

to the shelves of a museum, where they are placed in the most heterogeneous confusion. Made for particular purposes, and adapted to the site for which they were sculptured, when placed together like so many wax figures, all the poetry is lost, and the effect entirely destroyed. The eye becomes bewildered, and can hardly render justice to the bold and energetic productions of Juan de Juni, or the more graceful and devotional works of the pious Hernandez. These two artists were the great ornaments of the school of Castilian sculpture in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The life and origin of the former seems enveloped in some obscurity; but his style tends to credit the belief that he studied on the classic soil of Italy. Hernandez proved a worthy successor to Juni, and has left many proofs of his genius in the town where he resided. He died in 1636, after a life divided between the exercise of his art, and works of religious devotion, preparing himself for the execution of figures, which were to adorn the altars of the churches, by prayer and mortification.

There is a fine Mater Dolorosa by Juan de Juni preserved in the church of the Augustias, called La Señora de los Cuchillos, from the long silver knives placed in her hand. The face expresses the bitterest anguish and sorrow, and with eyes upturned to heaven, portrays the depth of human grief.

We also went to see the English college, and were most kindly received by the rector, who has resided there for upwards of twenty years. The building presents nothing remarkable; it contains a neat octagonal church, which had been undergoing repair: the corridor is hung with pictures of some who are said to have suffered martyrdom in England in the days of Elizabeth, many of whom were educated within its walls. This college,

dedicated to St. Alban, was founded by Philip II. for the education of such Roman Catholics as could not receive instruction in England, in order, that when duly trained in the principles of their faith, they might be able to instruct others on their return to their own country. There are now but thirteen students. Another college, founded with similar intentions, was given to the Scotch in the last century, and both are possessed of considerable lands in the neighbourhood, which are much better cultivated than the properties round them.

The rage for taking the veil is prevailing as much here as in other places; we went to see a novice enter the convent of Santa Ana, and the ceremony was performed in the church, and not within the convent, as is generally the custom. The lady, who was anything but pretty or prepossessing, was very gaily dressed, and in such joyous spirits, that one might have imagined she was doing it rather out of bravado than influenced by any better feeling. She knelt before the altar, while the officiating clergyman gave us a long lecture on the vanities of the world, and the beauty of a life of seclusion and penance. He then placed a crucifix in one of her hands, and in the other a torch, and her head was adorned with a large crown of roses. I felt sorry I had not a small looking-glass to offer her, for she seemed so anxious it should be arranged becomingly, that she gave the crucifix to a friend to hold while she settled it herself. After this was adjusted to her satisfaction, she walked out of the church in procession, and entered the convent. The crowd rushed to the iron railings to see her give the embrace to the nuns. The curtain rose, and she then appeared in her white dress, and made her bow to the world, while the spectators left the church highly edified with the proceedings.

Valladolid does not seem more lively than Spanish

towns in general. It has a theatre, a plaza de toros, but very little society. We spent one very pleasant day in an expedition to Simancas, where the archives of Spain are preserved. We had a most charming vehicle for our excursion, what is called here a "tartana," a small omnibus with a canvas covering, and no great abundance of springs. It was got up quite regardless of expense, and lined with satin, and trimmed with all manner of fringe and tassels. We had two horses at starting, but when we had left the town a third was brought out, which, being left to its own devices, took its own line of country in a most independent manner, at one moment threatening to take us into a ditch, at another up a bank. The road leads along near the river, and was one continued succession of ruts the whole way to Simancas. We stopped to take a sketch of the town, which has an imposing appearance from a distance, with its long bridge; but of all wretched, miserable places, when you once reach it, I never saw its equal. We were obliged to leave our elegant equipage at the bottom of the hill, and we ascended to the castle through streets, ankle-deep in mud.

