

gold. This gem of Oriental magnificence, an octagon of fifteen feet, was the Holiest of Holies of the great mosque, and the pilgrims made the tour of it seven times, as was their custom at Mecca. It is ornamented with six beautiful arches, two little columns, all of different marbles, with gilt capitals and bases, supporting them on each side; and the dome of the roof, in the form of a shell, is one piece of marble. The walls of the chapel are of the same material; the lower part smooth, and the upper carved into the richest decorations. The splendour of the Omeyyah dynasty was not then a dream, an illusion; a thousand years have passed, and Europe cannot exhibit better taste or greater magnificence.

In the Capilla de los Reyes is a fine coloured figure, by Cespedes, the expression is good. There are handsome brass gates leading into the choir, which is plateresque, but very imposing, and the carving excellent, by Pedro Cornejo, born at Seville, 1677. There are seventy or eighty different Biblical subjects, and the ornaments of the stalls and columns are very rich and beautiful. In the centre is the Transfiguration. The roof is in bad taste, but really it requires some philosophy to examine patiently this fungus which destroys the splendid Moorish mosque. Well might Charles V. exclaim: "You have built here what you or any one might have erected anywhere; but you have destroyed what was unique in the

world. You have pulled down what was complete, and you have begun what you cannot finish."* The pulpits of wood, resting on marble groups of a bull and an eagle, and an angel and a lion, are also beautifully carved. The retablo of the high altar is good, and the marbles rich; but the general effect is bad, and the paintings by Polomino wretchedly coloured, and wanting in expression.

The numerous other chapels in this immense church seem to contain nothing but rubbish. The Madonna and Child, with St. John, St. Andrew and St. Ann, by Cespedes, is much injured; but the painting is good, and the figure of the Madonna very beautiful.

In the Capilla del Cardenal is the tomb of Cardinal Pedro de Salaza, which is rather fine, but too much ornamented; and though imposing from its size and design, the execution is bad. In the same chapel is a painting representing the taking of Cordova, interesting for its subject. In the sacristia is a beautiful silver custodia, a splendid work of Henrique de Arphe, 1517, in the most elegant Gothic style. The sacred subjects and figures are of silver gilt, and well executed; and the filigree ornaments are also very exquisite. There is a silver crucifix of the same period; and another chiefly of gold, ornamented with precious stones. We were

* Handbook, p. 301.

then shown what is considered by the guides the greatest wonder of Cordova—a delineation of a cross, with a figure upon it, scratched, they say, by a Christian prisoner with his nails.

The summit of the tower of the cathedral is the best place for forming a correct idea of the ancient capital of the Moors. One of the bells has a Gothic inscription on it, and it is said to be of that period: the others are not worked in a manner to make them musical; two men were labouring away, and their occupation appeared to be simply turning the bell round and round.

The view, looking towards the bridge, is picturesque, of the towers, the winding Guadalquivir, the Moorish bridge, the verdant Mont Mariano, and in the distance the Sierra de Cabra. In the other directions the vast city appears one mass of grey-roofed houses and white walls, mingled with trees and courts; and many of the houses have open galleries and square windows, quite Moorish. Around the town are groves of oranges and pomegranates, and large plantations of olives; and farther off, the verdant plain, probably El Campo de la Verdad, where Roderick's nobles pledged their faith; and beyond, forming a fine natural boundary to the valley, the Sierra Morena, well wooded, and many farms and villages scattered high up its acclivities, and finishing with a steep hill, on the summit of which is the Moorish Castle of Almodovar.

The ancient walls and towers of Cordova are visible from here ; and they point out a large building where Hisham's powerful minister Al-Mansur had his palace.

Standing on the summit of this old mosque, with Moslem remains around, and the once-splendid metropolis, still Moorish in all its features, and now so changed, recalls vividly the misfortunes of the Arabs, and especially the last of their kings, the unfortunate Boabdil, who was here so splendidly entertained by Ferdinand, when his influence was supposed to be great with his subjects in Granada, and here also subsequently neglected by the King, when his subjects had driven him from his throne, and he was no longer useful in stirring up the flames of civil discord.

