

tain a great number of windows which have the appearance of loopholes. One would call it a prison rather than a convent. Everywhere one sees that dark, dead color, and not a living soul; there is the stillness of an abandoned fortress about it; and beyond the black roofs lies the black mountain, which seems to overhang the building, giving to it an air of mysterious solitude. The locality, the forms, the colors, everything, in fact, seems to have been chosen by him who founded the edifice with the intention of offering to the eyes of men a sad and solemn spectacle. Before entering, you have lost all your gayety; you no longer smile, but think. You stop at the doors of the Escorial with a sort of trepidation, as at the gates of a deserted city; it seems to you that, if the terrors of the Inquisition reigned in some corner of the world, they ought to reign among those walls. You would say that therein one might still see the last traces of it and hear its last echo.

Every one knows that the basilica and convent of the Escorial were founded by Philip II, after the battle of San Quintino, in fulfilment of a vow made to St. Laurence, during the seige, when the beseiged had been forced to bombard a church consecrated to that saint. Don Juan Batista, of Toledo, began the work, Herrera completed it; and the labor upon it lasted twenty years. Philip II desired that the edifice should present the form of a gridiron, in commemoration of the martyrdom of St. Laurence, and such, in fact, is the shape. The foundation is a rectangular parallelogram. At the four corners rise four great square towers with pointed roofs, which represent the four feet of a gridiron; the church and the royal palace that rise on one side, symbolize the

handle ; the interior buildings which join the two longest sides, take the place of the cross-bars. Other minor edifices project beyond the parallelogram, at a short distance from the convent, along one of the long sides and one of the courts, and form two great squares ; on the other two sides are gardens. Façades, doors, atriums—every thing is in harmony with the grandeur and character of the building ; and it is quite useless to heap description upon description. The royal palace is superb, and it is better to see it before entering the convent and church, in order not to confuse the separate impressions produced by each. This palace occupies the north-east corner of the edifice. Several rooms are full of pictures, others are covered from floor to ceiling with tapestries, representing bull-fights, public balls, games, fetes, and Spanish costumes, designed by Goya ; others are regally furnished and adorned ; the floor, the doors, and the windows are covered with marvellous inlaid work and stupendous gilding. But among all the rooms the most noteworthy is that of Philip II ; it is rather a cell than a room, is bare and squalid, with an alcove which answers to the royal oratory of the church, so that, from the bed, by keeping the doors open, one can see the priest who is saying mass. Philip II slept in that cell, had his last illness there, and there he died. One still sees some chairs used by him, two little stools upon which he rested the leg tormented with gout, and a writing-desk. The walls are white, the ceiling flat, and without any ornament, and the floor of brick.

After seeing the royal palace, you leave the building, cross the square, and re-enter by the principal door. A custodian attaches himself to you ; you cross the broad vestibule, and find yourself in the

court-yard of the kings. There you can form a first idea of the immense framework of the edifice. The court is enclosed by walls ; on the side opposite the doors is the façade of the church. On a spacious flight of steps there are six enormous doric columns, each of which upholds a large pedestal, and every pedestal, a statue. There are six colossal statues, by Battiste Monegro, representing Jehoshaphat, Ezekiel, David, Solomon, Joshua, and Manasseh. The court-yard is paved, scattered with bunches of damp turf. The walks look like rocks cut in points ; everything is rigid, massive, and heavy, and presents the fantastic appearance of a titanic edifice, hewn out of solid stone, and ready to defy the shocks of earth and the lightnings of heaven. There one begins to understand what the Escorial really is.

One ascends the steps and enters the church.

The interior of the church is sad and bare. Four enormous pilasters of gray granite support the ceiling, frescoed by Luca Giordano ; beside the high altar, sculptured and gilded in the Spanish style, in the inter-columns of the two royal oratories, one sees two groups of bronze statues kneeling, with their hands clasped, toward the altar. On the right Charles V, the Empress Isabella, and several princesses ; on the left, Philip II, with his wives. Over the door of the church, thirty feet from the ground, at the end of the principal nave, rises the choir, with two rows of seats, in the Corinthian style, simple in design. In a corner, near a secret door, is the chair which Philip II occupied. He received through that door letters and important messages, without being seen by the priests who were chanting in the choir. This church which, in comparison with the entire building, seems very small, is nevertheless one of the

largest in Spain, and although it appears so free from ornamentation, contains immense treasures of marble, gold, relics, and pictures, which the darkness in part conceals, and from which the sad appearance of the edifice distracts one's attention. Beside the thousand works of art that are to be seen in the chapels, in the rooms contiguous to the church, and on the staircases leading to the tribune, there is, in a corridor behind the choir, a stupendous crucifix of white marble, by Benvenuto Cellini, bearing the inscription, *Benvenutus Zelinus, civis Florentinus facebat, 1562*. In other portions are pictures of Navarrete and Herrera. But every feeling of surprise sinks into that of sadness. The color of the stone, the gloomy light, and the profound silence which surrounds you, recalls your mind incessantly to the vastity, unknown recesses, and solitude of the building, and leaves no room for the pleasure of admiration. The aspect of that church awakens in you an inexplicable feeling of inquietude. You would divine, were you not otherwise aware of it, that those walls are surrounded, for a great distance, by nothing but granite, darkness and silence; without seeing the enormous edifice, you feel it; you feel that you are in the midst of an uninhabited city; you would fain quicken your pace in order to see it rapidly, to free yourself from the incubus of that mystery, and to seek, if they exist anywhere, bright light, noise, and life.

