heretical species of comfort—nevertheless a comfort—to be called upon to face in the Madrid Museo only some twenty-five particularly fleshy studies of Rubens. And even these are not set in the usual nauseating stream, but broken up with the most glorious Titians, Tintorettos, Raphaels, Guidos, and Paul Veroneses.

To say nothing of Murillo, who appeals to the student here in quite a refreshingly new light. There is not a solitary example of his impossibly sinless and confiding beggar boys, but he stands forth in his Virgins, Conceptions, Saints and Crucifixions as the great religious painter that he essentially was, devout in purpose and idea, tender and true in execution.

It is often asserted that Murillo can only be appreciated in Sevilla—his native city—and it is an assertion that leads to a good deal of disappointment. His Caridad and Museo pictures there are certainly very grand, but surely he himself would be content to be judged by his two great *Conceptions*, his *Adoration of the Shepherds*, his *Niños de la Concha*, his *Vírgen del Rosario* of the Madrid gallery, and the *El Tiñoso*, with its two great companion paintings, in the neighbouring Academia of San Fernando. These show, as well as can be shown, both his perfections and shortcomings:—his sunshiny luminosity, lacking depth; his slavery to—not quite mastery of—colour; his pretty conceptions of characters divine and human, which he lacked power either to raise to heaven or to make incarnate.

This Academia of San Fernando—the Academy of Fine Arts—in the Calle Alcalá must on no account be neglected. Besides the three masterpieces of Murillo just named, there are a capital *Crucifixion* by Alonso Cano, a characteristic Rubens, some good Riberas and Zúrbarans, and some sketches of Goya's which deserve more attention than they are in the habit of receiving. And then upstairs there is a quite excellent museum of natural history, with a fine collection of minerals and precious stones, and a zoological department that is certainly the finest in Spain.

In order fully to appreciate some of the exquisite detail painting in the Museo, notably in many of Velazquez's pictures, a visit should be paid to the Armeria Real, close by the royal palace, and a remnant of the old Alcázar. It possesses probably the very finest collection of armour in the world, a collection that is not only a perfect epitome of the history of the science of attack and defence, but is full likewise of touching record and suggestion.

So much so that, although one may come here simply as a lover of the curious, or as an amateur of armour, or intent upon searching for just the particular panoplies represented with such wonderful effect by Spanish painters, all such ideas merge into speculations and reminiscences concerning the terrible Past that rises up in the grimmest seeming of reality as soon as the threshold of this Hall of the Dead is crossed;—a past that engulfs the best and the worst that Spain has ever been

or done. To what figures in history does the wand of Fancy point? Here they all are. Here is Charles V., most iron-hearted of warriors, in the very suit of mail which he wore at the battle of Muhlberg, when he was so worn by years and sickness that he had to be lifted upon his horse. Here are his camp utensils—not very luxurious, i' faith!—and here the litter in which he had finally to be carried. Here too, close at hand, is the Elector John of Saxony, his prisoner upon the same field of Muhlberg; and here the tools and habits of his wonderful son, Felipe Segundo, whose stamp is on the Spanish people to this day, and whose image and working overshadow their ways beyond those of any other ruler. Here are Don Jaime El Conquistador, Christopher Columbus, Pizarro, Isabel la Católica—the "gentle" Isabel—Don Pedro El Cruel, Fernan Córtes, Guzman El Bueno, 'El Gran Capitan' and the ill-fated Rey Chico. It is a great and strange host!

As many mornings, then, as can be spared for the Museo; an hour or two in the Academia and the Armeria Real; a stroll through the Puerta del Sol, the Alcalá, the Park, and the Salon del Prado—where stands the great obelisk of the "Dos de Mayo," erected in memory of the Murat massacre of 1808, which, in its consequences, ought to have for ever cemented a friendship between England and Spain; a peep into the dismal Convent de Atocha, San Isidro el Real, the gaudy San Andrés, and San Francisco revelling in all the pride of gorgeous apparel and the prospect of an

on-coming cathedralship. And then—the resources of Madrid are at an end.