Changed as Cordova is, its population of a million sunk to forty thousand, there are still sufficient architectural remains to recall its ancient glory, and time can never destroy its kindling associations. Though the plains may be less carefully cultivated, the Sierras and the noble Guadalquiver are still the same ; and gilded, as I saw this view, with the rays of the declining sun, and not a cloud visible in the blue expanse, it was intensely interesting. Southey might have been here, his description is so accurate :

The temples and the towers of Cordoba,
Shining majestic in the light of eve,
Before them Bætis rolled his glittering stream

In many a silvery winding traced afar,
Amid the ample plain. Behind the walls
And stately piles which crowned its margin, rich
With olives, and with sunny slope of vines
And many a lovely hamlet interspersed,
Whose citron bowers were once the abode of peace,
Height above height, receding hills were seen,
Imbued with evening hues; and over all
The summits of the dark sierra rose,
Lifting their heads amid the silent sky.
The traveller, who with a heart at ease,
Had seen the goodly vision, would have loved
To linger, seeking with insatiate sight
To treasure up its image, deep impressed,
A joy for years to come. O Cordoba!—DON RODERICK.

Of the Alcazar, built on the site of the Castle of Roderick, there are few remains; a circular, an octagonal, and some square plain towers, are all that exist. They are surrounded with gardens of lemon-trees and pomegranates, the latter now covered with their orange-coloured blossoms.

The circuit of the walls is interesting. Starting at the cathedral, we first examined the fine gate built by Herrera, ornamented with four columns of the Doric order. The bridge was built in 719, on Roman foundations, by the Governor As-samh, and is picturesque; the arches are very irregular, some appearing almost pointed, others circular, and they differ also in size; yet the general effect is good, and the Arab writers might well consider it one of the most magnificent structures in Andalus.

On the opposite side to Cordova is a fort, with a fringe of battlements, and a watch-tower in the centre of the bridge. Turning down the Alameda of the Obispo, we came immediately to a ruin, decorated with three horse-shoe arches, called the Baths of the Queen, and certainly well adapted for the purpose. It is now a mill, and there are others in a line with it. Some of the foundations of the walls are of immense stones, but hewn regularly, and probably Roman, with Moorish tapia-work above. The towers at starting from the cathedral are circular, and occur every forty paces; but in other places they are square, and only half that distance apart from each other. The barbican can be traced for a long way.

Before arriving at the gate of Sevilla, which appears to be Roman, with Moorish arches engrafted on it, we observed how the city had been curtailed, the ancient walls extending beyond the present enclosure. We passed the Alameda de la Agricultura, which is very pretty, with its trees and roses. The octagonal tower of the Mala Muerte is very picturesque. The large churrigueresque convent of the Merced—now converted into a useful asylum for widows—and the Catolina, and its orange-trees are rather pretty; as is also the plain-gate of Placencia, with the two palm-trees adjoining.

The first palm planted in Spain was at Cordova, by Abdu-r-rahman, in the garden made by that brave

and wise Caliph. It is said that the philosophic monarch used to take great delight in gazing at his date-tree, as it recalled the changes of his own eventful life—once a wanderer in the tents of the Zaneta—and called to occupy so gloriously the throne of Spain. In the midst of his prosperity, thoughts of the land of his birth sometimes forced themselves on the mind of Abdu-r-rahman when he gazed at the palm, and compared his own lot with that of his favourite tree: “Beautiful palm! you are, like me, a stranger in this land; but the winds of the west caress gently your branches, your roots have struck into a fruitful soil, and you raise your head towards the sky. Like me, you would shed sad tears, if you felt the cares by which I am oppressed. You have nought to fear from fortune, but I am always exposed to her caprices. When cruel fate and the fury of Al-Abas banished me from my dear country, my tears watered often the date-trees which grow on the borders of El Forat; but neither the palms nor the river have preserved the memory of my griefs. Thou, O beautiful palm! hast no regrets for your country; but I, sad and melancholy, cannot cease to lament her.”*

Cordova has lost what treasures of art she once possessed, but we visited a private collection, where the paintings were bad and ridiculously dear: a

* Condé, p. 169.

doubtful Murillo, £400; six other paintings dreadfully injured, and without a name, £200 each; a wretched head, said to be by Morales, £20. Andalusia is certainly not the country for collecting paintings, and assuredly not for bargains.

