

is kneeling before an altar, and has the same style of inexpressive features ; but the drapery is beautifully worked. The trees and foliage, mixed with cherubs, which adorn this sepulchre, are splendid ; and the Angel and the Madonna, and also the Saints and Evangelists, in their rich niches, are admirable. These tombs are certainly wonderful, and no one should visit Burgos without seeing them.

The choir is elaborately carved, but only with ornaments, and not figures, except the further Coro de los Legos, which is quite in the style of Berruguete, and very fine. The retablo is imposing, and the effect very good at a distance ; but it is heavy and too crowded. The subjects represent the chief events of our Saviour's life ; the best are, the Last Supper, the Taking of Christ, the Annunciation, and the Adoration of the Kings. At the bottom of the retablo there are images of the King and Queen kneeling on each side of an altar. The painted glass is less rich than usual in Spain. The rooms adjoining contain nothing of importance.

In the chapel of San Benito there are some busts of priests in the retablo, two of them in black, representing the Saint, are well done ; and in an adjoining chapel I observed a tolerable Christ at the Column, though the painting is not equal to the sculpture.

In the chapel, where the four poor priests, who alone occupy this immense pile, say mass, there are

two fine figures of Bishops, a good St. John, and an excellent St. Bruno.

The pleasant burial-ground, now much neglected, containing some cypresses and a neat fountain, is surrounded with the cells formerly occupied by the Carthusians.

We drove afterwards to San Pedro de Cardena: the heat was very great, as is to be expected in Castile in the middle of June; and the road was dreadfully uninteresting, over rocky downs, not a tree to be seen, or anything living, but a few shepherds and their flocks. We were glad when, after an hour's drive, we reached San Pedro, situated in a kind of hollow in this wretched plain; a more lonely and dreary situation cannot be imagined. The convent is very imposing at a distance, from its great size and simple, neat architecture; but it was surprising to see such an immense edifice in a district where one would scarcely expect to find a cottage. Over the principal entrance is the Cid mounted on his steed Babieca, riding over the Moors. His horse's face is injured, only one eye remaining, but it seems conscious of what he is doing.

The interior of the church is fine, though the yellow-wash disfigures the lofty pointed arches. In the centre of the chapel of the Kings, Counts, and illustrious Barons, is the stone effigy of the great Cid, laying with his wife Ximena on a sarcophagus, When the French were here, some drunken soldiers

utterly destroyed his face, and sadly injured the tomb. His wife, perhaps from the effects of a mutilation, has rather the features of a negro. The Campeador's beard, armour, and sword lying between his legs, are well sculptured for the period when they were executed. At the Cid's feet is a lion snarling, and his wife has a dog at hers, the emblem of her fidelity. Around the sarcophagus are busts and coats of arms. The walls also are covered with the armorial bearings of the illustrious dead buried there. It seemed to be their ambition to trace a connection with the great warrior. The inscriptions show that his daughters were married to the sons of the Kings of Arragon and of Navarre; and though the husband of one died before his succession, the other was the wife and also mother of a King of Navarre;* they record also the death of his son in battle with the Moors. Five claim the honour of being his nephews, two were cousins; one inscription is of his father, and another of his mother.

Above the entrance into the chapel are half-figures, coloured, of the Campeador and his wife; but, from their attitude, they might be quarrelling. Ximena seems in a great rage; and the Cid, with his arms stretched out, is not much more calm. She is represented as a fine-looking woman, with rather

* Mariana, lib. x. chap. iv.

large features ; but he is more mild and pleasing-looking. The statue of San Benito, on the altar, is not bad.

The chapel of the Martyrs is erected in memory of the two hundred monks buried there, who were murdered in 872 by the Moor, Zephe, when he sacked the convent ; and their blood is said to have always issued out of their tombs on the anniversary of their martyrdom, until the Moslems were conquered, and their spirits rested in peace. Now, there is only one monk, with a solitary attendant, residing in this immense and lonely pile, the sole guardian of the tombs of martyrs, kings and heroes.

