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ROMANTIC  
SPAIN

VOL. I.

J. A. O'SHEA

AUTHOR OF  
*"Lectures from  
the Life of  
A Special  
Correspondent"*

LONDON  
WANDERBURY

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ROMANTIC SPAIN :

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalit  
*A RECORD OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.*

JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA



# ROMANTIC SPAIN:

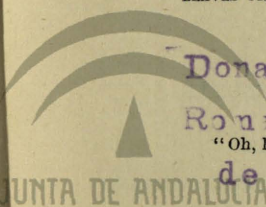
A Record of Personal Experiences.

BY

JOHN AUGUSTUS O'SHEA,

AUTHOR OF

"LEAVES FROM THE LIFE OF A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT,"  
"AN IRON-BOUND CITY," ETC.



Donativo de Sr. Conde de  
Román a la Biblioteca  
de la Alhambra. 1909  
"Oh, lovely Spain! renowned, romantic land!"  
CHILDE HAROLD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

WARD AND DOWNEY,

12, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.

1887.

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TO

WILFRID SCAWEN BLUNT, ESQ.,

IN TOKEN OF ESTEEM FOR

HIS BOLD AND TRUTHFUL CHARACTER,

AND OF

GLADNESS THAT WE HAVE SO MANY KINDRED SYMPATHIES,

This Book is Enscribed

BY THE WRITER.

## PREFACE.

---

THIS simple recital of personal haps and mishaps in perturbed Spain from the abdication of Amadeus to the entry of Don Carlos, puts forward no claim to the didactic or dogmatic. Its chief aim is to amuse. Of course, if I succeed in conveying knowledge and dispelling illusions—in Tasso's words, if I administer a pill under a coating of jam—I shall be cock-a-hoop with delight. But I warn the reader I am not an unprejudiced witness. I am passionately fond of Spain and her people. Although years have elapsed since the events dealt with occurred, I fancy the narrative will not be hackneyed, for in Spain public life repeats itself with a fidelity which is never monotonous. I do not pretend to cast the horoscope of the poor little monarch who is in the nurse's arms,

but Heaven guard him! 'Twere better for him that he had been born in a Highland shieling.

Should there be much individualism in these pages, it is intentional, and to be ascribed to the instance of friends. They said, "Bother history; give us plenty of your own experiences." It is to be hoped they have not led me astray by their well-meant advice.



P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife  
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA



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# ROMANTIC SPAIN.

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## CHAPTER I.

Which, being non-essential, treats partly of Spain, but principally of the Writer.

THE sun was shining with a Spanish lustre—a lustre of glowing sarcasm—seeing that on that very day a Fire-Worshipper, Dadabhai Naoroji, was overshadowed in his attempt to become a Member of Parliament for Holborn. The sun, I repeat, was shining with a Spanish lustre while the inquisition was being held. The tribunal was in the open air, under the mid plane-tree in Camberwell Green, the trimmest public garden in London. Conscience was the inquisitor, and the charge I had brought against myself was that of harbouring a vagrom spirit. I should have been born in a gipsy caravan

or under a Bedaween's tent. Nature intended me to have become a traveller, a showman, or a knight-errant; and had Nature been properly seconded, I should have been doing something Burnabyish, Barnumesque, or Quixotic this afternoon, instead of sitting down on a bench between a tremulous old man in almshouse livery and a small boy fanning himself with a cap. Yes; I fear I must plead guilty. I am possessed by a demon of unrest; my soul chafes at inaction, calls aloud for excitement. Had I the ordering of my own fortune I should spread the white wings of a yacht to woo the faint wind (but it may be blowing freshly off the Fore-land), or should vault on the back of a neighing barb with bushy mane and tail. But I am Ixion-lashed to the wheel of duty, leg-hampered by the log of necessity.

What is a gentle-born vagabond to do?

The law will not permit him to pink with his sword-stick the first smug fellow he meets on the side-path, self-respect debars him from highway-robbery which can be perpetrated without fear of the law, and it is idle to expect a revolution in this

humdrum country within any reasonable period. A General Election which is going on, with its paltry show of coloured strips of calico, its printed appeals to the gullible, its occasional bits of ribbon and bursts of cheering, its egotisms, its stupidities, its self-seekings, its shabby intrigues and simulated fire, its dull, dreary, drivelling floods of witless substance in ungrammatical form—that, surely, is no satisfying substitute for the tumult of real political strife.

Motion is the sovereign remedy for the vagabond's disease, and lo! through the leafy barrier of the pollarded limes bordering the Green, jingle the bells of the tram-car with its trotting team of three abreast. Three mules, which bring my thoughts to Spain, and to a letter I have had from my publishers, satirically asking how soon they might expect the last pages of a promised book on the land of the Dons, the first line of which is not yet committed to paper. I must think over that book as I jog along the grooves of the street rails, and survey the prospect from the roof. How do those mules on the flanks manage to avoid knocking their hoofs



against the metal-ruts, and tripping themselves up ? What a stand-and-deliver air the conductor has as he presents his snip-snap apparatus, like the brutal key of the primitive dentist, and viciously punches an orifice in your ticket ! For these conductors, as for letter-carriers, I have a profound sympathy ; they are over-worked and under-paid ; and yet they enjoy motion in abundance. But there is a poetry of motion, as when charging squadrons skim the plain, or a graceful girl with dainty ankles trips across the beeswaxed floor ; and there is a prose of motion, as of a policeman plodding over his beat, or the Sisyphus-toil of the treadmill. I ask myself, Will a tram-conductor ever write a poem ? Hardly, I think ; and yet, why not ? Was not Edward Capern, who achieved some smooth verses, a letter-carrier ?

New Cross, our terminus so far. Over the way is another tram, which will take us to Greenwich for the outlay of another twopence. Shortly it will be one continuous avenue of pretentious masonry, from the Thames at Blackfriars to the Thames by the naval palace, instead of the former pleasant

drive through Surrey fields. With what a fever they are building, terrace upon terrace, street upon street, interminable rows of villas in line or semi-detached! The patches of verdure, so refreshing to the jaded city eye, are diminishing in size and lessening in number. I like Greenwich; but they should never have removed the veterans of the ocean from it. Dear to the soul of youth, hankering for the strange and the stirring, were their three-cornered hats, their wooden stumps, their withered monkey-jaws puffed with quids, and their hoarse, squall-tearing voices. What a consuming thirst they had, and with what heroic industry they did tell lies! Peter of Russia was right: the sovereigns of England, the sea-rulers, should hold court in Greenwich. The Park with its fallow-deer is regal; the Painted Hall is eloquent with historic memories; the initial meridian is an imposing address; and then the Thames—but here, we are at it. A steamer awaits, and will carry us to the heart of London for a groat.

How dingy, dirty, despicable most of those steamers are! with their low-roofed, grimy cabins;

their irritating hawkers of hat-strings and small beer; their stale stock of mawkish refectations; their job-lot orchestras of wheeze and pipe and scrape and tootle; their smell of bilge and oil, sweat and cheap cigars, overtopped at holiday-times by the sulphurous oath or the rank obscenity of some reeling passenger. And yet how skilfully they thread their way through the crowded Pool; how readily they answer the wheel; with what ease they slow or quicken their run, and dart hither and thither; and with what nicety they are brought alongside the floating wharf! I wonder do the skippers of these boats move their hands in their dreams. Is the finger-sign for "Back her," that they use at home when they wish to replenish their pipes? Collisions there may be, explosions there have been; but the career of the mariner who plies between Chelsea Pier and the port of Woolwich must be singularly free from such vicissitudes as shipwreck or failure of provisions; he is seldom caught in a tornado, or banged into by a privateer; he rarely knocks up against an iceberg, or gets a glimpse of the Flying Dutchman; sharks he may

not study, except, perhaps, in the Westminster Aquarium, and when he dies he is trenched in commonplace clay. I cannot picture such a mariner to myself as having the spirit to ejaculate, "Shiver my timbers!"