Near to the cathedral is one of those institutions for orphans, which are generally found in every large Spanish town. It contains about two hundred of different ages, and there are always about eight or ten wet nurses in the establishment and about fifty others for older children; the infants are deposited in a kind of cupboard, which turns with a wheel: close to it is a bell, which the depositors of the child can ring, so that it need not be exposed above a minute or two. They say that about one-third of the children thus abandoned by their parents die.

Cordova is a miserable-looking town—a poverty-stricken place. One misses sadly the clean houses and beautiful balconies of Seville, covered with shrubs and flowers.

The Plaza de la Constitucion is picturesque. Three sides are exactly alike, and seem to be nearly all windows, or rather green shutters, as they were almost all closed; but the paint had not the usual Spanish freshness, and though there was more than sufficient whitewash on the houses to do away with their ancient appearance, they wanted another coat to present the redeeming brightness and cleanliness of Seville. The streets are wretchedly paved

and extremely narrow and twisting ; but apparently the narrower the street, the more aristocratic ; for the broadest and straightest in the city is inhabited by the poorest people.

Nothing can be more melancholy than the deadness in these almost deserted lanes and squares. I saw two or three carriages, almost a century old in their build and appearance, dragged by ill-fed mules, and servants in shabby liveries, driving to the Alameda ; and the pale, cadaverous-looking ladies inside, *sangue azul* (blue blood), no doubt, looked as if they did not often enjoy an airing ; but I did not see a single one of those steeds for which Cordova and the neighbourhood was famous until the French invasion.

The *Plateria* is interesting to those who are curious in old jewellery. I saw a beautiful cross for sale, formed of fine emeralds, which I regret I did not purchase. The silver ear-rings and brooches are curious. Cordova is a very cheap place ; bread much lower than in Seville ; meat, half the value ; house-rent so reasonable, that almost every poor man has a good one to himself. As the circuit of the existing walls is greater than those of Seville, and the population of that place is one hundred thousand and Cordova less than forty thousand, houses may well be plentiful. It is truly difficult to conceive, that in the tenth century, a million inhabitants, three hundred mosques, nine hundred baths, and six

hundred inns, were in a city where there is now only one fonda, which, I am glad to say, is a good one, and charges moderate.

The climate of Cordova is delicious. Would that I could remain here, instead of returning to the cold, damp climate which has driven me from England. I thought of the words of Musa, when, at the Caliph's command, he set out to give an account of his stewardship, and his unworthy jealousy of Tarik. O Cordova! great and glorious art thou among cities, and abundant in all delights. With grief and sorrow do I part from thee; for sure I am it would give me length of days to abide within thy pleasant walls.

Travellers in Spain must, however, recollect that with all the beauty of the climate, the warm sun and the clear blue sky, care should be taken not to eat much fruit, and avoid chills. Anxious to carry away a sketch of this interesting place, I arose with the dawn, the day after my arrival, walked hastily to the banks of the Guadalquivir, and, rather warm with the walk, sat down to draw, unmindful of the cold morning air blowing along the river. That evening I had a bad attack of cholera, the disease of the country, and had to nurse all the night and the next day, preparatory to starting in the evening for Madrid, and was thus prevented seeing the Church of San Hippolito, which contains the tomb of Don Alonso de Aguilar, the celebrated companion

and friend of the Marquis of Cadiz, and one of the most distinguished warriors in the Moorish wars. His exploits are the theme of many a song; and some years after the fall of Granada, he died gallantly, overwhelmed by a host of Moorish mountaineers who had broken out into rebellion. My illness also prevented my visiting the Church of St. Peter, where I believe there are some very ancient paintings on the right wall. At least I have a note to that effect, but I forget from what work I made it.

Mrs. H—— made an excursion to the hermitages in the Sierra Morena, a league and a half distant, which are well worth visiting, if only for the sake of the beautiful view of Cordova and the verdant plain, and in the distance the mountains towards Gibraltar. The hermitages are small huts, with a box at each door for the presents of their charitable friends and pilgrims, and a bell to summon the hermits. Mrs. H—— was in one which was unoccupied, and saw the hard boards on which they lie, and one of the iron chains, with which it is said they scourge themselves.

