THE MISSION OF SAN FRANCISCO XAVIER, AT TUCSON, ARIZONA

As an example of Mission architecture, differing somewhat from the specimens existing in California, the church of San Francisco Xavier, near Tucson, Arizona, is here presented. The photographs were made some time since by a traveler, and it is to be regretted that they are too small fully to show the many interesting details of the building. But the principal features are rendered with sufficient clearness to make easy the study which they merit, and as offering such features, the illustration in perspective is the better of the two.

In this we plainly see the wall which protects the façade and is furnished with a decorative gateway recalling the barbacans, or advanced entrances of the Moorish structures in Spain.

The portal proper is also interesting, accentuating, as it does, the central third of the façade, and justifying the elaboration of that compartment. The arched doorway is clearly Palladian; while the high pediment, with its broken arch and elaborate ornament, is a near relative of those of the latest Spanish buildings of the Netherlands. The pilgrim shell of St. James the Elder adds also a detail seldom omitted from the earlier architecture of a people who delight to commemorate their favorite apostle whenever it is possible, and see even in the Milky Way the tail of his white charger.

The lateral walls have that poverty of windows which is characteristic of buildings in hot countries, and the towers, with their wide balconies and open-work, further suggest their southern origin, at the same time that their flying buttresses, although twisted into Renascence scrolls, show a principle of Gothic construction.

Finally the dome and domical roof of the tower with its lantern are essential features of the style which, rising with St. Peter’s at Rome, was carried by the Jesuit missionaries to the two Americas.

I. S.