

Tomb of the Scipios - Tarragona
M 16 May 1869

VALENCIA TO TARRAGONA.

This is a journey of twelve hours, the train starting at six in the evening. Shortly after seven we were at MURVIEDRO—the ancient SAGUNTUM—famous for the resistance it offered to Hannibal 219 years before the Christian era.

After a siege of eight months, the inhabitants chose rather to perish in the ruins of their city than surrender. They burnt their houses and treasures, and then threw themselves on the burning pile, leaving a heap of ashes for the conqueror.

At six in the morning we reached TARRAGONA, the ancient TARRACO of the Romans, and one of the chief cities in Catalonia; and were soon established in comfortable rooms at the FONDA EUROPA.

Rain had fallen through the night, and rain is a thing of note in a country where it is of no common occurrence. The FONDA EUROPA is in the principal street—the RAMBLA—which extends the whole length of the city, and ends on the south side in a charming terrace overlooking the Mediterranean. The rain had passed away, and the deep blue of the sea blended in the horizon with a sky as blue; not a ripple was to be seen on the smooth surface; only a thin streak of foam where the blue sea met the green land, which is cultivated down to the very edge of the shore. On the right, looking towards Valencia, successive headlands jut out into the Mediterranean, the hills at the back covered with pine woods. On the left, on a steep ascent, stands the Cathedral, guarded by the old Roman walls of the upper town, beyond which is a beautiful line of coast stretching out in the direction of Barcelona.

This terrace of the RAMBLA is sheltered from the north by high ramparts, and as we sat on the low wall listening to the faint murmuring of the sea beneath, we could not but call to mind those in England, to whom

this place would be a paradise in the early spring; the air so soft and yet so dry; the whole scene so full of placid enjoyment, without even a beggar to disturb its peace and serenity.

THE CATHEDRAL.—From the terrace a short steep walk of a few minutes brought us to the upper town—the centre of architectural interest. After passing Roman walls and a beautiful Gothic Cross in the PASEO DE SAN ANTONIO, we were obliged to ask our way of a poor woman carrying water, who immediately left her “Alcarazza*,” and led us through a small archway, when the Cathedral rose grandly before us at the end of a steep street. A remarkable change from former experience was observed in the course of this walk; for whereas, in every other Spanish town crowds of beggars had pursued us, here there were positively *none*. Even the poor woman who with ready courtesy had insisted on accompanying us to the very door of the Cathedral, would accept no recompense, but gently put aside my hand, crossed herself, and withdrew.

We entered the Cathedral by a door in the north transept; a heavy covering was drawn aside with some difficulty; and the outer brightness was exchanged for inner darkness so complete, that, unable to distinguish anything, we were forced to pause before proceeding to the nave. Gradually the eye became accustomed to the obscurity, and we could discern something of the form of this magnificent Gothic Church, magnificent in its simplicity. It dates from the twelfth century, and perhaps produces a deeper impression of awe and solemnity than any other Church in Spain.

The whole attention is concentrated on the building itself, as there are no pictures and no relics of interest.

Spanish Churches are shut at twelve, and we were hurried out into the cloisters, where pointed and Norman arches are seen together in harmonious beauty.

Through Norman arches, raised on slender double columns, you look into the cloister garden, trim and

* Earthen pot.

green, and filled, like all Spanish gardens, with sweet-smelling flowers.

We rested here for awhile on a stone bench opposite the west wall, and perceived almost facing us a Moorish arch, richly decorated, before which no doubt the Moslem was wont to worship in ages past; the form and tracery of the arch are perfect, but its recess is filled up, and its beauty marred by whitewash. It is interesting to see this relic of Moorish times allowed a place on the wall of these cloisters, but still more ancient relics meet the eye from this same spot.

Broken fragments of Roman architecture likewise have a space allotted to them, telling of an age when Rome was mistress of the world, and Tarragona a Roman city.

A simple but more touching memorial to an English eye follows close upon these. On this cloister wall are inscribed the words *5th Company*, no mention of name or regiment—no other record of English soldiers who fought and fell in the Peninsular war, save these rude letters.

What strange shifting scenes pass before the mind, looking upon this patch-work wall!

“Dumb historians in stone” may these fragments be termed—recalling three empires which have crumbled away.

Nothing can exceed the beauty of the drives and walks around Tarragona. Small carriages are to be had at the hotel, and we drove to the Roman Aquaduct, which is a short distance from the city. The view from the northern end of the RAMBLA is even more striking than from the Terrace. It is one of those views which, though seen but for a moment, never pass away from the memory. We looked abruptly down upon a rich plain, studded with palms; on the left was a shelving beach, broken by creeks and sheltered by hills; and on the rippling sea floated innumerable little fishing boats—nautilus-like—with their white sails spread before the breeze.

