

of artists, and Philip IV. sought repose from the cares of state in the studio of Velasquez.

The Italian and Flemish schools offer a perfect wilderness of paintings—all choicest specimens of their respective artists. Here the canvas glows with the heavenly Madonnas of Raphael, and the more earthly beauties of Titian; all the greatest names of Italy are assembled in this noble gallery, and above sixty pictures by Rubens are memorials of his visit to Madrid. To notice even the most celebrated of these productions would fill a volume, and this gallery must be visited and revisited many, many times by those who care to dwell upon its beauties. It is alone worth a pilgrimage to Madrid.

One or two more galleries in Madrid are deserving of notice; one belonging to the Academia de San Fernando in the Calle Alcalá contains two or three of the chef-d'œuvres of Murillo, and numbers of inferior paintings. The celebrated one known as the "Tinoso," representing St. Isabel of Hungary curing the sick, is a noble painting, but the disagreeable reality of the wounds makes it very disgusting, and most unpleasant to look at. The two other pictures, by the same artist, were formerly in one of the Seville churches, and with the Santa Isabel took a trip to Paris, and returned after 1815. They represent the vision which appeared to a Roman patrician, relative to the building of Santa Maria Maggiore, and nothing can be more beautiful than the delineation of the sleeping Roman, or the Madonna appearing in the clouds. This academy is in a most delightful state of disorder; pictures are crowded upon the walls, and packed into every corner, and all the rooms are filled and choked up with rubbish, looking as though they were never opened, unless some stranger sought to have a peep at their contents.

They have a botanical garden in Madrid upon the Prado, not far from the picture-gallery; the plants are



arranged upon the Linnæan system, and it is under the direction of a Scotchman, who does not seem very much impressed with the enthusiasm displayed in this country for flowers. It is, however, an ornament to the Prado, with its cast-iron railings surrounding the shady walls, and looks green and refreshing. The palace of the Dukes of Medina Celi stands on the Prado at the end of the Carrera San Geronimo. Some of the palaces of the grandes are splendid in point of size, but nothing can be plainer than the exterior. How different to the palaces of the old Italian nobles on the banks of the Arno! The gardens of the Buen Retiro, one of those numerous palaces which the sovereign possesses close to the capital, likewise skirt the Prado; they are considered by the Spaniards the *ne plus ultra* of perfection; and as things always go by comparison, anything in this country approaching to a garden is welcome to the eye.

On the Prado a granite obelisk may be seen peering through the trees, raised to commemorate one of the most important events in the history of this century. It covers the ashes of the victims of the celebrated *Dos de Mayo*, when the first signs of resistance to the French appeared, and the first blood flowed in defence of their country. It was after Murat had established himself in Madrid, and Ferdinand had been entrapped into visiting Bayonne, that the Infante Don Antonio, the only member of the royal family yet left in Spain, was ordered to leave Madrid. His departure was arranged for the 2nd of May, but when the carriage drove up which was to convey from the country the last remnant of their royal family, the full meaning of the French schemes, the consciousness that they had been betrayed, seem to burst upon the inhabitants, and a general movement took place. Seizing on any arms they could command, undaunted by the French troops which then occupied the capital, they



attacked their enemies, and fought with a desperation which proved the valour of the people, and showed how they could fight if they were only worthily commanded. One young man named Velarde headed the people, and persuaded a fellow-countryman of the name of Daoiz, who was in command under the French, to hold his post for the Spaniards ; he did so, and with the few cannon they had at their disposal they defended themselves, with all the desperation of madness, against the overpowering force of Murat. They died at their post, the first who protested with their lives against the dominion of the usurper.

The streets of Madrid were deluged with blood, but the vengeance of Murat was not satisfied. On the following day all that were found with arms in their hands were led to execution ; hundreds breathed their last upon the scaffold erected in the Prado, and the Puerta del Sol ; but the brutality of the French recoiled upon themselves ; the dying groans of the victims of the 2nd of May found an echo in the hearts of their countrymen, and deep and deadly vengeance was sworn against the oppressor. The events of this day are graven on the hearts of the Spaniards, and the Dos de Mayo is still celebrated as a national festivity. This small obelisk commemorates it in Madrid ; and in Seville, the native city of Daoiz, a tablet to his memory was last year placed in the city walls, opposite the house where he had lived.