CHAPTER VI.

DEPARTURE FOR MADRID—BAYLEN—DEFEAT OF THE FRENCH
 —CAROLINA—GERMAN COLONISTS—GORGE OF DESPENA—
 PERROS—ANDALUSIANS—LA MANCHA—DON QUIXOTE—
 VENTA DE QUESADA—WINDMILLS—ARANJUEZ—PALACE—
 BEAUTIFUL GARDENS—ARRIVAL AT TOLEDO.

WE started from Cordova at nine o'clock in the evening; but I had very nearly abandoned the places I had taken from Seville to Madrid, price eight guineas; for, although so much better when I left the hotel that I thought I was cured, I had scarcely got seated in the *coupé* when I fainted completely, and on my recovery felt quite unequal to the journey. Fortunately, a friend, Mr. L——, happened to be in the diligence, who had a bottle of good brandy, which revived me, and repeated doses made me all right. The *coupé* was so roomy and comfortable for two persons, and the road so good, especially compared to the bad one from Seville to Cordova, I bore the journey

admirably, and Mrs. H—— was not at all fatigued. Ladies generally dread this long journey from the North to the South of Spain, but the diligences are so heavy, they are not easily shaken; and though the idea of travelling two days and two nights is formidable for all accustomed to English railway speed, the fatigue is really not great, and is felt less the second night than the first.

Travellers should take a good supply of provisions for the whole journey, for the meals are almost always at unseasonable and irregular hours; and not a single dish without the Spanish abominations, bad oil, saffron and garlic. When I awoke the first morning, we were just approaching Andujar, an interesting town on the Guadalquiver, with brown towers and roofs, a picturesque old bridge, and rather a fine range of hills behind, of the same tawny colour. We then ascended some wild hills, through which the river Herrumblar rushes, the views occasionally picturesque, especially near the bridge. Passing groves of olives and vineyards, we came to Baylen, a miserable little place, famous for the splendid victory gained by the Spaniards over the French. Castanos's army consisted of twenty-five thousand infantry, two thousand cavalry, and a very heavy train of artillery, and large bodies of armed peasantry, commanded by officers of the line. The whole multitude that advanced towards the Guadalquiver could not have

been less than fifty thousand men. After very little fighting, eighteen thousand French soldiers, under Dupont, laid down their arms before this raw army, incapable of resisting half that number, if they had been led by an able man. Joseph Buonaparte fled from Madrid, and all Europe was astonished at this victory and its results. The French troops, instead of being sent to France, according to the capitulation, were maltreated, and a number of them murdered in cold blood, especially at Lebrixa, where above eighty officers were massacred in the most cowardly manner. All who survived the march to Cadiz, after suffering every species of indignity, were cast into the hulks, where the greatest number perished in lingering torments,* and others were exposed on the destitute Island of Cabrera, without food or clothing, to feed on each other like howling wild beasts. These horrors were said to have been instigated by the clergy reclaiming the plunder the French had taken from the churches,† and may, in some measure, atone for the terrible retaliation of the French when they again invaded Spain. From Baylen to Guarroman, a miserable little village, the country is poorly cultivated.

We have now bid adieu to the beautiful villages and towns of the South of Spain, and really it is

* Napier's Peninsular War, vol. 1, p. 125.

† Foy, iv, p. 107; and see Handbook, 305.

difficult to bear the loss of the exquisitely white houses, the freshly painted balconies, the Moorish lattices, the appearance of comfort, and even opulence—all is now changed for wretched dirty-looking huts and undisguised poverty. The country after passing Guarroman became rather pretty, covered with magnificent carob-trees, under which were tolerable crops of grain, and the hills planted with groves of olives. As we approached Carolina, the view is extensive, and the ranges of the Sierra Morena visible in the distance. This is one of several towns, built and colonized, in 1767, by Germans and Swiss, brought here to supply the place of the banished Jews and Moors; but the promises held out to induce them to leave their country were never kept, and most of the foreigners died broken-hearted.

