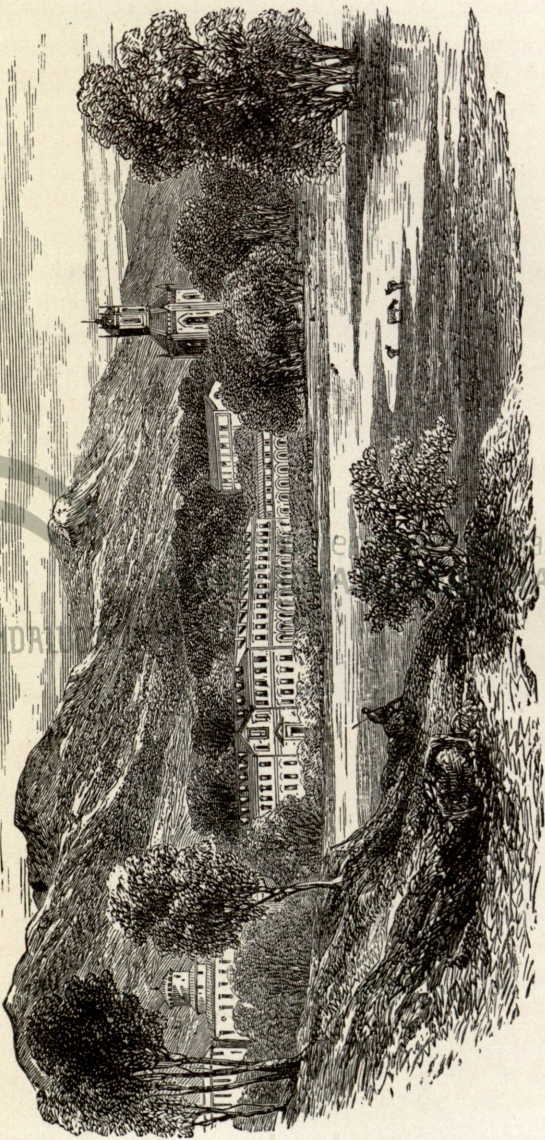


monarchy. I instantly sought with my eyes for the windows of the apartment of the Prince of Peace; I pictured him to myself as he fled from room to room, pale and dishevelled, in search of a hiding-place, followed by the shouts of the multitude which was climbing the stairs; I saw poor Charles IV place, with trembling hands, the crown of Spain on the head of the Prince of the Asturias; all the scenes of that terrible drama presented themselves before my eyes; and the profound silence of the place, and the sight of that closed and abandoned palace, chilled me to the heart.

The palace, which is in the form of a castle, is built of brick, with trimmings of white marble, and covered with a slate roof. Every one knows that Philip II had it constructed by the celebrated architect Herrera, and that nearly all the succeeding kings embellished it, and resided there during the summer season. I entered; the interior is superb; there is a huge room for the reception of the ambassadors, a beautiful Chinese cabinet of Charles III, a pretty dressing-room of Isabella II, and a profusion of most precious objects of ornament. But all the riches of the palace do not compare with the view of the gardens. Anticipation is realized. The gardens of Aranjuez (Aranjuez is the name of the small city which lies at a short distance from the palace) seem to have been laid out for the family of a Titanic king, to whom the parks and gardens of our kings must appear like terrace flower-beds or stable-yards. There are avenues, as far as the eye can reach, flanked by immensely high trees, whose branches interlace (as if bent by two contrary winds), which traverse in every direction a forest whose boundaries one cannot see; and through this forest the broad



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JUNTA DE ANDRÉS

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abode, through those long avenues, under the shade of those measureless trees, and in the profound silence of the forest, I thought of the superb processions of ladies and cavaliers who one day used to roam there behind the wild young monarchs or the capricious and insensate queens, to the sound of amorous music or the songs which told of the grandeur and glory of unvanquished Spain; and I repeated with a feeling of melancholy the words of the poet of Recanati (Leopardi):

“All is peace and silence,
And those who are gone are never named.”

Yet, in looking at certain marble seats half hidden by the shrubbery, fastening my eyes upon distant walks, and thinking of those queens, those loves and follies, I could not suppress a sigh, which was not one of pity; and a secret feeling of bitterness stole into my heart, as I said, with poor Adam in the *Diablo Mundo*: “How are these great ladies made? How do they live? What do they do? Do they talk, love, and enjoy as we do?” And I left for Toledo, imagining what the love of a queen might be, just like a young adventurer of the *Thousand and One Nights*.





CHAPTER VII.

TOLEDO.

IN approaching an unknown city, one ought to be near some who has already seen it, and who can warn one when it is the proper moment to put one's head out of the window and catch the first view of it. I had the good fortune to be warned in time. Some one said to me: "There is Toledo!" so I sprang to the window, uttering an exclamation of surprise.