The sight of a vessel from Seville laden with fruit and wine recalls me to that letter from the publishers and the book anent Spain. Not a word of it written yet. *They* will be shivering *my* timbers if I have it not ready in season. But I am not of those, like Anthony Trollope, who can sit down to their desks and turn out so many pages of copy at a stretch mechanically, much as a tinglary with its rotating handle grinds out a series of tunes. I cannot write unless I am in the mood, and that, I find, depends on the state of health and the absence of mental worry. The brain with some people refuses to become a piece of machinery. Of motion is often born inspiration—Hermes, god of oratory, is represented with *petasus* and *talaria*—and I am enjoying motion.

"Ease her—stop her!" Blackfriars Bridge, and here I quit the steamer's deck for the tram that



will take me back to the place whence I came, and so enable me to have made a diversified circular tour by land and water for the expenditure of tenpence. Who would waste his substance on coachmen and high-steppers; who would envy Sir Thomas Brassey his lordly pleasure-craft, when this round of travel, with its buoyant sense of independence at the end, can be accomplished for tenpence? And now I shall hie me to a bar I wot of, and with the two pence that remain of my splendid shilling, I shall cheer the inner man with a clear, cool, mantling glass of foam-crowned bitter beer.

The beer ought to be good in Camberwell, for here Mrs. Thrale lived of yore, and the ponderous lexicographer took his walks, and mused on the vanity of human wishes. We have breweries still, and we have groves, even groves of Academus, where one may laugh; for are they not sacred to the shades of the two Hoods and Jeff Prowse, the "Nicholas" of *Fun*, as to Nick Woods, the Napier-recorder of Inkermann, and to associations with William Black, Henry Bessemer, and John Ruskin,

master of art, which is something more, and more significant, than that *Magister Artium* which persons doubtful of their gifts or station ostentatiously affix to their names? And in our groves we have such variety of arborescent prizes as no other district of London can boast, extending to the arbutus or strawberry-tree, and the liriodendron or tulip-tree. The liriodendron has been planted in Palace Yard, in the hope that the breath of wholesomeness, genial to its native America, shall permeate the badly-ventilated atmosphere of the adjacent House of Commons. I love trees as if I were suckled by a hamadryad. May he who cuts them down to build whereon they stood taste the bitterness of Acheron!

And Camberwell Green, which I dearly affect, is it not replete with every modern convenience, as those ambitious amateurs who write the auction-bills are wont to phrase it? There is a bank where you may cash a cheque; two public-houses where you may spend great part of it fuddling yourself; a police-station where you may sleep the fuddle off; a pillar-box where a letter may be posted summon-

ing a bail to your aid ; a drinking-fountain where you may slake your thirst when you come out penitent from the police-office ; a Turkish-bath, with a crescent-and-star daubed piece of bunting over it, where you may knead your frame into sobriety ; a hairdresser's where you may make yourself presentable ; a stationer's where my friend Morris will lavishly dose you with the tonic of moral apothegm ; and, right opposite, a horse-trough where you may give yourself the ducking you deserve.

Inside the tavern, where I sought the beer, I met a financier, a shrewd fellow of a gross habit of body and a dry wit. He is accountant to a firm of book-makers, and can hold his own with the tongue ; he married into the family of a late eminent prizefighter, and, with the connection, seems to have acquired the talent of holding his own with the fist. I like Wat much, and have obtained various scraps of desultory information from him which are useful.

Imprimis, that a penny ticket on a river-steamer on a Sunday constitutes a man as *bonâ fide* a

traveller as Henry M. Stanley, and endows him with the privilege of getting liquid comfort within prohibited hours.

Item, that the cigars on the outside of a bundle, and therefore indented with the tape, are generally the best.

Item, that if there is hide or pelt on a carcase before a butcher's stall, you may take for granted it is a British carcase. Foreign meat has to be skinned to avoid the risk of importation of cattle-disease.

And, ultimately, that if you are about to drown yourself in the Thames, and are anxious to avert identification, the best spot to throw yourself off is in the neighbourhood of a ship at moorings, as then you are likely to be drawn under her and kept in the chains for months.

Some readers who are unaware that there were no gentlemen with coat-armour in the College of Apostles, may object that in presenting them to Wat I am introducing them to low society; but I can assure them that I have seen a very respectable Duke hail-fellow-well-met with a jockey, and my

friend Wat has a far fuller education than the primest of jockeys. He is apt and accurate in quotations from English literature; and if you venture to make Greeks "meet" Greeks in his presence, or talk of fresh "fields" and pastures new, or attribute the tempering of the wind to the shorn lamb to Holy Writ, he will lay you ten to one in sovereigns you are wrong, and win your money. He is also a champion orthographist, and will back himself to spell English words against any man in the British Empire for £500, bar words technical.

"Ah," he said, "my noble! is it true you are going on a lecturing-tour next winter?"

"If God but spare me health and lung-power I am," was my reply.

"And wherefore, may I ask? Can you not do better at the desk?"

"The desk is monotonous; besides, I yearn for change, and I may be able to freshen up my ideas, and set down some notes in my tables. 'Twill improve intellectual and physical health."

"It will, of course," agreed Wat. "For instance,

it will be perfectly delightful journeying to Inverness, say, in the depth of December."

"As it so happens, I am booked for Inverness on a date in that month."

Wat stared at me. "Do you know," he said, "'tis a far cry to Loch Awe, and Inverness is at the other side of Loch Awe? Thither and back from where we stand is eleven hundred and ninety miles."

I was surprised; I had not entered into these details; but I held my peace.

"Have you got many engagements?"

"Yes; the first was from Dollar, which I accept as a good omen; and, curiously enough, 'tis not in the United States."

"No," said Wat; "'tis between Edinburgh and Stirling. What fee do they tender you there?"

I told him.

"Ahem!" he continued, fondling his chin as he spoke. "If you don't cumber yourself with luggage—a courier-bag will do—and if you bus it to King's Cross, and stop at a temperance hotel in 'Auld Reekie,' and give servants no tips, and con-

descend to all invitations, with a wise economy, I take it, you won't drop more than five-and-twenty shillings on that transaction."

"How! What do you mean? You surely are not serious?"

"Why, the railway return fare to Edinburgh alone is five-pun-nine-and-six; and that will burn a hole in your fee."

"Perhaps," I ventured, not to look foolish, "I may have means of getting to Edinburgh for nothing."

"Ah!" said Wat, with a sigh and a sorrowful sententiousness, "if you think you can try on that, well and good; but I'm getting so precious fat that I can no longer hide myself under a seat!"

The barman, who had overheard the dialogue, here burst into an ill-bred fit of laughter. That attendant had some appreciation of humour; but Wat did the correct thing, nevertheless, in rebuking him for his untimely hilarity. The barman should have waited until he had retired to his own room.

This lecturing, as I explained to the financier, is rather a hazardous experiment after a man has passed his fortieth year. It is like learning to act—



even more arduous than that, for you have no prompter, and must be qualified to think upon your legs. Interruptions must not check the flow of your eloquence; indifference must not chill your enthusiasm. You must be suave, alert, sonorous, and roll forth a discourse got off by rote as if it were the offspring of the moment's inspiration. The combustion of thought must appear to be a spontaneous combustion. Once your tale is set a-going, there must be no pause, no hesitancy; the electric current must be maintained to strong and constant power, or your audience sinks into a freezing dulness of courteous attention, which wishes, but fears, to yawn.

"Yes," said Wat, "the steam must be kept up. But if a Derby dog strays on the course—I mean if a bullock blunders on the track, what then?"

"That is the difficulty. It is vexatious if a man dozes off and endeavours to balance himself on the tip of his nose on the floor, when you are in the high ecstasy of a rhetorical period."

