

compartments, which strike the eye more agreeably, as they exactly answer to the pilasters of the front, and to the doors and windows. Without the balustrade is a spacious walk, free for all passengers, and which, towards the west, extends to a wall supporting the natural terrafs formed there by the eminence; and towards the north, to the apartments of some officers of the palace, which face it. On the south and east side of the area, is a terrafs, extending two hundred feet from the quadrangle; it is bordered by a balustrade, and commands a most delightful view of the garden.

THIS grand terrafs terminates in a wall of rustic arch-work, called Grand terrafs. OBRA ROMANA; and, after extending itself along the two façades abovementioned, with some projections towards the east, it joins the angle of the north tower. This wall has a very fine effect; and the terrafs is bordered with delightful gardens, fountains, and other decorations, which we shall describe in the sequel. At present the principal part demands our attention; and it is proper, first, to treat of the particulars in the internal area of the quadrangle, as they are exhibited in the plate; which the reader, for forming a more adequate idea of these parts, is to place constantly before him; as, by that means, he will see the part in question; and it will, in some measure, be the same as if a guide accompanied him, and pointed out the several pieces of the original.

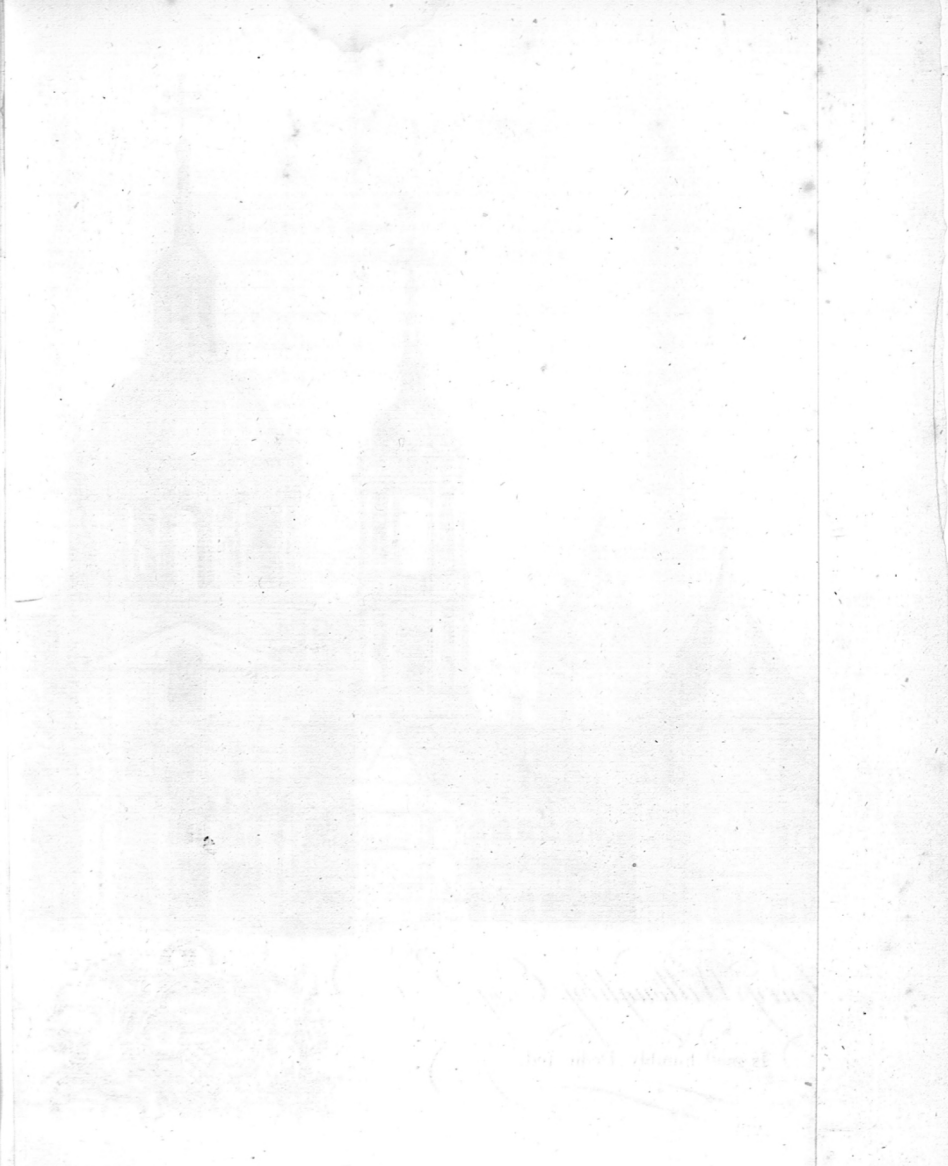
C H A P. III.

Division of the Quadrangle into its principal Parts; together with a Description of the Portico.

THE whole structure is divided into three principal parts, which fill the inside of the quadrangle; and are of such prodigious dimensions and magnificence, that any one of them would do honor to the most opulent and flourishing kingdom. The buildings on each side, going from east to west, form the grand entrance of the portico and church. On the south-side are five beautiful cloisters, one much larger than the rest, but all belonging to the convent: and, on the north-side, are five others, all of similar dimensions, and of extraordinary beauty, belonging to the college and palace: all these communicate with each other, and, with the greatest uniformity, correspond in every part, both with regard to figure and disposition.

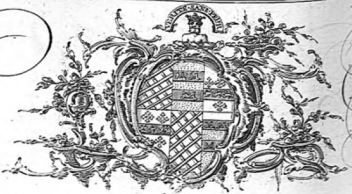
THE roofs reciprocally unite, and, by their frequent traverses, form a kind of beautiful labyrinth. Some are covered with lead, others with slate, and, at certain distances, strengthened with iron plates: and, at the rebuilding of the palace, after the dreadful conflagration, greater precaution was taken in this respect, by turning arches in the inside. The junction of all these roofs represents a gridiron; so attentive was the pious sovereign, that every part should declare his motive for erecting this edifice, composed of so many astonishing pieces. Let us make a tour through them all, and describe their symmetry, workmanship, and various beauties; beginning with that in the center, the portico, and church.