Toledo rises on a steep and rocky height, at the foot of which the Tagus describes a majestic curve. From the plain nothing is seen but the rocks and walls of the fortress, and beyond the walls the points of the bell towers and steeples. The houses are hidden; the city seems closed and inaccessible, and presents rather the aspect of an abandoned rock than that of a city. From the walls to the bank of the river, there is not a house nor a tree; every thing is bare, dry, shaggy, and steep; not a living creature is to be seen; you would say that to reach it you would be obliged to clamber up, and it seems to you that at the appearance of a man upon those precipices a shower of arrows would fall upon you. You leave the train, get into a carriage, and arrive at the opening of the bridge. It is the famous bridge of Alcantara, which crosses the Tagus, sur-

mounted by an Arabian gate in the form of a tower, which gives it a bold and severe aspect. After passing the bridge, you find yourself in a broad street that winds up to the top of the mountain. Here you really seem to be under a stronghold of the middle ages, and to find yourself in the shoes of an Arab, Goth, or a soldier of Alpoznzo VI. On all sides you see precipitous rocks, stone walls, towers, and the ruins of old bastions overhanging your head; and farther up, the last boundary wall of the city, which is black, crowned with enormous battlements, and opened here and there by great breaches, behind which appear the imprisoned houses; as you climb higher and higher, the city seems to shrink back and hide itself. Half way up the ascent, you reach the *Puerta del Sol*, a gem of Arabian architecture, composed of two embattled towers, that unite above a very graceful double-arched portico, under which the whole road passes. Beyond, if you turn back, you look down on the Tagus, the plain, and the hills. Pass onward, and you find other walls and ruins, and finally reach the first houses of the city.

What a city! At the first moment my breath was taken away. The carriage had passed through a street so narrow that the hubs of the wheels almost touched the walls of the houses.

"Why do you go this way?" I asked of the driver.

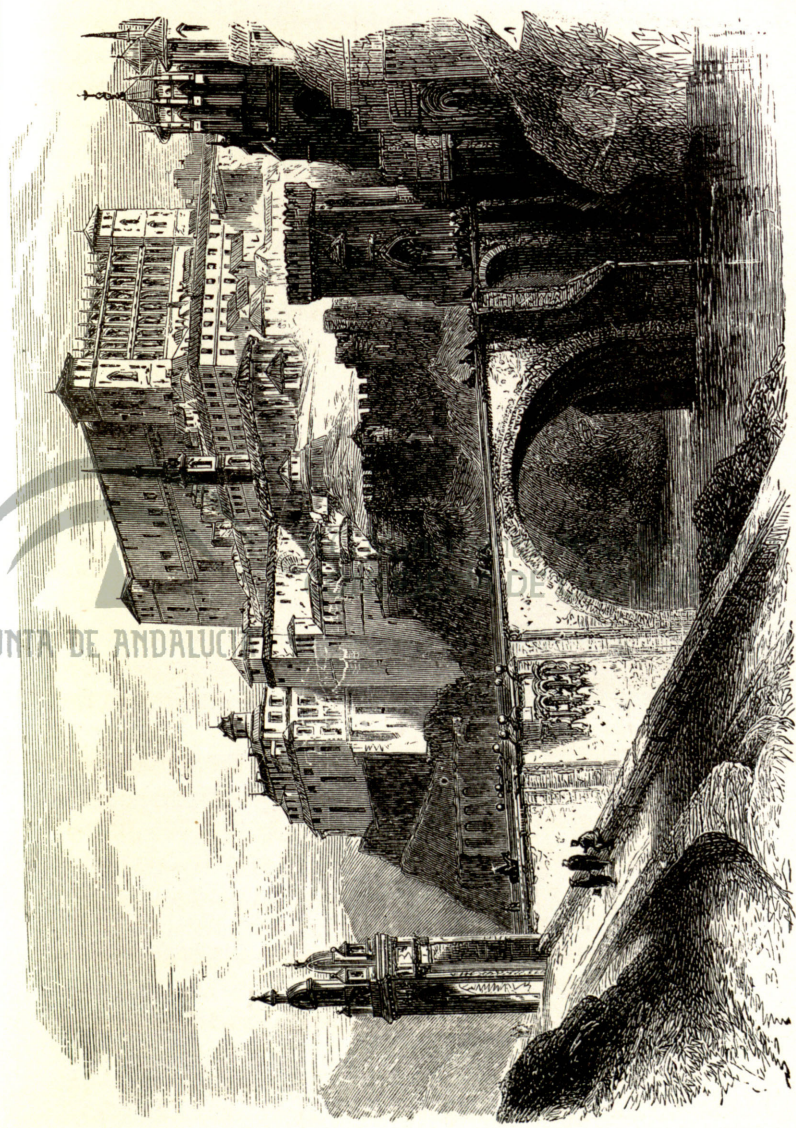
The coachman began to laugh and replied:

"Because there is no broader street."

"Oh! is all Toledo built like this?" I asked again.

"Yes, it is all built like this," he replied.

"It is impossible!" I exclaimed.



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TOLEDO.

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"You will see," he added.

In truth I did not believe it. I stopped at the hotel, threw my valise into a room, and rushed down stairs to go out and see this very strange city. A hotel employé stopped me at the door and asked, smilingly :

"Where are you going, caballero?"

"To see Toledo," I replied.

"Alone?"

"Certainly; why not?"

"But have you been here before?"

"Never."

"Then you can not go alone."

"Why not?"

"Because you will lose your way."

"Where?"

"As soon as you leave the house."

"For what reason?"

"The reason is this," he replied, pointing toward a wall, to which was fastened a plan of Toledo. I approached, and saw a confusion of white lines on a black ground, which seemed like one of those flourishes which children make on a slate to use up their chalk, and annoy their teacher.

"No matter," I said; "I wish to go alone; and if I am lost, some one will find me."

