

alone, went to fetch the things which they demanded. Thereupon the two Gypsies, seeing themselves at liberty, and having already pocketed the gold and silver which had been deposited for their conjuration, opened the street-door, and escaped with all the speed they could.

“The beguiled widow returned laden with the clothes, and not finding those whom she had left waiting, descended into the cellar, when perceiving the trick which they had played her, and the robbery which they had committed in stealing her jewels, she began to cry and weep, but all in vain. All the neighbours hastened to her, and to them she related her misfortune, which served more to raise laughter and jeers at her expense than to excite pity; though the subtlety of the two she-thieves was universally praised. These latter, as soon as they had got out of the door, knew well how to conceal themselves, for having once reached the mountain it was not possible to find them. So much for their divination, their foreseeing things to come, their power over the secrets of nature, and their knowledge of the stars.”

The Gitánas in the olden time appear to have not unfrequently been subjected to punishment as sorceresses, and with great justice, as the abominable trade which they drove in philters and decoctions certainly entitled them to that appellation, and to the pains and penalties reserved for those who practised what was termed “witchcraft.”

Amongst the crimes laid to their charge, connected with the exercise of occult powers, there is one, however, of which they were certainly not capable, as it is a purely imaginary one, though if they were punished for it, they had assuredly little right to complain, as the chastisement they met was fully merited by practices equally malefic as the crime imputed to them, provided that were possible. *It was casting the evil eye.*

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## CHAPTER VIII.

The Evil Eye—Credulity of Oriental Nations—The Janisary—The Greek Physician—Remedies for the Evil Eye—The Talmud—Superstitions of the North.

IN the Gitáno language, casting the evil eye is called *Querelar nasula*, which simply means making sick, and which, according to the common superstition, is accomplished by casting an evil look at people, especially children, who, from the tenderness of their constitution, are supposed to be more easily blighted than those of a more mature age. After receiving the evil glance, they fall sick, and die in a few hours.

The Spaniards have very little to say respecting the evil eye, though the belief in it is very prevalent, especially in Andalusia amongst the lower orders. A stag's horn is considered a good safe-guard, and on that account a small horn, tipped with silver, is frequently attached to the children's necks by means of a cord braided from the hair of a black mare's tail. Should the evil glance be cast, it is imagined that the horn receives it, and instantly snaps asunder. Such horns may be purchased in some of the silversmiths' shops at Seville.

The Gitános have nothing more to say on this species of sorcery than the Spaniards, which can cause but little surprise, when we consider that they have no traditions, and can give no rational account of themselves, nor of the country from which they come.

Some of the women, however, pretend to have the power of casting it, though if questioned how they accomplish it, they can return no answer. They will likewise sell remedies for the evil eye, which need not be particularized, as they consist of any drugs which they happen to possess or be acquainted with; the prescribers being perfectly reckless as to the effect produced on the patient, provided they receive their paltry reward.

I have known these beings offer to cure the glanders in a horse,

(an incurable disorder,) with the very same powders which they offer as a specific for the evil eye.

Leaving, therefore, for a time, the Spaniards and Gitános, whose ideas on this subject are very scanty and indistinct, let us turn to other nations amongst whom this superstition exists, and endeavour to ascertain on what it is founded, and in what it consists. The fear of the evil eye is common amongst all oriental people, whether Turks, Arabs, or Hindoos. It is dangerous in some parts to survey a person with a fixed glance, as he instantly concludes that you are casting the evil eye upon him. Children, particularly, are afraid of the evil eye from the superstitious fear inculcated in their minds in the nursery. Parents in the East feel no delight when strangers look at their children in admiration of their loveliness; they consider that you merely look at them in order to blight them. The attendants on the children of the great are enjoined never to permit strangers to fix their glance upon them. I was once in the shop of an Armenian at Constantinople, waiting to see a procession which was expected to pass by; there was a Janisary there, holding by the hand a little boy about six years of age, the son of some Bey; they also had come to see the procession. I was struck with the remarkable loveliness of the child, and fixed my glance upon it: presently it became uneasy, and turning to the Janisary, said—There are evil eyes upon me; drive them away. “Take your eyes off the child, Frank,” said the Janisary, who had a long white beard, and wore a hanjar. “What harm can they do the child, efendijem,” said I? “Are they not the eyes of a Frank,” replied the Janisary; “but were they the eyes of Omar, they should not rest on the child.”—“Omar,” said I, “and why not Ali?—Don’t you love Ali?”—“What matters it to you whom I love,” said the Turk in a rage; “look at the child again with your chesm fanar and I will smite you.”—“Bad as my eyes are,” said I, “they can see that you do not love Ali.”—“Ya Ali, ya Mahoma, Alahhu!”\* said the Turk, drawing his hanjar. All Franks, by which are meant Christians, are considered as casters of the evil eye. I was lately at Janina in Albania, where a friend of mine, a Greek gentleman, is established as physician:—“I have been visiting the child of a Jew that is sick;” said he to me one day; “scarcely, however, had

\* O Ali! O Mahomet!—God is God!—A Turkish war-cry.

I left the house, when the father came running after me. "You have cast the evil eye on my child," said he; "come back and spit in its face."—"And I assure you," continued my friend, "that notwithstanding all I could say, he compelled me to go back and spit in the face of his child."

