

"How do I know? Are all the Andalusian women as beautiful as you?"

The girl stretched her hand out on the table.

"Will you hide that hand?" I said.

"Why?" she asked.

"Because I wish to eat in peace."

"Eat with one hand."

"Ah!"

I seemed to be pressing the hand of a child of six; my knife fell to the ground, and a dense veil settled over the cutlet.

Suddenly I felt my hand empty; I opened my eyes, saw that the girl was greatly excited, and turned around; gracious heavens! There stood a fine-looking fellow, with a spruce jacket, tight trowsers, and a little velvet hat. A *torero*, in fact. I gave a start as if I felt two *banderillas de fuego* planted in my neck.

"Ah, I see how matters stand," I said to myself, and I fancy any one would have done so. The girl, slightly embarrassed, made the presentation:

"This is an Italian who is passing through Cordova," then she added, hastily, "and who wishes to know what time the train starts for Seville."

The *torero*, who had scowled at the sight of me, became reassured, told me the hour of departure, seated himself, and entered amicably into conversation with me. I asked him the news of the last *corrida* at Cordova, for he was a *banderillero*, and he related all the day's doing minutely. The girl, meanwhile, was gathering flowers from the vases in the *patio*. When my breakfast was ended, I offered a glass of Malaga wine to the *torero*, drank to the successful planting of all his future *banderillas*, paid my bill (three *pecetas*, with the beautiful eyes in-

cluded, be it understood), and then becoming quite bold, and wishing to dissipate even the shadow of a suspicion in the soul of my formidable rival, I said to the girl :

"Señorita! No one ever denies any thing to a person who is going away. I am like a dying person to you. You will never see me again. You will never hear my name mentioned; so please give me some souvenir; give me that bunch of flowers."

"Here it is," the girl said. "I had gathered it for you."

I gave a glance at the *torero*, who made a sign of approval.

"I thank you with all my heart," I replied, making a move to go. They both accompanied me to the door.

"Have you any bull-fights in Italy?" the young man asked.

"O Heavens, no! We have none yet."

"What a pity! Try to introduce them into Italy too, and I will come and *banderillar* at Rome."

"I will do all that I can. Señorita, will you tell me your name that I can say good-by?"

"Consuelo."

"God be with you, Consuelo!"

"God go with you, Señor Italiano!"

There are no noteworthy Arabian monuments to be seen around Cordova. Yet at one time, superb edifices were scattered all through the valley. Three miles from the city, on the north, on the slope of a hill, rose Medina Az-Zahra, "the *flourishing city*," which was one of the most marvellous works of architecture of the time of Abdurrahman III, started by the Caliph himself in honor of his favorite, whose name was Az-Zahra. The

foundations were laid in the year 933, and ten thousand workmen labored thereon for twenty-five years. The Arabian poets celebrated Medina Az-Zahra as the most superb earthly palace, and the most delicious garden in the world. It was not a building, but an immense collection of palaces, gardens, courts, porticoes, and towers. There were exotics from Syria, fantastic jets for the very high fountains, rivulets lined by palms, and immense basins filled with mercury, which gleamed in the sun like lakes of fire. There were doors of ebony and ivory studded with pearls, thousands of columns of the most precious marble, great aerial terraces, and among the innumerable multitude of statues there were twelve animals of massive gold (gleaming with pearls), from whose noses and mouths fell sprays of perfumed water. In this immense palace was a troop of servants, slaves, and women, and musicians and poets flocked hither from every portion of the world. Nevertheless, this Abdurrahman III, who dwelt amid so many delights, who reigned for fifty years, was powerful, glorious, and fortunate in every undertaking, wrote before his death that during his long reign he had never been happy but fourteen days! His fabulous "flourishing city" was invaded, sacked, and burned by a barbarous horde seventy-four years after its first stones had been laid, and to-day those which remain hardly suffice to recall its name. Not even the ruins are to be found of another superb city, called Zahira, which rose on the east of Cordova, and which was built by the powerful Almansur, the governor of the kingdom; for a body of rebels reduced it to ashes shortly after the death of its founder.

"All things return to the grand old mother earth."

Instead of taking a drive in the environs of Cordova, I gave myself up to wandering here and there, and to indulging in fancies about the names of the streets, which, in my opinion, is one of the greatest pleasures a man can enjoy in an unknown city. Cordova, *alma ingeniorum parens*, might write at every corner of her streets the name of an artist or illustrious servant born within her walls; and, let it be said to her honor, she has remembered them all with maternal gratitude. You find there the little square of Seneca, and there, perhaps, is the house in which he was born; there is the street of Lucan, the street of Ambrose Morales, the historian of Charles V, the continuer of the *General Chronicle of Spain*, begun by Florian di Ocampo; the street of Paul Cespedes, painter, architect, sculptor, archeologist, author of a didactic poem, *The Art of Painting*, which, though, unfortunately, unfinished, contains some beautiful passages. He was very enthusiastic about Michel Angelo, whose works he had admired in Italy, and he addressed a hymn of praise to him in his poem which is one of the finest things in Spanish poetry; and despite myself, some of the last lines escape from my pen. He says he does not believe that the perfection of painting can be better shown.

* " Que en aquella escelente obra espantosa
 Mayor de cuantas se han jamas pintado,
 Que hizo el Buonarrota de su mano
 Divina, en el etrusco Vaticano !

