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DUNDAS MURRAY

THE
CITIES AND WILDS
OF ANDALUCIA

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JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

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P. Blanchard, del.

J.W. Cook, sc.

*Puerta del Perdón,
(Gate of Pardon.)*

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THE
CITIES AND WILDS
OF
ANDALUCIA.

BY

THE HON. R. DUNDAS MURRAY.



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TO

LORD MURRAY

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED

WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF GRATITUDE AND ESTEEM,

BY

THE AUTHOR.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife

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THE CITIES AND WILDS

OF

ANDALUCIA.

CHAPTER I.

CADIZ BY MOONLIGHT.—THE MARKET-PLACE.—GAY ASPECT OF THE CITY.—THE ALAMEDA.—ANDALUCIAN BEAUTY.—HISTORY OF CADIZ.—CHICLANA.—BAROSA.

It was by the beautiful moonlight of Andaluca that I first saw Cadiz. Leaning over the low bulwark of a rakish schooner, I rested my eyes upon the ocean city, at first not so much in admiration of the scene as with the satisfaction of being at length released by its presence from anxiety and danger. Our voyage had been an eventful one, and the little craft under my feet had run the gauntlet of various watery disasters ere it now glided with the ease and grace of a sea-bird up the waters of the bay. Could it have spoken—and the crew declared it could do everything but speak—what a long yarn would it have spun as it recalled past scenes!—the collision at midnight, with its crash of rending timbers and moments of fearful suspense; the tempest that chased it into the nearest port, a dismasted and crippled wreck; and then, when the breeze was fair and all went well, the sudden squall that passed over

B

with resistless strength, and bent it down into the waves to the verge of overturning.

After a month's listening to the roar of winds and waters, the calmness of the bay and the serenity of the night appeared something unnatural: perhaps the impression was aided by the aspect of the city, which wore, as it seemed to me, a strangely pale and sepulchral hue. Our vessel soon swung to its anchor, surrounded by shipping, whose black hulls and cordage chequered with shadows the silvery surface around them. In front lay Cadiz, no longer "rising o'er the dark blue sea" an indistinct white speck as I had first seen it, but a long low mass of monumental whiteness resting by the side of a moonlit expanse which was as calm as a lake. Not a light twinkled from the dwellings, although the night was barely begun, nor did a sound come from them; all was silent as the grave: yet "It is not dead, but sleepeth," we said of the city.

Morning came, with its sunshine and stir, but without the power, so it seemed, to awake the sleeping city. While the bay was traversed by objects in motion, ships coming in and others sailing out, and boats flitting across the surface, it displayed none of the usual signs by which cities in our climate announce the presence of a stirring population. There was no smoke rising into the air nor streaming away with the wind; no hum or murmur was to be heard; the outlines of its edifices and towers cut clear and well-defined against the sky: and as, according to our notions, a smokeless roof is a deserted one, the impressions conveyed by this prospect were connected with solitude and desolation in the streets we had yet to see. Yet, this apart, the aspect of the city was imposing; walled and bastioned, and showing lines of stately dwellings

towards the bay, it looked just the place from whence fleets and armadas had departed, and where merchants had heaped up the wealth of princes.

Entering by the sea-gate, we pass at once into the market-place, where picturesque illusions and historic reminiscences speedily vanish amid its vulgar realities. Yet the scene, though always a common-place one, is here animated and striking; its actors are arrayed in colours and draperies at once novel and pleasing to the eye, and which mingle together with pictorial effect. Those vociferating and gesticulating groups are clothed in brown cloaks, and shadowed by fantastic sombreros: their swarthy skins, coal-black hair, no less than their flashing eyes, proclaim them the excitable children of the South. They scream, they shout, and appear to be on the point of tearing the knives from their sashes to terminate their disputes, which, after all, are nothing more than bargaining. Above the clamour rise the voices of the venders of shell-fish and water; "Agua fresca,—fresca como nieve!" is drawled out by the latter with a long monotonous cry. "Is water actually sold by the glass?" exclaims the native of the rainy north, forgetting that as here cloudless skies prevail during the summer months, water becomes scarce, and, as a consequence, a luxury. Then there are other features of the scene as strange and novel; droves of burros, with their tinkling bells, passing through the crowd; or, mayhap, an ox-cart of antique shape slowly wends its way past; or a horseman, seated on a high-peaked saddle, bestrides a prancing steed with a flowing mane and tail; he is muffled to the eyes in an ample cloak, and by his side hangs a gun or carbine, bespeaking a land where each man must defend his property by the armed hand, or lose it. And who are those

nun-like figures that mingle with the throng? A black drapery covers their heads and falls upon their shoulders; in many instances the rest of the dress is of the same mournful colour. That head-dress is the mantilla, and these are no nuns, but Spanish dames in their national costume. A moment's observation dispels the first impressions produced by their sad-coloured attire; those eyes, dark, lustrous, and eloquent, are fraught with no religious fire or feeling, but cast glances around—free, though not immodest—and in which there is felt to lurk a strange power; their symmetrical forms are developed by the close-fitting dress they wear; a tiny foot peeps from below; the fan in one hand is in a constant state of fluttering excitement; and thus arrayed, the “daughters of Cadiz” move through the crowd with the wondrous grace of their country, and that step which no other land can equal.

Turning towards what seemed a narrow cleft in the line of houses encircling this scene, I entered the street of which it was the opening; and while passing on to the Fonda Inglesa, had opportunity to survey the peculiar architecture of Spanish cities. Looking upwards, there were lofty houses with whitened fronts, dazzling to the eye; balconies and various devices in bright colours diversified the exterior, and vied with each other in giving a lively air to their respective habitations: there was nothing of the sombre aspect I had been accustomed in fancy to associate with the streets of Spain; every edifice appeared modern and new, or, if ancient, was painted “up to the eyes” like some withered cheek, the better to conceal the ravages of time. The whole effect was therefore gay and brilliant beyond description; everywhere seemed

stamped on the walls the wreathed smiles of a city of pleasure. Such, I believe, will be the first impression of every voyager on landing at Cadiz; he is dazzled by the tinsel and Tyrian dyes in which it is arrayed, and imagines he has seen nothing so fascinating among cities, or so like the creation of enchantment; in a few days he surveys it with sobered eyes, and then feels disposed to condemn as dreamers the poets who have sung, and the travellers who have rehearsed, its charms. The illusion, it must be owned, is very powerful at first, and is in no small degree aided by the aspect of the moving throng that peoples the streets: when sombreros, flowing cloaks, and mantillas decorate the figures in this varied scene—when each pair of masculine lips embraces a cigar, and each feminine right hand rattles a fan—it is hard to believe that a population so theatrically attired, and so strangely occupied, have not been conjured up to give effect to the gaudy façades before which they move, and are not destined to vanish when that purpose is answered.

A short hour will suffice to explore all that is worthy of being seen in the city, and to gain a sufficiently accurate idea of its position and internal structure. It is seen to occupy the wave-beaten extremity of a long and narrow peninsula, and to compress within a massive girdle of ramparts the dwellings of 60,000 inhabitants into the smallest possible space; every inch of ground is valuable here, and broad streets and spacious squares are accordingly eschewed, in order that as great a number of habitations as possible may be condensed within circumscribed limits. The effect of this, however, is to surround the observer, wherever he goes, with a wearisome glare of stone; it paves the ground he treads, presses close to his vision in white or variegated

masses, intercepts every distant prospect, and leaves him only the view of objects hard, angular, and rigid. The eye soon longs for some spot of verdure to gladden its sight, but searches for it in vain amid the stone-built city: on the Alameda it descries a few dwarfed and sickly trees struggling for existence on the gravel-strewn soil; a few more may perhaps be found in some deserted nooks, but neither sward nor flower-pot flourishes under them, nor anywhere breaks in upon the grey pavement that wraps the surface of this Elysium of pleasure. I have mentioned the word Alameda: it is hardly necessary to inform the reader that this is a levelled space set apart for the paseo, or promenade, one of the most important divisions in the routine of Spanish life. Here it is placed on the eastern side of the city, contiguous to the ramparts, and, terrace-like, overlooks the bay and its shores studded with towns; among the lofty dwellings that partly encircle it, there is one over which waves the British flag, and marks at once the site of the Consulate and a mansion famed for its hospitality.* As soon as the day begins to close, a tide of fashionables sets in through the various avenues leading to it, and after diffusing itself for a time in various eddies among the exterior walks, or pausing to rest upon the lines of stone benches that fringe the centre one, concentrates at last into a narrow stream that divides the Alameda

