

readiness fit for the habitation of the numerous suite. I furnished the apartments, stored the house with provisions, arms, and ammunition, always in expectation of the Duke's arrival and fully prepared for his reception. His Grace might perhaps find his quarters rather limited in extent, somewhat primitive in not a few of its arrangements, but the place was at least made perfectly safe. He might have to rough it a little ; but it was his own castle, and I was quite sure he would find it far more comfortable than any hotel accommodation in Granada.

There was as yet no road from the Molino house and from the Bodega, or from the Soto de Roma to La Torre, but by deep cuttings from hill to hill I filled up the intervening ravine ; and this I achieved with the help of hundreds of poor little starving boys, who used to congregate every morning underneath my bedroom window, with their baskets, crying out, '*Don Horacio! Don Horacio!*' in a whining undertone: '*Mucha hambre, Don Horacio! Mucha!* Give us work, or we must starve.' My heart would melt at their cry, and while still dark I would go down to them and set the little fellows their task. In the evening, when the donkeys came in with their loads of copper coins, and each boy had received his twopence wages, they were met on their way home by their mothers. And great was the rejoicing in the family ; for even with that little copper coin bread

and salt, if nothing better, could be procured. It was quite touching to see these mere children holding up their well-earned money and hear them cry, '*Madre! Madre! Aquí tienes dinero para comprar pan!*' (Here is money to buy bread!) It was marvellous to see how much I achieved by the help of these poor little fellows, who would most surely have perished without my help. There were a few girls with the boys—not many of them, of either sex, more than seven or eight years old. They filled their baskets with earth or stones, helped one another to lift the baskets on their heads, and tripped along with them down the ravine, shooting the contents on the heaps, which were then levelled down into the road along which *El Duque y la Duquesa* were to travel when they came to see the place. The people seemed to know who was their best friend, and I soon became popular among them. One day, as I was riding down the Illora road, I saw a man and his boy on the other side of the river driving home the village swine. As they drew nigh I heard the man talking to the boy, and pointing to me he said: 'Knowest thou who that is riding down on the other side? That is Don Horacio, the saviour of our country. But for him we should all die. The alcalde says he is keeping six thousand people day by day. He has been sent here to us by God, and may God bless him!'

## CXXXIII.

In these pursuits I spent the whole winter of 1867-68.

After the battle that had been fought the *mal-hombres* gave us no further trouble or uneasiness, and Molino del Rey could be crossed in all its length and width without fear by women and children; their baskets, clothes, and other things were safe; the only offences we heard of were thefts of olives, acorns, and grapes, the usual misdeeds of a rural population in almost every country. And these gave me more trouble because the guards, who were paid to prevent such mischief, accepted bribes to connive at them.

I made an attempt to make a brick-yard on the Molino estate. I brought together a quantity of wood, and split it up. But the brick-burner complained that the guards neglected to do their duty, and allowed the wood to be stolen. As the brick-burner could not get the guards to keep watch over his wood, I determined to see what I could do to help him. With that view I rose at one of my unusually early hours. I saddled my horse at two o'clock in the morning, and rode down to the ravine where the brick-burner had prepared his wood, where I found a man who had just laden himself with a great sack full of large wood trotting home to Illora with his load. I kept out of sight of the man, as I supposed, and followed at

a distance on his track. I had to cross a canal over a rickety wooden bridge, which gave way under our combined weight, and we fell in, frightening my poor mare terribly. Still I managed to get her up and out of danger without being unhorsed, and soon came up to the main road, in the middle of which stood the load of wood, but not the man, who had evidently seen me and given me the slip. However, I pretended to take no notice, but followed the path along the brook until I was out of sight, and then, turning the mare sharply round, I put her into a hand-gallop, and was hard upon the man, who had in the meantime taken up his load, but had no time to drop it again and run away as he had done before. I compelled him to trot to the Molino house with his load. We soon found out that he was the village swine man. I sent him to Illora, where he was locked up for three days, at the end of which the alcalde sent the man's wife to know if I would forgive him. My answer was that if she would become responsible for his future good conduct she could take him home with her; so she 'collared' him and went her way with him, and he afterwards proved a very trusty workman. Some time after this I was coming down one of the ravines, and met the woman and her husband going home from labour. She looked at me with a smiling face, and cried out, 'Buenas tardes, Don Horacio! I have got him, you

see. He is a good man now. He works in the vineyard, and does not want to steal.'

## CXXXIV.

Whenever anything happened to bring me into communication with the Duke of Wellington, I invariably received the best proofs of his friendly disposition towards me. In the spring of the year 1867, for instance, after a visit of several days at his Grace's residence at Strathfieldsaye, I expressed a wish to return to my business in Pall Mall, but as I was taking leave the Duke pressed me to put off my journey till the following day, when his Grace himself, with the Duchess and Lord John Hay, were going to town. At the Mortimer station the Duke very kindly offered to take my ticket for me, but as I had been beforehand with him I thanked him, showing that I was already provided. When we alighted at the Paddington station the Duke handed the Duchess into her carriage, and then his Grace himself, Lord John Hay, and I walked across the Park to Apsley House, where I left the Duke. I was very much impressed by these marks of kindness and condescension on the part of his Grace; and doubtless the marked attention shown to me by the Duke and Duchess in great measure contributed to enlist my zeal and earnestness to serve his Grace at all hazards,

and to help him to bring his Granada property into such a condition as might be creditable to its English owner and to the nation to which he belonged; thus placing his Grace in a becoming position among the people on his estate, at the same time as I raised his income from that estate to a height which it had never before reached, and which might be a surprise to him.