"I know," said Wat. "When you are what you call piling up the agony."

"Or when a deaf dowager is seized with a fancy to sternutate as you are waxing pathetic."

"Sternutate. That's a good word," remarked Wat admiringly. "I swear I could spell that. By-the-bye, how are you getting on with that book on Spain?"

*Ecce iterum Crispinus.*

"Good-afternoon. I am just on my way home to write it."

\* \* \* \* \*

The title I shall leave to the finish. Something catching is sure to suggest itself. The dedication I pencilled off months ago. Let that stand.

The subject, I think, is good. Spain is comparatively unknown. John Bull on his travels will not open to it. The British tourist in the Peninsula too often carries with him his native sense of superiority and his constitutional tendency to spleen. He turns up his nose at what he cannot, or will not, understand. If the beef is tough, he does not consider that it ought to be, most of the animals from whose ribs it came having done honest work as beasts of burden before they were

driven to the slaughter-house. If the Val de Peñas is rasping to his palate, he ignores that the taste for wine, as for olives and Dublin stout and Glenlivet, is acquired. If the tobacco is coarse and weedy, he forgets that it is cheap, and that he can roll his cigarette and smoke it between the courses. But why does he not console himself for the absent by what is present—the ripe golden sun, the luscious fruits, the picturesque costumes, the high-bred dignity of the humblest beggar, the weird Æolian melody of sudden trills of song, the flashing eyes, mantilla-shaded, which speak romances in three volumes in every glance? The truth is, your Briton abroad, I mean the average one—not men like Mr. Gladstone in Sicily, or Captain Burton everywhere, Queen's Messengers and Special Correspondents, travelling Fellows of Oxford and pilgrims of art—your Briton of the tourist type is less inclined to adapt himself to another sphere than to try and assimilate that other to his own.

This tourist goes to Spain; he hurries from end to end of the Peninsula, his guide-book in his hand and his opera-glass across his shoulder; he pays a

flying visit to the Escorial, and pronounces it a gloomy crib ; drops in on Seville, sees it, and does not marvel ; mayhap he wanders as far as Granada, and finds it a dreary "sell ;" and then he returns homeward, hot and tired and disappointed, and is eloquent on the rapacity of innkeepers, the profusion of counterfeit coin, the discomforts and unpunctuality of locomotion, the shocking uncleanness—but, however, "you know, we got on better than the Joneses ; we saw more sights and covered more country in fewer days." And this peripatetic postures for the rest of his life as an authority on Spain ! The only point, perhaps, on which his judgment is to be accepted is one which he might have learned in London, namely, that Price's circus is not quite so good as Sanger's in Westminster or Hengler's off Oxford Street. Out upon the poor fool ! *He* know Spain ! Why, that is more than I could dare to say, and I have had experience of it under Monarchy and Republic, in peace and in war ; have mixed with Carlists in the field, and Intransigentes in the fortress ; have traversed it from Irun to Gibraltar, from Santander to Malaga. He

who has not been admitted into the intimacy of domestic life in Spain, who has not listened to habaneras by the camp-fire, joined in the jota on the village sward, shared in thorough sympathy in the sports of the arena and in the rites of religion, dipped into the peasant's olla podrida, nay, even watched the flushed gamblers over their cards, with the eager-eyed baratero standing by—he does not know Spain. All this have I done, and more; and yet I am but on the threshold of acquaintance with that great and beautiful home of paradox, that land of valour and courtesy, of fidelity and magnanimity, of piety and patriotism; and, in a lesser degree, of the vices which are opposed to these good qualities. No country of Europe so near to us is so little known. Yet in none is the soil fertilized by so much British blood. But this was in the bygone; and the yearly increasing swell of journeying-against-time tourists has not swept in tidal wave over the Peninsula. Even Spanish plays—and Spain can boast of one of the richest springs of dramatic literature in Europe—are comparatively sacred from the desecrating touch

of the ruck of contemporary English stage adulterators.

Spain is not known; and yet it is not for the lack of word-painters to make it familiar in pen-and-ink pictures. There is Ford, most learned and graphic of guides, as full of irresistible prejudice as he is of impulsive affection. There is Borrow, that robust, quaint, and captivating, if sometimes over-fanciful, cicerone, albeit his errand to Spain was as indiscreet in purpose as it was bootless in result. There is Sala, of memory richly stored—whom I freely salute as past-master in his craft—most charming, observant, and illustrative of roving journalists. Ford, Borrow, Sala, all know Spain and “things Spanish” by personal experience; but it is plain that too many of the latter-day critics of Spain and the Spaniards are of the class who are ready to write social novels on Chinese life with no more knowledge of the Flowery Land than is to be obtained under the dome of the Reading-room of the British Museum. The pity of it is that this second-hand evidence is too often taken on trust, while the truthful records of eye-witnesses are

shoved into a dusty corner of the cupboard. It is so nice to be patted on the head and rubbed down with the grain, to be reminded that we are what we always thought ourselves to be—the perfect, the registered A 1, people of the universe, the people who set the pattern, the people who are righteous, moral, honest, tolerant, charitable, and modest; who wage no unjust wars; who have no Divorce Court scandals; who know not bank frauds; who never persecuted Highlanders, or Jews, or Irishmen; who permit no misappropriations of money left to the poor; who make no brag over small victories against badly-armed savages. But stay, this is taking me to Africa, not Spain; and Africa does not begin at the other side of the Pyrenees, the epigram of Dumas to the contrary notwithstanding. My great object is to coax the English reader to be reasonable, and not to take the dimensions of the round world by the parochial yard-measure, nor to gauge the Coliseum by the standard of Clapham.

However, I shall not complete this work unless I make a start. *Dimidium facti*—but these odds



and ends of Latin, which give to style an eighteen-penny polish of erudition and prove nothing, you can pick at will from "Swain's Collection of Easy Sentences." If I wait till I am in the mood, my suspense may be as long as that of the rustic on the bank of the stream. Perhaps Samuel Johnson, LL.D., was near the mark when he said that the author that thinks himself weather-bound will find, with a little help from hellebore, that he is only idle or exhausted.

And now a paragraph to elucidate why I have dedicated this book to a gentleman with whom I never exchanged a word. Apart from the bright and solid facts that he wards the weak, and has the pluck to change his opinions when he feels himself in the wrong, there are in his case two reasons all-sufficient to secure his counterfeit presentment a niche in my album, and himself a nook in my heart—he hath killed a bull in the arena, and he is husband of Byron's grand-daughter; and Byron was a poet—yea, a poet, I re-affirm, the hysterics to the contrary of sixteen screaming

*laudatores Veneris* in non-lucid intervals counting for naught.

\* \* \* \* \*

I have lost faith in Wat. In a moment of misplaced confidence I laid a wager on him at a spelling competition. He put one *n* in innuendo, and the *i* after the *lls* in *paillasse*. If he had only gone to the root of the matter! I offered such long odds, too—a frayed copy of the “Iliad” to a gilt and morocco-bound set of the “Newgate Calendar.”

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife  
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

## CHAPTER II.

The Old-Fashioned Invocation—"Them 'ere Spanish Kings!"—Candidates for a Throne—*En Voyage*—Bordeaux and the Back-ache—An Unmannerly Alsatian—The Patriot gets a Roland for his Oliver—Small Change for a Hot Bath—Plan for Universal Coinage—Daughters of Israel—The Jews Diagnosed—Across the Border—The Writer is Saluted "Caballero"—Bugaboo Santa Cruz—Over a Brasero.

O MULES, liquorice, onions, oranges, garlic, and eke figs, cork and olives, and all you other products of Spain, come to my aid now that I enter upon my theme! Why should not a prose-chronicler of this era proffer his appeal as did the poets of era undetermined, of the eras of Augustus or the Second Charles? Perchance the *Θεα*, *Musa*, or Muse, to whom he makes his plea, may prove less kind than those to whom Homer, Virgil, or Milton prayed; but he has his remedy. In most instances, he can eat them.