From the church you pass through several bare, cold rooms into the sacristy, which is a large arched chamber, in which one wall is entirely covered by wardrobes of variegated and very fine wood, containing the sacred ornaments; the opposite wall by a series of pictures of Ribera, Giordano, Zurbaran,

Tintoretto, and other Italian and Spanish painters ; and at the end is the famous altar of the *Santa forma*, with the celebrated picture of poor Claude Coello, who died of a broken heart because Luca Giordano was called to the Escorial. The effect of this picture surpasses all imagination. It represents, with life-size figures, the procession, which was formed to place in that spot the *Santa forma*. The sacristy and altar are portrayed, the prior kneeling on the steps, with the wax and sacred wafers in his hands ; around him are the deacons ; on one side Charles II on his knees ; beyond are monks, priests, seminarists, and other faithful ones. The figures are so lifelike and speaking, the prospective so true, the coloring, shade, and light so effective, that upon first entering the sacristy one is apt to mistake the picture for a mirror which is reflecting a religious service being performed at that moment in a neighboring room. Then the illusion of the figures disappears ; but that of the background of the picture remains, and one is really obliged to go near enough to touch it, in order to convince himself that that is not another sacristy, but a painted canvas. On fête days the canvas is rolled up, and there appears in the centre of a little chapel a little temple of gilt bronze, in which one sees a magnificent pyx that contains the sacred host, inlaid with ten thousand precious stones, among which are rubies, diamonds, amethysts, and garnets, set in the form of rays that dazzle one's eyes.

From the sacristy we went to the Pantheon. A custodian with a lighted torch preceded me. We descended a long granite staircase and reached a subterranean door, through which not a ray of light penetrated. Above this door one read the following inscription in gilt bronze letters :

“GREAT AND OMNIPOTENT GOD!

“This is a place consecrated by the piety of the Austrian dynasty to the mortal remains of the Catholic kings, who are awaiting the desired day, under the high altar sacred to the Redeemer of mankind. Charles V, the most illustrious of the Cæsars, desired this final resting-place for himself and his lineage; Philip II, the most prudent of kings, designed it; Philip III, a sincerely pious monarch, began the work; Philip IV, noted for his clemency, constancy, and devotion, enlarged, embellished, and finished it in the year of our Lord 1654.”

The custodian entered, I followed him, and found myself in the midst of sepulchres, or rather in a sepulchre dark and cold as the grotto of a mountain. It is a small octagonal room, all marble, with a little altar in the wall opposite the door, and in the remaining ones, from the floor to the ceiling, one above the other, are the tombs, distinguishable by ornaments in bronze and bas-relief; the ceiling corresponds with the high altar of the church. On the right of the altar are buried Charles V, Philip II, Philip III, Philip IV, Louis I, the three Don Carlos, Ferdinand VII; on the left, the empresses and queens. The custodian placed his torch near the tomb of Maria Louisa of Savoy, wife of Charles III, and said to me with an air of mystery:

“Read.”

The marble is striped in different ways; with a little difficulty I succeeded in discovering five letters; they form the word Luisa, written by the queen herself with the points of her scissors.

Suddenly the custodian extinguished the torch, and we were left in the dark. The blood froze in my veins.

"Light it!" I cried.

The custodian gave a long and lugubrious laugh, which seemed like the rattle of a dying person, and replied :

"Look!"

I looked ; a very faint ray of light, falling through an aperture near the ceiling, along the wall, almost to the floor, illumined scarcely enough to make them visible, some of the tombs of the queens, and looked like a moonbeam, and the bas-reliefs and bronzes on the tombs gleamed in that ray of strange light, as if they were dripping with water. In that moment I perceived for the first time the odor of that sepulchral air, and a shudder ran over me. I penetrated, in imagination, those tombs, and saw all those rigid bodies. I searched for a means of escape above the ceiling, found myself alone in the church, fled from the church and lost myself in the labyrinths of the convent ; then recovered myself, in the midst of those tombs, and felt that I really was in the heart of that monstrous edifice, in the deepest portion, in the coldest corner, in the most overwhelming recess. I seemed to myself a prisoner, buried in that great mass of granite, as if everything were gravitating toward me, crushing me on all sides, and closing the exit to me. I thought of the sky, the country, the open air, as I would have done of a remote world, and with an ineffable feeling of sadness.

"Sir," said the custodian, solemnly, to me before going out, as he pointed to the tomb of Charles V, "the emperor is there, just as he was when they laid him there, with his eyes still open, so that he seems alive and about to speak. Who lives will see."

Saying which, he lowered his voice as if he feared the emperor would hear him, and making a sign of the cross, he preceded me up the staircase.

After the church and the sacristy, one visits the picture-gallery, which contains a great number of works by artists of every nation, not the best of course, because these were carried to the Madrid Museum; but such as quite merit a half day's visit. From the picture-gallery one goes to the library, passing by the great staircase over which curves an enormous vaulted ceiling, painted in fresco by Luca Giordano. The library is composed of a very vast hall, ornamented with great allegorical paintings, and contains more than fifty thousand precious volumes, four thousand of which were presented by Philip II, and beyond this, a room where there is a rich collection of manuscripts. From the library one goes to the convent.

