

wait upon them. The choristers form a third, and the hermits a fourth, division of the body. Each monk has three or four rooms, from the windows of which the view of the rocks and the Llobregat is as delightful as possible. A new abbot is chosen every four years. Their offices are as follow : at twelve at night they sing *matins*, and immediately after *lauds* ; at six *prime*, afterwards *chapter* ; at nine *tiers* ; after this grand mass, and immediately *sixths*. They dine about eleven. Upon leaving the refectory they proceed to *nones* ; *vespers* at half past two ; and *complin* in summer at five ; in winter earlier. After *complin*, silence is to be observed. They retire to bed about eight. Their library, though considerable, is notwithstanding one of the worst collections that I ever

saw. Spanish divinity without end. The only English book that I observed was *Anglia Sacra*, by Wharton: the humanity class very scanty. In the evening the visitors and pilgrims became very jovial, singing and dancing with great glee; some were excessively drunk: but what surprised me still more, was a party of tradesmen from Barcelona; who kept me awake half the night by roaring out deep nasal tones in imitation of the monks singing at mass.

May 30. We wished to continue our route this morning at four but the convent gates were not opened till six. A vast crowd of peasants departed with us, carrying bows of the trees which grow on the mountains; others remained to keep up the festival. Our guide decorated his fingers with rings bought in the convent.

We descended by a steep and dangerous road, which obliged us to walk the greater part of the way to Monestrol, a village at the base of the mountain, belonging to the convent: its original name was Monstrulum, from some small religious edifice which formerly existed there. At present it has a church with ten residentiary priests—an enormous number for so insignificant a town: it took us three quarters of an hour to arrive here. We passed the Llobregat, and proceeded by an irregular pathway towards Vacarisas: we preferred this return that we might, in a general view, see the interesting face of the mountain which Thicknesse has represented; but our observations did not at all tend to confirm his accuracy. Instead of the dark effect which he has given it,

Montserrat appears perfectly white ; and the rocks which are more like bolsters than spires, are made too spiring and pointed in his print.

Montserrat has three sides ; that towards Barcelona (the north-east) is bold and rugged, but by no means extraordinary ; the face it presents on the west side, towards Vacarisas, is more striking. The mountain here appears to have been built up perpendicularly, and to have received from the hand of nature two crowns of cones and bolsters ; other fantastic pinnacles arise in other parts, but these two form the prominent features. Between them the mountain retires, and leaves a convenient sheltered recess for the monastery a little more than half way up its side. In this view also the greater number of the hermitages are seen ; they are all

defended by their situation from the north wind. The rock is white, composed of myriads of pebbles and small stones apparently cemented together: every side of it appears dignified, and embellished with shrubs. It stands alone in a hilly country; and attracts the eyes as well as the devotion of the seamen of Barcelona, and the whole province of Catalonia. The most stupendous prospect, however, which this mountain exhibits, is on the road to Villafrauca. Its extraordinary length, and magnificent irregularity, are there seen with every possible advantage, and the most imposing effect. Its height is probably not much more than two thousand feet, but it appears loftier from the low hills by which it is surrounded. At a pea-

sant's house (for we passed Vacarisas to the left) we obtained some tolerable bread and wine ; which, with the addition of two excellent omelets, gave us the unexpected pleasure of a good breakfast. The heat now began to be excessive ; so that while we were almost melted, we shuddered at the prospect of the southern provinces. The land is almost everywhere cultivated in corn and vines ; but though it is by no means fertile, the groves of dwarf pines seem to be the only interruption to the labours of the peasant. The vines are at present short and without support ; the precision of their arrangement, and the tender green colour of their leaves, render them a pretty object in the landscape. We pursued our track through several clean white vilages,

without beggars, to Tarassa, where we were glad to refresh and to repose ourselves during the heat of mid-day. The peasants of Catalonia have a curious mode of drinking: the wine-bottles are made somewhat in the form of a tea-pot; by means of a tube they spout the wine into their mouths at a little distance, and are very adroit in this clean custom. I have seen half a dozen peasants at dinner, who have handed round the bottle during the whole meal without once touching the spout with their lips; the water-vessels are made for the same practice. This mode of drinking is ancient and classical, as may be seen in the frescoes of Her- culaneum.

From Tarassa we continued our route to Savandell, resting an hour

by the way: these are rather neat towns, and contain cloth manufactories. It being holiday time, we met a vast many peasants on the road in their best clothes; and we had fresh occasion to admire this fine race of clean and industrious people. We passed a mountain covered with white goats and sheep: the latter are most of them black, with small horns, and their appearance is very lean and scraggy. After riding through the lively village of St. Andreol, we found ourselves in the fertile and populous vicinity of Barcelona. The city, backed by Monjoich, has a pretty look on this side; and though it was impossible for us, whose eyes had been so lately feasted with the charms of Naples and Genoa, to be struck with the villas of Barcelona,

yet returning from monastic solitude, they delighted us extremely. We hastened lest we should be too late for the gates, which are always shut at eight o'clock.

Our journey to-day has been at least forty miles, and a bad road; but I earnestly advise any traveller who wishes to be pleased and surprised by Montserrat, to prefer it to the other (through Martorel): by this means he will receive his first impression from a most interesting general view of the mountain, and his curiosity will thus be sharpened instead of checked. It is ten miles further, and the road is worse; but it is all to be done in a day.

We found the **Rambla** (the parade of Barcelona) crowded by all the middle orders of the citizens; men,

women, priests, and monks. It was the double holiday of Whit-Monday and Saint Renpands. After the opera, about thirty carriages moved in procession: they were generally shabby, both as to the vehicle and the equipage; and many were of the ancient square form. The general's (which was preceded by two dragoons) and that of the governor, were in the Parisian fashion: the harness of both was handsome, and decorated with silver; the latter had plumes on the horses' heads.

May 31st. Being determined to set out at all events for Valentia to-morrow, we sent for a master muleteer, and agreed with him for two volantes, which were to perform the journey in seven days. The distance is fifty-five leagues, about two hundred and

twenty miles; and we are to pay twenty-four dollars for each carriage. On our calling at the banker's, he presented us with the king's declaration of war, dated the 16th. Though prepared to expect such an event, yet we were a little confounded; but it still more increased our anxiety to set out for Madrid.

CHAP. III.

Environs of Barcelona.—Plain of Villa Franca.—Roman Antiquities.—Parragona.—Late Archbishop.—San Carlos.—Barren Tract.—Castle of Almenara.—Plain of Valencia.—Saguntum.—Valencia.—The Theatre.

WE left Barcelona about seven in the morning of the 1st of June; and at the gates were obliged, as usual, to fee the custom-house officers. The neat and fertile gardens, and the rich vale of Llobregat, attracted as much admiration as our former journey to Montserrat. The hedges of fine lofty aloes, which are seen in every cultivated part of Catalonia, are perhaps one of its most remarkable features. Soon after we passed the Llo-

bregat, which is almost dried up, we came into a dull country of hills covered with dwarf-pines. At twelve o'clock we arrived at a venta, not very dirty, where we remained till three, during the heat of the day; here we procured some omelets and wine. After dinner the same uninteresting landscape accompanied us for the greater part of the way; the road however is excellent, raised and bricked up at the sides. In one place an attempt has been made to throw a bridge with two ranges of arches across a small valley, to shorten the route; but it has failed, from want of skill in the architect. Near it is building a country-seat for a rich citizen of Barcelona, which I mention as it is a novelty and a curiosity in Spain to see a villa really in the country. Cultivation began to shew

itself here and there. Towards the evening at length the rich and picturesque plain of Villa-franca opened on us, and closed the prospects of the day. It is an irregular piece of ground, generally clothed with vineyards, barley, hemp, &c. but not entirely cultivated; having pine-groves which intersect the fields in different parts, and add infinitely to the beautiful variety of the scene. The great object, however, which attracts and absorbs all our attention, is the fine blue spiral mass of Montserrat. I had no idea of its length, and of its magnificent irregularity, till this view was set before me: it is more striking and surprising than any thing I ever beheld.

