

vate house on the Plaza. The dirty narrow wynds are built on a slope, with the ground-floor of the houses under colonnades given up to stabling. The convent towers grandly above the Plaza, once lord of all it surveyed: degraded now into a barrack, the splendid chapel has escaped, preserved as a parish church; the Virgin of Guadalupe, the great patroness of Estremadura, guided the invaders of the new world to victory and spoil, and to her a share was always apportioned: hence the number of her shrines in Mexico, to which Cortes transported his local recollections; his first act on returning in 1538 was a pilgrimage to this convent, where he worshipped her image for nine days. He and his followers hoped, by offering at her altar the *spolia opima* of their strangely achieved wealth, to purchase deathbed pardons for lives spent in the commission of wholesale murder and every sin.

Diego de Montalbo, in his 4to. History, Lisbon, 1631, treats of this image, the second in holiness of the myriads of her images in Mariolatrous Spain. In 1330, one Giles, a cow-keeper of Caceres, discovered a statue, which turned out somehow to have been carved by St. Luke, to have been given to San Leandro, the Gothic uprooter of Arianism, by Gregory the Great, and miraculously preserved during the six centuries of Moorish invasion. A hermitage was built on the spot, and in 1340 Alonso XI. raised a chapel, which Juan I., in 1389, converted into a convent, subject to the Pope alone. The site, a warm southern fertile slope, abounding in fruit, water, and trout-streams, was, with the whole *Sierra de Altamira*, granted to the holy Jeronomite monks. This order, peculiarly agricultural, formerly possessed 80,000 Merinos, and were so rich that the proverb ran—

“*Quien es conde, y desea ser duque,
Metase fraile en Guadalupe.*”

Navagiero, who went there with Charles V., describes in his ‘*Viaggio*’ (p. 12) the place as rather a city than a monastery, with a tower said to be

filled with gold; the cellars for wine were proportionate. The strong castellated walls, like in the convents in Syria, proved the necessity of a defence against the infidel.

The first view from the *plaza* is very imposing, yet one regrets that the ancient balustrade should never have been finished; the pointed front of the chapel contrasts with the old towers, turrets, buildings, and library, to which new works were added when the Carlist Palillos held it during the civil war: the grand entrance is by a noble ascent and vestibule, with a Moorish arch to the l.; here is the *Sagrario*, and to the l. the Gothic tomb of Alonso de Velasco; the walls were hung with the votive chains of captives delivered by the Virgin. Hence Cervantes (Pers. y Sig., iii. 5) calls this “*Santisima imagen, Libertad de los cautivos, lima de sus hierros y alivio de sus prisiones;*” and compare Horace, *Catenam, ex voto Laribus*. In an adjoining chapel observe a representation of a general council held here in 1415; ascending to the Gothic church, to the l. lies buried the architect Juan Alonso, *Maestro que fizó esta Santa Iglesia*. The three naves are built in a massy pointed style, but the extension of the *coro* has destroyed the symmetry. The superb lofty *reja* which divided the monks from the populace is a masterpiece of Francisco de Salamanca and Juan de Avila. The cupola above the transept is octagonal, with gilt capitals. The classical *Retablo*, designed by Juan Gomez de Mora, and executed by Giraldo de Merlo, imposing in itself, is out of keeping in a Gothic church, modernised in the worst taste, filled in 1618 with paintings relating to the Virgin and Saviour by Vicente Carducho and Eugenio Cajés.

The walls of the *Capilla Mayor* were ornamented in marble by Juan Bautista Semeria, a Genoese, and by Bartolomé Abril, a Swiss. Observe the royal sepulchres, statues, and carvings; and in *la Capilla de los cuatro altares*, the effigies of Prince Dionisio of Portugal, and Doña Juana his wife, erected

in 1461, and moved to their present place under Philip II. Notice also the tomb of Doña Maria de Guadalupe Lancaster y Cardenas, Duchess of Aveyro; but this convent once was a sort of Escorial, and a tomb-house of illustrious dead. A jasper staircase leads up to the *Camarin* of the Virgin, or treasury, with some sketchy paintings by Luca Giordano, in vile taste. The dresses and wealth in it once were prodigious. The silver lamps, &c., the glorious Custodia made by Juan de Segovia, were plundered by Victor; now disappeared the silver throne of the image, the silver angels, the 85 silver lamps, the gilt lamp taken at Lepanto, the diamonds, pearls, gold, and jewels, the offerings of kings. He also carried off nine cart-loads of silver; but this Victor was an adept at this art, having in 1797 pillaged the real Loreto of Italy; he, however, piously left the wooden image behind, although carved by St. Luke himself. The wonderful relics of this sanctuary are referred to '*Historia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*,' folio, Gabriel de Talavera, Toledo, 1597: the scrolly title page is curious.

The splendid *Sacristia* contains 8 fine Zurbarans, representing the life of St. Jerome, which from monkish neglect are pure and uninjured. There has been some talk of moving them to a *museo* at *Caceres*. The church is surrounded by an assemblage of buildings, once extensive and sumptuous. The *hospederia*, or house of reception for strangers, was built out of the confiscated goods of burnt heretics. Visit the two noble cloisters, one of a Gothic pointed, the other of a Moorish style. Notice an elegant Gothic shrine, or temple, and an extremely beautiful double arcade, one above the other. Observe in an angle the injured tomb of Gonzalo de Illescas, Bishop of Cordova. *La Botica*, or medicinal dispensary, yet remains; and the library, from whence the best books have disappeared. This splendid pile, placed in an out-of-the-way situation, is passing away, like the monks for which it was

raised; both have served their turn: they it was who made roads and introduced agriculture into these former forests and "valleys of wolves;" and it was in order to facilitate the approach of pilgrims to this shrine that Pedro Tenorio, Archbishop of Toledo, built, in 1338, his magnificent bridge over the Tagus, about $7\frac{1}{2}$ L. below *Talavera de la Reina*. He also gave to the convent that remarkable bronze font, which used to be near the refectory.

