

prayers and hymns of praise may no longer resound in the vaulted church, some respect seems to have been shown to this sanctuary of kings, and Miraflores has as yet been spared from sharing the common ruin, or the indignity of being converted to some unworthy purpose.

Miraflores was a favourite resort of the Spanish Sovereigns. A hunting-seat of Henry III. ; it was presented to the Carthusians by his son John II., who desired to be interred within the walls of the church, which he himself had erected. A fire consumed the edifice, and it was some time after his death before his remains were deposited there.

Isabella, on her triumphal entry into Burgos in 1483, stopped at Miraflores, and wished to see her father's tomb; but as it was within the walls of the convent, over whose threshold the foot of woman could not pass, the cenobites were rather perplexed, and wished to make an exception in her favour, as their Sovereign. On hearing this, however, she declined, saying, "that she trusted Providence would not permit vows to be broken on her account, or the rules of the order to be violated." Isabella may, in fact, be considered as the founder of this convent, and indeed she would not allow any one to share the honour with her, for it is said that on seeing one day that the arms of Aragon and Sicily had been blazoned with her own, she exclaimed in indignation that she would not permit any but her father's arms to be placed in the church which contained his sepulchre. Much as she loved and respected her husband, she had that Castilian pride which always showed itself tenacious to a degree of any interference with her own dominions.

Burgos seems rich in royal convents, for near the town, in the plain watered by the Arlanzon, stands the nunnery of the Huelgas, founded by Alfonso VIII., at the instigation of his wife, Eleanor of England. It was com-

menced in 1180, and inhabited by nuns of the Cistercian order. It is a singular building, or rather groups of buildings, and is more like a large village surrounded by walls, presenting specimens of architecture of every age. The superior was a mitred abbess, and ruled over fifty-one villages; her jurisdiction was independent of any diocese, and her power, both spiritual and temporal, exceeded that of any abbess in Christendom. All this is now a mere shadow; the nuns still retain some possessions, but compared with what they once enjoyed, it is as nothing. None but ladies of noble blood are admitted, and many of the Infantas of Castile have ruled within its walls.

There are still several nuns in the Huelgas; we paid one of them a long visit, at the reja—for no one, either male or female, is permitted to enter within its walls without a royal order. I never met any one who so thoroughly enjoyed talking; she touched on politics, scandal, and everything in succession with a rapidity which showed that her seclusion from the world had rather increased than diminished her affection for hearing of its frivolities. She was very good-natured, and came down to the church to undraw the curtain that we might peep through the iron railings, and see the tomb of the founder. Above the high altar, waves the banner taken from the Moors at the Navas de Tolosa. It is a fine church, but it was too dark to see it to advantage, and we could only just catch the vision of a kneeling nun by the dim lights burning before the altar. They have a curious high head-dress descending in a peak on the forehead, and they wear a black mantle over the white robe of their order.

The Church of the Huelgas has been the theatre of many interesting events in Spanish history. Within its walls Saint Ferdinand knighted himself, while his mother,

who had so nobly made over to him her own right to the throne, fastened on his sword. Here, too, our Edward I. was married to Eleanor, daughter of the sainted monarch, and received knighthood from the hands of her brother, Alfonso el Sabio. This church witnessed the coronation of several Castilian sovereigns, amongst them of Henry of Trastamara, when he commenced his wars against his brother. There are many other convents in Burgos, but few are worth visiting.

We had now seen as much as our time would allow us of this venerable old place, where the first Cortes, which assembled in Spain, held its sitting in 1169, and which was the nucleus of that Castilian power, destined eventually to unite under its sceptre all the various monarchies of Leon, Aragon, Navarre, and the vast territories which once owned the Moslem sway. Burgos now barely contains a population of ten thousand inhabitants. It seems to possess no sign of life within it. The weather too was unfavourable when we were there, and contributed perhaps to make it more gloomy than usual—the leaves lay scattered thick under the trees along the river, and the cloudy sky above formed no very cheering prospect, after the bright days of the South.

The diligence road from Burgos to Valladolid, runs along a wide valley, more liveable and more cultivated than the usual wastes of Castile. It is a capital road, and we performed the distance of twenty-two leagues in twelve hours. We dined at a wretched place, called Torquemada. On approaching Dueñas, the traveller's attention is attracted by a splendid canal, which shows signs of industry and commerce, something unusual in a land whose staple produce seems to have been monastic buildings. As usual, it is not finished; such works never are concluded in Spain. Dueñas is a

curious town, people seem to live under-ground, in the hill sides; and the chimneys spring from the earth in an extraordinary manner.