Here human imagination loses itself. If any one of my readers has read *L' Estudiante de Salamanca* of Espronceda, he will remember that indefatigable youth, when, in following a mysterious lady whom he met at night at the foot of a tabernacle, he passes through street after street, square after square, alley after alley, turning, twisting, turning again, until he finally reaches a point where he no longer sees the houses of Salamanca, and finds himself in an unknown city. He continues to turn corners, cross squares, traverse streets, and, as he proceeds, the city seems to enlarge, the streets lengthen out, and the alleys grow thicker. He goes on and on without rest, and does not know whether he be dreaming, awake, intoxicated, or insane; terror seizes his iron heart, and the strangest fancies crowd into his wandering mind. So it is with the stranger in the

convent of the Escorial. Pass through a long subterranean corridor, so narrow that you can touch the walls with your elbows, low enough almost to hit the ceiling with your head, and as damp as a submarine grotto ; you reach the end, turn, and you are in another corridor. You go on, come to doors, look, and other corridors stretch away before you as far as the eye can reach. At the end of some you see a ray of light, at the end of others an open door, through which you catch a glimpse of a suite of rooms.

From time to time you hear the sound of a step, you stop, and hear it no longer ; then you hear it again ; you do not know whether it is above your head, at the right, left, behind, or before you. You look through a door and start back alarmed ; at the end of that long corridor, into which you have glanced, you have seen a man, as motionless as a spectre, who was looking at you. You proceed, and emerge on a narrow court, enclosed by high walls, which is gloomy, overgrown with weeds, and illumined by a faint light, which seems to fall from an unknown sun, like the courts of the witches, described to us when we were children. You leave the court, ascend a staircase, come out on a gallery, and look down upon another silent and deserted court. You pass through another corridor, descend another staircase, and find yourself in a third court ; then other corridors, staircases, and suites of empty rooms, and narrow courts, and everywhere there is granite, a pale light, and the silence of a tomb. For a short time you think you would be able to retrace your steps ; then your memory becomes confused, and you remember nothing more ; you seem to have walked ten miles, to have been in that labyrinth for

a month, and not to be able to get out of it. You come to a court and say : " I have seen it already ! " but you are mistaken ; it is another. You fancy you are in one portion of the building, and you are really in an opposite part. You ask the custodian for the cloister, and he replies : " It is here "—and you keep on walking for a half hour. You seem to be dreaming ; catch glimpses of long frescoed walls, ornamented with pictures, crucifixes, and inscriptions ; you see and forget ; and ask of yourself : " Where am I ? " You see a strange light, do not understand it, and wonder whether it be the effect of the reflection of the granite, or the light of the moon. It proves to be daylight, but it is sadder than that of darkness, and is a false, gloomy, and fantastic light. On you go, from corridor to corridor, court to court ; you look ahead with suspicion ; almost expect to see suddenly, at the turning of a corner, a row of skeleton monks, with their hoods drawn over their eyes, and their arms folded ; you think of Philip II, and seem to hear his retreating step through dark hallways ; you remember all that you have read of him, of his treasures, the Inquisition, and all becomes clear to your mind's eye ; you understand everything for the first time ; the Escorial is Philip II, he is still there, alive and frightful, and with him the image of his terrible God. Then you would like to rebel, to raise your thoughts to the God of your heart and hopes, and to conquer the mysterious terror which the place inspires in you ; but you cannot do this ; the Escorial surrounds, holds, and overwhelms you ; the cold of its stones penetrates to your marrow ; the sadness of its sepulchral labyrinths invades your soul ; if you are with a friend you say : " Let us leave ; " if you were

with your love you would press her to your heart with a feeling of trepidation ; if you were alone you would take flight, At last you mount a staircase, enter a room, go to the window, and salute with a burst of gratitude, the mountains, sun, freedom, and the great and beneficent God who loves and pardons.

What a long breath one draws at that window !

From here you see the gardens which occupy a restricted space, and are very simple ; though they may be said to be elegant and beautiful, and quite in keeping with the edifice itself. Then you see twelve graceful fountains, each one surrounded by four squares of myrtle, which represent the royal shields, designed with such exquisite taste, and rounded with such finish that in looking at them from the window they seem to be woven of plush and velvet, and produce a very pretty effect in the white sand of the pathways. There are no trees, flowers, nor arbors ; nothing is seen in the garden but fountains, squares of myrtle, and two colors, green and white ; and such is the beauty of that noble simplicity, that one cannot take one's eyes from it ; and when the eye has been removed, one's thoughts return to it, and rest there with a very keen pleasure tempered by a sort of sweet sadness. In a room near that which looks upon the garden, a series of relics were shown me, which I gazed at without allowing the custodian to suspect my private doubts as to their genuineness. There was a splinter of the holy cross presented by the Pope to Isabella II ; a piece of the wood bathed in the blood, still visible, of St. Laurence ; an inkstand belonging to St. Theresa ; and other objects, among which was a small portable altar of Charles V, a crown of thorns and a pair of

pincers used for torture, found I know not where. From thence I was taken to the cupola of the church, from which one enjoys a magnificent view. On one side the eye takes in all the mountainous country between the Escorial and Madrid ; on the other, one sees the snow-capped mountains of the Guadarrama ; below, one embraces, with a glance, the enormous edifice, the long lead-covered roofs, and the towers ; one sees the interior of the courts, cloisters, porticoes, and galleries ; one can traverse, in thought, the thousand passages of the corridors and stairs, and say : " An hour ago I was down there, here, up there, below, and over there ; " grow astonished at having taken such a walk, rejoice at having issued from that labyrinth, from those tombs, shadows, and at being able to return to the city, and to see one's friends again.