We visited Madrid twice, but paid such flying visits, that we had but little time to see more than the usual routine of sight-seeing, and take a passing glance at the society and gaieties of the Court. It was in the autumn of 1852 that we were last there, and were anxious to undertake our journey through Castile before the season got more advanced.

We left Madrid by the diligence at five in the morning,



the road as dreary as is usual in the Castiles. The aspect, however, gradually changed; we passed the remains of a fine Franciscan convent, situated amid a wilderness of oaks, and then descended on an extensive plain, in the centre of which stands the village of Lozoyuela, where we dined, and a most wretched place it was. The next stage was Buitrago, a pretty village on the banks of the little stream Lozoya. Its fine old walls and ruined towers show it to have been a town of importance in by-gone days. We soon approached the pass of Somosierra, or the Puerto, as they call these mountain passes in Castile.

It began to pour with rain, warning us that we were already in more northern lands, and the autumnal tints on the oak woods, with the wet leaves strewn thickly upon the ground, reminded one of home. In the south the leaves dry up and die almost upon the trees, but they do not assume those rich-changing hues which lend such a charm to forest scenery in damper climates. The thick mists prevented our seeing much of the mountains; on the summit of the pass Old Castile is entered. It was night long before we reached Aranda; the weather cleared up, and the moon shone in all its brilliancy as soon as we entered upon the plains.

Aranda is a small town, situated on the Duero. The façade of the great church is beautiful. The portal is most elaborately worked in the rich Gothic of the time of the Catholic Sovereigns, whose arms and badges are carved in stone; the interior is plain, but it has a fine retablo. The houses, with their wooden colonnades, are picturesque, but falling to decay. The convent of the Dominicans has become a ruin, nothing except the outer walls remaining. At Aranda we left the diligence, and taking horses rode to Peñaranda, about three hours distant. We passed through a flat cultivated



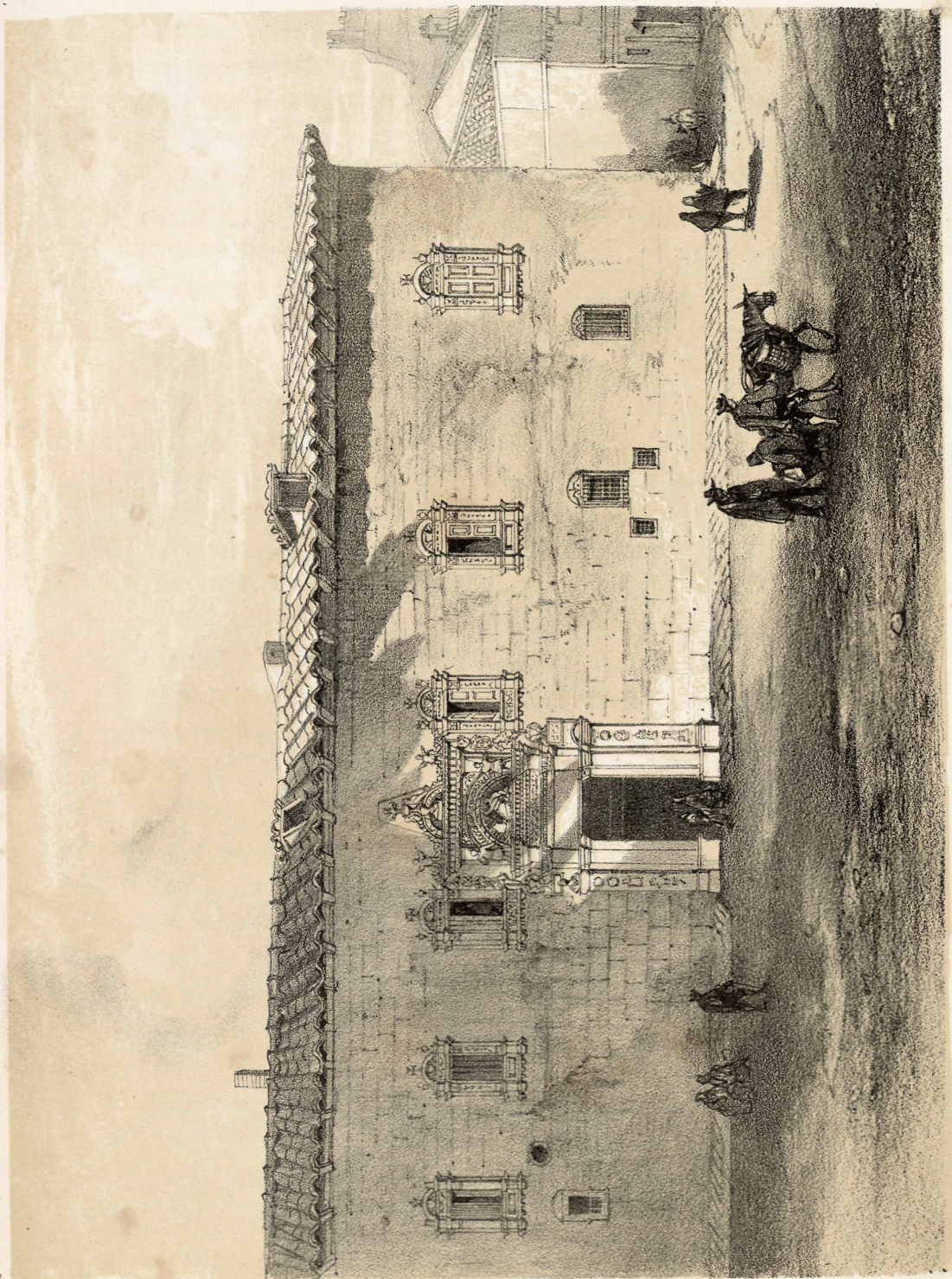
country, but some of the villages presented a very picture of misery and wretchedness, and the dirt was excessive. The women appeared never to have heard of the existence of such an article as a comb; such a contrast to the rich and carefully arranged hair of the Andalusian peasants. Arrived at Peñaranda, we were most hospitably received by the agent of the Countess of Montijo, to whom the place belongs. There are no inns in these unfrequented Castilian towns, but genuine hospitality is exercised by those who can afford it, and such a welcome is no uncommon thing in a country where roads are scarce and travellers few, but soon it disappears before the advance of railroads, and increased means of communication. I have before had reason to bear witness to the invariable kindness of Spaniards under such circumstances, and throughout Castile we received the same attentions, which had already welcomed us in the mountains of Andalusia.