"You will not go a hundred paces," observed the man.

I went out, and passed through the first street, so narrow, that in stretching out my arms, I touched both the walls. After taking fifty steps, I found myself in another street, narrower than the first, and from this one I entered a third, and so on in this way. I seemed to be roaming, not through the streets of a city, but through the passages of a build-

ing ; and I went on with the idea of coming out, from one moment to another, on to an open space. It is impossible, I thought, that a city can be built in this way ; one could not live here. But as I proceeded, it seemed as if the streets grew narrower and shorter ; every moment I was obliged to turn ; after a curved street, came one that was zig-zag ; after this another, in the shape of a hook, which led me back into the first ; and so I wandered for some time among the same houses. From time to time, I came out into a cross-road of several alleys that ran off in opposite directions, one of which was lost in the darkness of a portico, another ended, after a few paces, at the wall of a house, a third seemed to descend into the bowels of the earth, and a fourth climbed up a steep ascent ; others were hardly broad enough to allow the passage of a man ; others were squeezed in between the walls, without doors or windows ; all were flanked by buildings of great height, which barely allowed a narrow streak of the sky to be seen between the roofs ; and had windows, with iron gratings, great doors, studded with enormous nails, and dark and narrow courts. I walked for some time without meeting any one, until I emerged upon one of the principal streets, all lined with shops, and filled with peasants, women and boys ; but which was little broader than an ordinary hallway. Every thing is in proportion with the street : the doors look like windows, the shops like niches, and one sees all the secrets of the house : the table, which is laid ; the children who are in the cradle ; the mother, who is combing her hair ; and the father, who is changing his shirt. Every thing is on the street, so that one does not seem to be in a city, but rather in a house inhabited by one large family.

I turn into a less frequented street, and nothing is to be heard but the buzzing of a fly. My step resounds up to the fourth floor of the buildings, and some old women appear at the window. A horse passes; it seems as if a squadron were going by; and every one rushes to see what is happening. The slightest noise echoes on every side; a book falls in a room on the second floor; an old man coughs in a court-yard; a woman is using her handkerchief, I do not know where; and everything is heard. At some points all sound ceases suddenly; you are alone, and no longer see any signs of life; there are houses of witches; cross-roads suitable for conspiracies; alleys for betrayal; blind alleys, which seem made for crime; windows for the conversations of infamous lovers; and dark doors, that give rise to the suspicion of staircases stained with blood. Yet in all this labyrinth of streets there are no two alike; each one has something peculiar about it; here there is an arch, there a little column, and farther on a bit of sculpture. Toledo is an emporium for art treasures; whenever the walls peel a little, records of all centuries are discovered, such as bas-reliefs, arabesques, Moorish windows and statuettes. The palaces have doors furnished with plates of chased metal, historical knockers, nails with chiselled heads, coats of arms and emblems; and these form a fine contrast to the modern houses, painted in garlands, medallions, cupids, urns, and fantastic animals. Still these embellishments take nothing from the severe aspect of Toledo. Wherever you turn your eyes, there is something which reminds you of the fortified city of the Arabs. Though your imagination may not be an active one, it will succeed in recompensing, with the traces left here and

there, all the design of the cancelled picture, and then the illusion is complete; you see the great Toledo of the middle ages, and forget the solitude and silence of its streets. It is an illusion that lasts a few moments; after which you fall back into your sad meditations, and no longer see the skeleton of the ancient city, the necropolis of three empires, and the great sepulchre of the glory of three nations. Toledo reminds you of the dreams which come to youths after reading romantic legends of the mediæval ages. You have probably seen many times, in dreams, dark cities, surrounded by deep ditches, very high walls, and inaccessible rocks; and have passed over those drawbridges, have entered those moss-grown and tortuous streets, and have breathed that damp, tomb-like, and prison-like air. Very well, you have dreamed of Toledo.

The first thing to see, after having taken a general view of the city, is the cathedral, which is very justly considered one of the most beautiful in the world. The history of this cathedral, according to popular tradition, goes back to the times of the Apostle Santiago, the first bishop of Toledo, who is said to have designated the place where it was built; but the construction of the edifice, just as it stands to-day, was begun in 1227, under the reign of San Fernando, and terminated after two hundred and fifty years of almost continuous labor. The external appearance of this immense church is neither rich nor beautiful, like that of the Cathedral of Burgos. In front of the façade is a small square, and it is the only point from which one can take in with a glance a large portion of the edifice; all around it runs a street, from which, no matter how much one may twist his neck, nothing can be seen but the high

boundary wall that encloses the church like a fortress. The façade has three great doors, called *Pardon*, *Inferno*, and *Justice*; and is flanked by a strong tower, which ends in a beautiful octagonal-shaped cupola. No matter how immense you may have found the building in walking around it, you experience a feeling of intense surprise upon first entering it; and, immediately thereafter, one of keen pleasure, which comes from that freshness, quiet, lonely shade, and a mysterious light that, falling through the colored glass of the innumerable windows, is broken into a thousand blue, yellow, and roseate rays which steal here and there along the arches and columns like the stripes of the rainbow. The church is formed of five great naves divided by eighty-eight enormous pilasters, each one composed of sixteen turned columns, which are as close together as a bundle of lances; a sixth nave cuts these five at a right angle, passing between the high altar and the choir; and the ceiling of the principal nave rises majestically above the others, which seem to bow as if rendering it homage. The variegated light and the clear color of the stone give the church the air of subdued joy that tempers the melancholy aspect of the Gothic architecture, without taking from its pensive and austere gravity. In passing from the streets of the city among the naves of that cathedral, is like passing from a dungeon to a square. One looks about him, breathes again, and feels life returning.