An illustrious traveller said that after having passed a day in the convent of the Escorial, one ought to feel happy throughout one's life, in simply thinking that one might be still among those walls, but is no longer there. This is almost true. Even at the present day, after so great a lapse of time, on rainy days, when I am sad, I think of the Escorial, then look at the walls of my room, and rejoice ; during sleepless nights I see the courts of the Escorial ; when I am ill, and fall into a disturbed or heavy sleep, I dream of roaming through those corridors alone, in the dark, followed by the phantom of an old monk, shouting and knocking at all the doors without finding an exit, until I go to the Pantheon, and the door closes loudly behind me, and I remain buried among the tombs. With what pleasure I saw once more the thousand lights of the *Puerta del Sol*, the crowded cafés, and the great noisy street of the

Alcalà! Upon entering the house I made such a noise that the maid, who was a good and simple Gallician, ran to her mistress, quite breathless, and said :

“ I think the Italian has gone mad ! ”

I was more amused by the deputies of the Cortes than by either the cocks or bulls. I succeeded in procuring a small place in the tribune of the journalists, and I went there every day, and stayed there to the end with infinite enjoyment. The Spanish parliament has a more juvenile aspect than ours ; not because the deputies are younger ; but because they are neater and more carefully dressed than ours. There one does not see the disordered hair, unkempt beards, and those colorless jackets which are seen on the benches of our Chamber : there the beards and hair are nicely arranged and shining, the shirts embroidered, coats black, trowsers light, gloves orange-colored, canes silver-headed, and flowers in the button-hole. The Spanish parliament follows the fashion plates. The dressing and speaking are alike : both lively, gay, flowery, and sparkling. We lament that our deputies are more governed by the form than is fitting political orators ; but the Spanish deputies cultivate it more studiously still, and, it is only fair to confess, with better grace. They not only speak with a marvellous facility, so much so that it is a rare occurrence to hear a deputy interrupt himself in the middle of a sentence to seek for a phrase ; but there is no one who does not strive to speak correctly, and to give to his words a practical lustre, a classical flavor, and a little of the imprint of the grand, oratorical style. The gravest

ministers, the most timid deputies, the most rigorous financiers, even when they are speaking on subjects quite foreign to those allied to rhetoric, embellish their speeches with the fine forms of anthology, graceful anecdotes, famous verses, apostrophes to civilization, liberty, and the country; and proceed quite rapidly, as if they were reciting something committed to memory, with an intonation always measured and harmonious, and a variety of poses and gestures which leaves no place for ennui. The newspapers, in criticizing their speeches, praise the elevated style, the purity of the language, *los rasgos sublimes*, the sublime flashes; which one admires—if it concerns their friends, be it understood; or, they say, with scorn, that the style is sesquipedal, the language corrupt, the form,—in a word, that blessed form! uncultivated, ignoble, unworthy of the splendid traditions of the art of Spanish oratory. This worship of form, this great facility of speech, degenerates into bombastic vanity; and while it is certain that one must not seek for the models of true political eloquence in the parliament of Madrid, yet that which is universally admitted is not the less true, viz.: that this parliament is, among those of Europe, the richest in fruitful oratory, in the ordinary sense of the word. One ought to hear a discussion on a subject of important political interest, which stirs the passions. It is a veritable conflict! They are no longer speeches, but inundations of words, calculated to drive stenographers mad and confuse the minds of the auditors in the tribunes! There are voices, gestures, impetuosity, and rhapsodies of inspiration, which make one think of the French Assembly in the turbulent days of the Revolution!

There you hear a Rios Rosas, a very violent orator, who dominates the tumult with a roar ; a Martos, an orator of the chosen form, who slays with ridicule ; a Pi y Margall, a venerable old man, who terrifies one with gloomy prophecies ; a Collantes, an indefatigable speaker, who crushes the chamber under an avalanche of words ; a Rodriguez, who, with marvellous flexion of reasoning and paraphrase, pursues, confuses, and stifles his adversaries, and among a hundred others, a Castelar, who vanquishes and fascinates both enemies and friends with a torrent of poetry and harmony. And this Castelar, noted throughout Europe, is really the most complete example of Spanish eloquence. He pushes the worship of form to the point of idolatry ; his eloquence is music ; his reasoning is the slave of his ear ; he says or does not say a thing, or says it in one way better than in another, according to the turn of the sentence ; he has harmony in his mind, follows it, obeys it, and sacrifices to it everything that can offend it ; his period is a strophe ; in fact, one must hear him in order to credit the fact that human speech, without poetical measure and song, can so closely approach the harmony of song and poetry. He is more of an artist than a politician ; has not only an artist intellect, but an artist heart also ; it is the heart of a child, which is incapable of hatred and enmity. In none of his speeches can one find abuse ; in the Cortes he has never provoked a serious personal dispute ; he never has recourse to satire, nor does he adopt irony ; in his most violent philippics he never lets drop a dram of gall, and this is a proof of it, that though a republican, adversary of all the ministers, a warlike journalist and perpetual accuser of him who exer-