* Few Englishmen have ever visited Cadiz without experiencing the kindness and hospitality of the late Sir John Bracken-burg, the father and predecessor in office of our present Consul there. I gladly embrace this opportunity of recording how much I am indebted to him for his assistance in facilitating my subsequent wanderings through Andalucia, by the means which his official position commanded.

into equal portions. For an hour the current continues to flow up and down within the bounds established by custom; the young and old, the "girls of Cadiz" and their gallants, mingling in a confused throng, from which arises a murmur of lively voices. As group after group passes by, there is observable a wonderful similarity in the expression of their mirth as well as in their general appearance; the clear, shrill tones of the feminine speakers are incessantly ejaculating the most sacred of names; the same arch smile plays on every countenance; the fan is toyed with by all with the same careless grace, and flutters more or less in proportion to the animation of its owner; the same quick movements of surprise or delight are everywhere elicited by the sparkling nothings of the Gaditanian *petit maitre*, whose treble runs like a discord among the other sounds. Amid all these displays there is, however, nothing boisterous or unfeminine on the part of Cadiz's daughters; their liveliness, though wanting that subdued tone we deem essential to polished manners, is graceful and becoming in its flights; it is the overflow of spirits which, like the beautiful wild flowers of their own land, are stirred by the lightest breath of air, and, like them, give forth a pleasant rustle when so agitated. At the same time the traveller, if he has indulged in exaggerated notions of Spanish beauty, will here be taught in what it consists. Probably his final impression will be one of disappointment; and even he who has drawn in his imagination a less glowing picture of its charms, will find the reality fall short of his ideal sketch. If he has kept out the pure red and white and the eye of heavenly blue that mark the beauty of a northern sky, he has judged rightly; but after supplying their place with the pale or dusky cheek

of a southern clime, and its eye, which, whether it be wild or gentle, flashing or languid, is always dark, he will need to use his pencil with caution. In truth, the Spanish dame, as regards regularity of feature, and those charms which form beauty of countenance, must yield the palm to the dames of other nations; her attractions centre in her dark glossy hair and in those eloquent eyes, that unite with an ever-varying play of expression in making her wondrously fascinating. In beauty of form, however, she reigns alone; nothing could be more symmetrical or more exquisitely rounded than the shapes of the Gaditanian belles, as they glided or floated—anything but walked—through the mazes of the gay crowd on the promenade; indeed, the Andalusian grace is proverbial in Spain, and the traveller must confess that he has never beheld elegance of motion until he has stood upon an Andalusian Alameda. What it is, can hardly be described by words; it is beyond the power of language to describe those slow and surpassingly graceful movements which accompany every step of the Andaluza; her every attitude is so flowing, and at the same time so unforced, that she seems upborne by some invisible power that renders her independent of the classically moulded foot she presses so lightly on the ground.

Meanwhile, the concourse begins to diminish; group after group drops away; the line of promenaders contracts to a narrow thread, and finally disappears entirely, leaving the Alameda deserted by all but a few who find attractions in its quiet nooks. The stream has, however, only disappeared to rise again in another quarter: the Plaza San Antonio is now the scene to which the shifting throng has transferred its perambulations; and here, beneath the light of lamps, it paces round the

limits of the square, which till a late hour is alive with the sound of moving feet mingled with bursts of merriment, and other tokens of a pleasure-loving people.

Cadiz, like many of the seaports on this coast, may lay claim to the remotest antiquity. Its name has descended to us from the Phœnicians, who called it Gadir, a word which is supposed to have signified in their tongue "a bulwark," and might be well applied to the rocky point on which it stands. That maritime people, half merchant, half corsair, quickly perceived its advantages as a defensible post against all who might be powerless at sea; and, confident in their acknowledged supremacy on that element, were not slow to make the barren rock their own. Here they raised fortifications, and founded a temple which was dedicated to their own divinity, Hercules, the god of the strong hand. From hence it was not difficult to push the commercial enterprises northwards, having now so safe a haven and a rock-built sea-fastness at their command. Voyages more distant than any they had before contemplated were undertaken, even to that Britannia, whose shroud of mist and fogs they were the first to pierce. It is curious to note how the path of commerce has in all ages remained the same, and how that from the West to the East is trodden by the greatest of modern commercial nations in the very footsteps of the ancient people who, without chart or compass, boldly followed it in their course from the East to the West. The halting-places of both nations are likewise nearly the same: Gibraltar is to Britain what Cadiz was to the Phœnicians; it is the half-way-house upon the route, established at the point where danger and delays are most to be apprehended. Malta,

in like manner, was a post of the Phœnicians; and thus, while we plume ourselves upon the possession of these important stations for our fleets, the acquisition of one of which was the result of a random stroke of war, we pay an involuntary tribute to the wisdom and foresight of the seafaring people by whom they were secured, and each one made the basis of commercial operations.

When the Phœnicians ceased to be merchants and navigators, Cadiz passed into the hands of the Carthaginians, who not only succeeded their parent nation in its maritime greatness, but developed, to an extent unknown before, the resources and power of commerce. It shared, however, the fate of the Peninsula on the triumph of the Roman arms over the mistress of the seas, and became a Roman city in the year 203 B.C. Henceforward it is known only as one of the richest commercial emporiums of the empire. But long after its absorption into the Roman dominions, this city appears to have retained in its manners and customs many traces of its Oriental origin; then, as now, the usages of the East were too congenial to the climate and character of the people to be eradicated by a change of masters from the soil in which they had taken root. Even in the matter of amusements, it seems to have imported the wanton dances of the East; for these it was once as famous as it now is for its cachucha and fandango, both of which are indisputably derived from an Oriental source. To the latter, which may be, and occasionally are, danced in a fashion far from decorous, the modern censor may still apply the words in which the Roman satirist reproved the indelicate displays of the Gaditanians in his own age; the "*de Gadibus improbis puellæ*" have preserved but too well not a

few of those free movements which called forth his indignant rebuke.

Under the Arab domination, Cadiz sank into obscurity; its position placed it out of the line of Arab commerce, which was exclusively directed towards the East and the states of Barbary. Hence the ports on the Mediterranean, such as Gibraltar, Malaga, and Almeria, being the principal outlets for Andalusian manufactures, monopolised the whole traffic with other countries, and rose to a corresponding degree of eminence. When, however, by the discovery of America, the path of commerce turned towards the West, Cadiz could not fail to become the emporium of the new world, and to enter upon a new era of prosperity. From the moment that the treasure-laden galleons began to discharge their precious freights on its quays, it assumed the first place among the ports of Spain, and, notwithstanding the defection of the American colonies, still continues to retain that position. In the wars between Britain and the Spanish monarchy, no town suffered so much as this; its semi-insular situation particularly exposed it to the assaults of a nation which long and successfully contended with the Spanish navies for the supremacy at sea. The first of these attacks occurred during that period of exhaustion which overtook the Spanish empire upon the destruction of its invincible Armada. That mighty armament was merely the last effort of expiring strength, and on its overthrow "Spain with the Indies" lay prostrate and helpless at the feet of her maritime rivals. Her southern shores were ravaged with impunity by the Barbary corsairs, who landed wherever they chose, wasted her fruitful soil, and carried into captivity all whom the scymitar spared. The traveller still sees on

the bold headlands along the shores of the Mediterranean the remains of the atalayas, or watch-towers, from whence a smoke ascended to give notice of the approach of the Moorish vessels, and warn the wretched inhabitants to flee inland. Her northern and western coasts were in like manner swept by the fleets of victorious England. Either in privateering expeditions they lay in wait for and captured her galleons, or disembarking bodies of troops, assailed her seaports and wasted them with fire. It was in an expedition of the latter nature, only eight years after the wreck of the Armada, that Cadiz was stormed by the English forces and taken by the sword. Among the commanders in that successful exploit were Sir Francis Vere, Sir Walter Raleigh, and the Earl of Essex. It was a subject of debate whether the town should be held by an English garrison; and Sir Francis Vere offered with four thousand men to maintain it against all enemies, but his proposal was rejected, and the town, after being in the possession of the invaders for fourteen days, was abandoned. The same fleet on its return to England landed on the coast of Portugal, and seized the town of Faro in the province of the Algarve. There they found the valuable library of Osorius, who was bishop of the place: this they conveyed to England and bestowed upon the newly-erected library of Oxford.* It was again assailed in 1702 by a fleet under the command of Sir George Rooke, but without the success which attended the former expedition. The repulse was, however, amply avenged by the capture of Gibraltar two years subsequently.