The *Serrania* of Guadalupe is a continuation of the *Montes de Toledo*. The highest range, behind the convent, rises 7000 feet. These mountains divide the basins of the Tagus and Guadiana. In the cistus-clad plains game of every kind is most abundant. Those who propose to visit *Almaden* must return to *Logrosan*; which is a wild ride of guess-work distances over aromatic *dehesas y despoblados*. The first day's midday halt will be at *Casas de Don Pedro*, half a league, beyond which the Guadiana is crossed at a ferry. Sleep at *Talarrubias*, Lacipea, pop. 2,000, a pretty town, with iniquitous accommodations. Here the sandstone and quartz cease. The next day's ride to *Almaden* is more lonely. The first and only village, *Espiritu Santo*, is too near the starting-place to be of any use for a midday halt: rest, therefore, at a streamlet before ascending the Sierra beyond *La Puebla de Alcocer*. After leaving the pasture-land the hills become wild and solitary, with a wide moor on their summit, and thence descend to *Chillon*, a dependency, as it were, of *Almaden*, although separated by a steep hill. For *Almaden*, and the Route to Cordova, see R. 8.

ROUTE 57—(CONTINUED).

Those continuing to Madrid must return from *Logrosan* to *Trujillo*. The high-road, after crossing the Monte by a good bridge, ascends to *Jaraicejo*, a miserable hamlet, which commands the plain, where the conical hill of Santa Cruz and *Trujillo* form fine objects.

Here the Duke lingered after the battle of Talavera, until famine and the breach of every Spanish promise forced him to withdraw his starving troops to the agues of Merida and Badajoz. Now, as then, all this Punic bad faith is blinked, and the old pretext put forth that political motives, and a desire to secure Portugal for England, were the Duke's real reasons (Schep. ii. 415).

Hence to the *Puerto de Miravete*, the culminating point, whence the eye sweeps over interminable plains, studied here and there with conical hills. The Tagus is crossed at the picturesque bridge of *Almaraz*, which spans from its cistus-clad rocks the deep sea-green river, muddy, alas! sometimes. It was built in 1552 by Pedro de Urias, and paid for by the city of *Plasencia*, as connecting it with the province of La Mancha. Lower down is another bridge, built by a Plasencian, the Cardinal Juan de Carvajal, and hence called *el Puente del Cardenal*, which opens communications with Trujillo. The bridge of *Almaraz*, 580 ft. long, 25 wide, and 134 high, consists of two arches, one of which was destroyed by Cuesta in 1809, and remained so for many years, to the disgrace of the Government, to the annual loss of life, and interruption of communication between Madrid and Portugal. It was rebuilt by an ex-monk, Ibanez, in 1845, at the expense of the locality. Lord Hill took his title from *Almaraz*, as here, May 18, 1812, he conducted "with consummate ability one of the most brilliant actions in the war." Following the Duke's instructions, he passed the intricate defile of *La Cueva* with such secrecy, that both Drouet and Foy were deceived. He next assaulted Fort Napoleon, about $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile from the bridge, which, although guarded by 1000 French and 18 guns, while he was without any artillery himself, he carried by the bayonet, the garrison leaping down froglike into the river from sheer panic at such unheard-of gallantry; *Fort Ragusa*, although the Tagus flowed be-

tween, followed the example, and was abandoned by the scared enemy. By this splendid affair Soult was cut off from Marmont, and the Duke then wrote home that he should try the latter single-handed, "no man in the army entertaining a doubt of the result;" that result was Salamanca. Hill, with a mere handful of men, was the terror of Drouet and the French in Estremadura; and Buonaparte, writing *privately*, and then telling the truth to Soult, for he knew the real state of things, inquired, "Comment est-il possible que six mille Anglais et quatre ou cinq mille Portugais aient enlevé les magasins de Merida, se soient avancés jusque sur les débouchés de l'Andalousie, et y soient restés un mois, et cela devant votre armée composée des meilleures troupes du monde, pouvant présenter plus de soixante mille hommes présents sous les armes, et une cavalerie si supérieure en nombre?"

Leaving the Tagus, the road turns inland to *Navalmoral*, and enters the province of New Castile. *Oropesa*, cresting its ilex and olive-clad hill (*Posada del Navarro*), gives a title to the Duke of Frias, who has here an irregular dilapidated palace, and a fine castle with round towers and keep. N.B. Those riding from *Madrid to Juste* may turn off at *Navalmoral*, to the rt., to *Zarzuete*, 6 L.; thence to *El Barco del Rio Xerte*, 1 L.; then $3\frac{1}{2}$ on, through aromatic wastes, to *Cuacos* and the convent. From *Oropesa* the road continues through oak woods to *Talavera de la Reina*, or *Reyna*, of "the Queen," because given by Alonso XI. as an appanage to the royal consort. There are two other Talaveras; one, *la Real*, is near Badajoz, and the other, *la Vieja*, which lies 10 L. from that of *la Reina*, on the l. bank of the Tagus. The remains of this last old Roman town have served to build the modern hamlet. The pillars and arch of a temple, however, have escaped. See two papers in the '*Mem. de la Acad. de Historia*,' i. 345; and Cean Ber. 'Sumo.' 115.