Perhaps there is no nation in the world amongst whom this belief is so firmly rooted and from so ancient a period as the Jews; it being a subject treated of, and in the gravest manner, by the old Rabbinical writers themselves, which induces the conclusion that the superstition of the evil eye is of an antiquity almost as remote as the origin of the Hebrew race; (and can we go farther back?) as the oral traditions of the Jews, contained and commented upon in what is called the Talmud, are certainly not less ancient than the inspired writings of the Old Testament, and have unhappily been at all times regarded by them with equal, if not greater reverence.

The evil eye is mentioned in Scripture, but of course not in the false and superstitious sense; evil in the eye, which occurs in Prov. xxiii. v. 6, merely denoting niggardness and illiberality. The Hebrew words are *ain ra*, and stand in contradistinction to *ain toub*, or the benignant in eye, which denotes an inclination to bounty and liberality.

It is imagined that this blight is most easily inflicted when a person is enjoying himself with little or no care for the future, when he is reclining in the sun before the door, or when he is full of health and spirits: it may be cast designedly or not; and the same effect may be produced by an inadvertent word. It is deemed particularly unlucky to say to any person, "how well you look;" as the probabilities are that such an individual will receive a sudden blight and pine away. We have however no occasion to go to Hindoos, Turks, and Jews, for this idea; we shall find it nearer home, or something akin to it. Is there one of ourselves, however enlightened and free from prejudice, who would not shrink, even in the midst of his highest glee and enjoyment, from saying "How happy I am!" or if the words inadvertently escaped him, would he not consider them as ominous of approaching evil, and would he not endeavour to qualify them by saying, "God preserve me!"—Aye, God preserve you, brother! Who knows what the morrow will bring forth?

The common remedy for the evil eye, in the East, is the spittle of the person who has cast it, provided it can be obtained. "Spit in the face of my child," said the Jew of Janina to the Greek physician: recourse is had to the same means in Barbary, where the superstition is universal. In that country both Jews and Moors carry papers about with them scrawled with hieroglyphics, which are prepared by their respective priests, and sold. These papers, placed in a little bag, and hung about the person, are deemed infallible preservatives from the "evil eye."

Let us now see what the Talmud itself says about the evil eye. The passage which we are about to quote is curious, not so much from the subject which it treats of, as in affording an example of the manner in which the Rabbins are wont to interpret the Scripture, and the strange and wonderful deductions which they draw from words and phrases apparently of the greatest simplicity.

"Whosoever when about to enter into a city is afraid of evil eyes, let him grasp the thumb of his right hand with his left hand, and his left hand thumb with his right hand, and let him cry in this manner: 'I am such a one, son of such a one, sprung from the seed of Joseph;' and the evil eyes shall not prevail against him. *Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well,\** &c. Now you should not say *by a well*, but *over an eye*.† Rabbi Joseph Bar Henina makes the following deduction: *and they shall become* (the seed of Joseph) *like fishes in multitude in the midst of the earth.*‡ Now the fishes of the sea are covered by the waters, and the evil eye has no power over them; and so over those of the seed of Joseph the evil eye has no power."

I have been thus diffuse upon the evil eye, because of late years it has been a common practice of writers to speak of it without apparently possessing any farther knowledge of the subject than what may be gathered from the words themselves.

Like most other superstitions, it is, perhaps, founded on a physical reality.

\* Gen. xlix. 22.

† In the original there is a play on words.—It is not necessary to enter into particulars farther than to observe that in the Hebrew language "ain" means a well, and likewise an eye.

‡ Gen. xlviii. 16. In the English version the exact sense of the inspired original is not conveyed. The descendants of Joseph are to increase like fish

I have observed, that only in hot countries, where the sun and moon are particularly dazzling, the belief in the evil eye is prevalent. If we turn to Scripture, the wonderful book which is capable of resolving every mystery, I believe that we shall presently come to the solution of the evil eye. "The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night." Ps. cxxi. v. 6.

Those who wish to avoid the evil eye, instead of trusting in charms, scrawls, and Rabbinical antidotes, let them never loiter in the sunshine before the king of day has nearly reached his bourne in the west; for the sun has an evil eye, and his glance produces brain fevers; and let them not sleep uncovered beneath the smile of the moon, for her glance is poisonous, and produces insupportable itching in the eye, and not unfrequently blindness.

The northern nations have a superstition which bears some resemblance to the evil eye, when allowance is made for circumstances. They have no brilliant sun and moon to addle the brain and poison the eye, but the grey north has its marshes, and fenny ground, and fetid mists, which produce agues, low fevers, and moping madness, and are as fatal to cattle as to man. Such disorders are attributed to elves and fairies. This superstition still lingers in some parts of England under the name of elf-shot, whilst, throughout the north, it is called *elle-skiod*, and *elle-vild* (fairy wild). It is particularly prevalent amongst shepherds and cowherds, the people who, from their manner of life, are most exposed to the effects of the elf-shot. Those who wish to know more of this superstition, are referred to *Thieles Danske Folkesagn*, and to the notes of the *Kœmpe Viser*, or popular Danish Ballads.

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## CHAPTER IX.

Exodus of the Jews: that of the Gypsies—Indifference of the Gitános with respect to Religion—Ezekiel—Tale of Egyptian Descent—Quiñones—Melchior of Guelama—Religious Tolerance—The Inquisitor of Cordova—Gitános and Moriscos.