It is doubtful whether Spain has gained or lost by the destruction of the convents, and the confiscation of the Church property. Ask the Spaniards, and they will answer you as they are individually affected by the measure, or as they are prompted by their zeal and affection for their religion, or dislike to monastic institutions.

No one can make an extensive tour in Spain without perceiving that there is a strong feeling that they have gained little anywhere from their aggressions on the Church, and are in many places severe sufferers from the destruction of the splendid convents, which generally created a certain degree of prosperity and comfort around them. If the lands had all been sold to individuals with capital and enterprise, and liberal institutions, and a fair and

unbiassed representation of the people in the Cortes had afforded some security that those who sow may hope to reap, and still more, that those who improve their land may reasonably expect to derive the benefit of their improvements, Spain would no doubt be a gainer by having thrown off an incubus which was certainly a great restraint on the intelligence and commerce of the country.

Although the kingdom now enjoys a salutary repose under a strong administration, yet as every month's rumour assures the country that its continuance depends upon Court favour, which may suddenly be withdrawn, and no one has really much confidence in the future, the lands wrested from the Church are seldom better cultivated than they were formerly, and in many places are now a wilderness. As a matter of finance, the measure had its advantages, inasmuch as the Government realised capital during the civil war, when they required it most urgently; otherwise the amount annually paid for the support of the clergy is nearly as much as the interest of the sum they gained by the sale of the property at prices so much below its value.

Mr. Urquhart* says the clergy paid a revenue to the State which amounted, some years ago, to one hundred and eighty millions of reals; and that the Church now figures in the Budget as a

* Vol. II, p. 348.

charge of one hundred and forty millions ; but this debtor and creditor account appears to me rather fallacious, inasmuch as the land from which the Church chiefly contributed to the exigencies of the State still pays taxes in the hands of lay proprietors, and the amount which the Church receives from the State is now much less.

A great portion of the rentals derived from the confiscated lands is spent in Madrid, or the chief towns of the district ; whereas the priests might generally be considered a kind of resident landlords, an immense advantage to a country, where the grandees, the great proprietors, never reside on, and rarely visit, their large estates.

The magnificent and over abundant churches and convents in such cities as Toledo, Leon and Valladolid, are totally inconsistent with the number and poverty of the inhabitants. Such establishments could not have existed, if the Church had not concentrated in itself almost all the wealth of those districts. If Spain, with its territory twice as extensive as the British isles, and only one-tenth less than the size of France,* and with a population, to judge of them from that class of which the greater number of men are born, one of the very finest in the world, is ever again to take its ancient place in the scale of nations, this great blow to a Church, the chief

* Handbook, vol. i, p. 90.

obstacle to all improvement, and this dispersion of her colossal power and wealth, would certainly facilitate that event. There is, however, no reasonable chance of such a change: her excellent municipal institutions are crippled or destroyed; the country owes an enormous debt, and it remains to to be seen whether they will ever pay much interest.

Spain has got the finest peasantry in the world—courageous, high-minded, deserving of political power; but there is a want of an independent, talented and wealthy middle class, and country aristocracy, to rouse the nation to better things, diffuse vigour, enterprise and industry, and under the ægis of liberal institutions, create confidence, and develop the vast resources of the empire.

Convinced of the utter hopelessness of expecting such wants being soon, if ever, supplied, and finding, from the sad history of the past, that administrations change in Spain, but nothing else, it is impossible not to feel some regret that these fine convents, some of them noble specimens of Gothic architecture, and almost all museums of art, were plundered and destroyed, and that the treasures they once contained are lost or are now to be seen anywhere but in Spain. These mighty piles are characteristic of the country; and whether in the ancient towns, the dreary wilds, or amid the lofty sierras, are always interesting, though frequently so far beyond the means and wants of the wretched districts sur-

rounding them, one naturally suspects them to have been the fruits of the virgin crust of the rich gold districts of the New World, or of the room Atahualpa almost filled with the precious metal for his ransom ; but their wealth, however obtained, was not hoarded, but diffused, with a liberal hand, in charities, hospitalities, and in a liberal encouragement of the arts. It is an error to suppose that these establishments were only tenanted by those who made a trade of religion. They afforded seclusion, and ease of mind and body to the broken-down man of the world, comfortable quarters to the weary soldier, a house of refuge for the worn-out pilgrim, a solitary cell for meditation, and cheerful society and the comforts of their religion for all.