AFTER

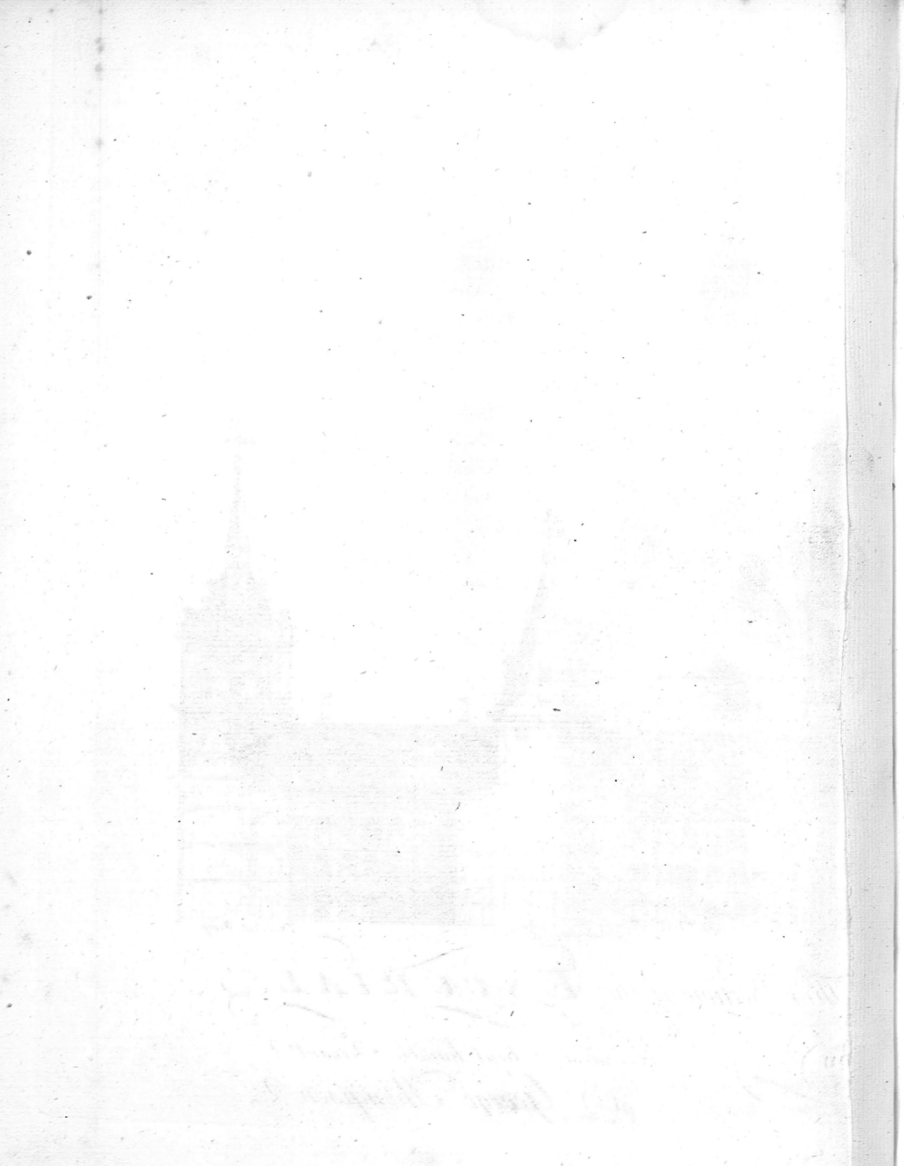




To Henry Willoughby Esq^r
 Is most humbly Dedicated,



This Section of the ESCURIAL,
 By His most obedient humble Servant,
 George Thompson.



AFTER passing through the principal gate, you enter the portico Portico. or vestibule, extending from the college to the convent, thirty feet in breadth, and eighty-four in length; it is finely decorated with pilasters, arches and windows, in the form of a cross, and is allowed to be a judicious piece of architecture. Over it is the library, having two doors, one for the convent, and the other for the halls of the college, with two windows over them, and in the front three stately arches, leading into a court of inexpressible grandeur. Here the eye is struck with surprize, at the august frontispiece of the church, the basilic of St. Laurence, on each side of which is a lofty tower, and in the center a magnificent cupola. The pillars, intercolumniations, arcades, royal statues, cornices, pilasters and windows, by their disposition, number and workmanship, astonish the curious spectator. Every one, Effect of architecture. at his first entering this court, feels the same sensations, as at hearing suddenly a fine concert; architecture having the same effect on the eye, as music on the ear; the mind is absorbed in an extasy. The propriety and artful arrangement of these objects are expressive of the spiritual intention of this edifice, and render it analogous to Aug. lib. ii. de ord. c. 11. the human soul.

THE length of this court, from the arches which form its entrance, to the flight of steps before the church, is one hundred and ninety feet; and from the first step to the arches that support the frontispiece, forty; the whole being two hundred and thirty feet, to a breadth of one hundred and thirty-six, which, according to Vitruvius, Vitruv. lib. vi. cap. 4. is the most beautiful proportion for porticos. The side walls are of free-stone, decorated with elegant pilasters in grand relievo, and five rows of windows, forming a very splendid appearance. At the height of fifteen feet is a fillet or middle cornice; and the central part is

E

terminated

terminated by modillions supporting the projecture of the crown. A view of this conveys some idea of the famous porticos of ancient Rome; as that of Augustus on the Palatine Mount; that of Gordian in the Campus Martius; that of Agrippa in his Pantheon, and many others so highly celebrated by antiquity.

Grand portal
of the church.

THE front of this church is one of the most complete pieces of the whole structure: never did the doric order more happily unite strength with beauty. It has five majestic arches, fourteen feet in the clear, and of double the height. These form the entrance into the vestibule before the church, and are all remarkably beautiful, especially that in the center, which is supported by six large pillars; the pedestals, chapiters, architraves, frizes, cornices, and crowns, with the variety of triglyphs, metopas, and modillions, are beheld by a curious observer with the greatest pleasure, as they exhibit all the graces of the doric order, executed in the most masterly manner. The plane, on which the pedestals stand, is thirty feet in breadth, and is ascended by seven steps, making ten feet more, which are the forty feet added to the length of the portico. And surely, it was a very judicious precept of architecture, to place flights of steps at the entrance of churches, as they add dignity to these sacred structures. The position of these columns cannot be sufficiently admired; two on each side are so placed, that their distance, at the lower part of the shaft, is only equal to their diameters; and the distance between the other two, something above two diameters and a half. The height of them, together with their bases and chapiters, which support the architrave, frize, and other pieces, is forty-five feet, and the whole height of this amazing colonnade, from the bottom of the pedestal to the edge of the cornice, fifty-five feet.

Precepts of
architecture.
Vitruv. lib. iii.
cap. 2.

OVER

OVER these five arches are five windows, seven feet in width, and fourteen in height; and over these another range of windows in the most grand taste. On the six columns of the lower part are an equal number of pedestals, above thirteen feet high, embellished with a plinth and cornice, and on each a large statue of the finest stone that could be collected from the neighbouring quarries. They represent six kings of the tribe of Judah, and house of David, all rendered illustrious by their piety. The height of these statues is something more than seventeen feet, the drapery splendid, denoting royalty, and, which have a very pleasing effect, the heads, hands, and feet are of white marble. The middle parts are filled by David, and Solomon his son, as being the monarchs who made the greatest figure: next to David is king Hezekiah, and next to Solomon Josiah, and at the extremities Manasseh and Jehosaphat. On the heads of these statues are bronze crowns, enamelled with gold, and still retain their original lustre. Each of these crowns weighs an arroba, or a quarter of a hundred (a small weight when compared to that commonly annexed to crowns,) and when viewed from below, appears of a just proportion. In one of their hands are scepters of the same metal with their crowns, equally bright as when first made, and the weight of the six, twelve arrobas. Their particular emblems indicate that these were the monarchs, who all, though not equally, contributed to the building or improving that famous temple. Each of these kings has an inscription, shewing his name, and the actions he performed towards augmenting the splendor and glory of the temple. These inscriptions are engraven on a tablet of white marble, and inserted in the dies of the pedestals on which the statues are placed.

Statues of the
portico.

DESCRIPTION OF

BENEATH the mantle of David is seen the hilt of a large sword, weighing almost five arrobas, to denote his being a great warrior. The harp, which is also of bronze, enamelled with gold, weighs fifteen arrobas. His inscription is as follows :

DAVID
OPERIS
EXEMPLAR
A. DOMINO
RECE-
PIT.

