

UNDER grammar, on one side, is the building of the tower of Babel, where the Almighty baffled the presumption of man, by confounding tongues and idioms; and on the other, the first grammar seminary known in the world, composed of Daniel and his colleagues, with other young men, committed to his care for their instruction in the sciences, and the Chaldean language. These histories are also divided by fillets, with foliages and brutefque paintings, like those in the ceiling.

Grammatical
histories.

NEXT to the preceding are two of humanity, placed under the science of rhetoric. One represents Cicero pleading in defence of Caius Rabirius, who, on a false accusation, would have been condemned to a shameful death, had not the strength and beauty of Cicero's oration turned the scale in his favor, and he was accordingly acquitted with honor. That on the other side is the Hercules Gallicus, with the lion's skin and club; gold and silver chains, issuing from his mouth, are fastened to the ears of a multitude, whom he draws after him; an emblem of the power of elocution over the human mind.

Rhetorical
histories.

UNDER dialectics or logic, are two histories. On one side is Zeno Eleates, surrounded by several youths, pointing at two doors. Over one is written, VERITAS, and over the other, FALSITAS, denoting, that logic, which, according to Aristotle, was invented by Zeno, is the gate that leads to the knowledge of truth, and the perception of error. On the other side is St. Ambrose and St. Augustin, as disputing, and St. Monica, his mother, praying for his conversion, with this inscription underneath: A LOGICA AUGUSTINI, LIBERA

Dialectical
histories.

DESCRIPTION OF

NOS DOMINE; which St. Ambrose is said to have added to the litany.

Arithmetical
histories.

IMMEDIATELY after these, follow two histories relating to arithmetic. On one side is Solomon solving the problems put to him by the queen of Sheba, and on a table lie a pair of scales, a rule, and a counting table, full of cyphers; and on the side of the carpet, hanging down from the table, is the following sublime sentence, in Hebrew characters: "He hath made all things in number, weight, and measure." On the other part is a groupe of naked men, representing gymnosophists, who, according to St. Jerom, explained philosophy by cyphers on the sand, indicating by their proportion, the powers, affections, and virtues of the soul, according to the sentence of Pythagoras, who advanced, that the principles of all things were contained in numbers.

Musical
histories.

NEXT to the former are those belonging to the compartment of music. In one part is David, with the soothing sounds of his harp dispelling Saul's infernal melancholy: the other is the fable of Orpheus, whose melody charmed the triple-headed Cerberus, and suspended the tortures of the inhabitants of the infernal regions.

Geometrical
histories.

FURTHER, within the arch, are Mercury and Apollo; and to these immediately succeed the histories of geometry; where on one side are Egyptian priests and philosophers, with their squares and compasses tracing geometrical figures on the sand; and with the most exact justice restoring to every one his lands, after the marks and limits had been obliterated by the inundations of the Nile. On the other is
Archimedes

Archimedes of Syracuse so intent on a mathematical demonstration, that, after the Roman army had broke into the city, the shouts, shrieks, and tumult could not disengage his attention; but absorbed in his speculation, he fell unknown, by the hand of a common soldier; for his prodigious talents in mechanics had induced the Roman general to give particular orders to spare his life.

THE last two histories are those of astronomy. One represents that Astronomical histories. supernatural eclipse, which happened at the crucifixion of our Saviour, while St. Dionysius the areopagite, accompanied with other Athenian philosophers, who, full of astonishment, are observing it with their astrolabes; the saint seems crying out: "Either the God of nature suffers, or the frame of the world is falling into ruins." On the other side is king Hezekiah, with the prophet Isaiah, shewing to him, as a token of his recovery, the retrogradation of the shadow on the dial of Ahaz.

AT the end, under theology, is a masterly representation of the Council of Nice. council of Nice, the most general that ever met, being composed of three hundred and eighteen fathers, who unanimously established the equality and consubstantiality of the three divine persons, and condemned the pernicious doctrines of Arius. The presence of the Holy Ghost is represented with great judgment; and under this effulgence is the emperor Constantine, committing to the flames some papers, containing accusations against bishops, saying, that priests and bishops were to be judged by God only, and not by men. Arius is seen lying in a disordered posture on the floor, with obstinacy and malice, glaring in his distorted countenance.

Author of
these
paintings.

SUCH are the ornaments, and such the disposition of the paintings under the cornice; the artist was Bartolomeo Carducho, an Italian, and it must be acknowledged, that they exhibit a most noble instance of his learning, judgment, fancy, and skill in architecture, harmony and coloring. As to the room itself, they who have seen even the Vatican, are amazed at its construction and extent.

Books.

THE number of books is not great, being only eight thousand, though no place is left void. But it must be considered, that many single volumes contain the works of several authors, in order to give the volumes the better size, otherwise they would, at least, have amounted to ten thousand: and had a copy of every book, printed in Spain since its foundation, been sent hither, according to the royal charter, the number would have been greatly increased; but this demand was so strangely neglected, that, it must be owned, there were, for many years, only a few modern books in this library.

HIS majesty Philip IV. observing this defect, by a most royal munificence, settled four hundred ducats per annum on the library for purchasing new books, and binding those sent thither conformably to the above mentioned charter. Here are books in all languages, especially Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Spanish, Italian, &c. the binding is red calf, and the leaves gilt. The books of the several faculties, or sciences, are divided answerably to the emblematic compartments in the ceiling, with the name of the science in gold letters over every division; and every book is numbered on the back, that, by means of the indexes, containing the shelf, science, and author's name, they are easily found.

BESIDES

BESIDES the beautiful paintings and other curious ornaments, with which it is filled from the pavement to the ceiling, there are in the middle five black marble tables of very neat workmanship. They are placed at equal distances, and take up the whole length, resting on pedestals of the same marble, with jasper niches, in which are disposed some particular books. On the tables stand terrestrial and celestial globes, and other mathematical instruments. Here are also two tables of porphyry, of inestimable value, the gift of his majesty Philip IV.

Marble
tables.

IN one of the three doors, on the college side, is a most splendid niche, in which are kept several literary jewels, which alone would ennoble a library.