We had a letter to one of the officials, who escorted us over the building; where the archives are deposited. He declared there was not anything to see, that all those little packages of papers contained positively nothing. To do him justice, he seemed in most blissful ignorance of the value of their contents. In this uncomfortable manner we passed through forty-three rooms, in which ninety thousand packages of paper await the investigation of the curious. The ground was strewed with above thirty tons of documents, all relating to the Inquisition, which had but lately arrived from Madrid. Of all uninteresting rooms to walk through, those containing records are the most tiresome; all the packets ticketed and put

in their own little compartments, looking as though they were settled in peace and quietness for life, without any intention of being disturbed. There is something so foolish in this negative inspection, the tickets conveying no meaning to the eye, which longs to penetrate their dingy covers and glean some information from their silent contents. They remind one of those quiet people, one meets occasionally in the world, so cold and impenetrable that there is no making anything out of them, although, as a consolation, you are always assured there is a great deal in them. So it is with these musty records, in which there is doubtless much concealed that might reward those who would take the trouble to cultivate their acquaintance, and in both cases you long for the talisman that would unravel the mystery in which they are shrouded.

As we were leaving, we met the Secretary, who asked if we had seen some curious documents, which he mentioned, and to which of course we replied in the negative. He then escorted us back through many mysterious corners and up winding staircases into a small octagonal room, where the wills of some of the Spanish Sovereigns are preserved. We glanced through those of Isabella, her grandson Charles V., and we likewise saw the capitulation of Granada, signed by Boabdil. The accounts of the Great Captain were likewise exhibited, accounts which were so remarkably extravagant that the "Cuentas del Gran Capitan," became a bye-word in Spain for any unusual expenditure of money. Simancas is an old town, and its strong castle, once belonging to the Henriquez, was afterwards used as a state prison by the Sovereigns of Castile, and Philip II. had the archives arranged here. It may have answered very well for this purpose, when the Court held its residence at Valladolid, but now it is at a most inconvenient distance from the capital.

Simancas possesses an additional interest in the eyes of visitors from Ireland, as having been the place where Red Hugh O'Donel died in 1602, when he came to Spain after the triumph of the English arms at Kinsale, to seek for aid at the Court of Philip III. Although he did not obtain the assistance he sought from the King, he was honoured in death, and interred with great pomp, as it is related by the ancient chroniclers in their own simple style :

“And when he arrived at the town, which is called Simancas, two leagues from Valladolid, where the King's court was, God permitted, and the misfortunes of the island of Heremon would have it, that O'Donel should take the sickness of his dissolution ; and after lying seventeen days on the bed, he died on the 10th of September (1602), in the house which the King of Spain himself had in the town of Simancas, after lamenting his crimes and transgressions, after a rigid penance for his sins, after making his confession without reserve to his confessors, and receiving the body and blood of Christ, and after being duly anointed by the hands of his own confessors and ecclesiastical attendants, Father O'Mulconry (then confessor and spiritual adviser to O'Donel, afterwards Archbishop of Tuam on that account), and Father Maurice Dunlevy, a poor friar of the order of Saint Francis, from the convent of the monastery of Donegal, which town was one of O'Donel's fortresses. His body was conveyed to the King's palace at Valladolid, in a four-wheeled hearse, surrounded by countless numbers of the King's state officers, council and guards, with luminous torches, and bright flambeaux of beautiful wax lights burning on each side of him. He was afterwards interred in the Monastery of St. Francis, in the Chapter precisely, with veneration and honour, and in the most solemn manner that any of the Gaels had been interred

in before. Masses and many hymns, chaunts, and melodious canticles, were celebrated for the welfare of his soul; and his requiem was sung with becoming solemnity."

Not a vestige now remains of this Convent of Saint Francis. It has been swept away from the earth; modern houses and crowded streets now occupy the site of this ancient edifice. It was founded by Berenguela, in 1210, she, who abdicated the crown in favour of her son Saint Ferdinand. The monks were first established on the banks of the river, about a quarter of a league from Valladolid, in the time of Alfonso el Sabio; its inmates were removed by his wife, Doña Violante, to the interior of the town, near the great plaza, where the Church of Santiago now stands. A portion of it was devoted to a royal palace, and here Maria de Molina died; and it is often mentioned in the history of Valladolid.