cises any power, and of him who is not a fanatic for liberty, he has never made himself hated by any one. However, his speeches are enjoyed, not feared ; his style is too beautiful to be terrible ; his character too ingenuous to admit of his exercising a political influence ; he does not know how to tilt, plot, and to make way for himself by bribes ; he is only fitted to please and to shine ; his eloquence, when it is grandest, is tender ; his most beautiful speeches draw forth tears. To him the Chamber is a theatre. Like improvisators, in order to have a clear and serene inspiration, he is obliged to speak at a given hour, at a fixed point, and with a certain allowance of time before him. Therefore, on the day he is to speak, he takes certain measures with the president of the Chamber ; the president arranges matters so that his turn comes when the tribunes are crowded and all the deputies are in their places ; his newspapers announce his speech the evening before, so that the ladies may procure tickets ; for he requires a certain amount of expectation. Before speaking he is restless, and cannot keep quiet one instant ; he enters the Chamber, leaves it, reënters goes out again, wanders through the corridors, goes, into the library and turns over the leaves of a book, rushes into the café to take a glass of water, seems to be seized with fever, fancies that he will not know how to put the words together, that he will be laughed at or hissed ; not a single lucid idea of his speech remains in his head ; he has confused and forgotten everything.

“ How is your pulse ? ” his friends ask, smilingly.

When the solemn moment arrives, he takes his place with bowed head, trembling and pallid as a man condemned to death, who is resigned to losing

in a single day the glory acquired with so many years of fatigue. At that moment even his enemies feel pity for his condition. He rises, gives a glance around him, and says :

“Señores!”

He is saved ; his courage returns, his mind grows clear, and his speech comes back to him like a forgotten air ; the president, the Cortes, the tribunes, disappear ; he sees nothing but his gestures, hears nothing but his own voice, and feels nought but the irresistible flame which burns within him and the mysterious force that sustains and upholds him. It is beautiful to hear him say these things :

“I no longer see the walls of the room,” he exclaims, “I behold distant people and countries which I have never seen.”

He speaks by the hour, and not a deputy leaves the room, not a person moves in the tribunes, a general voice interrupts him, not a gesture disturbs him ; not even when he breaks the regulations has the president sufficient courage to interrupt him ; he displays at his ease the picture of his republic, clothed in white and crowned with roses, and the monarchists do not dare protest, because, so clothed, they, too, find it beautiful. Castelar is master of the Assembly ; he thunders, lightens, sings, rages, and gleams like fireworks ; makes his auditors smile, calls forth shouts of enthusiasm, ends amid a storm of applause, and goes away with his head in a whirl. Such is this famous Castelar, professor of history in the university, a very fruitful writer on politics, art, and religion ; a publicist who makes fifty thousand francs a year in the American newspapers, an academician unanimously elected by the *Academia Española*, pointed out in the streets,

fêted by the people, beloved by his enemies, and a charming, vain, generous, and handsome youth.

Now that we are discussing political eloquence, let us give a glance at the literature. Let us imagine a room in the Academy full of noise and confusion. A throng of poets, novelists, and writers of every kind, all having something French in their faces and manners, although studiously striving to conceal it, are reading and declaiming their works, each one trying to drown the voices of the others, in order to make himself heard by the people crowded into the tribunes ; who, on their part, refrain from reading the newspapers and discussing politics. From time to time a vibratory and harmonious voice makes itself heard above the tumult ; and then a hundred voices break out together in a corner of the room, shouting : " He is a Carlist ! " and a salute of hisses follows the cry ; or, " He is a republican ! " and another burst of hisses, from another side, stifles the vibratory and harmonious voice. The academicians throw paper balls at each other, and shriek in each other's ears :

" Atheist ! Jesuit ! Demagogue ! Weather-cock ! Traitor ! "

By straining one's ear in the direction of those who are reading, one catches harmonious strophes, well-turned periods, and forcible phrases. The first effect is pleasing ; they are really poems and prose full of fire, life, beams of light, felicitous comparisons taken from all that shines and sounds in the sky, on the sea, and upon earth ; and every thing is vaguely illumined with Oriental colors and richly clothed in Italian harmonies. But alas ! it is only literature for the eyes and ears ; it is only music and painting ; rarely the muse, in the midst of a nimbus of flowers,

