

del Sagrario—queen of the cathedral; the tabernacle of San Ildefonso, where the Virgin herself descended to invest the saint with a chasuble, as he was praying; the library; the glorious fifteenth-century stained glass, and the sunshiny cloisters with Bayeu and Maella's frescoes.*

And then—one may have got a fair insight into just one section of Christian work and life in Toledo. The remarkable middle period, when a leavening of Moorish forms was resorted to, is by no means covered by the two or three churches already referred to; while there is a long post-Gothic time, as marked in the changed Alcázar, or Mendoza's Hospital of Santa Cruz—the great staircase of which, by the way, is one of the finest Renaissance bits extant.

And it may be doubted if the Christian was the most noteworthy character in the ancient city's drama. Perhaps even the Jew, in his usual unobtrusive fashion, has played here a more conspicuous, certainly a more tragic, part. Contemned and persecuted by every successive master-race, never, like these, coming to the front, and yet possessed of a longer life than any, at home in his Juderia—now so desolate and waste—in his synagogues of Santa Maria la Blanca and El Tránsito, about the churches of Cristo de la Luz and Santiago del Arrabal,

* There are some very fine bells here, one so big that it is commonly said that fifteen cobblers could sit at once within it and draw out their threads. This monster is badly cracked, and the tale goes on that Saint Peter caused the damage one day by throwing down his keys upon it, when it had beguiled him into thinking that its mellow tones came up from his own church in Rome.

the cloisters of the cathedral, the old Soko, and the council-chambers of Pagan, Christian, and Mahomedan ruler alike, he has written his record of fourteen centuries of faith, suffering, and fanaticism in characters, alas! of blood. It is a picture neither lovely nor great, but it is one upon which it is good to look.

It is customary to take some notice, more or less careful, of the well-recognised, the absolutely-labelled, Jewish haunts and quarters, but it is with an eye chiefly to their architectural and other details, and these are so consistently Moorish—the outcome of Moorish design, and Moorish handiwork—that the preoccupied or unthoughtful mind is rather led away from, than drawn out towards any care for the old life echoes which linger around them, and appeal to the heedful ear. And how few ever dream of tracing the footsteps of the Jew in the darker bypaths which he was compelled to tread, and where the main issues of his days were decided! Let us go in quest of one such record—one out of many—and see how far the search may lead us in imagination.

In the extreme north of the city, close by the old Puerta de Visagra, there stands the not very noticeable church of Santiago. It was perhaps Alonso VI., after he entered Toledo in triumph in 1085, who built the original Santiago and, then perhaps Sancho Capelo, whose tomb forms one of the group around the high altar of the cathedral, rebuilt it, towards the end of the thirteenth century. Now it is a poor specimen of the mixed



Gothic and Moorish work which is so common in Toledo, and whatever merit it once possessed has been pretty well destroyed by late artists in plaster and whitewash. With these matters, fortunately, we have at the moment nothing to do. But there is here a very remarkable piece of furniture, in the shape of a pulpit, of good design, and wrought with much excellent Moorish and Gothic detail, built against one of the pillars of the nave in such a curious way that it seems quite inaccessible, and one is a good deal puzzled to know how the preacher can ever get inside. But it has been used, nevertheless, with the direst effect, and you may still see, within, the image of a man, with crucifix in one hand, and the other raised towards heaven, who in the year of grace 1405 held multitudes spellbound here by the power of his oratory. Were there any Jews present? one is tempted to wonder. Probably, for they seem rather to have affected Christian assemblies in those days, and San Vicente Ferrer was a famous preacher, and their avowed enemy. His theme was the well-worn one of how the accursed Israelite had dared to put sacrilegious hands upon God Himself, had tortured Him, and had brought desolation upon our Blessed Mother. Then there was the lament that such a race, whom God had cursed and driven away, and upon whom He could only look with abhorrence, should be tolerated, and allowed to grow fat and proud, in so sacred a spot as Toledo—a city beloved of the Virgin, and where she had deigned to set her feet—with the

