

In Tarshish, likewise, the Arabian Jews, learned in all the wisdom of the East, found refuge from persecution when "the Koran or death" was the alternative offered by the Prophet of Mecca.* But in the seventh century Tarshish failed them as a refuge; Christian persecution had set in; and the King of the Visigoths published an edict by which the Jews were commanded either to forsake their religion, or quit his dominions.

Multitudes wandered forth again; but some thousands, weary and heart-sick, submitted to be baptised, rather than leave the land of their adoption.

When in 712, Count Julian in his revenge betrayed his country to the African Moors, the baptised Jews took part with the invaders, and hailed with joy the new era. Hundreds of their brethren dispersed in Africa, accompanied the Moors to Spain, and were entrusted with the command of Toledo, whilst the Moors pursued their conquests in other parts of the Peninsula.

A golden age now dawned upon the hitherto despised race. Under Moorish rule, Moslems, Jews and Christians had equal rights, and equal freedom, liberty of conscience was allowed to all, and from henceforward the Israelites took firm root in the soil. "They planted, they builded," and they worshipped after the manner of their forefathers.

It is said that this synagogue, now called SANTA MARIA LA BIANCA was built in the ninth century. The new temple rivalled that of Solomon in magnificence; its beams and rafters were made of cedar brought from Lebanon; beams which to this day support the roof, bearing witness to the surpassing strength and purity of the wood.† The very ground whereon they stood and worshipped was holy, for they had conveyed within the synagogue some of the sacred dust of Palestine, guarding it from unhallowed contact by a covering of painted tiles. Horse shoe arches, resting on pillars, form the aisles, whilst the whole of the rich plaster

* Arabia afforded retirement to St. Paul after his conversion, and Jews from Arabia were among "the devout men present on the day of Pentecost."

† The wood of the cedar of Lebanon is so bitter that, it is said, no insect will touch it.

work is wrought by the hand, as if in remembrance of the "carvings of open flowers overlaid with gold," which adorned the glorious temple of Solomon. It is supposed from the form of these arches, and the peculiar delicacy of the plaster work, that Moslems helped to build this house dedicated to the service of the One God, even though they must have known that the worshippers within these walls acknowledged not Mahomet as His prophet. This thought gives a special interest to these horse-shoe arches, which tell of religious freedom in that ninth century; and what Protestant, standing under their shadow in SANTA MARIA LA BIANCA, will not desire that Catholic Spain should evince the like tolerance in the nineteenth century.

Protected thus by the Moors, the Jews lived in peace and prosperity singing their hymns of praise, each one under the shade of his own fig-tree, their race no longer despised, but rather held in honour.

Two centuries elapsed, and again in 1085 the Christian hosts advanced to the gates of Toledo; and the city passed from Moorish rule to that of the Christian King Alonso VI.

The golden age of the Jews became dim: under Christian rule* a tax was levied upon them. The sum of "30 pieces," the price of Him whom they of the children of Israel did value was set upon every Jewish head, but notwithstanding this they retained their influence in the State, and it was not till the close of the fourteenth century that they were dispossessed of their privileges. Up to this period they had risen to places of trust throughout Spain; they were employed not merely as tax-gatherers (the office they had held under Roman dominion in Judea); but Jews were consulted by Kings and Princes. They were the best physicians, the most successful merchants, the ablest financiers of the country, and to them was often committed the management of the Royal Treasury; their intelligence and learning made them necessary to the well being of the state; whilst their wealth excited the cupidity of the nation they served. The crisis of

* See Milman's "History of the Jews."

their history was in 1492, in the time of Ferdinand and Isabella—"those wicked ones"—as they are justly called by the race they baptised, burnt, and expelled from Spain. Henceforth the land was to be purged alike from Jew and Moslem—Christian baptism or exile—the choice lay between these.

Within four months every unbaptised Jew was ordered to quit Spain,—a decree dictated by the fierce zeal of Torquemada,—and 170,000 Jews left houses and lands, preferring poverty and exile rather than forsake the faith of their fathers. Then ensued scenes of horror and misery such as no words can describe. Despoiled of their wealth, perishing from exhaustion, thousands died of famine or pestilence, and "the wicked ones" deemed in their blindness that they had performed an act acceptable in the sight of the Most High, the all-merciful Father of us all! With the expulsion of the Jews ended the commerce and prosperity of Toledo, and Christians who had hunted down the chosen race bent the knee to the God of Israel in the old Jewish synagogues.