lets fall the gem of a thought ; and nothing remains of this luminous shower but a light perfume in the air, and the echo of a soft murmur in the ear. Meanwhile, one hears in the street the cries of the people, discharges of guns, and the sound of drums ; at every moment some artist deserts the ranks, and goes forth to wave a banner among the crowd ; they disappear two by two, and three by three, in crowds, and go to swell the body of journalists ; the noise and the continuous vicissitudes of events, divert the most tenacious from lengthy works ; in vain does some solitary person in the crowd cry : " In the name of Cervantes stop ! " Some powerful voices are raised above that cry ; but they are the voices of men grouped on one side, many of whom are about starting on the journey from which there is no return. It is the voice of Hatzembuch, the prince of drama ; it is the voice of Breton de los Herreros, the prince of comedy ; it is the voice of Zorilla, the prince of poetry ; it is an orientalist, who is called Gayango, an archeologist called Guerra, a writer of comedies called Tamayo, a novelist called Fernand Caballero, a critic called Amador de Los Rios, a romancer called Fernandez y Gonzales, and a troop of other bold and fruitful geniuses ; in the midst of whom the memory of the great poet of the revolution is still alive, Quintana ; the Byron of Spain, Espronceda ; of a Nicasio Gallego, of a Martinez della Rosa, and of a Duke di Rivas. Yet tumult, disorder, and discord, like a torrent, invade and envelop every thing. But to leave allegory, Spanish literature is almost in the same condition as ours ; there is a body of illustrious men who are declining, but who had two great inspirations ; religion, or the country, or both together, and who left, moreover, a particular and

lasting trace in the field of art. There is a troop of young men who are feeling their way forward, asking what they have to do, rather than doing any thing ; wavering between faith and scepticism ; or, having faith without courage, or not possessing it at all, they are induced by custom to simulate it ; not secure of their own language, and vibrating between the academies, which cry : " Purity ! " and the people, who cry : " Truth ! " hesitating between the law of tradition and the need of the moment ; left in a corner by the thousand who give fame, and vituperated by the few who set their seal upon it ; they are forced to think in one way and to write in another ; to half express themselves, to let the present flee away in order not to detach themselves from the past, and to make their way as best they can between opposing difficulties. Good fortune may keep their real name afloat, for some years, in the torrent of French books with which the country is flooded. From this rises the discouragement which attacks first their own strength, and then the national intellect. And this, too, is either the cause of the imitation that permeates mediocrity, or the abandonment of the literature of great studies and great hopes, for the easy and profitable scribbling in the newspapers. Alone, amid so many ruins, stands the theatre. The new dramatic literature no longer contains any thing of the antique style, nor of the marvellous invention, splendid forms, and that original imprint of nobility and grandeur, which was peculiar to a people dominating Europe and the New World ; and less still the incredible fecundity and endless variety ; but in compensation for this lack it has a more healthful doctrine, a more exquisite delicacy, and a greater conformity to the true aim of the theatre, which is to

correct customs, and ennoble the heart and mind. In all literary works, then, as in the theatre,—romances, popular songs, poems, and history, there is, always living and dominating, the feeling which permeates Spanish literature more profoundly, perhaps, than any other European literature, from the first lyric attempts of Berceo to the vigorous warlike hymns of Quintana,—that of national pride.

Here we must speak of the character of the Spanish. Their national pride is the same to-day, after so much misfortune and such a fall, as to make the stranger who lives in their midst, doubt whether they be the Spaniards of three hundred years ago, or the Spaniards of the nineteenth century. But it is a pride which does not offend one, a pride innocently rhetorical. They do not depreciate other nations to appear greater in comparison with them; no, they respect, praise, and admire them, but allow one to perceive the feeling of a superiority which, to their minds, draws from that admiration a very clear evidence of the fact. They have for other nations that benevolence which Leopardi justly says is peculiar to men full of self-conceit; who, believing themselves to be admired by all, love their fancied admirers also, because they think it in keeping with that superiority with which they believe fate has favored them. There cannot have existed in the world a nation prouder of their history than the Spanish people. It is really an incredible thing. The boy who blacks your boots, the porter who carries your valise, the beggar who asks alms of you, raise their heads and send out flashes from their eyes at the name of Charles V, Philip II, Ferdinand Cortes, and Don John of Austria, as if they were heroes of their time, and they had seen them enter the

city in triumph the day before. The name of *España* is pronounced in the tone with which the Romans in the most glorious times of the republic used to pronounce the name of *Rome*. When Spain is mentioned all modesty is banished, by the most naturally modest men, without there appearing upon their faces the slightest indication of that exultation for which one condones intemperance of language. They exalt coldness from habit, without being aware of it. In the speeches in Parliament, in the newspaper articles, in the writings of the Academy, they call the Spanish people, without any periphrase, a *people of heroes*, the great nation, the marvel of the world, and the glory of centuries. It is rare to hear said or read a hundred words by any person and before any audience, without having the burden of the song become, sooner or later, Lepanto, the discovery of America, and the War of Independence, which is always followed by a burst of applause.

It is just this tradition of the War of Independence which constitutes in the Spanish people an immense inherent strength. No one who has not lived for a greater or lesser time in Spain can believe that a war, no matter how glorious or fortunate, has the power to leave in a people such a profound faith in their national valor. Baylen, Victoria, and San Marcial are more efficacious traditions for Spain than Marengo, Jena, Austerlitz for France. The same warlike glory of the armies of Napoleon, seen through the War of Independence which covered it with its first veil, seems to the eyes of the Spaniards much less splendid than to any other people in Europe. The idea of a foreign invasion gives rise in the Spaniards to a smile of disdainful scorn; they do not believe in the possibility of being con-

quered in their own country ; one ought to have heard in what a tone they spoke of Germany, when there was a rumor that Emperor William was resolved to uphold the cause of the Duke d' Aosta. And there is no doubt that, if they had to fight a new War of Independence, perhaps they would fight with less success, but with a prowess and constancy equal to the marvellous one they developed at that time ; 1808 is the '93 of Spain ; it is the date which every Spaniard keeps before his eyes written in characters of fire ; the women glory in it, so do the boys and the children who are just beginning to talk ; it is the war cry of the nation.