" Cual nuevo Prometeo en alto vuelo
 Alzándose, estendió las alas tanto,
 Que puesto encima el estrellado cielo
 Una parte alcanzò del fuego santo ;
 Con que tornando enriquecido al suelo

* See Appendix for translation.

Con nueva maravilla y nuevo espanto,
 Dió vida con eternos resplandores
 À marmoles, à bronces, à colores.
 ¡ O mas que mortal hombre ! ¿ Angel divino
 O cual te momaré ? No humano cierto
 Es tu ser, que del cerco empireo vino
 Al estilo y pincel vida y concierto :
 Tu mostraste à los hombres el camino
 Por mil edades escondido, incierto
 De la reina virtud ; a ti se debe
 Honra que en cierto dia el sol renueve."

While murmuring these lines I came out on the street of Juan de Mena, the Spanish Ennius, as his fellow-citizens call him, the author of a phantasmagorical poem, entitled *The Labyrinth*, an imitation of the *Divine Comedy*, which had great fame in its day, and is not without some pages of great and inspired poetry ; but very cold, and filled, as a whole, with pedantic mysticisms. John II, King of Castile, was quite enthusiastic about this *Labyrinth*, kept it beside the missal in his closet, and carried it with him to the hunt ; but, behold the caprice of a king ! The poem had only three hundred chapters, and these seemed too few for John II ; do you know why ? Simply because there were three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, and he thought there ought to be just as many chapters in the poem. So he begged the poet to compose sixty-five more ; and the poet obeyed, very glad, the flatterer ! to have the pretext of flattering his sovereign more, although he had already gone so far in his adulation as to beg the king to correct his verses ! From the street of Juan de Mena I passed into the street of Gongora, the Marini of Spain, not less gifted intellectually, but perhaps a greater corrupter of his literature than Marini has been of ours, because he spoiled, maimed,

and degraded the language in a thousand ways, so that Lopez de Vega makes a follower of Gongora ask one of his listeners :

“ Do you understand me ? ”

“ Oh, yes,” the other replies. To which the poet responds :

“ You lie ! because I do not even understand myself ! ”

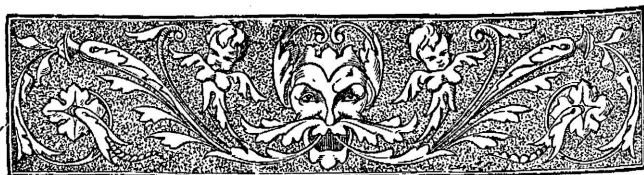
Yet not even Lopez is quite free from Gongorism, when he dares write that Tasso was only like the first rays of Marini's sun ; nor was Calderon, nor many greater men, free from it either. However, enough of poetry, for I am digressing !

After the *siesta* I hunted up my two companions, who took me into the suburbs of the city, in which I saw, for the first time, men and women of the true Andalusian type, just as I had imagined them, with the eyes, coloring, and attitudes of the Arabs. There I heard, too, for the first time, the real Andalusian style of speaking, which is softer and more musical than in the Castiles, and gayer, more imaginative, and accompanied by more vivacious gestures. I asked my companions if that which is said of Andalusia is really true, viz., that the early physical development causes greater vice, more voluptuous habits, and unbridled passions. “ Too true ! ” they replied, as they proceeded to give me explanations and descriptions, and tell me anecdotes which I withhold from my readers. We returned to the city, and they took me to a fine club-house, with gardens and superb rooms, in one of which (the largest and richest, ornamented with the portraits of all the illustrious men of Cordova) is a sort of stage, from which the poets read their poems on the evenings set aside for public trials of genius ; and the

victors receive a wreath of laurel from the hands of the most beautiful and cultivated girls in the city, who are seated, in a semicircle, on chairs wreathed with roses. That evening I had the pleasure of meeting several young Cordovans who devote themselves to the cultivation of the Muses. They were frank, courteous, and very vivacious, and had a medley of versés in their heads, and a sprinkling of Italian literature ; so that, as my readers may fancy, from twilight until midnight, in those mysterious little streets which had made my head whirl on the first evening, there was a continuous and increasing interchange of sonnets, national hymns, and ballads in the two languages (from Petrarch to Prati, and from Cervantes to Zorilla), and a gay conversation ended and sealed by many cordial handshakings, and promises to write and send books to each other, to come to Italy and return to Spain, etc., etc. They were only empty words, it is true, but none the less agreeable for that.

On the following day I left for Seville. At the station I saw Frascuelo, Lagartijo, Cuco, and the whole company of *toreros* from Madrid, who greeted me with a benevolent look of protection. I dashed into a dusty carriage, and when the train started and Cordova appeared to my eyes for the last time, I took leave of it with the words of an Arabian poet, which are, if you choose, a trifle too sensual for the taste of a European, but really quite suitable to the occasion :

“ Farewell Cordova ! I should like to live as long as Noah, in order to dwell forever among thy walls. I should like to possess the treasures of Pharoah, to spend them on wine and the beautiful Cordovese women, whose lovely eyes seem to invite kisses.”



CHAPTER IX.

SEVILLE.

