On the 13th we came to a much more agreeable country, better provided with wood, and more thronged with habitations; on every ſteeple one or two ſtorks' neſts; thoſe birds ſeem to be held in the ſame veneration here as they are in the Low Countries. That morning we arrived at Burgos, the ancient capital of the kingdom of Caſtille, but long ſince abandoned by its princes to obſcurity and decadency. The approach to it, up a long valley, is rather pleaſing: the caſtle, the ancient broken walls ſloping down from it, and lower down the cathedral, terminate the proſpect in a pictureſque manner. The dreſs of the women differs from all thoſe we have ſeen elſewhere; and were there any ſmartneſs in their manner, any beauty in their faces, or even the uſual bright Spaniſh eye to peep out from under their veil, it would be a very becoming garment for a country girl: but all thoſe we ſaw were the ugliеſt awkward hoydens in nature; they wear large clumſy ſhoes, almoſt as bad as the French ſabot, a brown gown thrown back and tied behind, a blue and white apron, and a large flowing white veil faſtened with blue ribands. The montero caps of the men are all faced with red or blue.

Before we entered Burgos, we paſſed by the famous Abbey delas Huelgas, one of the beſt endowed in Spain. Its nuns are all noble, and the abbeſs almoſt a ſovereign

reign princeſs, by the extent of her territories, the number of her prerogatives, and the variety of her juriſdictions. The convent is not a ſhewy building; the ſituation is low and unpleaſant. The little river Alarcon ſeparates the ſuburbs from the city; which is built in a very irregular manner, on the declivity of a ſteep hill, commanded by an antique caſtle, once the abode of the counts, and afterwards of the kings of Caſtille.

As ſoon as the petty ſovereigns of Aſturias ventured to ſteal out of their mountainous faſtneſſes and retreats, to extend the limits of their little kingdom at the expence of the Mahometan caliphs, their conqueſts ſeem to have been entruſted to the care of generals or counts. As the kings of Leon and Aſturias were always buſied in warfare, if men of ſtrong bodies and valiant ſpirits, and if princes of a weak conſtitution and an unwarlike turn, were unable to form any ſtrong oppoſition, theſe counts gradually encroached upon the royal perogative, and converted a precarious delegated command into the ſolid eſtabliſhment of hereditary power. By theſe means, about the cloſe of the tenth century, the counts of Caſtille became entirely independent of the crown of Leon, in the time of Ferdinand Gonzales, and during the minority of Ramiro the third, king of Leon. Some authors have advanced, that the Caſtillians at one time had formed themſelves

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into a commonwealth, governed by two judges, one appointed to ſuperintend all civil affairs, and the other to command the troops. But the proofs alleged to ſupport this opinion, are extremely weak and ſuſpicious; it is however a favourite ſtory in Caſtille.

The male line of Gonzales failed in the perſon of Garcias Sanchez, who was murdered by ſome exiled noblemen; and his ſiſter Munia transferred the ſovereignty to her huſband Sancho the Great, king of Navarre. This prince was the common ſtock of all the princes that afterwards governed the ſeveral monarchies of Spain. The title of king of Leon was ſoon abſorbed, or at leaſt ſuperſeded in point of rank, by the new one of Caſtille.

Over the city gate are ſome ſtatues of the judges or counts, ſtill objects of great veneration in the eyes of the patriotic Caſtillian.

The cathedral is one of the moſt magnificent ſtructures of the gothic kind, now exiſting in Europe; but although it riſes very high, and is ſeen at a great diſtance, its ſituation in a hole cut out of the ſide of the hill, is a great diſadvantage to its general effect. Its form is exactly the ſame as that of York-minſter, which I look upon to be the criterion according to which the beauties or defects of every Gothic church are to be eſtimated. At the weſtern or principal front are two

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ſteeples ending in ſpires, and on the center of the edifice riſes a large ſquare tower, adorned with eight pinnacles; on one ſide of the eaſt end is a lower octagon building, with eight pyramids, which correſpond exactly to the Chapter-houſe at York. We were ſtruck with the reſemblance between theſe buildings; both were embelliſhed with a profuſion of ſtatues; moſt of thoſe at York were deſtroyed in the firſt emotions of iconoclaſtic zeal; thoſe of Burgos are ſtill in full poſſeſſion of the homages of the country, and conſequently entire; ſeveral of them are much more delicate than one would expect, conſidering the age they were ſculptured in. Santiago, the patron of this cathedral, ſtands very conſpicuous on his war-horſe among the needles of the main ſteeple; and the Virgin Mary is ſeated in ſolemn ſtate over the great window of the weſt porch. The foliage-work, arches, pillars, and battlements, are executed in the moſt elaborate and finiſhed manner of that ſtyle which has uſually been called *Gothic*; of late this appellation is exploded, and that of *Arabic* ſubſtituted for it. I confeſs, I ſee ſome reaſon to doubt of the propriety of this ſecond epithet. In the buildings I have had opportunities of examining in Spain and in Sicily, which are undoubtedly Saracenic, I have never been able to diſcover any thing like an original deſign, from which

