

its delicate arms raised towards its mother, as if imploring her assistance. Every one must remember the fable here so forcibly represented. Latona was banished from heaven through the jealousy of Juno, and condemned to wander upon the earth a martyr to the persecutions of the serpent Python. During her journeyings she encountered once, while fatigued and exhausted, a body of reapers, from whom she asked a cup of water to quench her raging thirst. They not only inhumanly disregarded her humble request, but so muddied the stream of an adjacent fountain that she was unable to drink of it. Jupiter, hearing the lamentations of Latona, and being moved with compassion, revenged himself upon the cruel reapers by changing them into frogs.

In the interior of the gardens we entered upon a capacious octagonal square, surrounded by eight beautifully arched fountains, while as many more might be seen at the termination of the intervening avenues, which branched off in arbours of beauty on each side. In the centre of the square is an ornamental pedestal, from the base of which, it is said that, when in action, most of the fountains may be simultaneously seen, casting their silvery spray in the air.

The pedestal itself possesses considerable merit. Upon it are seen three figures. The god Mercury, with wings on his feet and head, and his wand in his right hand, stands looking up towards the goddess Pandora, who has her right hand raised and supporting the famous box of human misfortune and evils. Her face is raised, in the posture of invocation. The third figure represents Rancour, lying at the feet of the others, with an erected neck and hideous countenance, and one hand placed upon the thigh of Pandora, in the act of listening attentively to that which is taking place above.

Thus much for the fountains of La Granja. They are all of them equally interesting and worthy of description, but not to weary the reader, I shall content myself with merely alluding to them. We must not omit to mention, however, that the grand cascade of the gardens is one of the most magnificent in the world. It is several hundred feet in length, and rises from near the palace, in a succession of regular gradations, to the general reservoir above. The steps are of marble, while some of the lower ones are inlaid in a curious and beautiful manner. On certain festive occasions this cascade is brilliantly illu

minated at night, the effect of which is said to be enchanting beyond expression. As a whole, the fountains of La Granja reflect much credit upon the ingenuity and taste of the Spanish people. Their crystal waters are not purer than the chaste sentiment of beauty which hovers around them.

On the ensuing day (which we also spent at La Granja) we revisited the gardens, and likewise examined the principal edifices of the town. The palace is very splendid, but decidedly French in its furniture and decorations. The paintings and statues are many of them of a very voluptuous character. Several strange and momentous events have transpired within the walls of this royal edifice which have exercised an important influence upon the modern history of Spain. The most conspicuous of these was the revocation of the Salic law, by Ferdinand VII., (by which law females had been rendered ineligible to the throne,) in order that his daughter Isabel might become the legitimate heiress to the crown. By this deed, which was most probably accomplished through the powerful sway of Christina over the weak and flickering intellect of her husband, Don Carlos, the heir presumptive

and brother of the King, was deprived of his rights and robbed of his expectations, and thus the torch of civil war was enkindled on the following year at the funeral pyre of the fickle monarch. He died September 29, 1833, and the subsequent history of Spain has been one of anarchy and blood.

In the cathedral, (if it may so be called,) is the tomb of Philip V, the founder and patron of this royal retreat. The inscription upon his marble sepulchre reads as follows:—
“To Philip V, King of Spain, a great prince and good father, this monument is dedicated by his son Fernando VI.”

The evening was spent by us quite pleasantly at the inn. It was the last night we were to pass at San Ildefonso, we therefore enjoyed it in a quiet and social manner. The weather being rather cool, we sat together round a huge *brasero*, or pan of live coals, and having lighted our cigars, we cheerfully chatted away the hours of night. Our host had seen much of Spanish life, and was well versed in the wild and legendary lore of the country in which he had been born. He had no wife; yet according to his own story he had always been a favourite with the sex, and

might have had almost the Queen herself had he been willing to hang himself in the noose of matrimony. He was, indeed, a most jolly fellow! We became strongly prepossessed in his favour, and it was with a considerable degree of regret that I at last bade him farewell.

CHAPTER VII.

SOME ACCOUNT OF SEGOVIA, AND THE ROMANTIC INCIDENTS
WHICH THERE BEFEL US.