## CXXXV.

To effect this I required two things. In the first place, I wanted a scientific master to take charge of the vineyards and the olive-trees. In the second place, I also wanted a good practical farmer to plough the olive-grounds and effectually to cultivate the irrigated farm of Huerte Majara, which adjoined the olive-plantation and received the water which flowed from it.

With respect to the first want, I was sure that there could be no farmer in Andalusia whose knowledge stood so high in men's estimation as Don Luis Jurado, of Montilla; and I knew he was strongly attached to me, and would do anything to serve me. So on my way home from the Duke's estate in the spring I paid a visit to my old friend Don Luis, whom I found seriously ill—in my bedroom, as he called it. But I succeeded in telling him how I needed the co-operation

of a first-class scientific farmer to be placed over the vineyards and olive-grounds of the Duke's estate, adding that Mr. Edye knew nothing about those matters, and no greater mistake could be made than to place a non-practical man in power and intrust to him the management of vineyards and olive-farms, which I regarded as being two of the highest sciences in all farming, no matter how good his antecedents might otherwise be. Don Luis answered that he had long been thinking of it, and that I might safely leave the matter in his hands. And, in effect, during the summer he found a very able practical farmer and his three sons, all of them gentlemanly in bearing and of the highest respectability—a very handsome family, as I found them when they met me on my arrival at Molino del Rey, in September 1867, when I placed them in charge of the Duke's vineyards and olive-grounds.

## CXXXVI.

I had prepared a cottage for their residence at the Molino house, and had sent to the Molino a considerable number of properly seasoned (*envinadoed*) sherry-butts, to receive the Duke's wines, then in the grape, estimated to be about 900 arrobas (thirty butts). I was thus able to set the men at once to work gathering the grapes and beginning to make them into wine. The

stone trough in which the olive berries were ground on the previous year had again to be pressed into use. I also called Mr. Edye, and bade him observe with what care and cleanliness this olive trough had been prepared for its use by these new capatazes. I then took him to the press, and showed him how careful the men were in the minutest particulars, cleaning the oil-press again and again with boiling water ; pointing out to him how essential this care was to prevent the possibility of any impure taste arising in the wine during its process of active fermentation.

## CXXXVII.

I then went with him all over the vineyard. and showed him how carefully the finest grapes were first gathered when they were quite ripe, yet not in the least over-ripe, as the wine has its finest bouquet and flavour when the grapes are gathered in their full and perfect maturity. After this a second gathering took place from which a second-rate quality of wine is made. And after this again a third and last gathering was made, and these third-rate grapes were laid out in the sun in the courtyard to dry the dew off them and improve any unsound or unripe grapes that might still be amongst them.

Further, I took Mr. Edye to inspect the casks which

had been so carefully and cleanly prepared, and with a lighted taper tied to the end of a long cane I inspected the inside of each butt, and bade him do likewise, requesting him to notice most carefully the smell he detected in each cask, that he might observe how nice and sweet it was. I explained to him how necessary all this care was, 'For,' I said, 'in Montilla once I sent a Xeres clerk down to Xeres to buy casks for me, and he came back with his purchase of casks—excellent casks to all outward seeming and as to their make and shape ; but Paula just put his nose into the bung-hole of one of them, and instantly detected something impure in the smell, and I had to have them all taken to pieces ; and though the inside had apparently been washed and cleaned to perfection, there was something nasty in the wood which all the cleansing had failed to remove, so, fearing that good wine might be spoiled, we filled the casks full of the commonest wine, and after a time sold the wine that had been put into those casks for distillation. And thus you see,' I added, 'Mr. Edye, how far short theory goes when it comes to be put to the test of practical experience. Mind, therefore, that you never trifle with the advice and direction of these people, whose knowledge is based on long experience ; for these mountain wines are so clean and so pure naturally, and so beautiful in bouquet as they advance to maturity, that the least blunder arising from inexperience has, I know, in several instances

ruined a whole bodega of wine. I mention all this as a caution to you, for I know one of your failings is a disposition to show off your powers and importance, while in these matters you are helplessly ignorant, and these people are thoroughly at home in them ; so that if you air any of your nonsense to them they will be off at once, and then what shall I do? What can you do? and, lastly, what will the Duke do? What I must do, I know, is to withdraw from the Duke's affairs as being hopelessly, irretrievably ruined. What you can do is simply nothing, except perhaps put in some ignoramus who may have been playing up to you, and by his interference bring about the ruin of everything that has been done. And for what concerns the Duke, what can he do? Simply nothing but put up with the loss of all that has been done for him, and appoint some other ignoramus who will in ignorance starve the vineyards and olive-plantations by improper or non-cultivation, and gather the proceeds of the property, and spend nothing upon it, in this way giving the Duke a bad name, as has been done hitherto, and raising against him the old outcry as an improvident and unfeeling landlord.