Having complied with what used to be a hallowed custom, I shall now, following the example of that shrewd man, the late Abraham Lincoln, proceed to tell a story. The deadly sin in any book is dulness, and an occasional anecdote—if it point a moral so much the better—is sovran balsam for spleen.

I had a literary friend in London, and as he once returned to his residence by Regent's Park after a long walk, and asked had anyone called during his absence, the housekeeper replied "No;" but, correcting herself, added, "leastways, nobody, sir, except one of them 'ere Spanish kings!"

The Spanish king who was of no consequence was one of the race of Pretenders, and had the proud blood of countless generations of thick-lipped Bourbons meandering through his veins.

In the February of 1873, from which my personal knowledge of Spain dates, there were quite a number of these Spanish kings on the carpet. Amadeus, the Italian, had vacated the throne on the 11th, in a message which substantially affirmed that the peaceful government of Spain was hopeless—his Majesty gave it up as a bad job—and the

two Chambers, combining as the sovereign Cortes, proclaimed the Republic by a majority of four to one. Of the aspirants to the crown there were notably Don Carlos Maria de los Dolores, the legitimate heir—if there be any virtue in legitimacy—and Don Alfonso, only son of the deposed Isabella, a boy of fifteen, at school at Vienna, a legitimate claimant if the abolition of the Salic law in 1830 be acknowledged. There was one who might have been a king, but sensibly declined the proffered honour in the person of the ancient Espartero, Duke of Victory, Prince of Vergara; and there was a Prussian princeling, a Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, who had been nominated king in the midsummer of 1870, and whose nomination afforded the coveted pretext for the war between France and Germany. Besides, every Captain-General in the country—and the allowance is five—was a king *in prospectu*, not to mention the multifarious leaders of the many parties in the Congress, all of whom were qualified to be kings in their own conceit. Spain being thus suffering from a plethora of kings—as one result of which the Republic

existed—it struck those who had commissioned me to chronicle the humours of besieged Paris that I might find some material for instructive and entertaining writing at the other side of the Pyrenees.

There are several ways of getting to Madrid. I had no difficulty in selecting mine—in fact, I had no choice. It was my duty to go there by the quickest route, no matter what the expense, the danger, or the inconvenience. These were the terms implied in my bond. The first stage was to Bordeaux. Over that I shall not dwell beyond a passing note on the excitement of the mad drive from terminus to terminus through Paris streets, in the early morn, at the rate of four statute miles an hour; in order, as Brother Jonathan has it, to “establish connection,” and the misery of the long railway pilgrimage south. The scenery, I believe, was lovely; but fatigue, and the worry of a constrained position, and the frequent jerky stops as one was dozing to sleep, and the impatient summons “*en voiture*” as the hungry man was settling to a square meal, indisposed one for the proper appreciation of the picturesque. I got so eye-dazed from the whirl

and dust and fitting sentinels of telegraph-posts on the long music-lines of telegraph-wires, that I could not distinguish a life-buoy from a funeral wreath. There were no sleeping-cars between Paris and Bordeaux then; back-ache, with an occasional variety in the shape of migraine, is my principal memory of that journey. Back-ache, the reader will allow, would take the poetry out of a honeymoon trip. And here I interpose a short parenthesis to register my acknowledgment to the philanthropist who invented sleeping-cars with their complementary accommodations. He is a benefactor to travelling humanity. Statues have been erected to dozens who have done less good to their kind—soldiers, lawyers, politicians, and patent pill-makers. Sleeping-cars avert exhaustion, ill-humour, bad dreams, and kidney-disease, not to exclude the back-ache and migraine aforementioned. Whenever a bronze memorial is to be raised on the Thames Embankment to their inventor, I am ready with my contribution.

At Bordeaux, where I shuffled into the nearest hotel, I uncoiled myself, and took the kinks out of



my bones ; but of the wine capital I shall say no more than that "I came, I slept, I left." At leaving, a little adventure variegated the itinerary. As I entered the railway-carriage, a gentleman on the opposite seat, its only occupant, was sucking an orange. I pulled out my cigar-case, and politely asked him if he had any objection to my smoking.

"Are you a German?" he demanded stiffly.

"Pardon me," I said, "I inquired if you had any objection to my smoking."

"Are you a German?" he repeated almost fiercely, his eyes flashing.

"I fail to see what business it is of yours what my nationality may be."

"It is my business, and I insist on your answering my question," he shouted, dropping the orange in his anger.

"And I decline to answer it," I said quietly.

Now he fairly raged. There is nothing which so provokes a man of hasty temper, with whom you may be in a controversy, as to preserve a tranquil, self-possessed demeanour. Ladies who nag their

husbands are aware of this interesting feature in household ethics.

"Ah, you *are* a German!" he yelled. "You are a Prussian. I will not sit in the same compartment with you!" and he stood up, and danced, and went through a round of epileptic gesticulation.

"Your absence will not leave me inconsolable," said I, in soft, sweet accents, ceremoniously lifting my hat.

He bounced out of the carriage like a maniac, stamped along the platform, muttering with incoherent vehemence as he went, and presently reappeared with a gendarme, whom he informed that he suspected I was a Prussian spy. Interrogated, he could advance no proof beyond his own suspicions, my arrogant coolness of manner, and my hesitation in returning a straightforward reply.

"I am sure he is," he concluded, "for he all but admitted it."

The gendarme was perplexed, and asked me very civilly, was I a German?

"Distinctly not," I answered.

Had Monsieur any papers? I produced my

British passport, which he looked at, pretended to understand, folded up, returned to me with excuses for having given me so much trouble, and fixed a look of grave reproach on his countryman. The latter was embarrassed, and had not the grace to make a frank apology, but mumbled something to the effect that I might have saved all this annoyance if I had stated what countryman I was at first.

"If you had put your question in the French fashion, that is to say courteously, I might have done so," I said.

He blushed, and stammered forth the apology at last; he hoped I would forgive his quickness, but he could not control himself when he met a German; he hated the race—the Germans were a pack of cold-blooded robbers, who had brought ruin on his country. He had vowed vengeance against them, and he had reason for it, for he was an Alsatian.

I saw my chance.

"*Mon Dieu!*" I exclaimed, throwing up my hands in affected horror. "It is you who are the German, then, and not I. Do you not know, sir,

that Alsace has been a province of Germany for the past two years?"

If the face be an index to the mind, that Alsatian must have passed through a mental cyclone. Luckily for the angel who records bad language, his rage was so terrible that he lost the power of speech, the while I gently moved my head to and fro, and gazed at him with compassionate remonstrance, as much as to say how could he, a sausage-eating creature, have had the heart to pass himself off on me as a Frenchman? It was cruel, but it was merited. That Alsatian I despised as the meanest thing in patriotism I had ever met—and my experience of the article is not limited—for even were I a German, so long as I behaved myself with propriety he had no right to insult me by his surly cross-examination. But I suppose the poor devil thought he was playing the rôle of redresser of the wrongs of his country, and exacting an instalment of that *revanche* of which we hear occasional frothing babble. If I were a German I should be proud of it, and I hope I should have had the firmness to tell my Alsatian interlocutor so to his teeth.