SOLOMON, as an emblem of his wisdom, has a book in his left hand: his countenance is mild, youthful, and remarkably pleasing, and his gesture indicates peace. He being also the prince by whom the temple was built, and dedicated to the Almighty, with the most amazing magnificence and solemnity, his inscription is this :

SALOMON
TEMPLUM
DÑO.
ÆDIFICA-
TUM DEDI-
CAVIT.

HEZEKIAH has in his hand a golden boat (a vessel for carrying incense for the censers), and near him stands a goat, alluding to his having restored the altar and sacrifices, which had been neglected by the idolatrous kings of Israel; and having, in order to cleanse the temple

temple

temple from the pollutions of idolatry, assembled the people to celebrate the passover, his inscription runs thus :

E Z E C H I A S
M U N D A T A
D O M O
P H A S E
C E L E B R A -
V I T.

JOSIAH, as having caused his people to observe the substance of the law, as contained in the book of Deuteronomy, holds in his left hand a sceptre, and in his right a roll ; devout princes, making more frequent use of the latter than of the former ; his inscription is this :

I O S I A S
V O L U M E N
L E G I S
D O M I N I
I N V E -
N I T.

JEHOSAPHAT, who caused the high-places of the idols, which the blind people worshipped, to be destroyed, and their groves to be cut down, holds in his left hand an axe of enamelled bronze ; and as he also revived the sacrifices, taught the law, and settled the Levites and priests in possession of the temple, he has near him several leaves, and a goat. His inscription is as follows :

I OSOPHAT

DESCRIPTION OF

I O S O P H A T
L U C I S
A B L A T I S
L E G E M
P R O P A G A -
V I T.

MANASSEH, who is placed the left on the left hand, has a large chain, and the wretched clothes of a captive at his feet. He holds in his hand a pair of gilt compasses, and a square, to denote, that on his being released from captivity, through the merciful interposition of Providence, and repenting of the errors which had plunged him into these calamities, he zealously applied himself to repair the walls of the holy city, clear the temple of those vain images, which he himself had impiously placed there, and restored the altar, that sacrifices might be offered on it. His inscription runs thus :

M A N A S S E S
C O N T R I -
T U S
A L T A R E
D. I N S T A U -
R A V I T.

ALL these statues have an appearance truly royal, and strike the spectators with a pleasing reverence. They were made by the same hand as that of St. Laurence at the principal gate, and were formed out of the same stone. They surpass every thing performed by modern artists, and may be compared with the most celebrated works of antiquity.

THE

THE letters of the inscriptions are of bronze, painted black, and very large, that they may be easily read at a proper distance. These inscriptions were not added till the year 1660, though certainly very necessary, as before it was not easily known what kings the statues represented, what the emblems meant, or with what intention they were placed here. Aries Montano is said to have composed inscriptions, which were intended to have been placed where those at present stand, but were mislaid. Others were immediately wrote, but so long that there was not room to insert them on the die of the pedestal, unless engraved in too small a character to be read at such a distance, and were therefore laid aside. To supply this defect, I presented to his majesty Philip IV, the above taken from texts of Scripture, to which was annexed a draught of the pedestals, with the inscriptions wrote upon them, and a scale, that his majesty might have a more just idea of the dimensions of the letters, in proportion to the surface of the die; and his majesty, after satisfying himself, that they were properly adapted to the pedestals and the distance, ordered them to be engraved, contrary to my expectations; for I was persuaded, they would have no better fate than the former, as I could not presume to compare myself with persons of such distinguished merit.

THE portal of the church, in which these statues are placed, is also adorned with six pilasters, half a foot in relievo, together with windows, fillets, and other decorations. The whole terminates in a most superb frontispiece of excellent workmanship, in which an arched window, thirteen feet wide, and twenty-six high, interrupts the upper cornice, but at the same time heightens the beauty of the
façade;

façade; above this are the battlements, and leaden globes on the top of the pilasters, four at the two angles, and two in the centre.

Towers of
the church.

ON the sides of this frontispiece are two towers of exact proportion, and beautiful architecture, decorated with an infinite variety of pilasters in an elegant taste, with their bases, chapters and cornices. The intercolumnary spaces are diversified with a great number of niches and windows, very advantageously disposed, and divided by fillets, which are continued along all the four fronts of the structure. On the top are large arched openings, having a ball in each, and over the upper cornice, stone battlements, and battlements with spires, terminated with gold globes, directly vertical to the pilasters: above all these appears a splendid cupola, with a lantern with eight windows, and a very ornamental base and chapter. Upon the top of the dome is a stone spire, supporting a gilt bell-metal globe, five feet in diameter, and on the globe a cross with a fane. The piece is equally astonishing in its dimensions and workmanship. The height from the ground to the cross is two hundred seventy feet; and every piece of an admirable symmetry with the principal cymborium, and the whole fabric.

Bells.

ON the side next the convent is a set of fine bells, newly cast; the former, which were remarkably heavy, having been melted in the conflagration. That belonging to the clock is the largest and best in all Spain.

Musical
chimes.

IN the other tower is also a set of bells, consisting of thirty-two in number. These were sent as a present to his majesty by count de Monterey, governor of Flanders, to replace the former. They are
in

in musical consonance, played on with keys like the organ, and make a very melodious concert with other instruments: accordingly they are a part of the solemn music on the principal festivals. Chimes are a Flemish invention, improved by the Germans. Were the ancients, who so highly gloried in the splendor of their buildings, to behold this frontispiece, with its two towers, they would own it was not at all inferior to those admirable pieces which were the subjects of their elogiums.

FACING this, and in the same court, is another, equally august: it stands at the back of the outward gate; and in the center of it, over the first arches, which from the entrance of the portico, is the library. Front of the library. The pilasters and fillets are half a foot in relievo. The columns, with their bases and chapters, belong to that of de los reyes, which also, above the arches, has large windows with lesser over them, five in each row, for the more free admission of light into the library; and, immediately over the lesser, are five circular windows for the conveniency of the upper apartments; so that nothing can surpass the grandeur and harmony of this court, both in the fronts and the ornaments of the walls. The number of the windows exceeds two hundred and forty; and every part of the building corresponds in such exact similarity, that, in this species of architecture, it is not to be paralleled, and therefore forms a suitable entrance to that sumptuous basilic, which shall make the subject of the following chapter.

AFTER passing through the arches of the frontispiece de los reyes, The vestibule of the church. the first object is the vestibule of the church, or, according to Vitruvius, the pronasus, which is synonymous with portal; this is an exquisite piece of architecture, decorated with pilasters, hollow
F squares,

squares, and niches, all in fine proportion, and with ornaments in the arcade, perpendicularly over them. Besides its singular beauty and variety of proper ornaments, it is likewise of great strength, standing in the principal part of the palace, and supporting the immense weight of the vaulted ceilings, the frontispiece and statues.

The convent
and college
gates.

ON the sides are two gates, facing each other; that on the right leads into the convent, and the other to the college; they are of an oblong figure, eight feet wide, and sixteen high, the sides, lintels, and other pieces, are curiously adorned with mouldings, &c. The distance between these doors, which form the length of this passage, is one hundred and thirty-eight feet, and the breadth, to the entrance of the church, twenty.