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the Gothic ornaments might be ſuppoſed to be copied. The arches uſed in our old cathedrals are pointed; thoſe of the Saracens are almoſt ſemi-circular, whenever they are not turned in the form of an horſe-ſhoe. The churches of our anceſtors ſhoot up into ſpires, towers, pinnacles and filigree work, and no ſuch thing as a cupola ſeems ever to have been attempted; the moſques and other buildings of the Arabians, are rounded into domes and coved roofs, with now and then a ſlender ſquare minaret terminating in a ball or pine-apple; the Arabic walls ſhine with painted tiles, moſaics, and ſtucco, none of which ever appear in our ancient edifices; the pillars in the latter are generally grouped many together, and from a very ſmall member of an entablature ſprings one or two arches; in the former, the columns ſtand ſingle, and if placed more than one together to ſupport ſome heavy part, they never touch, or as it were grow into each other; there is always a thick architrave at leaſt to ſupport the arch, and commonly an upright piece of wall to reſiſt the lateral preſſure. Whenever it happens, as in the great diviſions of the moſque at Cordova, that four pillars are joined together, it is by means of a ſquare wall or pier, at the four angles of which are placed the columns, perfectly ſeparated and diſtinct. In all the varieties of capitals I have taken drawings of, I never found one ex-

actly the ſame in deſign or proportions, as our Gothic ones in the churches of England, or in thoſe of France, at leaſt ſuch as I have examined; viz. Saint Denis, Amiens, Rouen, Bordeaux, Tours, and others. The Chriſtian ſtructures are extremely lofty, and full of long windows with painted glaſs; the porches and doors are deep receſſes, with ſeveral arches one within another, crowded with little ſaints and angels. Now every thing is different in the moſque of Cordova, the only one I have ever ſeen, but which I think may be fairly deemed a proper ſample of Arabian ſacred architecture, to eſtabliſh a judgment upon; whether we conſider its antiquity, being built before the ninth century; its preſent ſtate, which, ſome parts excepted, is exactly as it was a thouſand years ago; or laſtly the princely hands that raiſed it. It was erected by Abdoulrahman the firſt, probably upon the deſigns, and under the inſpection of the ableſt architects of the age, and according to the method of diſtribution obſerved in holy edifices built in Arabia and Egypt. Here, and I have reaſon to think it is ſo in moſt, if not all, moſques, the elevation of the roof is trifling, not a ſeventeenth part of the length of the iles; there are no windows of any ſize, and what there are, are covered with filigree-work in ſtone, ſo as never to admit any great quantity of light, which was received from ſky-lights and cupolas,

polas, and from the occaſional opening of the doors: the ſinking back of the arches over the gates is ſcarce perceptible, as they are almoſt of an equal projection with the wall of the building. From all theſe differential marks, I am inclined to ſuſpect that our old ſtructures have been new-named, and Mahometaniſed without ſufficient proof of their Arabic origin. At the ſame time I acknowledge it is difficult to find them a more ſatisfactory and genuine pedigree.

The beſt age of that ſtyle of conſtruction began in England in the reign of Henry the third, for till then we built in the clumſy manner called Saxon, deſtitute of every recommendation but ſolidity; the new taſte came in all probability from France, introduced by ſome Provençals that followed the queen. If you ſuppoſe it imported into that kingdom by thoſe that returned from the cruſadoes, we muſt of courſe ſet it down as an eaſtern invention. The queſtion is what part of the eaſt it came from, and whether it was the ſame as that employed by the Arabians. If there were clear proofs of its being a branch of the Arabic architecture, it would ſtill appear extraordinary, that its very firſt inroduction into Chriſtendom ſhould be attended with ſo great a variation from the models it was meant to imitate; and that any prince or learned prieſt

that thought it worthy of being employed in his country, ſhould immediately ſet about new faſhioning it in all its points. We may, if we pleaſe to indulge our fancy, ſay that ſome ſublime genius ſtarted out from the duſty gloom of a monaſtic library, altered and improved upon the hints he found in books of Arabian architecture, ſubſtituted bold and aſtoniſhing ideas of his own; found biſhops, princes, and abbots, willing to adopt them; and built churches in a ſtyle entirely new, and apparently original. We may ſuppoſe him to have formed a ſchool of other monks, the only architects of thoſe ages among the Chriſtians; and that theſe pupils gradually new modelled the precepts of their maſter, and reduced his method to certain rules; which afterwards ſerved as guides through all the fantaſtic mazes of our eccleſiaſtical architecture. Some perſons have ſuſpected it to have been the manner practiſed by the eaſtern Chriſtians, and not adopted by the Arabs; who might diſdain to have any thing ſimilar in their places of worſhip, with thoſe of a conquered people. Others have been of opinion, that it comes originally from Perſia, or further eaſt; and ſome again maintain it to be an European invention, or at leaſt a barbarous mode of building brought by ſome great genius to the elegant perfection we behold in our cathedrals.

thedrals. The argument would require a great number of compariſons, confrontations, and combinations, to find out the connection between the two manners: ſuch a diſquiſition belongs more properly to a treatiſe than to a letter, of which it has already engroſſed too large a ſhare.