Originals by
faints.

THE most antient is a manuscript of St. Austin, intituled, de baptifimo parvulorum. The letters resemble the Vandal character, at that time used in Africa, which was famous for seminaries of literature. This book was for many years deposited among the reliques, till the pious founder judged this a more proper place.

An autograph
by St. Austin.

ANOTHER, which he also highly valued, is the gospel, written by St. Chrysoftom in a very antient Greek character, and sung throughout the year in this church.

Another
by St.
Chrysoftom.

ANOTHER has for title the Apocalypfis of St. Amadeus, of the minorite order; and what adds to its value, it is all written by the hand of its illustrious author.

Original by
St. Amadeus.

HERE

DESCRIPTION OF

By St. Teresa. HERE are also four other books by St. Teresa de Jesus, containing the chief parts of her works, which, impregnated with celestial sweetness and strength, have converted numbers of sinners, confirmed the weak, enlightened the blind, and comforted the distressed.

A letter of
St. Vincent.

AN original letter by St. Vincent Ferrer, to king Ferdinand of Arragon, concerning a cross seen in the air at Guadalaxara. Both the above were also deposited among the reliques, together with a book of the conception of the blessed virgin, by St. Lewis Beltran.

Golden book.

LASTLY, the four evangelists with St. Jerom's preface, and the canons of Eusebius Cæsariensis, in letters of very fine gold. This book appears to have been written in the reigns of the emperors, Conrad and Henry II. his son; and it is surprizing, that, after an interval of above six hundred years, the brightness of the gold, and the perfect clearness of every letter should still continue. It is distinguished by the name of Codex aureo, and never-shewn but with lighted flambeaus, and other ceremonies, due to such a valuable transcript of the holy scriptures. This, together with the two of St. Augustin and St. Chryostom, were sent to the founder by his aunt, queen Mary, sister to the emperor Charles V. in approbation of so noble a discharge of his vow. Before the niche, in which these valuable treasures are placed, is a curtain as a mark of veneration, and for the greater security they are kept under lock and key.

Upper
library.

As this room, however spacious, could not contain all the books, which the munificent founder had collected, two others have been added

added to it, equal in length and breadth, and with the same number of windows; but much inferior in decorations.

THE cafes and desks are of fir; but so neatly wrought and the colors so well imitated, that it is only a curious eye which distinguishes them from the others. Cafes and desks.

HERE are placed duplicates of all scientific books; and here likewise should be all that are printed within the dominions of Spain, which, by the king's edict, in favor of this august place, were to be transmitted hither. Books.

HERE are also many Arabic and other prohibited books, as contrary to the Roman faith and the purity of life it requires. These are inclosed within an iron gate, so as neither to be read, nor touched. Prohibited books.

NOR is it without a considerable number of manuscripts in several languages, and on various subjects and faculties, to which all have free access; they are in general very clean and beautiful, and many richly illuminated. These are another donation of Philip IV. that liberal patron of learning and religion. Manuscripts.

THE other room is in the cloister of the hospederia, and near the principal cloister. Its windows face the north, and have a view of the portico. The length is eighty-three feet, the breadth twenty, and the height fifteen. Manuscript library.

Stands.

THE stands resemble the others, and consist of five rows, on which the books are disposed in the most judicious manner. On one side are the Greek and Latin, and on the other, the Hebrew, Arabic, Italian, Spanish, Persian, Chinese, Turkish, and others, all manuscripts, except the Chinese, which are printed; hence this place is distinguished by the name of the manuscript library.

Disposition of the books.

THE books are divided according to the sciences, and, by the help of very particular indexes, are found without any difficulty. Many are originals, and carry the most genuine marks of great antiquity, which gives no inconsiderable weight in determining philosophical alterations; a connoisseur in manuscripts, from such a collection of treasures, would conclude this to be the principal part, and not a kind of supplement to a library.

Bibles.

HERE are particularly very antient bibles in different languages, all agreeing with the Complutense polyglot, and consequently with the true Hebrew; and one written in Greek by the emperor Catacuzenus, which in most particulars agrees with that of the septuagint. Here are also many large volumes, in a gothic letter, of the proceedings and decrees of councils; these are in high esteem among the ecclesiastics, who are the best judges of their value.

Histories of councils.

HERE are many originals of the Grecian fathers, St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Nazianzen, St. Chrysoptom, and others; and among them a great number of homilies, and other devotional writings, which brevity will not permit me to enumerate.

Originals by saints.

IN a part of this library were three thousand Arabic books, taken from the Turks by admiral Faxardo, as they were transporting them from town to town; but, except the alcoran, and a few others, they were all consumed at the time of the conflagration.

Arabic
books.

IT also contains a great variety of antient coins, medals, and bronzes; among which is a shekel of the sanctuary. It weighs little less than a royal, and is of pure silver. On one side is the pot of manna, with some Samaritan characters, which were used by the Jews before the breach between the ten tribes, and those of Judah and Benjamin, but all they express is: "A shekel of "Israel." On the other is the almond-branch, which blossomed, in token that God had chosen Aaron for high-priest, with some characters, the sense whereof is, "Jerusalem the holy."

Medals and
coins.

HERE is also a Jewish memorandum book, in which they used to write what parts of the scripture were to be read in the course of the week, as likewise to minute down things of private concern; it was such a one as this, that Zacharias, the father of John the baptist, desired, in order to write down the name which should be given to his son.

Tablets.

OTHER objects, which antiquarians survey with great pleasure, are the different materials made use of by several nations at the first invention of letters, as the leaves and rind of trees, and the papyrus; the real paper of the Chinese books is of a most admirable delicacy.

Antient
paper.

Hortus ficcus. A curiosity, greatly admired, is a *HORTUS SICCUS*, consisting of all the medical plants in the West-Indies, with the root, stem, branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits; collected and arranged by that great botanist and physician, Francisco Hernandez, whom Philip II. with appointments becoming a king of Spain, commissioned to go to the Indies to make botanical discoveries. Nor was Hernandez contented with this collection, he also painted every one of those plants in other books, together with a great number of beasts, birds, and insects, inventions and habits of the Indians, accompanied with curious narratives and remarks; but all these, an irreparable loss! perished at the fire, which spread its devastations here with an irresistible rapidity.

