

This hill is artificial, being simply an immense dome of brickwork covered with earth. There is also a menagerie of wild beasts, a lion—panthers, zebras, monkeys, &c. ; but the Queen does not appear to have much taste for quadrupeds, many of the cages being empty. Though there are few rare plants, the walks among the shrubs and flowers are pretty ; the standard rose-trees are in great profusion and very beautiful. The Queen drives to these gardens every evening at half-past five, for an hour or two ; the King, and also Queen Christina visit them occasionally, but always at different times. It takes about an hour or two to see them, one gardener passing you on to another.

Besides this delightful lounge, there is also a botanical garden, opposite the Prado below the Museum, which seems pretty and retired, but for some reason, it is closed this month. Near there is the artilleria, which contains models of guns, forts and harbours, and machines for the manufacture of cannon. The suite of rooms is fine, but spoilt by a roof painted in the worst taste. There is a trophy, in honour of Jacinto Ruiz, Luis Daoiz, and Pedro Velarde, who refused to surrender their cannon, on the 2nd of May, 1808, to the French ; three men against thousands, and two of them perished. Adjoining the Museum is a granite obelisk, erected to the memory of those who, on the Sunday, were executed by Murat, to strike

terror into the Madrilenians, but their deaths roused all Spain against the invaders. A short distance from the Prado and the fine gate of the Puerta de Alcalá, is the Plaza de Toros. The bull-fights are apparently finer at Madrid than at Seville.

The Calle de Alcalá was crowded with thousands hurrying to the scene: such galloping of *calèches*, omnibuses, and carriages, such screaming and shouting, all hurrying as if they had forgot that their seats were numbered, and there was no fear of losing them;— a scene more animated could not be imagined. The arena was crowded to excess, Montes being expected, and, therefore, as usual, not a seat was vacant. The building is not remarkable, but it is a fine sight to see an arena filled with twelve thousand spectators. There were, perhaps, more banderilleros than at Seville, and their dresses were handsomer. To escape from the bulls, the *chulos* at Madrid are obliged always to leap the barriers, there being no openings as at Seville.

Montes was ill, but his pupil, Chiclanero, who took his place, is an admirable matador, and ranks as second only to his master. The horses were rather more valuable, and might, from their appearance, be worth £5 each in England; and the picadores seemed to incur greater risk; one was tossed by the bull, and a second time seriously hurt and compelled to leave the arena; another picador was also

wounded, and obliged to retire for a while. The Spanish people are always to be seen in their element at a bull-fight.

The collectors of paintings will find nothing cheap at Madrid. I visited several private galleries; and the best was a collection of four hundred, made by the late General Mead, shown to me by our Consul, Mr. Brackenbury, whose kind attentions and hospitality I have very great pleasure in acknowledging. I saw few that I admired, and they seemed to have a very exaggerated notion of their value.*

There is great difficulty in getting old paintings out of the country. They say that the last tarif does not prohibit their exportation, but the officials have not learnt the new law, and, therefore, the old prohibition is practically still in force—*Cosas de España*. I sent a case from Granada to Malaga by the galera, but, on arriving there, I found that neither my banker nor the Consul would undertake to ship them. Two of them being on panel, I could not take them on the horses. I was, therefore, obliged to trust them to Matias Balcon, formerly landlord, but now a waiter at the *Fonda de la Danza*, and of whom I knew nothing, except that Mr. Ford calls him a worthy Galician. He undertook to deliver them at Gibraltar; but as they had not arrived long after

* These paintings were, I understand, sold in London early this spring, before my return from the continent.

the time fixed, I wrote to the landlady of the Danza, who repudiated all connection with Matias in a way which gave me reason to suspect him. For several weeks I gave them up for lost, when, at last, by some means or another, they found their way to Gibraltar and my suspicions of poor Matias proved unfounded.