In a narrow lane near Burgos we were detained for ſome time by the paſſing of many ſmall carts, coming down from Aragon with ſpears for bull-fighting, iron, and chairs. Theſe are the carts that ſuggeſted to Cervantes the idea of Merlin's chariot in the ſecond part of Don Quixote. Their wheels make a creaking or grinding, which I can compare to nothing but the noiſe of iron mills and fire engines. It is the loudeſt and moſt piercing ſound imaginable; and before you are acquainted with the cauſe, it is not poſſible to gueſs what produces it.

We proceeded along the river ſide, through a well wooded handſome vale. The Carthuſian convent ſtands beautifully on a round hill; its old chapel anſwers the idea of a fine object in an Engliſh garden. Behind it riſes a long ridge of green hills, over which appear the ſnowy ſummits of ſome very diſtant mountains. We ſlept at a poor place, where we were much diverted with the head attire of the married women; it conſiſts of a black periwig, faced all round with the wool of a black lamb, ending behind in two long plaited treſſes, that

that reach down to their rumps. Previous to their nuptials, they are obliged to make up this elegant kind of helmet, which renders their natural uglineſs ſtill more horrible.

All the fourteenth we travelled from vale to vale, over the bare hills that ſeparate them. The moſt fertile is the vale of Saint Mary, where the corn was uncommonly ſtrong and healthy, but the roads ſo bad as to put us frequently in danger of an overturn. At length all theſe alternate plains and hills brought us to the foot of the Sierra del Oca; a lofty ridge of mountains that runs from weſt to eaſt, and ſeems to block up all further progreſs. As our muleteers had informed us that we were not to climb the mountain, we were long conſidering where the paſs could poſſibly be. Pancorvo proved to be the place; a long village in a defile that winds through the Sierra, with immenſe piles of rock impending on every ſide. It wears a moſt aweful tremendous aſpect, which was heightened by the black clouds that hung upon the ſummits of its cliffs, and ſoon after burſt in a violent ſtorm of thunder and rain.

On the fifteenth having paſſed through with great eaſe, as the road is extraordinarily good, we deſcended into the fruitful plains of the Ebro. This noble river did not appear to us much leſs here at Miranda, than it did above two hundred and thirty miles lower, at Tortoſa,

Tortoſa, where we croſſed it eight months ago. The bridge was deſtroyed laſt year, and a ferry now ſupplies its place; and is likely to do ſo long, for this is not the country for ſpeedy repairs. Miranda is well ſituated, but its buildings are poor, and its gates and ſtreets ſo narrow that a carriage cannot paſs through them. The plain is of great extent, bounded to the weſt by the blue mountains, where the Ebro takes its riſe. In theſe flats, which are frequently overflowed, the ſoil is a rich loam, where they cultivate a large quantity of oats, a grain not much ſown or uſed in the ſouthern provinces. We aſcended the hills to a gravelly country planted with vines, and at Puebla de Trivi̅o, bade adieu to all bad roads, and villainous inns; for here we entered Alaba, a diviſion of Biſcay, and immediately came to the fineſt road imaginable, made at the expence of the province, and carried through the whole ſignory of Biſcay, to the frontiers of France. Their only fault is being rather narrow in ſome places, which indeed is excuſable from the mountainous and difficult paſſes they have been conveyed over, where more ſpace is ſcarce to be contrived. Every thing round us now aſſumed a different appearance; inſtead of the bare depopulated hills, the melancholy deſpondent countenances, the dirty inns, and abominable roads, that our eye had been accuſtomed to for ſo many months;

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we here were revived by the ſight of a rich ſtudied culture, a clean-looking, ſmiling people, good furniture, neat houſes, fine woods, good roads, and ſafe bridges.

Biſcay is the country of the ancient Cantabri, ſo imperfectly ſubdued by Auguſtus, and ſo ſlightly annexed to the Roman empire. Their mountains have in all ages afforded them temptations and opportunities of withdrawing themſelves from every yoke that has been attempted to be impoſed upon them. Their language is accounted aboriginal, and unmixed with either Latin, French, or Spaniſh. It is ſo totally different from the Caſtillian, that we ſeldom met with any of the peaſants that underſtood one word of Spaniſh. The Biſcayners are ſtout, brave, and choleric to a proverb. The beſt ſailors in Spain belong to the ports of Biſcay, and its mountains produce a very valuable race of ſoldiers. Their privileges are very extenſive, and they watch over them with a jealous eye. They have no biſhops in the province, and ſtyle the king only *Lord of Biſcay*. The men are well-built and active, like all mountaineers. The moſt ſingular thing in their dreſs is the covering of their legs; they wrap a piece of coarſe grey or black woollen cloth round them, and faſten it on with many turns of tape; it anſwers preciſely the idea I have of Malvolio's croſs-gartering in the Twelfth-night. The

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