Turkish
lanthorns
and flags.

HERE also were shewn the lanthorns and colors of the Turkish admiral at the battle of Lepanto, when Christendom was saved by Spanish valor; but these, with a fine collection of Arabic books, were also destroyed by the same dreadful accident.

Number of
books in the
library.

THE number of books in the three rooms exceeds eighteen thousand, exclusive of the lesser collections in the cells of the monks, left by the munificent founder for private use; and these have been augmented, not a curious book coming out in foreign countries, especially scientific, but one or other of the monks purchases a copy.

Foundation
of this
library.

THIS library had its beginning from that in the palace of Philip II. who enriched the Escorial with it; and here is still kept, as a very valuable curiosity, a catalogue, in which he has drawn a stroke through every book intended for this donation.

IN the principal library is a magnet weighing seven pounds, and ^{Magnet.} of such an attractive power, as to suspend a piece of iron of above a quarter of a hundred weight: this secret virtue, and the frequent experiments made with it, give occasion to many philosophical debates; but all are managed with gentleness and decency; and amidst a great variety of philosophical sentiments, the cordiality of the cloistral love does not suffer the least diminution.

CHAP. XVII.

The Garrets, Cellars, Cisterns, Fountains, Gardens, and Offices
of this Building.

THE most splendid and important parts of this wonderful structure have been already described, with all possible brevity: but as the scripture, in its description of Solomon's Temple, comprehends the lesser parts, subservient to its convenience and cleanliness; and as the historians of Rome, in displaying the grandeur of that state, do not confine themselves to the provinces, legions, tribes, revenues, and eminent buildings, but give very particular accounts of their high-ways, aqueducts, and common sewers, without which the city, amidst all its extent of opulence and glory, would have labored under great disadvantages: so I now propose to use the like method, that no part of this admirable structure may be omitted, and that conveniency, cleanliness, and beauty may appear with equal propriety.

Garrets.

IN the upper part of the edifice, near the ridges, are a multitude of garrets, but all spacious, airy, and handsome; and mostly divided into apartments, commanding delightful prospects. It is computed, that not less than five hundred persons may be conveniently lodged in them: and the distance, from the cornice to the ridge, being twenty-five feet, the cells in the convent for the seminarians, and the lodgings in the palace for the household, have been ceiled, that they might not be contiguous to the slate covering, as otherwise the piercing cold of winter, and the penetrating heat of summer, would
be

be equally insupportable; accordingly an empty space is now left between the rooms and external covering.

THIS whole edifice is covered with slate, except the sheets of lead carried along the ridges; and over the offices, at certain distances, strong hooks are fastened, to which the ropes and ladders are secured to be ready in case of accidental fires. I must add, that for the more speedily carrying off the rain, the church, the two principal cloisters, and the three lesser belonging to the palace, are covered with lead.

THE chimnies are all of a height, and resemble so many fluted Chimnies. pillars, with pedestals, bases, and cornices, of a fine white stone, which, with the bright blue of the slate, has a most charming effect; in the whole edifice are no less than fifty of these stately chimnies.

THE cellars and vaults are also worthy of notice; they run under the Cellars. whole area of the palace, and, besides their strength, elegance, and utility, are all spacious, dry, and chearful: these passages and turnings form a labyrinth, in which many have been bewildered.

IN this part are the cisterns for receiving spring or rain water, Cisterns. with very curious brass cocks of several sizes. They are eleven in number, and so large as to be sufficient for a city, the least containing eighty tuns; the water is very cool in summer, and temperate in the severest winters.

THE number of the conduits or pipes, and the distribution of Conduits and fountains. them, for the more ready conveyance of the water to all parts, is not

to

DESCRIPTION OF

to be paralleled. The fountains in the houses, cloisters, offices, gardens, &c. amount to eighty; even the antequire has a marble fountain with three pipes, and the great height of the hill, whence it descends, would allow the water to be carried much higher.

Descent of
water.

THE several natural springs, arising near the summit of the mountain, form a small stream, which discharges itself into a stone reservoir, on the declivity of the hill, fifty feet long, and thirty-four broad, where the water settles, and becomes remarkably fine; hence it continues its course through several others, made at certain distances, till it reaches a reservoir little less than the former, contiguous to the house, and, by means of keys and pipes, is distributed to the several parts of the palace and monastery.

Disposition of
the pipes.

IN order to this, some of the pipes are laid horizontal, some in a descending, and others in an ascending direction. Besides there are above forty brass cocks and pipes of the same metal, which carry the water to the fountains, and, in some parts, through walls of a prodigious thickness. The distribution of the water through such a variety of conduits, is greatly admired by architects. Here are also passages of brick and stone, through which the workmen walk at their ease, in order to survey the pipes, and make the necessary repairs.

Outward
ornaments.

MAY I be permitted, for once, to transgress my limits, and take a view of the outward appendages of this structure, which, from its stateliness and magnificence, we may conclude to be not unworthy of notice.

BEFORE

BEFORE the principal front, or that facing the north, in which Areas around it. are the portals leading into the whole building, is a very spacious area, with gates and balustrades, encompassing half this vast edifice.

THE other half, which consists of the south and east fronts, offers Gardens. a sight still more pleasing and august; the terraces of the gardens, which border on them, representing the walls of Babylon, and the penile gardens so celebrated among the wonders of antiquity.

ALONG the two fronts are twelve fountains, each in the center of Fountains. four parterres, laid out in compartments and knots of beautiful flowers, herbs, and plants, adorned with such a variety of the most vivid colors, that they appear like splendid carpets spread by luxuriant nature, either to rival the magnificence of the structure, or contribute to the grandeur of its appearance.

IN the middle of each fountain is a pyramid, where the water is Form of the fountains. forced up to a great height, in the form of a plume of feathers.