We were unfortunately rather late in the season, and the wretched weather, which had greeted us as we crossed Somosierra, followed us throughout our journey, preventing us from seeing many places we had intended visiting. It detained us two days under the hospitable roof of our entertainers, where we lived, of course, in the primitive style still practised in these retired places. In the morning we partook of a cup of that delicious thick chocolate, which can only be enjoyed in Spain; followed, by the usual glass of water with its sugary accompaniments. These "azucarillos," as they are generally called, are made of sugar and white of egg, and when put into a glass of water, dissolve and give it a refreshing taste. At one or two o'clock we dined; about six in the afternoon, we had again a cup of chocolate, and at nine a regular supper; in the evening our circle was increased by the clergyman of the parish, and one or









OLD HOUSES AT PENARANDA.

Dieleman Dross lith.



two acquaintances of the family who dropped in. The house where we were staying, was in the Plaza ; on one side of which stood the old mansion of the Counts of Miranda, Dukes of Peñaranda, and opposite a charming group of old tumble-down houses, the wooden work of the walls being filled up with every variety of brick and baked mud, forming a perfect picture for an artist. Behind rose the old towers of the castle, and to the right was the church, a large building in the Gothic style. The old castle must have presented a formidable appearance in ancient times ; its long line of walls are now, however, in a very dilapidated condition. It was taken from the Moors in the twelfth century.

The more modern mansion of its proprietors is a very remarkable building, erected in the sixteenth century. Its façade is built with regular courses of rough stones, with a most elaborate doorway, surmounted by the arms of the family, and a bust of Hercules crowning the whole. The windows are likewise richly ornamented, each surmounted by a different coat of arms. Its external appearance bears the same stamp of desolation, as the interior of the building. Its fine patio is now used as a stable, the balustrades of its splendid staircase have disappeared, and its nobly carved wooden ceiling nearly all fell within the last few years. Enough remains, however, to impress the mind with an idea of its former magnificence. A long suite of rooms, now used as granaries, still retain their superb ceilings, which imitate in dark wood the rich stalactite work of the Alhambra, while the cornices and frieze which run round the walls also show that taste for arabesque ornaments, which in those days mingled itself with the Gothic.