inevitable *sequitur* that whoever smote a Jew in person or possessions did a God-service. It was an old tale, and an enticing one, inasmuch as it opened up an easy road not only to the favour of Heaven but also to the enjoyment of rapine, and murder, and lust, and divers other equally religious impulses and emotions. And so the plea that the Jews of Toledo were descended from a tribe which had refused to vote for the death of Christ was lost sight of. That was a belief only to be cherished when Christians wanted money, and felt obliged to resort to moral suasion in order to get it. And Toledo's streets ran once more with Jewish blood, the holy emissary of the Prince of Peace himself directing the crusade, while, greatest desolation of all to faithful Jewish hearts, their beloved sanctuary was taken away from them, and converted into a house for the Nazarene impostor.

The saddest thing about our visit to Santiago is that one is compelled to speak of these matters as "an old tale," and a drama enacted "once more." It was but the culmination of such a series of cruel persecutions—for eight dreary terrible centuries, with perhaps a little alleviation under Moorish rule—as no other record in the world can show. Sisebutus in the seventh century had inaugurated the system of compulsory Christian baptism. Fifty years later Wamba—the "good" King Wamba—had tried to stamp out Judaism by wholesale expulsion of its professors. Egica promptly followed with an edict that the Jews should be regarded as

slaves, and their children brought up as Christians; while Alfonso VI., by his *fuero* of Sepúlveda, which declared that the Christian who killed a Jew should receive one hundred maravedis, while the Jew who killed a Christian should be put to death, and his goods confiscated, opened the door to all the torrent of popular hatred, and popular thirst for blood, and popular greed which swept backwards and forwards over the country for nearly four centuries, lashed to its highest point by the preaching of San Vicente and his fellows, and only subsiding when Ferdinand and Isabella's famous edict of 1492 rewarded their faithful Israelitish subjects for assistance at a critical hour of need, by expelling their 170,000 families finally from home and country.

It is easy to sum up these things in a dozen lines, but how conjure up the faintest conception of the sufferings and patience of this people—of the fear and desolation that must have held alternate sway over their now deserted Juderia, their blasted synagogues and congregations? How spell out the horror of such figures as forty-seven wholesale slaughterings, burnings, and ravishings in four hundred years, or of twenty-seven such scenes enacted within the short space of from 1321 to 1391? How characterise the meanness of the excuses put forth from time to time to initiate or palliate the reign of lust and rapine—meanness that could sanction the desecrating of the cathedral cloisters (themselves the direct outcome of robbery from the Jews) by the setting forth of such a wretched fabrication as the

crucifixion of the boy Juan Passamonte? And how *not* tread the Toledan Jew's ways with pity and reverence, and leave them with a softened feeling towards all faithful and persecuted souls, of whom he surely is the chief?

But before either Christian or Jew stands the Mahomedan. He it is who has left behind him the broadest and wholesomest mark. Alike in handiwork and history his ways are pleasanter far to follow up than those of any of his collaborators in the old romance, and infinitely less easy to err in. So much so, that, though the purely Moorish bits may be confined to the Cristo de la Luz, Las Tornerias, the Jewish synagogues, one or two of the old gates, some few houses, and portions of the walls, yet one leaves Toledo with a *not-to-be-got-rid-of* impression that it is the second great monument in Spain of Moorish domination, and that it is, to this day, rather an Eastern than a Western city—the home of the Arab rather than of the Spaniard.