WHEN the six hundred thousand men,\* and the mixed multitude of women and children went forth from the land of Egypt, the God whom they worshipped, the only true God, went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light; this God who rescued them from slavery, who guided them through the wilderness, who was their captain in battle, and who cast down before them the strong walls which encompassed the towns of their enemies, this God they still remember, after the lapse of more than three thousand years, and still worship with adoration the most unbounded. If there be one event in the eventful history of the Hebrews which awakens in their minds deeper feelings of gratitude than another, it is the exodus; and that wonderful manifestation of olden mercy still serves them as an assurance that the Lord will yet one day redeem and gather together his scattered and oppressed people. "Art thou not the God who brought us out of the land of bondage?" they exclaim in the days of their heaviest trouble and affliction. He who redeemed Israel from the hand of Pharaoh is yet capable of restoring the kingdom and sceptre to Israel.

If the Rommany trusted in any God at the period of *their* exodus, they must speedily have forgotten him. Coming from Ind, as they most assuredly did, it was impossible for them to have known the true, and they must have been followers (if they followed any) either of Buddh, or Brahmah, those tremendous phantoms which have led, and are likely still to lead, the souls of hundreds of millions to destruction; yet they are now ignorant of

\* Exodus chap. xii. v. 37, 38.

such names, nor does it appear that such were ever current amongst them subsequent to their arrival in Europe, if indeed they ever were. They brought with them no Indian idols, as far as we are able to judge at the present time, nor indeed Indian rites or observances, for no traces of such are to be discovered amongst them.

All, therefore, which relates to their original religion is shrouded in mystery, and is likely so to remain. They may have been idolaters, or atheists, or what they now are, totally neglectful of worship of any kind; and though not exactly prepared to deny the existence of a Supreme Being, as regardless of him as if he existed not, and never mentioning his name, save in oaths and blasphemy, or in moments of pain or sudden surprise, as they have heard other people do, but always without any fixed belief, trust, or hope.

There are certainly some points of resemblance between the children of Roma and those of Israel. Both have had an exodus, both are exiles and dispersed amongst the Gentiles, by whom they are hated and despised, and whom they hate and despise, under the names of *Busnees* and *Goyim*; both, though speaking the language of the Gentiles, possess a peculiar tongue, which the latter do not understand, and both possess a peculiar cast of countenance, by which they may, without difficulty, be distinguished from all other nations; but with these points the similarity terminates. The Israelites have a peculiar religion, to which they are fanatically attached; the Romas have none, as they invariably adopt, though only in appearance, that of the people with whom they chance to sojourn; the Israelites possess the most authentic history of any people in the world, and are acquainted with and delight to recapitulate all that has befallen their race, from ages the most remote; the Romas have no history, they do not even know the name of their original country; and the only tradition which they possess, that of their Egyptian origin, is a false one, whether invented by themselves or others; the Israelites are of all people the most wealthy, the Romas the most poor—poor as a Gypsy being proverbial amongst some nations, though both are equally greedy of gain; and finally, though both are noted for peculiar craft and cunning, no people are more ignorant than the Romas, whilst the Jews have always



been a learned people, being in possession of the oldest literature in the world, and certainly the most important and interesting.

Sad and weary must have been the path of the mixed rabble of the Romas, when they left India's sunny land and wended their way to the West, in comparison with the glorious exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, whose God went before them in cloud and in fire, working miracles and astonishing the hearts of their foes.

Even supposing that they worshipped Buddh or Brahmah, neither of these false deities could have accomplished for them what God effected for his chosen people, although it is true that the idea that a Supreme Being was watching over them, in return for the reverence paid to his image, might have cheered them 'midst storm and lightning, 'midst mountains and wildernesses, 'midst hunger and drought; for it is assuredly better to trust even in an idol, in a tree, or a stone, than to be entirely godless; and the most superstitious hind of the Himalayan hills, who trusts in the Grand Foutsa in the hour of peril and danger, is more wise than the most enlightened atheist, who cherishes no consoling delusion to relieve his mind, oppressed by the terrible ideas of reality.

But it is evident that they arrived at the confines of Europe without any certain or rooted faith; knowing, as we do, with what tenacity they retain their primitive habits and customs, their sect being, in all points, the same as it was four hundred years ago, it appears impossible that they should have forgotten their peculiar god, if in any peculiar god they trusted.

Though cloudy ideas of the Indian deities might be occasionally floating in their minds, these ideas, doubtless, quickly passed away when they ceased to behold the pagodas and temples of Indian worship, and were no longer in contact with the enthusiastic adorers of the idols of the East; they passed away even as the dim and cloudy ideas which they subsequently adopted of the Eternal and His Son, Mary and the saints, would pass away when they ceased to be nourished by the sight of churches and crosses; for should it please the Almighty to reconduct the Romas to Indian climes, who can doubt that within half a century they would entirely forget all connected with the religion of the West! Any poor shreds of that faith which they bore with them

they would drop by degrees as they would relinquish their European garments when they became old, and as they relinquished their Asiatic ones to adopt those of Europe; no particular dress makes a part of the things essential to the sect of Roma, so likewise no particular god and no particular religion.