In the afternoon we visited the Hospital of "LA SANTA CRUZ," built in the 16th century; and perhaps there was no building in Toledo, with the exception of the Cathedral, which impressed us more than this; so rich in its decoration, so simple in its form.

Over the portal is a fine piece of sculpture. It represents St. Helena, the mother of Constantine, discovering the Holy Cross, which had been lost to the faithful for upwards of three centuries.

After her conversion, Helena undertook a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, in search of the Cross on which the Saviour had suffered. Under a heathen temple at Jerusalem she found three crosses; but who could reveal to her which of these was the Cross of Him who came to give life unto the world?

As she and her attendants stood there, distracted by doubt, a dead man was carried past. The bearers were commanded to stop, and place the body upon the three crosses in succession; and, as the lifeless form

touched the third, he that was dead arose and gave thanks; by the virtue of the Cross of Christ, he had passed from death unto life. Such is the legend.

The Church is built in the form of a Latin Cross, without any side aisles to divert the eye from its grand simplicity, or any "coro" to diminish the effect of the vast length of the nave.

Alas! however, as we advanced, we found that in this age of desecration, a "Board" holds its sittings where once the choir met, and in the centre of the transept stands a graceless table, with pens and ink, and seats around for the members of the board; the sacred chancel, too, is now an arsenal; and military trophies fill the place where once were celebrated holy mysteries.

Much of this beautiful Gothic building has been destroyed, as modern Spain cares little for the artistic gems of past ages of which she possesses so many. Church architecture was in its glory in Spain when the Reformation had well nigh trodden it down in other lands, but now that Christian art has awakened as a giant refreshed from sleep, and the love of Church Architecture—with Gothic art as its purest type—has revived throughout Christendom, it would seem in Spain to be a time to destroy rather than to build up what is beautiful.

Faded pictures of Isabella la Catolica, and Cardinal Mendoza hang on the walls of "La Santa Cruz." The Queen died in 1504, the year that the foundation stone of this building was laid. Ten years before this date Mendoza had expired, leaving a will by which he made his royal mistress his executor: a trust she faithfully fulfilled. The College of La Santa Cruz, at Valladolid—now turned into the Museo—and the Foundling Hospital, at Toledo,—now transformed into a Military College,—were built by his express wish, and the whole cost defrayed by the money entrusted to her care

Leaving the Santa Cruz, we made our way to

THE ALCAZAR, which crowns the rocky heights of Toledo. It gains nothing by a nearer approach—on

the contrary, it loses in grandeur. It has twice been burnt down; once during the war of the Succession, and again by the French in the Peninsular war, and ruined walls are all that now remain of the famous Alcazar.

The names of two Queens are connected with this old fortress. Blanche of Bourbon, the unhappy and deserted wife of Pedro the Cruel, who lived for a short time in state in the Alcazar of Toledo. Her beauty and gentleness had touched the hearts of the nobles, and made the people of Toledo enthusiastic in her cause. They rose against the king, and the fortress destined by him to be her prison, became, for awhile, her palace.

In a few months Toledo was forced to open its gates, and the young Queen was a prisoner in the hands of the cruel Pedro. After a captivity of ten years, she was murdered.

In the "Ancient Spanish Ballads" Queen Blanche, whose piety and misfortunes had endeared her name amongst the people, is thus made to lament her cruel fate—

"The crown they put upon my head was a crown of blood and sighs,
God grant me now another crown more precious in the skies."

The other Queen imprisoned in this Alcazar, was Mariana, Queen Regent of Spain. She was widow of Philip IV., and mother of Charles II., and was held here in honorable captivity by Don John of Austria, the natural son of her husband.

Queen Mariana had always hated this Prince, who was distinguished for his energy and sound sense. During the life of Philip, she had feared his influence over the mind of the King, and artfully contrived to sow discord between them, so that the Prince was banished from his father's court. Mariana was appointed Regent during the minority of her son, but her misgovernment, and the audacity of her confessor, Nithard, so exasperated the grandees, that they forced her to recall Don John, and share with him the Regency.

Nithard was immediately banished by the Prince without being permitted to take leave of the Queen.

It was on this occasion that the arrogant priest uttered those words so full of priestly assumption, "Ye ought to have more respect to one who has God daily in his hand, and your Queen at his feet!"