From Bordeaux to Bayonne, down through the Landes, is a most interesting ride, as I dimly recollect; but I have no notes of it, and I infer that nothing particular occurred as I sped through the fat, nice, pleasant country. I had a short stay at Bayonne—long enough, however, to enable me to mark by ethnological signs and tinge of complexion that Spain was near. There were architectural signs, too, for there were colonnades in some of the streets to shelter promenaders from the powerful sun. Plenty of soldiers in Bayonne, and plenty of Hebrews. All of the latter seem to be engaged in the money-changing business. The whole art of money-changing consists in undervaluing the coin you are buying, and setting an exaggerated value on that you are giving for it. I must have lost a small fortune in the course of my money-changing transactions, therefore am I a most determined adherent of a uniform system of coinage for all civilized nations; and that coinage, I maintain, should be decimal. Fancy a foreigner getting small money for a sovereign after he has incurred a debt of one and sixpence for a hot salt-water bath on the South

Coast! The fair attendant offers him a crown-piece, two half-crowns, two florins, two shillings, two six-pences, two groats, two threepenny bits, a postage stamp, a wheedling simper and a charity-bob. He is puzzled, and to my thinking he is justified in being puzzled; and if the attendant be not exceedingly attractive he is cheated. Coinage should be simple—should be so plain in identity that a child could distinguish it in the dark, and its worth should descend in regulated gradation. This reform will come eventually. One of the objections to a universal mintage may be that there would be a struggle as to whose profile should be sunk into the stamps—a point on which many rulers are solicitous, for they foresee that it is the only species of immortality they will ever attain. His Majesty of Araucania might legitimately protest against having his individuality merged in the lineaments of the artistic concretion of the Republic of San Marino, and the Queen of Madagascar (what is her name, by-the-bye?) might not easily be weaned from a natural longing for the luxury of having her own face in the perpetual youthfulness of Hebe imprinted on the

discs which circulate at Tananarivo. That objection might be met in two ways; one side of the coin might be common to all the world, and the other reserved for the vanities, or the vanities might toss up, and acquire the renown of the numismatist's glass-case in turn.

That the reform will come I am convinced, but not while the Hebrews can hinder it. It is their interest to have this diversity of coinage; and they are very conservative of what is their interest. I have for a long time been trying to make up my mind about the Hebrews. My sympathies fly out to them because they have been persecuted, foully persecuted, on account of their religious belief, while, on the other hand, my antipathies are stirred because they make to themselves an idol of gold. Beautiful are the daughters of Israel with a striking Old Testament beauty, marvellously imperious considering the lengthened apprenticeship of helotry through which they have served; but *naïveté* is not the quality one would look for in their countenances. As well seek a dimple, or a blush, or a coy reserve. Oh! beautiful indeed, and



to an imposing degree, with long straight nose, full orbs, pursing lips, clean-chiselled regular contour; but the earliest lesson they learn is how many grains Troy go to a silver shekel. They may have in them still the fire of Jael, who drove the tent-peg into the skull of the tyrant, or the fierce genius of the poetic Deborah, who was one of the first to strike the lyre of triumph; but, alas! that it must be said, the gentle Ruth, gleaning in the fields of barley, is a lost tradition of the race. I can almost imagine the tender-eyed Leah and the well-favoured Rachel figuring in an idyl of another Wakefield family; but, then, where are we to seek for them? Not in Bayonne. There are no artless Jewesses there; the pupils under their black lashes glitter with the glow of cupidity, and I prefer the light of love. There is something in it more womanly and mellow. I have seen the eyes of a Jewess almost bulge out of their sockets like those of the telescope fish, as she gazed on the treasures of Notre Dame at Paris—to me a degrading dilatation—and I set it down to the instincts engendered by centuries of servitude, when the Jews

discovered that the surest mode of checkmating their masters was by amassing money, and lending it out to them at usurious rates. Certes, they are a pushing and clannish tribe, and skilled in the mimetic arts; but they are not so high-souled and all-influential as their friend Disraeli would fain make them in a chapter of elaborate gush in that fine novel, "Coningsby." In the main I admire them; but I could wish that they stripped to manual toil oftener; that they were less obsequious in indigence, and less despotic and dictatorial when they are in authority—niggers and Hindoos can be that; that they were less prone to exhibit their entire stock-in-trade in the shop-window; that they were less ostentatious in their hospitality, when they are hospitable, and that they had a quieter taste in raiment. Now, I think I have had ample retribution out of that greasy matron at Bayonne, who exploited me when converting my honest notes of the Bank of England into Spanish duros.

From Bayonne the train rattled along not far from the fringe of the Bay of Biscay, by Biarritz and St. Jean de Luz, and across the bridge spanning

the Bidassoa to Irun, the border town of Spain, close by Fontarabia's wooded height. Here we had a pause for customs and passport examination and change of carriages. No railway official could give me any information as to how far the line went; it might go to Madrid, it might not go more than a few miles; the country was unsettled. These officials impressed me as sulky or stupid or timorous, or all three combined, and made glaring contrast with the smart servants on the London, Chatham and Dover line, who know everything that regards their calling, and are always quick and decisive in answer without taint of rudeness. But I was recalled from my comparisons by one word, which wrought a magic effect upon me.

That word was "*caballero!*"

How elate I felt! I realized that I was in Spain, and seemed to grow in inches and self-esteem. I lent myself to an unconscious swagger, tipped my hat jauntily on one side of my head, and was swayed by an almost irresistible inclination to retire to some unobserved corner and wax the ends of my moustache.

The speaker was a Guardia Civil, the Spanish equivalent for a French 'gendarme. A solemn man in a cocked-hat, protected by a glazed cover, his complexion was of sickly walnut-juice sallow, like the flesh-tint on a portrait in oils by an old master. The complexion was characteristically Spanish. He was the State personified, and had much dignity. He told me I might count upon getting to Beasain, a village in a valley at this side of one of the mountains of the Pyrenean range, but that progress beyond that by rail was problematical, as the Cura Santa Cruz had torn up the track.

This was the first I had heard of the Cura Santa Cruz, one of the most ferocious and redoubtable of the partisans of Don Carlos. Truculent were the stories which were told of him. He was Raw-head-and-bloody-bones in cassock; priest and picaroon, with a well-developed tendency towards wholesale murder; Bogie with a breviary—that is, according to some. According to others, he was a brave, disinterested and reverend patriot; a sort of Hofer-cum-Tell individual, etherealized by the sanctity of his vocation. Anyhow, be he maleficent or be-

nign, it was clear that he was Somebody, and had filled the whole country-side with awe. He led a corps of guerrilleros, who rejoiced in the nickname of the Black Band; and such was the terror inspired by their exploits, that the whisper that Santa Cruz was hovering near stunned opposition, and brought in any ransom demanded. He must have been in one of his benign moods on this occasion, for he permitted our train free passage through his territory; and in the evening we drew up in a snow-bound basin, where shuddered the straggling hamlet of Beasain. I took up my lodging for the night in a two-storied cabin, and sent a news-letter to London, recounting what I had seen and heard so far. I was urged to this by an intimation which had reached me, that a rival had preceded me on the road to Madrid by twenty-four hours. The first blow is half the battle, and I calculated that if I could get the ear of the public in advance of him, there would be a point gained. Communication with England was open from Beasain. Heaven knows how it would be to-morrow or next day.

There was fearful tangible evidence of the presence of Santa Cruz in this remote valley. At one extremity where the cavernous opening of the railway tunnel made a dark gap in the hillside, the track had been wrenched from its fastenings, and the sleepers smeared with oil and set on fire. Heaps of charred timber marked the spot, and alongside, down in a ravine, lay the wreck of shattered carriages and locomotive, just as they had been tumbled in a topsy-turvy blending of complete collapse. It made me tremble to reflect what this meant, and I came to the conclusion that Santa Cruz was thoroughgoing in his warfare and restrained by few scruples of compassion.

Over the fumes of the brasero, the brass-pan with its stifling embers of charcoal, placed on a stand in the middle of my room, my landlord and I with outstretched palms held long confab before I turned into bed. His mother had been French, and we gossiped in that tongue. His views were tolerably impartial, but it was plain that the Carlists had his good wishes. The factions were partially dispersed, but were not defeated, he said; they would give

more trouble; and then he horrified me with a well-authenticated tale of a recent fight at Aspeitia, where an old villager had taken refuge in a house which was subsequently occupied by the troops. He fell dead after a volley fired by the Carlists. His son was one of those who had joined in the volley, and the awful muffled rumour was spreading among the peasantry that it was by the son's bullet the father had been slain.