To Cadiz may be applied Dr. Johnson's definition of a ship; it is a prison with the chance of being

* Sir William Monson's Naval Tracts.

drowned. On every side but one the sea washes the foundations of its walls, which secure it as much from the assaults of the turbulent element as from the ravages of a foreign invader. On the western side, which confronts the Atlantic, a wild scene of warfare is visible whenever the ocean is agitated by storms. The rocky slope at the foot of the ramparts is then white with the breakers that roll up towards the walls, and dash with stunning noise against their solid masonry. At such times, every projecting angle is enveloped in a cloud of spray, which falls upon the interior in cascades of brine, and seems to bode the entrance of the billows that storm without. The sound of this wild uproar penetrates into the centre of the city, and makes itself heard even in the interior of the houses. During the hours of darkness, the effect is peculiarly imposing. If, as Silvio Pellico says, "svegliarse nella mezza noce è cosa tremenda," how much more striking is it to waken at midnight, and hear the silence of one's prison broken by the clamour of an adversary that thunders at its gates without pause or rest! The stillness he deems so awful is then rendered doubly impressive by the distant roar of a warfare which the listener fancies is fraught with peril to himself. Yet these dangers are more apparent than real. Cadiz is founded upon a rock, and, however loudly the Atlantic may rage, is seated upon too sure a foundation to be in dread of its waves. On one occasion, however, its citizens trembled for their own and the city's existence. During the earthquake of 1755, by which the greater part of Lisbon was laid prostrate, the sentinels on the walls of Cadiz descried the sea, at ten miles' distance, rising to the height of sixty feet above the common level, and the huge billow thus

formed advancing with great velocity towards the city. At this sight the whole population were seized with dismay, and, apprehending the total submersion of the town, rushed with the soldiery towards the gate which leads to the low isthmus connecting the town with the main land. Happily, the governor was a man of sense, and perceived the danger of this step. He ordered the gates to be closed, so that few succeeded in gaining the isthmus. Meanwhile, the gigantic wave reached the shore; and dashing among the rocks with a terrible crash, spent its force there ere it reached the walls. It was, however, strong enough to demolish these, and to remove some pieces of heavy artillery to a distance of a hundred feet, and then, sweeping into the town, inundated the lower portion of it. Little damage, however, was done, and the only loss of life occurred upon the isthmus to which I have alluded. All who had retreated there were overwhelmed by the waters and drowned.

Along this isthmus is conducted the road to Chiclana, the summer resort of the Gaditanians. At all seasons of the year the communication is kept up by omnibus, while, at the same time, it may be reached by water; but, declining both these modes of conveyance, I started, on a clear wintry morning, to traverse the distance on foot. Passing out by the land-gate, I shortly gained the noble arrecife, or causeway, formed on the narrow strip of land that here divides the waters of the bay from those of the Atlantic. On the right hand the deep blue tide stretched far into the horizon, unmarked by sail or shadow; but on the other a variety of objects mingled with the liquid expanse to diversify the prospect; shipping of all nations were crowded together at one point; at another a little

flotilla of fishing-boats were spreading their picturesque lateen sails to the wind ; along the winding shores in sight, white towns and villages seemed to hang upon the edge of the waters, and to be on the verge of sliding into them ; and inland, bold sierras completed the background. As I increased my distance from Cadiz, I passed in succession the outer line of fortifications and forts by which it is defended, and, after a walk of six miles, entered the town of La Isla. A broad street is all that is worthy of notice in this place ; which, though suffering from the vicissitudes of fortune, still boasts of a population of thirty thousand souls. From La Isla there extends towards the south a bleak tract of salt-marshes, dotted with pyramids of salt, which is here formed in large quantities by evaporation, and stored up in that shape. The road, however, avoided this marshy region, by turning to the east, after having crossed by the Puente de Zuazo, the Santi Petri river: the latter stream is, however, more properly to be termed a natural canal between the ocean and the Bay of Cadiz, and, as it cuts across the peninsula upon which that city stands, may be said to convert it into an island.

By the circuitous route taken by the road, Chiclana is six miles distant from La Isla. It is altogether unworthy of its position as the chosen retirement of the Gaditanians during the summer months, for its dirty and dilapidated condition presents a striking contrast to the clean and well-paved streets and the handsome edifices of Cadiz. Not far off, however, is a spot to which every Briton will turn with interest; the field of Barosa lies to the southward, and I did not delay long to pay it a visit. Taking with me Napier's account of the battle, I wended my way through the

pine-wood which skirts Chiclana on the west and south ; and crossing the broken plain that lies between it and the fiercely contested heights, ascended the latter by an easy slope : this terminated in an abrupt steep towards the sea, on the edge of which stood a roofless and dilapidated hut, once a vigia or watch-tower. Here it was evident that the thickest of war's tempest had descended ; the walls, both on the exterior and interior, were covered with the marks of bullets and shot, not yet obliterated by the lapse of more than thirty years : indeed, so lightly had the finger of time touched the ruin, which was probably the work of that day, that the names and remarks of those who had visited the battle-field immediately after the event, though written in pencil on the walls, were yet fresh and legible. From this spot the course of the fight could be distinctly traced. On the west was the sea, bounded by a line of steep cliffs, at the base of which, however, a firm sandy beach afforded an excellent road for troops. If they pursued this route in a northerly direction, their march would be stopped at the distance of four miles by the channel of the Santi Petri River ; but at the mouth of this a flying bridge had been constructed, and the passage therefore into the Isla could be effected without difficulty. It was towards this point that the allied force of Spaniards and British was tending on the day of battle, their march being directed along a route, which kept them about two miles from the beach. There was, however, no slight danger in this movement. Marshal Victor, with nine thousand troops, was in the woods of Chiclana, and so nigh that he could fall with ease upon the rear of the force crossing the bridge, and probably bring it into a disastrous conflict, as, from the nature of the ground, there was but

scanty space afforded for the defence of the passage. Under these circumstances, General Graham proposed to La Peña, the Spanish commander-in-chief, to hold the height of Barosa, which he justly argued was the key both to defensive and offensive movements: so long as it was occupied by the allied force, no advance could be made by the French, as in that case their flank would be menaced by the détachment on the height. La Peña, however, replied to this reasoning by ordering the British commander to march straight for the Bermeja, a low ridge about midway between the Barosa height and the bridge. This Graham obeyed, in the persuasion that a division of Spaniards was to remain at Barosa; but scarcely had he entered a wood in front of the Bermeja, when La Peña moved off with his Spaniards towards the Santi Petri bridge, leaving only a weak rear-guard to protect the baggage. The French general, who had watched this false step from his forest-lair, immediately sprang forward upon the prey he now deemed his own. While one brigade, under Laval, was directed against the British, another, commanded by himself in person, ascending the Barosa height, dispersed the Spanish rear-guard, captured three of its guns, and bore hard upon the small British force which was left to protect the baggage. Upon notice of the attack reaching Graham, not a moment was lost in countermarching to meet the enemy; but when he reached the plain the key of the field of battle was already in their possession, while Laval's column was close upon his left flank. La Peña was nowhere to be seen. In such a strait, the British general felt that a retreat, if such were possible, would only aggravate the desperate position in which he was placed, and resolved, therefore, to attack without losing an instant. The

troops were hastily formed into two masses, one of which marched straight for Laval's column, the other directed its course against the Barosa height. The former, by a fierce charge, broke the first and second lines of the French, and threw them into irremediable confusion; but a harder task awaited the second body. On the edge of the ascent they were met by their gallant opponents, and for some time the victory hung in the balance: the fire of the British, however, prevailed; two French generals fell mortally wounded, and their troops were driven down the hill, with the loss of many soldiers. The British then stood triumphantly on the summit, masters of six guns, an eagle, two generals, both mortally wounded, and 400 prisoners; but having been twenty-four hours under arms, and without food, were too exhausted to pursue. "While," says Napier, "these terrible combats of infantry were fighting, La Peña looked idly on; neither sending his cavalry, nor his horse artillery, nor any part of his army, to the assistance of his ally; nor yet menacing the right of the enemy, which was close to him, and weak." It was a fit sequel to such unworthy conduct, when the Spanish general claimed the victory for himself, and his staff published inaccurate accounts of the battle, accompanied with false plans of the ground, in order to support their assertions. No reasoning, however, or falsification, could extinguish the fact, that not a Spaniard joined in the fight; while the loss of 1100, in killed and wounded, on the side of the British, attested its severity, and marked on whom the weight of battle had fallen. I have mentioned that the watch-tower on the height bore many traces of the deadly fray around its walls. While roaming over the field of battle, I was surprised to discover other memorials

of its fury, which, like the former, had resisted the effacing fingers of time. In the shallow ravines by which the field is broken, C—— and I found a couple of cannon-balls, which had probably lodged in their sides, and, being detached by the rains, had rolled to the bottom, where we picked them up, half imbedded in the sand. These we carefully preserved as mementos of a day so glorious to the British arms.