'This is what I am most seriously concerned about, and in this light I feel sorry, very sorry, to my heart's core for the Duke. His Grace always calls me his friend when he speaks of me to the people about him, and I have proved my title to that appellation by the

labours and hardships I have gone through for him, besides the worries I have had to put up with for several years on the part of his late agents, and their revengeful ways.'

## CXXXVIII.

Here I interrupted the lecture I was giving the young man to cure him, if it had been possible, of his conceit, and abruptly asked him—

'Pray, Mr. Edye, do you know what your father used to think about me?'

'My father,' the young man answered, 'knew you better than any man. He thought you were past finding out; there was, in his opinion, barely one like you born in a century: that is what my father used to say, and I do believe him. Who, after seeing and knowing you in Pall Mall, would expect that you would come out here and put your nose into these casks and test them as you do? Anybody would think that you were testing everything for the royal family, and not for ordinary mortals.'

'These remarks,' I replied, 'may be natural to you and befit your inexperience, but you should see by my conduct my desire to make you perfect in the duties you have to carry out. Bear in mind that I must have implicit confidence in your science, and in your ability to rescue these estates from the awful dilapidation into

which they have for so long a time been suffered to drift—a dilapidation of which nobody seems to know or to care what the end must be. Bear in mind that these people have to earn their daily bread under your stewardship; they have souls to save in every way as precious to God as your own; you are responsible both for their physical and moral well-being. Take care, therefore, that no rash word, no unkind act, may be imputed to you, but let every word, thought, and deed proceed from an upright heart; for it will then be all kindness, politeness, and feeling of sympathy with these poor people and their troubles, and they will learn to love and obey you.

‘Bear in mind, above all things, that every man is the temple of God; and if you feel that God dwells within you there is no place for evil of any kind. Pray, therefore, my dear Harry, pray for the Bread of Life: that is what you were used to before this with Mrs. Hammick and with me also in your childhood, and if you have left off doing so, pray take to it again now. In the Bread of Life you will find the life of peace and of goodwill to all men.’

## CXXXIX.

Before I left Mr. Edye in the spring, I had made all arrangements with him, bidding him, in consideration

of the prevailing famine and of the large number of people who were to be saved from utter starvation, convert the two sheds from which the old wooden presses had been removed into cellars : one to receive the oil, the other to receive the wine now about to be made. Mr. Edye had brought together all the materials for this purpose ; he had been carting bricks and lime from the Soto, and making cement, so that now with my English mechanics I made these two oil-press compartments into permanent substantial cellars; with solid concrete floors, with the roof resting on pillars raised in the centre, and double entrance doors to admit large casks being rolled in and out as desired. I made one of these cellars fit to contain upwards of two hundred butts of wine, and there was room for a similar quantity of oil in the other cellar. Thus for this vintage of 1867 I was very well provided.

## CXL.

This reminded me that I had left two butts of wine and some vinegar in these cellars in charge of Mr. Edye when I left him in the spring of the year. As I did not now see the wine and nothing was said about it, I inquired what had become of it. Mr. Edye informed me that as he was constantly called upon to open these cellars to store up the bricks, lime, and cement, to be

ready for me in the building of the cellars when I came back, he had removed the wine to an empty house in Illora. I expressed my surprise at this, as in the spring I had told him I wanted to test this wine against that of another vineyard in Montilla which had been planted at the same time. As these casks had gone out of his keeping, my hope and confidence in this matter were at an end. I begged him, however, to go and fetch me a sample or samples of each of the two casks.

A few days later I asked for these samples, and was answered that 'the man in charge of the house at Illora would not allow him to see the casks, would not give him the samples; the owner of the house was absent, and nothing could be done for the present.' Whereupon, after waiting some days, I again sent Mr. Edye on the same errand, but the result was the same. 'The master of the house was not living there, the house was in charge of his servant; there was nothing to be got out of it.'

As I doubted these statements, I sent my faithful Don Antonio Paula to ferret out the real truth of the matter, told Paula to give a cigar or two to the man in charge, and if that had no effect to slip a dollar or two into the man's hand, and give him to understand, with my compliments, that 'I should be glad if he would allow him to see the wines, and bring me a sample of

them to enable me to see in what state they were, and what progress they had made.'

My good Paula went off to Illora, and in the course of the day came back to La Torre with the intimation, 'El vino se ha marchado [The wine has made itself wings], Don Horacio. The house belongs to a friend of Calzado, and what is now in the casks has been put into them recently since your arrival. Here is a sample of what the casks now contain. It is in colour like the wine, but it is greasy and earthy, and it is simply water with some abominable deleterious mixture steeped in it. All that can be done now is to knock in the heads of the casks, to prevent the possibility of their ever again being put to the like use.'

'Then go and do it, friend Paula,' I said, 'or see it done, to make sure of their doing no further mischief. See the staves burnt to ashes before you leave them.'

In the evening, at dinner-time, when Mr. Edye put in an appearance, and Paula told him what had been done, and how apparently some people had been making merry with the Duke's wine, Mr. Edye seemed angry, because he would have liked to have drunk some of it himself, and the capatazes said it was usual to have the first wine that was made out of a new vineyard given to them for their use.