The high altar, should one wish to examine it minutely, would require quite as much time as the entire church. It is a church in itself, a confusion of little columns, statuettes, leaves, and variegated ornaments, which project along the corners, rise above

the architraves, wind around the niches, support one another, accumulate, and hide themselves, presenting on every side a thousand profiles, groups, foreshortenings, gildings, colors, and every variety of artificial lightness, so that they present all together an appearance full of majesty and grace. In front of the high altar is the choir, divided into three rows of seats marvellously sculptured by Philip of Bourgoigne and Berruguete, with bas-reliefs representing historical, allegorical, and sacred incidents, and it is considered one of the most noteworthy monuments of the art. In the centre, in the form of a throne, is the seat of the archbishop ; all around is a circle of enormous jasper columns ; on the architraves are colossal statues of alabaster ; and, on the two sides, are enormous bronze pulpits, upon which are gigantic missals, and two immense organs (one in front of the altar), from which it seems as if a torrent of sound, sufficient to make the roof tremble, might burst forth at any moment.

The pleasure of admiration in these great cathedrals is almost always disturbed by the importunate guides who wish you to amuse yourself in their own particular way. Unfortunately, I had the conviction forced upon me that the Spanish guides are the most obstinate of the race. When one of them has made up his mind that you are to pass the day with him, the matter is settled. You may shrug your shoulders, refuse to answer him, let him get out of breath without turning your face toward him, wander around on your own account as if you had not seen him ; it is all the same. In a moment of enthusiasm, before a picture or a statue, some word, gesture, or smile escapes you ; it is quite sufficient ; you are bound, you are his property, you are the prey of

this implacable human *pieuvre*, which, like that of Victor Hugo, does not leave its victim until it has cut off its head. While I stood looking at the statues in the choir, I saw one of these *pieuvres* out of the corner of my eye. He was a wretched old creature, who approached me slowly and sidewise, like a cutthroat, looking at me all the time with the air of a man who is saying: "You are there." I continued to look at the statues; the old man came to my side and began looking too; then, suddenly, he asked:

"Do you wish me to accompany you?"

"No," I replied, "I do not need your services."

Then he said, without the slightest discomposure:

"Do you know who Elpidius was?"

The question was so strange that I could not help asking in my turn:

"Who was he?"

"Elpidius was the second bishop of Toledo."

"Well, what about him?"

"It was the Bishop Elpidius who conceived the idea of consecrating this church to the Virgin, which is the reason why the Virgin came to visit the church."

"Ah, how is that known?"

"How is that known? Why, you see it!"

"Do you mean to say that it has been seen?"

"I mean to say that it is still to be seen; be kind enough to come with me."

Saying which he moved on, and I, very curious to know what this visible proof of the descent of the Virgin could be, followed him. We stopped before a species of tabernacle near one of the great

pilasters in the middle nave. The guide showed me a white stone set into the wall, covered with a wire netting, around which was the following inscription:

“ Quando la reina del cielo
Puso los pies en el suelo
En esta piedra los puso.”

“ So,” I asked, “ the holy Virgin really placed her foot upon this stone ? ”

“ Yes, really upon this stone,” he replied, and passing his finger through the net-work and touching the stone, he kissed his finger, made a sign of the cross, and made a sign to me, as if to say :

“ It is your turn.”

“ My turn ? ” I replied ; “ oh, forsooth, my good friend, I really cannot do it.”

“ Why ? ”

“ Because I do not consider myself worthy of touching that divine stone.”

The guide understood, and looking fixedly at me, asked :

“ You do not believe, sir ? ”

I looked at the pilaster. Then the old man made me a sign to follow him, and moved off toward a corner of the church, murmuring with an air of sadness ;

“ *Cadauno es dueño de su alma* ” (every one is master of his own soul).

A young priest who was near by, cast a sharp glance at me, and muttering something I could not hear, withdrew in a different direction.

The chapels are in keeping with such a church ; almost all of them contain some fine monuments. In the chapel of St. Jago, behind the high altar, are two magnificent alabaster tombs, which hold the remains

of the constable, Alvaro di Luna, and his wife. In the chapel of St. Idelphonso is the tomb of the Cardinal Gil Carillo di Alborno. In the chapel of *los Reyes nuevos* are the tombs of Henry II, John II, and Henry III. In the chapel of the shrine, there is a superb collection of statues and busts in marble, silver, ivory, and gold, together with numerous crosses and relics of inestimable value, the remains of St. Leucadia and St. Eugenia enclosed in two finely-chased silver caskets.