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

CHAPTER II.

PORT ST. MARY'S.—BODEGAS.—ROAD TO SAN LUCAR.—BRIGAND
VIS-A-VIS.—PLUNDERED TRAVELLERS.

EL PUERTO SANTA MARIA, or as it is more commonly called for brevity's sake, El Puerto, is, like many other towns in Spain, never seen to better advantage than when distance throws its veil over many accompaniments too matter-of-fact to be picturesque. For this reason, its best point of view is undoubtedly from the ramparts of Cadiz; and looking from the latter town across the bay, which is here some five or six miles wide, it was not difficult to imagine that the "port," with its white walls gleaming in the sunshine, was no unpleasing addition to the landscape on the opposite mainland. Between the towns a couple of small steamers are constantly plying throughout the day; and stepping on board one of these, in less than an hour I was at my journey's end. Before entering the mouth of the Guadalete, which forms the harbour of the town, we had to cross a bar of very ominous character; and this undertaking, even by a steamer, is regarded as a hazardous attempt in bad weather. To small craft and boats the danger is much greater, especially at low water, or when a heavy swell sets in from the Atlantic. Should the reader attempt to cross it, as I once did, under these circumstances, he will learn what is meant by a boat being filled with water. For-

merly it was usual for the boatmen to collect small sums from the passengers, in order to procure masses for the souls of those who had been lost amid the boiling surf; but since the introduction of steamers the custom has been abandoned.

Except the bodegas, or wine-vaults, little is to be seen in the town worthy of note. These bodegas, it must be observed, are very different from the subterranean and rheumatic labyrinths in which it is our pleasure to immure the rosy god. Here they court the light and the sunshine, displaying broad fronts and lofty walls, and really are edifices of such extent and completeness in their arrangements as to rival the first of our manufacturing establishments. Entering one of them, you feel as if some "banquet hall deserted" was now put to humble uses, for much there is to remind one of a higher origin; the roof is high overhead, the walls ponderous and lit by narrow apertures, and from end to end you enjoy a clear view, interrupted only by the solid pillars by which the rafters are sustained. All this height and magnitude of proportion is designed to compass the same object for which we construct underground cellars; in both cases the purpose is to maintain an uniformly even temperature—with this difference, however, that in Spain a fiery sun must be excluded, while in our own rugged clime the enemy to be dreaded is excess of cold. It may sound strangely to call the bodegas manufactories of wine; yet the term is not inappropriate; the wine is stored in long ranges of casks piled over each other tier above tier, the uppermost invariably containing the fruits of recent vintages. As the contents of the lower casks are drawn off, more is added from the upper ones, so that a system of constant replenishing is at work, and on no account is a

cask ever drained to the dregs. Hence the lower tier contains the produce of various seasons, all blended together by this process of admixture. Up to this stage of its manufacture the wine is free from foreign ingredients; the next step is to add brandy, to infuse strength—boiled wine, to give any shade of colour that may be desired—richer and older wines, to impart flavour: and when the taste of the market has been thus satisfied, the mixture is called sherry. As a wine-exporting town, the reputation of Port St. Mary's is but of yesterday. Not long ago, it was merely the shipping port of Xeres, from which it is distant about ten miles; but now a great deal of business is transacted by the enterprising merchants who first saw the advantages of its situation, and its prosperity seems manifestly to be on the increase. As far, however, as regards the finer kinds of wines, its older rival must still bear away the palm.

On the edge of the suburbs to the westward stands a spacious convent, in days of yore the property of St. Dominic; but, alas! a mightier than he in Spain has turned him out of house and home, and his patrimony is now the spoil of the state. Seeing the gate open as I passed by, I walked in to ascertain to what uses the place had come at last; for since the suppression of the monastic orders, the greater number of the convents have undergone the strangest of metamorphoses, in all of which there is to be traced an utilitarian character, very much at variance with the precepts and practice of their former occupants: the majority are converted into hospitals, jails, lunatic asylums, penitentiaries, barracks, and so forth, while a few minister to the wants of the mind, having risen into universities and museums. The building was one of those gloomy,

prison-like edifices, with massive square towers at each angle, such as the old Italian masters loved to introduce into the background of their scriptural pieces. The place seemed quite deserted, so I wandered unquestioned through the courts below, and from thence up to the corridors that gave access to each cell. On the basement story I passed into what had evidently been the refectory, a lofty though rather narrow apartment, and as void of ornament as every other part of the building; but it was clear that the fathers no longer feasted there. At the furthest end a wooden stage rose above the floor, and was flanked by certain screens called wings; while a dingy piece of drapery depended from the roof, and was intended to represent a curtain: in short, the wicked world had helped itself to the room, and had transformed it into a theatre. Projecting from one of the sides of the apartment was a pulpit, to which there was a passage by a dark staircase in the wall. Here one of the holy fathers at meal times was wont to read a homily, or passages from devout books, for the edification of the brotherhood as they devoured their commons in silence. As I squeezed myself with difficulty up the narrow passage, I could not help admiring the wisdom of the fraternity in causing the office of reader to be discharged by the most recent member of their community. Common report gave them the credit of living on the fat of the land, and hence it was pretty evident that none but the latest, and consequently the leanest among them, could thrust his person up that narrow flight of steps with any hope of reaching the top.

When all the sights had been exhausted, C—— proposed visiting San Lucar de Barrameda. This is an ancient town, situated at the mouth of the Guadal-

quivir, and in the brighter days of Spain was rather famous as a seaport. It was not far off, being some twelve or fifteen miles distant; and as the road was said to be tolerably good—at least for Spain—we resolved to make our way to it on foot. But in Andalusia, where such a thing as pedestrianism is altogether unknown, our choice excited as much astonishment as if we had proposed a pilgrimage to Mecca. To speak the truth, I rather imagine our sanity suffered in their estimation, for once or twice I caught the exclamation, “Que locos Ingleses!” But in this quarter of the world Englishmen have the reputation of doing all sorts of odd things; and if this was one, I consoled myself by thinking that I was keeping up the national character. On a clear, bright morning, therefore, towards the end of January, we bade adieu to Port St. Mary’s, and soon found ourselves beyond the odours of its narrow and ill-paved streets. We carried arms, as all must do who have no particular fancy for hearing “Stand and deliver!”—a kind of salutation not uncommon upon the roads in Andalusia, and most usually addressed to the unarmed. Against interruptions of such a nature we deemed our double-barrels a sufficient protection, though many of our friends strongly recommended the precaution of taking in addition some armed attendants. At that period, indeed, so great was the insecurity of the road we were about to follow, that the common mode of traversing it was after the fashion of a caravan. At a certain hour assembled all the travellers whom fate commanded to make use of it; they then placed themselves under the protection of an escort, more or less numerous according to the height of their fears or the number of their party. Thus fortified the procession sallied forth, and wound

its way onwards in fear and trembling; and if it reached its destination unassailed, the event was a subject of congratulation to all concerned. For our own part, we rejected all assistance, being influenced thereto by sundry reasons of moment: first and foremost, we had little to lose, and cared less whether or no it departed from us; and in the next place, we well knew that, whatever might be the bold bearing of an escort, too often its practice was to show valour on every occasion but the one when it was most required. Outside of the town we halted to load our guns. Looking back, the view that presented itself was of a high order of beauty. A far off to the right was Cadiz, rearing its glittering spires at the termination of the long low promontory that carries it far into the sea. In the distance the sandy strip which links it to the mainland was lost to view; and all alone, in the midst of the waters, stood the bastioned city, severed by a broad sheet of dark blue from the shore, and seemingly left to the mercy of the Atlantic. On the side nearest us were spread out the waters of its noble bay, which lay at our feet calm and silent as a lake. A few sails sprinkled its burnished surface; some seeking distant ports, but most of them hastening to mingle with a forest of masts which, deep in its bosom, marked the anchorage for shipping. Upon the mainland, the eye ranged over a level country, terminated by the picturesque sierras of Moron and Medina Sidonia; their rugged peaks clothed in that hue of dusky purple so peculiar to Andalusian mountain scenery, and which the rays of a warm sun were unable to dispel.