It is not hard to see why this should be so, or even why no amount of familiarity with the place is able to dispel the notion. For there is an altogether remarkable and significant amount of Moorish work here—an unjustifiable amount, one might almost say. Much of the product of provision for their own needs is alas! destroyed, but the Arab designers and artificers were so much the more skilful that, as has been already hinted, the Jews employed them in preference to workers of their own race. Then the Christians, for long after the re-conquest

—indeed until the adoption of the later French and Renaissance styles—seem to have been unable to devote time, talent, or ingenuity to aught save warring and intrigue. And so it came to pass that they, too, adopted the current and easy plan of having recourse to Moorish workmen, who, with fine art-cosmopolitanism, did not shrink from grafting upon their own distinctive types some of the Gothic forms to which they were commended, or to which they felt drawn out. From these sources comes the strange prevalence of the Moresque in the domestic architecture of Toledo;—the huge outer door with its carefully-wrought iron garnishings, and the square tiled inner courtyard, with wooden or granite pillars supporting an overhead gallery (sometimes open, sometimes covered in) upon which the dwelling-rooms give, and to which access is gained by a happily concealed staircase.

The little list of absolutely Moorish remains, too, given above, affords distinct and valuable—if not very pure—representatives of each of the three periods into which Saracenic art in Spain may be roughly divided. In *Cristo de la Luz* there is the early Arab-Byzantine style, of which perhaps the best example in the country is the mosque of Córdoba. That is to say, it is the product of a time when the sciences (and especially the science of mathematics) were yet comparatively undeveloped in the East, or, at any rate, were jealously guarded by the lettered few, and when there was just a clinging to some old traditions, modified by a servile

imitation of Greek, Latin, and Persian forms—flowers, and leaves, and *azulejo* or mosaic decoration—and accompanied by a not very laudable recourse to already prepared material, as evidenced by some incongruous collections of pillars, friezes, and capitals.

But presently there came a season of blessed security and rest, when the conquerors could turn their attention to the manifold questions inducing and proceeding from material and social progress. Then their art struck out a new path for itself. The seed already planted in the far East took root in Spanish soil, and there were produced all those infinite and ever fresh varieties of decoration which may truly be called arabesque—the geometrical combining and curving of lines in relief or open work, and the cunning use of inscriptions—all wrought out with a skill and honesty which astonish and baffle the carefulest worker to-day. This, the transition period, may be studied in Santa Maria la Blanca and the Casa de Mesa.

And finally there came a time which the purist must look upon as one of decline, though the majority of folk profess to find in it the highest perfection, when magnificence passed into the luxury of phantasy and excess of ornamentation, when the *bóveda* became infinitely intricate in its multiplication and crossing, and when the stalactite decoration and honeycombed cornice were added. The experiences of Toledo were perhaps too stern and sad for there to be any really good examples of this style here, but it may nevertheless be traced in

the synagogue 'Del Tránsito' and in the Taller del Moro, near the cathedral.

That these types are not unadulterated may have arisen, easily enough, from the fact that they partook more of the character of transplanted specimens than the southern erections, and so were more leavened by the already existing forms alongside of which they sprang up; and also from their being in each case late in date for the respective periods to which they belong.

There is another side, however, to all this work of inquiry—another region to be explored. To all the carefully-preserved remains, and to all the facts of history which are writ so large that "he who runs may read," the ordinarily conscientious traveller is fairly attentive. That which he habitually passes over, from lack of time, or lack of heedfulness, and that which at once explains much that is repelling in the grim old streets of Toledo, and endears them to the careful, the tarrying soul, is all the world of *unwritten* history—not to call it by any scornful name—the nearly destroyed record, which has even to-day a definite and uniquely potent influence over the Toledan mind and life.

Such histories, that is to say, as linger about some of the cathedral chapels, and the old Zocodover; about the San Martín bridge, and the rocks that frown down from the southern bank upon the turbid hurrying waters of the dark Tagus; about Cristo de la Vega, too, and Cristo de la Luz—that most dainty and fairy-like of Arab sanctuaries. Every one knows how that, some