All traces of these things have now vanished, and the ashes of Hugh O'Donel have shared the fate of many heroes of the land in which he died. Spain is a country where the remains of the dead are less respected than in any other, and where, as we have seen, even from the days of the Cid, they have been changed about, or scattered to the winds, as each succeeding revolution has swept over the land. After the usual round of the churches has been gone through, there is little to tempt the traveller to linger at Valladolid, and we turned our eyes towards Leon.

We took the "berlina," or coupé of the diligence, which fortunately happened to be vacant; the chances being against us, as we had to take it up as it passed through from Madrid. We started in the evening, and passed Rioseco in the dark, a town formerly of some importance. If the whole journey could have been performed at night, it would have been all the more agreeable, for uninteresting as La Mancha and the

Castiles are generally, the journey from Valladolid to Leon surpassed in dull monotony anything we had yet seen. There was not the slightest undulation in the ground to relieve the eye, and the misery and poverty of the inhabitants of the villages through which we passed, formed a fitting accompaniment to the dreariness of the country. Here and there you see small bee-hive-looking places, subterranean cellars, where the produce of the vintage is preserved. The whole distance is three-and-twenty leagues, and the sameness of the scene was only varied about three leagues before we reached Leon at Mansilla, a village surrounded by old walls.

Crowds of country people were assembled, at a large fair which was being held, and the scene was very picturesque and animated; the men wore every variety of hat, from the old pointed peaks, with their silky tufts, to the modern pincushion sombrero, which has not, however, become so much the fashion here as in Andalusia. They were enveloped in dark brownish cloaks, apparently the natural colour of the wool; the women had gay-coloured petticoats and wooden shoes, something like the French sabot, called here "madreñas," which are universally used in Leon. We took up several passengers, and all the remainder of the road met troops of country people flocking into Mansilla with their horses and mules for sale. It commenced pouring in torrents, and the weather, which gave us so unhospitable a greeting upon our arrival in Leon, never condescended to clear up entirely during the ten days we remained there.

The town is rather well situated, on the slope of a low hill, with a rich valley before it, the towers of the cathedral forming a prominent feature in the landscape. It is rather disappointing on a first view, after the lovely spires of Burgos. Our arrival, too, was not the best calculated to give us a pleasing first impression of this venerable city.

There were no rooms in the posada where the diligence stopped; we had fortunately been recommended to a private house by a friend of ours, and started off in pursuit of more comfortable quarters. After some difficulty in finding the house, we were welcomed by a most civil little woman, who seemed anxious to entertain us as well as she could; she had, however, but little at her disposal, and that little was of a very primitive nature. She had only one room to offer us with two alcoves in it, but we discovered a small closet for the photographic apparatus, and settled ourselves with becoming resignation. The preparations for our ablutions were not on a very extensive scale, one of those mysteriously shaped basins used by barbers with a piece cut out of the border to admit the chin, and which the sorrowful knight mistook for a helmet, was all we could obtain. Neither candlesticks nor lamps abounded, but the woman of the house suggested they were not necessary; and spilling a few drops of wax on the floor, stuck the candle upright—a thing which though apparently easy we did not prove adepts in imitating.

As to comfort, it would be vain to expect it in a Spanish house during such weather. In the south, where winter lasts so short a time, one can understand its being more advisable to make preparations against heat, and submit to the cold; but here, in the north of Spain, where the winters are longer, and the climate much more resembling that of England than of Andalusia, it seems strange they should not take more precautions to make themselves warm within their houses. The doors and windows let in the air in every direction, and then they have nothing but the “brasero” to heat the room.

There they sit shivering, their shawls and cloaks wrapped round them, trying to avail themselves of the small amount of heat its ashes diffuse. Sometimes they



place it under a table pierced with holes, and well covered down to the ground with thick green baize : when seated at the table, the warmth to the feet is very pleasant. Foreigners in general do not approve of the "brasero," the heat is not sufficient, and the charcoal affects the head ; and although from habit I have got rather to like them than otherwise, when you only require a trifling degree of warmth, I cannot praise them so enthusiastically as a native of the country would do ; I hope, therefore, I shall be excused when I allow a Spaniard to speak for himself on this subject, and transcribe the following description from the pages of a modern author, whose satirical sketches of life and manners are much admired by his countrymen in the present day.