When Charles II. assumed the reins of government, he placed Don John at the helm, and the first act of the Prince was to confine Mariana in the Alcazar at Toledo.

Don John had not only supplanted her in the mind of the feeble Charles; he had also opposed her in the selection of a daughter-in-law, giving a French instead of an Austrian bride to her son.

The marriage was ushered in by the death of Don John, which event restored the Queen-Mother to liberty.

The afternoon was wearing on, and we descended without further delay towards the ancient Visagra Gate, by which the Cid and Alonso VI. entered Toledo. The old Moorish gateway was closed by Charles V., and the new Visagra of Philip II. has taken its place as the entrance gate.

A double line of fortified walls guards the city, and as we leant over the parapet with the Tagus flowing beneath—the remains of a Roman amphitheatre and an ancient Basilica were pointed out to us. In this last ruin the early Councils of Toledo were held, and the errors of Arianism were renounced by the Gothic King Recared.*

The day had become stormy, gusts of wind moved the gloomy waters of the Tagus, forming crested waves on its surface, and clouds of dust swept past us along the road, as the grey oxen met us, their huge horns bound with cords, dragging their burden up the steep path.

We now bade farewell to Imperial Toledo, where Roman, Goth, Israelite, and Moor, meet in decayed grandeur, and we started by the evening train at 5.45 for CASTILLEJO.

* Arianism was renounced by him in the sixth century through the teaching of Leander.

TOLEDO TO SEVILLE

Viâ CASTILLEJO AND ARANJUEZ.

Railway arrangements in this country are very different to railway arrangements in France, where a "bouillon," or "café au lait," may be had at every station. In Spain, if you neglect the times appointed, you must fast for many hours, as nothing is to be had at the wretched little stations. Spaniards provide themselves with baskets of provisions; and English travellers would do well to take the hint. Dining at Toledo would have interfered with our sight-seeing: we therefore settled to go back as far as Aranjuez and dine there. This plan would secure us food and rest, neither of which could be had at Castillejo Junction.

ARANJUEZ.—At 6.35 the train reached Castillejo; in another hour we were at Aranjuez.

It was now dusk, but no omnibus awaited travellers at the station. A short walk of ten minutes brought us to the Palace, its low white walls looking cold and ghastly against the black wintry trees of the royal gardens, close to which is the Fonda "des Ambassadeurs."

We had already telegraphed to Madrid to secure a coupé by the evening train to Seville, which train would reach Aranjuez at 10.50. Three quiet hours were therefore before us in this clean, comfortable, little inn. Partridges were provided for our repast, which travellers should remember to ask for at a Spanish fonda, as Spanish partridges have long held a well-deserved renown. So esteemed were they by Charles V. that they were often expedited to Flanders for the royal table, and were not forgotten at Yuste—the gastronomic weaknesses of the Emperor having followed him to the cloister. The excellence of these birds is also recorded by an English ambadress* at

* Lady Fanshaw.

Madrid, whose notice of Spanish fare in the reign of Philip IV. holds good to the present day. She affirmed "Spanish partridges, Spanish eggs, and Spanish bread to be the best in the world."

To all this we give our hearty assent. Would that we could say as much of the wine, but at Aranjuez, as elsewhere, it is strongly impregnated with the pig skin in which it is kept; and though this flavour may be acceptable to the orthodox Spaniard in his abhorrence of Jews and Jewish prejudices, it certainly makes the wine most repugnant in taste to both Jew and Gentile of other lands.

The night was wet and pitch dark when the hour of starting arrived. No conveyance could be had, but lanterns were provided by which we guided our steps back to the station. The train was late and very crowded, and we were greeted by the unpleasant intelligence that "there were no coupés!"

Our indignation was great at the ignorance of our Spanish servant, but English wrath produces no effect on Castilian gravity. We were hurried and hustled into separate carriages—our wraps, cushions, and handbags thrust anywhere, and the train was off.

Four hours ensued of insufferable heat and smoke, till at a quarter to three in the morning, we reached

ALCAZAR.—One of our party now appeared at the window with the joyful intelligence that there was an empty carriage on the line. Quickly we flew to take possession, but short-lived was our enjoyment: we were tracked by a railway official, who insisted on two of our number vacating their seats. It was the carriage for señoras, and though empty till now, it must not be invaded by the other sex! In vain we offered to pay for the carriage as far as Cordova, if only we might have it to ourselves: it was contrary to all rule, and, as we knew Spanish officials to be inflexible, we were obliged to submit.

