

It prevented, perhaps, the scourge of a general pestilence, by its incineration of the forty thousand corpses whose deleterious emanations would otherwise have corrupted the air.

The inhabitants, wandering among the ruins, were menaced with the horrors of famine, for all the supplies of corn were destroyed, and the sacks of flour which had been preserved could not be converted into bread for want of the necessary implements. Let us add, moreover, that a company of wretches, who had escaped from the prisons, traversed the smoking ruins, groping among the débris, breaking open the houses still standing, pillaging, stealing, and slaying.



FIG. 123.—RUINS OF THE CHURCH OF ST. PAUL.

When the disaster occurred, the Portuguese court was not at Lisbon, but residing in the castle of Belem, in the environs of the city. The castle was uninjured, but the king thought it prudent to spend the night of the 1st and 2nd of November in a carriage. He remained four-and-twenty hours without any attendant, and almost without food. The next morning he repaired to his ruined capital to organize the first measures of relief.

The numbers of wounded were immense. The king had them tended under his own eyes. The queen, the infanta, and the ladies of the court, worked with their own hands, preparing lint and making bandages. As a portion of the royal kitchen remained upstanding, provisions were distributed to as many as needed them; and