Where these people first assumed the name of Egyptians, or where that title was first bestowed upon them, it is difficult to determine; perhaps, however, in the eastern parts of Europe, where it should seem the grand body of this nation of wanderers made a halt for a considerable time, and where they are still to be found in greater numbers than in any other part. One thing is certain, that when they first entered Germany, which they speedily overran, they appeared under the character of Egyptians, doing penance for the sin of having refused hospitality to the Virgin and her Son, and, of course, as believers in the Christian faith, notwithstanding that they subsisted by the perpetration of every kind of robbery and imposition; Aventinus (*Annalibus Boiorum*, 826) speaking of them says: "Adeo tamen vana superstitio hominum mentes, velut lethargus inuasit, ut eos violari nefas putet, atque grassari futuri imponere passim sinant."

This singular story of banishment from Egypt, and wandering through the world for a period of seven years, for inhospitality displayed to the Virgin, and which I find much difficulty in attributing to the invention of people so ignorant as the Romas, tallies strangely with the fate foretold to the ancient Egyptians in certain chapters of Ezekiel, so much so, indeed, that it seems to be derived from that source. The Lord is angry with Egypt because its inhabitants have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel, and thus he threatens them by the mouth of his prophet.

"I will make the land of Egypt desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities among the cities that are laid waste shall be desolate forty years: and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries." Ezek. chap. xxix. v. 12. "Yet thus saith the Lord God; at the end of forty years will I gather the Egyptians from the people whither they were scattered." v. 13.

"Thus saith the Lord; I will make the multitude of Egypt to cease, by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon." Chap. xxx. v. 10.

“And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them among the countries; and they shall know that I am the Lord.” Chap. xxx. v. 26.

The reader will at once observe that the apocryphal tale which the Romas brought into Germany, concerning their origin and wanderings, agrees in every material point with the sacred prophecy. The ancient Egyptians were to be driven from their country and dispersed amongst the nations, for a period of forty years, for having been the cause of Israel's backsliding, and for not having known the Lord,—the modern pseudo Egyptians are to be dispersed among the nations for seven years, for having denied hospitality to the Virgin and her child. The prophecy seems only to have been remodelled for the purpose of suiting the taste of the time; as no legend possessed much interest in which the Virgin did not figure, she and her child are here introduced instead of the Israelites, and the Lord of Heaven offended with the Egyptians; and this legend appears to have been very well received in Germany, for a time at least, for, as Aventinus observes, it was esteemed a crime of the first magnitude to offer any violence to the Egyptian pilgrims, who were permitted to rob on the highway, to commit larceny, and to practise every species of imposition with impunity.

The tale, however, of the Romas could hardly have been invented by themselves, as they were, and still are, utterly unacquainted with the Scripture; it probably originated amongst the priests and learned men of the east of Europe, who, startled by the sudden apparition of bands of people foreign in appearance and language, skilled in divination and the occult arts, endeavoured to find in Scripture a clue to such a phenomenon; the result of which was, that the Romas of Hindustan were suddenly transformed into Egyptian penitents, a title which they have ever since borne in various parts of Europe. There are no means of ascertaining whether they themselves believed from the first in this story; they most probably took it on credit, more especially as they could give no account of themselves, there being every reason for supposing that from time immemorial they had existed in the East as a thievish wandering sect, as they at present do in Europe, without history or traditions, and unable to look back for a period of eighty years. The tale moreover

answered their purpose, as beneath the garb of penitence they could rob and cheat with impunity, for a time at least. One thing is certain, that in whatever manner the tale of their Egyptian descent originated, many branches of the sect place implicit confidence in it at the present day, more especially those of England and Spain.

Even at the present time there are writers who contend that the Romas are the descendants of the ancient Egyptians, who were scattered amongst the nations by the Assyrians. This belief they principally found upon particular parts of the prophecy from which we have already quoted, and there is no lack of plausibility in the arguments which they deduce therefrom. The Egyptians, say they, were to fall upon the open fields, they were not to be brought together nor gathered; they were to be dispersed through the countries, their idols were to be destroyed, and their images were to cease out of Noph! In what people in the world do these denunciations appear to be verified save the Gypsies?—a people who pass their lives in the open fields, who are not gathered together, who are dispersed through the countries, who have no idols, no images, nor any fixed or certain religion.

In Spain, the want of religion amongst the Gitános was speedily observed, and became quite as notorious as their want of honesty; they have been styled atheists, heathen idolaters, and Moors. In the little book of Quiñones, we find the subject noticed in the following manner.

“They do not understand what kind of thing the church is, and never enter it but for the purpose of committing sacrilege. They do not know the prayers; for I examined them myself, males and females, and they knew them not, or if any, very imperfectly. They never partake of the Holy Sacraments, and though they marry relations they procure no dispensations.\* No one knows whether they are baptized. One of the five whom I caused to be hung a few days ago, was baptized in the prison, being at the time upwards of thirty years of age. Don Martin Fajardo says that two Gitános and a Gitána, whom he hanged in the village of Torre Perojil, were baptized at the foot of the gallows, and declared themselves Moors.

\* Quiñones, p. 11.

"They invariably look out, when they marry, if we can call their marrying, for the woman most dexterous in pilfering and deceiving, caring nothing whether she is akin to them or married already,\* for it is only necessary to keep her company and to call her wife. Sometimes they purchase them from their husbands, or receive them as pledges: so says, at least, Doctor Salazar de Mendoza.