We arrived, about eight o'clock, at a good posada in Villa-franca, which is kept by an Italian, having per-

formed only seven leagues (twenty-eight miles) in the whole day's journey. We visited the cathedral; but it was too dark to examine the interior. Externally it has the air of a large English country church; plain, with buttresses, a tower, and a short spire. The town is neat, and contains many shops; the houses are of plaister, well white-washed. We supped in company with several other travellers, who were all eager for our news concerning the war. The repast was a perfect banquet, and gave a deceitful specimen of the fare at Spanish inns: and as this was unique, I will insert an account of it. The company were eight in number: our first course consisted of fish, stewed beef, and stewed pigeons; the second a leg and loin of a kid, salad, three chickens, peas, and burnt cream: for

our share of this and our beds, &c. we were only charged three pesettas (thirty pence) each. A curious affray took place after supper. As the muleteers and the females of the inn were familiarly conversing in a balcony at the end of the room, the noise they made so enraged a German of the company, that after frequently commanding silence, he seized the foremost of the men, and attempted to force him out of the room: this, however the other indignantly resisted; and in a furious passion, snatched up half a dozen plates from the side-table, to fling at his adversary, to whose aid I advanced, and wrested the plates out of his hand. After a great deal of quarrelling (in which all the strangers spoke their own language, and the females resolutely took the muleteers' part) the intruders

left the room grumbling, and we retired to rest.

2. We set out this morning at half past four o'clock; and as we left the vale of Villa-franca, gave a parting look of admiration to the pinnacles of Montserrat. The country through which we proceeded was cultivated, though not very fertile. The few villages we saw were neat; and, like the others of Catalonia, bespoke the industry of their inhabitants: in one of them we breakfasted on oranges, bread, and wine. Soon afterwards we came to a Roman arch, of no beauty except the colour of the stone: it has two Corinthian pilastres on each side the aperture, and a light entablature. The traces of the inscription are almost entirely obliterated. It is supposed to have been the ancient entrance into the Campus

Terraconensis, but I think without any probability. The common people, as usual, refer it to the time of the Moors. The posada, where we stopped during the heat of the day, afforded us some excellent mutton-chops, salt fish, and salad, for which we were charged four pesettas. After dinner we passed several pine groves; in one of which, by the road side, stands a monument of the same coloured stone as the arch which I have just mentioned: it is plain, without dignity or grace. In the middle of the front next to the sea, are two figures in relievo of mourning warriors, considerably defaced, and very moderately designed. At the upper part is an inscription, of which only a few words are now legible. It is called the tomb of the Scipios (the father and the uncle of Scipio Afri-

canus). The probability of this, or perhaps the idea altogether, has arisen from their having both been killed in Spain; and from the first word, which seems to have been Cornelio, particularly as we know Cornelius was the name of one of them.

The slowness of our vehicle, and the prospect of having five more days to travel, and even then to be but half-way to Madrid, began at this moment to dismay me greatly; but my attention was soon called off from these considerations by the rich plain, and picturesque little city, of Tarragona. In this fertile spot the harvest of barley, rye, and oats, was begun; and we admired, as we passed along, the numerous broad luxuriant fig-trees which grew among the corn-fields.

Tarragona stands upon a rocky

elevation, and has the remains of ancient fortifications surrounding it with a pleasing irregularity. A few old buildings, and the tower of the cathedral, rise above them; so that it had all the appearance of a town of the thirteenth century, and after entering we might still continue the delusion. It is every where dirty and ill built, and swarms with monks and priests. To our great surprise, the muleteer informed us that there was no posada where we could sleep, but that we must continue our journey into the country for another hour:—an archiepiscopal city without an inn, on the high road between Valencia and Barcelona! We had just time to visit the cathedral; which is peculiarly interesting, since its date is ascertained: and it affords a proof that the same change, from the round

to the pointed arch, took place in Spain during the twelfth century, as we know it assumed at the same era in our own country. The building is, in general, plain and massive; but the lantern and stalls, which are of a later date, are rich and beautiful.

The archbishop, Don Francisco Armana, is just dead. He was a man of such eminent sanctity, that when the king visited the town in his return from Barcelona, and the prelate knelt to kiss his hand, the king begged him to rise, and said, "It is I, reverend father, who must ask that favour of you." Then turning to his family, he said, "Behold a saint of an archbishop! I desire you will all follow my example."

We had neither time nor inclination to search for the traces of ancient Tarraco. Upon leaving the city,

which is even more picturesque on this side than on the other, we again descended into the Campo Tarragonés, which is equal in richness and beauty to Campania itself. It is surrounded by an amphitheatre of blue mountains, and is filled with corn and vines: these are planted in stripes, like variegated ribands; the corn in the middle, edged on each side with a row of green vines. Fig and olive-trees are every where frequent, high aloes skirt the road, and several villages are prettily interspersed in the landscape. After jolting for three quarters of an hour over a bad road, we arrived at Santa Seraphina, a solitary *venta*, at half past eight. This *venta* (for it is impossible to translate the word), like all the others which I have seen, is built over a stable, and has a public sitting-

room with a few bed-rooms opening into it; the former emitted a most offensive smell, and was embellished in different places with piles of pigeons' dung. Mounting a ladder to see, as we thought, an upper chamber, we found a large pigeon-house; so that, even if we had received no other assurances, we might have been certain that the house was well stored with fleas. None of the rooms have any windows: the air and the light are equally excluded by wooden shutters. Indeed I do not wonder that Fischer advises travellers rather to brave the August suns of Andalusia, than to pass long winter nights in these solitary and comfortless hovels. Our sheets were clean; and we however had every advantage of a light supper.

We departed, as usual, at half past

four o'clock; passing for some time through a cultivated and rather fertile country, which at length changed to an absolute desert. We proceeded lamentably slow over an indifferent road; and passed Hospitalet, a venta near the ruins of a fort on the sea-coast. Here we observed a patrol of soldiers setting out on the same route as ourselves; which exciting our inquiries, we found that we were approaching a district frequented by banditti. The soldiers were returning to their station, which was the house where we stopped to dine in the middle of the day, and where they arrived long before us. It was near twelve before we came to this lonely mansion, which is built against the tower and walls of an ancient castle. It afforded some fish (sardines) and an omelet; and we rested in it till

three o'clock, when we again set forward. The road was excellent all the way to the town where we slept, which was twelve miles off; but it lay through a country where every rock and every bush seemed to warn us of danger. On one side was the sea; on the other a range of barren rocks; and on both, between the road and these objects, an irregular ground covered with dwarf, rosemary, and other underwood. This sameness of prospect is now and then varied by a straggling grove of pines; which, however, does not by any means give the country a more lively appearance. At eight o'clock we arrived at a very clean posada in Perillo, having travelled eight leagues (thirty-two miles) in the course of the day.

4th. We left our inn at the usual time. The land about the town is

cultivated, but our prospects soon became very dreary. We advanced slowly across a barren heath to the bank of the Ebro, a fine broad river which rushes towards the sea with a yellow muddy stream: the view before us is that of an ungenial country covered with carob-trees, and is terminated more inland by a barren ridge of grey rocks. As we were waiting for the ferry-boat, or rather two boats with a platform over them, the wind swept very coldly across the desert. The ferrying business was managed with great adroitness; and we were landed at La Posta, a miserable village, the first dirty one we have seen in Spain. The country, as we proceed, is here and there enlivened by corn-fields; and every where covered by the algarrobo, or carob-trees, which are short and bushy, bearing

long pods, which are eaten by the pigs as well as by the peasants. We dined at a beautiful little village, built by the king, near the sea-side, and called from him San Carlos. A port is here constructed for fishing-boats ; but a long stretch of land, which renders these roads convenient for vessels of a larger size, has been the occasion of the foundation of the town. The works were discontinued in consequence of the war with France in 1792, and the church and many other buildings still remain in an unfinished state.