eight hundred years ago, the Cid's noble Babieca—the mystic King Arthur of warriors' steeds—unearthed here, at Cristo de la Luz, the crucifix still to be seen over the altar, which had been hidden away during the long Moorish usurpation, and before which the *luz*—the lamp—had been kept unfailingly alight. But every one does not know that this was no isolated instance of the image's divine potency. This crucified Christ has often saved himself as well as others. Half a century before the Cid's name became a power in the land, one Abisain, a Jew, had introduced himself, in a moment of religious frenzy, into the little Christian temple in the dim evening light, when all was quiet; had cast down and trampled upon this effigy of the despised Nazarene; had pierced its side with a dagger, and, hurrying it away to his house in the Plaza de Valdecaleros, had tossed it upon a dung-hill. But he had not noticed in the darkness that the wounds he had inflicted forthwith bled, and so left a tell-tale track along the streets which brought swift retribution upon his own head, and a glorious restoration to his victim.

Or there is the Cueva de Hercules. How few care to turn over the pages of its strange history, though it has been alike the birthplace and the nursery of so much traditional life! To the sight-seer come down from Madrid for the day it means—if he bestows a thought upon it—that if there is nothing better for him to look at he can go home. But to the average inhabitant of Toledo it means—in some more or less

defined and acknowledged sort—that the world is ruled by a dual divinity of Fate and Direct Retribution, and that therefore, as it is useless to attempt to alter what has been prepared and ordained, the best thing to do is to submit as quietly as possible to the inevitable, and seize upon such good and pleasant morsels as the passing moment puts in one's way. All such notions as the power of a man over his own destiny, or the operation of natural causes—the survival of the fittest, or the overthrow of a race or kingdom by the simple process of inherent defect—are either unrecognised by him, or not deemed sufficient to account for the catastrophes which every now and then occur in the social system.

This is putting the matter rather coarsely, no doubt. If questioned closely on the subject the said average citizen would probably declare his entire freedom from superstitious ways, and a firm faith in the operation and powers of the Blessed Virgin, or in some particular patron saint out of the many newly-discovered fetishes. But the older, simpler, and in some respects far grander religion forms none the less the true undercurrent of his thoughts and life, and any such of its special temples as the Cueva de Hercules is to be shunned on a dark night as carefully as a churchyard by the average English disbeliever in spiritualism.

But what, perhaps the reader will ask, is this wonderful Cueva de Hercules? It was not always a Cueva, and much less had it aught to do with the

church which now guards its entrance. From the days only to be conveniently reckoned by 'generations,' it was a forbidding, uninhabited spot, which no sun could gladden, and upon which Nature herself seemed to turn her back. And here was situated the enchanted tower of the great King Hercules, a man—if indeed he might be reckoned a man—who was mighty and wise beyond all men who had ever lived, and who had foreseen that the kingdom of the Goths would be ruined by that ruler who should be base enough to prefer the satisfying of his own lusts and pride to the welfare of his subjects. And so he had built this palace of jaspers and richly-coloured marbles, and, himself sealing up the door, had ordained, before his unaccountable disappearance from the earth, that each successive monarch should add another seal within a few days of his accession to the throne, and should sacredly forbear from searching out the mysteries of the building.

And age after age his bidding was religiously fulfilled. It was affirmed, naturally, and presently accepted as an article of faith, that there was a sort of heaven of riches and pleasure within the shining tower, of which its precious stones were an emblem; but still its secrets were respected, and some unseen power seemed to watch over the kingdom of the Goths.

Until there arose a king, Roderick the ill-fated and ill-natured, who cared nothing for any custom, religion, or right, nor suffered these things to stand between his lusts and himself. How he prosecuted his

determination to ransack the Enchanted Palace, and what awful confirmation he met therein of the gloomy prophecies wherewith King Hercules had backed up his behest ; how, as he was now grasping at the goodly things he had come upon, they turned to veriest ashes, and how, as he and his companions fled terror-stricken from the scene, a tongue of fire darted out of the lurid blackness that had gathered around them, and the whole edifice crashed down into a heap of half-buried ruins, is all well known to those who are willing to sit at tradition's feet. And what followed has been made matter of history, though the irreverent scribes thereof nowhere give due prominence to the exact fulfilling of King Hercules' ordaining, and the retributive punishment of Don Roderick's unhallowed defying of the supernatural. The Arab hosts speedily made their appearance in the south ; swiftly they over-ran Andalusia, scattering the puny force which Teodomiro, the Gothic viceroy, opposed to them, destroyed King Roderick and the flower of Toledan chivalry at the Guadalete, and—so sure their avenging onswEEP—within two years the whole of Spain lay bleeding at their feet.