AND before the cellar-grates, in the lower part, are espaliers Espaliers. of roses, oranges, lemons, gilly-flowers, and jasmynes, and being sheltered from the north and west winds, with little cultivation, display their beauties throughout the whole year.

ANOTHER considerable ornament to this delicious palace is twelve Stair-cafes. flights of stone steps, ornamented with exquisite sculpture; these lead down to the lower gardens, and the charming grove on the east side, facing his majesty's apartment.

Laboratory
gallery.

BUT the capital embellishment is a colonnade, two hundred feet long, and twenty broad; which, after joining the garden terrass, and the west side, strikes off from the square, and terminates at the corner of the south tower. It has two rows of pillars finely wrought; the lower doric, and the upper ionic, but in the same taste, having distinct intercolumniations, instead of being a continuance of equal arches.

Gate and
passage.

IN the doric order, on a level with the garden, is a superb arched portal facing the east, with four round columns, fifteen feet high, and in the intercolumniation a niche, with a square plane over it, and pilasters at the sides. The whole length of the cornice over the columns serves as a passage, from a door near the dispensatory, to the upper colonnade, and is ornamented with iron rails and globes. Here, in winter, the patients enjoy the comforts of the solar rays, and in summer recreate themselves in the gardens, which offer the most delightful prospects; on one side are seen the mountains even beyond Toledo; and on the other those of Guadalaxara, with many villages, fields, vineyards, farms, and other rural objects, particularly the chestnut grove, and the meadows of Herreria.

Chestnut
grove.

THE chestnut grove lies on the declivity of a hill facing the south part of the convent, and is inclosed with a stone wall, half a league in circuit. It has now a great variety of trees, all yielding the most excellent and salubrious fruits. Along the walks, and in the compartments, are several fountains, besides streams flowing through the grove from the top of the hill, which diffuse a most agreeable coolness, and preserve the trees in a continual exuberancy.

Here

Here is also an hermitage with an altar, over which is an antique St. Jerom.

THE convent orchard, or fruit-garden, lies nearest to the royal gardens, and is also divided into walks, plots, and parterres, beautifully diversified with various trees, flowers, and other parts of the vegetable kingdom. Its wall is of a particular elegancy, and, including what is called the *bosquecillo*, or little grove, has a circuit of above eight thousand feet. On each side of the wall is a stately gate of the tuscan order, for coaches to pass through. Within it are neat dwellings for the gardeners, and a very large snow-vault, besides a capacious reservoir for watering the garden, the construction of which is very much admired.

THE extent of this reservoir, from north to south, is two hundred feet, and from east to west, one hundred and forty; the bottom and every other part is of stone, and round it is a walk, twelve feet broad, with seats at proper distances. On the east side, which has a view of the garden in its whole length, is a bank, having, on the top of it, a very elegant balustrade, adorned with pilasters and globes, and in the center a flight of steps with four entrances, one of the best pieces of the kind, and a most majestic ornament to the reservoir. In the bottom are a great number of very large brass cocks, which, on being turned, discharge the water into several subterraneous receptacles, whence, by innumerable pipes, it is distributed at pleasure to all parts of the garden. In the *bosquecillo* is also another reservoir for the like uses, maintaining this delightful place in a constant verdure.

Buildings
round the
palace.

SUCH are the environs of the four façades of this glorious structure. But, besides the areas, gardens, fountains, reservoirs, and groves, there are many other buildings; some towards the south and west, others towards the north, all very handsome, and appropriated to particular uses; and being beyond the reach of the fire, they were a comfortable shelter to the religious, during the rebuilding of their apartments.

Elaboratory
cloister.

THE first little cloister, southwards, joining to the gallery before mentioned, is the chemical dispensatory, divided into eight offices, where, by stills, alembics, and a multitude of other chemical utensils, the virtues of the products of nature are extracted, and her astonishing secrets revealed.

Passage.

THE façade of this cloister is a very elegant piece of ionic architecture; from it runs a gallery, or passage in the same order, one hundred feet in length, to the house called Companna, and lower down crosses the common road to the villages in that neighbourhood. It has seven open arcades, answerable to the grandeur of its other parts.

Companna
cloister.

IN the Companna, the most remarkable object is a spacious quadrangular cloister, two hundred feet square, with square pillars and zocles, instead of bases and capitals. The breadth, from them to the wall, is eleven feet. The whole circuit consists of sixteen superb arches, and fifty pillars on each side. The second row contains a like number of windows; and above these runs a flighty fillet. The whole building is covered with slate, and both the symmetry and height so remarkable, that I do not know a more complete piece of architecture

in

in the rustic order. In the center is a fountain, and along the sides handsome stair-cafes.

THE east front, facing the convent, is taken up with cells for Hospedaria. lodging strangers of all ranks.

IN the upper story of the south front are several chambers for the Infirmaries. sick; one set apart for the boys of the feminary, and where, at the time of the fire, divine service was celebrated; another for strangers; another for servants and the poor; but in all such a regularity and cleanliness observed, that every humane person is highly pleased. Another circumstance, not less commendable, is, that they have altars so disposed, that they, who are unable to rise, may have the satisfaction of hearing mass, and beholding that body which suffered for the remission of their sins.

IN the lower part of the same front is the shoe-ward, which is Shoe-ward. divided into working places, and store-rooms; for, besides the shoes used by the great numbers of persons, constantly residing within the precinct of this extensive structure, the quantities of this article given away are very considerable.

A little further is a large refectory for servants, and, below this, Refectories. another for strangers and the poor; but, immediately after the fire, the religious and seminarists used to eat here. In the western wing are dwellings and dormitories for the domestics, which, during the above time of distress, were also occupied by the same venerable persons.

Granaries,
mill, and
bakehouse.

IN that, towards the north, are the granaries, a mill, kneading troughs, and sieves, which, at the same time, yield meal for four different sorts of bread, all of a most convenient disposition.

Companna
offices.

BEYOND this great cloister are many other inferior buildings, with courts, sheds, yards, stables, and other conveniencies necessary in such a vast palace situated in a wilderness.