"Friar Melchior of Guelama states that he heard asserted of two Gitános what was never yet heard of any barbarous nation, namely, that they exchanged their wives, and that as one was more comely looking than the other, he who took the handsome woman gave a certain sum of money to him who took the ugly one. The licentiate Alonzo Duran has certified to me, that in the year 1623-4, one Simon Ramirez, captain of a band of Gitános, repudiated Teresa because she was old, and married one called Melchora, who was young and handsome, and that on the day when the repudiation took place and the bridal was celebrated he was journeying along the road, and perceived a company feasting and revelling beneath some trees in a plain within the jurisdiction of the village of Deleitosa, and that on demanding the cause he was told that it was on account of Simon Ramirez marrying one Gitána and casting off another; and that the repudiated woman told him, with an agony of tears, that he abandoned her because she was old, and married another because she was young. Certain Gitános and Gitánas confessed before Don Martin Fajardo that they did not really marry, but that in their banquets and festivals they selected the woman whom they liked, and that it was lawful for them to have as many as three mistresses, and on that account they begat so many children. They never keep fasts nor any ecclesiastical command. They always eat meat, Friday and Lent not excepted; the morning when I seized those whom I afterwards executed, which was in Lent, they had three lambs which they intended to eat for their dinner that day."—Quiñones, page 13.

Although what is stated in the above extracts, respecting the marriages of the Gitános and their licentious manner of living,

\* The writer will by no means answer for the truth of these statements respecting Gypsy marriages.

is, for the most part, incorrect, there is no reason to conclude the same with respect to their want of religion in the olden time, and their slight regard for the forms and observances of the church, as their behaviour at the present day serves to confirm what is said on those points. From the whole, we may form a tolerably correct idea of the opinions of the time respecting the Gitános in matters of morality and religion. A very natural question now seems to present itself, namely, what steps did the government of Spain, civil and ecclesiastical, which has so often trumpeted its zeal in the cause of what it calls the Christian religion, which has so often been the scourge of the Jew, of the Mahometan, and of the professors of the reformed faith; what steps did it take towards coverting, punishing, and rooting out from Spain, a sect of demi-atheists, who, besides being cheats and robbers, displayed the most marked indifference for the forms of the Catholic religion, and presumed to eat flesh every day, and to intermarry with their relations, without paying the vicegerent of Christ here on earth for permission so to do?

The Gitános have at all times, since their first appearance in Spain, been notorious for their contempt of religious observances; yet there is no proof that they were subjected to persecution on that account. The men have been punished as robbers and murderers, with the gallows and the galleys; the women, as thieves and sorceresses, with imprisonment, flagellation, and sometimes death; but as a rabble, living without fear of God, and, by so doing, affording an evil example to the nation at large, few people gave themselves much trouble about them, though they may have occasionally been designated as such in a royal edict, intended to check their robberies, or by some priest from the pulpit, from whose stable they had perhaps contrived to extract the mule which previously had the honour of ambling beneath his portly person.

The Inquisition, which burnt so many Jews and Moors, and conscientious Christians, at Seville and Madrid, and in other parts of Spain, seems to have exhibited the greatest clemency and forbearance to the Gitános. Indeed, we cannot find one instance of its having interfered with them. The charge of restraining the excesses of the Gitános was abandoned entirely to the secular authorities, and more particularly to the Santa Hermandad, a kind

of police instituted for the purpose of clearing the roads of robbers. Whilst I resided at Cordova, I was acquainted with an aged ecclesiastic, who was priest of a village called Puente, at about two leagues' distance from the city. He was detained in Cordova on account of his political opinions, though he was otherwise at liberty. We lived together at the same house; and he frequently visited me in my apartment.

This person, who was upwards of eighty years of age, had formerly been inquisitor at Cordova. One night, whilst we were seated together, three Gitános entered to pay me a visit, and on observing the old ecclesiastic, exhibited every mark of dissatisfaction, and speaking in their own idiom, called him a *balichow*, and abused priests in general in most unmeasured terms. On their departing, I inquired of the old man whether he, who having been an inquisitor, was doubtless versed in the annals of the holy office, could inform me whether the Inquisition had ever taken any active measures for the suppression and punishment of the sect of the Gitános: whereupon he replied, "that he was not aware of one case of a Gitáno having been tried or punished by the Inquisition;" adding these remarkable words: "The Inquisition always looked upon them with too much contempt to give itself the slightest trouble concerning them; for as no danger either to the state, or the church of Rome, could proceed from the Gitános, it was a matter of perfect indifference to the holy office whether they lived without religion or not. The holy office has always reserved its anger for people very different; the Gitános having at all times been *Gente barata y despreciable*."

