

THE CORONATION OF INEZ DE CASTRO.*

BY ROBERT FOLKESTON WILLIAMS.

Solemn, and still, and melancholy was the hush
 In *Santa Clara* of the thousands there ;
 Deep as the human soul, or as the gush
 Of a young heart in prayer ;
 For the full heaviness of grief let fall
 Its shadow on them all.

It was a solitude, although the aisles
 Were thronged with living forms ; and they were rife
 With those affections, passions, tears, and smiles,
 That tell of human life :
 Yet were they as the winter frost can make
 The surface of a lake.

For each, so awed to silence, held his breath
 In lips that fearful wonderment compressed ;
 For, lo !—they stood beside the form of death
 Clad in a royal vest—
 A sightless, moveless, voiceless one, whose look
 Was more than they could brook.

She who'd been carried from the gloomy cave
 Into the light of day—she who had been
 Snatched from the dreary region of the grave,

* "The tragical fate of this beautiful but unfortunate woman has created many fine compositions by poets of different nations.—She was married to Pedro, the son of Alonzo, king of Portugal ; but the father of the prince objected to the match, and, with circumstances of great cruelty, assisted in her murder. Until Pedro came to the throne, he had not sufficient opportunities to revenge her death ; but almost immediately after his father's decease, his vengeance fell upon the murderers with an unexampled ferocity. When he was satisfied with the summary justice he had inflicted, he proceeded to the church of St. Clair at Coimbra, caused her corpse to be brought from the sepulchre, to be arrayed in royal vestments, to be placed on a throne with a crown on her head and a sceptre in her hand, and there she received the homage of the assembled courtiers and of the highest officers of the state. From the church her body was conveyed on a splendid car, accompanied by the male and female nobility of the kingdom clad in mourning, to the monastery of Alcobaca, wherein he had ordered to be constructed two magnificent tombs of white marble, one of which he intended for himself, and the other for his queen. This occurred about the year 1361."