At Valencia, I took the precaution, before making any purchases, to ask a banker if he would ship them for me, which he agreed to do; but it seems the Academy obliges the officers there to be strict. After a lengthy correspondence, and a delay of more than a year, finding it impossible to export them from Valencia, they were sent to Madrid, to be forwarded from some place in the North, where there is no Academy. The ports in that part of Spain are worse than in the South, so that they were obliged to send them to Cadiz, where they were shipped, and I have at last received them. Let travellers, therefore, take warning, and send their purchases by the galeras, which are safe and cheap, to Seville or Cadiz.

Having heard that the hotels at Madrid are the worst in Europe, and very dear, I wrote to Mr. Purkiss, No. 23, Caballero de Gracia, who is always anxious to oblige the English. His house was repairing, but he got me very comfortable lodgings in the Calle de las Carretas, No. 29, first floor, kept by an elderly, good-natured, respectable person, Signora Evenita Espinosa, who gave us good breakfasts—chops, and delicious butter (though at Madrid it costs

five shillings a pound)—and excellent dinners, all for three dollars a-day, which is extremely reasonable for this expensive capital. I paid five francs a-day, as usual, to the *valet-de-place*; but I did not like him, and, therefore, will not mention his name. They say there is no lack of good places for dining in Madrid, and there are excellent confectioner's shops and great varieties of cool, delicious drinks at the *cafés*.

The great object of attraction at Madrid is the museum, with its two thousand paintings. There is no collection, here or elsewhere, of the most ancient Spanish masters, to enable us to trace the history of art in this country. The earliest works known as the productions of Spanish artists are a very few by Sanchez de Castro and Rincon, and their scholars; though I cannot but think that many of the old paintings with gold grounds, which I have noticed in several of the cathedrals and churches, and also in museums, which are generally attributed to Flemish artists, may have been painted by Spaniards, but are not now identified as such. The Moorish, foreign and civil wars, which disturbed the country for so long a period, would prevent a school of art flourishing so prosperously and so early as in Italy; but when Granada was conquered, and the glorious reign of Ferdinand and Isabella had united the different kingdoms, and established peace and security throughout the realm, then we see literature and

the arts making a rapid progress. The connection with Italy, especially with Naples, in their reigns, and probably the importation of works of art from that country, would give an impulse to the genius of such painters as Campaña and Morales, who were born at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Charles V. was a collector and liberal patron of art, and, during his numerous campaigns and journeys, had opportunities of acquiring the finest paintings of the Italian and Flemish schools.

About the middle of the sixteenth century, El Mudo and Joanes, who almost rivalled the great Italian masters in the beauty of their compositions, and the richness of their colouring, visited Italy at a time "that country was the seat of the arts and letters; and no small part of what was noble and cultivated in Spain was led across the Alps, and awakened to a perception of such forms and creations of genius and taste as had not been attempted beyond the Pyrenees."*

It is singular, also, to trace the effect of the progress of literature on the arts in Spain. Morales died (an octogenarian) in 1586, and El Mudo and Joanes, in 1579, when already the literature of their country had made great advances; when the lyrics and pastoral poetry of Boscan and Garcilasso de la Vega, and their imitators, had diffused an

* Tickler, vol. 1, p. 438.

Italian taste in Italian forms throughout the country, and thrilling chronicles and histories of the New World had roused the feelings and energies of the nation; when dramatic representations of a religious character were common, the interdict of the Inquisition, which had lasted half a century, being already raised, and Lope de Ruida had made a successful effort to establish a popular drama. But it is very remarkable, that, with the exception of the three great artists I have named, almost all the best painters in Spain flourished in the first half of the seventeenth century, when the literature of the country was most distinguished.

Taking a dozen names, which occur to me as the most talented of the Spanish school, whose works will be most familiar to travellers visiting the cream of Spain, though some may change two or three of these for others, according to their taste, more deserving of the rank, we find that El Greco was born in 1558, Roelas, in 1560, and both died in 1625; Francisco Ribalta, born 1551, Juan de Ribalta, his son, born 1597, both died in 1628; Ribera, born 1588, Francisco Herrera el Viejo, born 1576, both died in 1656; Zurbaran, born 1598, died 1662; Velasquez, born 1599, died 1660; Jacinto Geronimo de Espinosa, born 1600, died 1680; Alonso Cano, born 1601, died 1667; Orrente, died 1644; Murillo, born 1618, died 1682.