About eight miles from hence we passed the foot of the last mountain of Catalonia ; and entered, by a bridge over a small dry course of a river, the kingdom of Valencia. The plain here widens with hills in the distance, the cultivation improves, the road is better, and the change of dress im-

mediately shews itself. The costume of Valencia is not perhaps quite so picturesque as that of the Catalans: but it is very much so; and is certainly more uncommon, and better suited to a hot climate. The Valentians are tall and strong, with long black hair, and fine dark eyes; but they do not appear so handsome as their neighbours. As we approached the town of Binrosas, the country became exceedingly rich; and near the town it is a perfect garden. The vines, hemp, corn, &c. are planted with the nicest regularity; and are interspersed with fig, palm, and other trees. All the peasants were busy at work; trimming, hoeing, pruning, and watering the fields:—and all this close to the sea too! The inn at Binrosas is large, and is kept by an Italian: we had the ill luck to arrive

when every chamber was engaged except one ; which, as might be supposed, was not the best. Two travellers visited us almost as soon as we got in, who requested that their carriage might accompany ours to-morrow, as part of the road which we should be obliged to travel had lately been infested by robbers. When we retired to bed, about eleven, the whole town was resounding to the guitars, tamborines, and castanets, o the dancing peasantry.

5th. Sunday. The muleteers attended mass this morning at four o'clock, in consequence of which our departure was delayed till a little after five. A volante, containing an Italian and a Dutchman (the travellers with whom we spoke last night) joined us on the way. The road deviates more than usual from the sea

it is in admirable repair, and we passed along pleasantly, though without much variety, through a country filled with vineyards, and bounded on each side by a range of barren hills. On one of these we observed, in an elevated situation, the ruins of an ancient castle built in the Moorish wars. The towns here are more dirty than those of Catalonia. After a pause of three hours in the middle of the day, our party, consisting of three carriages and nine men, set forward again, and proceeded over the district said to be infested by the robbers. The road was excellent; and lay through a valley here and there producing corn, but almost entirely covered with carob, olive-trees, and underwood. The hills on each side are pleasing, and we could hardly conceive it a more dangerous spot

than the lonely heath between Hospitalet and Perillo. Our advanced guard was at one time thrown into a little alarm by the sudden appearance of eight stout men (some carrying guns) from the wood; but they passed us quietly, and we arrived about seven in perfect safety at a solitary venta by the road-side. The exterior of this edifice was truly discouraging; and to complete our misery, the Dutchman, with an activity of which we had no expectation, while our servant was haggling with the women below, skipped up stairs and took possession of the best room. Though wretched in itself, the venta is pleasantly situated, being surrounded by a grove of olives, carobs, palms, and aloes. On one side is the sea at a few miles distance; on the other the hills are pleasingly varied,

and a ruinous castle on one of them is a prominent and picturesque object in the scene.

6th. As our muleteer promised to take us to-day as far as Morviedro, we were induced to rise by candle-light and get into our carriage at three o'clock. In the course of the morning we traversed a dreary country, and passed over the Puente di Villa Reale, a very noble modern bridge across the nearly dry bed of a river. In proceeding through the town of Castaneo, we could not help observing that we had taken leave of glass windows. The houses here are rude; generally one story high for the lower orders, and not more than two for the more opulent inhabitants: the window-shutters have small apertures, which are opened for air when the heat requires the former to be closed.

It is a clean and lively town. As we left it, we passed a convent; and observed that we had seen fewer of these edifices, and fewer clergy, in all the towns on the road except Tarragona, than we expected. A vast number of monumental crosses, chiefly of wood, about three feet high, attracted our attention to-day; though we have observed them less frequent in other places. The cross is erected on the spot where a murder, quarrel, or accident happened, and the parish buries the dead. A superb road, enlivened by the passing and repassing of industrious peasants, and leading through a country well cultivated with vines, olives, carobs, beans, bearded wheat, &c. brought us about twelve o'clock to the cleanest venta we have met with in our journey.

At three o'clock, the muleteers be-

ing impatient, our cavalcade was again in motion. The day was dreadfully hot; the road, if possible, improved; yet we again met with the dull prospect of fields a little cultivated, but every where covered by an orchard of carob-trees. An interesting object, however, at length roused our attention; the castle of Almenara, admirably situated for defence upon a rock with three peaks, lofty, for the most part inaccessible, and entirely detached from the neighbouring hills: the keep stands upon the topmost eminence, surrounded by out-works, which descend and extend themselves to the other two points, where watch-towers are erected. We wished we could have seen it more accurately. Neglect, and its exposed situation near the sea, seem to have conspired to leave nothing but the

mere shell; and even through this the tempest has made its way for many a winter. Full of this antiquity, we turned the corner of the rock on which it stands, and were in a moment called off to behold a scene which nature, industry, imagination, and memory, all conspire to render one of the most delightful in the world. We had been disappointed that, within twenty-five miles of Valencia, the country wore no extraordinary aspect of fertility; but now the plain of Valencia opens upon us, full of all the riches of nature,—vines, corn, vegetables, mulberries, carobs, olives, figs, &c.: some picturesque palms in the fore-ground; behind, a range of mountains beautifully sloping; and at a great distance, the insulated rock which bears the ruins of Saguntum:—all this viewed by the

glowing tints of sun-set ! The plain of Capua is always quoted as the most beautiful instance of fertility, and its pendant vines are certainly delicious ; but here the prospect is more diversified, and infinitely more like a garden. All the vines and vegetables are arranged with the nicest precision ; channels are formed, and water flows to every part, either directed from the rivers in the neighbourhood, or drawn up from wells by mules. The varied colours and irregular groupes of trees are highly pleasing. What a glorious triumph of nature and industry ! What a delicious evening ! All the peasants carrying their ploughs and their mat beds on their mules, and returning from their work singing. But as we walked along this noble road, it was not nature and industry alone which

engaged our attention. At one end of the vista rises the castle of Almenara; at the other the rock, whose sides are interspersed with, and whose top is crowned by the ruins of Saguntum, consisting of rugged towers and embattled walls, which are very numerous and picturesque. At its foot stands the town of Morviedro; by the road side is an ancient mausoleum, with a cross rising above it; and near it a rude obelisk, built of irregular stones, and bearing four coats of arms, signifying the spot where the dioceses of Valencia, Majorca, Portosa, and Segorba, meet and are separated. The costume of the peasants adds greatly to the high interest of the scene. We found a good posada at Morviedro; where we drank tea, and slept comfortably.

June 7th. We arose early this morning, and at six a guide attended us to the ruins of Saguntum. We were anxious to see the architectural taste of a Roman town so far removed from the seat of the arts; but of this there remain only slight traces. Saguntum was admirably situated for luxury and defence: it stood upon a steep rock; which, detached from the neighbouring ridge of hills, projects boldly into the fertile plain of Valencia. Its station was not too high for convenience, and high enough for security. The principal object which remains of it, is the theatre; without doubt the rudest fragment of antiquity that I have any where seen. The seats, all broken and chipped, are formed out of the same stone, and have almost the appearance of part of the rock: its height is

nearly the same as that of the larger theatre of Pompeia ; but this rises more suddenly, and has the peculiarity of three ranges of vomitories, besides the doors of the upper corridor. It is evident that the proscenium must have been where the road passes at present ; and what is now called the stage, which has been divided into several parts by walls, must be the remnant of the architectural scene. There are twenty-seven ranges of seats under the upper corridor : and the circular part of the theatre is placed, as is usual, against the side of the hill, from whence the rich plain of Almenara, terminated by its ancient castle, is entirely commanded. The theatrical spectators of London and Paris have never enjoyed so superb a scene as those of Saguntum ; and I think if it could

be transported, it would go far to reconcile us all to the unity of place. This edifice is so constructed, that a person speaking at the end of the stage in a low voice, is easily understood in the uppermost seats. We desired our guide to speak something for this purpose; upon which he immediately began the Ave Maria.