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CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

### CHAPTER III.

A Make-Believe Spain—The Mountain Convoy—A Tough Road to Travel—Spanish Superiority in Blasphemy—Short Essay on Oaths—The Basque Peasants—Carlism under a Cloak—How Guerilla-Fighting is Conducted—A Hyperborean Landscape—A Mysterious Grandee—An Adventurous Frenchman—The Shebeen on the Summit—Armed Alasua—Base Coin.

AND this is sunny Spain, the land of the olive and the vine. Spain it certainly is in the absolute sense of the word in political geography, but in no other. It is no more Spain than the Highlands are England. The language, the race, the habits, the growths, are different. The language, the Euscara, is known to only one man not born within the borders, the polyglot Prince Lucien Buonaparte. A hackneyed legend runs that the devil tried to learn it, and dislocated his jaw. The race is the aboriginal Iberian, and has none of the languor of the south in it—a stubborn, not a supple race.



The habits of the people are industrious. The growths are rather of the apple and the pine than the olive and the vine.

There before us rises the wall of Nature's handiwork which shuts us out from the true Spain.

In my boyhood I often gazed with admiration on a print of Napoleon crossing the Alps. He was astride of a prancing white charger. I have since learned to detest Napoleon, and to know more of mountain travel. That masterful general, but cruel, dishonourable, bad man—demon-man with genius undoubted and will unbendable, but with the most unscrupulous of insatiate and insensate ambitions, and a leaven of littleness—did not face the heights of St. Bernard on a mettlesome steed, but on a patient mule, and the luxury of his apparel was restricted to furs. Wrapped up in the thickest clothing I could find, I watched the convoy forming outside the station at Beasain in the sunlit cold.

The train from San Sebastian got in at nine in the morning, and before ten a procession of six waggons, built after the massive, clumsy fashion of the French diligence, was drawn up in line. Horses

and mules, generally in teams of five—three leaders and two wheelers—were yoked to the ramshackle vehicles. The passengers, muffled in cloaks, rugs, scarfs, shawls and comforters—for there was ice in the breath of the keen air of the mountain—literally packed themselves in the narrow “insides” of the old-fashioned coaches. There were five in the low, narrow hutch upon wheels with myself, all males; we were as close as sardines in a box. There were some ladies of the party. I trust they had more space at their disposal. The luggage was piled on the roofs and covered with tarpaulins, the drivers mounted the seats in front, whips were cracked, and off we bounded at a pace that would rouse the applause, or peradventure the envy, of the gentlemen who tool the Brighton coach. Gaily our skinny steeds breasted the rise, sending a curl of mist from their hides, and shaking merry music out of the collars of bells round their necks as they clattered over the hard road. For three miles we dashed along at express speed. How spirit-stirring is rapid motion! I actually was warming into a wild joy, and praying that we might en-

counter the Carlists, under the influence of this gallop in the bracing morning atmosphere.

Suddenly there is a stop. The Carlists? No. But here the ascent begins, and a body of mountaineers await us with a string of bullocks. The three leaders are unharnessed and attached behind; and eight bullocks, two by two, are yoked in front of the pair of mules who act as wheelers. The same is done with the other waggons. I watch this process of yoking the bullocks with much curiosity. A strong piece of board is run across the heads of the pair who are coupled, and firmly tied in front of the horns; a sheepskin is thrown over that, for what purpose I cannot tell; and the ropes by which the bullocks drag us are fastened to the piece of board afore-mentioned. They pull, not against the shoulder, but against the horn. Their owners, muscular peasants, lightly clad, though it is cold, walk beside them with long pointed sticks, and occasionally goad them in the flanks. When that does not suffice, they push them, or rain blows on their hides, or twist their tails, and when all other means fail they swear at them. But the grave oxen

move no quicker ; they cling to their own gait as if deeply convinced of the truth of the adage, "Fair and easy goes far in the day." The peasants call one "demonio" and another a cow ; but the sleepy pair keep never minding, as they waddle along with drooping heads, held closely together as if whispering conspiracy.

At this early point in my experiences, the painful knowledge is forced upon me that the Spaniards are highly accomplished in the art of imprecation. If our army swore terribly in Flanders, I have my theory to account for it. They must have picked up the habit there, and the Spaniards under Alva had left their traces behind them in the speech of the region they had occupied. As a rule, swearing betrays a poverty of invention ; it is the resource of the vulgar and ignorant to emphasize their assertions ; but in Spain the swearing developed an originality that almost reconciled one to it. There was an awful insolence, a ribald riotousness in some of the oaths which redeemed them from the scorn which every well-balanced mind should feel for displays of petulance. I respect a

good round oath—an oath that blanches my cheeks and makes me imagine that it would not be extraordinary if the ground were to open and swallow the varlet who uttered it. That sort of oath is to be tolerated for its audacity. The malediction is a higher form of oath, and some maledictions are magnificent. To the amateur I can recommend King Lear's upon Cordelia, Francesco Cenci's upon Beatrice—which is more Shakspearian than Shakspeare—and even puny Moore's upon the traitorous Gheber. The joint-stock oath which Sterne puts into the mouths of the Abbess of Andouilletts and the novice, Margarita, who had the whitlow on her middle finger, is passable for its fantastic ingenuity; and the strong locutions pat in the lips of a certain Duke—unless notoriety belies him—are to be licensed because of his rank, and because he is a soldier. But he should have the courage to blurt them out on all occasions. He who dares to outrage society should not shrink from offending an individual.

“You — naughty boy, why did you sound the wrong call?” said H.R.H. to a bugler, but as soon

as he got out of earshot of a certain Personage, he muttered in an angry undertone, "You canonized little beggar, you know what I meant."

The Spaniards are liberal and earnest and dogged in their railings, anathemas, and execrations, but still the sleepy oxen do not hurry themselves. They care no more for a volley of select comminations than the jackdaw of Rheims did for the archbishop's curse. Of a verity this bullock's pace is a snail's pace, and we have ample leisure to inspect the peasants as we crawl along. Brawny, hardy, and firmly-knit as Highlandmen, their faces are weather-beaten and frank; their manner, when one speaks to them, independent but polite; in dress like unto their Celtic kinsmen of Brittany, short-jacketed, loose, and slovenly, but in stature more like to the tall mountaineers of Tipperary. They must be poor, very poor; but they have the appearance of content, and with it of honesty, sobriety, and civility.

And now a little secret must be imparted. Every man-jack of these ox-drivers is a Carlist, and that is the reason we are not attacked to-day! In a

week those innocent clowns may be blazing away at the regular army of Spain from the brushwood on a hillside, for after such fashion are Carlist wars conducted. A band assembles at the call of some chief—that is to say, the peasants leave their cabins and meet at some rock, some conspicuous tree, or some cross-roads. They have with them a flag, perhaps; perhaps a priest or two; they are badly armed with such arms as insurgents carry—blunderbusses, flint-muskets, fowling-pieces, horse-pistols; they have no distinctive uniform, except a few of the older bands—the permanent army of Carlism—which are clad in the seedy clothes that the French Garde Mobile wore during the late war. The campaign opens; a descent is made upon some village, the mayor is asked to supply so many hundred rations, and the young men are summoned to join the flag. Sometimes the mayor refuses, and there is a fight between “the volunteers of liberty,” that is to say, the local national guard, and the Carlists. On the average, so the reports go, one man is killed in each of these combats, and three wounded. That is a battle at this stage of