THE journey from Cordova to Seville arouses none of that surprise which is awakened by that from Toledo to Cordova, but it is more beautiful still ; for there are always those orange and endless olive groves, the hills covered with grape-vines, and those fields filled with flowers. At a short distance from Cordova one sees the rocky towers of the formidable Castle of Almodovar, standing on a very high rock, which dominates an immense space round about it. At Hornachuelos, there is another old castle on the top of a hill, in the centre of a solitary and melancholy landscape. Farther on, lies the white city of Palma, hidden in a thick grove of oranges, encircled, in its turn, by a wreath of kitchen- and flower-gardens. And so we pass on through fields whitened with grain, flanked by hedges of Indian fig-trees, rows of little palms, groves of pines, and fine plantations of fruit-trees. At every step one sees hills, castles, torrents, slender bell towers belonging to the villages hidden among the trees, and the blue summits of distant mountains.

The little country-houses scattered along the road are more beautiful than any thing else. I do not remember having seen any of them which were not as white as snow. The house, the parapet of the

neighboring well, the low wall which encloses the garden, the two pilasters of the garden gate are all white, and every thing looks as if it had been white-washed the day before. Some of the houses have one or two little Moorish mullion windows ; others, some arabesques over the door ; others, still, have varigated roofs like the Arabian houses. Here and there, scattered through the fields, one sees the red and white capes of the peasants, velvet hats in the midst of the verdure, together with sashes of every color. The peasants whom one sees in the furrows, or who have to watch the train pass by, are dressed, just as they are represented in the pictures, in the costumes of forty years ago. They wear a velvet hat with a very broad and slightly upturned brim, which has a crown like a sugar loaf ; a short jacket, open waist-coat, knee-breeches like those of the priests, a pair of gaiters that reach the trousers, and a sash around their waists. This style of dress, which is beautiful, though inconvenient, adapts itself admirably to the slender figures of those men who much prefer being beautifully uncomfortable, than to be comfortable without grace, and who willingly spend a half hour on their toilette every morning, in order to get into a pair of breeches which will display a fine shaped hip and leg. They have nothing in common with our hard-faced, stony-eyed peasants of the North. The former look at you with a smile ; the great black eyes cast audacious glances at the ladies who put their heads out of the windows, as if to say : " Do you not recognize me ? " they hand you a match before you have asked for it ; sometimes reply in rhyme to your question ; and are quite capable of laughing on purpose to show you their white teeth.

At the Rinconada, one begins to see, in a line with the railway, the bell tower of the Seville Cathedral ; and on the right, beyond the Guadalquivir, the beautiful hillsides covered with olive groves, at the foot of which lie the ruins of Italica. The train sped along, and I said to myself, more and more hurriedly as the houses became more frequent, with that breathlessness full of desire and joy which one experiences in climbing the staircase of one's sweetheart :

" Seville! Seville is here! She is here, the queen of Andalusia, the Spanish Athens, the mother of Murillo, the city of poets and loves, the famous Seville, whose name I have uttered since my childhood with a feeling of sweet sympathy! Who would have said, a few years ago, that I should have seen it! Yet it is not a dream! Those houses are in Seville, those peasants over there are Sevillians, and the bell tower which I see is the Giralda! I at Seville? It is strange! I feel like laughing! What is my mother doing at this moment? If she were only here! If such and such an one were here too! It is a pity that I am alone! Here are the white houses, gardens, streets. . . We are in the city. . . Now we leave the train. . . Ah! how beautiful life is! . . ."

I arrived at a hotel, tossed my valise into a *patio*, and began roaming about the city. I seemed to see Cordova enlarged, beautified, and enriched ; the streets are broader, the houses higher, and the *patios* more spacious ; but the general aspect of the city is the same. There is the same spotless whiteness, that intricate network of small streets, the diffused odor of oranges, the lovely air of mystery, that oriental appearance which awakens in the heart a

very sweet feeling of melancholy, and in the mind a thousand fancies, desires, and visions of a distant world, a new life, an unknown people, and a terrestrial paradise full of love, delight, and peace. In those streets one reads the history of the city; every balcony, fragment of sculpture, and solitary cross-road recall the nocturnal adventures of a king, the inspirations of a poet, the adventures of a beauty, an amour, a duel, an abduction, a fable, and a feast. Here is a reminder of Maria de Pedilla, there of Don Pedro, farther on of Cervantes, and elsewhere of Columbus, Saint Theresa, Velasquez, and Murillo. A column recalls the Roman dominion, a tower, the splendors of Charles V's monarchy, an alcazar, the magnificence of the court of the Arabs. Beside the modest white houses rise sumptuous marble palaces; the little tortuous streets emerge on immense squares filled with orange trees; from the deserted and silent cross-road one comes out, after a short turn, into a street traversed by a noisy crowd. Everywhere one passes he sees, through the graceful gratings of the *patios*, flowers, statues, fountains, suites of rooms, walls covered with arabesques, Arabian windows, and slender columns of precious marble; and at every window, in every garden, there are women dressed in white, half hidden, like timid nymphs, among the grapevines and rose bushes.

Passing from street to street I reached at last, on the bank of the Guadalquivir, a promenade called the Christina, which is to Seville what the Lungarno is for Florence. Here one enjoys an enchanted spectacle.

First I approached the famous Torre del Oro. This noted tower, called the Golden one, received its name either from the fact that it held the gold

which the Spanish ships brought from America, or because the King Don Pedro hid his treasures there. It is octagonal in shape, with three receding floors, crowned with battlements, and washed by the river. Tradition narrates that this tower was constructed by the Romans, and that the most beautiful favorite of the king lived there for some time, when the tower was joined to the Alcazar by a building that was destroyed to make place for the Christina promenade.