Ascending higher, we entered the Moorish fortifications which crown the long ridge of these rocks. Here we were introduced to a few rude antiquities: which were chiefly the pavements of temples, the bases of half a dozen columns, and some inscriptions of the times of the Cesars, all of the grey stone of the place. Only two remains of marble are visible: the capital of an Ionic pillar, in a corrupt and loaded style; and a small statue of a priest, which has

lost its head, but is not without grace. We were informed that about twenty years ago an excavation was attempted among the ruins by an Englishman, who was very active, and wrote a great deal. He discovered the Ionic capital, some coins, and the pavement of a temple. Since his effort, no one has made any attempt, till six years back; when Don de Pach, a Castilian, archbishop of Saragossa, visited this place, continued two days living with the hermit, and broke up the ground around the tower of Hercules, which stands on the highest part of the rock. He found a skeleton and some coins: the latter he took away; declaring that if he were archbishop of Valencia, he would build a palace on this spot. The coins which are sometimes found here, are purchased by

the procurator of Morviedro, who has a collection. The king, in his late tour, inspected these ruins: which in consequence experienced the loss of an ancient statue that had remained here for ages; his majesty ordering it to be removed to ornament the custom-house of Valencia. When the Moors got possession of this station, they seized upon the stones of the amphitheatre, and perhaps many other ancient buildings, and constructed with them towers and a great extent of fortification: many parts of this work however, particularly the battlements, are formed entirely of a strong composition made with lime and small stones. Near the pavement of the temple of Diana (as it is called), and in other places, are circular ranges of stones like wells, having a tree in the centre of each.

Here, our guide informed us, the women of Saguntum burned themselves and their effects when the city was taken by Hannibal.

The view of the plain of Valencia from the hermitage which is built among the ruins, is the finest prospect of the kind I ever beheld. The beautiful verdure, the neatness and immense extent of cultivation, the faint white towers of the capital daily seen at a distance, the bright blue sea stretching along the horizon and meeting every where a garden on its banks, formed a scene which was admired by us even after the wonders which we had seen in Italy.

On our return to the posada, we looked into a cottage which was entirely full of silk-worms in their vermicular, spinning, and grub states. A girl told us that last year she had

derived from three pounds and a half of silk-worms (wrapped up in their produce), two ounces and three quarters of silk. We set forth at about ten o'clock to traverse the rich plain to Valencia, which is three leagues distant. The road is magnificent, and we were kept in constant admiration. As we approached the capital of the province, towns and scattered houses of the rustic gardeners began to make a frequent appearance: the latter are thatched, and have small wooden crosses on their roofs. A fine convent of Bernardines was on our left, with a garden of palm-trees. When we entered the suburbs, these instantly ceased, and we found ourselves in a scene as new and surprising as if first landing in a foreign country. We were upon a large bridge over the

bed of a river, at present almost dry. Three other bridges were in view, ornamented with saints under canopies: leading to a picturesque city, surrounded by ancient fortifications, with a gothic gateway; and shewing a vast many antique towers, houses, and some bronze-tiled domes above the walls. All this filled us with astonishment; but we entered only to wonder more. Here we saw narrow streets, people in strange costume, frequent gothic edifices, shops with large paintings of saints for their signs, and seldom having glass in the windows, awnings stretched across the way, and projecting lattices: indeed, after this, I can no longer entertain the common idea, that an Englishman takes his leave of all grand subjects of surprise after he has spent his first day at Calais.

We put up at the *Tres Reges*, the *Fonda de la Par* (the best inn) being entirely full. We found the rooms bearing the names of saints; and over the house door was inscribed “*Sancti tres Reges, Caspar, Melchior, & Balthasar, orate pro nobis, nunc & in horâ mortis nostræ.*” An almanac is nailed up in the passage, to tell when the sacrament is exposed in the churches.

At six o'clock we attended the theatre; and in our way thither observed many shop-keepers sitting on their counters, and playing their guitars. We paid a *pesetta* each, and were shewn into an empty pit: indeed the number of persons in the whole house might easily have been counted. The stage is small, and the house remarkably ill-constructed; it is twelve boxes in length, three stories

high, and the pit only fifteen paces broad: the boxes are entirely open, with wooden balustrades; the whole painted white. The comedy performed was *La Reconciliacion di Jos dos Hermanos* (the Birth-Day, as represented at Covent Garden), taken or rather abridged from Kotzebue. The scenery was new, but badly painted; and the acting execrable, totally without spirit. To me the audience seemed to be asleep. The prompter, shewing his head in the front of the stage without any concealment, appeared much the most prominent character in the piece; and his droning voice, nearly as loud as that of the actors, was heard reciting the play from beginning to end. The partition between the house and the street is so thin (and what rendered this more unfortu-

nate, is the situation of the theatre near the city gate) that at every moment, in the most interesting scenes of the comedy, carriages were heard passing, mules jingling their bells, and at one time the guard examining a passport, was louder than the prompter. There was hardly a laugh, and not one applause during the whole performance. The Spanish translator has turned the hearty blunt Jack Junk (as he appears on our stage) into an old forlorn sailor, who looked like Robinson Crusoe on the desert island. After the play a volero was danced with considerable spirit, succeeded by a song badly performed; and the amusements were finished by a stupid farce, in which the humour consisted in a servant who conceals himself behind a side-scene, from which he continually looks out,

and makes remarks upon what is said on the stage. At ten o'clock the whole performance was over. This theatre has been built about ten years: it is large enough; but it is intended to erect a new one in a more handsome and convenient style.



CHAP. IV.

Valencia.—Its Buildings.—Convent of San Francisco.—Cathedral.—Archbishop.—View from the Tower.—Religious Concert. Corpus-Christi Day.—Processions at Valencia and Madrid.

June 8th.

WE walked through several antique and curious streets to the Plaza de San Francisco, which is a sort of market for job-coachmen and mule-masters. After surveying their carriages, and hearing their offers, we visited the convent of St. Francis. The church is dark and ugly: the cloister, however, amply rewarded our trouble. It is plain, but noble in its proportions and extent; and the enclosure is full of luxuriant

oranges and palms, which cast a delightful shade. The walls are painted better than usual, with the life and miracles of St. Francis:—they are beyond all wonder!—“things unattempted yet *by land or sea.*” Over the door of the cells, which open into an internal passage, are inscriptions signifying the different offices of the friars; and, at the same time, displaying their taste in poetical composition. I remember one of them—

“Hic moderator adest conventi pervigil hujus!”

The cathedral is a large edifice; the tower, lantern, and gates of which are in a good Gothic style. The body of the church has been rebuilt in the Italian taste: it is neat and not unpleasing as to its ornaments; but is only striking from its extent.

A very venerable choir fills the greater part of the church ; and the altar is of solid silver. The archbishop's palace is perhaps the best house in the city, though it is built of plaister white-washed. The present prelate Campani, is of Italian origin, though a Spaniard by birth : he is seventy-two years of age, but looks younger. In his youth he was a Franciscan friar, from whence he rose to be general of the order, and archbishop of Valencia. His annual revenue is about three hundred thousand dollars, arising from lands ; and he has three villas in the neighbourhood of the city, in one of which he resides nearly half the year, coming here only on festivals and days of ceremony ; his whole residence in his palace at Valencia is perhaps for three months, and he generally spends

about four with the court at Madrid. His establishment comprises above forty servants. An arch is thrown from his palace across the street to the cathedral, so that he comes to church without either carriage or procession. He has the character of great austerity; and his looks accord with his character.

The custom-house is a commonplace building, but is much admired here; nor is it to be wondered that at Valencia, where the houses are so eccentric, a piece of regularity should be an object of admiration.

We ascended the tower of the cathedral, and from thence enjoyed a noble prospect of the surrounding country and the sea at half a league's distance. No view can be richer than this, the fields exhibiting alternate carpets of the finest verdure and

the brightest yellow, interspersed with groves of olives, figs, and palms; towns, villages, and scattered houses: but from this spot, which is near the middle of the city, the country is at too great a distance to observe all the niceties of the planting, training, and irrigating the land; which makes me prefer the view from the hermitage of Saguntum, where a scene or rather map of fertility is closely submitted to the eye, and where it is less distracted by the mixture of villages and houses.