The *Mozarabe* chapel, which corresponds with the tower of the church, and was built to perpetuate the tradition of the primitive Christian rite, is, perhaps, the most noteworthy of all. One of the walls is entirely covered with a Gothic fresco, representing a battle between the Moors and Toledans, which has been most marvellously preserved even to the finest shadings. It is a painting which is worth a volume of history. One sees the Toledo of those times, with all its walls and houses, the uniforms of the two armies, the weapons, faces,—every thing, in fact, has been depicted with a wonderful fidelity and unusual beauty of coloring, that corresponds perfectly with the vague, uncertain idea which we form of those centuries and people. There are two other frescoes, on either side of the first, representing two ships that are conveying the Arabs into Spain, and these also contain a thousand minute details of the mediæval navy, and that air, if I may so express myself, of those times, which makes one think of and see numberless things not represented in the picture, just as one is reminded of distant music in looking at a landscape.

After seeing the chapels, you visit the sacristy, in which there is a sufficient accumulation

of riches to replenish completely the exchequer of Spain. There is, among others, an immense room, on the ceiling of which is a fresco by Luca Giordano, representing a vision of Paradise, with myriads of angels, saints, and allegorical figures, which sweep through the air, or stand out in a thousand such bold and surprising attitudes, and foreshortenings, that they seem to have been chiselled, and to project beyond the cornice of the walls. The guide, pointing to that *prodigio de imaginacion y de trabajo*, which, in the opinion of all artists, is—to make use of a very curious Spanish expression—of an *atrocious merit*, suggests that you look attentively at the ray of light which is falling from the middle of the ceiling toward the walls. You look, and take, while looking at it, a turn around the room, yet no matter where you may be, it seems as if that ray were falling directly upon your head. From this room you pass into one which is also admirably frescoed by the nephew of Berruguete, and from this into a third, where a sacristan displays to you the treasures of the cathedral. There are the enormous silver candlesticks, the pyxes, gleaming with rubies, the ostensoriums, studded with diamonds, the vestments of damask, embroidered in gold, and the robes of the Virgin, covered with arabesques, flowers, and stars of pearls, which, at every movement of the material, sent out rays and gleams of a thousand colors, that the eye can scarcely bear. An hour hardly suffices for the hasty inspection of these treasures, which would certainly satisfy the ambition of ten queens, and enrich the altars of ten basilicas. When the sacristan, after showing you every thing, seeks in your eyes for an expression of surprise, he only finds that of stupefied astonish-

ment, which tells that your imagination is wandering elsewhere,—in the fabulous palaces of the Arabian legends, where the beneficent genii accumulated all the riches dreamed of by the ardent fancy of enamored sultans.

It was the eve of *Corpus Domini*, and the robes for the procession were being prepared in the sacristy. There can be nothing more distasteful, and out of keeping with the quiet and noble majesty of the church, than that theatre-like bustle, which is always seen on such occasions. It really seems like being behind the scenes on the evening of a dress rehearsal. From another room of the sacristy, a crowd of half-dressed boys kept coming and going with a tremendous racket, carrying armfuls of shirts, stoles, and capes. Here there was a sacristan in bad humor, who was opening and slamming the doors of a wardrobe; there, a priest quite red in the face calling in an angry voice to a boy who did not hear him; other priests were running through the room with half their vestments on and half of them dragging; some were laughing, some were shouting, some screaming from one room to another, at the top of their lungs; and everywhere one heard the rustling of petticoats, or labored breathing, and an indescribable tramping and stamping.

I went to see the cloister; but as the church door which leads to it was open, I saw it before entering. In the middle of the church one catches a glimpse of a portion of the cloister garden, a group of great shade trees, a grove, and a mass of luxuriant verdure, that seems to shut in the door, and looks as if it were framed under an elegant arch, and between two slender columns of the portico,

which runs all around it. It is a delicious view, that reminds one of oriental gardens, seen between the columns of the mosques. The cloister is large, is surrounded by a portico, both graceful and severe in style, and the walls are covered with frescoes. Here the guide advised me to rest, before climbing the bell tower. I leaned against an old wall, under the shade of a tree, and remained there until I felt strong enough for another expedition. Meanwhile, my guide held forth to me on the glories of Toledo, and carried the impudence of the love of country so far as to call it *a great commercial city*, which could buy out Barcelona and Valencia, and a city so well fortified as to wear out, were it necessary, ten German armies and a thousand batteries of Krupp's cannon. At every one of his boasts I kept urging him on, and the good man enjoyed himself immensely. How much amusement one can obtain in making these people talk! Finally, when the proud Toledan felt himself so puffed up with glory that the cloister could no longer contain him, he said, "We can go now;" and he moved off toward the door of the bell tower.

When we had climbed half-way up, we stopped to take breath. The guide knocked at a little door, and a presumptuous little sacristan appeared and opened another door leading into a corridor, where I saw a group of gigantic puppets most curiously dressed. Four of these (so the guide told me) represented Europe, Asia, America, and Africa, and two others, Faith and Religion. They were made so that a man could conceal himself in them and raise them from the ground.

"They are taken out," added the sacristan, "on royal fête days, and are carried about the city."

Then, wishing to show me the *modus operandi*, he got under the petticoats of Asia. Next he led me to a corner where there was an enormous monster, which, touched at some point, extended a very long neck and a horrible head, with deafening noise. He could not tell me, however, what that horrible creature meant, and begged me to admire instead, the marvellous Spanish imagination, which created *so many new things* that it could furnish them to all the known world. I admired, paid, and continued the ascent with my Toledan *pieuvre*. From the top of the bell tower one enjoys a magnificent view of the city, the hills, the river, and an immense horizon; and below, that great pile, the cathedral, which looks like a mountain of granite. There is, however, another height, at a short distance from which one sees everything better; and, therefore, I remained but a few moments on the tower, because the sun was so strong that all the colors of the city and country were bathed in an ocean of light.