The crowded churches, and notwithstanding the appropriation of their revenues, the absence of all appearance of anything like poverty in the chapels and services, prove that the Spaniards are now as devout worshippers, and as zealous friends of the Church as they were in her palmy days. The Spanish people has ever been deeply attached to religious institutions ; and when their constitutions were breaking, and they felt the necessity of weaning themselves from the passions, the pleasures, and excitement of the world, they have, in every age, availed themselves, to an extraordinary extent, of these asylums as their last resting-place on earth.

It is not surprising that any of the adventurers

who accompanied Columbus, and still less that those whose hands were imbrued with the blood of the Aztecs and the Incas, who insisted that the brave Guatemozin should be tortured to compel him to disclose his treasures, and who riveted the irons on the legs of the pusillanimous Montezuma — irons which may well be said to have entered his very soul ; or that those whose voices called for the execution of the truthful and generous Atahualpa ; or that many of the thousands who, from thirst of gold and adventure, followed them to the New World, should have sought a refuge in these asylums when, escaping from their fearful toil and perils, they returned to their native country with broken constitutions—without homes, finding perhaps the friends of their youth dead and scattered ; and their ill-gotten wealth insufficient to relieve the loneliness of the last stage of life.

One can imagine also a Charles V. harassed with cares, wars and disease, astonishing all Europe by retiring to San Yuste ; and a Philip II. delighting in his cell in the Escorial ; but the fashion of spending their last days in a convent, which prevailed amongst all ranks, is very remarkable, and to such an extraordinary extent, is unprecedented in any other Catholic country. Some of the most distinguished artists, such as Cano and Joanes, El Mudo, Cotan, Rincon, Borrás, Cespedes, Roelas, Rizi, and many others, took orders. Many of the

poets* also finished their career in religious seclusion.

The three brightest ornaments of Spanish literature, Cervantes, Lopa de Vega, and Calderon—though the two latter were not only the most successful, but the most prosperous of authors—and many of their cotemporaries and imitators spent their last days in these asylums. Not merely a number of the writers of dramas, but many even of the actors—a class notorious in Spain for their disorderly and vagabond lives—followed the fashion, and taking refuge in a religious life, became devout priests, and died almost in the odour of sanctity.†

There is still the same inclination amongst all classes to retire from the world, when ambition's fitful fever is past. The life of a Spaniard, even at the present day, is too often one of fearful toil, and rapine, and blood. The soldier in other countries in Europe is easily moved from place to place; but the Spaniard, who has to march thousands of miles over burning sierras, destitute of every comfort, has ever an eventful life, to say nothing of the foreign wars, revolutions, and the atrocious civil feuds, when unheard-of cruelties were committed. The actors in such scenes, probably without homes (for celibacy is the rule in the Spanish army), and perhaps equally destitute of friends, may

* Tickler, vol. II, p. 387.

† Tickler, vol. II, p. 404.

regret that the soldier's last barracks, the friendly convents, are now closed.

We returned to Burgos by the celebrated Cistercian nunnery of Santa Maria la Real, called Las Huelgas Reales, being built in the gardens of the founder Alonso VIII., whose wife, Leonora, was daughter of our Henry II. The Abbess of this monastery, at one time, ruled over one hundred and fifty nuns of the most noble families in Spain, and exercised jurisdiction over fourteen large towns, and more than fifty smaller places; and was considered only inferior in dignity to the Queen.* When the monasteries were destroyed, there were one hundred nuns here; and now there are fifteen, and five preparing to take the veil; the Government, within the last two months, having granted them permission to have as many as twenty-four.