This promenade extends from the palace of the Duke of Montpensier to the Torre del Oro, and is entirely shaded by oriental plane trees, oaks, cypresses, willows, poplars, and other northern trees, which the Andalusians admire as we should admire the palms and aloes in the fields of Piedmont and Lombardy. A great bridge crosses the river and leads to the suburb of Triana, from which one sees the first houses on the opposite bank. A long row of ships, golettas (a species of light boat), and barks extend along the river; and between the Torre del Oro and the duke's palace there is a continual coming and going of boats. The sun was setting. A crowd of ladies swarmed through the avenues, troops of workmen passed the bridge, the work on the ships increased, a band hidden among the trees was playing, the river was rose color, the air was filled with the perfume of flowers, and the sky seemed all aflame.

I reëntered the city and enjoyed the sight of Seville at night. The *patios* of all the houses were illuminated; those of the smaller houses by a half light, which gave them a mysterious grace; those of the palaces were filled with tiny flames, which made the mirrors gleam, the sprays of the fountain glisten



GOLDEN TOWER, SEVILLE.

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like drops of quicksilver, and the marbles of the vestibules, the mosaics of the walls, the glass in the doors, and the crystals of the tapers, shine in a thousand colors. Within one saw a crowd of ladies, heard on all sides the sound of voices, laughter, and music. It seemed like passing through so many ball-rooms, for from every door there came a flood of light, fragrance, and harmony. The streets were crowded; among the trees on the squares, under the vestibules, at end of the alleys, on the balconies, and on every side one could see white skirts floating, disappearing, and reappearing in the shade; little heads ornamented with flowers peeping from the windows; groups of young men moving through the crowd with gay shouts; people saluting each other and talking from window to street; and on all sides a quickened pace, a bustle, laughter, and a carnival-like gaiety. Seville was nothing but an immense garden, in which a crowd filled with youth and love was revelling.

These moments are sad ones for a stranger. I remember that I was ready to dash my head against a wall. I wandered here and there half bewildered, my head drooping and my heart saddened, as if all those people were amusing themselves simply out of disrespect for my solitude and melancholy. It was too late to deliver any letters of introduction, too early to go to sleep. I was the slave of that crowd and gaiety, and I should have to bear it for many hours. I experienced a sort of relief in forcing myself not to look in the faces of the women, but I did not always succeed, and when my eyes encountered the dark pupils by chance, the wound was more bitter (because it was unexpected) than if I had dared the danger with a ready heart. I was

in the midst of those Sevillian women who are so tremendously famous! I saw them pass on the arms of their husbands and lovers, I touched their dresses, inhaled their perfume, heard the sound of their low sweet words, and the blood rushed through my head like a wave of fire. Fortunately I remembered having heard from a Sevillian at Madrid, that the Italian Consul was in the habit of spending the evening at the shop of one of his sons. I hunted up the establishment, found the Consul there, and presenting him with a letter from a friend, said to him in a dramatic tone which made him laugh: "Dear sir! please take charge of me, for Seville frightens me!"

At midnight the appearance of the city had not changed; there was still the same crowd and light; I returned to the hotel, and shut myself up in my own room with the intention of going to bed. Worse and worse! The windows of the room opened on a square where a crowd of people were swarming around a band which never stopped playing. When the music did cease at last, the guitars, shouts of water-venders, songs, and laughter began, and all night long there was uproar enough to wake the dead. I had a dream which was both delicious and tormenting at the same time, perhaps rather the latter, on the whole. I seemed to be tied to the bed by a long black braid twisted into a thousand knots, to feel on my lips a fiery mouth which took away my breath, and around my neck the vigorous little hands that were crushing my head against the handle of a guitar.

The following morning I went immediately to see the cathedral.

In order to describe this enormous building fit-

tingly, one ought to have ready a collection of the most extravagant adjectives and the most exaggerated similes which ever issued from the pens of the hyperbolic writers of all nations, every time they were obliged to depict something prodigiously high, monstrously broad, frightfully deep, and incredibly grand. Whenever I talk of it to my friends, involuntarily I too, like the Mirabeau of Victor Hugo, give *un colossal mouvement d'épaules*, swell my throat, and increase my voice, little by little, in imitation of Salvini in the tragedy of Samson, when with an accent that makes the parquette tremble, he says he feels his strength returning in his nerves. To talk of the Seville Cathedral wearies one like playing a great wind instrument, or keeping up a conversation from one bank to the other of a noisy stream.

The Cathedral of Seville stands alone in the middle of an immense square, and yet one can measure its size with a single glance. At the first moment, I thought of the famous speech made by the Chapter of the primitive church, in decreeing the construction of the new cathedral on the eighth of July, 1401. "Let us erect such a monument that posterity will say we were madmen." Those reverend gentlemen did not fail in their design. However, one must enter in order to convince one's self of this. The external appearance of the cathedral is grand and magnificent, but much less so than the interior. The façade is lacking; a high wall surrounds the entire edifice like a fortress. No matter how much one turns and looks at it, one is unable to impress upon the mind a single outline which, like the preface of a book, gives a clear conception of the design of the work; one admires it, and breaks out more than once with an exclamation: "It is wonderful!"

but still it does not satisfy, and one hastily enters the church, desirous of experiencing a more thorough feeling of admiration.