Indeed, most of the persecutions which have arisen in Spain against Jews, Moors, and Protestants, sprang from motives with which fanaticism and bigotry, of which it is true the Spaniards have their full share, had very little connexion. Religion was assumed as a mask to conceal the vilest and most detestable motives which ever yet led to the commission of crying injustice; the Jews were doomed to persecution and destruction on two accounts,—their great riches, and their high superiority over the Spaniards in learning and intellect. Avarice has always been the dominant passion in Spanish minds, their rage for money being only to be compared to the wild hunger of wolves for

horse-flesh in the time of winter : next to avarice, envy of superior talent and accomplishment is the prevailing passion. These two detestable feelings united, proved the ruin of the Jews in Spain, who were, for a long time, an eye-sore, both to the clergy and laity, for their great riches and learning. Much the same causes ensured the expulsion of the Moriscos, who were abhorred for their superior industry, which the Spaniards would not imitate ; whilst the reformation was kept down by the gaunt arm of the Inquisition, lest the property of the church should pass into other and more deserving hands. The faggot piles in the squares of Seville and Madrid, which consumed the bodies of the Hebrew, the Morisco, and the Protestant, were lighted by avarice and envy, and those same piles would likewise have consumed the Mulatto carcase of the Gitáno, had he been learned and wealthy enough to become obnoxious to the two master passions of the Spaniards.

Of all the Spanish writers who have written concerning the Gitános, the one who appears to have been most scandalized at the want of religion observable amongst them, and their contempt for things sacred, was a certain Doctor Sancho De Moncada.

This worthy, whom we have already had occasion to mention, was Professor of Theology at the University of Toledo, and shortly after the expulsion of the Moriscos had been brought about by the intrigues of the monks and robbers who thronged the court of Philip the Third, he endeavoured to get up a cry against the Gitános similar to that with which for the last half century Spain had resounded against the unfortunate and oppressed Africans, and to effect this he published a discourse, entitled "The Expulsion of the Gitános," addressed to Philip the Third, in which he conjures that monarch, for the sake of morality and every thing sacred, to complete the good work he had commenced, and to send the Gitános packing after the Moriscos.

Whether this discourse produced any benefit to the author, we have no means of ascertaining. One thing is certain, that it did no harm to the Gitános, who still continue in Spain.

If he had other expectations, he must have understood very little of the genius of his countrymen, or of King Philip and his court. It would have been easier to get up a crusade against the wild cats of the sierra, than against the Gitános, as the former



have skins to reward those who slay them. His discourse, however, is well worthy of perusal, as it exhibits some learning, and comprises many curious details respecting the Gitános, their habits, and their practices. As it is not very lengthy, we here subjoin it, hoping that the reader will excuse its many absurdities, for the sake of its many valuable facts.



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

## CHAPTER X.

The expulsion of the Gitanos ; a discourse addressed by Doctor Sancho De Moncada to Philip the Third.

“SIRE,

“THE people of God were always afflicted by the Egyptians, but the Supreme King delivered them from their hands by means of many miracles, which are related in the Holy Scriptures ; and now, without having recourse to so many, but only by means of the miraculous talent which your Majesty possesses for expelling such reprobates, he will, doubtless, free this kingdom from them, which is what is supplicated in this discourse, and it behoves us, in the first place, to consider

“WHO ARE THE GITANOS?

“Writers generally agree that the first time the Gitanos were seen in Europe was the year 1417, which was in the time of Pope Martinus the Fifth and King Don John the Second ; others say that Tamerlane had them in his camp in 1401, and that their captain was Cingo, from whence it is said that they call themselves Cingary. But the opinions concerning their origin are infinite.

“The first is that they are foreigners, though authors differ much with respect to the country from whence they came. The majority say that they are from Africa, and that they came with the Moors when Spain was lost ; others that they are Tartars, Persians, Cilicians, Nubians, from Lower Egypt, from Syria, or from other parts of Asia and Africa, and others consider them to be descendants of Chus, son of Cain ; others say that they are of European origin, Bohemians, Germans, or outcasts from other nations of this quarter of the world.

“The second and sure opinion is, that those who prowl about

Spain are not Egyptians, but swarms of wasps and atheistical wretches, without any kind of law or religion, Spaniards, who have introduced this Gypsy life or sect, and who admit into it every day all the idle and broken people of Spain. There are some foreigners who would make Spain the origin and fountain of all the Gypsies of Europe, as they say that they proceeded from a river in Spain called Cija, of which Lucan makes mention; an opinion, however, not much adopted amongst the learned. In the opinion of respectable authors, they are called Cingary or Cinli, because they in every respect resemble the bird cinclo, which we call in Spanish Motacilla, or aguzanieve (wag-tail), which is a vagrant bird and builds no nest,\* but broods in those of other birds, a bird restless and poor of plumage, as Elian writes.

“THE GITANOS ARE VERY HURTFUL TO SPAIN.

“There is not a nation which does not consider them as a most pernicious rabble; even the Turks and Moors abominate them, amongst whom this sect is found under the names of Torlaquis,† Hugiemalars, and Dervislars, of whom some historians make mention, and all agree that they are most evil people, and highly detrimental to the country where they are found.

“In the first place, because in all parts they are considered as enemies of the states where they wander, and as spies and traitors to the crown; which was proven by the emperors Maximilian and Albert, who declared them to be such in public edicts; a fact easy to be believed, when we consider that they enter with ease into the enemies' country, and know the languages of all nations.

“Secondly, because they are idle vagabond people, who are in no respect useful to the kingdom; without commerce, occupation, or trade of any description; and if they have any it is making picklocks and pothooks for appearance sake, being wasps, who only live by sucking and impoverishing the country, sustaining

\* This statement is incorrect.