This is one of the many indications I have met with in Spain, showing the disposition of the present Government to restore, as far as is in their power, the fallen fortunes of the Church, and return by degrees, perhaps, to the old abuses. The architecture of different styles gives a history of the place; towers, with machicolated battlements, square towers, circular and pointed arches mingled together; and there are some fine old tombs at the entrance of the church. The view through the grating, of the choir

* See Prescott's Ferdinand and Isabella, p. 39.

where the nuns sit, is imposing; and must be more so when they are present; the seats seem to be beautifully carved, and the floor boarded—a regard to comfort seldom found in Spain. It is a kind of St. George's Chapel, where the old Spanish kings knighted themselves, and Alonso El Sabio conferred that honour on our Edward I.* There is a monument of the founder and his wife in the centre, covered with velvet; and above the grating a good fresco of the grand victory of Las Navas de Tolosa.

The King is represented on his knees praying, on one side, and his wife on the other; and above, he is seen on horseback, in the midst of the fight. It is very superior to the fresco in the Escorial of the same subject. Close by the grating is an old gilt pulpit, covered with rudish figures of saints but preserved as a great treasure; for in it preached the renowned St. Vicente de Ferrer. The grand altar is churrigueresque; on each side it are kneeling figures of Alonso and his wife.

Burgos is an interesting old town. The irregular plaza is picturesque, with its granite arcades, and looked very imposing, filled, as I saw it, with all the military, priests, authorities of the city, and gentry walking in procession, carrying the celebrated statue

* See Handbook, p. 903.

of the Señora de Oca, and other relics, to procure a safe accouchement for the Queen ; while gay silk and satin curtains and bed-coverings, mostly crimson, decorated the balconies, crowded with the beauty and fashion of the place. The fine open space occupied by the bed of the river, though not often containing much water ; the bridges, which have always a picturesque effect ; the beautiful shady alamedas, or the Espolon and Espolon Nuevo, with their hedges of rose-trees on each side of the river ; and the picturesque old gate of Santa Maria, form as cheerful and as pleasant a prospect as any town enjoys, enhanced greatly by the view of the old city, rising above the modern houses and the cathedral, one of the finest and externally perhaps the most elegant temple ever erected to the divinity.

The horrors of war, foreign and domestic, are over ; the commerce of the little town is increasing ; and large houses are building in every direction, some of them handsome ones. Burgos can boast of being the place where, in 1169, the first Parliament assembled in Spain. Every city had its deputy, who were chosen at first by the householders at large. The chamber comprised peers and clergy ; and even before the fifteenth century, the power of the Cortes was very great.*

The remains of the grandeur of Burgos may be

* Prescott's Ferdinand and Isabella, p. 20.

traced not only in her splendid cathedral, fine churches and convents, but also in the houses of her nobles. I have mentioned the palace of the Constable; in the Calle San Lorenzo there are about a dozen of their residences, with sculptured arched doorways, and some of them with round turrets; and in the Calle Avellares there are some portals richly decorated with busts and columns.* The entrance, also, of the Casa de Miranda, in the Calle de la Calera, on the other side of the river, is worth observing for its decorations, and double fluted Corinthian columns on each side; the figures also supporting the arms are graceful. The patio is very rich with its abundance of ornaments, figures, and fluted columns, but the capitals are in bad taste.

There are some few paintings collected at Burgos, but probably rubbish, as usual. I walked to the Institution first, whence I was sent to St. Jeronimo, and there told the curé had the key, and was teaching, and I could not get the porter to ask for it. They said if I returned at one, I should see them, and I did so, but found no curé and no key (Cosas de España). A traveller must either waste his time in staying twice as long in every city as ought to be

* The numbers best worth observing in the first street are Nos. 4, 6, 8, 14, 17, 23, 27, 28, 29, and 31; in the second, Nos. 4, 6, and 8.

required, or leave something unseen from the difficulty of getting access. I am weary of the words *sta cerrada* (it is closed), and the little value Spaniards have of any time but their own. They never think of keeping appointments.