Of course I was aware of the custom, and had

fully intended to comply with it, and allow them to have as much of the wine as they needed ; only before I did so I was anxious to compare that wine with other wines of a new vineyard of the same age in Montilla, and that object was frustrated. So I said to Mr. Edye—and I called him 'Master Harry,' to give him to understand that he had behaved as an inexperienced young simpleton :—

'You see, Master Harry, how you have thwarted me again in this most particular matter. It is not the value of the lost wine I think so much of : all that is a mere matter of pounds, shillings, and pence. What I regret is the knowledge I wanted to derive from it as a test in comparing it with others of similar character in Moriles. That knowledge I cannot replace, and that is a matter of great importance to me, for this reason : this is the first wine that has been made out of this, the Duke's vineyard, and I intended to have taken home a cask for the Duke and for his Grace's advisers, in the hope of impressing them with the capabilities the estate would develop under wise and careful management. And you are so uncertain, Master Harry, that I tremble at the thought of what you may do when left to yourself.'

With this I bade him good evening, and he left for his own quarters at the Molino house.

## CXLI.

After he had left, Don Antonio Paula told me some of 'Don Enrique's' (Henry Edye's) doings during my absence in London, and added his own opinion that 'he was too easily won over and bamboozled, too fond of praise and flattery, no match for the cajoling Spaniards. He was deficient in firmness, in penetration of men's characters, and the worst was he took no real interest in what concerned the welfare of the estates, or of the people living on or by them. He would have wished to live at Granada, as Calzado and others had done before him.' Paula told me that such was the opinion expressed about Edye's character by the alcalde of Illora, a respectable gentleman, who wished me to be told what he thought of the young agent.

## CXLII.

After this I took Master Harry more strictly in hand, had him in my company almost wherever I went, thus seizing every opportunity of talking to him privately and affectionately. I spoke to him of the early years in which he had been living with us, of the attachment we felt for him in his younger days—a circumstance of which the Duke was well aware, and

which indeed had been the inducement to his Grace to place him here as his agent.

'It would,' I said, 'cause me great pain and grief, I assure you, Master Harry, and grieve also Mrs. Hammick, if I were compelled, for the sake of my own security, to withdraw my responsibility for your conduct: yet such surely would have to be the case if you went on so carelessly and so thoughtlessly as you have done in this matter of the two casks of wine. A very serious consideration it is to me, for I am looking forward to the chance of having by next spring completed all the work necessary to be done, so that I may be free to go home to London at the commencement of the season, as I am anxious to look to my business, and repair its losses—for you know that is the kind of occupation I most delight in. In the next autumn I may look forward to the chance of revisiting this country and assisting you during the coming vintage, which the capatazes tell me will yield us nearly two hundred butts of wine; and this will give us pleasure, and silence the ill-will of any enemy.'

In this strain I talked to the young agent, in our frequent rides to and fro to the Soto de Roma, and when I surveyed the boundary grounds, and the condition of the Duke's tenantry adjoining the rivers and plantations.

## CXLIII.

Mr. Edye had written to me during the summer, in Pall Mall, informing me that the cartage of the bricks from the Soto had worn out all the carts and harness, and he had again and again had them repaired, but the repairs turned out mere waste of money, and both carts and harness were now altogether unfit for use. He therefore begged me to send out some new carts with as much solidity in make as possible. This brought me into correspondence with a noted cartwright of Thoverton, near Sir Stafford Northcote's estate at Upton Pyne, in the neighbourhood of Exeter. This man had built several carts for her Majesty's farms at Windsor, and for several other notable persons. Besides this, I was well acquainted with the neighbourhood, and even with the identical shop, and had observed what a beautiful stock of old oak and ash timber was there piled up. I went and saw the man, and told him I wanted some tipping carts with broad wheels, such as could be worked by poles instead of shafts, shifting poles suitable for a pair of oxen, or a pair of mules, to be used principally for the carting of olives, as well as of bricks and stones, lime, and wood. I contracted with this man for many of these carts with very strong broad wheels and iron axles. These carts were found to answer the purpose admirably.

## CXLIV.

Whilst the work was in hand I informed him that I was very desirous of finding a young farmer who possessed far above the ordinary intelligence of young farmers. I wanted to employ him as overseer over these carts and the mules and oxen which worked them ; and I also wanted the man to be a good ploughman, for I had 16,000 olive-trees which had been planted many years ago, forty feet apart, and had been neglected for several years, so that the ground had become very hard, and consequently required deep ploughing. There was also an irrigated farm of about two hundred acres adjoining, lying waste. This farm received all the waters after they had passed over the olive-grounds, and I felt confident that by able cultivation it could be made highly productive. There was, besides, a large extent of waste lands covered with bushes of prickly evergreen oak, some in trees, some in shrubs, and these yielded a large quantity of acorns. The Duke's agents had been in the habit of selling all these acorns for 5*l.* every year, but this last winter I had started a herd of swine, which ate up all the acorns and all the early droppings from the olive-trees (and I had, besides this herd of swine, more or less, about a thousand sheep). After thus giving the cartwright an account of the capabilities of the estate, I inquired of him whether