The town is uninteresting, with wide streets, and is anything but Spanish in its appearance. The inhabitants appeared generally dark, but I observed some with very light complexions, and two or three with sandy hair, the descendants, no doubt, of the colonists. The peasants working in the fields were coolly and picturesquely dressed, having nothing on their bodies but a white shirt, reaching half way down their thighs, and bound at the waist with a red sash; white stockings, extending from the knees to their ankles only, sandals on their feet, and a conical-shaped hat, seldom without holes or bruises, completed their costume. Leaving Carolina,

we entered a pretty rocky country, with patches of cultivated land amongst the cliffs; and afterwards we enjoyed some fine extensive views of the Sierra Nevada in the distance, and large plains, one of them said to be the scene of the great battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, when two hundred thousand infidels were killed, and only a hundred and twenty-five Christians; so records an eye-witness, a better hand, says Mr. Ford, at guess-work, than arithmetic.*

We then reached a miserable little village, which, with our notions of Spain, we should scarcely have thought to be Spanish, but for the costumes of the peasants, and two or three youths playing their guitars to their wives, working at the doors of their hovels. Leaving this hamlet, we immediately descended at a rapid rate an admirably constructed road into a wild valley, and soon reached the splendid gorge of Despeña Perros (though over the dogs, cast over the infidel hounds.) The pass is narrow at the base, where the river flows; but where the road winds, the rocks are some little distance apart, forming, on entering, a fine natural amphitheatre; and the formation of the last rock on the right, at the end of the gorge, is magnificent. At one point of view, it appeared almost like a conglomeration of pinnacles, some perfect, and others broken.

* See Handbook, p. 306.

The rocks are generally of a grey colour, covered with yellow and red tints, and illuminated, as I saw them, with a setting sun, were really splendid. This is the boundary of La Mancha, and here we bid adieu for ever to gay Andalusia, certainly the most charming district in Spain. The Andalusians are often vain and conceited, but always good-tempered, civil and obliging—full of wit, fun and pleasantness—indolent, but, as far as my little experience extends, honest.

Now we enter La Mancha, a dreary, impoverished country, which even the genius of Cervantes and the exploits of Don Quixote cannot make interesting. I soon fell asleep, and awoke at Valdepeñas, where the diligence stopped to dine at midnight, not having halted since eleven A.M. The inn appeared clean, but the meal looked detestable, and I was told every dish had garlic in it. The wine, which they called the best in the place, was very inferior to the excellent Valdepeñas I have drunk in many places in Spain. I awoke in the morning just before arriving at the Venta de Quesada, the celebrated inn where Don Quixote was knighted. The round buildings at one side might well be imagined to be towers of a castle by a crazy knight, and the high enclosure the castle walls. The country around is flat, and covered with corn; in the distance is a low range of hills.

The tropical vegetation is now changed for less picturesque trees. At Cordova, we bid adieu to the

graceful palm-trees ; and on entering La Mancha, to the few aloes which we had seen in the hedgerows just before leaving Andalusia. We passed Villarta, a small village, and then drove through extensive but indifferent pastures, covered with poor sheep, and still poorer looking shepherds. We breakfasted at Puerto Lapiche, a miserable place, where Don Quixote told Sancho they might get elbow-deep in adventures, which they very soon did. At a little distance on each side is a hill, with groves of olives around them.

Soon after leaving Lapiche, we observed several mills a long way from the road, which, in the distance, when their sails are not visible, might well be taken for giants by a crazy knight, and especially, as at that time windmills were novelties in the country ; and having formed this opinion of them, and worked up his imagination to the belief, and closed his visor, he might well be described as encountering the giants of his disordered brain.

Madridejos, a town of seven thousand inhabitants, is a poor-looking place, but the most convenient for those who wish to see Tobosa and the Cave of Montesinos, which really do exist ;* but as I am satisfied, from what I have seen, that the localities in Cervantes' admirable tale are sketched from nature, and having no fancy for the cheese Sancho liked so much, or

* See Handbook, p. 84.

or any wish to be starved to death, I should be sorry to linger in a country apparently without a decent town, a clean village, or a tolerable inn—destitute of art and beauty, and where the peasants, male and female, are as brown and uninteresting as the mud huts, and the burnt-up pastures and sierras. I have observed on the deserts in Africa how the animals, and even birds and insects, often assume a sandy hue; here, almost everything has a general sameness in the colouring, a deeper tawny tint, but there is scarcely a bit of colouring to be seen which would not require a large mixture of burnt sienna. Alas! I fear, there will really be no tolerating the North of Spain, after the picturesque South.