Those riding from Madrid might,

before entering Talavera, go to the *Casa de Salinas*, ascend the hill, and visit the battle-field, passing to Talavera by the ridge on which our troops were posted.

Talavera de la Reina—Tala-Briga—once flourishing, is now a most decayed place, but charmingly situated on the Tagus, in a verdurous vega; *Posada de las Postas*, and another, *del Fresco*, on the Plaza. The town is ancient, straggling, ill-paved, and inconvenient, but full of nice bits for the sketch-book; remains exist of a triple circumvallation, the oldest is Roman; the *Torres Albarranas* were built in 937 by the Moors: these old girdles rise picturesquely among the houses; notice the arch of San Pedro, and the irregular Plaza, with red houses, porticos, and balconies. There is a fine but dilapidated bridge and a pleasant *Alameda*, whose groves are tenanted by nightingales. Another pleasant and favourite *paseo* is on the Madrid road, leading to *Nuestra Señora del Prado*, a hermitage built on a Pagan temple, and where Pagan rites continued to be celebrated down to 1807. These *floralia* were called *las Mondas de Talavera*, and were akin to the Helston May "*Furry*," the Flora of Cornwall: a sort of chief magistrate was chosen for the day, who was called *Justicia de Mogiganga*, because he presided over the large images then paraded about. A complete *lectisternia* also took place, and idols were "borne on men's shoulders" with curious rites.

The population of Talavera is about 5500; the former leather, silk, and hat manufactures have much declined; that of coarse earthenware, *alfareria*, made from a clay brought from *Calera*, still languishes. The Gothic *Colegiata* is not remarkable: begun in 1211, repaired in 1389, it afterwards was modernised. The noble Jeronomite convent near the river, and now a manufactory! was begun in 1389, by the Archbishop Pedro Tenorio, and altered in 1549 and 1624; the staircase and Ionic façade are excellent; the views charm-

ing. The *Dominicos* contained three grand sepulchres—Cardinal Loaisa, and Pedro Loaisa, with Catalina his wife. Mariana, the historian, and Alonso de Herrera, the writer on agriculture, were both born here. The bridge over the Tagus, dedicated to St. Catherine, and built in the 15th century by the great Cardinal of Toledo, Pedro Mendoza, is much dilapidated from neglect.

On the hill to the l. and on the plain on the Madrid road was decided, July 27 and 28, 1809, what the truthful Duke justly calls "the long and hard-fought action against the French, with more than double our numbers," and commanded by Jourdan, Victor, and Joseph in person. The royal arithmetic is most delectable:—"J'avais pu réunir 50,000 hommes, et nous avions affaire a près de 80,000 hommes ('men in buckram'), dont la moitié Anglais ou Portugais" ('Mémoires,' x. 324). This was the first time that Wellington, relying on the co-operation of Spanish generals and the promises of Spanish juntas, advanced into Spain, and it was the last. The Spanish army was commanded by Cuesta, a brave man personally, but a mere "child in the art of war," and too old, proud, and obstinate to be taught. Never were the two nations more truly represented than by their respective leaders; the decrepid formal Don coming in a coach and six, and keeping his ally waiting, when minutes were winged with destinies; while the other, the very personification of eagle-eyed power, iron in mind and frame, was of lightning decision. Cuesta, rather than take a hint from a younger officer, twice lost the tide of affairs, and thus, the first time, saved Victor from defeat, and the second almost ensured it to himself. Had he advanced on the Alberche on the 22nd, as the Duke entreated him to do, Victor single-handed must have been crushed; but during his procrastination the French, warned by traitors in the very tent of Cuesta, fell back, the Spaniards thinking that they were running away

from them; and now Cuesta, just when the Duke wished him to remain still, would advance. He imagined that he was following "flying deer, but found that he was hunting tigers." This conceit was so inveterate in the ancient Iberians, that the Romans constantly shammed a flight, and then turned round on their pursuers, "effusé sequentes," and scattered them to the winds. See Livy, xxxiv. 14; xl. 48.

The allies then took up a position before Talavera. The situation of Sir Arthur Wellesley, now far advanced in the heart of the peninsula, was full of peril. With inefficient allies, an incumbrance rather than an aid, and with starvation staring him in the face, while a French army of 55,000 veterans menaced his front, and larger forces gathered in his rear and around. Then, had the French only remained on the defensive, his escape was hardly possible; but over-confidence in numerical superiority, and the jealousy of rival Marshals, induced Joseph, Victor, and Jourdan to hurry an attack before the junction of the other French forces had enveloped the English in a net, past redemption. Sir Arthur, on the 27th, drew up the Spaniards in two lines on his right, in a position secured by the river and very strong from enclosures, ditches, and plantations; his centre, in front of Talavera, was intersected by roads and ravines. He placed the British troops on the sloping hills to the l., the real key of the position. His whole English and German handful was under 19,000, with 30 guns; while the Spaniards ranged about 34,000. The French mustered upwards of 50,000 men, of whom 7000 were cavalry. Numerically the contending hosts were equal; intrinsically, most unequal. While the Spaniards were incapable of performing the simplest operation, the French force consisted of splendid veterans, highly disciplined, and flushed with victory. Victor concentrated all his forces against the English, by whom he was everywhere beaten back. Night terminated the contest, the Duke sleeping

Spain.—II.

on the ground in his cloak. Victor's second attack failed from Sebastiani's neglecting to assist him now, as he did again afterwards at Barrosa (see p. 145). Victor himself had risked this battle prematurely; jealous of Soult, and wishing to monopolise the glory of a victory, he hurried it on before that marshal could arrive after his defeat at Oporto. The French finally abandoned the field, having lost 20 cannon, and 10,000 killed and wounded: the English lost 6200. They alone did the deed, for "the Spanish army," wrote the Duke (Disp. Aug. 25, 1809), "with very trifling exceptions, was not engaged, yet whole corps threw away their arms, and ran off in my presence, when they were neither attacked, nor threatened with an attack, but frightened, I believe, by their own fire." "When these dastardly soldiers run away they plunder everything they meet, and in their flight from Talavera they plundered the baggage of the British army, which was at that time bravely engaged in their cause."