he knew a young farmer of uncommonly good abilities who would go out to Spain, and bid fair to be capable of taking all these matters in hand for me. I added that I was going out myself early in September, and the farmer might rely upon me for any intelligence he might require to be furnished with on the spot ; assuring him that ' if the man's head was well stored I would make him a farmer of no mean scientific knowledge during my winter campaign.' The cartwright's answer was : ' There is a young man here, a most respectable farmer's son ; himself very respectable, and he carries off all the prizes at ploughing-matches. I will take an opportunity of seeing him and seeing also his father, and broaching the subject to both of them, and I will write you word.' In the course of time this young farmer came up to me in Pall Mall, with a letter from Milford, the cartwright, and after questioning him as to his knowledge of general farming I stated that over the sheep I had a head shepherd and his two little sons, that this shepherd had a man under him besides, with three large dogs ; so that if the young farmer had patience and simply watched the doings of these shepherds he would in time become equal to them in the knowledge of the local management of flocks, after which he would be able to teach them something as to the English ways of sheep tending and rearing.

## CXLV.

With respect to the herd of swine, also, I told him I had only started this herd the previous autumn at the instance of my old friend Paula ; that the acorns had previously been sold for only 5*l.*, but the fellows who bought them were day and night traversing the estates and gathering the acorns, so that the grapes and olives were all alike fish coming to their nets, though they had never been bargained for ; and that Don Antonio Paula had prompted me to establish a herd of pigs, which would fatten on the acorns and olive-droppings, and which could further be fattened with maize and other fruits which the tenants were at a loss how to dispose of at the Soto. Thus the poor labourers would save out of their little earnings and club together the money wherewith they could buy a fat pig for Christmas. By this contrivance I made a profit of several hundred pounds for the Duke.

The labourers used to choose their pigs out of the herd, and agree upon the price, which was usually from fifty to sixty reals an arroba (25 lbs.), and the highest price per arroba was always given for the largest pig, the lowest for the smallest pig, inasmuch as the interior of the animals is proportionately much greater than in the larger ones. The old-fashioned steel-yards used to be hung up to the limb of an

olive-tree ; each pig had a canvas or flat rope made of esparto grass tied round behind his fore legs and another in front of his hind legs, and the two were made to hook on to the steel-yards, and thus the weight of the live pig was ascertained. The poor men who had become the purchasers would every day before Christmas be driving home their pigs, smoking and chatting together with others who had been equally fortunate in their purchase. Sometimes when I met them in their homeward progress they would salute me with becoming Spanish gravity, and sing out :—

‘ Buenos dias, Don Horacio! Muy alegres estamos, Señor. Este cochino nos viene de nuestro trabajo en la viña. Mujer y niños muy alegres! Será para la Pasqua. Buenas tardes, Don Horacio, tenga Vd. y sus amigos ;’ and so they went on, every man to his home with his own grunter, as happy as Sancho Panza when he rescued his donkey out of the clutches of the thief Ginez de Pasamontes.

The tenants at the Soto were delighted also with this opportunity of disposing of their unsaleable produce, for it afforded them the means of paying the Duke his rent, and to meet other demands ; the acorns, turned into pork, considerably increased the Duke’s revenue, instead of sacrificing it to speculators, for they were bound to pay their rent and debts in wheat, and now the pig in Spain, as in Ireland, was ‘ the gentleman that helped to pay the rint.’

## CXLVI.

Thus I engaged this young farmer, and sent him out to Molino del Rey to assist Mr. Edye in this department of farming, and I had thus provided the young agent with every efficient aid he was likely to stand in need of. I sent him out a complete set of books ; and I had given him the most able and expert accountant I could find. I had given him Vega, who had been an old clerk in the Duke's office in Granada, also the old book-keeper Negretti, and a young clerk from Gibraltar—a Mr. Shakery—as an interpreter. Edye had also his chief of the Soto, who had always been in charge of the house and granary, Señor Torres, in my opinion the most honest and conscientious subaltern official on the estate, a man who, when he was young, must have been the best of sub-agents.

## CXLVII.

Then, as regards the offices at the Molino house, I had established an office for clerks on the inside of the entrance to the Molino, with an inside lock-up room for the Duke's deeds and papers of the least value. On the other side of the entrance I had made a corresponding office for Mr. Edye, and an inside lock-up room for the Duke's more important deeds, documents,

and books. Over these offices I had made a centre room for Mr. Edye to receive visitors ; and on each side of this room I had made a dining-room and a large bed-room. On the other side were a kitchen and a servants' room, and closets at the two ends, with a handsome stone staircase with iron rails to go up to these upper rooms : so that when the Duke and his friends arrived his Grace would be able to take his friends over these business premises with ease and comfort, and rest and take refreshments at his own pleasure—for all this would not unlikely be wanted at this place.

## CXLVIII.

Thus the Duke's agent, Mr. Edye, would have no complaint to make on the score of his accommodation. By the side of these central premises I reared houses for the capatazes of the vineyards and olive-grounds. These were small, but the best of the size that could be contrived. I also added two other cottages, one on each side of Mr. Edye's offices, intended for the habitation of two of his clerks. Moreover, I built a stable for four saddle horses, and next to it another for sixteen mules, and next to that another for a similar number of the same animals.