THE AQUEDUCT.—We had to leave our carriage and

make our way to this wild spot on foot. The sight of the Aqueduct brought Rome vividly before us. This marvellous work spans a wide valley, and consists of a double tier of arches, twenty-six in number. They are still in sufficient preservation to be crossed by the traveller, with no other fear than that of the giddy height at which he finds himself. Beneath the arches a shepherd was leading forth his sheep and goats to pasture amidst dwarf palms and wild myrtles: reminding us of the divine parable, and affording another striking instance of the enduring hold with which the habits of Eastern life yet cling to Spain. Here again we were surprised by the refusal of this shepherd boy to receive a reward for a small service rendered.

Whitsunday, May 16.

The deep bells of the Cathedral sounded early on the ear, and all Tarragona was in movement. We followed the crowd up the grand flight of steps into the Church, where velvet hangings and quaint old tapestries covered the massive piers: tapestries which are said once to have decorated the altar of our St. Paul's. Innumerable candles lighted up the sombre Church; every face was turned to the high altar; every knee was bent on the marble pavement. The service commenced with a procession round the Cathedral; the Archbishop of Tarragona, "Déan," and Canons, were in magnificent vestments, in which red and gold brocade predominated; but in the procession moved another figure, whom to overlook was impossible.

This was the Sacristan, clothed in scarlet, with painted cheeks and a stiffly-curved wig!

The pulpit in a Spanish Church is placed in an angle outside the chancel, so that the preacher commands his congregation without turning his back on the high altar.

The sermon was extempore, and the subject "Charity." The preacher invariably addressed his hearers as "señores," but notwithstanding his earnest and even impassioned appeals, they never turned towards him, but sat looking straight before them, as chill and cold

as the pavement on which they crouched. The sermon was followed by an extempore prayer from the pulpit.

A curious effect was produced by the mingling of the chimes of silver bells with the tones of the organ and voices of the choristers—now swelling forth, now dying in the distance, as the procession passed along.

On the step at each side of the high altar sat two young acolytes—apt image to the mind of those other two who sat “the one at the head, the other at the foot” of the empty tomb, saying “He is not here, He is risen.” The service lasted two hours.

We observed a small *Pietà* in marble in this Church, which well deserves to be noticed. All the figures are coloured, save the One Lifeless Body. There is also a beautiful memorial chapel to St. Elizabeth of Hungary. It was erected by her Sister Donna Violante, whose husband Don Jaime reconquered Valencia from the Moors.

A short drive from Tarragona brought us to

THE TOMB OF THE SCIPIOS.—Who can look unmoved at this impressive monument?—A monument built two hundred years before the Christian Era, when Spain was overrun by Roman legions, and Scipio Africanus made Tarragona his winter quarters.

We are led back to the second Punic War, when the fall of a Spanish town caused Rome to declare war against Carthage. Hannibal had attacked Saguntum (Murviedro), a Spanish city under the protection of Rome, and Rome demanded that Hannibal should be given up.

“Behold here are peace and war,”* said the Roman envoy, “take which you choose.” “Give which thou wilt,” was the haughty reply of Carthage. “Then here we give you war,” thundered forth the Roman. Such was the commencement of the struggle between Hannibal and Rome. Onwards from the farthest point of the east coast of Spain to the Ebro and the Pyrenees, marched the hostile force of the great Carthaginian general, to attack the Roman legions on the

* Arnold's Rome.

other side of the Alps. Spanish troops accompanied his army, and fought on the side of Carthage at the battle of Thrasymenus, whilst Spanish mines furnished gold and silver wherewith to pay his troops. But whilst the victorious Hannibal menaced Rome, Roman legions under the two Scipios disputed with Carthage the possession of Spain. The legions were defeated, the Scipios slain, and Roman influence seemed lost for ever, when a new general appeared in the person of Scipio Africanus.

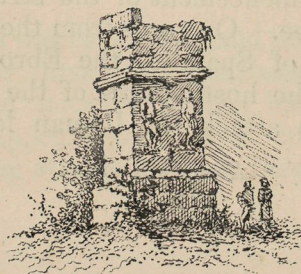
Tarragona was the place selected by the younger Scipio for the winter quarters of his army, and on the shore of the Mediterranean he raised this monument to his father and his uncle.

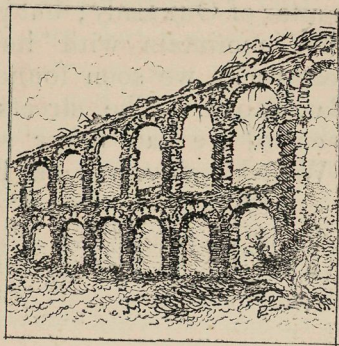
From Tarragona the fleet sailed to attack New Carthage, the stronghold of Carthage in the south.