Palace offices.

THE other range of houses, on the north side, stand twenty feet from the balustrade of the area. It is wonderful to see the multitude of apartments for the reception of the officers and servants attending the court, when the royal family resides at the Escorial. The whole range is of stone, and the several doors in an elegant taste; it has likewise three rows of large windows, and the roof covered with slate.

Courts.

EACH of these houses is divided into three inward courts, ornamented with pilasters, and forming several airy apartments and offices.

Chapel.

IN the west side, within the same quadrangle, is an elegant chapel, with a stone steeple, for the spiritual advantage of those, who live in the neighbouring buildings, or any others belonging to the royal household. It has three altars, of which the chief is dedicated to the glorious martyr St. Laurence, whose martyrdom, by the skillful hand of Frederic Zucaro, constitutes a beautiful altar-piece. Here the reliques, paintings, and furniture of the house, were secured at the time of the fire.

AT the other extremity, facing the east, is a spacious area, nearly square, leading to a grand walk of elms, consisting of two rows on each side, cut with the utmost exactness, and reaching to the village, at the distance of a quarter of a league, where it terminates in a most charming area, planted with the like trees, and in the center a fine fountain. This delightful walk is very agreeable to all whose minds are adapted to contemplation. Area and elm-walk.

AFTER so particular an account of the gardens, outhouses, and edifices, let us take a view of the more distant ornaments of this situation.

BEYOND the village of Escorial, whose forges were buried in obscurity till it gave the common appellation to this august structure, the superb mansion of the Spanish monarchs, we enter on another walk of elms, answering exactly in breadth, direction, and cut of the trees, to the former. It is also of the same length, reaching to Fresneda common, where was once a small town; at present both are converted into a very fine park, laid out into grass-plots, parterres, groves, fountains, and canals. Escorial village.

Its wall is of stone well wrought, eight feet high, and above four thousand paces in circuit. It has several gates, all of the tuscan order; and, at the entrance, it is impossible, not to stand, as it were, in an extasy, at the variety of beautiful objects, which crowd on the eye. The shady walks, the vivid parterres, the groves, and canals, the warren in the center, where the sportive rabbits are continually frisking, add a beauty to the whole that surpasses description. It is, Fresneda.
indeed,

DESCRIPTION OF

indeed, a noble subject for a poetical pen; but it becomes me to confine myself to historical simplicity.

Farm-house. IN the center of this paradise stands an elegant seat, or house of recreation, whether, according to the authorized custom of the order, the religious, for the preservation of health, go twice a year, to enjoy a short relaxation from their several austere precepts. It was once a manor-house, to which the royal founder added a small cloister of the tuscan order, with seventy cells, besides apartments and offices, two refectories, a kitchen, and a chapel, decorated with four altars; the whole perfectly neat and convenient.

Garden. ON the outside of the cloister, instead of a wall, is an iron balustrade, with pillars at certain distances, giving a view of a very pretty garden, with a fountain in the middle.

Royal lodge. ON a terrace, adjoining to this garden, is a most beautiful lodge for the reception of any of the royal family, when they come to amuse themselves in this retirement, which art and nature combine to render so very delightful.

Chapel. AT some distance, eastward, is a chapel, formerly the church of the village, and a burial-place, where, on every Sunday and holy day, throughout the year, mass is said for those who are buried there. Thus to them, the demolition of the church has proved a signal benefit.

Garden. FACING the north front of the seat, is another garden, surrounded with a stone wall, which on all sides is covered with vines and fruit-

fruit-trees, whilst the parterres display the most beautiful flowers, intermingled with curious trees and plants.

ON one side is a fountain, covered with lattice work, through Fountains. which a great number of shrubs insinuate their branches, as if desirous of its reviving water. In the middle is an elegant piece of stone work with a column supporting a basin, while the water, issuing to a great height through the tubes of a fictitious bunch of flowers, is dispersed all over the garden in the form of a shower.

HERE are also other gardens, and, around the seat, a great number Gardens. of trees, particularly ash; besides four ponds, which plentifully supply it with water and fish.

BEYOND these is another pond, railed in, though not less than Ponds. two thousand feet in circuit, having in the center a most delightful island with shady walks, and a bridge for going into it.

THE third is still of greater extent, its circumference being four thousand feet; here is also an island, one hundred feet square, with Island, summer-house. rails and seats, and in the center a most elegant summer-house, the sides of which, being lattice work, are lined with roses, jasmynes, gilly-flowers, honey-suckles, and other beautiful and odoriferous plants. The other part of the island is laid out in parterres and walks. To this pond belongs a barge, in which the religious are sometimes seen taking the air on the water; and surely that person must be of a very saturnine cast, who censures these short intervals of innocent recreation, and in which a precise observance of the monastical institutes is still maintained.

DESCRIPTION OF

THE fourth pond has the appearance of a sea, and not only supplies the other with water; but in a drought it is from hence, that the park, the groves, the gardens, and roads are watered; so that, in the most parching seasons, the bloom and verdure of spring is here seen united with the fertility of autumn.

IN the neighbourhood are also several walled closes, about a league in circuit, full of rabbits, hares, deer, and wild boars; but none are permitted to hunt here, except the king himself.

Herreria
common.

HERRERIA common lies nearer the palace, and, without any of the cost and art bestowed on the Fresneda, surpasses it in pleasantness and beauty; and, besides its plenty of pasture and wood, affords better sport. Round the wood, which is very large, are several pieces of building, meadows, vineyards, and groves, greatly heightening the external pleasantness and majesty of this superb structure; but having continued the chapter to a sufficient length, I shall proceed to other particulars, more immediately relating to the palace itself.

C H A P. XVIII.

Of the Quexigal, San Saturnino, Nuefra Señora del Parrazes, and Santo Tome del Puerto, farms belonging to the convent; together with a detail of the cost of this stupendous fabric.

AFTER giving as general an account of the magnificence and devotion of Philip II. in this structure, as a proper brevity would admit, I must not pass over some of the more distant appurtenances, which are assigned to the maintenance of this splendid convent.