At your first entrance you are bewildered, feel as if you were wandering in an abyss, and for several moments do nothing but glance around you in that immense space, almost as if to assure yourself that your eyes are not deceiving nor your fancy playing you some trick. Then you approach one of the pilasters, measure it, and look at the more distant ones which, though as large as towers, appear so slender that it makes you tremble to think that the building is resting upon them. You traverse them with a glance from floor to ceiling, and it seems as if you could almost count the moments it would take for the eye to climb them. There are five naves, each one of which might form a church. In the centre one, another cathedral with its cupola and bell tower could easily stand. All of them together form sixty-eight bold vaulted ceilings, which seem to expand and rise slowly as you look at them. Every thing is enormous in this cathedral. The principal chapel, placed in the centre of the great nave, and almost high enough to touch the ceiling, looks like a chapel built for giant priests, to whose knees the ordinary altars would not reach. The paschal candle seems like the mast of a ship, and the bronze candlestick which holds it like the pilaster of a church. The choir is a museum of sculpture and chiselling which merits a day's visit. The chapels are worthy of the church, for they contain the masterpieces of sixty-seven sculptors and thirty-eight painters. Montanes, Zurbaran, Murillo, Valdes, Herrera, Boldan, Roëlas, Campana, have left there a thousand traces of their hand. The chapel of Saint Ferdinand, which

contains the sepulchres of this king and his wife Beatrice, of Alphonso the Wise, the celebrated minister Florida Blanca, and other illustrious personages, is one of the richest and most beautiful of all. The body of Ferdinand, who redeemed Seville from the dominion of the Arabs, clothed in his uniform, with crown and mantle, rests in a crystal casket, covered with a veil. On one side is the sword which he carried on the day of his entrance into Seville; on the other, a staff of cane, an emblem of command. In that same chapel is preserved a little ivory virgin, which the holy king carried to war with him, and other relics of great value. In the remaining chapels are other large marble altars, tombs in the Gothic style, statues in stone, wood, and silver, inclosed in broad crystal caskets, with breasts and hands covered with diamonds and rubies; and immense pictures, which, unfortunately, the faint light that falls from the high windows does not sufficiently illuminate to enable the visitor to admire all their beauties.

One always returns, however, from the inspection of the chapel pictures and sculpture to admire afresh the cathedral in its grand, and, if I may use the expression, formidable aspect. After having dashed up to those dizzy heights, the eye and mind fall back to earth, almost wearied by the effort, as if to take breath before climbing again. The images which fill your head, correspond with the vastness of the Basilica; they are immense angels, heads of monstrous cherubims, wings large as the sails of ships, and the waving of huge white mantles. It is a perfectly religious impression, not a sad one, which this cathedral produces upon you; it is the feeling that transports the thoughts into the interminable space and tremendous silence in which Leopardi's

thoughts were drowned. It is a feeling full of desire and daring ; the involuntary shudder which comes over one on the brink of a precipice ; the disturbance and confusion of great ideas ; the divine terror of the infinite.

As it is the most varied cathedral in Spain (because Gothic, Germanic, Græco-Roman, Arabian, and what is vulgarly termed *plateresque* architecture, have each left their imprint upon it), so is it also the richest and most privileged. In the time of the greater power of the clergy, twenty thousand pounds of wax were burned there every year ; five hundred masses were celebrated every day, upon eighty altars ; and the wine consumed in the sacrifice amounted to the incredible quantity of eighteen thousand seven hundred and fifty litres. The canons had a royal suite of servants, went to church in splendid carriages drawn by superb horses, and, while they celebrated mass, made the young priests fan them with enormous fans ornamented with feathers and pearls ; a privilege granted them by the pope, of which some of them take advantage even to-day. It is not necessary to speak of the fêtes of holy week, which are still famous all over the world, and to which people flock from every part of Europe.

The most curious privilege, however, of the Seville Cathedral, is the so-called dance of *los seises*, which takes place every evening at twilight, for eight consecutive days, after the festival of *Corpus Domini*. As I was at Seville during those days I went to see it, and I think it is worth describing. From what I had heard, I thought it must be a scandalous buffoonery, and I entered the church with my mind prepared for a feeling of indignation at the profanation of this sacred place.

The church was dark ; only the principal chapel was illuminated ; a crowd of kneeling women occupied the space between the chapel and the choir. Several priests were seated on the right and left of the altar ; before the steps was stretched a broad carpet ; and two rows of boys, from eight to ten years old, dressed like Spanish cavaliers of the mediæval age, with plumed hats and white stockings, were drawn up opposite each other in front of the altar. At a signal given by a priest, a low music from violins broke the profound silence of the church, and the boys moved forward with the steps of a contra-dance, and began to divide, interlace, separate, and gather again with a thousand graceful turns ; then all broke out together into a lovely and harmonious chant, which echoed through the darkness of the vast cathedral like the voice of a choir of angels, and a moment later they commenced to accompany the dance and chant with castanets. No religious ceremony ever moved me like this one. It is impossible to describe the effect produced by those small voices under that immense vault, the little creatures at the foot of the enormous altar, that grave and almost humble dance, the ancient costumes, prostrate crowd, and, all around, the darkness. I left the church with my soul as peaceful as if I had been praying.