And so the Palacio Encantado became the Cueva de Hercules—the mighty palace a blackened hole encum-

bered with ruins. And then began a new phase of its history. The dire evils which had been chained up within it, and then, when let loose upon the country by a sacrilegious hand, had rent the fabric in their issuing, had only added fresh colouring to the awe with which the inhabitants of Toledo had ever regarded the spot; while, from the entry of Don Roderick and his companions, there had come to be noised abroad confirmation of the old idea that endless treasures were shut up herein, and that the rough, misshapen den was even now the abode of beauteous sirens, who ever and anon wooed the passer-by to his destruction. So the place came to be called "*Placer con pesar*," a devil's treasure-house, where a rash mortal who sought to obtain good by unhallowed means might become rich and happy in haste to repent at leisure. It was whispered that, when the melancholy *Angelus* bade farewell to the dying day, there might be seen restless, vaporous forms flitting for a moment out from the horrible grinning mouth of the cavern, and then passing from sight;—like the strange bluish shapes which scared and benighted wayfarers see flashing forth now and again from behind the tombstones of cemeteries, and which every one knows to be those who have perished in mortal sin, and are allowed to revisit the earth again to seek for prayers and penance.

And, naturally, there were not wanting those who declared that these appearances were all imagination, and that as the *pesar* for King Roderick's crimes—of

which this affair of the Enchanted Palace was the culmination—had already been undergone by the country, it only needed sufficient courage on the part of some spirited mortal to face whatsoever of terror might still lurk around the threshold of the Cueva, in order to enjoy to the full the *placer* which lay behind—and the riches. True, there had been strange disappearances of those who, from curiosity, greed, or unweariness, had ventured near the place by night; but that only proved that it was in very fact a paradise that lay embosomed in the earth, so sweet, so perfect, that those who had once attained thereto did not care to revisit a blasted, down-fallen world.

One thing, however, was beyond all doubt—that there was something very awful and supernatural about the spot. For, almost in our own day, when everything is so enlightened and certain that it is absurd to suppose that any mere superstition can stand the tests brought against it, the Cardinal Archbishop Siliceo had been compelled, by the most terrible warnings, to desist from a scheme which he had aired for searching out whatever of god or devil lay here enshrined.

Here was a promising source and nurturing for popular beliefs and superstitions. It could not but come to pass that there should grow out of it a long list of the Cueva's victims,—of unhappy wights who have sought within the unhallowed precincts a prompt and royal road to wealth, or to the satisfying of love, or of vengeance, and who have found instead a mysterious

but no less certain fate which was all the more impressive for its half revealing. Perhaps some time we may come back to the spot, and unravel some of these histories and influences at our leisure. Now, however, we must turn our faces southward.

IX.

CÓRDOBA.

IF for any reason La Granja and El Escorial have been passed by—and the former is far too often left out of the traveller's programme—Aranjuez ought to be visited as a sort of duty, in order to understand a certain facet of Spanish life and custom, and to see what can be done in the way of a stiff reproduction of Nature, and a glorious violation of the usually recognised canons of art. Sometime, in the days when it was praised by Calderon and Garcilaso, and painted by Velazquez, when it was a royal residence in something more than name, and when its long avenues and shady bowers were bright with groups of gaily-dressed courtiers, or brighter with the laughter of children, Aranjuez must have been pretty enough. Even now it would be quite tolerable—indeed, in some respects admirable—if only there was a decent veiling of its poor imitation of bad French forms, or if its ugliness were relieved by love. As matters stand, however, there is not sufficient expenditure of care or money to sweep up the dead leaves of autumn, or check the growth of summer weeds, and so the scene is mournful and depressing to the last degree.