Valladolid is a large and imposing town, compared with the decayed city of Burgos, and has altogether a more modern and civilized appearance; many of the streets are wide, and have been considerably modernized. The row of shops under the colonnades of the Plaza, are very handsome, and look well filled with French goods; next to Madrid, as far as one can judge by the display in the windows, they certainly appear better than in any other town in Spain, that I have yet seen. Here and there may be found some picturesque bits, but they are few and far between; all the old bridges over the Esgueva, a stream which runs through the town, have been cleared away, and the Esgueva itself covered over; this, although a considerable improvement in some respects, has destroyed many a pretty picture. Valladolid is a very old place, but a large portion of it was destroyed by a terrible conflagration in the reign of Philip II., after which the present Plaza, and many adjoining streets were built.

It claims as its founder the Count Pedro Ansurez, to whom it was ceded by Alfonso VI. This powerful noble contributed much to the embellishment of the town, and erected the bridge which now crosses the Pisuerga, the Church of the Antigua, and many other edifices. In the year 1208, on the death of one of his descendants, the lordship of Valladolid reverted to the Crown, and it became afterwards a favourite residence of the court, which was finally established there during the minority of John II. It was here that Christopher Columbus expired in 1506, his later years clouded by the ingratitude of his Sovereign; and here, in the year 1527, Philip II. was born. The rejoicings in celebration of his birth were

postponed in consequence of the taking of Rome ; and the Emperor ordered prayers to be put up in the churches for the speedy deliverance of the Pope, whose release depended only on a stroke of his own pen. In 1536, Charles entered Valladolid again, but not now with all the pomp and splendour of an Imperial court ; he was on his way to the cloister of San Yuste, to finish a career of unparalleled glory by one of prayer and religious seclusion.

Valladolid was one of the strongholds of the Inquisition, which was established in 1500. A modern historian of this town says, it was first established in the Calle del Obispo, in a house now occupied by the Academia de las Nobles Artes, where still, on the blackened walls of the subterranean chambers, may be traced inscriptions, probably the effusions of some of its victims ; the style and language of many of them, being in Latin, proving them to have been written by people of the better class. Many were the autos-de-fè, held in this town in presence of royalty ; the " Campo Grande" being the scene of the fires, which consumed alike the followers of Luther and the persecuted race of Israel. In those days none were safe from this dread tribunal ; the slightest taint of heresy was sufficient to draw a suspected person within its vortex, and the most learned and the most pious, against whom no charges could possibly have existed, fell victims to a tribunal, which was frequently made the instrument of private vengeance.

The scene of their autos-de-fè is now the grand winter promenade of Valladolid, a portion of it having been laid out as an Alameda. It is a fine open space, surrounded by buildings, most of which were convents ; and here Napoleon reviewed upwards of thirty thousand men. This, however, as a walk, is not to be compared in beauty with that of the Moreras, which lies

along the banks of the Pisuerga. Valladolid stands in a fine valley, bordered by low hills; and the river which waters it, is really a noble stream. The Alameda of the Moreras has a fine broad walk, interspersed with seats; it takes its name from the rows of mulberries, which are planted along the green bank that slopes down to the water's edge, and enjoys the most delicious shade. Crossing the bridge, and passing the quays of the canal, we climbed the height where stands the telegraph. The view extends over an immense plain, intersected here and there by low ranges of hills, which separate the different valleys, and in the distance the blue mountains of Avila bound the horizon. The situation seems well adapted for a great capital.

The royal palace is now deserted; built by the great Cardinal, Duke of Lerma, it became royal property. Nothing can be plainer than the exterior, and the interior is wretchedly furnished, wearing an air of most uncomfortable neglect. One of the King's sisters, the Infanta Josefa is now residing there, in a sort of honourable exile, having married far below her rank. Opposite to the palace is the elaborately worked and magnificent façade of the church, formerly belonging to the Dominican convent of San Pablo, one of the most highly ornamented specimens of the period, when Gothic architecture was enriched in a fantastic manner, and overloaded with a luxuriance of decoration. No one can form an idea of the detail of this façade, the whole surface of the stone is sculptured, and surmounted by the arms of the Duke of Lerma. He and his Duchess were buried in this church, but their fine monuments have been removed to the Museum. The interior is simple, but of fine proportions; it had cloisters attached to it, but they have now entirely disappeared, the materials having been found useful for the construction of a new prison in the Campo Grande.