This same pride they have in their writers and artists. The beggar, instead of saying *España*, says to you sometimes, *the country of Cervantes*. No writer in the world ever enjoyed such popularity among his people as the author of *Don Quixote*. I believe that there is not a peasant nor a shepherd, from the Pyrenees to the Sierra Nevada, from the coast of Valencia to the hills of the Estremadura, who, on being questioned about Cervantes, would not reply with a smile :

He is the immortal author of Don Quixote.

Spain is perhaps the country where they most frequently celebrate the anniversaries of great writers ; from Juan de Mena to Espronceda ; every one has his solemn day, on which a tribute of song and flowers is laid on his tomb. In the squares, in the cafés, in the railway carriages, everywhere you hear quoted the verses of illustrious poets, by every class of people ; he who has not read it, has heard it read ; he who has not heard it read, repeats the quotation like a proverb, from having heard it from some one else ; and when one recites a verse, every

listens. Any one knowing a little of Spanish literature, may take a journey in that country with the certainty of having something to discuss and something with which to inspire sympathy, wherever he may happen to find himself. The national literature is really national there.

The defect of the Spanish which strikes the stranger from the first is this: that in estimating things, the men and events of their time and country, they make great mistakes; they enlarge every thing; see every thing as if through a lens which magnifies disproportionately the outlines. Not having had for a long time any immediate participation in the common life of Europe, they lack the opportunity of comparing themselves with other states, and of judging of themselves by comparison. For this reason their civil wars—the American, African, and Cuban—are to them, what are to us, not the little war of 1860–61 against the Papal army, or even the revolution of 1860; but the great war of the Crimea, that of 1859, and that of 1866. Of the battles, sanguinary without doubt, but not great, which illustrated the Spanish arms in those wars, they speak as do the French of Solferino, the Prussians of Sadowa, the Austrians of Custoza. Prim, Serrano, and O'Donnell are generals who cast into the shade all the most noted ones of other countries. I remember the noise made at Madrid by the victory gained by General Morriones over four or five thousand Carlists. The deputies, in the conversation-room of the Cortes, exclaimed emphatically: *Ah! Spanish blood!* Some went as far as to say that if an army of three hundred thousand Spaniards had been placed in the position of the French in 1870, they would have marched straight to Berlin. And

certainly one cannot doubt Spanish valor, which gave so many proofs of itself; but is it permissible to suppose that one can draw any comparison between routed Carlists and Prussians gathered in army corps; between soldiers of Europe, to go further, and soldiers of Africa; between great battles, where the shot destroys life by the thousand, and the encounters of ten thousand soldiers on a side, with great disparity in arms and discipline? And as they talk of wars so they speak of every thing else; not the common people alone, but cultivated persons also. They bestow extravagant praises upon their writers; they call many *grande poeta*, whose names have never been heard out of Spain; the epithets irrefragable, sublime, and marvellous are current coin, which one spends and receives without the slightest doubt as to the security. One would say that Spain looks at and judges every thing of its own rather like an American people than an European nation; and that instead of being separated from Europe by the Pyrenees it is divided by an ocean, and that an isthmus joins it to America.

Otherwise how closely they resemble us! To hear the people talk politics, seems like being in Italy; they do not discuss them, they give their decisions; they do not censure, but condemn; any subject is sufficient for a judgment, and any sign or indication suffices for the forming of an argument. This minister? He is a rascal. That one? He is a traitor. That other one? He is a hypocrite; they are all a quagmire of thieves; one has had the trees of the gardens at Aranjuez sold; the other has carried off the treasures of the Escorial; a third has emptied the coffers of state; a fourth has sold his soul for a bag of doubloons. They have no longer

any faith in the men who have been interested in politics for the last thirty years; even in the common people there exists a feeling of discouragement, so that one hears on every side such expressions as these: *Poor Spain! Unhappy country! Unfortunate Spaniards!*

But the irritation of the political passion and the fury of the internal struggles have not changed, at the bottom, the ancient Spanish character. Only that portion of society to which is given the name of the political world is corrupt; the people, though always inclined to those blind, and sometimes savage impulses of passion which betray the mixture of Arabian and Latin blood, are good, loyal, and capable of magnanimous and sublime bursts of enthusiasm. *La honra de España* is still a motto which sets all hearts beating. And then they have such frank and pleasant manners; perhaps less fine, but certainly more amiably ingenuous than those for which the French are praised. Instead of smiling at you they offer you a cigar; instead of saying something polite they press your hand, and are more hospitable in deed than in word. Nevertheless the formulas of salutation retain the old court-like imprint; the man says to the woman: "I am at your feet;" the woman says to the man: "I kiss your hand;" the men, to each other, sign their letters Q. B. S. M., *que besa sus manos*, as a servant to his master. Only friends say adieu, and the people have their affectionate salutation: *Vaya usted con Dios* (God be with you), which is worth more than all the kisses on your hand.