the Carlist war. With the regular troops sent against them the Carlists act otherwise. They take up ground in some inaccessible eyrie, pop at the passing detachments from their ambushade, draw them on in the hope of catching them in a trap; but the troops are cautious, they pepper away at the Carlists from a distance until the Carlists run, and the affair ends, as usual, with the loss of one man killed and three wounded. The peasants return to their cabins to tell the tale of their gallantry, and if the troops perchance should come their way, why they are but inoffensive, ingenious tillers of the soil, the most peaceful beings on the face of nature. The firearm is hid in the thatch or in the neighbouring hedge. But the officers who lead the troops do not allow their enemies the monopoly of gasconade. In the *Gaceta de Madrid* the bulletin of the engagement duly appears, and the names of the doughty warriors are chronicled for the admiration of the señoritas. One Carlist chief—at least, so pretend the wags—had been killed outright thrice, wounded mortally five times, and has had his band completely dispersed and



broken up seven times in the *Gaceta*, and yet he is still alive and troublesome. A most outlandish war, but how disastrous in its effects on the trade and prosperity of the country! It could not be carried on if the soil were not rich to plenteousness. There is an adventurous vigour in the breed, too, and the terrain lends itself to guerilla fighting. So far, I know nothing of the merits of Carlism; but this I can divine, that it is the old rivalry betwixt town and country, and the "pagans" or villagers are all Carlists—question of transmitted feud or local traditions, or both. The rustics have the advantage over the town-bred men; they are familiar with the by-paths; every sheiling is a refuge for them, every dweller therein a self-constituted scout. When they choose to seek them, they must have secure hiding-places. Artillery is an arm of derision in the hills; cavalry can rarely act effectually, and in the way of reconnoitring is next to useless, as its movements can be espied from rock-cover on every eminence; but in the open these insurgents can do nothing against disciplined troops. Pity that they should be such fools as to

abandon their pleasant and comfortable, if humble, homesteads, to help on the aspirations of any right-divine make-believe claimant to the heaven-sent mission—by accident of birth—of impressing other human beings that he is wiser than they, and should have revenues and reverence for condescending to govern them.

What would our ox-drivers do, I wonder, if they could overhear and understand the conversation in which thoughts like these are exchanged in the lumbering Noah's ark they are helping through their domain? We are getting nigh and nigher to the clouds, and the quilt of snow on the mountain grows thicker. The pathway is traceable only by the marks of the hoofs of beasts of burden and the ruts of wheels, and the fleecy banks at each side rise gradually higher. It is palpably colder, and yet we are far from the culminating point of the Pyrenean pass; straight saplings are not infrequent around, and here and there a lowly hut in a nook under some sheltering rock, both hut and rock hoary with snow, startles us with the reminder that human beings actually live here. The Basques,

said Voltaire, are a people who sing and dance on the summit of the Pyrenees. Our ox-drivers do not sing, neither do our muleteers. This interminable glare is becoming very fatiguing to the eyes, and the higher we ascend the rarer are the refreshing little streaks of darker hue. Stumps of dwarf trees replace the straight saplings to be seen lower down; and hardly are we on the crest of one snow-capped hill than another, hidden under the same smooth sheet of everlasting lime-white, mocks us. Slowly and painfully the oxen toil along, and the peasants by their side sink knee-deep at every step. Will this ever end? It was picturesque at first to watch the long caravan coiling over the spiral track which turns right and left like a corkscrew. Now it is tedious, for we are chilled and worn-out, hungry and cramped. The sublimity of nature is grandiose, but there may be too much of it. One tires of rolling perpetual cigarettes; one even tires of studying the forcible Spanish adjurations that begin with the third letter of the alphabet. My companions, four French commercial travellers, relapse into silence and doze off into fitful starts of

the sleepiness begot of extreme cold; the fifth—a grandee of Castile I take him to be at the very least by his appearance, broad swarthy countenance, shaven upper lip and chin, and short spade whiskers of a night-black—the fifth, this Spaniard, did not relapse into silence, for he had never uttered a word since we started.

What weariness to the flesh is this tedious climb to regions hyperborean! I catch myself yawning. What if our waggon were to break down! At last one of the Frenchmen bursts out, "*Dieu de Dieu, j'en ai assez.*" He would stand or rather sit it no longer, opened the door, and alighted. We all followed his example, even to the taciturn Spaniard, and took to the road. A walk in advance might send the blood circulating, and on we plodded in the middle of the path, regardless of the snow which soaked into our boots and saturated our trousers to the knees. Not a living being was visible but two crows who bore us company, and hopped on our flanks like a covering-party. The road was tantalizing in its tortuousness; after walking a furlong we found ourselves a couple of

yards directly above the point we had quitted a quarter of an hour before. One of the Frenchmen, seeing this, had an inspiration; he determined to go up the mountain perpendicularly, and before we could dissuade him he had sunk to his armpits in a treacherous crevasse. We dragged him out by making a cable of our pocket-handkerchiefs and throwing it to him. He took his wetting in good part.

"Ah!" he cried, "shan't I have something to tell them when I get back to the Boulevard des Italiens." And then, as if reflecting, he added, "But no, 'twill never do; they'd call me *farceur*."

A red-brick building with an arrangement of iron on the roof, as if it had been employed as a signal-post, faced us—high up on the pinnacle of a ridge at one moment; was at our side the next; behind us anon; and directly before us now. By turns it was small and large. We were asking ourselves (all except the Spaniard; he never spoke) was this a phantasmagoria, when a jingle of bells was heard on the still air. Where did it come from? We could see nothing. Suddenly, as a

theatrical ghost springs from a trap-door, at an abrupt turn a wild figure appears bearing right down upon us. A Carlist chieftain? Not so fast. A muleteer simply, sitting sideways on his prad, and leading a half-dozen mules laden with panniers in Indian file behind him. He told us we had reached the summit, and that there was a fonda a short distance off. Signs of life multiplied; we met mountaineers, with oxen drawing small cars with solid wheels similar to those of toy carriages—wheels that kept up perpetual creak and croak—and finally we encountered the caravan from Alsasua to Beasain. But we encountered no Carlists, that is, no armed Carlists, for every man there is Carlist in soul. The smoky fonda was as miserable as the most miserable of Irish shebeens; yet they gave us good white bread and eggs to eat, and, with the aid of the sauce of hunger and sundry glasses of acid Val de Peñas to wash it down, we made a hearty meal. The caravan overtook us in half an hour; the rest of the journey was downhill, the snow was deeper than on the other side, and the jolting terrific, but we did not care. Our goal was

near, and we had eaten and drunk. We laughed at the dangers we had passed, and even the Spaniard unbent and exhibited unexpected powers of conversation. Alas! for my judgment; he was no grandee of Castile, but a butcher from Saragossa, a mere *carnifex* with blood of the common red tint.

At Alsasua we came upon a village bleaker than Beasain, with soldiers billeted under every roof. They loitered in twos and threes about the wide street, which was drab with patches of dirty snow. Here were placed a few mountain guns under custody of a shivering sentry, there a bugler in slovenly greatcoat blew some call with pinched lips on a battered instrument. At the station—a rude shanty with wooden partitions and a plank erection run up as refreshment-stall—some attempt had been made at fortification. There were mud-works thrown up in its vicinity, and the walls were roughly loop-holed. A party of Linesmen were in possession. On a siding close by was the locomotive which had been riddled with shot by the insurgents on the now disused line to Pampeluna. Our own locomotive

was awaiting us, with steam up, and I hurried to procure my ticket. I pushed a piece of honest red gold through the wicket, and an extremely nice, slim female clerk gave me the pasteboard with my change and thanks. Something struck me in the silver shoved towards me; the leaden hue of the pesetas was suspicious. I took up one and rung it; the dull sound convinced me it was bad. I rung another—same result. I was desolate; but I had to call the attention of the extremely nice girl to the error she had fallen into; and she coolly, without adumbration of a blush, or faintest pretence at apology, took back the base coins, and gave me their equivalent in coins that were sterling. And then, for the first time, it broke upon me, that it was not considered a scoundrelly act to pass bad money upon an innocent foreigner, or upon an innocent native, for the matter of that. I further learned that if I had removed that bad money from the counter, I should have had to bear with the loss. That extremely nice girl would have assured me with all politeness that I must be labouring under an illusion.