I had thus done all I was able to settle Mr. Edye in the most comfortable manner, providing for his accom-

modation both in his domestic and official departments. And I was now looking forward with great delight to the day on which I should be able to go back to my home in Pall Mall, where I might rest from the labours I had accomplished, and which I had pursued without a moment's intermission from the first moment I became connected with the Duke's affairs.

## CXLIX.

My young farmer, Mr. Diment, whom I had brought from the neighbourhood of Upton Pyne, Sir Stafford Northcote's seat, near Exeter, took to his vocation with admirable zeal and intelligence, and soon proved himself a great acquisition to the Duke's property. In the first place he took great interest in the fattening of the herd of pigs and getting them in good condition, so as to have them ready for the labourers and planters in the vineyards in good time for their Christmas necessities. He was frequently heard to complain that the acorns were being stolen, and the guards took no heed of his complaints. I asked him to tell me the whereabouts of the trees from which they had been stolen, and I remembered those trees, and how thickly laden with acorns they were. Bushels upon bushels must have been stolen, I concluded, and I at once sent for Vega, to know from him what guards had

been or were on duty at this particular spot, asking if he could account for the occurrence in any way. Vega professed complete ignorance about the matter. 'The estates,' he said, 'had been so traversed in all parts and in every direction for so many years, without let or hindrance, that to find out the robbers would be an impossibility. And it was so unsafe to be out among these ladrones, particularly in the dark nights, that the guards did not care to show themselves singly or in small force.' He therefore intimated that I should have to put on extra guards if I wished a more efficient protection of the acorns and olives at that season of the year.



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CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA  
CL.

Whereupon, as was my custom, I appeared disposed to allow the subject to drop; but such was by no means my intention. On the following day I rose at about eleven o'clock at night, saddled my mare Duquesa, took the Duke's six-chambered revolver in my pocket, and set out alone, like a knight-errant of the olden times.

Almost pitch dark as it was, I sallied forth and stole silently by the zigzag path down the ravine for about a mile and a half, and there I drew rein and halted, and stayed there listening. As the moon looked out and gave a clearer light, I saw that the mare was pricking up her ears, and fixing the right ear towards a clump

of these acorn-trees. I then set the mare gently stealing on till she reached a thicket of these acorn-trees, where she came to a standstill. There seems to be no doubt that the sagacious steed perceived what I was in quest of, and her instinct guided her better than my own judgment might have led me; for as the moon threw out more light I descried at the root of the trees something that looked like sacks. Again, as I looked overhead, I could make out three dark spots among the foliage of the trees, but nothing seemed to stir. Anon, as I waited a moment or two, I heard a rustling as if something moved, but all was soon still again; so at a venture I sang out, 'Now I have you! Come down at once!'

Then a voice from the tree cried out:—

'No, we won't.'

'Ah!' I replied. 'If you will not come down alive I must shoot you down.'

And crack went my 'lady's-companion'—one—two—three shots, but I pointed to the ground for fear of accidents. However, it had the desired effect, for the thieves slipped down from the outside of the trees where they were picking the acorns—a fall of about ten or twelve feet—and away they scampered, one eastwards, another northwards, and the third westwards. I allowed them to get out of reach, and then pretended to ride after them—first after one of them, firing a shot,

then after another, till one of them halted and looked round. I made pretence to gallop up to him, taking out the double-barrelled gun I had at my saddle-bow, and cried out: 'What! not dead yet?' And bang, bang! went both barrels in the air, which set him scampering off towards the village of Allomartes.

The next morning the empty sacks were found and brought to me, with the information that the thieves had been disturbed in the midst of their plunder, and in their flight had left the bags behind them. I pretended to be surprised and delighted, and inquired who was the brave guard on duty, because he deserved to be rewarded. 'For,' I added, 'during all these years I have been here there has been no other instance of a guard catching a *ladron* in the act.'

This put an end to the stealing of acorns.

## CLI.

Next came the turn of the grapes.

I chanced to be at the bankers' in Granada, Señores Rodriguez y Acosta, who were always extremely polite and really obliging to me on all occasions—especially in these times of famine, pestilence, and revolution, when they were ever ready to take such trouble and to evince such care and forethought in my behalf as I could never be sufficiently grateful and thankful for. These kind

gentlemen happened to mention grapes, and were very earnest in their praise of the Duke's grapes, telling me how they had got them fresh and good and ripe every morning at the Granada town market.

I stood open-mouthed, and said, 'Well, this is news to me, gentlemen, and you surprise me, for I was not aware that any of the Duke's grapes had been gathered yet. I have not had any.'

## CLII.

On my return to La Torre I mentioned the occurrence to Vega, to Mr. Edye, to the capataz of the vineyard. All fell from the clouds. They could not believe, they could not account for the phenomena in any way. Then I sent for the guard on duty. Of course he had nothing to say about it. And Vega took it for granted that there must be some mistake, as there were not as yet any grapes ripe on the Duke's estate.

'But surely,' I said, 'the bankers must have known what they said. Send me a guard from the Soto. There is one little man there whose charge is nearest to Granada. That is the man I want; send him.'