QUEXIGAL wilderness, or common, lies about four leagues from the Escorial, and two from St. Martin de Valde-Iglesias. Here the above magnanimous prince having caused the circuit of a league to be cleared of pines, converted it into a vineyard, beautifully laid out in lanes and squares, and bordered with olive-trees. A commodious house was also built for the officers, and dwellings for the laborers; the whole surrounded with a strong stone wall.

THE house is of mortar, stone and brick, with a spacious court, and a colonnade towards the south; and on the east side is a set of apartments for any of the royal family, yet rather neat than magnificent.

HERE are likewise presses and cellars, both for the wine and oil, and other products; and at a little distance from the house is a chapel, formerly the church of a small village which stood here, and was also

DESCRIPTION OF

called Quexigal, the baptismal font of which still remains in the chapel. It is situated in the diocese of Avila, but being annexed to this house, it is reputed nullius diocesis.

San Saturnino
farm.

ON the other side of the hills, towards Toledo, and five leagues from the convent, is another estate belonging to it, called San Saturnino, from a hermitage dedicated to that saint, and much resorted to by the neighbouring country, for obtaining rain in a time of drought. Here the deaf, or those who are hard of hearing, or afflicted with pains in the ear, meet with a relief truly miraculous.

River
Alverche.

IN this neighbourhood the river Alverche rises from among the precipices of a high mountain, and, after slowly moving to Escalona and Talavera, forms an angle, which on the east and south side environs a fine spot of about two leagues in circuit, full of vineyards and olive-yards, intermixed with plantations of stately oaks.

House.

ON the river stands a large house, with piazzas, offices, and out-houses: here the steward, or overseer resides, who, in this estate, is usually a religious, and has under him servants and laborers of several degrees, all conveniently lodged; and living comfortably under a superior, who manifests a tender concern both for their temporal and spiritual welfare.

Pref.

THE house is also provided with cellars and presses. This estate was purchased by the joint body of the religious from the convent of our Lady of Guadalupe; and, though not an immediate gift of the founder, they esteem it as such, it being a maxim in philosophy, that he, who gives form and essence, gives also the derivatives.

THE

THE convent is also possessed of a parcel of land, on the banks of ^{River of Xarama.} the river Xarama, near Aranjuez, about four leagues from Madrid, and as fertile a spot as any in the whole kingdom of Toledo. Here is such a plenty of rabbits, that sometimes the very clouds seem changed into those creatures. The cattle here are strong, swift, and fierce, especially those of the beeve kind. The Xarama bulls are known all over Spain.

BUT the best and most complete estate of the pious founder was ^{Abbey of Parrazes.} the abbey and house of our Lady de Parrazes, four leagues from the city of Segovia. The most reverend father, Joseph de Siguença, has given an account of its founders; its great antiquity; how it came into the possession of the cathedral of Segovia; and how afterwards, with the pope's approbation, they granted it to a canon, who, with three others, were desirous of living a part from the bustle of the city, and its disturbances; and in what manner, some years ago, they came to make the three essential vows of a perfect profession, under the rule of St. Augustin, on which account they were termed, regular canons of St. Augustin, and the superior had the title of abbot: he also relates their gradual declension from such devout principles, till a reformation became absolutely necessary; this not having its due effect, and only two or three recluses being left; in 1566, at the request of the pious founder, that excellent pope Pius V. was pleased to allow of its being annexed to the royal convent of St. Laurence, for the revival of a decayed college of monks, which has been productive of innumerable benefits temporal and spiritual: he concludes his valuable work with a detail of the transactions and vicissitudes of that college, till the removal of its members to the palace convent, being replaced by twelve religious, besides the vicar, who is the chief, and

DESCRIPTION OF

sometimes they are fourteen, all immediately under the prior of St. Laurence.

Convent of
Parrazes.

THE convent here is a decent building of a middling size, and the cells and rooms so disposed as in some measure to mitigate the inconvenient extremes of the situation, which is very cold in winter, and sultry in summer.

Church and
reliques.

THE church is elegant, and very well ornamented, but chiefly noted for an image of our Lady of very great antiquity, and several curious reliques found, at the repairing of the church, in a chest concealed in one of the pillars; among them is one of the stones which were thrown at St. Stephen, the protomartyr; consequently of more value than the largest diamond of the Indies.

Exercises of
the religious.

THE same retirement, devotional exercises, and discipline is observed here as in the strictest house of that order; besides which, these religious are very assiduous in promoting christian knowledge and piety in the villages belonging to the abbey, and, at the same time, in distributing very liberal donations to the sick and indigent, according to their several necessities.

Soil.

THE soil is of a good kind, especially for grain, yet for want of hands, and through the badness of the seasons, the harvest generally falls short of what might naturally be expected.

Priory of
St. Thomas.

To this monastery also belongs the priory of St. Thomas del Puerto, which above four hundred years ago was an abbey with canons. According to tradition, a hermitage was built here in honor of

St.

St. Thomas, the last battle against the Moors was fought in this neighbourhood on the festival of that saint; but afterwards, devolving to regular canons, they enlarged it to a convent, and the recluses, by the fame of their exemplary sanctity, obtained several distinguishing favors from the kings of Spain, who, in their progresses, frequently visited the convent.

THE faint likewise was pleased to confer a mark of regard on this place, by an immediate cure of persons bit by mad dogs; for which it is still celebrated, and many, who recovered from so terrible a danger, have expressed their gratitude by considerable donations. Miracles.

BUT succeeding canons degenerating from the glorious example of their predecessors, pope Benedict III. dissolved the abbey, and changed it to a priory, under a secular ecclesiastic, who received the income, and lived where he pleased, as did also the canons; at last, the priory was bestowed on mere laymen, and under this wretched abuse it labored till the time of its being annexed to the palace, which was done in 1573, by pope Gregory III. at the desire of the illustrious founder Philip II. Annexed to the royal convent.