The convent of St. Domingo has a dome of bright bronze tiles, which is a new wonder among the strange sights around us. The rest of the building is old and shabby; yet it is impossible not to walk with pleasure in the decayed Gothic cloister, the arches of which are full of mullion

work, and the enclosure well shaded with large orange trees.

In the evening we passed the gate of Serranos, by which we had entered yesterday, to enjoy again the prospect which had so much surprised us. Valencia is really a *foreign* city, and one of another century. Standing on the side of the suburbs, and seeing the four dark bridges, the long line of low fortification, the heavy gate-house, the rude towers and palm-trees rising above the walls, we either entirely forget Europe, or that we exist in 1803. The sun-set was magnificent to-night. We walked by the bank of the Guadalaviar to the Alameda, which is quite an eastern prospect, exhibiting two alleys of embowering trees, surrounded by numerous plantations of palms. Here

we observed about a dozen carriages driven slowly up and down, of all fashions except the English. The Plaza de Catedral presented a curious spectacle in the evening, a concert being performed there in honour of to-morrow's festival of Corpus-Christi. On this occasion the whole square was covered with awnings, and brilliantly illuminated: on one side of it a number of triumphal cars, carrying images of saints, were arranged in a line; and I could not but observe that the Virgin had two candles burning before her, while the chariot which carried the Deity was totally in the dark. A band was stationed in these machines, and another in the balcony of the town-hall, playing alternately to a considerable concourse of people. The scene was

very novel and extraordinary; but it reminded me rather of a tea-garden frolic, than of a religious celebration.

June 9. Corpus-Christi day.—We were awakened this morning by a violent ringing of bells; and upon our leaving the inn, we found the streets thronged with people of all ranks in their gala clothes, and many in masquerade dresses. The peasants were as picturesque as possible, in their broad-brimmed hats with gold tassels, white shirt, kelt, and sandals, and their jackets with long ribands instead of buttons, hanging carelessly over their shoulders; all who could afford it had silk cloaks, this being the established day for putting on summer apparel. The higher ranks were full dressed, with bags and swords, and mixed with the crowds

which moved every where without noise or confusion.

As we proceeded to the cathedral, we were astonished to find a number of gigantic and ridiculous figures of men and women, Moors and Egyptians, set out directly opposite to the triumphal saints; and we were still more surprized to hear that they were to be carried in the same procession this evening. The church was filled with people, the sacrament exposed on the altar, the canons in the choir, habited in purple soutans and hoods, were singing to a noble organ, assisted by a powerful band of other instruments. The archbishop presided, and wore over his purple the blue and white riband of the royal order of Carlos III., which the king put on with his own hand when the court was at Valencia last year. The

morning passed in observing similar acts of festivity and devotion in other places; and at four o'clock in the evening, we took possession of a window near the cathedral to witness the solemn procession of the Corpus-Christi, which, upon the whole, was the grandest Roman-catholic exhibition I have ever seen. All the streets were crowded; and the windows of the archbishop's palace, situated opposite to us, were decorated with draperies of crimson damask. Small processions kept moving to the cathedral, carrying the images of the different parish churches and convents to the general rendezvous. Every house had its saints new dressed and placed in conspicuous situations; we saw a considerable number, besides several relics, in that in which we were stationed. The soldiers with

difficulty made a passage through the crowd for the triumphal cars, each drawn by four fine mules, and each containing at least ten persons. These machines are ugly, resembling boats with wheels; and their representations are badly executed, and shamefully disgusting. They are so unmanageable, that this day of festivity has never passed without an accident; a circumstance which has induced the archbishop to attempt the omission of them, as well as of the ludicrous scene which I shall afterwards describe; but the people are headstrong in retaining their favourite part of the fête.

The first machine contains a representation of the Trinity, and of Adam and Eve expelled from Paradise; between these effigies a set of boys dance with hoops and bells.

The second has the Virgin ; the third Faith ; the fourth St. Vincent, by whose interposition Valencia is supposed to have been delivered from the Moors ; the fifth St. Michael ; and the sixth the Devil. On the stages or platforms of the five former are, as I have mentioned, groupes of dancing boys ; but his satanic majesty has a different accompaniment. On his stage the seven mortal sins are represented by masks, the foremost among whom is Fornication dancing to a fiddle, and exhibiting every sort of indecency. These puppet-shews proceeded in full gallop towards the cathedral ; and we soon received the melancholy intelligence that one of them had rushed by a person who was standing against a wall, and had absolutely torn his bowels out.

About five o'clock a cart was

brought through the streets filled with orange leaves, which were scattered in the path of the procession; and at the end of another half hour the pageant began to shew itself before our window. It had made the tour of the whole city, and was now on its return to the cathedral. It appeared nearly in the following order: Gigantic figures of gentlemen, ladies, Moors, and Egyptians, preceded by *outré* characters with enormous heads. Saints from the parish churches dressed in tawdry clothes, and attended by the priests and chief inhabitants in full dress, together with dancing boys and music. Scripture characters: Moses with the law; Aaron in pontifical robes, with the budding rod; David with his harp; Sampson with Goliath's head; Joshua with the sun in his hand; Abra-

ham with Isaac bearing the faggots; Noah carrying the dove; and Balaam on his ass. Then followed the convents of the city: the monks of the Holy Trinity (in white soutans, with black robes and hoods marked with blue crosses); the Capuchins (brown); Carmelites (brown with white cloaks); Benedictines, or black monks; friars of St. Francis of Paolo (black); Franciscans (some in grey, others in blue); Mercenarian friars (white with small red crosses); black canons of St. Augustin; Dominicans (white with black cloaks), &c. all carrying their saints and candles, and chanting as they walked. Priests: the four evangelists in masquerade; they passed so quickly that we had only time to observe St. Luke with a bull's head. Priests again: three large gilt eagles walking; priests

and canons of the cathedral carrying solid silver statues of saints; noblemen and gentlemen in full dress; the Host (or Corpus-Christi) in a high Gothic frame-work of gold, under a rich canopy, surrounded by a blaze of candles; the four senior canons of the cathedral; the mitre on a crimson cushion; the archbishop walking bare headed, with his crosier in his hand; gentlemen of the archbishop carrying his red velvet chair of state; nobles of the city; the governor and general with candles. The procession concluded with a detachment of soldiers. On the entrance of the host into the church there was a discharge of artillery.

We had an advantage in its being evening before the procession passed; which, as all the monks, &c. carried

candles, considerably increased the effect. The moment when the silver images went by, and the machine containing the host turned the corner of the street, and was fully opposed to us with the reflection of so many lights, it presented a splendid spectacle.

As soon as this pageant (which lasted three hours) had closed, we hastened to the cathedral. The crowd and pressure were dreadful; but the sight was grand beyond description. This large building was lighted up in the most fanciful and richest manner; and the Gothic lantern had a particularly beautiful effect, and the high altar entirely of silver, blazed with innumerable candles. A loud and noisy chorus of rejoicing was singing as I entered, accompanied by organs, fiddles, &c.

and when this confusion of tongues and sounds had finished, the archbishop ate the object of adoration, the Corpus Christi, having previously elevated it before the people. He was surrounded by tapers, incense, and priests in glittering robes, and seemed actually enveloped in a flood of light. He then assumed his mitre, gave the benediction, and the piece concluded, the most pompous that I have ever seen.

