

constitutes the prominent object of interest in Cordova, and justly deserves to be classed among the wonders of the world.

We had no sooner entered this extraordinary edifice, which externally has a stern, massive, and gloomy appearance, than we were surrounded by a swarm of importunate beggars, who assailed us with every species of lamentable solicitation. Moved by their aspect of distress, we threw among them a handful of copper coin, which produced such a state of frightful discord and avaricious contention among them, that we were almost inclined to regret the charity we had bestowed, though the difficulty, however, arose from the manner in which we ourselves had distributed it.

Nothing could be more strange and striking in effect than the interior of this old Arabian mosque. The roof is low, and is supported by such a multiplicity of columns that it seemed to us at first as if we had entered a marble grove, or subterranean grotto of enchantment. Originally these pillars were twelve hundred in number, but many have been destroyed during periods of warfare, and consequently only about eight hundred and fifty now remain. These are

composed of different kinds of marble, jasper, porphyry, and verd-antique: one hundred and forty of the original columns were presented by Leo, Emperor of Constantinople, and may easily be distinguished by their uniqueness and superior beauty. This mosque was built in the eighth century by the then reigning Arabian king, and was regarded as second only in rank and splendour to the Caaba of Mecca. The few moments allotted us merely allowed us to take a cursory glance at the various chapels and their curious decorations, yet the general effect left upon our mind was too gorgeous to be soon blotted from our memory. Resuming our journey, the city of Cordova gradually faded in the distance, while the retrospective view of the mountains and fertile plains, the dashing river, the waving palms, and graceful olive hills, presented a scene of beauty which long lingered in our mental vision.

Soon after sunrise on the following morning we reached the picturesque town of Alcala, which is situated about two leagues from Seville, and is fortified with one of the most perfect and stately of all the Moorish castles now existing in Spain. At the base of the rocky hill, whose sloping side

is ridged with ancient walls, the peaceful river makes a gentle curve, and courses merrily onward to the sea. Alcala is a town of bakers, and literally supplies Seville with bread, and that of the most excellent quality. The number of mills here in operation is above two hundred, while more than fifty ovens are said to be in constant use. Besides bread, the city of Seville derives its water from Alcala, which is conveyed from thence by means of a modern Spanish aqueduct.

We were now at the termination of our protracted journey, and delightful indeed to a couple of exhausted wanderers was the prospect of repose in such a charming region. Ronalds was in extacies, and smoked his cigar with all the tranquil complacency of a contented Turk.

At length the much wished for spectacle dawned upon our sight. In the centre of the delicious plain beneath us, and upon the verdant banks of the sparkling Guadalquivir, lay the enchanting city of Seville, with its grand cathedral rising in gothic sublimity to the sky, and pointing, as it were, with its filigree fingers, to the spirit's everlasting home. As we approached nearer, the roadside became skirted with beau-

tiful gardens and orange-groves in fruitful bloom, enclosed with hedges of prickly cactus and wild geraniums in fragrant flower. In contrast with the barren Castiles, from which our transition had been so sudden, it seemed as if we were now within the precincts of Paradise itself. Nor did we experience anything like disappointment upon entering the gates of the city. On the contrary, the general appearance of the streets and houses gave us the utmost pleasure, to which was added the heartfelt satisfaction of having completed our long, and, upon the whole, uninteresting journey. We betook ourselves at once to the "Fonda de Europa," where we secured more agreeable accommodations than we had previously met with in the country. An excellent dinner was immediately provided for us, during the private enjoyment of which a poor blind fiddler, called Chico, was brought into the room for our entertainment, who not only played with consummate skill upon the instrument, but likewise sang for us several of the popular songs of Andalusia in a manner which called forth from us a perfect round of applause. Our bowels of compassion were highly moved; and, moreover

so much were we amused with the musical performances of the old man, that we made him promise to visit us every day during our stay in Seville, a promise which we found not the slightest difficulty in exacting, and which to the very letter was scrupulously fulfilled.

## CHAPTER XI.

AN EPITOME OF SEVILLIAN HISTORY, WITH BRIEF NOTICES  
OF THE CATHEDRAL AND EXCHANGE.