A curious anecdote was told me apropos of this dance. Two centuries ago, an archbishop of Seville, who thought the contra-dances and castanets did not worthily praise the Lord, wished to prohibit the ceremony. A great tumult followed in consequence, the people rebelled, the canons raised their voices, and the archbishop was obliged to call the pope to his assistance. The pope, who was curious, desired to see the dance with his own eyes in

order to give his judgment in the matter. The boys, dressed like cavaliers, were taken to Rome, received at the Vatican, and made to dance and sing before his holiness. The pope laughed, did not disapprove of it, and wishing to satisfy the canons without displeasing the archbishop, decreed that the boys should dance until the clothes they had on were worn out; after which the ceremony might be considered as abolished. The archbishop smiled, and the canons laughed in their sleeves like people who had already discovered a way of outwitting both bishop and pope. In fact, they renewed one part of the boys' dress every year, so that it could never be said that the costume was worn out; and the archbishop who, as a scrupulous man, took the pope's order *au pied de la lettre*, could never make any opposition to the ceremony. So they continued to dance, do dance, and will dance as long as it pleases the canons and the good Lord.

Just as I was leaving of the church, a sacristan made me a sign, led me behind the choir, and pointed out a stone in the pavement, upon which I read an inscription that set my heart beating. Under the stone are buried the bones of Ferdinand Columbus, son of Christopher, born at Cordovo, died at Seville the 12th July, 1536, at the age of 50 years. Under the inscription are several Latin distiches which have the following signification :

“ What does it avail that I should have bathed the entire universe with my sweat, that I should have traversed three times the New World discovered by my father, that I should have embellished the banks of the tranquil Beti, and preferred my simple tastes to riches in order to gather around thee the divinities of the Castalian spring, and offer thee the treas-

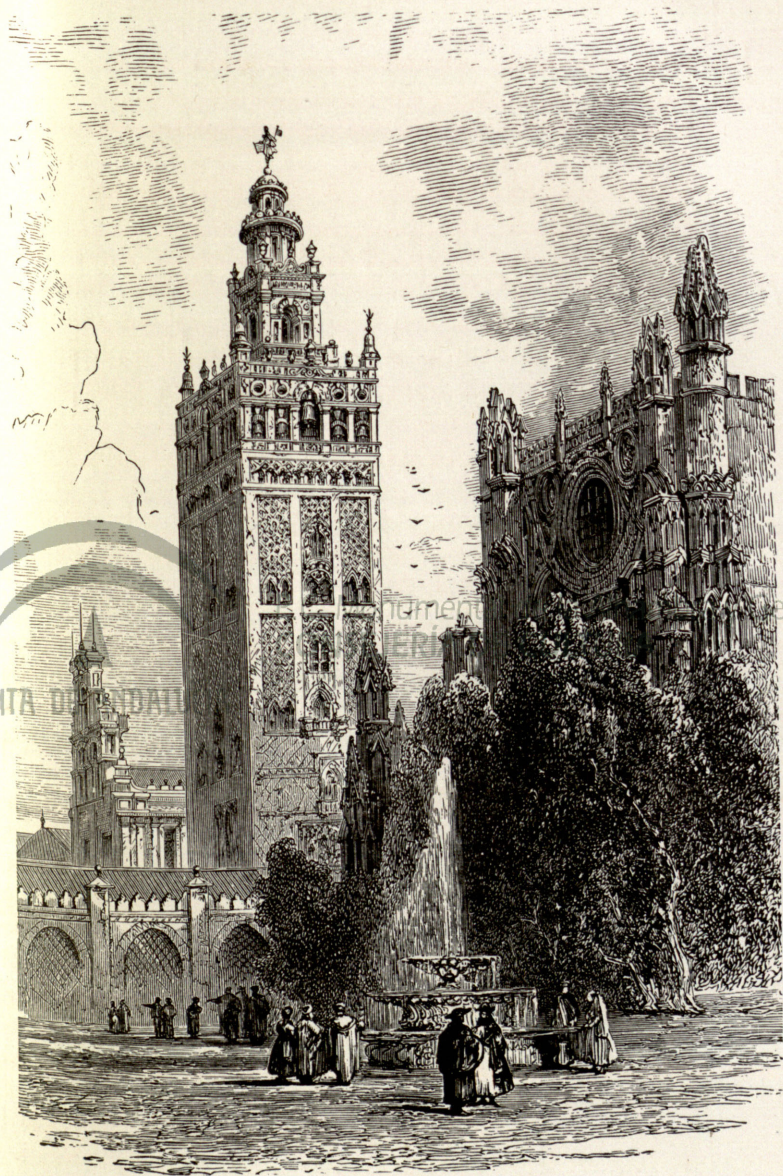
ures already gathered by Ptolemy, if thou, in passing silently over this stone, dost not give at least a greeting to my father and a slight thought to me?"

The sacristan who knew more about the matter than I did, explained the inscription to me. Ferdinand Columbus was, when very young, a page of Isabella the Catholic and the Prince Don John; he travelled in the Indies with his father and brother, the Admiral Don Diego; followed the Emperor Charles V in his wars; took other journeys in Asia, Africa, and America, and everywhere gathered with great care and expense most valuable books, with which he started a library, that after his death passed into the hands of the Chapter of the cathedral, and remains there still under the famous title of the Columbian Library. Before dying, he himself wrote the Latin distiches which one reads on the stone of his tomb, and manifested a desire to be buried in the cathedral. During the last moments of his life, he had a platter full of ashes brought to him, and covered his face with them, saying in the words of the Holy Scripture: *Memento homo quia pulvis es*, intoned the *Te Deum*, smiled, and expired with the serenity of a saint. Instantly I was seized with a desire to visit the library, and I left the church.