THIS priory, by the bulls of several popes, is nullius diocesis, and exempt from the payment of tithes. It has three places belonging to it, but all so inconsiderable, that, if united, they would not make a creditable village. At the time of their being annexed to this convent, the principal church and hermitage of St. Andrew were in such a ruinous condition, as required a thorough repair; and the annual rent of them does not exceed a thousand ducats. They stand Places belonging to the convent.
in

in a lonely barren country; the inhabitants are of a savage turn of mind, and the buildings are extremely mean: in fine, had they not belonged to this royal convent, the very being and memory of them would long since have been extinguished.

Cost of this
structure.

BUT enough of what scarce deserves mention. Let us now, agreeable to the title of the chapter, take a view of the cost of this amazing structure; an article, which, I believe, will not be less acceptable, than any of the preceding descriptions of its disposition, beauty, and magnificence. It is natural for us to be desirous of knowing the charge of an edifice of such grandeur, magnificence, and splendor, where want is liberally relieved, and genius improved in all the sciences; the glory of Spain, the unparalleled monument of the riches and piety of its monarchs. This laudable curiosity we shall endeavour to satisfy; for, by the books of the several directors and overseers of the works, by the bills of tradesmen and artists, and the receipts in the offices of the paymasters and accountants, as they occur for thirty-eight years successively, being the term from the beginning to the death of Philip II. it appears, that the total of the expences amounted to five millions, two hundred and sixty thousand, five hundred and seventy ducats; in this sum is included not only the whole structure, but likewise the paintings, embroideries, parterres, gardens, orchards, groves, canals, Quexigal, vineyard, and house, with all the several appurtenances already described; and if to this be added the silks, brocades, the silver, gold, velvet, and fine linen, which were furnished by the jewel office, the cost would not exceed six millions, two hundred thousand ducats. Such is the computation of that accurate writer father Joseph de Siguença, in book iv.

cap. 24. of his history of the Escorial; a most elaborate piece, and with incredible industry authenticated from the most indisputable authorities.

SOME, indeed, from opinions founded on the seeming disproportion between the charge and the structure, have presumed to assert, that in the thirty-eight years not less than twenty or twenty-five millions were expended here; but, relying on the above author, who may be said to have heard, seen, and handled every thing; and, on some particular inquiries, I am convinced, that, even comprehending the pantheon, which put the finishing hand to the grandeur and perfection of this structure, together with the great repairs after the fire, and many new embellishments and additions, the expence will not amount to one third part of twenty-five millions. I however own, that, in surveying this vast assemblage of buildings and gardens, the stateliness of the architecture, the splendor of the furniture, the excellence of the paintings, and the innumerable variety of costly ornaments, we are inclined to think, that all the treasures of the Indies would scarce be sufficient to answer the expence of such a fabric; yet the truth is otherwise, the charge not exceeding my calculation.

Opinions
concerning
the cost.

THE church, with its several decorations, the altar-piece, tabernacle, oratories, images, paintings, stalls, organs, brass work, &c. seems above any value or estimate; yet, from the books and accounts, the whole cost was only one million, two hundred and forty thousand ducats.

Cost of the
church.

THE furniture, utensils, and ornaments of the sacrifice, strike every beholder with astonishment, and a million is the least estimation; yet

Sacrifice.

to

DESCRIPTION OF

to say, that it actually cost four hundred thousand ducats, would be greatly exceeding the truth.

THE oil and fresco paintings in the principal cloister, are such as scarce admit of any estimate, but the real expence was only thirty-eight thousand, one hundred and seventy-one ducats.

Library
painting.

THE library painting, one of the finest things in this convent, together with the stands, desks, and books, seem likewise to exceed all value; whereas, in truth, the expence of all amounted to no more than fifty thousand, eight hundred and ninety-two ducats, ten ryals; including also in the account, the marble pavement, each square of which, when laid, cost thirty ryals.

Portico
statues.

THE statues of the six kings in the façade of the church, and that of St. Laurence in the grand portal, with their respective insignia and ornaments, are very extraordinary pieces, both with regard to magnitude and execution, and with the scaffolds and engines for raising them, cost ten thousand, nine hundred and forty-five ducats; a sum which would hardly be thought equal to the charges of raising such prodigious masses to so great a height. Thus it is with every particular, even the minutest parts of this fabric, where admiration always exaggerates the estimate.

Presents to
his majesty.

I must however observe, that in the sum mentioned are not included the inestimable treasures in the reliquaries, the paintings, and the most noble sepulchre exhibited here in passion week, presented to his majesty, for the church built by the munificent founder in the village of

Escorial,

Efcorial, at the expence of fixty thousand ducats ; nor other things of a fimular kind.

THUS have I endeavoured to give some idea of this fuperb fabric, at prefent, without any parallel, and even equal to whatever has employed the eulogiums of antiquity. It is an aftonifhing memorial of the devotion and magnanimity of that pious and munificent monarch, who, even in this world, was recompenfed with feeing the work completely finifhed, fourteen years before his death ; an amazing circumftance ! as the edifice apparently required the continued efforts of many fucceffive kings.

How long in building.

THE glorious founder had the fatifaction to enjoy it in all its grandeur during the fpace of fourteen years, the pantheon excepted, which was not begun till the twenty-third of April, 1563, and the laft ftone was laid in 1584 ; and in 1598, that monarch, whofe memory will ever be revered in Spain, left this tranfitory life in the feventy-fecond year of his age, in this very palace, and even in the church of his patron St. Laurence, to whom he had dedicated it, that, by his interceffion, he might become an inhabitant of that beatific palace, which alone furpaffes the fabric he had raifed.

CHAP. XIX.

Number of Ornaments and Parts of this wonderful Structure.

HAVING, in the former chapters, taken a distinct view of the several parts of this prodigy of architecture, and endeavoured to display the beauties of the Escorial, I shall now, to satisfy the curiosity of the reader, give an enumeration of its principal contents, observing the same fidelity as before; well knowing, that, to adorn it with additions, would be an injury to the edifice, and, to propagate a known falsity, a stain to my profession.