'You may well say that for him,' the other guards there present answered. 'He has his little house near his beat, and that is the reason he is always so readily

able to protect his own part of the ground. If the Duke would equally build us cottages in the proper places, we would prove as efficient guards as he is ; but we have to leave our grounds to go home, for we are in want of food and rest, and these *ladrones* watch the opportunity of our absence and decamp when they see us come back—and that is the way the grapes are stolen.'

I never insisted, but accepted this excuse as valid. I said nothing more about it, but went home to rest at about eight o'clock as usual, and in the morning, when it was yet dark, I went to the stables, saddled my Duquesa, and putting two of the Duke's six-shooters in my pocket, and laying my double-barrelled gun on the saddle-bow at my side, I crept very quietly down the ravine, not far from the spot where I had caught the acorn-stealing rascals ; and there in a hollow adjoining the vineyard I halted and stood waiting to see what the grey of the morning would bring forth.

And there, to be sure, the usual premonitory phenomenon repeated itself. Presently Duquesa became restless ; first one ear was turned towards the Illora road, then the other, and lastly they both became fixed upon the olive-grounds and vineyards nearest the road. I waited and stood still, and presently saw six donkeys drawing near under cover of the olive-trees, and each donkey-driver busy among the grapes with his scissors. The work was carried on

very briskly until each man had laden his donkey, when, covering the grapes with esparto matting, away they went from the olive-grounds into the Illora road, and were soon past the Molino house, following the old road to Granada.

As these men had their guns with them, as is their custom when they go journeying, and it would have been madness on my part to attack them single-handed—for in their surprise and excitement at such an hour they might have proved dangerous customers—I deemed it prudent not to interfere with them; but though I let them go their own way, I followed them. I went after them as far as the Molino house, where I endeavoured to rouse the inmates; but it being only three o'clock in the morning, the men were still buried in deep sleep, so I gave up the pursuit and went back to La Torre and to bed, no one having missed me or known on what errand I had been. However, I made the authorities at Illora acquainted with the result of my watching, and the *ladrones* were soon tracked and found out and followed wherever they went, and we got quit of them so long as the grapes lasted.

## CLIII.

Profiting thus by the lessons of experience, I pointed out to Mr. Edye the necessity of building guards'

cottages, which I thought were particularly needed at the two corners of the Bodega ; and I intended when I should be back in England to instruct the London architect to add two guardhouses to his design of the building. But the ground adjoining it was so cut up by ravines that it would be necessary and expedient to build up some capatazes' cottages on some of the small hills which overlooked the vineyards in the hollows where they could not otherwise be seen.

## CLIV.

To convey my views practically to Mr. Edye, I took a cord and stuck up a pole on the top of one of these hills, and ran the cord out ten feet all round, then traced the line all round, giving it an octagonal shape ; and by using the evergreen oaks for uprights, tiling it over, filling up the sides with rubble-stone, and leaving space for door and window, a very cheaply erected guard's cottage, or hut, could be contrived, and by a sufficient number of them the robberies of grapes would soon be put an end to. This was the only way which occurred to me.

## CLV.

I had noticed on several occasions, as I walked or rode past the heaps of olives which had been gathered.

in the course of the day, how neat, how compact, the heaps were left, how cleverly all the work was done ; yet it was all done by young girls with little children under their guidance, and only some old men and women. What an intelligent race this Spanish peasantry looked, especially in their tender years ! How easily amenable to order and method ! How eager to learn and make themselves useful ! I considered how easy it would be by a little wise training and teaching, above all things by kind yet firm treatment, to raise them to the rank of one of the finest populations in Europe. But, alas ! where nature had done so much, culture had done worse than nothing. A mental and moral depravation set in by example at a very early age, a confusion of all ideas of right and wrong, for which not the people themselves but their rulers and teachers are really to be held responsible.

## CLVI.

Certainly there was nothing more charming than the ways of these Spanish children. There came a time—fortunately only a short time—when my usual health seemed to give way. My indisposition was chiefly owing to overwork, and still more to the anxious strain on my mind, for serious thoughts haunted me as to what might become of my work in the end, and I was disturbed also

as to the means by which it was to be carried on from day to day, till such time as I might gradually lay aside, or at least lighten, part of my overwhelming employment.

‘What would happen,’ I reasoned, ‘if my foresight were for once at fault, and if I failed to find the needful money for the men’s wages, were it even only for one day?’ These men were starving with their families, yet hopelessly improvident, accustomed to live from hand to mouth, without savings or resources. In their hunger and want they would rise against me at the moment of disappointment, and they would stone me to death. I took good care to guard against such a mishap of course, but what if illness for one moment disabled me? In a chest of tea, unknown to all men, I kept a ten days’ supply of money for the men’s wages. Relying on this ultimate resource, I frequently allowed the cash at the office to run very low (as an excuse that I could not long continue the labour forced upon me), and to such an extent that the clerks there, on two or three occasions, were alarmed and talked of absconding, leaving their post before the treasure was completely exhausted, well knowing that, if they confronted the men empty-handed, it would be almost impossible, in the distress and actual famine that would stare the poor labourers themselves and their families in the face, to control the popular fury.