A guide stopped me at the door to ask if I had seen the *Patio de los Naranjos* (the Court of the Oranges), and having replied in the negative, he took me there. The Court of the Oranges is situated at the west of the cathedral, and surrounded by a great embattled wall. In the centre rises a fountain, encircled by a grove of orange trees, and on one side, near the wall, Vincent Ferrer is said to

have preached. In the space covered by this court, which is very large, rose the ancient mosque that is believed to have been erected toward the end of the twelfth century. No trace of it remains, however. Under the shade of the orange trees, on the edge of the fountain, the good Sevillians go to enjoy the fresh air *en las ardicutes siestas del estio*; and nothing remains which recalls the voluptuous paradise of Mahommed but the lovely verdure and the embalsamed air, with now and then some beautiful girl whose great black eyes dart glances at you as she flies through the distant trees.

The famous Giralda of the Seville Cathedral, is an old Arabian tower, built, so it is affirmed, in the year one thousand, after the design of the architect Gaver, inventor of algebra; modified in its upper portions after the conquest, and then changed into a Christian bell tower; but it is always Arabian in appearance, and decidedly prouder of the fallen standards of the vanquished than of the cross which the victors have recently placed upon it. It is a monument which produces a moral sensation; it makes one laugh; for it is as immense and imposing as an Egyptian pyramid, and at the same time as gay and lovely as the chiosk of a garden. It is a square brick tower, of a very beautiful rose color, quite bare up to a certain point, and from here up ornamented with little Moorish mullion windows, scattered here and there at random, and furnished with small balconies that produce a pretty effect. On the floor, upon which the variegated roof formerly rested, surmounted by an iron beam that supported four enormous gilt balls, rises the Christian bell tower, three floors in height; the first occupied by the bell, the second encircled by a balustrade.



BIBLIOTECA DE LA ALHAMBRA

THE GIRALDA, SEVILLE.

and the third formed by a species of cupola, upon which turns, like a weather vane, a colossal statue of gilt bronze, representing Faith, with a palm in one hand and a standard in another, visible at a great distance from Seville, and when the sun strikes it, gleaming like an enormous ruby, set in the crown of a Titan king, which is dominating with its eye the whole Andalusian valley.

I climbed the top, and there was amply repaid for the fatigue of the ascent. Seville, as white as a city of marble, encircled by a wreath of gardens, groves, and avenues, in the midst of a country scattered with villas, extends before the eyes in all its oriental beauty. The Guadalquiver laden with ships traverses and embraces it in one broad turn. Here the Torre del Oro mirrors its graceful form in the blue waters of the river, there the Alcazar raises its austere towers, farther away the Montpensier gardens thrust above the roofs of the buildings an immense mass of verdure. The glance penetrates the bull-circus, into the gardens of the squares, the *patios* of the houses, the cloisters of the churches, and into all the streets which converge around the cathedral. In the distance one discovers the villages of Santiponce, Algaba, and others which gleam on the hill-sides; on the right of the Guadalquiver is the great suburb of Triana; on one side, far, far away, are the indented crests of the Sierra Morena; on the opposite side are other mountains varied by an infinite number of blue tints; and above this marvellous panorama lies the purest, most transparent and enchanting sky that ever smiled on the eye of man.

When I came down from the Giralda, I went to see the library, near the *Patio de los Naranjos*. After looking at a collection of missals, Bibles, and

precious manuscripts, one among which is attributed to Alfonso the Wise, entitled *The Book of the Treasure*, written with the greatest care in the old Spanish language, I saw—let me repeat it—I saw with my own moist eyes, and, pressing my hand on my heart which was beating quickly, I saw a book, a treatise on cosmography and astronomy, in Latin, with its margin covered by notes, in Christopher Columbus' hand. He had studied that book when he meditated upon the great design, had kept night watches over its pages, his divine forehead had perhaps touched them in those fatiguing nights when he had bent over that parchment in weary abandonment, and had bathed them with his sweat! It is a thought which makes one tremble! But there is something else too! I saw a writing in the hand of Columbus, in which are all the prophecies of the old sacred and profane writers about the discovery of the New World; a manuscript that he used, as it appears, to induce the sovereigns of Spain to furnish him with the means for his undertaking. There is, among other things, a passage from the *Medea* of Seneca, which says: *Venient annis sæcula seris, quibus oceanus vincula rerum laxet, et ingens Pateat tellus.* In the volume of Seneca, which is also in the Columbian Library, near the passage quoted, is an annotation by the son Ferdinand, that says: "This prophecy was verified by my father, the Admiral Christopher Columbus, in the year 1492."

My eyes filled with tears; I should like to have been alone to kiss those books, to weary myself by turning them over, and to have loosened a fragment to carry away with me as something sacred. Christopher Columbus! I have seen his writing! Have

touched the leaves which he has touched! Have felt him so near to me! On coming out of the library, I do not know why . . . I could have thrown myself into the flames to save a child, could have taken off my clothes to help a poor person, or would gladly have made any sacrifice, so rich was I.