Cuesta, insensible to shame and untaught by experience, next neglected, in spite of the Duke's urgent request, to secure the passes of Baños, and thus left a path open to Soult to fall on our flank; yet in spite of his imminent danger the old blockhead continued to linger, risking the loss of both himself and ally; then in the nick of time the Duke passed the bridge of the Arzobispo,* and thus saved Cuesta and Andalucia from ruin; and even as it was, such was the slowness and carelessness of the Spaniard, that the dotard was surprised by Mortier, and routed, flying even to Guadalupe, abandoning 30 guns and all his baggage, and this before one squadron of French dragoons.

After the battle the town of *Talavera*, which refused bread to the starving English *ally* when offering money for it, was found by the French *enemy*

* This bridge lies about 7½ L. below Talavera, and is so called because built in 1338 by Pedro Tenorio, *Archbishop* of Toledo.

to contain corn enough for their army for three months (Schep. ii. 424). Twice did the invaders sack the town. "Victor assembled his troops to pillage: every man was provided with a saw and a *hammer* (proverbial in French armies as was the *poker* of Augereau); willing troops filed off by the beat of *drum* (Victor originally was a drummer-boy) in regular parties to their work, a business with which they were well acquainted; nothing escaped their search" (Southey, 24).

"Had Spaniards in any way kept their word, and if I could have been fed," said the Duke, "I should after Talavera have turned and struck a brilliant blow on Soult at Plasencia." He was justly raised to the peerage for this splendid battle, although Mr. Whitbread affirmed that "it would have been better for Sir Arthur if he had never changed his name;" and Lord Grey criticised his "want of capacity and skill." But the Whigs never lost an opportunity of thwarting his efforts or of underrating his genius, which they could not even understand. Thus encouraged old Cobbett cut coarse jests, and vented out his anti-English treason on Baron Talavera and his wars; and luckily Buonaparte believed them, and never, until too late, found out that the crisis had produced the *man* by whom he was doomed to be crushed. Buonaparte was so pleased with the sayings and writings of these worthies that he had them translated into the Paris papers, but even the French thought them to be only his usual lies and forgeries. "The truth is," said Lord Dudley, "that the Whig Opposition had staked everything upon Napoleon's success, and are grieved at his failure." Ever ready to endanger throne and country for their own advancement, they were glad, said Wilberforce, "to see just so much mischief befall their country as would bring themselves into *office*." So party spirit, the bane of England, arrested Marlborough in his career of victory, and saved Louis XIV:

According to the Whigs, the French

were *not* beaten at Talavera; according to Buonaparte, the English are too stupid to know when they are beaten; M. Thiers is clever enough to do as much for his countrymen, and now-a-days (Lib. 36) calls Talavera "undecided." How great must that reverse be which is not claimed as a victory!

Talavera taught Wellington two important facts: *first*, that an English army need never fear the Buonaparte's "invincibles;" *secondly*, that no trust could ever be placed on Spanish words or co-operations in field or cabinet. He here learnt that if Spain was to be saved it must be done by himself, and alone he did it.

To complete this narrative, Belmas (i. 92), writing but the other day, and under Soult's eye and patronage, gives Cuesta 38,000 men, Venegas 28,000, and Sir Arthur 22,000 English and 5000 Portuguese; thus drawing up on paper 113,000 "men in buckram" against only 40,000 French. Thus is written what our ingenious neighbours call *history*; the real numbers of the English being only 16,000 raw troops, who most signally repulsed 34,000 superb French veterans.

But then as at Albuera, Barrosa, elsewhere and everywhere and always, where all was nearly *lost* by their misbehaviour, the chief glory was and is claimed for *Nosotros*. Nay, Cuesta, in his bulletin, while all Europe knew the falsehood, affirmed that "the terrific fire of the *Spaniards* overwhelmed the French!" And Lord Byron, then at Cadiz, wrote that the dispatch and the people called the victory Cuesta's, and made "no great mention of the Viscount." "These reports and insinuations," wrote Wellington, "may do very well for the people of Seville, but the British army will not soon forget the treatment it has received" (Disp. Aug. 31, 1809).

Quitting *Talavera*, the dreary country resembles *La Mancha*, a wide expanse of corn-plains, denuded of trees, with here and there miserable villages. To the l. rise the snowy Avila and Guadarrama chains. At *Maqueda* is

a ruined tower, called *la Torre de las Infantas*, where Berenguela resided while guardian to her nephew Henrique I. *Fuensalida*, which gives the title of Count, and is so well known to readers of ballad romance, lies to the r. of the road between *Maqueda* and *Santa Cruz del Retamar*. The mangy wearisome country continues to *Navalcarnero*, "the plain of sheep," where a tolerable wine is made; then crossing the Guadarrama river at *Mostoles*, and soon after the Manzanares, we reach the mud walls of Madrid (see Sect. xi.)