After seeing the cathedral, my guide took me to the famous church of *San Juan de los Reyes*, situated on the banks of the Tagus. My mind is still confused when I think of the twists and turns we were obliged to make in order to reach it. It was mid-day; the streets were deserted; little by little, as we went farther and farther away from the heart of the city, the solitude became more intense. Not an open door or window was to be seen, nor was the slightest noise to be heard. At one time I fancied that the guide was in league with some assassin to decoy me into a quiet place in order to rob me; for he certainly had a suspicious-looking face, and, added to this, he kept glancing here and there with the air of a man who is meditating a crime.

"Have we much farther to go?" I asked, from time to time, and he always replied; "it is right here," but we never reached it. At a certain point my anxiety changed to fear: in a tortuous little street a door opened, two bearded men came out, made a sign to the *pieuvre*, and came behind us. I thought my hour had arrived. There was only one means of escape; and that was to give a blow to the guide, throw him down, pass over his body, and take to my heels. But which way should I go? On the other hand, the extravagant praise which Thiers lavishes on the *jambes Espagnoles* in his "History of the War of the Independence" came to my mind; and I thought that flight would only be an expedient which would enable my enemy to plant his dagger in my back instead of my heart. Ah, me! Was I to die without seeing Andalusia! To die after having taken so many notes, after having given so many *pour boires*, to die with my pockets full of letters of introduction, my purse filled with doubloons, my passport with so many signatures, to die through betrayal! As good fortune willed it, the two bearded men disappeared at the first turn of the street, and I was saved. Then, filled with repentance at having suspected that this poor old man was capable of crime, I moved on to his left side, offered him a cigar, told him that Toledo was worth two Romes, and paid him a thousand compliments. Finally we reached *San Juan de los Reyes*.

It is a church which looks like a royal palace. The highest portion is covered by a terrace surrounded with a perforated and sculptured parapet, upon which rises a number of statues of kings, and in the centre is a beautiful hexagon-shaped cupola that completes the perfect harmony of the church. From the walls

hang long iron chains that were taken from the Christian prisoners after the conquest of Granada, and which, together with the dark color of the stone, give to the church a severe yet picturesque appearance. We entered, crossed two or three great bare rooms without any pavement, filled with piles of earth and debris, climbed a staircase, and came out on a high tribune inside the church, which is one of the most beautiful and noble monuments of Gothic art. It is a single, great nave, divided into four ceilings, whose arches cross under rich roses. The pilasters are covered with garlands and arabesques; the walls ornamented with a profusion of bas-reliefs, with enormous shields from the arms of Castile and Arragon, eagles, chimeras, heraldic animals, leaves, and emblematical inscriptions. The tribune, which is perforated and sculptured with richness and elegance, runs all around; the choir is supported by a very bold arch; the color of the stone is light-gray, and every thing is admirably finished, and still intact, as if the church had been built a few years since, instead of at the end of the fifteenth century.

We went from the church down into the cloister, which is a marvel of architecture and sculpture. There are slender and lovely columns that might be broken in two by the blow of a marble hammer, resembling the trunks of young trees, that sustain the capitals overladen with statuettes and ornaments, from which project (like curved boughs) arches ornamented with flowers, birds, grotesque animals, and every kind of freize. The walls are covered with inscriptions in Gothic characters, mingled with leaves and very delicate arabesques. No matter where one looks, one finds grace and richness combined with a harmony that is bewitching; in an equal

space, one could not collect, with more exquisite art, a greater number of lovely and beautiful things. It is a luxurious garden of sculpture, a great room decorated with embroideries, quiltings, and brocades in marble, a grand monument, majestic as a temple, magnificent as a royal palace, delicate as a plaything, and graceful as a bunch of flowers.

After the cloister, one must see the picture-gallery, which only contains some pictures of little value ; and then the convent, with its long corridors, narrow staircases, empty cells, falling into decay in some places, and quite in ruins in others, and everywhere as bare and squalid in appearance as a building after a fire.

At a short distance from *San Juan de los Reyes*, there is another monument worthy of being seen ; a curious record of the Judiac epoch ; the synagogue now designated by the name of *Santa Maria Blanca*. One enters a neglected garden, knocks at the door of a wretched-looking house, the door opens and one experiences a pleasant feeling of surprise, and beholds a vision of the East, the sudden revelation of another religion and another world. There are five narrow naves, divided by four long rows of little octagonal pilasters, which support as many Turkish arches upheld by capitals of stucco in different forms ; the ceiling is of cedarwood, divided into compartments of equal size ; here and there on the walls are arabesques and Arabic inscriptions ; the light which falls from above making every thing white. The synagogue was changed by the Arabs into a mosque, and the mosque was transformed by the Christians into a church ; so that it is really not one of these three things at present, though it preserves the character of the mosque, and the eye

sweeps over it with delight, and the imagination follows from arch to arch the fleeting images of a voluptuous paradise.