IMMEDIATELY after breakfast, we resumed our journey towards the ancient and interesting city of Segovia. It was a clear, sparkling day, and the country presented a very cheerful and pleasant aspect. As we jogged slowly on, my mind was constantly running upon the history of Gil Blas, and his reputed adventures in this particular part of Spain. The distance from La Granja to Segovia being only ten miles, we soon reached the end of our journey. At the gate we experienced a few moments' detention from the rapacious custom-house authorities, who insisted upon examining our luggage, though we had merely a small valise and carpet-bag between

us. Their motive was not difficult to penetrate, and was founded upon the well-known fact in human nature, that an enthusiastic traveller will, as a general rule, patiently submit to a slight pecuniary loss, rather than experience the vexations of a troublesome delay. My companion, however, would not gratify them, so indignant was he at their impertinence ; and, after calling them by every complimentary appellation he could remember or devise, and threatening them with complaints to Government, and the consequent loss of their posts, we entered the limits of the dilapidated though picturesque-looking town. I could not but laugh at the recent ebullition of ire on the part of my guide, whom I highly commended for the zeal and courage he had displayed. Passing through the quaint and narrow streets, our unusual and foreign appearance created no small degree of excitement : who we were, and where we came from, were questions no doubt freely circulated among the populace. As for myself, I never felt more absolutely *out of the world* : everything about me appeared so odd, and old, and curious, that even a glimpse into a new planet could not have produced a more novel impression. My

guide being well acquainted with the town, took me to the best hotel in the place, which, though a building of large size, with the remains of a Moorish square tower for its garret or upper story, was, beyond question, the most villainous establishment of the kind that I ever encountered in Spain. The landlord was a frightful-visaged, cross-tempered, and cut-throat-looking individual, with a large mouth, squinting eyes, and up-turned nose. Not a single good trait of character imparted a ray of geniality to his deep-furrowed and hideous countenance ; he was like a fiend in person, and the nature of a fiend seemed to glisten from his distorted eyes : he sometimes tried to laugh, but the demon-like grin which puckered up his monstrous mouth was a perfect revelation of the hideous hypocrisy that dwelt in his bosom. With a hollow pretension of politeness, he escorted me to a dirty and flea-haunted apartment, where he said he hoped I should be able to make myself comfortable. The idea of comfort being associated with such a place was not only a parody, but a positive insult. It was as if the devil should ask one of his victims to make himself comfortable in a chamber of his infernal realm.

The first thing of consequence we did was to ascend to the top of the Moorish tower, from whence an extensive view of the city and surrounding country offered itself to our contemplation. A crowded mass of antique and crumbling buildings lay in strange and fantastic confusion beneath us, while from the midst of them rise the giant forms of numerous churches and convents, and, above all, like a venerable chronicler of time and former ages, loomed the stupendous cathedral in the stern majesty and sublimity of true gothic proportion. Dim in the distance towered the vast mountains, wooing to their soft summits the kisses of the sky !

The early history of Segovia is involved in considerable obscurity : the prevailing opinion entertained by the people seems to be that it owes its origin to Hercules, who is generally regarded as its founder. Certainly it is the oldest-looking place I have yet seen. I felt myself as if I was an antediluvian while carelessly loitering with my guide up and down its crowded and shabby streets. Nothing reminded me of the present save the multitude of ragged urchins who beset our path, evidently actuated by motives of curiosity.

The city of Segovia is built upon a long rocky knoll, rising precipitously from a valley, while on its northern side is a rapid stream, with houses, gardens, and shady groves pleasantly interspersed along its banks. Here is usually assembled an innumerable concourse of washerwomen, who in their gay petticoats of crimson, yellow, and blue, present an exceedingly striking and masquerade-like appearance. The town itself is encircled with a massive wall with round towers, which were raised during the reign of Alonzo VI. On account of its elevation, which is three thousand three hundred feet above the sea, the temperature is remarkably cool. The population has decreased to less than one-third its former number, and the city itself is but the mere shell of what it once was. Yet it abounds in curious antiquities, which well merit the attention of the historian or scholar. Every house seems hoary with age and pregnant with the legendary associations of by-gone centuries.