For the prospect that invited us onwards so much could not be said. We soon lost sight of the ocean,

and entered a wilderness of growing wheat, stretching away on every side for many miles, and as destitute of habitation, tree, or shrub, as the most wintry desert. At the same time the road became a mere track, so that the vehicle which carried our luggage was compelled to make long and tedious detours, in order to avoid the impassable gulfs that yawned at every step. Half-way stands a venta, or inn, said to bear but an indifferent character, being, according to report, the resort of such brigands as infest the road. For their purposes the situation is admirably adapted. It stands upon a slight eminence commanding a view of the road on both approaches for a long way, thus giving them ample time to scan the strength of parties travelling, or to make off if danger is nigh. Seeing a peasant at the door, I walked up to him to inquire if any robberies had taken place during the morning. Guessing my purpose, the man came forward, and, without waiting to be questioned, informed me that there was "no novelty"—such being the delicate phrase used in Spain to intimate that there had been neither robbery nor murder on the route. Had I put the question a few hours later, he would have returned me a different answer, as the sequel will show.

Not far from the venta, we encountered the convoy from San Lucar. It consisted of eight or nine calesas filled with passengers, the whole preceded by a couple of horsemen armed to the teeth with carbines, pistols, and cigars, and looking the beau ideal of stern resolve. If the reader knows not what a calesa is, let his imagination picture a machine of a very antique cut. The wheels are high, supporting a body like that of a cabriolet, the sides and back being, however, daubed scarlet or yellow, and adorned, besides, with strange

mitations of fruits and flowers. Throw over this a veil of cobwebs, blue mould, rust, mud-splashes of two or three years' growth, and a calesa is then in character. The turn-out, however, is not complete till you have placed between a couple of short straight shafts a lean and withered Rosinante, who steps along to the music of hundreds of small bells which decorate its head and neck. The driver is scarcely less fantastic than his vehicle. He wears a short brown jacket, the back and arms of which are inlaid with cloth of various gaudy hues—scarlet, blue, and yellow being predominant, so that his upper man has much the appearance of a harlequin; next come calzones, usually of black velvet, and open at the knee; while gaily-embroidered leggings of calf-skin, lacing up the outside of the leg, and a conical hat with a spacious brim, complete the costume. There is no seat provided for him, and he therefore sits on the board at your feet, singing, talking, and plying his whip, with a most sovereign contempt for everybody's comfort but his own.

As we proceeded, the road began to improve a little. A gang of galley-slaves was at work upon it—squalid and scowling wretches; some bearing on their heads baskets of sand from a pit hard by, while others were spreading out the material, not with spades or other instruments, but solely with their naked hands. As we passed them, one accosted us in French, begging a cigar or two to lighten his task. On inquiry he proved to be a native of "la belle France."

"Why are you here?" was our next question.

"For nothing to speak of," said he, shrugging his shoulders most characteristically; "pour avoir tué un douanier."

Leaving these miserable outcasts a long way behind

us, the country became as wild a solitude as ever. The only object to arrest the eye within a circuit of many miles was a straggling olive-grove, spreading its dusky foliage over the brow of a low ridge about a mile to our left. As we were looking upon it with something of that interest with which the voyager amid the lonely waste of waters eyes an approaching sail, on a sudden a couple of horsemen started out of its shade, and crossing the country at a rapid gallop, made straight for the road in our front. Such a manœuvre was too strange not to excite our suspicions; all the tales we had heard about banditti and so forth flashed across our minds as we coupled their sudden appearance with the route they were taking. In the hope of satisfying our doubts, we turned to the conductor of our luggage; but Juanito, though extremely talkative, became wonderfully silent on this occasion. "They might or might not be *ladrones*; how was he to know?" That they had, however, some evil purpose in view soon became a matter of no dispute; for, disappearing behind a slight acclivity, behind which the road wound, they were seen no more, though, from the pace at which they were going, they ought to have emerged the next minute into the open ground on our right. It was evident that on the reverse slope of the acclivity before us the suspicious strangers had halted, and that there they intended to await our approach.

In this dilemma we called a council of war. C—— was for marching on; I was of the same opinion, for a couple of men did not give us any concern; but our difficulties arose from the apprehension that they might be scouts stationed to give notice to a larger party concealed from our view: nevertheless, at all hazards, we determined to proceed, knowing that, however out-

numbered, yet with arms in our hands we might come to reasonable terms.

On reaching the summit of the acclivity I have described, our relief was great, when, on looking down, we descried but two horsemen, and these the same we had seen before. About thirty yards to the right of the road they had come to a halt, with bridles in hand and carbines resting on their saddle-bows, ready for instant action. As we descended towards the spot where they were posted, it was pretty evident that they watched intently every step that brought us nearer: still no sound or gesture broke from them to indicate a hostile purpose. Perhaps the cocking of our guns as we came in front—a very disagreeable sound when you know the bullet is destined for yourself—may have had its effect; but at all events they thought it better to let well alone as long as a leaden messenger could reach them. To do them justice, they were as fine a pair of cut-throat vagabonds as one would wish to see; not well enough dressed to be heroes—for I am sorry to spoil the romance of the thing by adding that they were rather out at the elbows; but, on the other hand, their steeds were capital, and in the best condition for exploits on the road. Altogether, with their slouched hats and dark visages, they had the air of men equally well disposed to thrust a hand into one's pocket, or a knife between one's ribs, and whose certain end was a halter or a bullet. As long as we could catch a glimpse of them they were still motionless, and fixed to the same spot and attitude; but as we plodded onwards an intervening ridge hid the place from sight, and we were once more alone on the road. In a short time the white houses and terraced roofs of San Lucar appeared in the distance, to announce the

termination of our march; and in the course of an hour we found ourselves without molestation in the best inn it affords.

After a couple of hours spent in strolling about the streets, we returned to our dinner, which we had ordered to be placed in the coffee-room of the inn. We had scarcely sat down to it when the door was hurriedly burst open, and a man with a countenance brimful of importance rushed into the middle of the room.

“Have you heard the news, señores?” said he, addressing himself to the whole party, who stared aghast at the interruption. “Three calesas, coming from Port St. Mary’s, and full of passengers, have just been robbed! Here they come!” he added, hearing the rumbling of wheels outside; and darted away as abruptly as he had entered.

We followed him with no less speed to the gate of the inn, where were drawn up the plundered vehicles, surrounded by a crowd eagerly listening to the narrative of the disaster. Two or three of the despoiled travellers were also there, lamenting over empty pockets, and watches and purses departed to return no more. One of the party, a colonel in the army, in the grief of his heart took to bed, and would not be comforted. It is true he was a sufferer to some extent, his loss consisting of a watch valued at fifty pounds, and a new cloak,—an article of apparel which in Spain is rather costly. From him we obtained next morning an account of the circumstances attending the robbery.

It appeared, from comparing notes, that they were stopped not far from the lonely spot selected for performing a similar operation on ourselves. The mode by which it was effected was rather curious. One of the escort having lingered a long way behind, there

remained but another man to guard the convoy. On a sudden three men on horseback galloped up : nobody could imagine from whence they came, though I believe they had concealed themselves under a bridge that spans a shallow stream crossing the road. Without pausing, or testifying any sinister intentions, the new-comers merely interchanged the "Vaya usted con Dios!" or "God be with you!" the invariable salutation of travellers in Spain, and passed onwards at the same pace. The next moment, however, they returned, sending before them the ominous words, "Boca abajo," or "Down upon your mouth." At these dreaded sounds the affrighted travellers, colonel and all, threw themselves with their faces on the ground, knowing too well the consequences of disobeying that terrible mandate. In a trice they were relieved by unseen hands of everything of value; and being sternly told not to stir, as they respected their lives, remained in that helpless posture for some minutes.