It was precisely at the same period that the litera-

ture, and especially the drama, of Spain was most flourishing, when indeed the genius of the three great authors, whose names are most known in Europe, gave an extraordinary impulse to the taste and literature of the country. Cervantes was born in 1550, and died in 1616; Lope de Vega, born 1562, died 1635; Calderon, born 1600, died 1681.

From a list published by Montalvan, it appears that there were seventy-six dramatic poets living, in 1632, in Castile alone;* and the number of heroic dramas, dramas for saints, sacramental autos and farces, &c., were estimated,† at the end of this century, at thirty thousand. Lope de Vega alone wrote or improvised the extraordinary number of one thousand eight hundred plays, many of them religious, when for two years the secular drama was prohibited; and four hundred autos,‡ a kind of religious plays performed in the streets, when the gorgeous ceremonies of the Corpus Christi filled them with rejoicing crowds.

About the same time were published long religious narratives, in verse, on such subjects as the History of Man, the Passion of Christ, the Glories of St. Francis, and the legends of the Spanish Church.§ These religious compositions must have had an immense influence on art, especially the dramatic representations, which were in truth little

* Tickler, vol. II, 417.

† Tickler, vol. II, p. 419.

‡ Tickler, vol. II, pp. 201 and 211.

§ Tickler, vol. II, p. 437.

more than so many *tableaux vivants* of the very subjects Spanish artists selected for their canvas.

Calderon died (an octogenarian) in 1681, living almost long enough to witness the decline of Spanish literature; and Murillo died the next year; more than a dozen years after the artists I have named as the most talented of the Spanish school. After this period, there was no lack of either painters or authors; but they were rarely of such merit as to deserve to be compared to the eminent men who had preceded them.

Although art, as well as literature, was greatly promoted by the connection with Italy, the liberal patronage of the Court, and the great wealth which flowed into Spain from the mines of the New World, still this simultaneous rise and fall of art and literature could not be accidental; and it is not too much to assume, that the genius of the artists would naturally be roused by the thrilling poetical compositions of the great Spanish poets, and especially by the exciting dramatic representations, for which there was such a mania throughout the nation, that tailors* and sheep-shearers had become authors, and princes, nobles, and commons, wrote for and took a part in these exhibitions; the Count Duke Olivares inventing new dramatic luxuries for his master, Philip IV., who for forty years favoured

† Tickler, vol. II, pp. 417 and 418.

and supported the drama with princely magnificence, writing for and acting in impromptu plays himself.

Those who expect to see a school of painting in Spain equal to the Italian, will be disappointed; but if the Spanish is compared to any other in Europe, it will, I think, be acknowledged to be superior; and yet it had to contend with restrictions which were most prejudicial to the genius of the painters, and accounts, in some measure, for that solemn and almost severe feeling, which certainly is the general characteristic of Spanish paintings. The artists were not allowed to draw more than the head and hands from the naked figure—a great restriction, especially in a country where there was no antique sculpture to supply the place. Further knowledge of anatomy was deemed useless, as, by the rules of the Inquisition, every other part of the body ought to be covered.