After several applications, I was at last fortunate enough to meet with the Governor, who grants permission to see the castle; and certainly the ascent, which is but trifling beyond the house of the Cid, is worth the trouble. It is built on the site of the original palace of the Kings of Old Castile, and is the birthplace of Don Pedro the Cruel, and there the Cid married his faithful wife, and our Edward I. espoused Eleanor of Castile. The situation of the castle is very strong, as the Duke of Wellington perceived, and his artillery and forces being quite inadequate, raised the siege and retired to Ciudad Rodrigo, when he heard of Soult's approach with a very superior army.

The view of the old town and its glorious cathedral, the alamedas, Vega, and distant mountains, is very fine, and the Vegas of the Huelgas and the Hospital del Ré are extremely pretty; the river winding through a verdant vale, richly planted with trees, is a refreshing sight in Castile. The Inn de las Postas, or as it is generally called del Doran, is the best, and the dinners are good for Spain; but clean as the rooms appeared, we had a crawler or two

for about the fourth or fifth time during our tour. If we had changed our beds as frequently during as many months in England, or in any other country, we might perhaps have been equally unfortunate.

CHAPTER XVI.

DEPARTURE FROM BURGOS—PASS OF PANCORBO—VITORIA—
STREETS—PROMENADES—SAN MIGUEL—SAN VICENTE—BAT-
TLE OF VITORIA—PAMPLONA—CATHEDRAL—IGNACIO LOYOLA
—ADIEU TO SPAIN—BAYONNE—BORDEAUX—METTRAY.

BEING disappointed in finding room at Burgos in the diligences, which at this season of the year are generally full from Madrid, we were obliged to take the courier in the evening, which I regretted, the country being more interesting than our former routes through the Castiles. They go at the rate of eight or nine miles an hour, but are more than twice as expensive as the diligences, on lines where opposition has reduced the prices of the latter; and they only allow thirty pounds of luggage to each passenger, and charge very high for the surplus.

The route was pleasant to Briviesca—the country, bounded by hills, was rich in pastures and corn, and trees were not wanting. That town seemed a

noisy, dirty place, with rather a picturesque plaza. Fortunately I was awake when we passed the fine mountain pass of Pancorbo, between the defiles of the mountains of Oca and the Pyrenean spurs. The dim light of a summer's night made the rocks appear higher and grander, perhaps, than they would have done under the glare of a Castilian sun. Some of them were of a very picturesque form, rising in one part so precipitately as scarcely to allow space for the river Oroncillo and the road along which we dashed.

Near the pass, the Handbook says, there is a ruined castle, where Roderick is said to have seduced the Cava. A more splendid natural barrier to the plains of Castile than this pass, could not be imagined. And here we bid adieu to the Castilians, a people tenacious, proud and independent, with a great deal to be admired in their characters, much sterling honesty, and a zealous love for their religion, their country and their Queen; but to passing strangers, like myself, they are not so polite, nor so good-humoured, nor half so pleasant as the Spaniards of the South, especially the Andalusians.

The lower orders in Castile and throughout Spain are far superior to the middle and higher classes. I was never weary of gazing at the groups of peasants, such fine-looking fellows, wearing their mantles with an air as if they were all grandes; and even when they had the appearance of being contraban-

dists, or even worse, one could not but admire them, there is so much character, courage, and independence in their mien, and they are always so civil and courteous when one addresses them ; assuredly they are worthy of better institutions and a more liberal government.

Vitoria, the capital of Alava, is a thriving, flourishing place. Diligences, couriers, galeras, &c., passing through continually have created a prosperity, which is exhibited in a handsome new town, with good inns ; a large plaza, with a Doric arcade ; a pretty Alameda, called the Florida, ornamented with statues, mingled with rose-trees, and enjoying pleasant views, of the verdant rich vale surrounding the town, and the distant hills ; a little further beyond the suburbs is another promenade called El Prado, which is more rural. The new part of Vitoria has quite a French appearance ; the inn still more so ; beds with curtains, and the floors of polished boards instead of flags. We explored the old town, where many of the streets are full of picturesque, Prout-like bits of tumble-down houses.