Unless one cares to see a bull-fight. It is really a sort of duty, even if it is no pleasure. Andalucia, indeed, is supposed to be the headquarters of the gentle craft of tauromachy, but a promising *corrida* in Madrid, with all its royal and representative accompaniments, is not to be neglected if it comes opportunely in the way. The fights are supposed only to take place between April and October, but any excuse is snatched at during the "off" months to sanction the coveted amusement. Nor will any amount of cutting north-easter be enough to prevent every place being taken, even when a *boletin de sombra* (ticket for a place in the shade) is not an article to be particularly sought for.

It is a memorable experience—the streams of excited and eager folk all making their way to one place, stirred as nought but the prospect of blood can stir them, with the surging of the ever-increasing wave around the walls and barriers of the grim cruel-looking charnel-house. And then to stand and look down upon the seething crowd of some fourteen thousand souls around and beneath one's *palco*, all so absurdly of one mind and desire, from the elegantly-dressed dames and cavaliers of the upper tiers away down to the sloping rows of benches set apart for those who perhaps have had to pawn their shirt to be here, and to the outer fringe of real *aficionados* who love to be close to the scene of action.

'Seething' is the only word that describes the normal condition of a Spanish crowd, for, however many-headed it may be, there is none of the British boiling over. One reason for this is not far to seek. If the scene were taking place at home, it would be easy to pick out some score or two of hopelessly drunken heroes, and there would be many more in a courageous state of defiance of law and order. But the Spaniard drinks but little, and, when he does drink, "droons the miller" effectually. So the rough horseplay of an English crowd-in-waiting makes no appearance, a few harmless flights of fancy being sufficient outlet for all exuberant spirit. Perhaps a lady inadvertently permits a gloved hand to appear upon the edge of a palco, and immediately some watchful individual below raises the cry, which swells into a mild roar, and refuses to be hushed until the fair *señora* takes off the coveted adornment and tosses it, with its fellow, to the forest of outstretched hands beneath. There is a few moments' scuffle, a few unfortunates discover that they are not made of india-rubber, and the temporary excitement dies out. Or our old acquaintance with the white coat makes his appearance, and is greeted with demonstrations of wrath and personal hatred which recall to one's recollection young Oxford in his Commemoration frame of mind. But, with all these little episodes, the order and patience of the huge assembly are wonderful, as it awaits the longed-for advent of the appointed hour.

But now the president has entered his palco, and,

with a punctuality only observed when it is of no very particular consequence, the signal is given, and forth comes the *cuadrilla*. Apart from a certain not-to-be-got-rid-of feeling of tawdriness, this opening ceremony is pretty, and very fairly effective. The procession is headed by two *caballeros*, solemn-looking individuals in black velvet, bestriding black steeds, and calling to mind irresistibly the ghost-scene in *Don Giovanni*. Then come the two *espadas*, the heroes of the day, in yellow and violet, and gold and green costumes respectively; after them, half a dozen *picadores*, with their round felt hats, short cloaks, and long leathern leggings plated with steel; then eight *banderilleros*—with the *sobre-saliente* and *punterillero*—sporting bright silk sashes, short breeches, and variously-coloured hose; and, finally, four or five attendants, leading the horses which are to drag off the carcases from the arena, and which are all bedecked in plumes and rich trappings.

The procession moves slowly across the ring, salutes the president, and breaks up. The espadas retire; the picadors indulge in a preliminary canter, or already begin to take up their positions at various points of the barrier; the banderilleros go in quest of their red cloths and other paraphernalia, and the horses are led away through the picadors' entrance. The two caballeros, or *alguacils*, are left behind. Again they salute the president, who throws down the key of the *toril*, or bulls' den. A few moments more, and the first bull dashes into the arena. The real business of the day has begun.