A lively traveller, speaking of these religious processions in Madrid, says: The religious processions are managed here with great magnificence, and may indeed be termed one of the principal amusements of the people. Sometimes it is the relic of a martyr, sometimes of a female saint, and even of an apostle, or a primitive father of the church. The

invaluable skull, or arm, or finger is carried through the streets encased in gold, and covered with a canopy, and the people throw themselves on their knees as it approaches them. But great is the joy when the entire body of a saint, or a whole bag of holy bones is the subject of the piece. Notice is publicly given of the streets through which the procession is to pass, and the inhabitants hang over their balconies rich carpets and velvet curtains, at the same time that they are crowded with women dressed in their finest clothes. First marches a band of music playing solemn tunes; then choristers who chant anthems; and they are followed by a long double row of monks, with lighted tapers, and generally cloathed in white. At length appears the holy relic, carried by six

or eight sturdy priests, on a shrine of massy silver, and shaded from the night air by a rich canopy of silk. A priest precedes it, swinging a silver censer, which throws out clouds of perfume, and walking backwards, that he may not seem to shew any disrespect to the sacred bones. A company of soldiers with fixed bayonets closes the procession; and happy are they who are chosen for this service, not only on account of the holiness of the office, but also because they are paid a quarter of a dollar each. A vast crowd of both sexes, and of every age and condition, follow the whole with heads uncovered. I saw the relics of Santa Barbara thus carried and thus attended. It was on the very same day and hour, some thousand years ago, *as every body well knows*, that she was carried

up into heaven, being a particular favourite of the Holy Virgin. Fortunately she left behind her all her clothes, even to the shoes on her feet, and the jewels in her hair, and which it need not be doubted have ever since been scrupulously preserved. The place of the body was supplied by the image of a handsome young woman, richly dressed, reposing on a couch of silver, and her head encircled with golden rays; but I was astonished to find that female dress had undergone so little variation in Spain for these last thousand years. Santa Barbara might have gone to court without being stared at, and even her shoes, which were of red morocco leather, I should have imagined had been made only a few days before, had not two long rows of tapers, a band of soldiers, and a

kneeling multitude, sufficiently proved that they could not be less than a millenium old. A church had been previously illuminated, and prepared for her reception, and rockets were fired in constant succession, until she was safely lodged before the grand altar. Here she lay in state, until at least one fourth of the population of Madrid had passed in review through the church, and paid their devotions at her shrine. I held up a little girl in my arms, that she might see over the heads of the crowd, and during this time some pious Spaniard took an opportunity of picking my pocket, under the very nose of Santa Barbara. This was the price I paid for beholding the mummeries played off before this great wooden doll. I was hardly less fortunate on another occasion. Re-

turning home one evening, I noticed a crowd at the corner of a street listening to a friar, who was haranguing them from under the pent-house of a door: full of curiosity, I mingled with the rest, and heard a serious discourse, solemnly delivered. Toward the close of his harangue, however, he tapped on the door behind him; a small wicket in it was opened, and a crucifix and lighted taper were handed out: these he held up with vehemence, and gestures, and exclamations, and in an instant down came all present on their knees, except myself, who remained standing for a few moments, surprized by the unexpectedness of the manœuvre. A violent tug on the coat, however, was soon a sufficient hint, and I was obliged to kneel in the dirt among the rest. But after this I took great care to avoid all such pious crowds.

We have been well amused at Valencia; for, independent of the splendid folly of its festival, it is a town full of the traces of antiquity and peculiarity. It is different from any place which I have seen before or since; and, though no where magnificent, it is every where curious and interesting.

CHAP. V.

Route to Madrid.—Almanzor.—A new Venta.—Desert country.—Banditti.—La Mancha.—Country church.—Ocana.—Aranjuez.—Approach to Madrid.

June 10th.

WE had made an arrangement yesterday in the Plaza de San Francesco to be conveyed (being four persons in number) in a coach with six mules and two drivers to Madrid in seven days, stopping at Aranjuez, for which we were to pay thirty-eight doubloons. This morning at six o'clock we commenced our journey, and passed forward on an excellent road, with high league-stones, through a noble avenue. The rich plain attended us about ten

miles, and our coach formed a delightful contrast to the exposed springless volantes in which we had lately travelled. We went through many towns and villages; and at the posada of Montartal, five leagues and a half from Valencia, we staid from twelve to three o'clock; but in spite of the bounty of nature which surrounded it, we could only obtain a few eggs and some bad bread and wine. After dinner we took a short survey of the country, which was cultivated, though without trees. Many fields were flooded and planted with rice. During the day the weather was dreadfully hot. In the evening we saw at a distance the finely situated town of San Felipe, with the castle above it, built on two pinnacles of rock, with communicating works and walls ranging down

the side of it. About eight o'clock we arrived at a neat venta (del Conde) standing by the road, with a village near it; but notwithstanding its promising appearance, it could not furnish us with milk for our tea: nor could we obtain anything to take with us from the village. We have become, however, pretty well accustomed to such disappointments in these "fine climates, and gardens of the earth." Our day's journey has been nine leagues, about thirty six English miles.

11th. We set out this morning at a little after four o'clock. The road was admirable; but the country relapsed into an absolute desert. At first we had rough groves of olives and carobs between the road and the range of hills on each side; now and

then we saw a field of shabby corn, and even a rich vale or two; we passed no villages, nor scarcely any habitations. After dining at an indifferent venta (de Puento), we rested from eleven to two o'clock, having accomplished five leagues and a half; the house only afforded bad wine and bread, bad water, and a few eggs. In the evening we entered the kingdom of Murcia, which, in the part through which we journeyed, presents an unvarying scene of desert hills and rocks covered with rosemary and furze. I never surveyed so lamentable a prospect; the plain of Almanzor is hardly an exception to this picture: it is vast, surrounded by barren hills, here and there shewing a poor crop of corn, but for the most part feeding flocks of sheep and

goats. The town consists of a small collection of brown plaister houses, with a little castle situated on a knoll of rock, which in a curious manner suddenly juts out from the plain. Near this stands an obelisk to commemorate the battle fought here; which affords but a mean display of generosity on the part of the monarch, who owed his throne to the event it records.

We continued to traverse this bleak country till eight o'clock, when we arrived at a neat new venta, improperly enough called de la Vega. As this is a fair specimen of those which have been lately erected, I shall be particular in describing it. The lower story is one room, with a large arch on each side, so that carriages can drive through it: the room on one side of the thoroughfare

serves as a kitchen, and on the other as a coach-house. Above stairs is a long passage with a chimney at the end, and three apartments on each side, each with two beds in alcoves or recesses, and with wooden shutters instead of glass in the windows; the stable is in a yard behind. These houses are sufficiently comfortable in every respect except as to provisions, and are a great improvement on the old ventas and posadas, of which we have had so often reason to complain.

June 12th. Sunday. Mass was celebrated this morning at four, in a little chapel in the venta, by a friar who had arrived the evening before for that purpose. The muleteers were ready about half an hour afterwards. The same dreary prospect which first broke upon us yesterday,

continued all to-day, varying a little now and then, but always threatening famine or robbers. As we proceeded, groves of cork-trees became more frequent; and we discovered from a little eminence that we should soon be enveloped in a considerable wood. From this spot we could see the road pursuing its strait direction for many leagues; but here we deviated from it, and traversed the wood towards the venta, where we were to rest during the middle of the day. We could observe by two volantes joining our caravan, and some other circumstances, that this was a dangerous pass: indeed it is admirably adapted for the depredations of banditti on horseback; the screens of underwood which mingle with the cork-trees are sufficient to conceal them, and at the same time they in

general grow in such distinct thickets as to leave a passage between them, among the intricate windings of thousands of which, spread over a vast surface of country, a flying band of robbers might almost defy pursuit. About twelve o'clock we came to a venta in the thickest part of the wood: it is called Rincon ô Pozo de la Pena, and is six leagues from the venta de la Vega. It afforded rice, salt fish, and some wine, which was almost too bad to drink. The inhabitants of this remote spot were clad in their Sunday apparel; and the hair of the women was ornamented with large combs of basket work. We set out again at three. The wood here has a mixture of pines, and breaks out into rocks and defiles for a few miles. Upon leaving these, we entered on vast and

dreary plains, affording nothing but a scanty pasturage to the flocks of sheep and goats that range over them. At half past seven we arrived at Albacete, a considerable town with a manufactory of knives, stilettos, and other articles of cutlery. The posada was unfortunately undergoing a repair, so that we were forced to put up with a wretched bed-room. We were able, however, to procure a sufficient supply of provisions. The white bread and oranges were remarkably good.