The church of San Miguel is finely situated on an eminence, and looks well from the plaza in the new town. The Gothic interior is imposing, though disfigured with yellow-wash. The retablo, ornamented with gilt Corinthian columns and coloured sculpture, is by Hernandez, and very good. The Circumcision, and the Adoration of the Shepherds,

are excellent. The shepherd, with a lamb on his shoulder, is splendid. The Adoration of the Kings and the Purification, are also fine. Over the grand altar in the centre is a large figure of the Conception, which is beautiful, but the drapery is heavy. Some of the Saints and Evangelists are also well done.

The interior of San Vicente is simple and elegant, the plain, lofty columns, which seem to be the fashion at Vitoria, are here without capitals, and the groining of the roof springs from the tops of the columns with a fan-like effect. The retablo is churrigueresque, and the sculpture not remarkable.

The porch of Santa Maria is richly decorated with pointed arches, immense groups of figures, statues, large and small, in elaborately carved niches, and a groined roof, the bosses of the groining ornamented with busts. The effect is good, though the sculpture is indifferent and much injured. The interior is destroyed by rafters, of an elliptical form which span the centre aisle, and there are also two chapels with circular arches, which do not harmonize with the pointed style of the building. The rafters, however, which spoil a pretty interior, appear to be required to strengthen the walls. The view from the summit of the tower of this church is fine, of the old town and its Alameda, and the rich and verdant plains studded with innumerable villages with their picturesque church-towers, and bounded

with ranges of hills whose soft outline is very pleasing.

This is a view, moreover, thrillingly interesting to every Englishman. The Allies crossed the hills surrounding the basin of Vitoria from the direction of Burgos, and Hill's corps entered through the defiles of Pueblo and Marquina. Near the road to Bilboa—where two ranges of hills, one more wavy than the other, slope down to the plain, and another low range of hills rises a little in the distance—were the British, under Graham. The hill of Arinez will be pointed out, where the battle was really fought, being the centre of the French forces entering right and left the road to Bayonne, by which they wished to retreat, but were prevented by the English and Spaniards (by the Spanish forces, says the custode), and the road is seen to Pamplona, in which direction, when completely beaten, they fled pell-mell, hotly pursued by the victorious Duke.

The basin of Vitoria was filled with troops. Sixty thousand Anglo-Portuguese sabres and bayonets, with ninety pieces of cannon, were actually in the field; but the Spanish auxiliaries were above twenty thousand, and the whole army including serjeants and artillery-men, exceeded eighty thousand combatants. Deducting the officers, artillery-men, sappers, miners, and non-combatants, which are always borne on the French muster-rolls, the sabres and bayonets of the enemy would scarcely reach sixty thousand,

but in the number of their guns they had the advantage.

The French escaped with the loss of their treasure, stores and papers, but lost comparatively few men. Never was an army, says Napier, more hardly used by its commander, for the soldiers were not half beaten, and never was a victory more complete. The French carried off but two pieces of artillery from the battle. Jourdan's baton of command, a stand of colours, and a hundred and forty-three brass pieces were taken. The loss in men did not, however, exceed six thousand, exclusive of some hundred prisoners. The Allies lost five thousand one hundred and seventy-six killed, wounded and missing. One thousand and forty-nine were Portuguese; five hundred and fifty-three Spanish, and the rest English. Plunder to the amount of five millions five hundred thousand dollars were carried away by camp-followers and non-combatants.*

As Napier says, the fate of Spain was decided at Vitoria, but the statue proposed to be erected to the Duke has not yet been raised. We must, however, recollect, that it has never been the custom of the Spaniards in any age, to erect statues to their great men who do not happen to have royal blood in their veins, except in the churches, where it appears to have been the policy of the priesthood

* Napier's Peninsular War, vol. v.