

of the Escorial. There is little now to remind one of the palace or of the monastery. Of the three great objects to which the edifice was devoted, one alone survives,—that of a mausoleum for the royal line of Castile. The spirit of the dead broods over the place,—of the sceptred dead, who lie in the same dark chamber where they have lain for centuries, unconscious of the changes that have been going on all around them.

During the latter half of Philip's reign he was in the habit of repairing with his court to the Escorial and passing here a part of the summer. Hither he brought his young queen, Anne of Austria,—when the gloomy pile assumed an unwonted appearance of animation. In a previous chapter the reader has seen some notice of his preparations for his marriage with that princess, in less than two years after he had consigned the lovely Isabella to the tomb. Anne had been already plighted to the unfortunate Don Carlos. Philip's marriage with her afforded him the melancholy triumph of a second time supplanting his son. She was his niece; for the Empress Mary, her mother, was the daughter of Charles the Fifth. There was, moreover, a great disparity in their years; for the Austrian princess, having been born in Castile during the regency of her parents, in 1549, was at this time but twenty-one years of age,—less than half the age of Philip. It does not appear that her father, the Emperor Maximilian, made any objection to the match. If he felt any, he was too politic to prevent a marriage which would place his daughter on the throne of the most potent monarchy in Europe.