The adjoining college of San Gregorio, has escaped destruction, having been converted into the palace of the civil Governor. Some formal modern windows detract very much from the beauty of the elevation. In the gateway, Gothic architecture displays itself in all the quaintest forms of the transition style; wild men with clubs under canopies adorn the sides, while in the centre the royal arms, supported by lions, are placed amid intertwining branches of strange-looking trees, and a sort of rustic stone-work crowns the whole as a parapet. This college was commenced, in 1488, by one of the princely prelates of those days, Alfonso de Burgos, Bishop of Palencia, and it took years in building. The cloisters are among the most exquisite in Spain, perhaps in Europe. They consist of two galleries, the lower formed by thin and lofty spiral columns. Round the upper, runs a richly sculptured balustrade; its arches subdivided by tiny columns, and the intervening stone-work covered with delicate wreaths of foliage, cherubs and other ornaments. The effect of the whole is beautiful, but considerably marred by the glass, which the Governor, with a view to his own comfort, has had placed in the openings. One side has escaped this vandalism, and stands out in all its pristine beauty.

We were most kindly received by the Governor, who showed us through all the rooms, some of which bear traces of their past magnificence. A long saloon, out of which two smaller ones opened at either end, had once a most gorgeous artesonado ceiling; but I grieve to have to say it exists no longer. For some reason or another, difficult to be accounted for, the people took into their heads it was falling, and in order to settle the matter without any trouble, it was taken down; but we were told that far from being in a ruinous condition when the workmen commenced operations, the pieces of wood of which it was



CLOISTER, ST. GREGORIO, VALLADOLID.

DeGlamen Iron Lith.





composed were so firmly united, that they had the greatest difficulty in displacing them. The hall was entirely in ruins when we were there, preparatory to being fitted up in modern Spanish style.

The street which leads from here to the cathedral has lately been baptized with the name of the Calle Reinoso, in compliment to one of the members of the Bravo Murillo cabinet, who had purchased the corner house, and was, of course, for the time being the especial object of adulation of his fellow-citizens. The cathedral might have been very splendid, had it been completed according to the original design. The interior is sombre, breathing the very spirit of him who built the massive church of the Escorial; the huge blocks of granite, without an attempt at ornament, inspire a certain feeling of awe at the massive proportions of the edifice, but it excites no admiration. The paltry altar, with its whitewashed walls, are unworthy of such a temple, and its unfinished state, both inside and out, leaves an unsatisfactory impression on the mind. It contains the tomb of the first Lord of Valladolid, Pedro Ansurez, and some one or two fine paintings of the Italian school. In the sacristy is preserved the beautiful silver custodia of Juan de Arfe; but little else remains of the former treasures which this church possessed before the French invasion.

Not far from the cathedral is the lofty tower of the Antigua. Built in the eleventh century by Ansurez, it is the earliest specimen of church architecture in Valladolid; and its numerous round-headed windows and scaly roof make it very peculiar. We could not see the fine retablo, from its being concealed by draperies prepared for a funeral ceremony.

The Colegio de Santa Cruz is an imposing edifice, with its parapet and buttresses; over the portal it is enriched in the plateresque style. It owes its origin to

the great Cardinal Mendoza, and Isabella assisted in person at the opening. Paintings, sculptures, and carvings, from the many ruined convents of Valladolid, are here collected in most admired disorder; and the few good things amongst them, are almost lost amid the rubbish thus assembled, and no attempt at classification has as yet been made. The director, Don Pedro Gonzalez, complained with much bitterness of the want of funds, and of the utter carelessness and indifference of both officials and people to encouraging anything connected with the fine arts, or the preservation of antiquities. He seemed really to appreciate them himself; but what can one person do where there are so few to second him?

On entering the patio, or cloister, it seems more like a curiosity-shop than anything else. One of the gems of the museum is the carved choir, removed here from San Benito; it is the work of Berruguete; the stalls are most beautifully sculptured, and the arms of the various Benedictine convents in Spain are carved over the seats. In the centre of the hall are bronze figures, richly gilt, of the Duke of Lerma and his wife; he was the well-known favourite and prime minister of Philip III., and when he foresaw his approaching disgrace, he wisely provided himself with a cardinal's hat, and ended his days in dignified retirement at Valladolid. Some large paintings, said to be by Rubens, are hung upon the walls; they were brought from the nunnery of Fuen Saldanha in the neighbourhood. Here and there a painting shines out from among the rest; but the principal attraction of this museum is the collection of painted wooden sculpture.

This art, so peculiar to Spain, may here be seen in perfection, although the figures have certainly not gained by their transfer from the altars of the churches