

was living here that Cervantes superintended the publication of "Don Quixote." Its university, famous throughout Spain as a school of law and medicine; its cathedral, of the Corinthian order, massive and grand, though unfinished, bare and somewhat dilapidated; the palace, seldom the abode of royalty since the removal of the capital to Madrid, but occupied for some weeks in 1809 by Bonaparte, at the time that he gutted and stripped the great palace of the Inquisition and turned it into a cavalry barracks; and that building itself which, though in ruins, remains one of the most impressive memorials of the past—are all objects of interest, around which cluster thrilling, romantic and often deeply tragic associations. Here was the scene of the first *auto-da-fé* of the Protestants in Spain. Here the weak and superstitious tyrant, Philip II., from a balcony witnessed the dying agonies of men "of whom the world was not worthy." This was the centre of the most intense Protestant activity in the days of the Reformation; and here the fire of the Inquisition raged most fiercely for its suppression.

The road from Valladolid to Avila lies through one of the wildest and most rugged tracts of country in Spain, perhaps in Europe. From a wide waste of wild granite blocks rises the latter of these cities, one of the most perfect relics of mediæval architecture in the world. It is surrounded with granite walls forty feet high and twelve feet thick, with eighty-six towers and gateways, all complete and unbroken. There is a tradition that this city was built by and named after Albula, the mother of Hercules, about two thousand years before Christ; and a recent traveller observes that "the legend seems almost credible when heard on the spot."

But we are drawing near to the capital and must not linger. Passing through a wild and desolate waste in which, during a journey of a few leagues forty-four tunnels and innumerable bridges are passed, at length the Escorial is left behind us, and in about an hour the imperial city burst on our view, and we are in Madrid. And here among the very first objects which force itself upon our attention is the ubiquitous gipsy. We have not time for a minute description of the specimens of this strange vagabond race, which we meet in the suburbs of Madrid, or to indulge in any speculations in respect to the origin of these singular people, who have spread themselves over