Scipio advanced by land. His troops scaled the city walls, and the citadel was taken by assault. Many battles ensued, but success followed his arms, and before long the contest in Spain was at an end. The power of Rome was established from the Pyrenees to the Pillars of Hercules.

Through all the countless changes which Spain has since undergone, this tomb of the Scipios remains, telling how the Conqueror of Zama once ruled at Tarragona.

Far from any human habitation the Roman mausoleum rises in solitary grandeur. Two mutilated figures carved in stone keep their solemn watch over the sepulchre : above is the imperfect outline of an arch, and the still more imperfect vestige of an inscription, of which but one word can be deciphered — that word “Perpetuo.” No sound breaks the stillness save the waves on the seashore ; and the air is perfumed with the scent of the aromatic herbs on which you tread ; as you stand beneath this lonely monument, so full of dignity and calm repose.





TARRAGONA TO BARCELONA.

At six o'clock in the morning we started for Barcelona, distant by rail three hours and a half from Tarragona. The rail follows the line of the Mediterranean. Stone pines, aloes, and cactus are washed by the waves on the sandy beach, and the scenery on either side is most lovely.

At 8.30 we were at MARTORELL, and passing the Roman bridge built by Hannibal in honour of his father Hamilcar, who died in Spain. It is interesting to remember that it was the Carthaginian expedition to Spain, which led to the well-known vow of Hannibal.

His father was on the eve of departure when Hannibal, then a boy of nine years old, entreated to be permitted to accompany him. Hamilcar took the boy's hand in his, telling him that if he would accompany the expedition, he must swear to be the enemy of Rome for ever.

Before the propitiatory altar on which Hamilcar had offered sacrifice to the gods, the boy made his solemn vow. After nine years Hamilcar died in battle: another nine years and Hannibal was in command of the whole Carthaginian force in Spain, and ready to accomplish the vow of his childhood.

MONSERRAT—bristling and dentated, now rose high on our left, and we looked wistfully up at the rugged

ascent to the monastery where Ignatius Loyola laid his sword before the altar of Our Lady; but passing rapidly below the sombre mountain with its hermit cells shadowed by great rocks, we soon found ourselves in gay, bustling BARCELONA. The streets were full of people—such a crowd we had never seen before in Spain. It was Whit-Monday, and all Barcelona was making holiday.

BARCELONA.

FONDA ORIENTE.—Our excellent apartment looked on the RAMBLA—the great promenade of Barcelona, stretching from the sea right through the heart of the city. The scene from our windows was most animated, and it was difficult to believe that we were still in Spain. Indeed except for the different climate, and more picturesque aspect of the people, we might have fancied ourselves Unter den Linden in Berlin, so strong is the resemblance between the two streets.

Barcelona, in point of commerce, is the Spanish Manchester, and the city which gave Aragon her kings, is now the most Republican and the most thriving in Spain.

THE CATHEDRAL.—This gothic Church, of which Barcelona is justly proud, is reached by a grand flight of steps, a peculiar feature in Catalonian Churches. It is of later date than that of Tarragona, and hardly so striking. The interior is very dark and solemn; there is a double line of chapels on the south side, placed back to back; the outer line looking into the cloisters, which, though considerably higher than those at Tarragona, are far inferior in beauty. Tanks of water are in the centre of these cloisters, with quaint fountains, shaded by oleanders and citrons.

The shrine of St. Eulalia, a Spanish martyr of the 4th century, is in the crypt, to which you descend by a flight of steps in front of the high altar. The east end of the Cathedral is as usual apsidal. Behind the high

altar are nine small chapels. One of these is THE MARINER'S CHAPEL, with a small model of a ship suspended at the entrance, and as we passed, a throng of people, old men and maidens, women and children, knelt before the rude Cross above the altar, praying to Him whom the winds and the sea obey. It was an impressive scene, and recalled Keble's lines—

“Thy precious things, whate'er they be,
That haunt and vex thee, heart and brain,
Look to the Cross, and thou shalt see
How thou may'st turn them all to gain.”

From the Cathedral we went to

SANTA MARIA DEL MAR.—There is no *coro* to take from the length and breadth of this vast Church, but we were startled by a multitude of chairs! Were it not for the retablo, we should not have imagined we were in a Spanish Church. It was built in the 14th century, and is considered only second in grandeur to the Cathedral, but its interior arrangements are modern and in the worst taste, and we could not reconcile ourselves to the innovation of seats!