Church
doors.

THE church doors are five in number, answering to the five arches of the façade; they are likewise arched, and all of the same breadth and height. Over the two, placed on each side of the principal gate, are two inscriptions, in gilt brass, on a block of black marble: that on the right hand indicates the day on which his majesty, king Philip the second, dedicated the first stone of this temple to St. Laurence the Martyr, on St. Bernard's day, in the year 1563, and likewise the day of the translation of the most holy sacrament hither, when the venerable sacrifice of the mass was first celebrated; which was on the eve of the festival of St. Laurence. The inscription itself is as follows:

D. LAURENT.

THE ESCURIAL.

35

D. LAURENT. MART.

PHILIPP. OMN. HISP. REGN.
VTRISQUE, SICIL. HIERV. &c. REX.
HUIUS TEMPLI PRIMUM DEDICAVIT
LAPIDEM, D. BERNARDI SACRO DIE.

Anno M. D. LXIII.

RES DIVINA, FIERI IN EO COEPTA
PRIDIE FESTUM D. LAURENTIJ.

Anno M. D. LXXXVI.

THE other displays the piety and devotion of that most wise prince, in procuring the consecration of this basilic to be performed by Camillo Cayetano, patriarch of Alexandria, and apostolic nuncio, which was done on the thirtieth of August, 1595. The inscription is as follows :

PHILIPP. II.

OMNIUM HISP. REGNOR.

VTRISQUE, SICIL. HIER. &c. REX.
CAMILLI CAIET. ALEXANDR.
PATRIARCHÆ NUNTIJ APOST.
MINISTERIO, HANC BASILIC.
S. CHRISMATE CONSECRAND.
PIE, AC DEVOTE CURAVIT
DIE XXX. AUGUST. Ann. M. D. XCV.

THE two doors, at the extremities, open into two courts, on the side of the choir, where cisterns are placed for receiving the waters from the church spouts ; and even these are of a very elegant construction. That on the side of the college serves likewise for an entrance into the palace, all the several apartments of which have doors here. Let us now enter the basilic of St. Laurence, where we shall see human art and magnificence displayed in the most glorious manner.

C H A P. IV.

Description of the Church of St. Laurence.

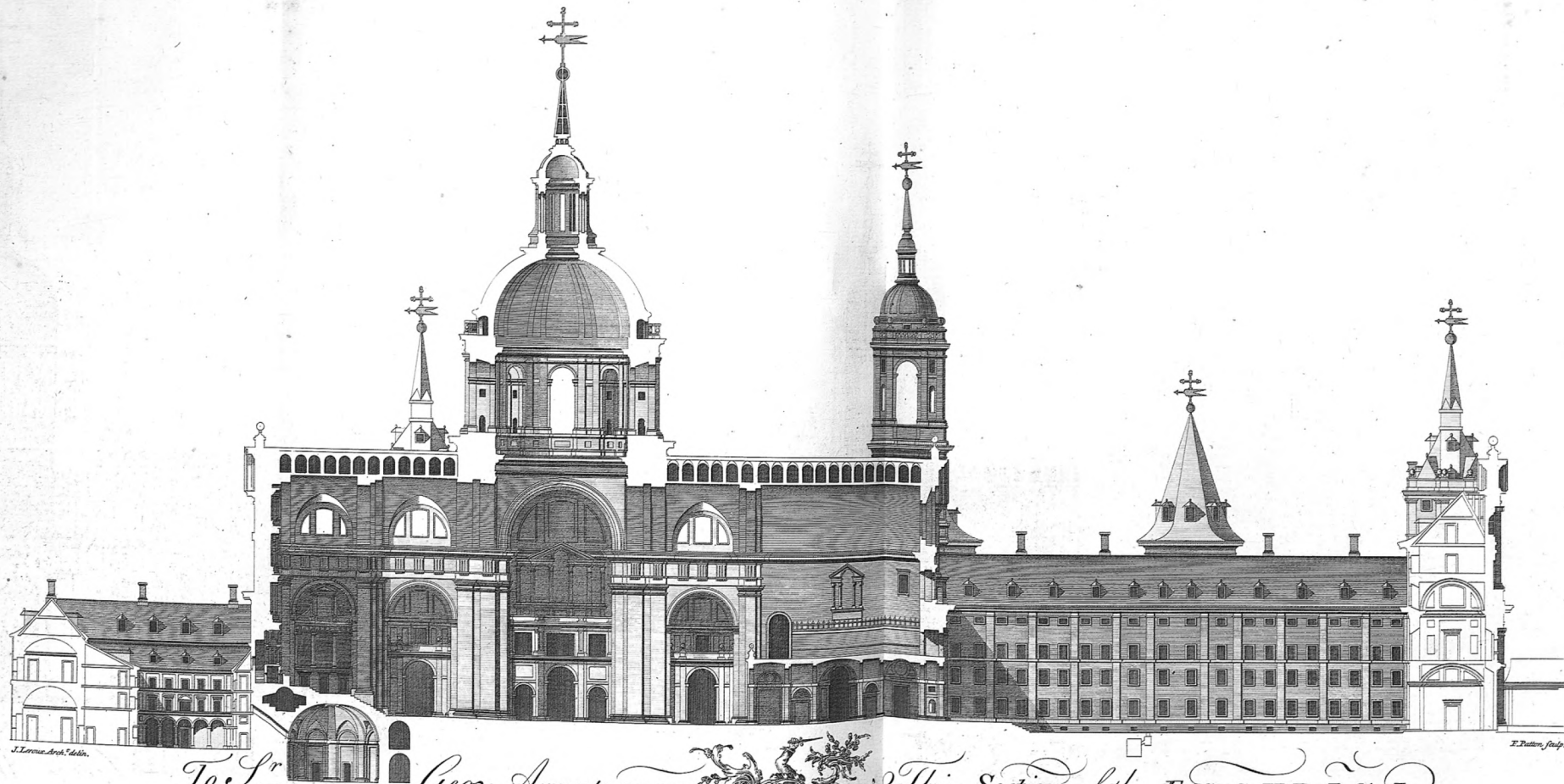
IN every kingdom, where the Christian religion is professed, many very splendid churches have been dedicated to the Spanish martyr St. Laurence, in regard to his ardent faith, his unconquered firmness, and powerful patronage.

Churches
dedicated to
St. Laurence.

THE city of Rome alone has five, and there is scarce a place where his glorious actions are not commemorated by some particular basilic dedicated to him: but the greatest glory of this intrepid champion is to have been the first martyr who had a public church of his name in the time of the pagan emperors, as then the Israelites, to avoid their sanguinary rage, were obliged to celebrate the holy offices in caves and subterraneous cemeteries.

First church
dedicated to
St. Laurence.

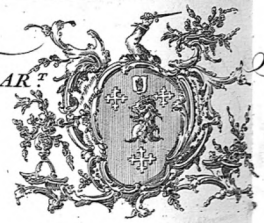
THE emperor Constantine, after his conversion to the faith, by that signal victory over Maxentius, built a church to St. Laurence, on the spot where he had been buried. This sacred structure was of such magnificence, that the chapel where the saint's body was deposited, rested on porphiry pillars, with a cupola, or cymborium, of silver, and many other superb embellishments, as may be seen in the writings of St. Damascenus. Here are united all the art, genius, and magnificence, which distinguishes it from the others; but in such a superior degree of perfection and grandeur, as evidently shew, that the intention of that great monarch in this amazing exertion of his power, was to leave nothing unattempted that could be either desired or performed.