OF all the cities in Spain, Seville undoubtedly presents the largest share of attractions, either to the traveller in quest of a place of delightful sojourn, or to the student in search of antiquarian lore. Its origin and early history are involved in deep obscurity. The Sevillians themselves attribute the foundation of their city to Hercules, as do also the natives of Toledo and the inhabitants of several other Spanish towns. The probability is, that it was quite an insignificant, puny town previous to its conquest by Julius Cæsar, who very much improved it, and finally converted it into a capital. It after-

wards fell into the hands of the Goths, under whom it continued to be the seat of regal power until the removal of the capital, in the sixth century, to Toledo. Upon the defeat of Don Roderick, and the consequent overthrow of the Gothic dominion, Seville was taken by the Moors, and remained in their possession until the year 1248, when, after a vain and desperate conflict, it surrendered to Ferdinand, the valiant king of the united powers of Leon and Castile. At this time the Arabian dynasty had become shattered, and the different kingdoms were engaged in civil warfare with each other. Certain tribes, through hatred and jealousy, even afforded assistance to the Christian monarch against their envied brethren, and thus ensured to his armies that success which otherwise would never have attended his chivalrous efforts. A few years after the siege, Ferdinand died in the city he had captured, and in the year 1668 he was constituted a saint by the act of Clement IX. Seville continued to be the capital of Spain until the court was transferred to Valladolid, during the eventful reign of Charles V.

Such is a brief epitome of the history of a city which has been successively a capital under

four distinct nations, and which combines in its present aspect striking peculiarities and interesting vestiges of each.

Before commencing our excursions through the city, we engaged an eccentric person of the name of Pascual Rose to act as our guide. This man, though a native of Gibraltar, had resided many years in Seville, and had earned a livelihood principally by waiting upon strangers and showing them the marvels and curiosities of the place. Another source of emolument was the fees and commissions which he was accustomed to exact from every shopkeeper to whom he introduced a customer. This is a practice which obtains among all the valets of Spain; and the traveller, therefore, cannot be too much on his guard against deception and roguery. In order to prevent actual loss, the commission of the guide is added to the original price of the article. On this account, if you have a sufficient knowledge of the language, you should always make your purchases alone, offering about half the price demanded, which is often sufficient, and can always be compromised for a third. Foreigners are invariably charged more than natives: they are expected to have long purses,

and are unscrupulously taxed accordingly. Though our conductor, Pascual, was by no means perfect, but on the contrary was full of faults and imperfections, yet he made himself extremely useful to us as a companion, and afforded us an infinite deal of amusement by his drolleries and laughable eccentricities. Such a perfect volume of rhapsodical talk I never heard issue from a human gullet before—it was truly overwhelming. Being a “rock-scorpion,” his knowledge of the English language was extremely imperfect, as well as ungrammatical, though we had no difficulty in understanding him, in spite of the rapidity with which he slaughtered the innocent words of the noble Anglo-Saxon tongue. This fellow had introduced himself to us immediately upon our arrival, and with many extravagant commendations of his own qualifications, had solicited the honour of taking us under his charge during our stay in the city, at the same time promising with ludicrous energy to devote himself body and soul to our service. There was something about the clown that pleased us, so we took him forthwith upon his own recommendation.

The first great object which we visited in

Seville was the cathedral. This is, without exception, the most magnificent ecclesiastical edifice in Spain, and probably the most solemn and religiously-impressive one in the world. It contains grandeur with simplicity, and symmetry of form with elegance of finish and beauty of design ; its architecture is a combination of the Gothic, the Roman, and the Moorish styles, the former of which, however, strongly predominates. Here one reads, in the very marble and unchanging granite, the history of departed ages, and the vast changes which have been wrought by passing centuries. Nations have flourished and vanished while this mighty temple, which witnessed their rise, their progress, and their fall, stands as firm as the eternal rocks, looking upwards in glorious triumph to heaven. The original Moorish mosque which occupied the site of the present cathedral was totally demolished, with the exception of its wonderful tower, the *Giralda*, which is not only perfect and unimpaired, as in the days of its Arabian pride, but has, moreover, one hundred feet of additional height, which is now about three hundred and fifty feet. This tower was erected during the twelfth century, and has

been the theme of admiration to all artists and travellers who have beheld it. It was from this tower that the *muezzin* was accustomed to call the faithful to prayers, but the Arabian star has now for ever set, and the dusky Moor no longer bends the knee in Spain.