Artists and Antiquaries may diverge from *Maqueda* either to the r. or l. As this was once a frontier line, it contains many fine but ruined castles of the former great nobility, who guarded the marches. And first for the l., ride to *Avila*, and thence by the Escorial to Madrid: attending to the provend. *Escalona*, founded by the refugee Jews from Ascalon, who came to Spain with Nebuchadnezzor! distant from *Maqueda* about 9 miles, rises nobly on a hill above the trout-stream, *Alberche*, crossed by a good bridge. Portions of the old walls of this ruinous abode of dirt and picturesque poverty remain; the once most splendid *palacio* of the counts, with a chapel, built in 1442 by the great Alvaro de Luna, in rich decorated semi-Saracenic taste of the age, was reduced by Soutl to a wreck. Visit also the *Colegiata*: hence to *Cadalso* a pleasant ride, amid vines, olives, and covers abounding in game: pop. 1000: placed on an eminence the view over the champaign plains is fine. This town is also called *de los Vidrios*, from some rude glass manufactories. The old castle and walls are all a painter can wish. Visit the palace and gardens of the Duque de Frias. Here Isabella met her brother Henrique IV. after their reconciliation at *Guisando*, where he had declared her to be his heiress to the crown. $1\frac{1}{2}$ L. through a country of fruit-trees and pines, leads to the monastery of *Guisando*, so celebrated for those strange relics of antiquity, the stone *Toros*, and so on to *Avila*.

Those who ride to the r. for *Toledo*, 12 L., which can be done in a summer's day, will pass through *Torrijos*, 7 long L.; it is placed in the fertile Sagra, *Posada de la Flora*, pop. 1500. This dilapidated hamlet owes its noble buildings, now so disproportionate to its size, to the proprietors, the Dukes of *Maqueda*, who, like the *Ferias* at *Zafra*, delighted in adorning their place of residence. Don Gutierre de Cardenas was a favourite of Isabella, who, in 1491, granted him an orle of eight shells, or, which are placed everywhere in his palace decorations. The once magnificent but now ruined Franciscan convent was founded by Teresa Enriquez, daughter of the great admiral of Castile and wife to Don Gutierre; and the remains of past magnificence in the churches and palace mock the present poverty of the denizens, becoming, however, every day more delectable in form and colour to the artist: in the long street are a superbly decorated Gothic church with fine façade, a plateresque portal, and pretty cloister; there is also a convent going to ruin, a grand semi-Moro *palacio*, with rich *artesonado* ceilings and relics of former state now abandoned to the usual fate which broods over the provincial mansions of the absentee nobles of Spain. Hence, passing *Barciencia*, 1 L., where there is another ruined castle with square tower and quadrangular girdle of walls, 1 L. on to *Rielves*, and 3 more to Toledo. It is better to branch off from *Torrijos* S.W. to *Escalonilla*, 1 L., pop. 2000. There is a fine ruined castle, a good *Parroquia*, dedicated to the Magdalen, with a grand relic, the body of St. Germain de Auxerre. The artist should manage to be here July 31, when the chapel is visited by all the picturesque peasantry of the Sagra. Outside the town, about 1 mile E. near *Casas Albas*, is the hermitage of *Nuestra Señora de la Estrella*, Our Lady of the Star, where a grand festival is held every Easter Monday. At 1 L. from *Escalonilla* is the large hamlet of *la Puebla de Montalban*, pop.

4000, in a fertile corn and wine country, with a good bridge over the Tagus. It contains a *Palacio* of the Duques de Uceda on the *plaza*, a handsome decorated hospital, two noble parish churches, one with three grand naves, the other, *San Miguel*, with a fine brick tower, raised in 1604 by Cristobal Ortiz. The imposing masonry façade of the Franciscan nunnery was built, in 1543, by Laurencio de Ilachoa: observe also the ruined hermitage de *Nuestra Señora de la Soledad*. Toledo lies distant 5 L. and *Rielves* 2.

Visit the castle of Montalvan, distant about 6 m. from *La Puebla*, and overhanging a ravine, as if put there on purpose for artists. The ruin, very large, square in form, and moated, belonged to the Condes de Fuensalida, and in position is scarcely less picturesque than even our Warwick Castle: three sides look over a precipitous cleft, through which a river boils along. The Tagus is seen in the distance. Of the many beautiful points of view one of the most striking is the *Despeñadera de la Mora*, the lover's leap of the Moorish girl. There are other fine castles in this district, such as *Gudadamur*, *Orgaz*, *Almonacid* (see Index).

Those who have ever performed this tiresome Route 58, will never do it twice; accordingly, on our second visit to *Merida* we struck off on horseback to *Alcantara*, continuing indeed our pilgrimage to *Santiago* and the Asturias, and riding down to Madrid through Leon and Valladolid, a route we strongly recommend to those who have leisure.

From *Merida* to *Plasencia* there are different routes. You can ride through *Montanches*, 6 L. (the longest way is by the *Camino Carretero*, the shortest but rather intricate cut is by the *Hoyanco*. Sleep 1st night at *Montanches*; 2nd night at *Arroyo del Puerco*, 8 long leagues, at about 4 L. notice two curious old castles; 3rd night *Alcantara*, 7 L.; 4th night, *Coria*, 8 L.; 5th night, *Plasencia*, 8 L. See Index for these places.

ROUTE 59.—MERIDA TO PLASENCIA.

Alcuescar	6	
Arroyo de Molinos.	1	7
Montanches	1	8
Caceres	6	14
Malpartida	2	16
Arroyo del Puerco	1	17
Brozas.	4½	21½
Alcantara	3	24½
Garrovillas	5	29½
Canaveral	2	31½
Coria.	4½	36
Plasencia	9	45

This must be ridden: take a local guide, as the country is lonely, and the accommodations bad; attend, therefore, to the commissariat. There is a shorter cut by *Casas de Don Antonio*, 6 L.; but *Caceres*, lying to the rt., is left out, without going to it.