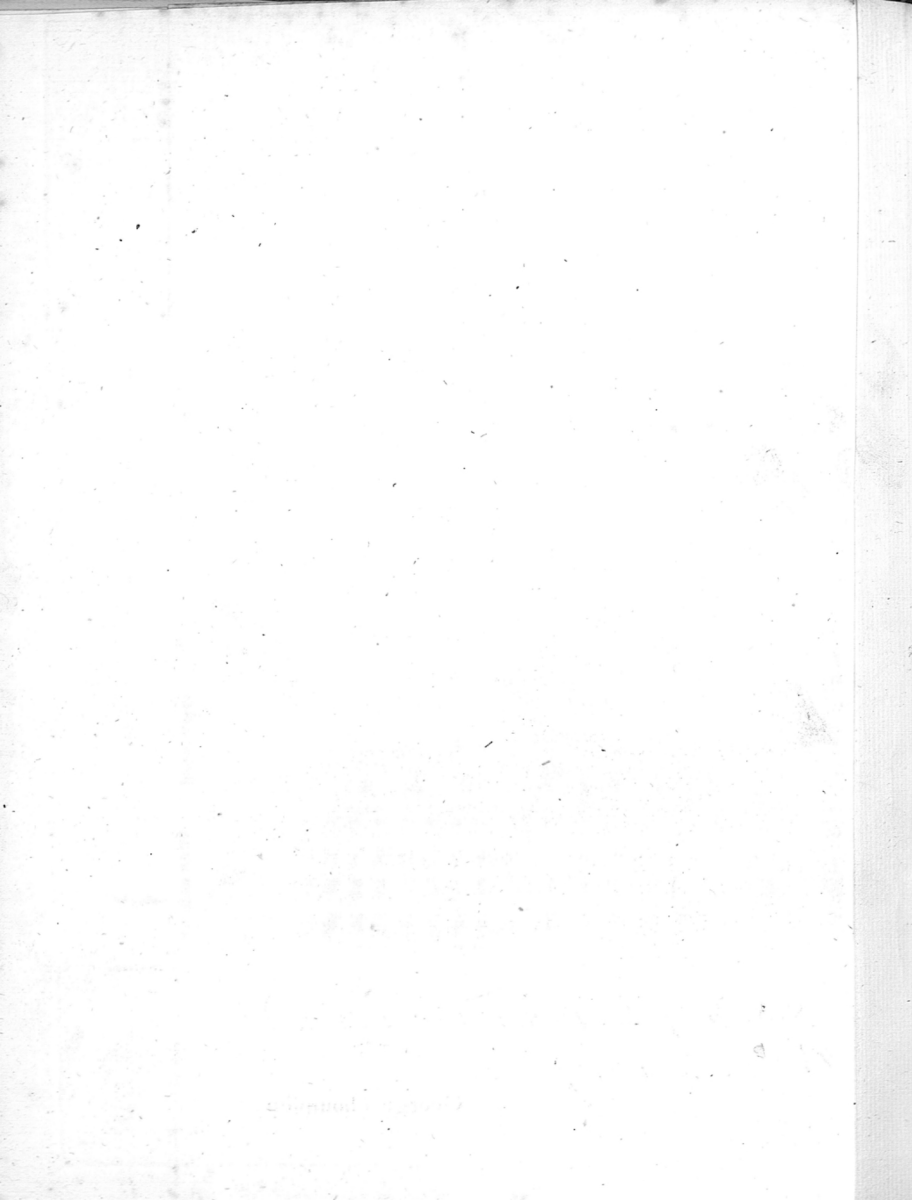
J. Lawrence Arch. delin.

J. Patton sculp.

To Sr. Geo: Armitage BAR^t
Is humbly Dedicated



This Section of the ESCURIAL
By his most Obed. servant,
George Thompson.



formed. It is impossible to enter it without being lost in astonishment. The capacity, elevation, symmetry, decorations, and resplendent magnificence unite to strike the mind with a religious awe.

THE length of this stately fabric, from the entrance of the five gates, and the arches of the frontispiece de los reyes, beforementioned, to the wall of the great altar, on which the altar piece is painted, is three hundred and sixty-four feet, and the breadth, from the wall of the convent's principal cloister, to that of the great gallery of the house and the cloister of the palace, is two hundred and thirty. Within this space are contained the great chapel, the choir, and the side arches, adjoining to the chapel and antecoros, on both sides, together with the passages from the convent to the college, and the sotacoro at the entrance. But exclusive of these parts, and limiting the mensuration by the brass balustrade below the rails of the choir, and the front step of the great chapel, the length is one hundred and eighty feet, and the breadth precisely the same; so that in this part, which is the principal, the basilic forms an equilateral square, or at least the difference is very minute.

Dimensions
of the church.

IT is built of the same stone as the other parts, very white and beautiful, being chosen from among the neighbouring quarries, and nearly the same as that to which the Greeks gave the name pyrites, on account of its inflammatory quality, and is particularly adapted to the church of St. Laurence, whose wonderful constancy was not to be subdued by the flames.

Pliny, lib.
xxxix. ch. 19.

ITS architecture is of the doric order, which, on account of its strength and dignity, was dedicated to the brave and vigorous; thus
the

the ancients used it in the temples of those gods who were most renowned for military achievements; as Jupiter, Mars, and Hercules, to denote their strength and intrepidity.

Church
pillars.

THE whole structure is supported by four antas, or very strong square pillars, erected round the center of the church, at the distance of fifty-three feet from each other, forming four grand arches. These correspond with other antas, or square pillars, placed in the walls, at the distance of thirty feet, and forming other arches. Thus the basilic is divided into three naves, on whatever side it is viewed; but in reality they are six, two in the middle, and four in an equilateral disposition along the sides. Those in the middle are above fifty feet wide, and those on the sides thirty. The symmetry and correspondence in all, has a very pleasing effect. The four principal pillars are twenty-nine feet square, and the height to the entablature is sixty-five feet. Round each pillar are four straited pilasters, projecting a foot from the main shaft, with intercolumniations of three; and as the pillars answer to each other, they form the arches and curves of the principal naves, which depend on the disposition of the pilasters traversing each other. In the middle, on the other two sides of these pillars, facing the lesser naves, are two niches, one over the other, which decorate the whole shaft, and answer to others in the antas along the wall, formed between two plain pilasters, projecting a foot from it. They are nine feet in the clear, to a height of eighteen. The lower serve for altars of a middling size. Thus every pillar has two altars, and two niches over them. Likewise in the niches of the pilasters, along the wall, on both sides, are altars answerable to the others.

Naves.