With the warm and expressive nature of this people, it is impossible to remain a month at Madrid without making a hundred friends, even without

seeking them, Fancy to yourself how many you could make by seeking them. This was my case. I cannot say all were real friends, but I had so many acquaintances, that it did not seem like being in a strange city. It is very easy to obtain access to the illustrious men, and, therefore, it is not necessary, as is the case elsewhere, to have a quantity of letters and messages from friends, in order to reach them. I had the honor of knowing Tamayo, Hatzembuch, Guerra, Saavedra, Valera, Rodriguez, Castelar, and many others, noted in science and letters, and I found them all alike: frank, cordial, fiery; men with white hair, but with the eyes and voices of youths of twenty; devoted to poetry, music, and painting; gay, full of gestures, and with a fresh and sonorous laugh. How many of them I saw grow pale, weep, and spring to their feet, as if touched by an electric spark, and showing all their soul in their gleaming eyes, when reading the verses of Quintana or Espronceda! What youthful souls! What ardent hearts! How much I enjoyed (in seeing and hearing them) belonging to this poor Latin race, of which we now say so many disagreeable things; and how much I was cheered in thinking that we are all, more or less, cast in the same mould, and that, although we may become accustomed, little by little, to envying the character of others, we shall never quite succeed in losing our own individuality.

After more than three months' sojourn in Madrid, I was obliged to leave, in order not to be overtaken by summer in the south of Spain. I shall always remember that beautiful morning in May, when I quitted, forever perhaps, my dear Madrid. I left to go and see Andalusia, the promised land of travellers, the fantastic Andalusia, of which I had so often

heard the marvels besung in Italy and Spain, by romancers and poets; that Andalusia for which I may say I undertook the journey; yet I was sad. I had passed so many charming days at Madrid! I left so many dear friends there! On my way to the station I traversed the street of Alcalà, saluted from afar the gardens of the Recoletos, passed before the palace of the Museum of Painting, stopped to look once more at the statue of Murillo, and reached the station with a sinking heart. Three months? I asked myself, a few moments before the train started: Have three months passed already? Has it not been a dream? Yes; it seems as if I had dreamed it! Perhaps I shall never see again my good landlady, nor the little girl of Señor Saavedra, nor the sweet, calm face of Guerra, nor my friends of the Café Fornos, nor any one else! But what nonsense! Can I not return? Return! Oh, no! I know full well that I shall never return! So, then, farewell, my friends! Farewell, Madrid! Farewell, my little room in the street of Alduana! It seems as if a heart-string were snapping, and I feel the necessity of hiding my face.





CHAPTER VI.

ARANJUEZ.

AS in arriving at Madrid, from the north, so in leaving it by the south, one passes through an uninhabited country, which reminds one of the poorest provinces of Arragon and Old Castile. There are vast, dry, and yellowish plains, in which it seems as if the earth, on being rapped on, ought to resound like a vault, or crumble like the crust of a crisp tart; and a few miserable villages of the same color as the soil, which look as if they might ignite like a pile of withered leaves, should one apply a match to the corner of a house. After an hour's travel, my shoulders sought the back of the carriage, my elbow a resting-place, my head reclined in my hand, and I fell into a profound dose, like a member of Leopardi's *Ateneo d'Ascoltazione*. A few moments after, closing my eyes, I was roused by a cry of desperation from the women and boys, and I sprang to my feet, asking my neighbors what had happened. Before my question was finished, however, a general laugh reassured me. A troop of huntsmen, scattered over the country, on seeing the train arrive, had planned to give the travellers a little fright. In those days they talked of the appearance of a band of Carlists in the vicinity of Aranjuez: the huntsmen (pretending to be the ad-

vance guard of the band), while the train was passing, had given a great shout, as if to call their companions, and while shouting, they had made believe to fire at the railway carriages; this was the cause of the fright and cries of my travelling companions; and then these men had suddenly kicked their guns into the air, to show that it had all been a joke. When the little fright had passed (from which I, too, suffered slightly), I fell into my academic dose again; but was aroused once more, a few moments later, in a manner decidedly more agreeable than before.

I looked around: the vast deserted plain was transformed, as if by magic, into an immense garden filled with graceful shrubbery, traversed in every direction by broad avenues, scattered with little country houses and huts enwreathed in verdure. Here and there were fountains playing, shady nooks, flowery fields, vineyards, small pathways, and a greenness, a freshness, a spring-time odor, and an air of gaiety and pleasure which was quite enchanting. We had arrived at Aranjuez. I got out of the train, made my way through a beautiful avenue, shaded by two rows of gigantic trees, and found myself, after a few steps, opposite the royal palace.

The minister Castelar wrote a few days ago in his memorandum that the fall of the ancient Spanish monarchy was predestined on the day when a crowd of people, with abuse on their lips and hatred in their hearts, invaded the palace of Aranjuez to disturb the tranquil majesty of their sovereigns. I was just on that square where, on the 17th March, 1808, the events took place which were the prologue of the national war, and, as it were, the first word of the sentence which condemned to death that ancient