For some minutes the huge animal appears bewildered, and rushes aimlessly here and there, scattering his tormentors in every direction, and making them vault the barrier with a precipitancy that no knowledge of the advisability of the action can rob of its comicality. He then makes for some one of the picadors, who, with blindfolded horses, have been standing awaiting the onslaught, or still engaged in the difficult task of putting a little life into their wretched steeds. The bull comes on with lowered head, and the picador endeavours, with his long pike, to turn his assailant aside. Perhaps he succeeds, inflicting a wound as the bull grazes by that sends the blood streaming down the poor brute's side. But the next picador is not so fortunate, or not so skilful, and here the bull gets to close quarters, his horn into the horse's flank. There is a peculiar little digging operation, a momentary unheaving, and down go both horse and man—to all appearance *hors de combat*. The shouts of the excited spectators testify that this is a critical moment. The flying squadron of *chulos*, who have been hovering around the principal combatants, immediately draw away the bull, as he stands for one short moment embarrassed by his own work of destruction, and the attendants rush to the rescue of the fallen picador. As he lies perfectly still the uninitiated onlooker conceives that he has fallen underneath his horse, and is crushed. But no—in nine cases out of ten he cleverly manages to extricate himself even as he is falling, but is so encumbered by his

heavy accoutrements that he cannot rise unassisted. Surely there is a special Providence which watches over picadors, as over drunken men and children! The poor horse is in far worse plight. Not much Providence for him—or much care! If he can be made, by any method of coercion or persuasion, to stand upright, no motives of humanity, or even decency, forbid his being once more pressed into active service. The whole of this portion of the *corrida* is inconceivably revolting and horrible, as many as six or eight horses often being slaughtered by a single bull.

But all the picadors have had their turn; or perhaps it is intimated that the popular thirst for blood has been satiated for a while. The president gives the signal—to the inexpressible relief of any beholder who possesses two grains of humanity—and the picadors retire. The banderilleros now come forward. Their work consists in sticking into the broad shoulders of the bull three or four pairs of ornamented darts—*banderillas*—about two feet long, of curious device and fashion, and often of considerable value. In this operation great skill, agility and daring are required, and the play is really pretty. The banderillero to whose turn it comes to put in his pair of darts stands in front of the bull, and raises his arms as high as possible over his head—"defying" his foe, as it is called. Then he walks slowly forward, the bull makes a little rush, and the man, swerving slightly to one side, pins in his banderillas simultaneously. If both go well home

there is a merited burst of applause, in which it is really difficult to help joining; if there is any bungling, and especially if the man loses his nerve, or shows any sign of shirking the attack of the bull, he is unmercifully hooted. As the banderilleros warm to their work, and are roused by the excitement of the people, they vie with one another in performing feats of agility and coolness. One awaits the bull seated calmly in a chair, banderillas in hand, jumping lightly up as the horns of the animal graze by, and manipulating his darts in an unerring way that seems almost impossible. Another, judging his distances with wonderful nicety, leaps cleanly over the brute's lowered head. A third seizes hold of the lashing tail, swings himself along the bull's side, and plants himself for one moment right between the curved horns.

Nor is the agility all on one side. There is a loud shout—the bull has leaped the barrier, to the mixed dismay and disgust of the fringe of spectators and attendants lining the passage. They flee in all directions, mostly jumping over into the arena, because they know that the passage-way is too narrow to allow their enemy to turn round and follow them. He is simply caged, and has no choice but to trot heavily round till he comes to a cleverly contrived door, which, swinging back, at once stops his onward progress and turns him back into the ring, followed by the jeers and hootings of the crowd.

But even in this, the only at all pleasant part of the

performance, there must crop up the never really satisfied cruelty of the people. There is a cry of "*Fuego! Fuego!*" and the banderilleros are forthwith provided with firework banderillas—half-squib, half-cracker—which, hissing and exploding in the poor beast's side, certainly spell the *ne plus ultra* of fiendishness.