In the meantime their solitary man of valour displayed the highest discretion : he put spurs to his horse and rode off; but whether he retired to save himself from the fate of his plundered charge, or whether he went to summon his companion, is a point he alone can clear up. Certain it is, however, that the two worthies returned only when the mischief was done, and pursuit fruitless. All that they did was to raise up the prostrate travellers, and point out to them in the distance the figures of the robbers, who were scouring over the country at the top of their horses' speed. From the description furnished us by our informant, we did not entertain a doubt that the couple who a few hours previously had attempted to try our nerves were concerned in this attack. One of them, we re-

marked, wore a white hat; and such of the travellers as dared to steal a glance, remarked the like on the head of one of their spoilers.

Subsequently the two increased their number to eight or ten, and spread the greatest terror over this and the other roads in the vicinity; but although I had occasion to traverse them more than once, by night as well as by day, I was always fortunate enough to escape without challenge.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

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

CHAPTER III.

SAN LUCAR DE BARRAMEDA.—ITS COTO.—DEER-SHOOTING.—
EL PALACIO.—THE STRAYED CAMEL.—LUCKY HIT.

THERE are two towns in Andalusia that bear the sainted name of San Lucar: the one styled, for distinction sake, "La Mayor," or the greater—so called because, like *lucus a non lucendo*, in reality it is *not* the greater—and the other, the town of which I now treat. This has also its sobriquet, being termed "Barrameda," and, of the two, best sustains the credit of its patron: at all events, there are observable in it fewer symptoms of decay; and this remark, as applied to Spanish towns, is tantamount to awarding them the palm of excellence.

It is certainly a fine old place, full of remembrances of other scenes and times; guarded both within and without by gloomy old convents, all the gloomier now since their life has departed—if indeed that could be called life that wore its weary chains behind gratings and walls, and was dead to the hopes and fears, the joys and affections, of mortality. It is here that the Guadalquivir, or the "great river" of the Arabs, finishes his course; and the town spreads its dwellings for the twenty thousand inhabitants it is said to contain, partly on a narrow flat bordering the river, and partly on a rising bank overlooking its broad tide and a wide prospect to the north. From all points its situation is highly picturesque—particularly so as you

approach it by the water, and see houses rising above each other in terraces mingled with spires, towers, and gardens.

From the earliest date this seaport was of some note in the maritime history of Spain. On the sandy beach that forms a firm pathway to Bonanza, about a mile higher up the river, the Roman galleys were wont to be drawn up; and by Roman superstition a temple to Hercules was erected near Chipiona, a small village a league distant to the westward. Previous, however, to their coming, the Phœnician and Carthaginian mariner might have been seen on the strand in busy trade with the rude Celtiberians, and trafficking his wares for the precious metals and stone, for which Spain was then as famous as was its own Peru in later times. More recently still, when the power of the Arabs was in its zenith, this remote haven was visited by the terrible Northmen.

After having been the scourge and terror of the northern seas, their fleets descended to this low latitude; and, undismayed by the two thousand miles of stormy distance that rolled between them and their homes, and forbade every hope of succour, the bold Sea-kings disembarked here, and carried fire and sword far inland. In their progress, they ascended the river as high as Seville, which they sacked and burnt; and laden with spoil, returned to their ships. The discovery of America, however, did more than anything else to swell the fortunes of this place, which became for a season the resort of the treasure-laden galleons. Its citizens, in consequence, waxed great and prospered, though somewhat at the expense of their fair fame—or else Sancho Panza has sadly calumniated them, when he styles their town a den of rogues. These

were its golden days, departed never more to return. Since that epoch, so fatal to Spain's resources and dominion, when her American colonies burst from the hands that vainly strove to retain them, the sights most common in the towns that once participated in the riches of the New World, are empty warehouses, and quays overgrown with grass. San Lucar, among the rest, has cause to mourn that the wealth of the Indies now flows into other channels; a few coasters now suffice for its trade, its custom-house is the mansion of solitude, and its merchants are a paltry few. In one respect, however, it may be said to have become a gainer by the change, as in point of character it is now no worse than the neighbouring cities; the vultures no longer scent the galleons.

The first object which C—— and I visited was the old Moorish castle, which rises from the brow of the slope by which the upper is divided from the lower town. Our knock at an old tottering gate was answered by a wild-looking youth, who came forth from some nook in the court-yard, and shouldered one of the leaves aside. While engaged in this work, which was one of some time and trouble, his teeth held a crust of bread, which he stopped now and then to gnaw and tear, somewhat after the style of a wolf at its meal. As soon, however, as the gate closed behind us, the spirit of hospitality fell upon him: with that grace which all Spaniards, the lowest not excepted, display on such occasions, his morsel of a crust was extended towards us, and, making a low salutation, he pressed us to share it with him. We declined his offer with as much formality as if it had been to the banquet of a grandee, adding the customary formula, "Buen provecho," or "Much good may it do you." Then following him

across the courtyard, we ascended to the top of a huge octagonal tower, whose battlements overhang the steepest part of the bank. From the summit, which had been converted by the French during the War of Independence into a station for a telegraph, we cast our eyes over a wide prospect. On every side but one, a tame and uninviting landscape presented itself; for the view ranged over chalky fields in the immediate vicinity of the town, to flats of a sickly green higher up the river. But directly in front, and on the other side of the Guadalquivir, was a tract of forest land, that, from its singular contrast to the surrounding scenery, instantly arrested our eyes. "That," said our guide, "is the Coto of San Lucar; it is a despoblado, and extends backwards from the river for seven or eight leagues; a lonely place it is, and as full of deer, wild boars, and mountain cats, as the sea is full of fish; vaya! in all Spain there is no better place for game than the Coto of San Lucar." As we were still gazing on the scene, which struck me as coming nearer to my impression of a wilderness than anything I had hitherto seen, the sun shone out strongly from behind a cloud, and showed us that it was a region of sand. Here and there the sandy particles were tossed into yellow hillocks, but generally a growth of low forest and underwood clothed the surface; and the whole was the hard-won gains of time, wrested during the lapse of ages from the Atlantic that thunders on the west, and still threatens to recover its lost domain.

"Wild boars and deer!" said C——, as we were cautiously descending the broken staircase of the tower; "what splendid sport! a day's shooting there would be an event in one's life."

Although little of a sportsman myself, I cordially

echoed his wish: my acquaintance with Andalucia having been as yet confined to its ancient cities and still more ancient roads, I was anxious to see something of its wilds; and this desolate expanse of sand and forest—a fragment, apparently, of some African desert cast by a convulsion of nature on the shores of Spain—was just one of those solitudes with which the province was said to abound, and which I had long desired to explore. We exerted ourselves therefore to obtain the necessary permission to use our guns within its bounds, for, as it by name implies, the Coto is a preserve, and was at the time rented by a party of gentlemen from its proprietor, the Duke of Medina Sidonia; ere long, through the kindness of a friend, our wishes were gratified.

The day previous to our departure was one of busy preparation on the part of C——, who, from the style in which he ordered in provender, seemed to regard our few days' sojourn in the Coto as something akin to wintering at the North Pole. Before nightfall the floor of our apartment groaned beneath a pile of hams, bread, sausages, and other viands, which he eyed with the satisfaction of a mind now at ease: however, after we started, the thought flashed across him that pepper and salt were forgotten—and, true enough, these condiments were wanting. The discovery was the subject of many a bitter lamentation, until we found that the Coto could supply all these articles and many more; and in truth his provident cares were wholly unnecessary, as our guns furnished us with the substantial requisites for a repast, and everything else was to be obtained at the lodges at which we took up our abode. The above formed a load for a "macho" which was to serve as our beast of burden; its conductor was a

bare-footed youth, half sailor, half landsman in costume, and I believe in vocation ; and all being arranged, at two o'clock the next day we were in the ferry-boat that traverses the river. The huge lateen sail was hoisted by a couple of half-naked boatmen ; and, a brisk wind blowing at the time, in less than ten minutes our keel touched the sand on the other side. A few steps in the deep sand quickly shut out from view our place of landing ; and while the noise and bustle attending our getting on shore were still ringing in our ears, we entered a solitude deep and unbroken except by the sounds we ourselves created. We had passed into a wood of pines—not the tall and stately giants of my own land, but a pigmy race of misshapen trunks and twisted limbs. The fantastic contortions of the sylvan throng had a singular effect, and almost led imagination to believe that they imbibed some poisonous potion from the barren soil on which they grew, and were writhing in pain from the draught.