Having seen Santa Maria la Blanca, I felt too weary to look at any thing else, and repulsing all the tempting proposals of the guide, I ordered him to take me back to the hotel. After a long walk through a labyrinth of solitary little streets, we reached it. I put a *peceta* and a half in the hand of my innocent assassin, who found the sum a small one, and asked me for (how I laughed at the word) a small *gratification*; and I entered the dining-room to eat a cutlet, or *chuleta*, as the Spanish call it, a name which would make people turn up their noses in some provinces of Italy.

Toward evening I went to see the Alcazar. The name makes one hope for an Arabian palace; but there is nothing Arabian about it except its name; the edifice which one admires to-day was built under the reign of Charles V, on the ruins of a castle, which existed in the eighth century, although only very vague indications of the fact are to be found in the chronicles of that period. This building stands on a height in the centre of the city, so that its walls and towers can be seen from all the higher portions of the street, and the stranger may use it as a guide out of the labyrinth. I climbed to the height by a long winding street, like the one which leads from the plain to the city, and found myself before the door of the Alcazar. It is an immense square palace, at whose corners rise four great towers which give it the formidable appearance of a fortress. Before the façade extends a large square, and all around it a belt of embattled bulwarks in the oriental style. The entire edifice is of a decided chalk color, varied with

a thousand shadings by that powerful painter of monuments, the blazing sun of the south; and is rendered brighter by the very limpid sky, upon which the majestic outlines of its walls stand out in bold relief. The façade is sculptured in arabesques with a taste full of nobility and elegance. The interior of the palace corresponds with the exterior; there is an immense court, encircled with two rows of graceful arches, one above the other, which are supported by light columns; with a magnificent marble staircase, that rises in the centre of the side opposite the door, and is divided, at a short distance from the ground, into two parts, which lead, on the right and left, to the interior of the palace. In order to enjoy the beauty of the court, one must go to the point where the staircase branches off, for there one embraces with a glance the whole harmony of the building which causes a feeling of pleasure like concerted music produced by scattered and unseen artists.

With the exception of the court, the other portions of the edifice, such as the staircase, rooms, corridors, and every thing, in fact, are already in ruins, or falling into decay. Now they are at work on the palace changing it into a military college. The walls are being whitened; the walls are torn down to make great dormitories; the doors numbered; and this royal dwelling is being converted into a barracks. The subterranean portions, however, which served as stables for Charles V, and which can hold thousands of horses, are still intact. The guide made me look out of a window, from which I saw an abyss that gave me an idea of their vastness. Then we climbed a series of rickety stairs, into one of the four towers; the guide

opened, with pincers and a hammer, a nailed-up window, and said to me, with the air of a man who is announcing something marvellous :

“ Look, sir ! ”

It was a stupendous panorama. One gets a bird's-eye view of the city of Toledo, street by street, house by house, as one would see the plan stretched out upon a table. Here is the cathedral, which rises above the city like an immense castle, and makes all the surrounding edifices look as small as play-houses ; there, the terrace (covered with statues) of San Juan de los Reyes ; in another point the embattled towers of the new-gate ; the bull circus ; the Tagus, that flows at the foot of the city, between the rocky banks ; beyond the river, near the bridge of Alcantara, on a steep rock, are the ruins of the old castle of San Servando. Farther away lies a green plain, and beyond are rocks, hills, and mountains, as far as the eye can reach. Above, is the clear sky, and the setting sun, which gilds the tops of the old buildings, and makes the river gleam like a silver scarf.

While I was contemplating that magical spectacle, the guide, who had read the history of Toledo, and wished to make the fact known, related every sort of story to me, in that half poetical, half facetious way, which is peculiar to the southern Spaniard. First of all, he wished me to hear the history of the works of fortification ; and although where he declared that he saw quite distinctly all that he was pointing out to me, I saw nothing, I succeeded in understanding something about it.

He told me that Toledo had been encircled with walls three times, and that one could still clearly see the traces of all three boundaries.

"Look," he said; "follow the line which my finger describes: that is the Roman boundary, the closest, and one can see its ruins yet, Now, look further on. That other, broader still, is the Gothic boundary. Then describe a curve with your eyes, which will take in the two; that is the Arabian boundary, the most recent of them all. The Arabs built a narrow boundary on the ruins of the old one; that you certainly can see. Now observe the direction of the streets which converge toward the highest portion of the city; follow the line of the roofs, like this: you will see that all the streets ascend zig-zag; and were laid out thus on purpose to defend the city even after the walls were destroyed; and the houses were built thus close to one another, so that people could leap from roof to roof, you see. The Arabs left a writing to this effect, and this is the reason why the gentlemen from Madrid make me laugh when they come here and say: 'Pah! what streets!' It is plain to be seen that they do not know the first thing about history; if they knew a little more about it; if they would read a trifle instead of passing their days at the Prado and Recoletos, they would understand that there is a reason for the narrow streets of Toledo, and that it is not a city for ignorant people."

I began to laugh.