Commencing our rambles through the town, the first object to which we gave any special degree of attention, was the far-famed aqueduct of the ancient Romans. This is a

most extraordinary work, and has survived in an astonishing manner the natural wear of centuries, and the devastations of warfare. In its course it forms several angles, the combined length of which is about twenty-five hundred feet. The bends were obviously intended for the purpose of interposing a check to the force of the current, besides adding to the strength and durability of the tremendous structure. The arches, low and single where the ground is high, gradually increase in height with the slope of the valley, until, finally, becoming double, they attain the prodigious elevation of one hundred feet. The great marvel of the work consists, however, in its being constructed entirely upon mathematical principles, and without the use of mortar or cement of any kind. In its architecture, it unites perfect symmetry with the utmost grandeur and solidity. Its abutments are apparently slight, yet the experience of ages has proved that they are amply sufficient to fulfil the purpose for which they were erected.

During the latter part of the eleventh century, the aqueduct was seriously injured by the Moors, who demolished a number of its arches, which,

however, were subsequently repaired in the sixteenth century by the order of Isabella. Concerning the origin of this wonderful structure, various contradictory opinions have been expressed, though none of them are of a perfectly satisfactory character. The most intelligent attribute it to Vespasian, while many of the old women firmly believe that it was raised by the devil in a single night, as a reward for the favours of a beautiful Segovian maid.

Having concluded our examination of the aqueduct, we strolled to the other side of the town, through a labyrinth of narrow and crooked streets, finally entering upon the grand *plaza* or square, in full view of the magnificent cathedral. As it was a *dia de fiesta*, or holyday, the plaza was densely thronged with a motley crowd of both sexes and all classes, engaged in every variety of amusement that indolence could suggest. The diversity of costume gave a marked air of gaiety to the scene. Every colour was there, from the deepest black to the most gorgeous scarlet. A more fantastic picture of human life could not be conceived. The effect moreover was considerable heightened by the contrast which the time-charred and ricketty

buildings around afforded. These were characterized by a striking irregularity and quaintness of style, that savoured more of antiquity than of modern times. It seemed as if we had been carried back several centuries into the past. I could scarcely believe myself an actual living, breathing, and acting, citizen of the year 1849.

My astonishment was still more increased when I entered the precincts of the sacred cathedral. It appeared to me little short of miraculous, that so august and splendid an edifice should have a real existence in the midst of so forlorn and impoverished a city. The paltry and wretched dwellings by which it was surrounded, served only to heighten the sentiment of grandeur and sublimity with which I gazed upon it. Its architecture is gothic, a style so eminently adapted to produce those feelings which tend so powerfully to develop the religious sentiment.

As we entered, a funeral service was being performed. The two immense and beautiful organs were pealing forth their harmonious and solemn strains. In the centre of the grand aisle, between the *coro* and the altar, was a platform, and a coffin, over which was thrown a pall of

black velvet, embroidered and fringed with gold. A procession of priests, bearing the Host, and dressed in robes of exceeding richness, were marching down the side aisles, some of them swinging in their hands vessels of incense, and distributing their fragrance on every side. The strangeness of the spectacle was well calculated to strike the mind with interest, and I can never forget the wild impression this scene made upon my imagination.

It was an odd transition, but from the cathedral we drove without ceremony into a *confiteria*, or confectioner's shop. Here we regaled ourselves with a cup of chocolate, almost the only luxury which is really better prepared in Spain than in any other country. It is made very thick, and is generally eaten (at least in *confiterias*) with slender sponge cakes, such as would be called in English, ladies' fingers. Spaniards very seldom drink coffee, and it is quite impossible to procure it properly prepared even in Madrid. The consequence is, that strangers soon fall into the habit of using chocolate as a daily beverage, and having once done so, they become easily reconciled to the loss of tea and coffee, the former, in a drinkable state, being equally as difficult to be

procured as the latter. The Spaniards are a remarkably abstemious race. Though it is rare to meet with one who does not use wine in a greater or less degree, yet I do not remember to have seen a single instance of intoxication, during more than six months that I spent in the country. This is owing to the fact that where wines are cheap, spirituous liquors are but slightly in demand, while, on the contrary, in countries where wines are not produced, and consequently dear, inebriation is the most universal and destructive. One of the most delicious and refreshing drinks of Spain is the national *aguaz*, which, in its cooling effect upon the system, is not to be surpassed by any liquid ever imbibed by thirsty man. It is simply composed of the unfermented juice of the grape, sweetened with clarified sugar and diluted with a suitable quantity of pure water. The gods themselves never drank anything on a hot day more invigorating and delicious.