Keeping the river on our right hand we toiled through sand for more than an hour, and then broke off sharply to the left, conducted by a path that dived into the depths of the wood. After we had plodded on wearily for some miles, sometimes by sandy mounds bared of vegetation, and sometimes wading through shallow lagoons, dusk began to deepen the shade of our forest-covert ; still there was no prospect of the lodge where we were to be housed for the night. By and by, in answer to our repeated inquiries, it came out that our attendant had only been once before on the track, and that long ago ; next he admitted that he might have mistaken it ; and finally confessed that he must have done so. This was unpleasant news, particularly as night was coming on ; but after

consulting for a few moments we determined to push on, as it was probable the path would terminate at some dwelling: at the same time we were far from relying with confidence on such a hope, for we knew that in this region houses were few and far between, and after all we might miss them in the dark. However, it was our only plan, except retracing our route, which we felt no desire to do; and, as the event proved, such a step would have been the most unfortunate for us. We had proceeded only a mile farther, when the sound of scattered shots was heard in the distance; the reports gradually drew nearer, and at length a party of seven or eight sportsmen came into view, bending their steps in our direction. They proved, as we anticipated, to be a party of the lessees of the preserve: some were C——'s acquaintances, and, after the usual explanations and inquiries, we joined their numbers. It was a fortunate circumstance for us our meeting with them; it appeared we had overshot our destination by three miles, and there was no other roof within a nearer distance than twelve or sixteen. As yet I had never made my bivouac in the open air, and had looked forward with some misgivings to the possibility of such an occurrence: subsequent experience, however, relieved me from these apprehensions, and I am bound to confess that many a worse couch have I found than among the wilds of the province; a grassy plot was all I needed, and then, wrapped in my manta, the exquisite summer night of Andalusia my only roof, and while the air was fragrant with the perfume of the wild flowers, seldom have I courted sleep in vain.

Night had completely closed in before we reached our habitation. On the way we were introduced to

Manuel Toro, the guarda or keeper of the preserve. Manuel was a spare though sinewy little man, with a keen dark eye, and a countenance expressive of as much openness and honesty as could be thrown into a set of features that were far from regular. He spoke, like many of the lower orders of the province, with a thick guttural accent—a peculiarity he probably inherited from his Moorish ancestors; to us it was new and strange, and we experienced considerable difficulty in understanding his speech, and in comprehending his directions when we were afterwards under his pilotage. Housed and refreshed, dinner in due course made its appearance. Many and various were the dishes handed round, and though on the whole we contrived to make a substantial meal, there were not a few preparations that would have driven a Ude or Soyer frantic. One still comes across my memory like a nightmare; it was the sopa. In a huge copper caldron, which occupied the place of a tureen at the bottom of the table, I descried a thick pasty substance, which, on inquiry, I was told was the soup; it was brought to table in this fashion—the caldron being the vessel in which it was boiled—in order to be eaten in all its perfection. As far as I could ascertain, bread sodden in hot oil formed the foundation of the mess, to which garlic moreover lent its odours; the surface was garnished with poached eggs resting upon a stratum of wild asparagus, a vegetable which those who have once tasted will not speedily forget, the apples of the Dead Sea being scarcely so bitter. C—— and I were the first to be supplied with a liberal portion of the uninviting compound. As the fumes of it ascended to our nostrils, we cast rueful looks upon our plates and at each other, which could hardly have escaped the notice of our entertainers, had

they not been too busily engaged in despatching their own shares : long before ours disappeared, the majority had been helped twice or thrice to this dainty, and, in fact, the caldron was not dismissed until it was completely emptied. For ourselves, after the first dose, we escaped pretty well, by alleging, for want of a better reason, that it was not the "costumbre" in England to be helped twice to soup. There is a wonderful power in the phrase "es costumbre," as the traveller in Spain quickly learns. He finds it, in his way, sometimes a stumbling-block, sometimes a valuable ally. Inquire the origin of some popular superstition, or usage of society, and lo, "es costumbre" appears as a satisfactory explanation ; or point out how things may be improved, and how they are managed better or differently in your own or other countries, and you have for answer a quiet shake of the head, with the words "No es costumbre aqui." In truth few Spaniards trouble their minds with investigations or reasonings on these matters ; generally speaking they are contented with treading in the footsteps of their ancestors as regards national usages ; and if they display a love of change, it is rather in the political world than in those customs by which society is governed. This clinging to the past is unquestionably a national characteristic, and to it we owe the fact that Spain is at this day, perhaps, the most interesting country in Europe.

Her daily life is, as near as can be, the same that is painted in the pages of Cervantes or Lesage ; in all that we see or hear, we are constantly reminded of their descriptions : and though at first it is difficult to conceive such a thing, we are brought to confess that we behold a state of society such as it existed 200 years ago ; the roads, the inns, the robbers, the salons, scre-

nades, picaroons, compliments, are in fact altered so little by the lapse of this long period, that one can hardly describe them without appearing to copy from the immortal works of these authors. The effect of this upon the observer is at first rather singular: having been long accustomed to consider the scenes and characters in "Gil Blas" and "Don Quixote" either as the creations of fancy or delineations of a past age, he is unprepared for their constant occurrence around him; he is struck with surprise to find men thinking and acting in a way nowise differing from that of the fictitious personages with whom he is conversant, and for a time can hardly credit his senses, so unreal does everything appear. After this impression wears off, there remains the conviction that Spain is the land of incident and adventure; a conviction that deepens the more he mingles with its people, and, as a spectator or actor, is introduced to strange passages—far stranger than any that have sprung from the imagination of her novelists.

Dinner over, coffee was introduced, followed by cards, the never-failing resource of an evening in Andalucia. Knowing little of tresillo or monte, we left our friends to the enjoyment of their favourite games, and took the opportunity of adjourning to the kitchen, where a bright fire of logs was blazing on the hearth. Here were assembled Manuel and his family, busily engaged in preparing the double-barrels for the morrow's sport. With the former, whom he found to be as communicative as he could desire, C—— kept up an animated discourse touching the noble science of woodcraft as practised in these regions. I refrain from giving the information he imparted, as the description of what took place on the following day will convey to the reader a sufficiently correct idea of the mode by which the

deer are hunted in the Coto. In the course of the conversation, Manuel called in an old deerhound, who came up to him with the confidence of a favourite. Its neck was covered with scars, with each of which was connected a tale of prowess he delighted to tell. This veteran of the chase appeared feeble and stiff, and scarcely able to crawl, from the effects of wounds and old age; but on remarking this to Manuel, he bade us reserve our judgment until we saw him in the field, "For, though old," said he, "he is a beast of much fire" ("Mucho fuego tiene, mucho"). In size and shape he was altogether different from the deerhound of Scotland, partaking very much of the appearance of a mastiff, and in no points approaching to the wiry and powerful forms of the Scottish breed.