BESIDES

BESIDES these, the whole circuit of the church, beneath the Chapels. cornice, which is at the height of thirty feet, is furrounded with chapels of very elegant architecture, and splendidly adorned; and over the chapels and cornice are galleries, extending quite round the church, and decorated with brass balustrades. Here the eye has a more collective view of the beauties of this structure. Beyond these, at the height of sixty feet, in the north and south fronts, facing each other, are two organs, which take up the whole breadth, and also the height, up to the principal cornice. Above this principal cornice, which is of exquisite workmanship, and carried round the whole church, at the height of eighty feet, is another passage within the wall, that resembles the first, and forms the tower of the inside. And such is the elegance, richness, and number of objects, that the curious beholder is ravished with so grand a display of magnificence and devotion. The ceiling consists of twenty-four lofty arches, formed by the disposition of the naves; their uniform appearance, with the regularity of the distances, add to the dignity of the place. The height of the four principal arches of the cross, and of the others, from the pavement to the key stone, is one hundred and ten feet, and those of the four lesser naves, between sixty and seventy. These excite an idea of those superb arches which Rome erected to her Triumphal arches. victorious generals; but then these have, with much greater reason, been raised to the honor of St. Laurence, who, in this majestic temple, triumphs over the rage of pagan tyranny.

ON the four central pillars, and the four arches formed by them, Cupola. rests a strong and splendid pedestal, twenty-eight feet high, supporting the stupendous cupola, of such magnitude, workmanship and solidity, that the pillars, though in themselves prodigiously large, appear

too

too slender for the amazing weight they support. The inward diameter is twenty-six feet, and the whole circumference about two hundred and seven. Without the pedestal is a square, but within circular; and at the four angles are four smaller cymboriums, with as many winding stair cases leading up to them, and round the whole is a stone gallery with balustrades, spires and globes, which greatly heighten the grandeur of the pedestal. The prospect from this gallery is inconceivably delightful, extending over the whole house, and the neighbouring country, which is agreeably diversified with seats, convents, and villages.

In the lower part of the body of the cupola are eight windows, sixteen feet wide, and thirty-four in height, and between each window two semi-columns of the doric order, adorned with a variety of embellishments. In the intercolumniations, and over the cornice of the architrave, is a second gallery like that below, with two flights of stairs leading up to it, contrived within the elevation of the cymborium, that is here divided by fillets in relievo to the borders of a lanthorn which has eight windows, eight or ten feet in height, divided by pilasters, that gradually diminish to the top, where there is another small cupola on the crown of the lanthorn, and over this a fluted stone obelisk or pyramid of thirty feet high, on the top of which is placed a globe of gilt brass, seven feet in diameter, with a very large cross and vane; the cross being thirty-one feet in length, and weighs seventy-three arrobas. The obelisk is fifteen feet in height, and the globe weighs one hundred and thirty-six arrobas.

Globe of the
cupola.
Cross.

Height.

THE height, from the pavement of the church to the center of the globe, is three hundred feet, and from thence to the extremity
of

of the cross thirty more; the cupola has not its proper height, it being shortened eleven feet, from an apprehension that one of the pillars had given way.

THE directors of the work should have remembered the circumstance that happened, at the building of St. Peter's church, where the pillars even split with the weight of the prodigious dome, which Bravanti the architect ventured to place on them: but our artists, unwilling to run the same hazard, left the outside of the cupola something too low; a defect indeed scarce perceived, as within, its pedestal, on which the pilasters on each side of the windows are placed, appear in such accurate proportion and firmness, that many think it hardly inferior to the dome of St. Peter in the Vatican, though of such magnitude, that the diameter of it exceeds that of the latter by twenty feet.

THIS basilic is finely lighted by the sixteen windows of the cupola and lantern, and three others, twelve feet broad, and twenty-four high, placed in the south, north and west façades; besides others over the cornice, some of which are arched, others in the form of a crescent, but all answering to each other in the most exact proportion, diffusing a light into the most retired parts of the church; and what increases the beauty of the whole, they are all of white glass. The vaulted ceiling, formed by the arches, are of exquisite stucco work, and white as snow.

THE pavement is of black and white marble, and the beauty of it very much heightened by the elegance of the knots and compartments, with which it is variegated.

Doors.

THE doors of this superb church are nine in number; five towards the west, which are adorned with admirable brass rails, and four towards the south and north. To these may be added two more, serving for the chapels, which on each side, throughout the whole body of the church, precisely answer to each other; all the doors have rails of curious workmanship, though not of the same materials.

Consecration
crosses.

OVER the arches of the principal doors, and on the great altar, are twelve crosses, three on each wall, and erected at the consecration of the church, which was on the thirtieth of April, 1590, when the ceremony was performed by Camillo Cayetano, patriarch of Alexandria, and, at that time, apostolic nuncio in the kingdom of Spain. The twelfth is on the wall behind the great altar. They are of a most beautiful red jasper, blended with white marble.

Altars.

THE altars are forty in number, all consecrated, and not only admired for the judicious taste of their architecture, and the correspondence of their chapels, but for the excellency of the innumerable paintings with which all parts of them are embellished. Besides these, there are four others; two in the oratories of the royal family, and two in the sotacoro, at the entrance into the church.

Sotacoro.

THE sotacoro is a very singular structure, sixty feet square, with four pillars, resembling those in the nave. The ceiling over the choir, is esteemed a masterly piece of architecture; for, though of stone, and the range of pillars of such a length, it is as level as the pavement; so that the beholder is astonished to think, how it is supported; but the whole consists in the artful form and junctures of
the

the stones, the rows of which form equal arches, till they close in a key stone. Here, as I have already observed, are two other altars, without the balustrade, where mass is said to the people, likewise six others in the thirty feet passages, and where the second elevation begins. Besides these, there is another below at the door of the sacristy, near the entrance into the church, and dedicated to our Lady del patrocinio; and the chapel, built by the devout king Philip the fourth, is one of the most splendid objects in this sumptuous church, especially the incomparable statue of our Lady.

THE forty altars are disposed in the following manner: in the two large pillars, nearest the great altar, are eight, and four in each of the other eight pillars answering to them. They are adorned with the pictures of the twelve apostles, and the two evangelists St. Mark and St. Luke, and their fellow-travellers St. Barnabas and St. Paul. They are represented in pairs, as their great Master sent them to preach the gospel. These capital pieces were the work of Juan Fernandez Mudo, a native of Logrogno, and a disciple of Titian.

Disposition
of the altars.

Paintings
over the
altars.

IN the two extremities of the lesser naves are the two principal relique altars; that on the gospel side is decorated with a painting of the annunciation; and that on the epistle side, with a portrait of St. Jerom, both of incomparable softness, and done by Frederic Zucaro, an Italian.

IN the principal nave, which runs from north to south, are six chapels, three on each side, with three altars; the largest being in the center, and the two smaller on the sides: over that, nearest the center, on the gospel side, is a painting of the battle betwixt St.