13th. The carriage was ready at a quarter before four this morning, the muleteers being determined to arrive at La Roda in time for mass, as it was St. Anthony's day. The master of the posada told the servant that we were the first Englishmen he

had seen for fourteen years. We left Albacete by an avenue of mulberries, and entered on a flat unproductive country. A few leagues further we met a strong detachment of cavalry patrolling the road, in consequence of a daring robbery which had just been committed on a nobleman who was bringing his bride to court from Barcelona: he had a numerous retinue; the banditti were twelve in number, and completely armed. Soon after passing Ginette, we found ourselves in the celebrated province of La Mancha: the country before us continuing as flat and dreary as before. The mode of driving practised by our muleteers is very remarkable: one of them holds a short whip and the reins, which are merely attached to the pair of mules which are next the carriage; the other sits by him

with his lap full of stones, which, when he wishes them to trot, he very expertly pelts at the heads of the leaders; and in case they seem inclined to quit the road on account of such violent treatment, he is ready to jump down to prevent an accident.

We entered La Roda a little after ten o'clock by an avenue. It is a poor desert town like the rest; the posada, however, is new and clean. During our stay here I visited the church; a modern fabric, though in some parts the traces of ancient clustered pillars may be discovered; over the entrance is written on a board: "*El YIImo. Don Filipe Solano Dignissimo Obispo di Cuenca, Anno 1792;*" and, on another near it, as far as I could make it out, the name of the Cura, or perhaps dean of the church. It has a

choir for a considerable number of priests, with an organ over it at the west end; the nave is spacious, and has two side-aisles. At the eastern extremity is a heavy gilt altar-piece; there are also several other altars at the sides, and against the pillars, all rudely ornamented. One of the chapels has a picture of the "Adoration of the Magi," of some merit; a vast many banners and other machinery, the pomp, no doubt, of the Corpus-Christi procession were lying about in different parts of the church. We dined well to-day on the provisions furnished by Albacete; but the wine of La Roda could hardly be made palatable, even with the addition of sugar and lemon. Just as we were setting out, a lady of distinction arrived in an antique coach, with attendants, and four horse-guards.

The road continued excellent; and the prospect the same desert, flat expanse; though towards evening it was diversified by a large wood of pineasters. In this country it is impossible to distinguish friends from foes, as all travellers go well armed. We met just here half a dozen horsemen, many of whom had swords and pistols; but they passed us quietly, and were probably travellers like ourselves, as we afterwards saw peasants riding on asses, armed in the same way. Venta de Pinaz, where we slept, has been lately built by the lord of the manor: is the largest on the road; and notwithstanding the noble donna had sent forward to bespeak the best rooms, our accommodations were very comfortable.

14th. The road to-day was, as usual, excellent; and the country pre-

sented the same level and desert appearance, except that a little cultivation is attempted around the towns, which are built of mud and plaister. The only interesting objects with which we have met in de Mancha, are its windmills, rendered famous by the exploits of Don Quixote. We had seen none before we entered this province; but here scarcely a village is to be seen without a group of them; they are built of stone, with thatched tops.

We rested during the heat of the day at Pedronoso, whose posada only afforded some bread and a little milk; in the neighbourhood of this town a jar manufactory is carried on. In the evening we passed La Motta della Cuervo, another considerable mud-town, with about a dozen windmills, and the most classical we have met

with, since from the eminence on which they stand, the spire of El Toboso is plainly distinguished. At eight o'clock we stopped at the dirty posada of Puintamar, where we obtained some pigeons for supper ; but the beds were horrible. Upon carrying the lamp near them, we saw the bugs coursing each other over the dirty sheets, in most terrific squadrons ! and upon lifting up our eyes to the wall near the bed's-head, we beheld all the little specks upon its surface, which at first sight seemed splashes of dirt, were animated,—all bugs ! We immediately called for the master of the house ; but as he did not seem to understand the cause of our complaint, and there was no remedy, we were obliged to take ourselves to the carriage for the night.

June 15th. To-day we traversed

the same flat and dreary country as I have so often described; the weather as hot as possible. We slept for two hours, and dined at a bad posada in Billatobas, another wretched mud-town, and at eight in the evening reached Ocana, after a very fatiguing journey.

Ocana is a city; and presents a view of many low towers and little domes. The inn is almost the dirtiest we have seen. Some pigeons were sent up to us for supper swimming in an execrable black broth: and to show how far such inconveniencies are from being softened by civility, I must mention, that the landlady, hearing that we had ordered the beds, as a precaution both against the heat and bugs, to be removed into the middle of the room, sent us word that, if her accommodations did not suit us, we

might turn out into the street. We were too much tired to quarrel, and quietly retired under a threatening quilt and patched sheets, at half past ten o'clock.

June 16th. We rose with alacrity to-day, which was to shew us Aranjuez and Madrid; and were in the carriage before three o'clock. We proceeded among dreary and bare hills for the space of two leagues: when at length, the paradise of Spain broke upon our view. The real beauty of the place, and the contrast of verdure and civilization, to the desolate scenes which we had lately passed, made us think it the most delightful spot we had ever seen. Before us was a vale full of trees, with domes and spires rising above them; a range of well-built white houses with a large church,

stood on the right. Traffic and bustle were alive on all sides; in short, we seemed to rise into life again. Having left our carriage at the inn, we hastened to review the wonders of the place. It was easy to discover that the court was here, from the number of coaches and six, officers, and servants, who continually passed us.

The town consists of small low houses, neatly and regularly built. The royal palace stands on the banks of the Tagus; the ambassadors and other persons of the court reside in several large houses near the prince's garden. Passing an arch, we came into a sort of crescent, with a chapel in the centre, the whole of which is constructed of plaister painted. The palace is of considerable extent; it has two domes, but no other attempt

at embellishment; indeed, its appearance is neither grand nor pleasing. The windows are casements, and the chief front is situated opposite the dullest part of the wood. With respect to the celebrated garden of the island, it is a spot where Nature has blotted out the original design, and made one of the most delightful retreats in the world. A person might walk a long time among the over-arching bowers of its ancient elms, without discovering that in fact all the walks are radii, and the fountains which occasionally fall in his way are the centres where they meet;—such was originally the taste in which the garden was laid out: but the elms have vindicated their own rights, and those of the place; they have bent their trunks in every direction; and thrust

their arms in bold irregularity across the stiff alleys and prim compartments which the designer had planned: at this time if the fountains were removed, nothing would be wanting to the beauty of the scene. The walks of the colleges at Cambridge, much thickened and extended, and the glades filled with flowers, will give an adequate idea of the effect of this most ancient and most beautiful garden of Aranjuez.

Upon quitting these magnificent shades, we found ourselves on the banks of the Tagus, whose stream was somewhat narrower than we had expected: the Princesses' apartments look this way; those of the King and Queen face the open plaza and the bridge; an aspect which cannot be admired: directly under their windows is a small garden of orange

trees, which being cut into round shapes, and powdered by the dust from the roads, seem like so many wigs in a barber's shop. Nor is the distant prospect more delightful; the shore of the river near the bridge is entirely covered with wood sawn out ready for sale; it comes from the mountains of Cuenca; and after having been floated down the Tagus, is sold by the King on this wharf. This is a very expensive commodity in Castile.

