequently, at the end of the day, the sight of the Moorish tower leads you on, buoyed up by doubly elevated

spirits, in the required direction, most anxious to bring the tiring excursion to a close: but this tower leads you to the opposite extremity of the city to that you seek, for there are half a dozen Moorish towers, all alike, or with but a trifling difference in their construction.

Nor is this obstacle to solitary exploration unaccompanied by another inconvenience. I allude to the continual ascents and descents. The surface of the mountain on which Toledo is built, appears to have been ploughed by a hundred earthquakes, so cut and hacked is it, to the exclusion of the smallest extent of level ground. To carry a railroad across it, would require an uninterrupted succession of alternate viaducts and tunnels. In consequence of this peculiarity, the losing one's way occasions much fatigue. To do justice to the inhabitants, an almost universal cleanliness pervades the town,—an excellence the attainment of which is not easy in a city so constructed, and which gives a favourable impression of the population. It is one of the towns in which is proved the possibility of carrying on a successful war against the vermin for which the Peninsula has acquired so bad a reputation, by means of cleanliness maintained in the houses.

In the house I inhabited on my arrival, I had suspected for some days an unusual neglect in the

duties of the housemaid, to whose department it belonged to sweep the *esteras* or matting, which serve for carpets, from the circumstance of my having been visited by one or two unwelcome tormentors. I ventured a gentle remonstrance to the *ama* (landlady), stating my reasons for the suspicion I entertained. It happened that on the previous day I had mentioned my having been shown over the Archbishop's palace. This she had not forgotten; for with a superb coolness, scarcely to be met with out of Spain, she replied, "Fleas! oh, no! sir! we have none here,—you must have brought them with you from the Palace." Satisfied, however, with having maintained her dignity of landlady, she took care to have the nuisance removed.

This *ama*, as may be already judged, was a curiosity. In the first place, she was a dwarf. The Spaniards are not, generally speaking, a more diminutive race than the other inhabitants of Southern Europe: but when a Spaniard, especially a woman, takes it into her head to be small, they go beyond other nations. Nowhere are seen such prodigies of exiguity. The lady was, moreover, deformed, one of her legs describing a triangle, which compelled her in walking to imitate the sidelong progress of a crab. Possessed of these peculiarities she had attained, as spinster, that very uncertain age called by some

“certain,” but agreed by all to be nearer the end than the commencement of life.

Although not an exception, with regard to temper, to the generality of those whose fate it is to endure such a complication of ills, she nevertheless on frequent occasions gave way to much amiability, and especially to much volubility of discourse. She was not without a tinge of sentimentality ; and when seated, fan in hand, and the *mantilla puesta*, on one of the chairs shorn of almost their entire legs, which were to be found in all parts of the house,—she made by no means a bad half-length representation of a fine lady.

She had apparently experienced some of the sorrows and disappointments incident to humanity ; and on such occasions had frequently, no doubt, formed the resolution of increasing, although in a trifling degree, some religious sisterhood, of which establishments she had so plentiful a choice in her native city ; but, whether on a nearer approach, she had considered the veil an unbecoming costume, or her resolution had failed her on the brink of the living tomb, the project had not as yet taken effect. The turn, however, thus given to her reflections and inquiries, had perfected in her a branch of knowledge highly useful to strangers who might be thrown in her way. She was a limping ency-

clopedia of the convents and monasteries of Toledo ; and could announce each morning, with the precision of an almanack, the name of the saint of the day,—in what church or convent he was especially fêted, and at what hour the ceremony would take place. She was likewise *au fait* of the foundation, ancient and modern annals, and peculiarities of every sort which belong to every religious establishment of the many scores existing in Toledo. Her administration of the household affairs was admirably organized owing to her energetic activity. Her love of cleanliness would frequently induce her to take the sweeping department into her own hands—a circumstance which was sure to render the operation doubly successful, for the brooms, which in Toledo are not provided with handles or broomsticks, were exactly of a length suited to her stature. Before we take leave of her, here is one more of her original replies.