La Mancha is celebrated for good mules, and generally we had remarkably fine teams of eight, two abreast, or rather six mules, with their hair shaved almost entirely off, to keep them cool and clean, and two horses. The mayoral and zagal, in their gay costumes, managing the six nearest the carriage, beating and shouting most vigorously, often pelting them with stones when ascending the hills; and a postillion, with yellow buckskins and jack-boots, riding the left leader. One of our mules fell exhausted, and was with difficulty raised.

Not the least of our regrets now is the beautiful *coiffure* of the South; for the gay handkerchiefs the women of La Mancha wear round their heads are

but a poor substitute for the mantilla—the most becoming of all costumes when adjusted, as only a Spanish woman knows how. Passing an uninteresting country covered with poor crops of corn, we arrived at Tembleque, a miserable place, in a treeless plain. We then came to La Guardia, another wretched-looking village, on a sand-stone hill, in which the inhabitants have excavated caves for their dwellings. Similar barren hills, with singular flat summits, extend around the plains, which are also dreary and treeless.

At a clean-looking inn at Ocana, the diligence stopped to dine ; and we then proceeded to Aranjuez, where we arrived in time for an eight o'clock dinner. This royal sitio is a charming place, a perfect oasis, after the deserts we have passed ; but the grounds, and even the palace, would be admired in England. I never saw a royal residence on the continent abounding with walks so natural and so delightful. The exterior of the palace has not much architectural merit to boast of, but still looks well. The best point of view is from the small iron suspension bridge. There is a tolerably handsome *façade*, with high roof, containing, apparently, different floors of offices, like the Louvre, and there are two domes at each end. The river flows below a plainer front, and forms a cascade. A garden, filled with flowers, clipped evergreens, and orange-trees, and ending in a fountain, is in front of the principal

façade. The other side of the palace is more imposing for its size, but architecturally not so good. Fine avenues of trees lead from it to the hills.

The entrance to the plaza before the garden-side of the palace is handsome. The extensive offices, with their arcades of arches, and the ornamental gateways, and the wavy hills beyond, are imposing. The views from this area looking towards the palace—the beautiful Alameda, formed almost entirely of magnificent elms, raised from plants brought from England — or towards the gardens of the palace, are very beautiful. The King arrived there to-day, which prevented our seeing the interior, which, however, I did not regret, as it contains no works of art. We rambled for several hours in the grounds, and saw what is called the Labradors (the Labourer's) house, but it is large enough for a prince, or, at all events, for a nobleman. The *façade* of the exterior, in the Italian style, ornamented with statues and busts, is nothing remarkable. The interior is expensively furnished with a variety of costly clocks, silk tapestries, views of the royal palaces; one room, ornamented with silver-gilt furniture, in the worst style of Louis XV., and odious frescoes on the roofs.

Of the fifty-six clocks, there was scarcely one in good taste. The paintings were positively daubs, and the rooms of the second floor very little above

six feet high. There was nothing, indeed, that I admired in this building, which the Spaniards are so proud of, but the beautiful marble floors, which are certainly exquisite. The fountains they boast of are not deserving of much notice as works of art; that of the Giants is not bad; one, in lead, would have been good if in marble; a fountain of Apollo, with an indifferent statue of the god, and columns supporting geese, I longed to have a shot at, and hurl from their pinnacles; and there are some ponds, with conservatories and islands. The great charm of Aranjuez consists in the delicious avenues of noble trees, the variety of foliage, and the shady walks. There are gardens left delightfully wild, except one opposite the Labradores House, which they pay us the compliment to call English, as it was laid out by Richard Wall, an Irishman, though anything more stiff or more monstrous cannot be conceived. I could, however, have walked all day along in the shady avenues of elms, amongst the fine tulip-trees, cypresses, splendid poplars, and others very rare, especially some American elms, with magnificent leaves. Anything more delightful and more refreshing, after crossing La Mancha, cannot be conceived; and there is a noble terrace on the Tagus; but like the gardens, it is not kept in good order—a good fault for a royal domain; as it is better to see the grounds looking a little wild than excessive primness and