Desiring to see the famous Alcazar, in which, according to Le Sage, the adventurous Gil Blas was for several months imprisoned, my companion suggested that we should call at once upon the governor and request of him a special order to

examine the edifice. This we accordingly did, and found the worthy old commandante alone in his studio, and seated in a capacious and old fashioned arm-chair, in a state of *dolce far niente*. I was introduced in a pompous style, and such a string of fictitious titles was given me by my guide, that I was astounded at the fellow's impudence; but my risible faculties were so strongly excited, that it was with the greatest difficulty I could restrain my laughter. My guide, however, was as cool and self-possessed, as if the fate of the kingdom was depending upon each word he uttered. A stoic could not have looked more serious and impressive. The governor welcomed us in a peculiarly bland and cordial manner, and then begged us to be seated. As soon as we stated to him the object of our visit, he immediately wrote for us the order we desired. He then summoned a servant, and called for wine, with which we refreshed ourselves, drinking at the same time the venerable governor's health. This is a custom, however, which does not seem to be in vogue in Spain. Toasts, moreover, are very seldom given, even at public dinners. Bidding his Excellency, at length, good bye, we started off in the

direction of the Alcazar. This is a large and curious building of stone, originally of Moorish construction, and has been employed at different periods, both as a fort, a palace, and a prison. At present it is used as a military college for the scientific education of cadets, and is, I believe, under very excellent management. Its position, for the purpose of a defensive stronghold, could not have been better selected. It stands upon the western point of the long rocky eminence on which the city is built, and besides being flanked with deep precipices on either side, has a wide and yawning moat in front, crossed only by a narrow bridge, which can in an instant be removed, and every means of communication thus directly cut off. We made a complete survey of the interior of the edifice, but saw nothing particularly worthy of description. Several of the saloons are quite splendid, and the ceilings and cornices elaborately carved and gilded.

After leaving the Alcazar, we strolled along the banks of the stream, which runs at the base of the city on the northern side. Women innumerable, in petticoats of colours as various as the hues of the rainbow, were engaged in all the

departments of washing and scrubbing. Such a chattering and clashing of human tongues, was perhaps never heard since the fall of Babel. It was perfectly overwhelming. As for my guide, he was soon smitten with one of the damsels whom he stoutly declared to be one of the most charming creatures he had ever encountered. I advised him to commence a courtship and marry her, but he emphatically declared, that he would sooner hang himself!

Passing by a large and gloomy edifice, some distance below the spot where the women were washing, and which, by-the-way, bore a strong resemblance to a convent, my attention was arrested by the figure of a youthful maid, who seemed to be pensively leaning over one of the balconies. Who knows, thought I, but this may be some unhappy and captive nun, and myself the knight ordained by heaven to effect her deliverance. So mustering all my courage for the philanthropic enterprise, I accosted the beautiful creature in terms of easy salutation, and was blessed in return with a soft and sweet reply. But, alas! how perplexing and cruel are the sad mistakes to which mortals are oftentimes subjected. The building I had supposed to be a

convent, turned out to be only a private residence, and as for my charming nun, a few moments' conversation sufficed to convince me, that she was no more than a romantic waiting-maid, who I am half inclined to think, suspected us of being nothing better than a couple of wandering rakes.

Returning to the inn, my ferocious-looking landlord gave me to understand that dinner was ready for me. When he said this, a dismal leer, intended by him for a smile, lit up for an instant his diabolical countenance. Perceiving no just cause for this exhibition of counterfeit mirth, I felt strongly inclined to pull the nose of my ungentlemanly host. But on second thoughts I patiently desisted. Turning to my companion, I saw at a glance that something of an amusing nature was occupying his mind, which he had hitherto refrained from disclosing to me. "What the d—l," said I, in wrath, "is the matter with you and our ugly-faced landlord? I should very much like to know what could produce a laughable impression upon such a mackerel-visaged scoundrel? He tried very hard to smile, but the muscles of his face, unused to such exercise, failed in the attempt,

and left a species of sardonic grin upon his uncouth features. It is my firm belief that none but men of good hearts can produce a genuine laugh—a laugh of true humour, and of soul. The laughter of a demon is more terrible than his frown.”