"The 'brasero' is a thing so purely Spanish, that it will be vain to look for a word answering to it in any foreign language ; not being good hands at translations, we aspire, although unworthily, to the name of originals. It is nevertheless true, although much to be regretted, that if things take their present course, the country of the Cid will soon have but little left peculiar to itself : the laws, the literature, the manners and customs of our ancestors will disappear, and even now there is not much remaining.

"When that day comes, the 'brasero' will be put aside, as an old-fashioned piece of furniture ; its place will be filled by the French or English fire-place ; the small brass shovel will yield to the bellows, and we shall blow the fire instead of scraping the ashes together.

"While this sad event is impending, and in case to-morrow should witness its fulfilment, it does not appear to us out of place to leave some description of it stamped upon these pages, in the same manner that the dexterous sculptor impresses on wax a countenance which is about to be buried in the earth.

“Were we etymologists or genealogists, we might, perhaps, decide the quarrel between Covarrubias, who maintained that ‘brasa,’ and consequently ‘brasero,’ come from the Greek ‘bras;’ and other authors, who declare the Spanish word to be the legitimate daughter of the Latin ‘urasa,’ which is descended in a direct line from ‘urere;’ but thanks to Heaven, we are far from lovers of such nice distinctions: we incline to more tangible proofs, and are willing to suppose cold to be the true cause and origin of the ‘brasero,’ and consequently we do hereby confess and believe as an article of faith, that if there had not been such a thing as winter, the ‘brasero’ would never have been invented.

“So far so good—‘who invented it?’ we shall be asked, and we will answer in a straightforward manner, ‘the first person who felt cold.’ Adam was the first man who became subject to all the miseries to which flesh is heir; one of those miseries was doubtless cold, ergo, our father Adam, the first who felt cold, was without doubt the inventor of the ‘brasero.’

“This discovery, like every other, underwent a progressive development; we see the vine-leaves gradually transformed into the Roman purple; and thus the ‘brasero,’ which began probably by being a stone pierced with a hole, became in time a most elegant piece of furniture. Already in the sixteenth century a law was enacted to this effect: “We hereby command that from this time henceforth no brasero of any form whatever shall be made of silver.” This law has naturally become a dead letter, for the motive which dictated it has passed away, and silver now is not so abundant as to be employed for ‘braseros.’

“With the lapse of time this primitive custom was changed and altered according to the different countries, climates, and laws enjoyed by man, but one and the same

truth was always recognised; that in order not to feel cold, it was necessary to burn some combustible material. In this all have agreed; they have differed only in its application; some burning the branches of oak, others the trunks; some vegetable coal, others mineral; in short, all have made use of that which was most easily obtained.

“So much for the material; as to the form, it would be endless to describe the variety of shapes assumed—the principle may be reduced to four. The blazing hearth in the centre of the room, the fire-place at the side, the stove and the ‘brasero.’

“Give me the Spanish ‘brasero,’ pure and primitive type! with its simple circular stand, its white ashes, its red-hot charcoal, its exciting shovel, and its protecting wire-work cover; give me its gentle, tranquil heat, the centre towards which sociability converges, its circular accompaniment of joyous faces. Give me the mutual confidence which its mild warmth imparts, the equality with which this is distributed; and if, between two lights, give me the tranquil brilliancy diffused by its bright-red coals, softly reflecting the fire of two Arab eyes, the transparency of an oriental skin.

“It is true that the aristocratic fire-place contributes more to the embellishment of splendid rooms, it spreads a higher temperature around, and there is no doubt that its lively, restless, fantastic glowing flames rejoice the sight of the peaceful spectator. But in exchange, what a tiring glare for the eyes! what burning flushes in the cheeks! And when it smokes (which often happens), and the wind and rain come down the chimney! and then what risk and alarm when the flames catch the tails of a coat, or the flounces of a dress, or when it alarms and compromises the safety of the neighbourhood by ascending its hollow way to visit the interior of the walls, and illuminate the tiles of the roofs!