The day was roused, when the morrow came, not with the sound of the echoing horn, but after a fashion which, once prevalent in the Highlands, I was surprised to find existing in temperate Spain. An attendant waked us by presenting a cup of strong waters—for the purpose, I presume, of fortifying our nerves for the coming onslaught. Immediately after breakfast we left the lodge: a picturesque and sequestered retreat it was, and one more to the taste of the sportsman could hardly be conceived. It was a long low building, occupying an opening in the heart of a woodland scene. At one end was the accommodation for the sportsmen—a sitting apartment, and two others fitted up with camp-beds after the fashion of a barrack; the other end was the property of Government, and, as an inscription testified, was a station for carabineros, or the preventive service. Surrounding it was a narrow carpet of green sward, diversified by a shallow lagoon on the west, and a few scattered wild fig-trees, whose

silvery stems had a striking effect in contrast with the sombre mass of pines that formed the background. In a few moments we lost sight of this oasis of verdure—for an oasis in truth it was, being speedily environed by woody knolls. While we are winding in single file along the path—a goodly company of eight or ten horsemen, not to mention as many followers on foot—I shall embrace the opportunity to describe the costume and equipments of the former portion of the party. Yesterday, at table, they were peaceful citizens, clad in the modern garb; now they sit on their saddles, their outward man so altered by means of sombreros, jackets, and scarlet sashes, that the stranger might readily imagine them to be a horde of bandits proceeding to their rendezvous. First, however, and foremost rides Manuel, his upper man clad in a zamarra, or black sheep-skin jacket, a red sash wound round his waist; his nether man is encased in brown shorts and leathern leggings; beneath the sombrero he has tied round his head, as is universally done by the peasantry, a bright coloured handkerchief, the ends of which float over his shoulders. Then follow the señores, who are similarly attired, with some unimportant variations only as to the colours and material of their costume; to this some add a gaudy Valencian manta, usually of a flaring scarlet or yellow; this at present rests upon the saddle-bow, but when need is, may be converted into a cloak, blanket, or coverlet. All and sundry of the hidalgos shoulder a double-barrel; one or two desperate characters, however, carry a brace, with ammunition in proportion, and in the folds of their sashes there is generally thrust a cuchillo del monte. This latter is so useful a weapon, and so well fitted for the sports which place life and limb in jeopardy, that I

am surprised it has not been adopted by those lovers of danger who glory in giving battle to the wild tenants of the jungle or backwoods. The "mountain knife," for so it is called, is a kind of dirk rather more than a foot in length; the haft, which is a few inches long, is round, and tapers away gradually so as to admit of being fixed in the muzzle of a gun. In fact, it is a revival of the bayonet in the earliest stage of its invention, which was simply a weapon like this thrust into the muzzle of a musket: the modern fashion of fixing it was a later improvement; and some of my readers may remember the name of that battle with which the last century opened, wherein a British regiment, while advancing to the charge with the old weapon, was more than staggered by a heavy fire thrown in by their opponents, who for the first time used the musket after the improved mode by which a volley could be discharged while the bayonet was attached to it. As a substitute, however, the cuchillo in the mouth of a gun is not to be despised, and would make a formidable weapon in the hands of the sportsman who might be attacked by a wounded beast of prey before he had time to reload.

On we went in silence, among a succession of hillocks and hollows clothed with dwarf pines that emitted a delightful fragrance—next toiling for many furlongs through smooth and bleaching sands, and once or twice crossing shallow ponds of no great extent. On these occasions a laughable scramble would ensue among the followers for places at the croupe of the equestrians: those who succeeded sometimes exemplified the truth, that it is as difficult to keep as it is to attain an exalted station; for the animals to which they clung, sometimes disliking the double burden, managed to unseat them by kicking and plunging, and off they rolled into

the water amid the merriment of the party. Manuel at length halts, and proceeds to dispose of his forces for action: for that purpose he used no words, as silence was enjoined, lest the game might be scared, but a multitude of nods and signs, which we translated into English the best way we could. Giving our horses in charge to the attendants, the whole party followed him stealthily, and one after another took up their stations at spots he indicated, and always under cover of a bush, tree, or bank. C—— and I were the last to be placed, and formed the extremity of a wide semi-circle of ambushed sportsmen. After placing us about fifty yards apart from each other, and cautioning us to lie quiet until we heard a shot in front, and by no means to fire into the interior of the circle, lest we might injure some of the beaters, he departed by a circuitous route to join his followers, and aid them in driving the deer in our direction. Presently the signal sounded, and we waited long in breathless silence, with our expectations wound to the highest pitch. At last several shots were heard in succession, coming from the centre of the crescent, but in our quarter not a leaf was stirring. Suddenly a small herd of hinds and fawns appeared on the crest of a sandy acclivity in our front, and dashed down towards a narrow glade that lay between the thickets in which C—— and I were respectively ensconced. On catching a glimpse of the former they wheeled towards my side, again retreated on seeing me barring the way, and at last halted between us in the greatest perplexity. As they were thus huddled together, nothing could have been more easy than to have disposed of one or two of them, but such would have been an infraction of the laws of the chase, which forbids a shot being fired at

any but bucks ; they were therefore permitted to pass without molestation. Soon after Manuel rode up and informed us that the ambuscade was at an end. The whole party of sportsmen then joined us, their Andalusian vivacity nowise damped by their ill-luck—for they had missed everything at which they had fired—and in a body we moved off to another locality ; here a second circle was formed, the same precautions as before being used. As far, however, as we were concerned, our patience was exercised to no purpose ; the shooting was almost entirely confined to the centre of the line, towards which the game appeared invariably to incline. C——, I believe, got the chance of a shot, which he lost through a misadventure : he was fortifying his patience by the aid of a cigar, when a buck bounded past him ; hastily raising his gun, it touched the cigar ; the cigar burnt his cheek ; and, as a consequence, his shot smote off the top of a tree some ten yards distant.

Yet there was much around and above us to compensate for our want of sport ; there was the picturesqueness of our positions, always varying in their character ; sometimes stretched on the flat summit of a mound of drifted sand, and commanding a mingled scene of open smooth sands and tangled thicket ; or crouching behind a crooked pine in the bed of a deep ravine, shut out from day by the bristling arms and sombre foliage of the masses that clung to the sides ; then again there was the utter stillness of nature, into which we plunged ere the voices of our companions had scarce rung out of our ears ; and to crown all, the warmth of the February sun, which, unlike that of northern climes, set the blood in motion, and communicated to the air a freshness and elasticity that braced

every nerve. With what an exhilarating effect did it breathe upon our spirits, causing us to look upon everything with an eye of enjoyment! All this more than repaid us for our long watchings and our oft-repeated negatives to the inquiries of our Spanish friends if game had crossed our stations. On the other hand, a strange fatality appeared to accompany their firing: from first to last they discharged forty or fifty shots without touching a creature; and from what I heard the deer sometimes brushed past so closely that it was a matter of surprise how it was possible to miss them.

On one occasion I was roused to the *qui vive* by an extraordinary commotion among the bushes in front of me; the boughs parted and snapped as if some ponderous animal was ploughing its way through them. Doubting not that the patriarch of the herd was to come forth, I raised my gun for a steady aim, but it was only to behold the rolling eye of one of those half-wild bulls that roam at large among the scattered pastures of this waste. His eye was speedily attracted by the scarlet hue of my sash, one of the virtues of which colour, as is well known, is to provoke the ire of bulls. Accordingly he stamped, pawed the sand, and laid his head to the ground with so much malice prepense in the fiery glances he shot, that I was strongly tempted to send him a bullet in return. I contented myself, however, with a passive act of hostility in reply to these ominous demonstrations, with what in polite parlance would have been termed a decided cut. I feigned not to perceive him, but the ill-mannered brute would not take the hint; he came up to the other side of the bush that separated us, and while I retreated round it, followed at my heels, occasionally jerking his horns into the air after a fashion

that intimated as plainly as language itself, that he was enjoying by anticipation the pleasure of launching my person from them. How long we might have continued to revolve round the bush I know not—probably till one or the other dropped down from giddiness; at length a shot fired close by caused him to desist and dart off at the top of his speed.

It is from the animals who wander in this savage state over the wild flats bordering the Guadalquivir, or amid the unprotected pastures of the interior, that the bull-rings of Seville and the other towns of the province draw their supplies. Those who are destined for this butchery in sport are allured from their native pastures by means of tame oxen, and the united herd of wild and tame animals is driven to the pens adjoining the ring; here the bulls are parted from the others, and each one confined in a separate crib. Those, however, whom it is designed to slay or secure are caught by pursuing the following method, which I describe as it was told to me. The vaquero, mounted on horseback, and wielding in his right hand his garrocha, or goad—the same weapon which the picador uses in the arena—gives chase to the animal he has selected from the herd. Fleet though it be, and of a race of first-rate leapers—for I have seen some bulls clear the barrier of the ring, the height of which could not be less than five feet—his Andalusian steed soon overtakes it: when sufficiently near, he plants the point of his goad close to the root of its tail. Watching his opportunity, he then manages by a well-timed push to tilt the animal forwards; on thus being thrown off its balance, it stumbles, and finally measures its length on the ground. Ere it has recovered from the suddenness of the fall, the vaquero is on