The early morning gave to our view an enchanting scene. In one night a change seemed to have come over the face of the earth, and we were ready to exclaim in the poetic language of the Hebrew King,

“Lo! the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear upon the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come!”

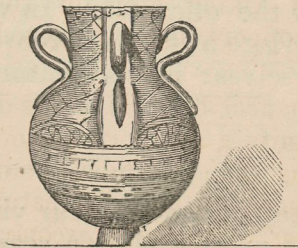
We were among vineyards and olive-gardens, rocks covered with brilliant flowers, among which were rich masses of the gum cistus (or rock rose) in full bloom, poppies of a ruby red, purple heath, golden alyssum and blue convolvulus, delighting the eye with their radiance: whilst flowing softly along was seen the Guadalquivir, its waters tinged with the red colour of the soil, and its fertile banks making glad the towns and villages on its course.

At half-past eight in the morning we reached MENJIBAR station, where we breakfasted.

Another five hours and we were at CORDOVA, in summer heat, and amid tropical vegetation.

We had already had fifteen consecutive hours of railway travelling from Aranjuez, but eager to get on to Seville for the *fêtes*, we determined to pursue our journey for four hours more.

After a respite of twenty minutes, we were again steaming through a region of palms and prickly pears, castor oil plants, and aloes; trees laden with oranges and citrons were followed by groves of silver grey olives, their gnarled trunks seeming to rise out of a cloth of gold,—the yellow wild flowers forming a carpet beneath them,—ruins of Moorish towers crowned the hills beyond; and at length, in the midst of a luxuriant plain watered by the Guadalquivir, SEVILLE the capital of Andalusia came in view, to revive the drooping spirits of the weary travellers.



WATER POT IN COMMON USE AT TOLEDO.

SEVILLE.

SEVILLE.—PLAZA DE LA MAGDALENA, No. 8.—It was fair time at Seville, and every hotel was full: rooms, however, had been taken for us in a private house overlooking the pretty Plaza de la Magdalena. How delicious was that first evening! listening to the rippling fountain, and inhaling the scent of the orange blossom wafted into our glazed balcony from the double line of orange trees in the Plaza! at each corner rose picturesque stalls for cooling drinks, and the cry of “*Agua, agua,*” reached the ear as the water carrier passed on his way, bearing his earthen pitcher on his back, and calling upon the thirsty to drink.

Sunday morning, April 18.

Daybreak was heralded in, not by the crowing of the cock, but by the tinkling of the bells of the mules passing beneath our windows, laden with provisions, whilst a feeble voice in monotonous accents had been ringing for some time in our ears, repeating incessantly “*Pater noster, pater noster.*” Who was this, whose eyes prevented the night watches?

Curiosity forced us at last to rise, and in a narrow street below, closely wedged against the wall, sat—not, alas! a saint—but a hoary beggar with outstretched hand asking alms of the muleteers, and pocketing his coppers, as he muttered the divine taught prayer.

How glorious is a southern spring! but nowhere is it more glorious than in radiant sunny Spain, where earth and sky seem to bid all creatures “sing, rejoice, and give thanks.” Sky, scent, scene, all were enchanting. As we raised our eyes to the pure, transparent blue above, not a speck of white floated upon the calm

unruffled surface, but, far as the eye could reach, all was blue—not deep, not intense, but clear as crystal—like the Apocalyptic sea of glass before the throne, and beneath the green acacias and orange trees, children were playing with their snow-white lambs,* calling them each by name, and the lambs following them.

No English Church is to be found in Seville, but at Seville leave has been granted to build one; and it is proposed either to do this; or to purchase one of the vacated Roman Catholic Churches for the celebration of our service.

In the meantime, the members of our Church meet in a room in the Calle de Zaragoza. We had some distance to walk, and as we proceeded through the gay streets, we found every outer door left open, disclosing an inner gate of light metal work, through which was seen a pretty tiled court; sometimes a marble fountain formed the centre in which bananas dipped their long trailing leaves, whilst myrtle and orange trees, and large plants of the daphne were planted around; or if a more humble "patio" presented itself, honeysuckles and roses took the place of more costly shrubs, but everywhere the air was filled with the fragrance of these courts.