Near the entrance to the Plaza stands a fine old Gothic cross, answering to our market-crosses in England. Here they are called "rollos," and are signs of the



jurisdiction of the lords of the village. The country people were all busily engaged at this season getting in their abundant vintage; the surplus produce of each year has to be thrown away, in order to make room for the new supply. There are no means of transporting it, and besides so little care is bestowed upon its manufacture, that it would neither be worth the trouble nor the expense.

The extreme poverty of the inhabitants of a land whose soil produces such rich harvests of corn and wine, offers a subject for much reflection. Castile is one of the finest corn countries in Europe; provisions may be obtained for a mere nothing; potatoes cost six cuarts the arroba (about a penny three farthings for twenty-five pounds of our measure); bread two cuarts per pound, and so on in proportion. The population is very scanty, quite insufficient for the area of ground they occupy; the people have plenty to eat, and yet the wretchedness and poverty can scarcely be surpassed. They seem to have no interest in improving themselves, and there is no one to look after or encourage them to exertion, and rouse the latent energy of the once noble Castilian character. They are likewise in the lowest state of ignorance; there are scarcely any schools, and the absence of all facilities of communication renders each village isolated and alone.

This portion of the country was much desolated by the civil wars; and in the house in which we were staying, Don Carlos slept when he was pursued by Espartero, in 1836, who was glad to avail himself of the shelter that had been afforded to his enemy, and slept in the same bed on the following night. We bid adieu to our kind friends at Peñaranda, our host himself accompanying us part of our day's journey. The weather was most unpromising, but we rode on over an undulating country; and it was impossible to resist smiling, when, on meeting a fine flock of sheep, our host informed me they were all



my own, as he placed them at my disposal in true Spanish fashion. At length we passed the village of Arandilla, and on the road our attention was drawn to one of those wooden crosses, erected to mark the site where murders have been committed ; here, however, it records the capture and execution of a Guerilla chief, a partizan of Don Carlos, who infested this country some years ago.

Just before entering Coruña del Conde, a village crowned with a pretty ruined castle belonging to the Belgida family, you pass a small church built with stones taken from the ruins of the ancient city of Clunia. The tiles employed here are of a reddish hue, which gives a bright tone of colour to the village when seen from a distance ; and the large bee-hive chimneys stamp them with a very peculiar character. On leaving Coruña we descended some very barren hills, on the summit of which stood Clunia ; there are but few remains of this old Roman city, here and there traces of old walls are visible, and some years ago a mosaic pavement was discovered, but it has been nearly covered over. The view from the platform, on which stood the town, is most commanding, embracing an immense extent of country. On the northern slope, as you descend into the valley, are the remains of a theatre, the seats of which are still preserved ; they are formed out of the solid rock. Not very long ago a marble statue and some weapons had been discovered in the plain below, and sent to Burgos.

We now descended upon the village of Peñalva de Castro, which is almost entirely built of old Roman stones. The walls round the church and the streets, if so they can be called, are choked up with huge blocks, covered with all sorts of inscriptions turned upside down, and in every variety of position. A small stone cross, a rollo, is made out of the shaft of an old Corinthian



column. We lunched here, and during the repast, which had been placed in our alforjas by the forethought of our friends at Peñaranda, many of the peasants brought us coins and entaglios for sale; the latter were few in number, and very bad in quality; they asked the most exorbitant prices, and were very independent, taking them away immediately when they found we were not to be so easily imposed upon. We bought two or three coins as a souvenir. We now bid adieu to our kind host of Peñaranda, who had escorted us thus far on our road to Silos.

We rode along through oak woods, interspersed with tall pines, while the cistus, juniper, and several varieties of heath, formed the thickest underwood. After passing the village of Arruazo, the road leads over such a delightful carpet of verdure until you arrive at a rocky glen; here the scenery was lovely, and we wound along amid the grey stones and bright foliage until we descended upon Doñasantos, another collection of mud hovels. Here rivulets stream down through every ravine, and the broken and mountainous character of the country was quite a relief to the eye after the interminable plains of the two Castiles. From Doñasantos we rode on to Peñacoba, which lies nestled at the base of tall white cliffs, with a large green sward in front, crossed by a purling brook, and overshadowed by forest trees. We skirted this village, which, at that distance, reminded us much of England.

After winding some time over barren heights, we saw the red roofs of Silos, and the large white building of its convent lying in a valley far below us. Through the kindness of a friend in Madrid, we had been well provided with letters of introduction for our tour, and very useful we found them. The parish priest of Silos gave us a warm welcome in his ruined habitation. We were