The surface of the tower is covered with curious Oriental devices and delicate stucco tracery : the effect is beautiful in the extreme. Upon the pinnacle is a bronze female figure representing Faith : it is fourteen feet in height, and weighs nearly three thousand pounds. The view from the belfry of the city and surrounding country, the green meadows and olive-dotted hills, the winding river, luxuriant orange-groves, and snow-white houses, as well as the numerous domes and sun-lit spires of the city itself, presented to our eyes a panorama of unrivalled interest and beauty. The ascent of the tower is made by a series of sloping planes, the inclination of which is so gradual that a person might ride to the belfry on horseback, in if he were disposed for such a novel equestrian undertaking.

At the entrance of the Giralda was a little room where a pretty gipsy girl sat from morning till night upon a low seat near the door, engaged in

working beautiful baskets of vari-coloured beads, which she disposed of to strangers, as pleasing mementos of their visit to the cathedral. We had not the heart to pass the threshold without contributing our mite of encouragement to the damsel, who, though she belonged to the gipsy race, had a brightness of eye and a softness of manner which irresistibly won from us a tribute of praise. Our guide, Pascual, appeared to be intimately acquainted with the maiden, and made himself so very free with her that she would have served him right had she smartly boxed his ears for his insolence.

The gipsy girl of the Giralda spoke the Spanish remarkably well, and the tones of her voice were gentle and kind; yet there was an artful and sinister expression about her features which gave one, at a glance, the most positive assurance of the strange tribe to which she belonged. She told us that she danced regularly at one of the theatres, and, upon the request of the loquacious Pascual, showed us several of her gala dresses, which were indeed quite fantastic and gay.

Adjoining the base of the town is the "Patio de los Oranjos," or court of orange trees.

This is neatly paved, and has an old fountain in the centre, at which the Moors formerly performed their pious ablutions. The northern entrance is very fine, being spanned with an oriental horse-shoe arch, and with massive doors of bronze. Upon entering the cathedral we were instantly impressed with the vastness and sublimity of the sacred edifice:—an unutterable stillness filled the place, while a dim and solemn light from the richly stained glass of the grand gothic windows, gave tone and spirit to the holy grandeur of the scene. No human object crossed our vision, save an occasional black-robed priest, stealing with noiseless steps and phantom aspect from one dark cloister to another. I felt that I was within the walls of an edifice exclusively set apart for the worship of that unseen and dread Being, who has created all things and exercises over them a controlling and resistless influence. Unworthy thoughts fled from my mind, while springs of deep reflection started into action within the secret recesses of my soul.

I have visited many of the grandest cathedrals and churches of Europe, but not one of them, not even St. Peter's at Rome, nor the

magnificent Duomo of Milan, gave me so powerful an impression of solemnity and awe, as I experienced upon entering the stupendous cathedral of Seville. Its length is four hundred and thirty-one feet, and its width three hundred and fifteen. It has five aisles, exclusive of the line of lateral chapels, the space occupied by which would constitute two more. Nothing could be more striking than the central nave, whose height is one hundred and forty-five feet, while at the transept dome it is increased to one hundred and seventy. The floor consists of a chequered pavement of black and white marble, which has a most beautiful effect, and was constructed at an immense expense.

About the centre of the royal aisle is the *coro*, or place for the singers:—this is composed externally of the finest marbles of different colours, polished and carved in the most exquisite manner. On each side the splendid and richly gilt organs rise almost to the very ceiling; though perhaps they are too profusely covered with ornaments and superfluous decorations, yet they are mighty instruments, and send forth tones at times as terrible as the rolling thunder, and then again as soft

as the chiming of evening bells, and as sweet as the voices of happy birds. According to Mr. Ford, author of the "Handbook of Spain," the largest of the organs, which was made in the year 1792, is said to have five thousand three hundred pipes, and one hundred and ten stops more than the one of Haarlem.

The interior of the choir is provided with one hundred and seventeen stalls, which are of dark wood and elaborately carved. In the centre is a large chair with a high Gothic back, which serves on certain occasions as a throne for the archbishop, during the performance of the "Tenebræ" in the holy week. A superb candlestick of bronze, twenty-five feet in height, is placed in the midst of the coro, and supplied with thirteen lighted candles, twelve of which are gradually extinguished, leaving but one in flame, which, being of white wax, burns with a clear and steady light, in representation of the devotion of the Holy Virgin, when the disciples had deserted their Lord. It is from this belief that the Virgin is so greatly idolized in Spain.