On quitting *Merida* and the *Charca*, a cistus-clad waste commences: here and there Roman military columns, about 7 feet high, in some places admirably preserved, still stand in their original positions, and mark the *Via lata*, from *Merida* to *Salamanca*. This road, a *Regina Viarum*, was laid down like a cyclopæan wall, with Appian solidity. The *summum dorsum*, or raised centre rising amid the wastes, looks like the backbone of some extinct megalotherium. This road, necessary for the military communications of the Romans, is no longer wanted. Here and there huge trees, growing out of the pavement, show how long it has been abandoned, and how surely nature will recover her own. The muleteer and carrier who convey the petty commerce of Spain creep by a side-path, as if ashamed to foot the great road of a mightier people. An excellent work on Roman roads is the '*Histoire des Grands Chemins*,' Nic. Bergier, 4to., Paris, 1622.

At 4½ L., after an ascent, *Montanches* appears on its hill; *Alcuescar* lies to the r., and below it the hamlet *Arroyomolinos*, where, Oct. 28, 1811, Lord Hill routed Gen. Girard, who with 5,000 men had been sent there by Soult on a plundering foray. Hill halted the night of the 27th at *Al-*

cuescar; and the honest villagers kept the secret so well, that the enemy remained ignorant of their danger. Early the next morning, during some rain, Hill, with the 71st and 92nd, surprised Girard, whose men fled, throwing away their packs, arms, and everything that constitutes a soldier: and yet they were some of the "finest French troops" in Spain, lusty and strong, filled with wine and meat, while the English, who, according to Mons. Foy, cannot fight unless stuffed with beef and rum, were hungry and foot-sore: had not our cavalry missed their way, not a Frenchman could have got off: as it was, 1300 prisoners were taken, all their artillery, colours, baggage, and plunder. Girard narrowly escaped. M. Dumas (iii. 234) accounts very satisfactorily for this affair: "Les Français, surpris, attaqués avec impétuosité, *durent céder au nombre*;" "quoique les Anglais fussent dix fois supérieurs en nombre, le Gén. Girard conserva tout son sang froid."!! Meanwhile, no Spaniards having been there, Señor Madoz (iii. 32) omits the astounding surprise and *sauve qui peut* altogether.

Arroyomolinos may be avoided by taking a bad but shorter road to the l., which leads up to *Montanches* (Mons Anguis). *Posada de la Plaza de San Fernando*; pop. 5500. The place itself, hidden in a saucer of hills, nestles under a castle which was the prison of Rodrigo Calderon, the ill-fated minion and protégé of Lerma, minister to Philip III. This place is renowned in the bacon district; the pork is superlative. It was on this *Mons Anguis* that the Duque de Arcos fed "ces petits jambons vermeils," which the Duc de St. Simon ate and admired so much; "ces jambons ont un parfum si admirable, un goût si relevé et si vivifiant qu'on en est surpris: il est impossible de rien manger si exquis" (Mem. xx. 30). His grace used to shut up the pigs in places abounding in vipers, on which they fattened.

Naturalists have remarked that the rattlesnakes in America retire before

their consuming enemy the pig, who is thus the *gastador* or pioneer of the new world's civilization, just as Pizarro, who was suckled by a sow, and tended swine in his youth, was its conqueror. Be that as it may, Montanches is illustrious in pork, in which the *Estremeños* go the whole hog. Pigs are everywhere, and everything. We strongly recommend *Juan Valiente* to the lover of delicious hams; each *jamon* averages about 12 lb.; they are sold at the rate of 7½ *reales* for the *libra carnícera*, which weighs 32 of our ounces. The duties in England are now very trifling. The fat, when they are properly boiled, looks like melted topazes, and the flavour defies language, although we have dined on one this very day, in order to secure accuracy and inspiration. The flesh of pork, a test of orthodoxy, as being eschewed by Jew and Moslem, enters largely into the national metaphors and stewpots. The Montanches hams are superb; it would perplex a gastronomic Paris to which to adjudge the prize, whether to the *jamon dulce* of the Alpujarras, the *tocino* of Galicia, the *chorizos* of Vique, or to the transcendent hams of this locality. The nomad habits of Spaniards require a provision which is portable and lasting; hence the large consumption of dried and salted foods, *bacalao*, *cecina*, &c.; while their backward agriculture, which has neither artificial grasses nor turnips, deprives them of fresh meats and vegetables during many months: so rice and *garbanzos* supply green herbs, and appropriately accompany salted fish and bacon. But as this is not a Hambook, lovers of Bacon must turn for details to our "Gatherings," ch. xi. N.B. The so-called Montanches hams sold in London are for the most part positive libels on the *sin par* originals.

Montanches is a central and almost equi-distant point between Merida, Medellin, Trujillo, and Caceres, half-way to which is Torremocha, and there is a project of opening a new road to Madrid and Badajoz, which is to join the *camino real* at Trujillo.

Caceres—*Castra Cæcilia, Cæsaris*—is the capital of its swinish district. *Posadas: de los Caballeros; La Nueva; la de Genaro Iorato.* Pop. 12,000. It is the residence of provincial *hidalgos y hacendados*, who fatten and get rich by the saving and selling their popular bacon. The climate, like the bacon, is delicious, and the environs very fertile in corn, fruit, and wine. The elevation keeps the tidy town cool, while the rivulets which flow from *el Marco* irrigate the gardens. *Caceres* is full of feudal architecture—of baronial massive houses, decorated with granite doorways and armorial bearings. Heraldry and hams, indeed, run riot here. The order of the *Vanda* is very prevalent. The upper town retains its ancient walls and tower; observe the two *algibes* and the *Arco de Estrella*, and the communication with the *Plaza*: the granite *templete* is by *Churriguera*, 1726. On the airy *Plaza*, shaded by acacias, is a mutilated Roman *Ceres*, and a *Diana* with a modern head. The lover of old houses will notice that of the *Veletas*, the Moorish *Alcazar*, that of the *Golfines*, with mosaics; one of the Counts *de la Torre*, and especially the mansion of the *Duque de Abrantes*; observe the windows.