† The Torlaquis (idle vagabonds), Hadgies (saints), and Dervishes (mendicant friars), of the East, are Gypsies neither by origin nor habits, but are in general people who support themselves in idleness by practising upon the credulity and superstition of the Moslems.

themselves by the sweat of the miserable labourers, as a German poet has said of them :—

‘ Quos aliena juvant, propriis habitare molestum,  
Fastidit patrium non nisi nosse solum.’

They are much more useless than the Moriscos, as these last were of some service to the state and the royal revenues, but the Gitános are neither labourers, gardeners, mechanics, nor merchants, and only serve, like the wolves, to plunder and to flee.

“ Thirdly, because the Gitánas are public harlots, common, as it is said, to all the Gitános, and with dances, demeanour, and filthy songs, are the cause of continual detriment to the souls of the vassals of your majesty, it being notorious that they have done infinite harm in many honourable houses by separating the married women from their husbands, and perverting the maidens : and finally, in the best of these Gitánas any one may recognise all the signs of a harlot given by the wise king ; they are gadders about, whisperers, always unquiet in places and corners.

“ Fourthly, because in all parts they are accounted famous thieves, about which authors write wonderful things ; we ourselves have continual experience of this fact in Spain, where there is scarcely a corner where they have not committed some heavy offence.

“ Father Martin del Rio says they were notorious when he was in Leon in the year 1584 ; as they even attempted to sack the town of Logroño in the time of the pest, as Don Francisco De Cordoba writes in his *Didascalía*. Enormous cases of their excesses we see in infinite processes in all the tribunals, and particularly in that of the Holy Brotherhood ; their wickedness ascending to such a pitch, that they steal children, and carry them for sale to Barbary ; the reason why the Moors call them in Arabic, *Raso cherany*,\* which, as Andreas Tebetus writes, means *master thieves*. Although they are addicted to every species of robbery, they mostly practise horse and cattle stealing, on which account they are called in law *Abigeos*, and in Spanish

\* In the Moorish Arabic, *رؤس الحرامين*—or *reus al haramin*, the literal meaning being, “heads or captains of thieves.”

*Quatrerros*, from which practice great evils result to the poor labourers. When they cannot steal cattle, they endeavour to deceive by means of them, acting as *terceros*, in fairs and markets.

“Fifthly, because they are enchanters, diviners, magicians, chiromancers, who tell the future by the lines of the hand, which is what they call *Buena ventura*, and are in general addicted to all kind of superstition.

“This is the opinion entertained of them universally, and which is confirmed every day by experience; and some think that they are called Cingary, from the great Magian Cineus, from whom it is said they learned their sorceries, and from which result in Spain (especially amongst the vulgar) great errors, and superstitious credulity, mighty witchcrafts, and heavy evils, both spiritual and corporeal.

“Sixthly, because very devout men consider them as heretics, and many as Gentile idolaters, or atheists, without any religion, although they exteriorly accommodate themselves to the religion of the country in which they wander, being Turks with the Turks, heretics with the heretics, and, amongst the Christians, baptizing now and then a child for form's sake. Friar Jayme Bleda produces a hundred signs, from which he concludes that the *Moriscos* were not Christians, all which are visible in the *Gitános*; very few are known to baptize their children; they are not married, but it is believed that they keep the women in common; they do not use dispensations, nor receive the sacraments; they pay no respect to images, rosaries, bulls, neither do they hear mass, nor divine services; they never enter the churches, nor observe fasts, Lent, nor any ecclesiastical precept; which enormities have been attested by long experience, as every person says.

“Finally, they practise every kind of wickedness in safety, by discoursing amongst themselves in a language with which they understand each other without being understood, which in Spain is called *Gerigonza*, which, as some think, ought to be called *Cingerionza*, or language of Cingary. The king our lord saw the evil of such a practice in the law which he enacted at Madrid, in the year 1566, in which he forbade the Arabic to the *Moriscos*, as the use of different languages amongst the

natives of one kingdom opens a door to treason, and is a source of heavy inconvenience ; and this is exemplified more in the case of the Gitános than of any other people.

“ THE GITANOS OUGHT TO BE SEIZED WHEREVER FOUND.

“ The civil law ordains that vagrants be seized wherever they are found, without any favour being shewn to them ; in conformity with which, the Gitános in the Greek empire were given as slaves to those who should capture them ; as respectable authors write. Moreover, the emperor, our lord, has decreed by a law made in Toledo, in the year 1525, *that the third time they be found wandering they shall serve as slaves during their whole life to those who capture them.* Which can be easily justified, inasmuch as there is no shepherd who does not place barriers against the wolves, and does not endeavour to save his flock, and I have already exposed to your majesty the damage which the Gitános perpetrate in Spain.

“ THE GITANOS OUGHT TO BE CONDEMNED TO DEATH.

“ The reasons are many. The first, for being spies, and traitors to the crown ; the second as idlers and vagabonds.

“ It ought always to be considered, that no sooner did the race of man begin, after the creation of the world, than the important point of civil policy arose of condemning vagrants to death ; for Cain was certain that he should meet his destruction in wandering as a vagabond for the murder of Abel. *Ero vagus et profugus in terra: omnis igitur qui invenerit me, occidet me.* Now, the *igitur* stands here as the natural consequence of *vagus ero* ; as it is evident, that whoever shall see me must kill me, because he sees me a wanderer. And it must always be remembered, that at that time there were no people in the world but the parents and brothers of Cain, as St. Ambrose has remarked. Moreover, God, by the mouth of Jeremias, menaced his people, that all should devour them whilst they went wandering amongst the mountains. And it is a doctrine entertained by theologians, that the mere act of wandering, without any thing else, carries with it a vehement suspicion of capital crime. Nature herself demonstrates it in the curious political system of the bees, in whose well governed

republic the drones are killed in April, when they commence working.