Once more the signal sounds, and the chief espada comes forward, greeted with rapturous applause. To him appertains the *finale* of the strange scene. Armed with a short Toledo blade, and a red cloth, he walks forward to the bull with all the nervous finely-strung action of a practised athlete, or fencer. A curious and most impressive hush falls upon the hitherto raging multitude, now intent as one thought upon watching every movement of the great man. He knows his *clientèle* too well to proceed hurriedly to extremities. First he must play his victim in all approved fashion. By this time the bull is becoming decidedly exhausted, and its movements are evidently laboured. Still it makes head against its enemy, who, aided by his band of satellites, resorts to every method of irritation and punishment. Presently he stops short, within a couple of feet or so of, and face to face with the seemingly fascinated animal. Every nerve of the man's body quivers with the absolute constraint and concentrated action that hold him. A moment more and the sword is buried deep in the brute's neck, between the shoulders. The position has been well chosen, the arm skilful and strong, and the one blow finishes the spectacle. The bull

staggers, crashes down on its knees, and falls heavily to the ground. The espada, leaving to an attendant the work of administering another *coup de grâce*, if necessary, turns on his heel and walks composedly towards the president's box, greeted with deafening cheers, and rewarded, among a shower of other tributes, with a magnificent bouquet of flowers. A most strange conjunction it seems. That butchery—those flowers!

Now all is over. The band strikes up; the horses are brought in, harnessed to the carcases that lie upon the arena, and driven off at a gallop; the sand is raked over the streams and pools of blood; much-needed watering-carts make their appearance, and lay the dust, and then all is ready for bull number two. Six animals form the usual programme, but a seventh, a *toro de gracia*, is nearly always added. The fourth and fifth are commonly the best—the fiercest and strongest—affording the most diversion, and giving the most trouble.

It is intensely difficult, even when one tries to look at the matter from a Spanish point of view, divesting oneself of all insular prejudice and sentiment, to see what valid defence of bull-fighting can be set up. The brutal horrors of some portions of the scene defy description, while the degrading immorality of the whole is patent throughout. And there is withal surprisingly little that is brave, or even clever. Indeed, prepared beforehand for the natural feelings of disgust that must be aroused, the predominant sensation is one of dis-

appointment. There is not much even of the gorgeous display that might fairly be expected; where ornament is used it is laid on with too unsparing a hand, so spoiling all artful effect, and there is a descent into tawdriness that is quite painful. Then the horses are about as far removed as can be imagined from the "noble steeds" that one connects with the idea of Spain; while the arrangements for ensuring the safety of the principal performers are so carefully studied that even the excitement of danger is reduced to a minimum, being chiefly aroused by the always imminent horror of the picadors falling beneath their horses, and being crushed. Besides the play of the banderillero, the only really admirable element of the whole is the skill with which the bull is drawn away to any part that his tormentors wish, and, by this means, the readiness with which a comrade is relieved when he is hard pressed. It is a pleasure to be able to mark that, while the bull-fight retains its hold upon the masses, while new plazas are being erected in all directions, and while the newspapers chronicle the doings of the espadas as of the upper ten, the diversion is steadily losing the favour of the fair sex. The average Spanish woman now lifts up her voice against it, and in many plazas she is only conspicuous by her absence.

VI.

SEGOVIA.

Upon the whole, perhaps the sweetest morsel about Spanish ways is the number of pleasant surprises which they provide. After a dreary journey over a dead country the traveller resigns himself to some destined and dreary-looking town, in the chill expectation of finding nothing but an experience as barren and hard as his surroundings; and in place thereof there await him cheeriness and hospitality and good companionship, with pleasant shade and greenery, and the refreshing of busy, laughing life.

So, in search of records and products of art, one turns hopelessly aside, perchance, to prowl round some ruinous-looking collection of mud hovels, or the even greater sterility of a gaudily-decorated, latter-day church. And, lo and behold! there rise up unlooked-for—and so all the more welcome—apparitions of good old work such as these degenerate times have unfitted themselves for—some lovely picture, image, or monument.