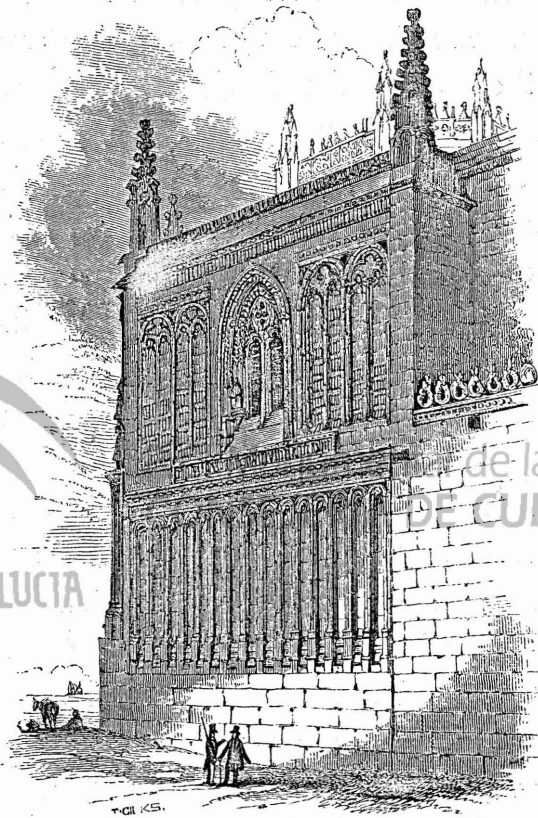
I complained to her at breakfast that the eggs were not as fresh as usual; and, suiting the action to the word, approached the egg-cup containing the opened one so near to her, that the organs of sight and smell could not but testify to the justice of my *reclamation*. Shrugging her shoulders, until they almost reached the level of the table—and with much contempt depicted on her countenance: “How could it be otherwise?” she exclaimed, “the egg

was taken a quarter of an hour ago from under the hen ; but you have broken it at the wrong end."

The monastery called San Juan de los Reyes, was founded by Ferdinand and Isabella, on their return from the conquest of Granada, and given to a fraternity of Franciscan friars. An inscription to this effect in gothic characters runs round the cloister walls, where it forms a sort of frieze, in a line with the capitals of the semi-columns. The inhabited part of the establishment is in a state of complete ruin, having been destroyed by the French during the Peninsular War. The cloisters are, likewise, in a semi-ruinous state: the part best preserved being the church; although that was not entirely spared, as may be supposed from its having been used as cavalry stables.

The choice of a situation for the erection of this convent was perfect in the then flourishing state of Toledo; and, even now, its picturesque position lends a charm to the melancholy and deserted remains still visible of its grandeur and beauty. It stands on the brow of the cliff, commanding the termination of the chasm already described as commencing at the bridge of Alcantara. It commands, therefore, the ruins of Roderick's palace, placed a few hundred yards further on, and on a lower level; still lower the picturesque bridge of

St. Martin, striding to the opposite cliff, over arches of ninety feet elevation, and the lovely *vega* which stretches to the west.



CHURCH OF SAN JUAN DE LOS REYES.

This monastery was one of the most favoured amongst the numerous royal endowments of that period. It is said that its foundation was the result of a vow pronounced by Ferdinand and the Queen

before the taking of Granada. In addition to the scale of magnificence adopted throughout the entire plan, the royal founders, on its completion, bestowed a highly venerated donation—the collection of chains taken from the limbs of the Christian captives, rescued by them from the dungeons of the Alhambra. They are suspended on the outside walls of the two sides of the north-eastern angle of the church, and are made to form a frieze, being placed in couples crossing each other at an acute angle; while those that remained are suspended vertically in rows by fours or fives, in the intervals of the pilastres.

The interior of the church is still sufficiently entire to give some idea of its original splendour. Its dimensions are rather more than two hundred feet in length, by eighty in width, and as many in height—excepting over the intersection of the nave and transept, where the ceiling rises to a hundred and eight feet. These dimensions are exclusive of three recesses on either side, forming chapels open to the nave, there being no lateral naves or aisles. The style of the whole is very ornamental; but the east end is adorned with an unusual profusion of sculpture. The transept is separated from the eastern extremity of the building, by a space no greater than would suffice for one of the arches; and its ends form the lines, which being prolonged, con-

stitute the backs of the chapels. The royal arms, supported by spread eagles, are repeated five times on each end-wall; separated respectively by statues of saints in their niches, and surmounted by a profusion of rich tracery. These subjects entirely cover the walls to a height of about forty feet, at which elevation another inscription in honour of the founders runs round the whole interior. The transepts not being formed by open arches, the sides afford space for a repetition of the same ornament, until at their junction with the nave they are terminated by two half-piers covered with tracery, and surmounted by semi-octagonal balconies, beneath which the initials of Ferdinand and Isabella, made to assume a fancy shape, and surmounted by coronets, are introduced with singularly graceful effect.

But the chief attraction of this ruin is the cloister. A small quadrangle is surrounded by an ogival or pointed arcade, enriched with all the ornament that style is capable of receiving. It encloses a garden, which, seen through the airy-web of the surrounding tracery, must have produced in this sunny region a charming effect. At present, one side being in ruins and unroofed, its communication with the other three has been interrupted; and, whether or not in the idea of preserving the other sides from the infection, their arches have been closed nearly