DESCRIPTION OF

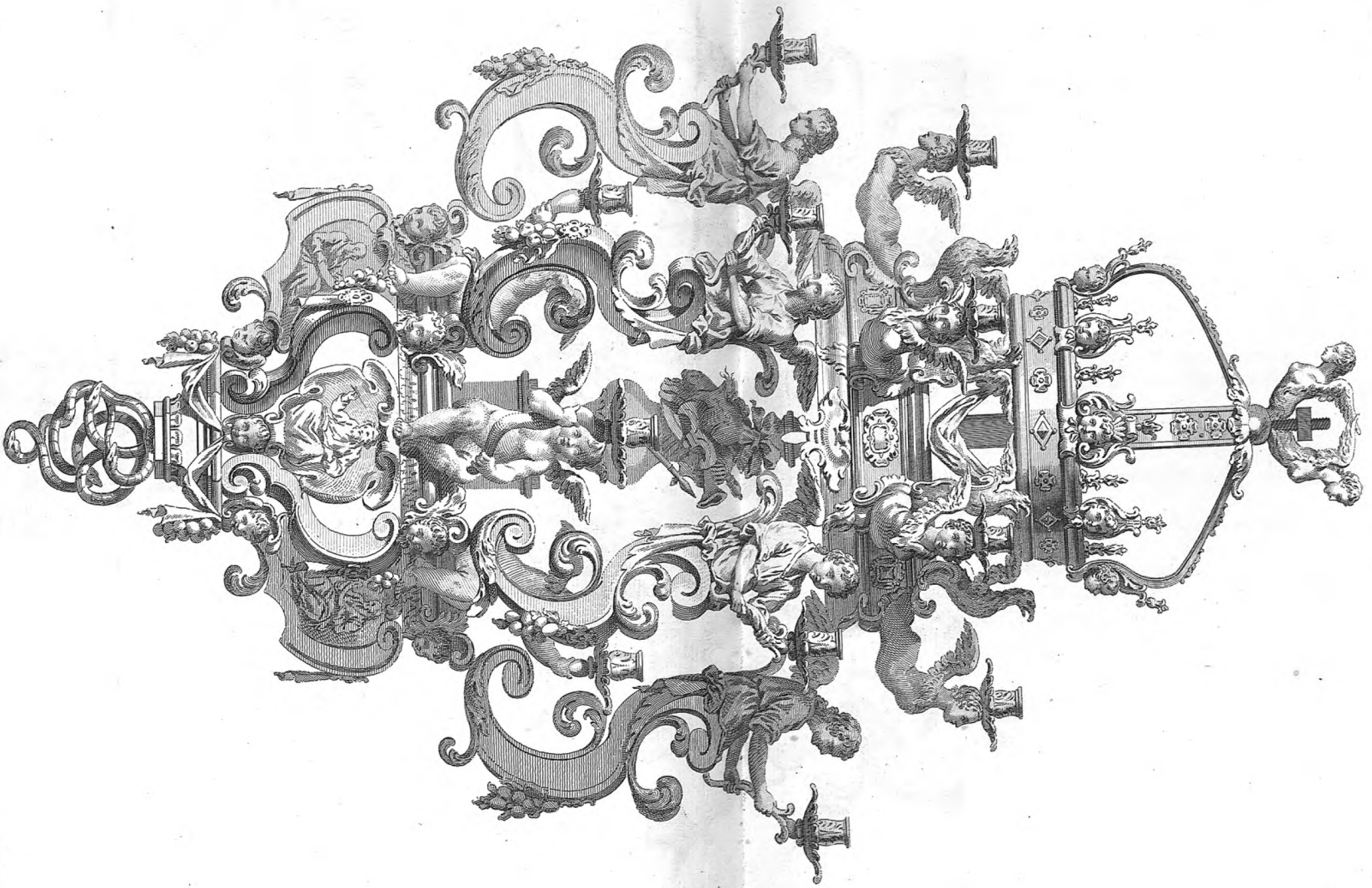
Michael and Lucifer, of which it is sufficient to say, that it came from the hands of Peregrino, a Milanese. And over the front altar is represented the triumphant squadron of the eleven thousand virgins, designed and painted by Juan Gomez.

OVER another altar of the same dimensions, at the north-west angle, is a painting finely executed, by Romulo Italiano, representing that glorious warrior St. Mauricio, and his attendants. In the south wall is the procession door, on one side of which is an altar piece of the crucifixion, in which Christ is represented as still living, and addressing himself to his eternal Father. This is one of Porta's best pieces; the figures are as large as life, their languishing aspect melts the hearts of all spectators; and the whole strongly excites grief, and all the other passions due to his memory. In the north-east angle is that morning-star of the Son of righteousness, St. John the baptist, preaching in the wilderness; an admirable piece, done by Lugneto, or Lucas Cangiolo, an Italian; who also painted St. Ann, over another altar, adjoining to it.

WITH regard to the pictures over the smaller altars, which, either in the pillars, or the chapel, answer to each other, some are by Urbina, some by Caravajal, and others by that incomparable portrait painter Alonso Sanchez. The subjects of them, from the devotion of the founder, are martyrs, confessors, and virgins, and display a masterly skill and judgment; but, to avoid prolixity, I content myself with only mentioning them.

The chapels
on the sides
of the
fotacoro.

ON the sides of the fotacoro are two chapels, of a very pleasing architecture, sixty-eight feet in length, and twenty-two in breadth,
with



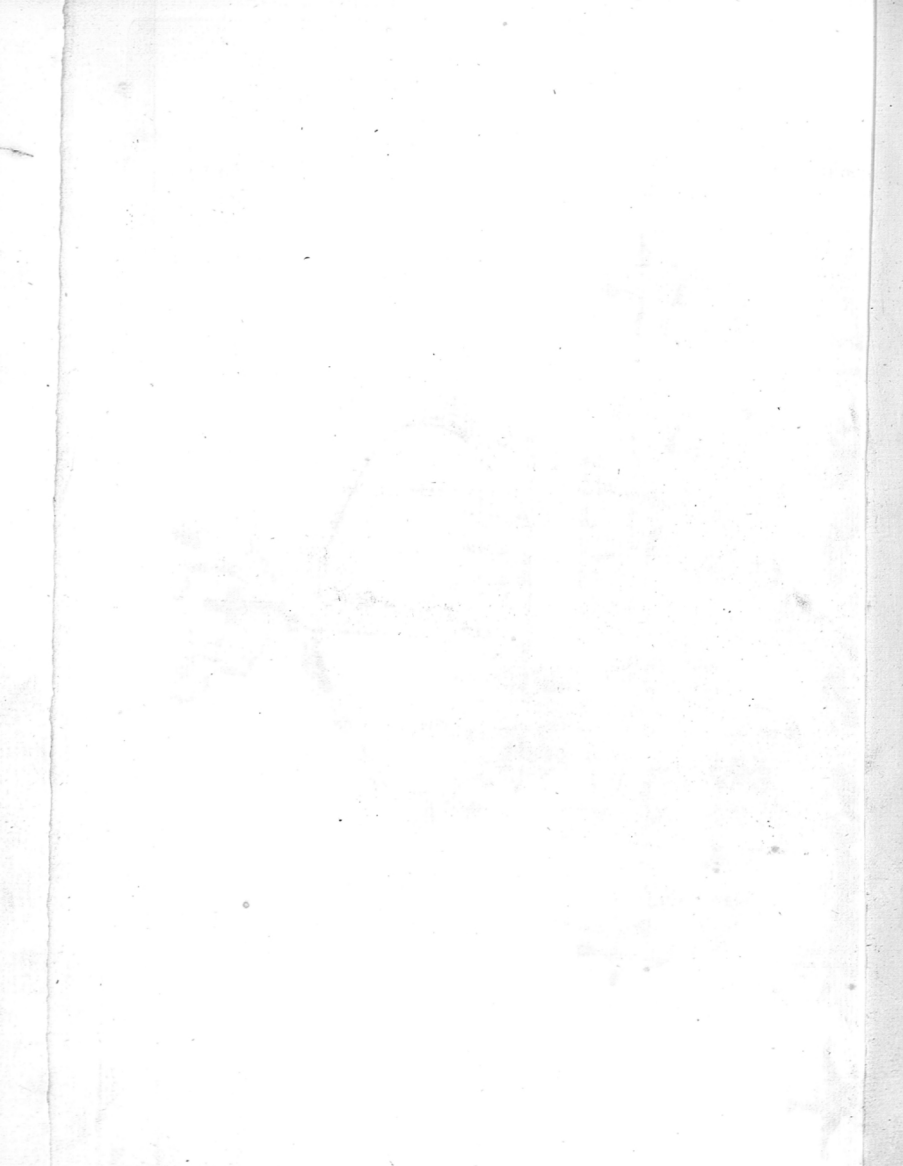
Made in

England

To the Right Hon. Genl. Haynards,
 His Highness's Chamberlain,



Wm. PEARCE,
 His Majesty's Architect & Surveyor,
 George Thompson.