But it is in vain for one to attempt detail

in regard to the Seville cathedral, unless perchance he contemplate writing an entire book upon the subject, for which its innumerable wonders of art afford ample materials. The contents of any one of the cloisters alone would abundantly supply thought and matter for an essay. Though wanting in fine sculpture, yet it contains inestimable treasures of exquisite painting, by Murillo and other distinguished masters of the Spanish school. Not a day passed by that we did not spend at least an hour in wandering through the various cloisters, and up and down the long and solemn aisles, gazing at the mysteries and marvels of the tremendous edifice, and listening to the overwhelming sounds of the glorious organs, as they rolled and reverberated among the gigantic columns and gothic arches of this most stately temple of the great and living God.

In every part of the cathedral we noticed printed cards, expressly forbidding the sexes to walk or talk together within the walls of the edifice, threatening with excommunication all such as should disregard this sacred injunction.

On leaving the cathedral we were conducted by the merry Pascual to the Lonja or Exchange. This noble edifice was erected during the reign of Philip II, and is constructed of solid granite, brought from the quarries near Xerez. The building is a quadrangle of about two hundred feet, by sixty-four in height. Within is the spacious patio, or court, where, in the days of Sevillian prosperity, the commercial men of the city gathered themselves together for the transaction of general business, the making of contracts, and speculations on the rise and fall of stocks. It is difficult to restrain a feeling of melancholy upon entering that lonely and grass-grown court, once so noisy with the busy hum of traffic and the sharp bickerings of avaricious men, now so silent, so deserted, and so sad. Even my unsentimental friend Ronalds looked grim, though our guide maintained the same expression of merriment that characterized on all occasions his comical features. "Come," said he, with a good-natured smile, "and you shall see some writings that will make you stare."

We thereupon ascended a royal flight of marble steps, handsomely embellished with

jasper ornaments, which led us to an upper chamber, in which were collected the deeply interesting archives, relating to the discovery and early settlement of America. These valuable relics are arranged in massive cases of mahogany, and constitute an extensive as well as invaluable library in themselves. The amount of manuscript is enormous, and gives one an adequate idea of the enthusiasm which must have marked the characters of the immortal discoverers of the New World. No one can gaze upon the handwriting of such men as Columbus, Pizarro, and Cortes, and read the details of the wonderful vicissitudes and strange adventures which they encountered, during their wanderings in the newly discovered land beyond the sea, without reflecting upon the extraordinary—I may almost say miraculous—results which have sprung from the labours of these men; who may be said to have followed the guidance of the mighty sun, and scattered the seeds of civilization amid the old and boundless forests of the western world.

## CHAPTER XII.

THE MYSTERIES OF THE ALCAZAR, AND TOBACCO FACTORY OF SEVILLE — AN INTERESTING RELIC OF THE HOLY INQUISITION—DELIGHTFUL STROLL UPON THE GUADALQUIVIR.

“WE will now,” said Pascual, “go to the Alcazar. I know that building well, and had the honour of residing in it more than a year, as the head cook of her sweet ladyship, the Duchess de Montpensier. Those were happy, happy times—good wages, good living, and excellent wine. The Duchess was particularly fond of me, and made me many a fine present, on account of the extraordinary tact and skill I displayed in suiting my dishes to the delicate palate of her Highness.”

“Well! upon my word,” replied Ronalds,

with an extraordinary look of disbelief, "I never should have taken you for a cook, and really I believe you lie! How the devil did you ever learn anything about cookery?"

"By the thousand witches," exclaimed Pascual, in a burst of virtuous indignation, "you will never doubt my cooking capacities, after you have once given me a fair trial. Good heavens! I have the reputation of being the best cook in Seville, and would bet you a million of dollars, by all the saints, that you cannot find a man anywhere who will prepare a boned turkey equal to myself, or make a better plum-pudding."

"If that is absolutely the case," said Ronalds, "you shall superintend our cookery for the future, and if anything is permitted to go into our mouths, which is in the least degree unsavoury, or intended as an experiment upon our digestive powers, you may depend upon a just retribution for your egotistical exaggeration of your own culinary qualifications."

We had now arrived at the Alcazar, and were standing before its grand Moorish portal, which was built by Don Pedro, in the fourteenth century when he restored this dilapidated palace,

employing Moorish workmen for the purpose. Here the marriage of Charles V, to Isabella of Portugal took place, and here Philip V. spent two years of solitary retirement, in a morbid condition of religious fanaticism and in the quiet enjoyment of a self-imposed monastic life.