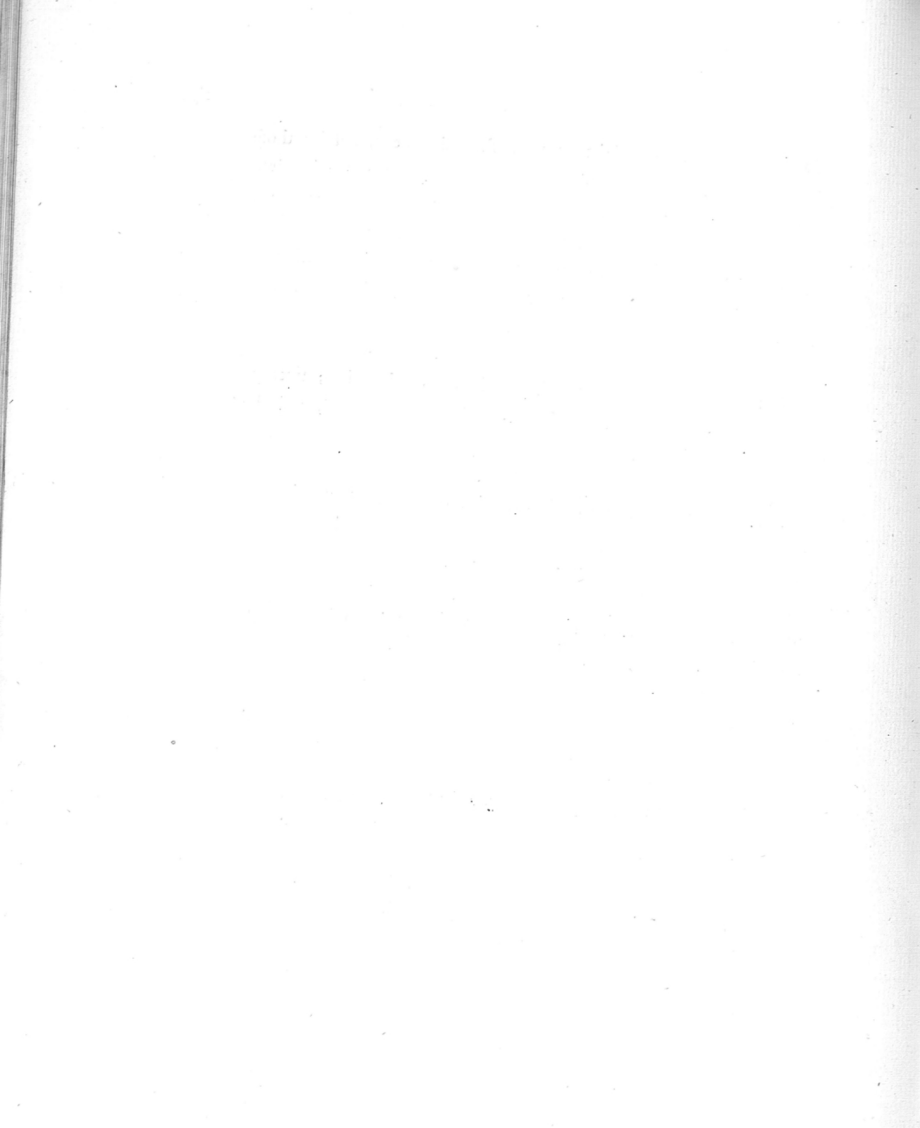
THIS astonishing structure then contains fifteen cloisters, decorated with arches, and six hundred and eighty sky-lights, or lanthorns; eleven courts; ten turrets, or steeples, besides the beautiful dome in the centre, all crowned with globes of brass gilt, vanes, and crosses; twelve thousand doors and windows; fourteen porches; eighty-six fountains; above eighty stair-cases; eight galleries; three chapter-rooms; three libraries; twelve halls; six dormitories; seven oratories and chapels, besides the great church; nine refectories; five infirmaries; one laboratory; two hospederias; nine kitchens; fifty-one large statues, and fifty of a smaller size; one thousand, six hundred and twenty-two pieces of painting, besides an innumerable number of small pieces, landscapes, &c.; thirty-four thousand books; five brass balustrades, and thirty-seven of bronze; forty-eight altars; two hundred and fifty candlesticks; one hundred crucifixes, besides twelve of a larger size in jasper, placed here at the consecration of the church; sixteen large silver lamps, and fourteen stately blandones, or stands

stands for flambeaus; eight organs; fifty-nine bells, besides those belonging to the chimes, which amount to thirty-two; five hundred and fifteen shrines; two hundred and sixteen music-books, curiously bound; five vessels of gold, and one hundred and twenty-two of silver, for the service of the altars: besides an infinite number of reliques, robes, and ornaments for the ecclesiastics, which cannot be enumerated, but have been already mentioned.

THIS surprizing fabric was thirty-eight years in building; twenty-four of which were taken up before the last stone was laid, and the other fourteen were employed in adorning and enriching it.

I shall now conclude this book, with observing, that whatever admiration the preceding account of its magnitude, beauty, and splendor, may have raised in the mind of the reader, it will be greatly increased by the following account of the magnificent chapel of the pantheon, afterwards added to it, and which is the subject of the second book.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.



A
DESCRIPTION
OF THE
CHAPEL ROYAL,
CALLED,
THE PANTHEON;
OR,
Burial Place of the Kings of Spain.

TRANSLATED

From the SPANISH of FREY FRANCISCO DE LOS SANTOS,
Chaplain to his Majesty PHILIP the Fourth.

ILLUSTRATED WITH COPPER-PLATES.

By GEORGE THOMPSON, of York, Esq.

LONDON,
Printed by DRYDEN LEACH,
For S. HOOPER, at Cæsar's Head, in the Strand.
MDCC LX.



TO
Sir GEORGE SAVILLE, Bart.

THIS
DESCRIPTION OF THE PANTHEON,

Out of Gratitude for the many Favors received, is Dedicated

By His

Most obedient

Humble Servant

GEO. THOMPSON.

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A Description of the Royal Chapel of the Pantheon, or, Burial Place of the Kings of Spain.

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