Those who have seen the beautiful feet of the Madonnas of the Italian painters, will find, with regret, that the feet of the Virgin are invariably concealed in Spain. The same strict regard to their notions of propriety extended to the composition and drapery. The angels were always painted with wings, and in the Annunciation required to be decently clothed, and kneeling down to the Madonna as to their Queen, and not falling down with their legs uncovered. Pacheco, a painter himself,

who was appointed by the Inquisition to inspect the paintings in the studios, and see that the rules were attended to, says that he knew of an artist at Cordova who was imprisoned for introducing into a picture of the Crucifixion a blessed Virgin in an embroidered petticoat and fardingale, and a St. John on horseback; and he styles the incarceration a justly deserved punishment.*

The artists who were enabled to visit Italy would there recover from the effects of these trammels on their early education; and others, like Murillo, would copy, perhaps, the almost naked figures at the doors of the convents; but these restrictions on the composition and colouring of the loftiest themes—those sacred subjects in which the Virgin is the life and grace—were very prejudicial to the genius and taste of the artist, and the beauty of his paintings.

Englishmen, whose school is distinguished for landscape painters, will be surprised to find that Spain has no great artist of that kind. Iriarte, born in 1620, though the best, has little merit; and it does not appear that he visited Italy, otherwise he would have seen the works of the great landscape painters—Poussin, Claude and Salvator Rosa, and, probably, have become acquainted with those artists, as they were

* Sterling, vol. 1, p. 330.

born only a few years before him. Velasquez, no doubt, enjoyed these advantages, which may account for some of his landscapes, though only accessories to his great paintings, being so very beautiful, and certainly unequalled by any other Spaniard.

This absence of landscape painters may be partly attributed to the same dearth in Italy at the period when Spain chiefly derived from that country her knowledge of the arts; but I conceive it to be principally owing to the Spaniards of every age resembling Orientals, and caring little or nothing for the beauties of nature, and never attempting to be graphic with their pens, or picturesque with their pencils; no one sketches in Spain, and their idea of a paradise is not a beautiful, but a rich, luxuriant, well-watered district, abounding in corn, wine and oil.

Mr. Tickler says,* "One thing has much struck me in all the poems written by Spaniards on their conquests in America, and especially by those who visited the countries they celebrate: it is, that there are no proper sketches of the peculiar scenery through which they passed, though much of it is amongst the most beautiful and grand that exists on the globe, and must have been filling them constantly with new wonder." The truth is, that

* Tickler, vol. II, p. 436.

when they describe woods, rivers and mountains, their descriptions would as well fit the Pyrenees or the Guadalquiver, as they do Mexico, the Andes, or the Amazon.*

It is also remarkable, considering the intimate connection between the two countries, and the magnificent collection of Dutch paintings, comprising above fifty, by David Teniers, who flourished at the same period, and whose works, as soon as painted, would be conveyed from one part of the empire to the other, that none of the great Spanish painters of the time I have mentioned painted in that style. The Italian school suited the genius and more elevated taste of the Spanish artists better than the Flemish, though the influence of the latter may often be traced in the rich colouring and elaborate finish of the early masters.

It has long been a question whether Murillo or Velasquez is entitled to be considered the best of this school; most Englishmen would say Velasquez, as he resembles more the style of our own painters; but I think all Italians would say Murillo: this contest ought not to be decided from the paintings we see here. This collection, of no less than sixty-two of the works of Velasquez,

* Pedro Cieza de Leon, the author of the "Cronica del Peru," is an exception, as he fully appreciated the beauties of the Cordilleras.—*Prescott's Peru*, vol. II, p. 195.

is indeed the only one in the world. Except perhaps the hunting scene, with its beautiful landscape, in our National Gallery, there are few in any other galleries so excellent of their kind as to weigh much in the scale. But there is scarcely one of the forty-six Murillos here, admirable as many of them are, which gives any idea of the mind and intelligence exhibited in the great paintings by the same master at Seville, and others scattered about Europe. The paintings elsewhere should, therefore, be considered in weighing their respective merits. It is difficult also to draw a comparison between masters so different in their styles, and, in truth, it is almost like comparing Teniers to Raphael, and Tam O'Shanter to the Apollo Belvidere. Velasquez is undoubtedly a wonderful painter, the first of the naturalist school, but he never pretended to paint in an elevated style; and even told Salvator Rosa that he did not like Raphael. His favourite of the Italian school was Titian; and his numerous paintings with dark backgrounds, and the colouring of the flesh and the breadth of his effects, show to what extent he studied, though never equalled, the works of the great Venetian master.