On entering, we could scarcely dispossess our minds of a strange feeling like that of enchantment, which came suddenly over us. It seemed as if, like a couple of modern Aladdins, we had, by some magical influence, been translated into the midst of a fairy palace. All was still and motionless! The gentle trickling of water from the fountains in the gardens, and the echoes of our own footsteps and voices, which followed us through lordly halls, vaulted passages, and deserted corridors, were the only sounds which fell upon our ears. It would be no easy task to give one an adequate idea of the peculiar beauty of this ancient palace of the Moors, which, with the exception of the Alhambra, is decidedly the most remarkable in Spain. The original decorations of its halls; including the Arabesque tracery of the wall and the rich and vari-tinted hues of the ceiling have been in a great measure impaired by the

depravity of modern taste, which has even covered, and almost erased, the exquisite stucco-work and architectural embroidery of some of the apartments, by daubing it over with a thick coating of whitewash. How men could be so utterly lost to a sense of taste and beauty, is exceedingly difficult to conceive.

The Hall of Ambassadors is a magnificent audience chamber, with a lofty and gorgeously decorated dome-swelling roof. Here many a Moslem banquet has probably been held, and many a Moorish pontiff been received in royal state. The adjacent patio is seventy feet in length by fifty-four in breadth. It is surrounded by columns and filigree arches, and has in the centre a fountain of pure and ever-bubbling water. In a chamber near the grand hall, it is said that Don Fabrique, master of Santiago, was cruelly murdered by his half-brother Don Pedro, properly surnamed "the cruel," who, with the intention of carrying out this unnatural and diabolical project, had hypocritically invited him to a royal entertainment. Several red spots in the white marble pavement were pointed out to us by the credulous Pascual, who firmly believed them to have been caused by

the blood of the unfortunate Don Fabrique. Those, however, of more incredulity, are said to have serious doubts on this point. As to Ronalds, he laughed heartily at the bare idea.

We walked into the gardens, and spent an hour in strolling about its winding and pleasant walks. In the midst of these charming grounds is an artificial pond, filled with glittering fish, though whether they are the veritable descendants of those placed here by Philip V, I cannot exactly say. Pascual insisted upon it that they were, though Ronalds contradicted him stoutly, and, moreover, added that it was too great an absurdity to be thought of for a moment.

The gardens were tastefully laid out, and in delightful bloom, and the air was truly fragrant with the incense of the numerous blossoms and flowers. The orange-trees were heavily laden with fruit, the sweetest and spiciest that ever cooled a human tongue. At our desire Pascual climbed one of the trees, and gave us an opportunity of filling our pockets, which we literally crammed to their utmost distention, with the golden-cheeked oranges, which fell in their

ripeness, with the most gentle agitation of the branches.

Beneath the palace is a subterranean cavern, which we entered from the garden called "the Bath of Maria de Padilla." On one side of the long marble basin, were several grated cells, in one of which, we were assured by Pascual, Blanche of Bourbon, the innocent wife of Philip the cruel, was imprisoned, and compelled to witness the daily ablutions of her husband, with the powerful rival who had supplanted her in his affections. What spectacle could be more agonizing to an affectionate and tender wife than this? To what lower grade could human cruelty descend! It is probable, however, that this story, like many others of a similar nature, is but an exaggeration, to which the credulity of the multitude has given birth.

From the Alcazar we directed our steps to the *Casa de Pilatos*, or House of Pilate. This splendid mansion was built at the close of the fifteenth century, and presents a singular intermixture of the Gothic and Arabian styles. It is in a lamentably abandoned and ruinous state, though its proprietor is a man of high rank and extensive wealth. Its Moorish patio

is sixty feet square, around which is a grove of delicate white columns supporting a series of exquisite Arabian arches, elaborately embellished with filigree inscriptions and beautiful lace-like workmanship in stucco. Many of the rooms are pencilled in the same curious manner, while the lower parts of the walls are covered with the painted porcelain tiles, in general use to this day among the Moors, and which give such a strikingly neat and pleasing effect to the interior of their dwellings. Numerous specimens of ancient statuary are scattered among the courts and chambers, but none of them merit any degree of attention, save for their antiquity. They were brought from the ruins of Italica, and have very much degenerated from their original condition. I doubt whether there is a single statue among the entire number which is not minus a head, an arm, or a leg, or at least an ear or a nose, or some other equally important part of the animal economy.

Our next visit was to the *Fabrica de Tabacos*, or tobacco factory. This is the most immense establishment of the kind in Spain, and is devoted exclusively to the manufacture of snuff and cigars. "Chewing" is a habit to which the