Thanks to my foresight, however, we were never brought to the extremity of a thoroughly empty till. And in this I was admirably aided by my bankers, Señores Rodriguez y Acosta, of Granada, and Señores Perez Hermanos, of Loja. The former of these gentlemen bought the Duke's oil at famine prices, before it was fit to be moved, and allowed me to draw the money upon it. The latter bought the corn equally at famine prices, and sent me 2,000*l.* in copper money at once—two cartloads of copper coin. These advances carried me through all serious difficulties, and reassured me from the threats that were often held out to me that the labourers would set fire to the Duke's granary, burn it all down, and Casa Grande along with it.

The report that I was ailing spread like wildfire, and from one quarter I received a singular but touching token of genuine sympathy. The girls who were gathering the olives came up in a body to La Torre, on their way to their homes, after their day's labour was ended, and found me outside, sitting on the esplanade in deep thought, and feeling weak and depressed. On catching sight of me they uttered a scream, rushed up to me, crowding all round, and forming a circle joined hands and danced round and round me for several turns, singing all the time 'God bless Don Horacio! Long live Don Horacio!' and this was repeated again and again when they saw me alone.

Then suddenly breaking up their circle, and throwing up their hats in the air, away they scampered to their homes. They evidently acted on a spontaneous impulse, seeing me sitting alone in deep thought, thinking that by cheering they would cure me ; and no doubt their bright faces and shrill voices, their joyous capers and gambols, and their innocent benisons did me good, and to some extent roused me to cheerfulness.

## CLVII.

But to return to the heaps of olives. On going out on my rides in the early morning I noticed on two or three occasions how unsettled and deranged were those heaps which had so pleasingly struck me by their tidiness on the previous evening. As soon as I felt better I was determined to find the reason for this difference. So I called up Vega and questioned him, but he boldly told me I was mistaken.

‘Who would steal the olives?’ he said.

I had not spoken of theft. But the idea was natural, and his very denial suggested it. Whereupon I made up my mind to try one of my nocturnal excursions and pay a sudden visit to the olive-heaps.

I took the usual precautions, went to bed early, at 8 P.M., took care that my six-shooters were in perfect order, loaded them, and soon after eleven o'clock

I called up Mr. Edye and roused the stable guards, bestowing on each of them a good cigar to soften any displeasure they might feel at that untimely disturbance.

We lighted our cigars, and away we went among the olive-grounds to the very far end, towards Loja, which was quite a thicket, and as we neared the two water-mills my faithful Duquesa began her usual play with her ears, pricking up first the right, then the left, and giving me to understand that she heard several people. And presently I saw by the moonlight a train of some eight or ten men with sacks on their shoulders coming up towards us in their jog-trot Red-Indianlike step, whereupon I backed between two trees to allow them to pass. But Duquesa would not stand still, she made a start, prancing up to the foremost of the band, so that, what with their surprise and the burden of their sacks, two or three of them fell down, sacks and all. Immediately I called up and down the line to them to surrender. They declared they never would: so here again I had recourse to my 'lady's-companion,' and fired off all the six chambers in the air as I cantered beside them, at the same time crying out, 'Muerte á todos!' (Death to all of you!), and down they dropped.

The mere reports of the shots brought the whole band to the ground, men and sacks jumbled together; but the men, finding they were unhurt, soon got up

again, and away they went to their homes behind the hills.

After this encounter I searched the ground here and there from end to end, but could find no guard on duty. We picked up the sacks and rode back to La Torre, and the next morning I sent for Vega, and, after showing him that somebody *would* steal olives, asked him who was to be the guard on duty that night and at that particular spot. I found out the man's name was Muserco.

'Dear me, Vega,' I cried out, 'is not that your father-in-law? Send him to me, that I may hear what he has to say for himself.'

Muserco came. I questioned and cross-questioned him. He declared he was at his post and he had not seen a soul. But if anybody had been there it could only have happened when he was at the Molino end of the olive-ground.

'But, my dear man,' I insisted, 'I traversed the whole of the olive-grounds from end to end, and I am sure you were not there. I greatly fear that both Vega and yourself have long had an understanding in these matters, and I advise you to take warning in time. Sooner or later punishment will be sure to overtake both of you. If you are dismissed from here without a character you will not easily find employment elsewhere, and what will then become of you? I advise you to

give the subject your serious consideration, and you may tell Vega and his wife, your daughter, what I now say to you.'

## CLVIII.

I may be asked why I was so lenient, and why I put up with such rogues at all. But the fact is, these men had been in the Duke's service all their lives, old servants looking forward to pensions, and, if these were bad, where should I look to find better? The great thing was to show them that honesty must be their best policy, and that if they did not make that their rule in life they were sure to be found out; and, when they perceived it was not a fool or a coward they had to deal with, shame and repentance might smite them, and they might deem it good policy hereafter to turn over a new leaf. The result was that after this encounter it came to pass (as had been the case with the acorns and grapes) that there was no more stealing of the olives, and the oil-making seemed to increase both in the gathering of the olives and in the making of the oil.

## CLIX.

It was always my earnest desire to reduce the expenditure, as soon as the famine allowed it to be prudent and wise to do so, for I knew that through the