We now arrived at the gate of the garden of the Prince of Asturias, which opens into a noble avenue, called the Calle de la Reyna. Several officers were standing here, from whom we requested permission to enter; one of them said, that we were at perfect liberty to see the garden after the King had passed, who was

going, according to his custom, to breakfast with the prince in a pleasure-house in the garden. After waiting about a quarter of an hour, his majesty drove by us in an old-fashioned crimson phaeton, with two ponies, and three servants behind; he was followed by an attendant on horseback, carrying his gun, and about a dozen other persons of all descriptions: he bowed as he passed us, and proceeded down the avenue to breakfast. The prince's garden is made in an ambiguous taste, half French and half English: the walks are straight and ornamented with fountains; but the compartments are planted irregularly, and often laid out in grass, with flowers in basket frames, according to the English plan. The whole is certainly very pretty; but as it is a modern work, and the trees

are young, it can by no means vie with the grandeur of the garden of the island: it is remarkable that every single tree has a separate pipe, which by conveying to its roots the waters of the Tagus, supplies the want of rain, which makes the country around so barren. We were surprised to find no foreign trees here, and very few oranges: in one part we were led to the banks of the river, where batteries are erected, and two large models of a frigate and a corvette are afloat; in another we were shewn in a most delightful situation a piece of water, filled with gold fish, in the middle of which was an island, containing a correct and beautiful imitation of a Chinese tea-house: but notwithstanding my daily experience of bad taste, I was astonished to see

in this striking and peculiar prospect, the late addition of a large and expensive Ægyptian temple! We were not permitted to approach the prince's pleasure-house, but we were assured we had seen all that was remarkable. In one of the avenues near the gate a green silk net was suspended, in case the king, after breakfast, should meditate a war upon the finches. After a stay of three hours, we returned to our carriage and departed. The Spaniard to whom I spoke at the garden gate, called Aranjuez the Richmond of Spain. It is a beautiful spot, more delightful in Spain than Richmond is in England; but considering them abstractedly, the fine broad oaks feathering to the ground, and the wide stream of the Thames, incline me to decide in favour of the

superior beauty of the latter. We passed the Tagus, and along an avenue of trees, through what is called the Alameda del Rey, which is intersected by several other avenues; but as we proceeded, trees became more scarce, and the ground more burnt up. After crossing a long stone bridge, we ascended a hill, and left trees and cultivation far behind; the whole prospect is dreary and desert; and is in every respect a miserable contrast to the approaches both to London and Paris: we did not indeed expect the picture of private wealth and happiness which the former presents; but we were prepared for some of the monarchical grandeur of the latter: in this, however, we were entirely disappointed; for though the road is fine, the avenues

want width and majesty; and upon quitting these, on the very verge of the metropolis, to relapse into a perfect desert, is intolerable. We dined at a posada where the provisions were plenty, but the charge exorbitant. From this it was four leagues to Madrid; the road perfectly direct, and its sides garnished by some miserable elms. There are no towns, a little traffic, and some cultivated fields; but it is almost impossible to conceive that we are close to a metropolis: at length it makes its appearance. Madrid! a small black town, standing quite distinct, in the midst of an arid plain: no suburbs or straggling houses. Its outline is diversified by a number of little domes and spires; but there is nothing pre-eminent or grand; the

perspective is closed by the snow-capt mountains of Guadarama.

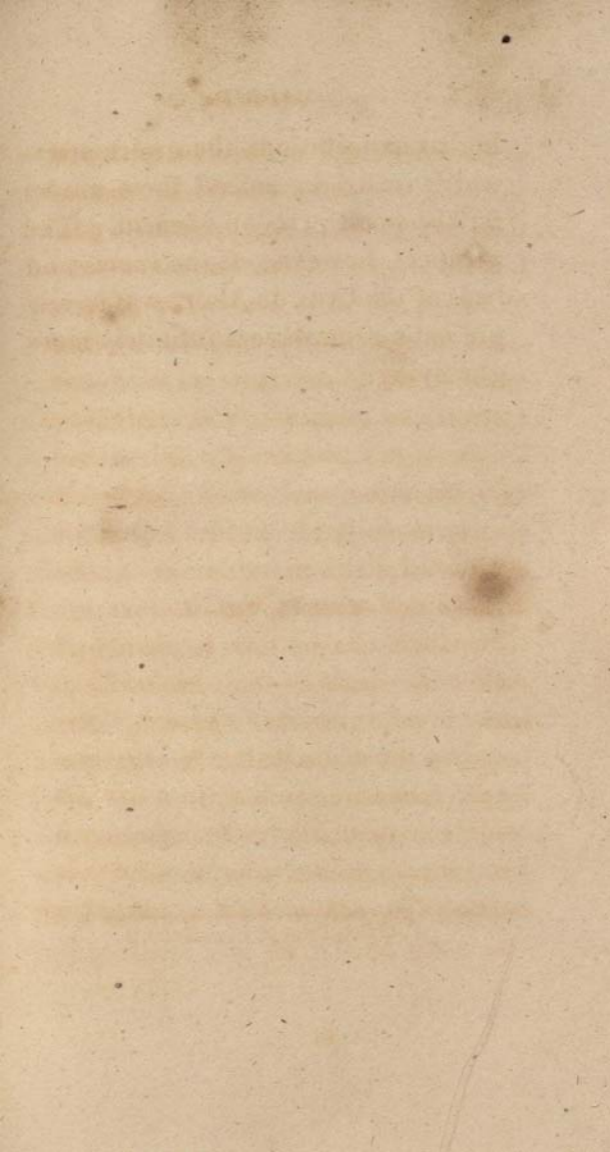
The Prince of the Peace going to the city in great haste passed us on the road, with half a dozen horse-guards, and three servants behind his carriage. The oppressive heat of the day was beyond expression; at length we crossed the Manzanares at a ford, and entered the verdant outworks of the Prado of Madrid; these are extended to the water side; and among them were many parties walking, their carriages waiting at a distance. We advanced under a shady avenue to the gate of Antocha, where our pockets were called upon for a contribution by the custom-house; and we passed within the walls of the metropolis, of which the grandeur of the Prado, and the width and lighting of the Calle de Alcalá gave us

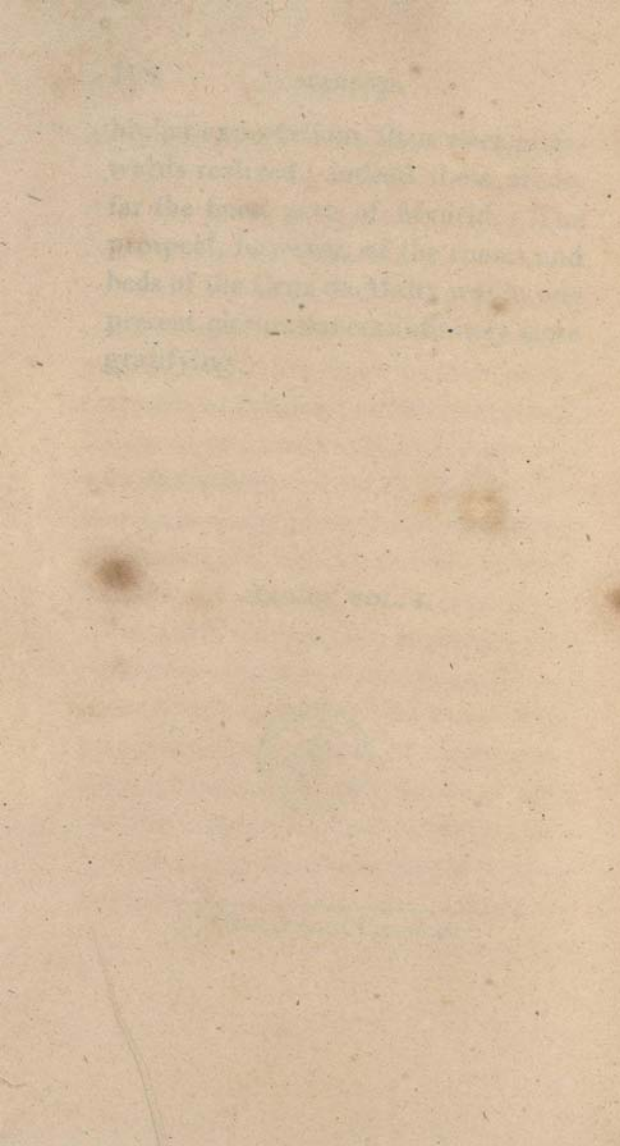
higher expectations than were afterwards realized; indeed these are by far the finest parts of Madrid. The prospect, however, of the rooms and beds of the Cruz de Malta was in our present circumstances infinitely more gratifying.

END OF VOL. I.



T. Gillet, Printer, Crown-court.













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