And so, too, in the matter of scenery. Who, judging from immediately foregoing experiences, would expect the Urola district, the glorious Pancorbo or Hoyo

Gorges, or the alpine Nava Cerrada—the road that rather separates La Granja and Segovia from the rest of the world than leads thereto?

This Nava Cerrada especially, after what one comes to regard as the established order of the Madrid surroundings, and after the dismal plain of Old Castile. There is some intimation, certainly, of what is in store, when from afar one sees the Guadarrama range looming into sight; but then the Segovia diligence crawls so slowly, first along the mile or two of flat road leading from Villalba, and then up the bare slopes of rugged hillside, that resignation for the six mortal hours that have yet to be got over is the only frame of mind to be cultivated.

And then, just as the summit of the Nava is touched, the whole scene changes as by magic. On the right rises the magnificent Peñalara, 8500 feet; on the left a chain of pine-clad mountains even grander in their long sweep; while in front the road is literally engulfed in the dark woods that lie out like a sea as far as the eye can reach. Nor is it a momentary vision of good things. All the way down to La Granja the road is indescribably beautiful—a noble piece of engineering to boot—and if the six miles between La Granja and Segovia are flat and comparatively uninteresting, they come only as a pleasant soothing after the strain alike to body and mind of the downward rush from the Puerto.

Segovia is one of the few Spanish cities that look

their best as one approaches them. After that dull two hours from La Granja, over country from which everything fine save repose seems to be flitting away eastwards, a sharp corner is suddenly turned, and at once there bursts upon the view a rocky gorge, spanned by Trajan's aërial, fairy-like aqueduct; beyond, the city, crouching upon the great ridge that rises sheer up in front, with its fringe of crumbling gray wall and battlemented tower, and all this again in a setting of green trees and the rich Eresma vale. The entrance to the town, too, is very impressive—the drive right under the huge aqueduct, with the accompanying thought of how it has lived and laboured there, so to speak, for fifteen hundred years, and will perhaps live and labour for another fifteen hundred. And then the ascent of the picturesque street, that winds up, under archway and nodding roof, past plazas lying red in the afternoon glow, and ancient houses with wonderful façades and windows, into the Plaza Mayor, that crowns the hill and is itself crowned by the grim mass of the cathedral striding across its whole western extremity.

But then in the morning light, when one sets earnestly about sight-seeing, a great deal of overnight gilt incontinently disappears. Segovia has been looked at in its best—its better than best—and now begins to take the inevitable lower place. Fine bits there are indeed; —in the narrow valleys that embrace the city on either side, about the Alcázar, and here and there among the clusters of interesting buildings. But the valleys are

quickly gone over, and the promising-looking buildings are so ruined by time, or—more surely—by hateful modernisation, that the predominant feelings they inspire are of sorrow and indignation. Then that standard of creature comfort by which we, perhaps insensibly, rule and measure so much of our appreciation of the good and beautiful, is at a very low point in Segovia; added to which there is a gruesome squalor to be faced, and a gruesome street life, which do not tend to make one either fond or proud of one's kind.

Nevertheless, for the antiquary, or ecclesiologist, there is here abundant payment for all of fatigue and loss of comfort which may have to be submitted to. His first impulse will probably be to do homage to the oft-described 'Puente del Diablo'—a foremost member of the large family to which his Satanic majesty stands sponsor, built by him in order to find favour in the eyes of a fair Segovian maiden, and paid for with characteristic womanly requiting. It is beyond all doubt a magnificent piece of workmanship, with its tier above tier of finely-pitched arches of granite blocks, set without cement or lime, and possessed apparently of the secret of perpetual youth. And yet, divesting one's judgment of all sentimental bias—such as the pleasantly good state of repair, the picturesqueness and yet subordination of the surrounding scenery, or the meanness of the hovels that cluster round it and help enormously to set it off—it must be confessed that this bridge is inferior to the noble aqueducts of the Pont du Gard, Tarragona, or

Alcántara, lacking something of the grand proportions, solidity, and simplicity which make these so supremely satisfying.