For ecclesiologists there is a fine suppressed Jesuit convent, and a *Seminario*, founded in 1603. The Gothic *Parroquia* of *San Mateo*, built by *Pedro de Ezquerria*, has a striking tower, and a tomb of the *Marques de Valdepuentes*. Observe in the *Santa Maria* the *retablo* carved by *Maestre Guillen*, 1556, with her Assumption, Coronation, &c. Some of the sepulchres, the *Figueras*, *Paredes*, &c., are remarkable. The church of *Santiago*, outside the walls, and once *Musarabic*, is buttressed up with Doric pillars. The *reja*, 1563, is fine, and the *Paso of Jesus Nazareno* much revered: but in times of public calamities an image of the *Virgin* is brought down from her hill convent, *La Montana*. The new bull-ring, built of granite, is of a first-rate class: meantime, antiquities

are constantly turning up in the environs, especially in the *dehesa de los Arrogatos*, 3 L. off, and are as constantly reburied or destroyed.

It was near *Caceres*, according to his flattering eulogists, that *Mons. Foy* covered himself with glory by a superb *sauve qui peut*. Surprised by some Spaniards, March 14, 1810, he and his troops got over “six lieues d’Espagne en cinq heures: cette retraite fit le plus grand honneur au Gén. Foy” (‘V. et C.’ xx. 11). “L’Europe,” says the modest hero himself, “a vu la célérité de nos mouvemens de stratégie et de tactique, et elle a été saisie d’épouvante, car le secret de la guerre est dans les jambes” (i. 89). As to the glory of the local *jambons* none will here differ: *Don Quixote*, ’tis true, thinks (ii. 24), “Mas bien parece el soldado muerto en la batalla, que vivo y salvo en la huida.”

Those who do not wish to go either to *Montanches* or *Caceres*, will turn off at $4\frac{1}{2}$ L., before reaching *Alcuescar*, and proceed through oak woods to *Casas de Don Antonio*, a poor place. A 6 hours’ ride next day, over a treeless, granite-strewed porcine plain, leads to *Arroyo del Puerco*, “Pig’s Brook;” for here the unclean animal is the joy and wealth of rich and poor. *Posada de la Cacerana*. In the plain gothic parish church are 16 pictures painted by *Morales*; 12 are very large, and although chilled, dirty, and neglected, are at least pure. The altar divides them into two portions, which again are subdivided into two tiers, each tier containing four pictures, three large and one small. The subjects are “Christ in the Garden;” “Bearing the Cross;” the “Annunciation;” “Nativity;” “Christ in Limbo,” very fine; “St. John,” three-quarter length, and a “Saviour bound,” both very fine; the “Descent,” fine; the “Burial;” the “Christ and Joseph of Arimathæa” are grand; “Adoration of Kings;” “Circumcision” (of which there is a repetition in the *Museo* at *Madrid*, No. 110); “Ascension of Christ;” the “Pentecost;” “Saviour with the reed;” and “St. Jerome.”

A six hours' lonely ride, amid *dehesas* of wild oaks, leads to *Alcantara*, by *Brozas*, which stands with an old castle, and the *Torre de Belvis*, on a naked hill. In the house of the Conde de Canilleros was the sword of the redoubtable Garcia Paredes. 3 L. of a treeless, miserable country, with a stone wall, Oxfordshire look, now extends to *Alcantara*, Arabicè *Al-Kantarah*, the Bridge. It was the *Lancia* of the Vettones, the *Norba Cæsarea* of the Romans. Present pop. about 4000; *Posada Nueva de la Viuda*, near the bridge, bad: but there is a decent *casa de Pupilos*, kept by Don Cesto Peña, near the Plaza de *Toros*.

The town, with its crumbling old walls, towers, castle, and steep, dirty, tortuous streets, crowns an eminence over the Tagus. Although a frontier *Plaza*, it is altogether *hors de combat*, and in every respect the picture of decay, poverty, and ruin, gutted churches and roofless houses bear record of Gen. Lapisse, sent to his dread account at Talavera: he remained here only one night, in April, 1809, but that night was employed in plunder, and in the commission of every crime by which humanity can be disgraced and outraged."—Southey, chap. xx. Neither the living or dead escaped him, for the very tombs were rifled (*Madoz*, i. 408).