This remarkable conversation, which might well astonish the Italians, was turned into old verse by Boschini:

Lu storse el cao cirimoniosamente,
 E disse : Rafael (a dirue el vero ;
 Piasendome esser libero, e sinciero)
 Stago per dir, che nol me piase niente
 Tanto che (replichè quela persona)
 Co' no ve piase questo gran pitor ;
 In Italia nissun ve dà in l'umor
 Perche nu che donemo la corona.
 Don Diego replichè con tal maniera ;
 A Venetia se troua el bon, e'l belo :
 Mi dago el primo liogo a quel penelo :
 Tician xè quel, che porta la bandiera.*

"To those who proposed to him a loftier flight, and proposed Raphael as a nobler model, he used to reply, that he would rather be the first of vulgar than the second of refined painters."†

When Velasquez visited Italy, he would see so many eminent artists, painting in the elevated style, that, feeling conscious, perhaps, of his want of imagination, and despairing of surpassing them, he clung still more closely to his own natural school, painting only what he saw before him most accurately, but without improving or exaggerating the defects of his studies.

Delighted apparently with dwarfs and other uncouth subjects, and apparently indifferent to beauty, for beauty is never seen upon his canvas, except

* Boschini Navagar Pitoresco vento primo, p. 58.

† Sterling, vol. 11, 581

such very scanty allowance of it which the royal personages who sat to him happened to possess. His handling is certainly wonderful, producing with a few touches the most surprising effects ; and there is a breadth and grandeur about his best compositions which are very striking. He may also be truly called the prince of portrait-painters, painting not only the outward form, but the mind, whenever there was any to delineate. Some of his likenesses are beyond all praise, and his Court friends always look like gentlemen and ladies. He is also, as I have said, by far the best of Spanish landscape painters. With all these excellencies, the absence of the ideal, of elevation of thought and mind, of all beauty male or female, of anything approaching to poetical feeling, of simplicity and of religious sentiment, lower him in my estimation much below Murillo, who possessed all these qualities.

Murillo had not the sublime elevation of style of the first Italian masters ; but his Madonnas, when most homely, have always the charm of simplicity and great beauty ; and often, in his Conceptions and Saints, his style is elevated and full of religious feeling. He is the painter of nature, but generally of refined nature ; so that his paintings delight and elevate, and at the same time their beauty and truthfulness command the homage of every one. They may not always exhibit the dextrous handling of Velasquez, or such broad effects ; but the Moses

Striking the Rock, or the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes, or the Conception, in the Museum of Seville, and many others I might mention, exhibit as powerful drawing, and more mind and intellect, than the wonderful portraits Velasquez made from what he saw before him.

No one can see those great works of Murillo without feeling that he possessed a sublime imagination, and no one can examine this fine collection of Velasquez without observing that he is almost destitute of that gift. As a colourist, I also think Murillo greatly superior to Velasquez. The paintings even in this museum are sufficient to maintain this superiority. His colouring is always broad and effective, never minute and elaborate; and his flesh is the colour of the Andalusians around him—warm, Titian-like tints, such as abound in that sunny clime.

Though Murillo copied nature faithfully, he had the good taste to select the most beautiful models he could find; and if his countrywomen had possessed the classic features of many of the Romans or Tuscans, or if he had had the advantage of studying the Grecian antiques in the Italian galleries, doubtless his style would have been more elevated. When, however, we consider the masterly boldness of his drawing, the exquisite roundness of his forms, the breadth, depth, and richness of his colouring, and the transparency and atmosphere

of his paintings, I cannot but think he is fully entitled to be considered the best of the Spanish school, and inferior to few, but very few, of the great Italians.