After the library, the Alcazar; but before reaching the Alcazar, although it stands on the square with the cathedral, I realized for the first time what the sun of Andalusia really was. Seville is the hottest city in Spain during the warm hours of the day, and I happened to be in the warmest part of the town. There was an ocean of light there; not a window or door was open, nor a living soul to be seen; if I had been told that Seville was uninhabited, I should have believed it. I crossed the square slowly, with my eyes half closed, my face wrinkled up, the perspiration running in great drops down my cheeks and breast, and with my hands so wet that they seemed to have been dipped in a bowl of water. Near the Alcazar, I found a species of booth belonging to a water-vender, and I dashed under it with the precipitation of a man who is seeking shelter from a shower of stones. When I had recovered my breath I moved on toward the Alcazar.

The Alcazar, an ancient palace of the Moorish kings, is one of the best preserved monuments in Spain. Seen from the exterior it looks like a fortress, for it is entirely surrounded by high walls, embattled towers, and old houses, which form two spacious courts in front of the façade. The façade is bare and severe like the other exterior portions of the edifice. The door is ornamented with gilded and painted arabesques, among which one sees a Gothic inscription that refers to the time when the

Alcazar was restored by order of the king Don Pedro. The Alcazar, in fact, although an Arabian palace, is rather the work of Christian than of Arabian kings. Begun, it is not known in precisely what year, it was rebuilt by King Abdelasio toward the end of the twelfth century; taken possession of by King Ferdinand toward the middle of the thirteenth century; altered a second time in the following century, by Don Pedro; inhabited for more or less time by nearly all the kings of Castile; and, finally, chosen by Charles V in which to celebrate his marriage with the Infanta of Portugal. The Alcazar was the witness of the amours and crimes of three races of kings, and each of its stones awakens some memory or guards some secret.

One enters, crosses two or three rooms, in which nothing Arabian remains but the ceiling and some mosaics at the foot of the walls, and comes out on a court where one is struck dumb with amazement. A portico with elegant arches extends on four sides, supported by small marble columns, joined two by two; and the arches, walls, windows, and doors are covered with sculpture, mosaics, and intricate and delicate arabesques, sometimes perforated like a veil, in places as thick and close as woven carpets, in others projecting and hanging like bunches and garlands of flowers. Aside from the many-colored mosaics every thing is as white, clean, and gleaming as ivory. On the four sides are four great doors by which one enters the royal rooms. Here marvel is changed into enchantment. Every thing that is richest, most varied, and splendid, which the most ardent fancy could imagine, is to be found in these rooms. From the floor to the ceiling, around the doors, along the corners of the windows, in the most

distant recess, wherever the eye may chance to fall, appear such a multitude of gold ornaments and precious stones, such a close network of arabesques and inscriptions, such a marvellous confusion of designs and colors, that before one has taken twenty steps, he is stunned and confused, and the eye wanders here and there, almost as if searching for a bit of bare wall on which to take refuge and rest. In one of these rooms the custodian pointed out a reddish spot, covering a good part of the marble pavement, and said with a solemn voice :

"This is the trace of the blood of Don Fadrique, Grand Master of the Order of Santiago, killed in the same place in the year 1358, by order of the king Don Pedro, his brother."

I remember when I heard these words I looked the custodian in the face with the air of saying :

"Let us move on," and that the good man replied in a dry tone :

"Caballero, if I were to tell you to believe the thing on my word, you would be perfectly right to doubt it ; but when you can see the thing with your own eyes, I may be mistaken, but— it seems to me —"

"Yes," I hastened to say, "yes, it is blood, I believe it, I see it, don't let us talk any more about it."

If one can joke over a spot of blood, one cannot do so, however, about the tradition of that crime ; the appearance of the place awoke in my mind all the most horrible particulars. One seems to hear Don Fadrique's step resound through those gilded rooms, as he is being pursued by the archers armed with clubs ; the palace is immersed in gloom ; no other noise is heard save that of the executioners and their victim. Don Fadrique tries to enter the

court. Lopez de Padilla seizes him, he breaks away, is in the court, grasps his sword, maledictions on it! the cross of the hilt is entangled in the mantle of the Order of Santiago, the archers arrive, he has no time to draw it from its sheath, so flies here and there as best he can, Fernandez de Roa overtakes and fells him with a blow from his mace, the others fall upon and wound him, and he expires in a pool of blood.

This sad recollection is lost, however, amid the thousand pictures of the delicious life of the Arabian kings. Those lovely little windows, at which it seems as if the languid face of an Odalisk ought to appear at every moment; those secret doors, before which you stop, despite yourself, as if you heard the rustling of a dress; those sleeping-rooms of the sultans, immersed in a mysterious gloom, where fancy hears the sighing of the girls who lost their virginal purity there; the prodigious variety of colors and freizes, resembling a rapid and ever-changing symphony, exalt your senses to such a point that you are like one in a dream; that delicate and very light architecture, and little columns (which look like women's arms), the capricious arches, small rooms, ceilings, covered with ornaments that hang in the form of stalactites, icicles, and bunches of grapes—all rouse in you the desire to seat yourself in the middle of one of these rooms, pressing to your heart a beautiful dark Andalusian head, which will make you forget the world and time, and with one long kiss, that drinks away your life, put you to sleep forever.

On the ground-floor, the most beautiful room is that of the ambassadors, formed by four great arches which support a gallery of forty-four minor ones, and above, a lovely cupola that is sculptured, painted, and embroidered with an inimitable grace and fabu-