My companion did not reply to me, but maintaining his silence, we walked into the banquet-hall together. This was a large and naked apartment, with no furniture save a few chairs and an antiquated clock that stood in one of its corners, and ticked so loudly as to create a reverberation from the opposite side of the room. In the centre, like a small island in the midst of the boundless ocean, was a small round table with a tureen of soup smoking upon it, and to my astonishment, plates arranged for two persons. Who could my companion be? and what right had any one to furnish me with a companion without consulting me? were interrogatories that instantly forced themselves upon my mind. I was not long, however, in doubt. No sooner had I taken my seat than—unexpected visitation—a door suddenly opened, and in stalked a tall lady, habited in black from head to foot, who without so much as honouring me with a glance,

deliberately approached the table, and in a dignified manner seated herself in the vacant chair. If an apparition had presented itself I could not have been more bewildered and astounded. Who could this sombre dame be, and from whence could she have emanated? It was in vain that I endeavoured to penetrate the mystery; the thing seemed too obscure for elucidation, so I gave up in despair, and resolved, politely, to play the agreeable. It was a strange predicament truly for a young bachelor and enthusiastic admirer of the sex! My guide had left the room, and I was therefore absolutely alone with a woman whom I had never seen before in my life. But silence was appalling: we were therefore driven into conversation, or we should have frightened each other to death by a supernatural stillness. She gave me to understand that she was a native of France, and had been for upwards of a year engaged in travelling through the different provinces of Spain. She was apparently about thirty years of age, of a rather prepossessing appearance and agreeable manners, while her conversation manifested a strong intellect, as well as a refined and thorough education. This surprised me the more, as I

had at first suspected her of being a lady of rather questionable character. She certainly was a most eccentric woman, and though I was far from being in any danger of falling in love with her, yet I am free to confess that she entertained me considerably by her various accounts of Spanish life, which were entirely new to me. In the morning she left in the diligence for Madrid. Neither my companion nor the landlord were able to give me any satisfactory information regarding her. The former supposed her a French lady who was canvassing Spain in quest of intrigues and adventures, while the latter gave us his opinion that she was a blue-stocking of the George Sand order, whose object was to produce eventually a volume of her personal travels in the Spanish kingdom. It may have been a malicious slander, yet an officer with whom I became acquainted on the following day, assured me that the "mysterious French lady" was no better than she should be; and he also furnished revelations concerning the celebrated Lola Montes much of the same nature. Though, of course, he paraded no reason for my doubting the truth of these extraordinary statements, yet I am convinced that those

who talk the most of such matters are, as a general rule, the least in favour with the ladies.

Before taking our departure from the city, we followed a funeral train to the *campo santo*, as the cemeteries of the dead are termed in Spain. The deceased was a young and beautiful girl, whose bridal was to have taken place in the course of a few weeks, and lo, she was now being carried in melancholy procession to the silent tomb. It was a sad end of the brightest hopes of youth. Her death had been as sudden as it was lamentable. The chill blast of death blew over her, and the sweet blossom faded and fell before it had expanded into a flower.

The coffin was of snowy whiteness, with a wreath of roses at the head, in token of the youth, innocence, and beauty of the departed. This was borne to the grave by a chosen body of pall-bearers. Before and after the corpse, walked a long line of mourners, priests, and children, each of them bearing a lighted torch in his hand. As they marched, they chanted a funeral dirge, low, full, and harmonious, which added much to the affecting solemnity of the scene. On arriving at the cemetery, we found that it consisted of an

area of several acres, enclosed by a stone wall, completely filled with catacombs for the reception of the dead. These were already so populous, that but very few places were unoccupied. In front of each cell was a small marble slab, announcing merely the name and age of the deceased occupant. The brevity of these inscriptions conveyed to me an useful lesson. The epitaphs upon our tombstones signify but little ; and are as much disregarded by the living as the dead. Rather let our epitaphs be written by a life of useful action upon the hearts of those who live after us.

I halted for a moment to contemplate the grave of a physician, who had survived to the remarkable age of ninety-two. Often when most affected with solemn thoughts, do the drollest ideas steal imperceptibly into the mind, and as I looked upon the final resting place of this Sangrado, it occurred to me that formerly many of the dead around him might possibly have been his patients, and that last of all he himself had finally given up the ghost.

I left the graveyard with feelings of deep humility and sadness, and walked listlessly back towards the city, meditating upon the recent

lesson of mortality I had gleaned from the voiceless tombs. In the morning we took a final leave of Segovia, and set out on our return to Madrid. After a cold and tedious ride over the mountains, we once more mingled with the ocean of human life ebbing and flowing within the walls of that peculiar city.