The school of Spain is of course the most interesting in this museum, as Italian, and also Dutch and French paintings, are to be seen elsewhere; but how few fine works of the great masters of Spain exist in the galleries of Europe! In England, we have many Murillos scattered over the kingdom; and a few paintings by Velasquez; but the other great masters, such as Joanes, Ribalta, Cano, &c., are almost entirely unknown. We can have but a faint idea of Velasquez from the pictures we possess of that master. Here he lived, and painted for almost royalty alone, and Spain still possesses the wonderful works of his brush.

The ancestors of this great master were Portuguese, but he was born at Seville in 1599. He first studied under Herrera the elder, and a similarity to that painter's style may be traced in some of the earliest works of the scholar; and it is probable that Velasquez is indebted to his master for that extraordinary freedom and boldness of drawing and colouring, which are his greatest attractions. The brutality of Herrera, which had driven even his children from his home, obliged Velasquez to leave him, and study with Pacheco, whose daughter he married; but nature was then his chief master,

and Pacheco gives an account (p. 100) of a peasant boy who served him as a model. In 1622, Velasquez went to Madrid, and painted the Duke of Olivares and Philip IV., who appointed him to be his portrait painter; and he had there the advantage of being intimate with Rubens, and profiting by his advice. In 1629, he went to Italy, and stayed a considerable time at Venice, a year at Rome, and afterwards proceeded to Naples, where he remained until the beginning of 1631, when he came back to Madrid. In 1648, he started for Italy again, to buy pictures and casts for the King, and returning in 1651, was appointed the year afterwards to the office of Aposentada Mayor—a place which unfortunately left him little leisure. He died at Madrid, in 1660.*

As the catalogue is out of print, and there will probably not be another for years, I will mention the paintings as they follow each other, which appeared to me worth attention. The keeper had one or two copies of the old catalogue, which he lent to strangers; but when others had applied before me, I had to manage without one; and it was only the day before I left that I was enabled to purchase the volume at five times its value.

Mr. Ford has unfortunately classed the paintings under the different masters, which makes his excel-

* See Sir Francis Head's Handbook and Mr. Sterling's work.

lent description of them almost useless as a guide. Those who have any curiosity to know the contents of the finest gallery of pictures in Europe, will find an account of it in Appendix D.

CHAPTER XI.

ARCHITECTURE OF THE ESCORIAL—THE PALACE—CASA DEL CAMPO—THE CHURCH—PANTEON—MONKS.

WE left Madrid at eight o'clock in the morning; and after passing on our left the Casa del Campo, a small palace of the Queen, in well-wooded grounds, which we have not visited, and on our right, the Florida, another royal villa, still less worth seeing, we soon entered the dreary wastes which surround Madrid. When we came to the domain of the Escorial, the country was pretty and park-like, the preserves covered with fine trees, and picturesque crosses perched on large rocks, reminded us that it was a monastery, church, and a royal mausoleum, that we were going to visit, as well as a palace. In the distance, the edifice is imposing, at the foot of a wild, barren range of grey picturesque hills.

The very name of the Escorial is grand and historically interesting; and then the millions that have been squandered on the building, enough to exhaust even Spain, at that period the richest country in Europe; and the renown of the architects and artists employed would have raised our expectations, if we had not recollected that the plan of the edifice, by royal command, represents the gridiron of St. Lawrence—a gridiron of granite, of which, as Mr. Sterling says, the frame and bars are a palace-convent, and the handle a monastic palace; and what architects, since architecture was a science, ever received such an order? Even Grecian and Roman skill could never have dignified such a commission with even the treasures of the New World to execute it on the grandest scale.

The large dome in the centre, and smaller tower on each side, and the four picturesque ones at the angles of the building—the latter the feet of the gridiron—have a very good effect; but the best front is towards the mountain and not Madrid; and instead of there being a handsome portico towards the capital, there is only a blank wall projecting in a frightful manner, being, in fact, part of the handle of the gridiron.

Juan Bautisa de Toledo, the original architect of the Escorial, who was born at Madrid, studied in Italy, where he designed the royal palace at Naples, and the celebrated street called after his name. In