"You do not believe me?" continued the guide; "it is an absolute fact. Not one week ago, to cite a case, one of these Madrid dandies came here with his wife. Even when they were mounting the steps they began saying all sorts of things of the city and its narrow streets and dark houses. When they stood at this window, and saw those two old towers down there on the plain, on the left bank of the

Tagus, they asked me what they were, and I replied: '*Los palacios de Galiana.*' 'Oh, what beautiful palaces!' they exclaimed, beginning to laugh, and looking in another direction. Why did they do it? Why, because they did not know their history; and I do not believe that you know it either; but then you are a stranger, and that is another matter. You must know that when the great Emperor Charlemagne was very young, he came to Toledo. King Galafro, who was reigning then, lived in that palace. This king had a daughter called Galiana, who was as beautiful as an angel; and as Charlemagne was the king's guest and saw the princess every day, he fell desperately in love with her, she reciprocating his affection. However, there was a rival, and this rival was none other than the King of Guadalajara, a gigantic Moor of herculean strength, and as courageous as a lion. This king, in order to see the princess without being discovered, had had a subterranean passage opened that led from the city of Guadalajara to the foundation of the palace. But what did this avail? The princess could not bear the sight of him, even in miniature, and as many times as he came just so many times did she send him back disconsolate. This, however, did not prevent the enamored king from paying her court, and, in fact, he hung around her so much that at last Charlemagne, who was not a man to submit to this sort of thing, lost his patience, as you may well imagine, and in order to put an end to the matter, challenged him. They fought; the struggle was terrible; but the Moor, although he was a giant, got the worst of it. When he was dead, Charlemagne cut off his head, and went and laid it at the feet of his inamorata, who appreciated the delicacy of the

offering, became a Christian, gave her hand to the prince, and left with him for France ; there she was proclaimed empress."

"And the head of the Moor, what became of that?"

"Oh, you are laughing at me, but I assure you this is a solemn fact. Do you see that old building in the highest part of the city? It is the church of San Ginés. Would you like to know what is in it? Well, nothing more or less than the door of a subterranean passage which extends to the distance of three leagues from Toledo. You do not believe it; well, listen: On the spot where the church of San Ginés stands, there was once, before the Arabs invaded Spain, an enchanted palace. No king had ever had the courage to enter it; those who might have dared do it, did not, however, because, according to the tradition, the first one who passed the portal would have been the ruin of Spain. Finally, King Roderic, before starting for the battle of Guadalete, hoping to find therein some treasures which would furnish a means of defending himself against the invasion of the Arabs, had the doors pulled down, and, preceded by his warriors, who lighted the way, he entered. After a great deal of difficulty in keeping their torches lighted, on account of the strong wind which was blowing in these subterranean passages, they reached a mysterious chamber, where they saw a coffer, upon which was written: 'He who opens me will see marvels.' The king ordered it to be opened, which they only succeeded in doing with great difficulty; but instead of gold and diamonds they merely found a rolled canvas, upon which some armed Arabs were painted, and under them was this inscription: '*Spain will be de-*

stroyed in a short time by these men. That same night a violent tempest broke out; the enchanted palace fell, and shortly thereafter the Arabs entered Spain. You do not seem to believe this!"

"Oh, nonsense; who should believe it?"

"This history is connected with another. You doubtless know that the Count Julian, commandant of the fortres of Ceuta, betrayed Spain, allowing Arabs to pass, to whom he should have barred the passage. You cannot know, however, why Count Julian betrayed Spain. He had a daughter at Toledo, and this daughter went every day to bathe in the Tagus, together with several of her friends. Unfortunately, the place where she bathed, which was called *Los baños de la Cava*, was near a tower, in which King Roderic used to pass the warm hours of the day. One day the daughter of Count Julian, whose name was Florinda, tired of playing in the water, seated herself on the banks of the river, and said to her companions: 'Let us see who has the most beautiful leg!' 'Let us see!' they all replied. No sooner said than done, for they seated themselves around Florinda, and each displayed her beauties. Florinda, however, bore off the palm; and, unfortunately, just as she was saying, 'Look!' King Roderic appeared at the window, and saw every thing. He was young, and a libertine, so took fire like a match, paid court to the beautiful Florinda, seduced and abandoned her, and this caused the fury for revenge in Count Julian, as well as the betrayal and invasion."

At this point I thought that I had heard enough, so I gave the custodian a couple of reales, which he took, and put into his pocket in a dignified way, and giving a last glimpse at Toledo, I went down from the tower.

It was the promenade hour; the principal street, which is scarcely wide enough to admit of the passage of a carriage, was full of people. There may have been some hundreds of persons, but they seemed to be a great crowd. It was growing dark; the shops were closing, and a few lights began to shine here and there. I went to dine, and left the house immediately afterward, in order not to lose the spectacle of the promenade. It was night; there was no other illumination than the light of the moon; one could not see the people's faces; it seemed to me like being in the midst of a procession of spectres, and I was seized with a feeling of melancholy. "To think that I am alone," I said; "that in this whole city there is not one soul who knows me; that if I were to fall dead at this moment, there would not be a dog who would say; 'Poor fellow! He was a good creature!'" I saw gay youths, fathers of families, with their children, and wives (or those who seemed to be wives) with a dear little thing in their arms, going by; every one had a companion; they were all laughing and talking, and they passed without even giving me a glance. How sad I was! How happy I should have been if a boy, a beggar, or a policeman had come to say: "I think I know you, sir!" "It is impossible; I am a stranger; I have never before been at Toledo; but never mind; don't go away; stay here; we will talk a little while, for I am alone!"

At a happy moment I remembered that at Madrid a letter of introduction had been given me for a gentleman in Toledo; I rushed to the hotel, got it, and had some one take me immediately to his house. The gentleman was at home, and received me courteously. On hearing my name uttered, I experi-