In any case it must not be allowed to come between Toledo and Andalucia. For, with the "imperial city" of the Castiles, nineteenth-century Western life, whether spick-and-span as in the capital, or frowsy and unkempt as in some of the capital's offshoots, has been put far from us, and will hardly be recognised again until Barcelona is reached.

This is no mere conceit. The traveller who has spent a week in Toledo, who has made there good use of his time, and is willing, now, to enter unreservedly into all the new experiences which await him in the South, will find that he has just gone through a desirable sort of apprenticeship, and is fitted to comprehend readily, and to enjoy, a life and surroundings which will prove to be made up of all the pleasanter characteristics of Toledo's ways, dressed up in bright and cheerful garb. And it is well to make the transition by this means easy and relief-ful—to have a sobering, in some sort sombre, foretaste of what is in store—because, usually, one entertains such an absurdly exalted idea of Andalusian experiences. Ever-blue skies, glorious sunshine falling through fruit-laden orange-groves, marble colonnades and courtyards, with cooling fountains plashing out scented waters, sylphlike forms that leave behind them just an impression of white floating robes and a pair of lustrous black eyes—that is the sort of picture which fancy generally limns, and the sort of thing even now to be met with in books aspiring to the mentorship of travellers. Of course there is a substratum of truth

in such descriptions. These delightful morsels of loveliness exist. But they have to be looked for behind grim walls, and under a not-to-be-lost-sight-of veil of squalor and grossness which jars terribly upon the susceptible nerves of a refined northerner fresh from the ways of a too luxurious civilisation. Get into the joyous, contented spirit of the life that reckes nothing of a few discomforts, trials, and inconveniences ; approach it footsore from the roughness, or oppressed by the dull sadness of some of the gray, stricken cities of the plains, and then the most brightly-tinged anticipations will be at least satisfied, if not fulfilled. Else what is really good and profitable and restful will be covered up, or hidden away, and, as one continually finds when exchanging experiences with fellow-travellers, the outcome will be a disappointment which increases with every onward step, and a spirit of reviling which is chiefly potent in irritating itself.

The scenery which supervenes upon the wastes of La Mancha is really very beautiful, though a thing *sui generis*—and that an unexpected kind. There is enormous fertility on all sides, but it is understood rather than expressed. Overhead, even in winter, there is an unblinking, blazing sun, that draws a blue mist over the horizon. The earth is brown, and devoid of any pleasantness of covering save here and there an oasis of orange or lemon trees. There is almost worse than no water, for the occasional *riachuelo* which trickles among the stones deep down in the baked *rambla*, or the broad,

undoubted river which rolls sluggishly along between low flat banks of mud, are rather eyesores than a relief, and seem utterly unable to fringe even their own ways with verdure. And yet there is the notion of richness and plenty everywhere—in the far-reaching slopes of olive plantation, in the evident fact that each foot of earth is diligently cultivated and wrought to good purpose, in the huge sprawling hedges of aloe and prickly pear, brightened with gloriously-coloured wild flowers, which appeal to one as old friends with strangely new faces, and in the perfected garden which heralds the approach to the more important stopping-places. It may not all seem beautiful at the moment, but there is something about it of rest and joyousness and satisfaction, which, with the more definite delights of vivid colouring and indescribably pure air, dwells in the recollection when one has passed far away, and creates a longing to see it all again.

Córdoba is absurdly unlike what it ought to be. One of the most ancient of cities, and abounding, too, in records of all the races that have made it, fought for it, and dwelt in it during the last two thousand years, it should be very picturesque, very dilapidated, very grim, and full of artistic treasures. These last, however, have almost entirely disappeared; and, for the rest, it is just as bright and clear and ordinary as an unenterprising and happy people, the clearest sky perhaps in Europe, and the most immaculate and pervading whitewash can make it. They say that a thousand years ago there