It was with something of the feeling of those belonging to a despised sect that we entered the room, where in the heart of this crowded city Protestants meet and worship, and it needed the thought of the "large upper room furnished" to reconcile the mind to so poor a place for the Anglican service, in a city possessing so many Churches,† and boasting of so grand a Cathedral.

The English Chaplain at Seville, Rev. L. S. Tugwell, has also a service in Spanish, which is well attended. The Litany, Collects, and Creed are read:

* These Pascal lambs are of a beautiful breed; perfectly white; except at the tips of the ears and feet; and following their young masters like dogs.

† Since writing the above one of these churches has been purchased by the Scotch church for the Spanish Protestant service for the sum of £1,500, and if English Protestants would act with the same liberality, our Liturgy would before long be "exercised in an open manner, and thus bring Spaniards to have a better opinion of us, and of our Church." (See Howell's Letters.)

Spaniards joining heartily in the responses, and fully appreciating our beautiful Liturgy.

In the afternoon a lively scene presented itself from our windows; crowds were seen making their way on foot, and on mule back, and in every variety of vehicle, towards the Plaza de Toros, on the banks of the Great River, where was to take place—a bull fight—the dark spot upon a Spanish feast day.

The black mantilla was laid aside, and the far less pretty white mantilla was seen covering the jet black hair, and partly shading the sparkling eyes of the Andalusian women, who despised all protection from the noonday heat, save that of the fan. Every colour of the rainbow was seen in their dress, whilst the men in velvet cap, slightly pointed in the crown, short jacket, and red or blue scarf round the waist, were equally striking and picturesque. The bells of the Giralda, and every Church in Seville were pealing forth, the whole city seemed in movement, and before long the Plaza de la Magdalena was left deserted—with no voice to be heard—not even that of the old beggar in the street below.

The Cathedral was near at hand, and we walked there. This Church, said to be the largest and grandest in Spain, was built by the chapter in the 15th century, the canons nobly relinquishing their incomes that “they might erect a fitting temple for their God.”

It stands on the site, and is of the same size as the mosque which was pulled down in 1401; the interior perhaps recalls Milan Cathedral to the mind; but it is altogether grander. Five imposing aisles divide the nave, beyond which are side chapels, and though the centre is encumbered by the Coro and Capilla Mayor, its vast dimensions are seen as you look up the side aisles, or bend your steps towards the marble slab in the centre which marks the burial place of Ferdinand Columbus—the son of the great navigator. He “who gave a new world to Castile and Leon” was given no rest-

ing place in Spain, his body and the chains with which he was bound and sent home a captive after his third voyage, lie buried together in the Cathedral of Havanna.

No Cathedral is more impressive in its intense solemnity than that of Seville: there rises at once an instinctive feeling in the mind, "the place whereon I stand is holy ground." Everything that art and munificence could devise has been done to beautify and make glorious the sanctuary of God. The arches are of prodigious height, and a rich glow of light falls on them through the lantern and beautiful windows of Flemish glass, casting the most wonderful hues on the lofty columns and high altar, and streaking with soft tints the somewhat sombre marble pavement.

THE CAPILLA REAL is at the east end of the Cathedral. Here in a silver sarcophagus lies Ferdinand the Saint, who conquered Seville from the Moors in the thirteenth century. His son, Alfonso the Wise, the father of our good Queen Eleanor, is also buried here with his Queen, and in this royal vault their likewise rests a woman of erring name, but who, through her descendants,* gave a line of Kings to Spain, and a Queen to England. Maria de Padilla, the left handed wife of Pedro the Cruel, reigned as a Queen in Seville and in this Cathedral she was given royal sepulture.

Service was going on, and as the procession of priests moved from the Coro to the High Altar, every knee was bent, the rustling of the fan ceased—for Spanish women carry their fans to Church as regularly as their beads—all were in prayer. The stillness was broken by voices which rose loud upon the ear with unpleasant familiarity. They were tourists and our country women. A verger drew near and requested them to be silent; but again the offence was repeated, and the English señoras were begged to withdraw. Strange that Protestants professing a purer faith, should usually be recognised in Roman Catholic Churches, rather by their want of

* Charles V., Philip II., and our Queen Mary were all descendants of Maria de Padilla.