It was at Barcelona, in the early spring of the year 1493, that a royal reception was given to Columbus on his return from his first voyage. The expedition had been undertaken at the sole expense of the Queen, and it had been crowned with success. After a voyage of ten weeks—when his despondent crew had risen in mutiny—the great navigator, on the night of the 11th October, 1492, came in sight of the Bahama Isles. In the following January he discovered Hispaniola, and then returned to Spain to lay at the feet of Isabella the gold and silver he had brought from the New World. The Court listened with breathless interest while Columbus described the beauty of those Western islands—of the trees which never lost their leaves; full of bud, flower, and fruit; as fresh and green in November as in the month of May in Spain. He told them of rivers whose waters carried gold; and spoke of the timorous natives as a simple race, professing no idolatry; but believing that all good and power and

might were in Heaven ; and showing so much love and liberality, that they would give their very hearts to serve the white men. When Columbus had ended, the whole Court knelt down to offer up prayer and praise.

Twenty-six years passed, and Barcelona witnessed another royal ceremony. Charles V. held an installation of the Golden Fleece in the old Gothic Cathedral. This military order, of which the King of Spain was Grand Master, was instituted by the Burgundian Princes. The first installation took place at Bruges in 1429, and the only one which Spain witnessed was in 1519, in the Cathedral of Barcelona. The knights were twenty-five in number. Clothed in scarlet wool lined with ermine, and wearing the collar of the order from which hung the Symbolic Lamb, to remind them that wealth and power must be adorned by a Christ-like spirit, they sat in the stalls which yet bear their coats of arms. One of the stalls is emblazoned with the royal arms of England: it was that of our Henry VIII., married to Catherine of Aragon, the aunt of Charles V.

To those who are curious in Spanish lace and old silver, the shops in Barcelona offer great attraction—but the great promenade after the Rambla is the MURALLA DEL MAR, a wall fifty feet in height, with a broad walk on the top, overlooking the port, and having a grand view of the Mediterranean. On the left is the citadel, and BARCELONETA, a suburb built by Philip V., and inhabited by fishermen ; and on a rock to the right stands the famous FORT OF MONJUICH, associated with the name of an English hero—Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough.

In 1705, during the War of the Succession, Barcelona was besieged ; for three weeks the city had been invested, but without result ; the Spanish governor continued to hold out, and every day increased the difficulties of the besiegers. Peterborough had been opposed to the undertaking, but his invincible spirit rose in proportion to the obstacles which met him, and he determined upon one of the most daring exploits in military history. He first made a secret survey of the defences of Monjuich, a fortress deemed

impregnable, and completely commanding the town and port. Consulting no one, but taking with him one aide-de-camp, he stealthily pursued his way to the fort. Having made his observations, he returned to his post, unperceived by the enemy, and satisfied that the garrison might be surprised. He carried out his measures with infinite precaution, and, the better to disguise his intentions, proclaimed that he had resolved to raise the siege. The troops and heavy artillery were embarked, in spite of indignant remonstrances from the other generals; and at night, whilst the whole city was rejoicing at the withdrawal of the enemy, Peterborough, followed by a band of picked soldiers, was silently scaling the heights leading to Monjuich. The fort was taken, the governor was obliged to capitulate, and Barcelona was entered in triumph by the gallant Peterborough and the army of the Archduke Charles.

The cause of Philip V. was, however, ultimately successful; the Bourbon dynasty was established by the Peace of Utrecht; and the Archduke Charles, though vanquished in Spain, lived to become Emperor of Germany.*

* He was the father of the Empress Maria Theresa.

BARCELONA TO GERONA.

At 6.30 we left BARCELONA; at 10 we were at GERONA, where the railway ends. We started thus early to enable us to see the Cathedral before the departure of the diligence for Perpignan. We had a Spaniard as our fellow traveller, busily occupied in making cigarettes, the unfailing resource of his countrymen. Out of his pocket-book he withdrew sundry little sheets of paper, and when his task was completed, asked, to our surprise, if we would *permit* him to smoke. He was revisiting his country after an absence of twenty years, spent at Aden. These years, he told us, had effected a great change in Spain, but Catalonia was still far ahead of the other provinces, both as to industry and commerce. "Les Espagnols sont des fainéants, mais les Catalans travaillent dès leur enfance." Our companion was himself a "Catalan," as I need hardly say, and a cork merchant of Marseilles.

Between Barcelona and Gerona the railway passes through large tracts of country covered with cork trees: they had been shorn of their barks, and their trunks looked bleeding. Our fellow traveller pointed them out to us, and then told us that the exportation of corks made from these trees, is one of the great sources of wealth in this province. The bark is stripped every seven years, in the month of September; a new bark then takes its place; and the trees appear to be in no way injured.

From discussing commerce the Spaniard proceeded to politics. He did not believe in the likelihood of a civil war. In his opinion French diplomatists secretly supported the claim of the Prince of Asturias, but the Duc d'Aosta was a candidate not unlikely to succeed. The Catalans themselves were in favour of a Republic, and in a speech lately made by one of their principal men, an eloquent sketch had been given of the line of Spanish