Alcantara formerly belonged to a military order of Benedictine monks, founded in 1156 by Suero Rodriguez Barrientos, to defend the frontier; a principle borrowed from the Moorish *Râbitos*. The order, at first called *de San Julian de Pereyro*, like the Templars, soon became too rich and powerful; their wealth was coveted by the crown, as much as their influence was dreaded, so both were absorbed in 1495, by appointing the King the "Master." Their noble granite-built convent, *San Benito*, almost ruined by the invaders, was built in 1506 by Pedro de Larrea, and improved by Philip II. The church is lofty and grandiose, the slim pillars

elegant. The decaying altar *colateral* contains some injured pictures of *Morales*, a fine "San Miguel," a "St. John," a "Pentecost," an "Apostle" reading, and a "Transfiguration"—doubtful. The granite *cinque cento* chapel, *de Piedra Buena* was erected by Pedro de Ibarra in 1550, for Francisco Bravo, Commendador de *Piedra Buena*. Observe his fine marble sepulchre. The pictures—if still here—have been shamefully treated. Many knights are buried in the church, *e. g.* Diego de Santillan, 1503; Nicolas de Ovando, 1511; also many others in the solemn cloister, now made into a stable! In a small temple is some injured sculpture, a "Resurrection," an "Adam and Eve." Notice the wooden tattered chest in which Pelayus floated down 250 miles from Toledo. For this legend consult *Morgado*, Seville, p. 22, and Southey, *Don Roderick*, Note 51. But the preservation of future legislators and rulers in arks is of older date, for thus, among other examples, Osiris was saved in Egypt, as Adonis was by Venus; so Ion was rescued by Creusa, and also in a "well-made" ark, according to Euripides. This exposure the Greeks called *Κυψισμος*, in a pipkin, or an "*olla*," which would have suited a Spaniard exactly. But they took legends ready made: thus the Pagans showed the box in which Cypelus (*Κυψελος*, a coffer) was similarly saved, and hung it up in the temple of Juno at Olympia (*Paus.* v. 17. 5). The legend of Pelayus, his exposition in a boat, and his preservation in order to found a dynasty, is neither more nor less than giving a new name to the older Spanish tale, as detailed by Justin (xliv. 4) in regard to Habis, and so in the authentic romance *Amadis de Gaula* the babe *Esplandia* is floated down the Thames in a case.

For the order and town of *Alcantara* consult '*Cronica de las Tres Ordenes*,' Rades y Andrada, fol. Toledo, 1572; '*Historia de las Ordenes Militares*,' Francisco Caro de Torres, fol. Mad. 1629. For the town and its saints,

'*Antigüedades y Santos de Alcantara*,' Jacinto Arias Quintana de Dueñas, 4to. Mad. 1661; '*Origen de la Orden de Alcantara*,' Juan Calderon de Robles, fol. Mad. 1662; and by the same author, '*Privilegia Selectiora Militiæ San Juliana de Pereiro*,' J. C. de Robles, fol. Mad. 1662; '*Retrato Politico de Alcantara*,' Leandra Santibañez, 8vo. Mad. 1779; '*Cronica de la Orden de Alcantara*,' Alonso de Torres y Tapia, 2 vols. fol. Mad. 1763.

El Puente de Alcantara, "the bridge of the bridge," worth going 100 L. to see, stems the rock-walled lonely Tagus, striding across the wild gorge.

"Dove scorre il nobil Tago, e dove
L'aurato dorso Alcantara gli preme."

Filicaia and other poets have clothed the barren crags with imaginary flowers, and stranded the fierce bed with gold: but all this is a fiction, which avarice readily believes in regard of distant unvisited regions. The deep sullen river rolls through a desolate arid country; and here resembles a mountain-enclosed narrow lake; the bridge, the soul of the scene, looms like a huge skeleton, the work of men when there were giants on the earth, and who built with colossal stones commensurate in size with their conceptions: loneliness and magnitude are the emphatic features; tinted grey with the colouring of 17 centuries, during which it has resisted the action of the elements, and the worse injuries of man. The bridge consists of 6 arches, the 2 central the widest with a span of 110 ft.; its length is some 670 feet, and height 210. The usual depth of the river is about 37 feet, rising, however, in floods to 176, for the narrow pass is a funnel: the best point of view is from the other side, turning down the rocks to the l. Built for Trajan, A.D. 105, it is worthy of an emperor. The architect, Caius Julius Lacer, was buried near his work, but barbarians have demolished his tomb. At the entrance of the bridge a chapel yet remains with a dedication to Trajan and some verses:

one couplet gives the name of the architect:

"Pontem perpetui mansurum in sæcula mundi,
Fecit divina nobilis arte Lacer."

The granite of which it is constructed is worked in *bossage*, pillowed, *almohadillado*: no cement was used. The centre arch has sunk: one arch, destroyed in 1213, remained repaired with woodwork until 1543, when Charles V. restored it, as an inscription given by Cean Ber. ('Sumo' 398), records; the 2nd arch on the r. bank was blown up June 10, 1809, by Col. Mayne, who had been directed to do so if the enemy advanced. This order, when the danger was past, was unfortunately either not rescinded by Cuesta, or the bearer of the message was killed; for Mayne had not kept his instructions secret, whereupon Victor menaced the bridge, "with no other view than to cause its destruction" (Napier, viii. 3), a Vandalism of no use to him in a strategic point of view, solely done to throw the odium on the English. See the Duke's Dispatch to Cuesta, June 11, 1809. The bridge was again repaired with woodwork in 1812 by Col. Sturgeon, continued so until again destroyed during the civil war in 1836, and so remains to this day, however easily it might be made serviceable. Now it is approached by paths which puzzle even Spanish mules, and the indolent natives, ferried over in a lumbering boat, smoke and yawn under the very shadow of arches raised by a race of the past, with whom they have little in common.

Ciudad Rodrigo lies some 19 direct L. from *Alcantara*: they are very long—4 to 5 miles each—through *La Zarzia*, 3; *Perales*, 5; *Peña parda*, 4; *Fuente Guinaldo*, 2; *El Bodon*, 2; *Ciudad Rodrigo*, 2. The sole interest lies in the associations with our Great Duke.

There is a direct road to *Coria*, 7 L., by *Ceclavin* 3 L., *Pescuenza* 2 L., and thence 2 L. more: this longish ride is without interest, and is to be avoided. We made the following charming cir-