But before going so far afield as the Puente there is the cathedral, in the Plaza itself, specially interesting as being one of the latest Gothic erections of the country, and well deserving of study for its own sake.

In many respects a manifest reproduction of the Catedral Nueva at Salamanca, and by the same architect, this great church is in every way superior to its prototype. It may have been that here Gil de Hontañon was not tied and bound by other folks' plans, or that, after ten or twelve years' deeper study of the new Renaissance styles, he had convinced himself that the old paths were better. Be that as it may, we have the same pure Gothic lines and fine proportions already noted in Salamanca, without the trumpery decoration and laboured elaboration of the earlier essay. We have, moreover, a very good chevet in place of the bald, square, eastern termination which at Salamanca effectually spoils the vista down the nave and side aisles, with just enough of fair stained glass to enrich and solemnize the whole. Defects there are, of course—defects incident to the period when the church was built, and bad work perpetrated by would-be improvers a hundred and fifty years ago; but, upon the whole, and approaching it with no very exalted idea of early sixteenth-century ways, Segovia Cathedral is very satisfying, and leaves one with pleasant reminiscences.

The cloisters formed part of an original foundation, which stood near the Alcázar; but they harmonise wonderfully well with the newer work upon which they have been grafted. Indeed it would be difficult to say with what they would not go well, so pretty and graceful they are; lofty too, with plain quadripartite groining, and lit by great pointed windows of eight lights, with very fair tracery in the heads. There are two or three monumental stones here not to be passed by carelessly. First, just at the entrance from the south aisle of the church, there is the tomb of Juan Gil de Hontañon himself, the architect of this cathedral—dying, however, when the work was only well begun—and the master mind that, with all its erring, did noble things in divers other parts of Spain. Not far along the aisle is the resting-place of the little Don Pedro, son of Henry II., who was killed by a fall from one of the windows of the neighbouring Alcázar. And then, just at the north angle of the cloister, there is about the most curious and catholic record to be found, surely, anywhere—curious and catholic alike in *naïveté*, sentiment, charity, and workmanship. Rather high up upon the wall there is a rude picture, which is only decipherable after a process of careful study, aided by some previous knowledge of the event set forth. And below there is written—

"Aquí está sepultada la debota
Mari Saltos con quien Dios obró
este milagro en la Fonzisla
Fijó su vida en la otra iglesia acabó sus
Dias como Católica Cristiana Año de 1237."

The terseness of "*la otra iglesia*," and indeed of all the record of an eventful life, is simply delicious. "*Este milagro*" which God worked, refers, of course, to the rough design above.

This Maria del Salto, or Maria of the Leap, was a Jewess, and, it is to be feared, a sinner. At any rate there were, some seven hundred years ago, a great many credulous people who believed it of her—perhaps all the more readily because of her race—and they proceeded to the extremity of throwing her down from the great cliff, upon the bank of the Eresma, which was the ordained Tarpeian rock of Segovia. Fortunately for her, however—but it is a fact which goes to confirm her imputed lightness of character—Maria was not true to her faith, and so, as she was being pushed over, she appealed, not to the God of her fathers, but to the infinitely more placable Blessed Virgin, who thereupon made her visible appearance, and, accompanying her newly-found daughter in her dreadful tumble, landed her unhurt upon the stones below. So Maria became a Christian—a "*devota*" to boot. And when they finished their glorious new cathedral, towards the close of the sixteenth century, they gave her the honour of a great re-interment in this cloister; and to this day she commands a wondrous amount of reverence—nay, absolute worship—in the chapel down by the stream which marks the site where the miracle was wrought.

It will be a pleasant walk, and a pleasant change too, after poring over the exacting details of the cathe-