The Spaniard has personal dignity to a prodigious degree. But his personal dignity does not hinder the ordinary Spaniard from endeavouring to foist counterfeit stamps upon his neighbour whenever he has the chance.

The tarantara of a bugle stirred a company of soldiers to take their places in the train. They were our escort to Miranda, on the borders of Old Castile, where we might consider ourselves out of danger. It is my opinion we were never in any danger.

We reached Miranda safely, and from that swept down in the darkness to Madrid without molest, the most of us snoring as regularly as the funnel of the engine snorted. I had a fearsome vision of a sweet Spanish maiden who had knowingly placed a worthless peseta in the tirelire at Mass, and had been sentenced by Santa Cruz to grill on the gridiron of hell for the term of her natural life. A carpet-bag utilized as a pillow was the origin of my vision. Had that carpet-bag been more carelessly packed, the penalty on the poor girl might have been prolonged to eternity.

## CHAPTER IV.

Madrid—The Fonda and its Porter—The Puerta del Sol—  
Postal Irregularities—Tribute to the Madrileños—The  
Barber's Pronunciamiento—Anecdotes of King Amadeus  
—Checkmating the Grand Dames—Queen Isabella—  
The Embarrassed Mr. Layard of Nineveh—The Great  
Powers Hesitate—America Goes Ahead—General  
Sickles—Mahomet and the Mountain—Republicanism  
among the troops—A Peculiar Pennsylvanian Dentist  
—Castelar under Torture—The Writer meets one of  
his Sept—Politicians by Trade—Honour among In-  
surgents—Alonso the Reckless.

FIRST impressions of Madrid, "the only court," do not fill the visitor with awe. It is an aggregate of masonry, fragmentary on the edges, compact in the middle, on a sandy plateau in a waste of arid landscape. There is lack of natural shade and water, albeit there are tree-planted walks and gardens, with cedars and Himalayan pines, and fountains with fulness of clear flow are abundant. It wants a river; the Manzanares, I am told, is but a ditch.

I do not know if that is so; I never could see the Manzanares. A rugged, sun-blistered city, Madrid struck me as no more characteristically Spanish—or what I had taught myself to accept as such—than Turin is Italian; both are half-Frenchified. In the northern distance are the summits of the Guadarrama hills, and the unseen breeze which sweeps down from its snowy eyries amongst them cuts like an icicle. The Madrileño fears it, for it has a trick of permeating the streets with a subtle, chilling, killing breath; and when the Madrileño steps from the sunny to the shady side of the street he is careful to lift a corner of his cloak as screen to his mouth.

The central point of Madrid is the Puerta del Sol—a bare, broad, irregular area off which nine thoroughfares diverge. Round it the day-god, greatest friend of Spain, pivots in glory. Now he floods one side with radiance, now he drops his cloth of gold over another. The Puerta del Sol is the focus of interest for the population. Thither the gossips repair, and there the affairs of the nation are discussed very often by those who have acted, act, or hope to act as leaders of the nation.

Naturally I made for the Puerta del Sol, for it was of vital importance to me to be in the movement, in the very vortex of the pool. I was fortunate. I got rooms in the Fonda de Paris, an hotel at the corner of the Calle de Alcalá, the principal avenue leading from the Plaza. As proof of the unsettled condition of affairs and its effect upon trade, it need only be said that at the *table d'hôte* of this, the first hotel in the capital, where one hundred and thirty persons usually sit down to dinner, there were sometimes not more than fifteen or twenty, and a proportion of these were fly-about Special Correspondents. Yet in this exiguous circle of prudent people who were detained in Madrid, or foolhardy people who had travelled there, turned up the irrepressible British tourist. Of the latter class we had charming specimens at dinner one evening in two English girls, with fresh peachy complexions, and hair like wavy masses of ripe maize. They had no guide but their faithful "Murray." What became of them subsequently I never ascertained; but it is to be trusted they were as lucky as the enterprising young lady who relied on Erin's honour

and Erin's pride in the reign of King Brian, and made the tour of the Emerald Isle with a gold ring on the tip of a wand. That would hardly pay the hotel-bills nowadays.

A great feature in the fonda was Constantine, the hall-porter, a tall swarthy man, who was as fluent a linguist as an Alexandria dragoman. He was Greek by birth, but had a strain of English blood on the mother's side. His sire may have been a South Sea cannibal or a South African lion-slayer for aught I remember; but that there was something phenomenally bold in him I am certain. Constantine's instincts were predatory, and his manners morose. There was a tradition that he had been a bandit in the neighbourhood of Smyrna, or an innkeeper by the Marseilles docks—much about the same thing, and that he was prepared to do little jobs of human carving for a consideration. However, these may have been fables got up by travellers in search of excitement to invest Constantine with an interesting air of romance. He was very civil to me and did not cheat me more than I chose. I never had occasion to ask him to kill anybody.

From my windows I could command the mid-basin in the Plaza, more for use than ornament, and as great a rendezvous of the quidnuncs as a village-pump. The panorama of life lounged or moved or bustled beneath—shifting groups of cloaked disputants, veiled women tripping gracefully along, stately Civil Guards in three-cornered hats, sombre priests with Don Basilio head-gear, the various moulds of human nature from the grandee to the mendicant, and above all that brood with which I soon grew familiar, and for which I conceived an invincible disgust—the sallow, peering, prating, importunate brood of hungry place-hunters, impatient to dip their fingers into the Government pie. Cabriolets passed to and fro, tram-cars with such sleek well-conditioned mule-teams jolted on the rails; here a horse-soldier trotted by with clattering accoutrements, there a water-carrier sturdily trudged; and in a sheltered angle a long-locked vendor of a magic hair-restorer vaunted his wondrous balm in sonorous patter, and occasionally curtained his face with his thick mane brought over from his back as tangible testimony to the fertilizing properties of

the balm. In short, from those windows I could take in the cardiac pulsing of Madrid. Below me, as I sat and smoked my cigarette, the beginning of change or crux, accident or riot, the initial whims or humours of the populace, the formation of a procession or the overture of a pronunciamento, were within my ken. And at one corner of the Puerta were the General Post Office and Telegraphic Bureau, a matter of great convenience to me, if only they were properly managed. However, it was far easier to collect news than to send it to the desired destination. The post was as unsafe as in those days in another land when Mr. Richard Turpin, highwayman, and his comrogues intercepted his Majesty's mails. As for messages by wire, I was not long in learning that no important information was allowed to be sent; true, the money for its transmission was taken, but—delayed, or forwarded, or suppressed even—the strict rule in that establishment was “no money returned.” Vain were complaints. The Special Correspondent had no resource but that of the negro suffering from toothache; 'twas his to grin and bear it. The idea

of ever again seeing the colour of the coin which has passed into the palm of a Spanish functionary is laughable in its pastoral innocence. As well expect to handle last year's snow. The system of ignorant espionage still obtained in the Peninsula, as I was forced reluctantly to observe: the word "Cuba" or "Carlos" on the telegraphic form at once aroused the scruples and suspicions of the official, and led to the confiscation of the message. In the end, I discovered how to facilitate the despatch of news; but as that is my secret I keep it to myself. Suffice it that in my bill of expenses the item "sundries" was elastic.

There are some valuable guide-books to Spain, and to them I refer the reader if he desire to be crammed with curious knowledge about churches and picture-galleries, museums of arms, and the beautiful upholstery of the Duke of Sixty-Blazons' palace. My behest was with living not dead Spain, as investigated during the throes of a political convulsion. I made my notes on the Madrileños without bias, and without bias I give them. I spent five weeks in constant and free intercourse with all