with square vacuities and arches for altars between the pilasters, with apertures for admitting the light. In that towards the college stand the statues of five of the primitive fathers; and in the sixth arch is a marble fountain, in which the priests, coming down from the college to say mass, wash themselves; the water flows through two griffins.

IN the chapel, next the convent, are six altars of holy virgins and matrons, and over one of them a crucifixion, with our Lady and St. John standing by the cross; the whole embroidered on blue satin, and said to have laid many years in the holy sepulchre. Its great antiquity is indeed evident from the figures. It was placed here by the express command of king Philip the fourth, to whom it had been presented by some religious, who brought it from Jerusalem. In each of these chapels are also two doors; one of which opens into the nave, facing the reliquaries; the other, answering to it, leads to the two side courts of the church, where are large doors of walnut and oak, all of the most delicate workmanship; and such are all the doors at the entrances of this splendid basilic.

IN the middle of the chapel are likewise two bronze branches, very large, and curiously wrought; one serves at the tenebrarium in passion week, the other is lighted only at the obsequies of the royal family; at the translation of a royal corpse to the pantheon, it is placed near the tombs, and its figure may be seen on the plate.

WITH regard to the other altars, it is sufficient to say, that they are all so regularly disposed, and so splendidly ornamented, that nothing can give more refined pleasure than to walk about this sacred structure; where the eye, on all sides, meets with symmetry and
magnificence;

magnificence; with pictures and statues of persons illustrious for their piety.

Reliques of
the altars.

BUT what constitutes the most valuable riches of these altars, is a small marble sepulchre in the center of their tables, containing many reliques of saints, and especially of those to whom the altars are dedicated; a most singular circumstance indeed, and worthy of the great piety of Philip; whose devotion, in order to heighten the glory of this wonderful structure, collected these sacred riches.

Ornaments.

THEY are all furnished and adorned in one and the same manner, with frontons, crucifixes, and branches; and, on the change of a festival, or solemnity, the furniture and ornaments are changed, preserving still an uniformity in the colors, equality in the fineness of the linen and velvets, and the richness of the laces, brocades and embroideries; except the great altars, and those of the reliques, which are more splendidly furnished than the others; particularly that of our Lady del patrocinio, which makes a fine appearance with its porphyries, bronzes of gold, of silver gilt, and gems.

Masses.

THE number of masses said here every day is very great, and includes all the living and the dead; so that all the altars are filled at the same time; and even the whole time, from matins to high mass, the greatest part of them are always taken up.

Lamps.

IN each of the three naves are two silver lamps of inimitable workmanship; another in the above mentioned chapel of our Lady, which was given by the queen regent; and, through the excellent communication

communication that reigns between all parts of the temple, and the judicious disposition of the lamps, the light is conveyed to its remotest corners; but when all the altars are illuminated, as on Christmas night, and the flambeaux of fourteen brass chandeliers, gilt with silver, and distributed along the principal nave, together with other luminaries, there cannot be a spectacle more noble, or more apt to raise devotion; this all acknowledge, all experience, who have been here on such occasions, or at the reception of the royal family: it seems a faint resemblance of the heavenly glory. Indeed, the solemnity of this illumination is much heightened by the grandeur of the building, the harmony, proportion and masterly union of all its parts, by the elevation and strength of its several pieces, adorned with such masterly skill and unequalled richness, its galleries, cornices, stately arches, vaults, and cupolas, which, throughout all the naves answer each other with admirable symmetry, both in the two principal which cross each other, and the four lesser round them. All are crowned with the stupendous cupola, and diversified with such a number of altars and chapels, especially the great chapel and the choir, which contain such a multitude of remarkable objects, as will require two particular chapters to describe them.

Grand lights
in the church.

CHAP. V.

Of the principal Choir.

ADMIRATION is never satisfied with contemplating the majesty and beauty of this choir, where, day and night, the praises of the Almighty are sung with voices expressive of fervent devotion; this is an institution peculiar to the order of St. Jerom, the most noble employment of creatures, and the end for which the wise and prudent Philip erected this structure. It is spacious, solemn, and receives the light through its great number of windows, which are those seen on the façade and frontispiece de los reyes, which we have already described. Its length, from the prior's seat to the brass rails, or the balustrade at the entrance of the church, is ninety-six feet, to a breadth of fifty-six; the height of the cornice, which extends round the whole fabric, is forty-six feet, and from thence to the roof thirty-eight; which in all make an elevation of eighty-four feet.

Stalls in the
choir.

ON both sides are two rows of stalls, one above the other, made of the most valuable woods, some of which are natives, and of those the most common is walnut-tree; the rest are from India, as caoba of two kinds, something redder than brazil, acana of a deep sanguine color, cedar, box, ebony; forming a most beautiful variety. The architecture is of the most ornamental order, I mean the Corinthian, and the execution surprizingly delicate.

ON the arms of the stalls, in the lower rank, are very neat pedestals, which, with the intermediate plane, forms a back adorned with mouldings

mouldings of ebony frizes, which, with the works in other wood, has a very pleasing effect. The back also, which runs along the whole row, is so disposed as not to obstruct the sight of those in the upper seats; nor does it rise above the heads of the monks. The upper row, besides a back, like that of the lower, is adorned with a range of round and fluted corinthian pillars rising above it. The shafts are of a sanguine color, with box chapters, and the bases of the same, the filling of which forms a most beautiful contrast with the acana. Behind each are two pilasters, the intervals of the columns. These are of cedar, surpassing in color the finest pine, and embellished with acana and ebony mouldings. The modillions above the architrave, with the thistle leaves over them, and the fleurons between both, are likewise of box, and make the most agreeable appearance. Over these, and the crown of the cornice, is another pedestal, directly above the pillars, and with the same embellishments as those under them; which, covering the upper row, gives a prodigious beauty and grandeur to them, as the color, grain, and workmanship cannot be exceeded. The height of the seats, or stalls, in the upper row, is seventeen feet, and the distance, between them and the lower, ten; so that a passage is left sufficient for three persons, very conveniently, to walk a-breast.

THE prior's stall is in the middle of two others, the three forming a grand front of twelve columns, which are also of the corinthian order, placed two and two along the arms of the three seats, six at the extremity, and six farther in, perfectly answering to each other; a work extremely admired for the grandeur of the architecture. The frontispiece is square, and embellished with pillars, pilasters, and

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some