“The third, because they are stealers of four-footed beasts, who are condemned to death by the laws of Spain, in the wise code of the famous King Don Alonso; which enactment became a part of the common law.

“The fourth, for wizards, diviners, and for practising arts which are prohibited under pain of death by the divine law itself. And Saul is praised for having caused this law to be put in execution in the beginning of his reign; and the Holy Scripture attributes to the breach of it (namely, his consulting the witch) his disastrous death, and the transfer of the kingdom to David. The Emperor Constantine the Great, and other emperors who founded the civil law, condemned to death those who should practise such facinorousness,—as the President of Tolosa has written.

“The last and most urgent cause is, that they are heretics, if what is said be truth; and it is the practice of the law in Spain to burn such.

“THE GITANOS ARE EXPELLED FROM THE COUNTRY BY THE LAWS OF SPAIN.

“Firstly, they are comprehended as hale beggars in the law of the wise king, Don Alonso, by which he expelled all sturdy beggars, as being idle and useless.

“Secondly, the law expels public harlots from the city; and of this matter I have already said something in my second chapter.

“Thirdly, as people who cause scandal, and who, as is visible at the first glance, are prejudicial to morals and common decency. Now, it is established by the statute law of these kingdoms, that such people be expelled therefrom; it is said so in the well pondered words of the edict for the expulsion of the Moors:—‘And forasmuch as the sense of good and Christian government makes it a matter of conscience to expel from the kingdoms the things which cause scandal, injury to honest subjects, danger to the state, and above all, disloyalty to the Lord our God.’ Therefore, considering the incorrigibility of the Gitános, the Spanish kings made many

holy laws in order to deliver their subjects from such pernicious people.

“Fourthly, the Catholic princes, Ferdinand and Isabella, by a law which they made in Medina del Campo, in the year 1494, and which the emperor our lord renewed in Toledo in 1523, and in Madrid in 1528 and 1534, and the late king our lord, in 1560, banished them perpetually from Spain, and gave them as slaves to whomsoever should find them, after the expiration of the term specified in the edict—laws which are notorious even amongst strangers. The words are:—‘We declare to be vagabonds, and subject to the aforesaid penalty, the Egyptians and foreign tinkers, who by laws and statutes of these kingdoms are commanded to depart therefrom; and the poor sturdy beggars, who contrary to the order given in the new edict, beg for alms and wander about.’

“THE LAWS ARE VERY JUST WHICH EXPEL THE GITANOS FROM THE STATES.

“All the doctors, who are of opinion that the Gitános may be condemned to death, would consider it as an act of mercy in your majesty to banish them perpetually from Spain, and at the same time as exceedingly just. Many and learned men not only consider that it is just to expel them, but cannot sufficiently wonder that they are tolerated in Christian states, and even consider that such toleration is an insult to the kingdoms.

“Whilst engaged in writing this, I have seen a very learned memorial, in which Doctor Salazar de Mendoza makes the same supplication to your majesty which is made in this discourse; holding it to be the imperious duty of every good government.

“It stands in reason that the prince is bound to watch for the welfare of his subjects, and the wrongs which those of your majesty receive from the Gitános I have already exposed in my second chapter; it being a point worthy of great consideration that the wrongs caused by the Moriscos moved your royal and merciful bosom to drive them out, although they were many, and their departure would be felt as a loss to the population, the commerce, the royal revenues, and agriculture. Now, with respect to the Gitános, as they are few, and perfectly



useless for every thing, it appears more necessary to drive them forth, the injuries which they cause being so numerous.

“Secondly, because the Gitános, as I have already said, are Spaniards; and as others profess the sacred orders of religion, even so do these fellows profess gypsying, which is robbery and all the other vices enumerated in chapter the second. And whereas it is just to banish from the kingdom those who have committed any heavy delinquency, it is still more so to banish those who profess to be injurious to all.

“Thirdly, because all the kings and rulers have always endeavoured to eject from their kingdoms the idle and useless. And it is very remarkable, that the law invariably commands them to be expelled, and the republics of Athens and Corinth were accustomed to do so,—casting them forth like dung, even as Athenæus writes:—*Nos genus hoc mortalium ejicimus ex hac urbe velut purgamina*. Now the profession of the Gypsy is idleness.

“Fourthly, because the Gitános are diviners, enchanters, and mischievous wretches, and the law commands us to expel such from the state.

“In the fifth place, because your majesty, in the Cortes at present assembled, has obliged your royal conscience to fulfil all the articles voted for the public service, and the forty-ninth says:—‘One of the things at present most necessary to be done in these kingdoms, is to afford a remedy for the robberies, plundering and murders committed by the Gitános, who go wandering about the country, stealing the cattle of the poor, and committing a thousand outrages, living without any fear of God, and being Christians only in name. It is therefore deemed expedient, that your majesty command them to quit these kingdoms within six months, to be reckoned from the day of the ratification of these presents, and that they do not return to the same under pain of death.’

“Against this, two things may possibly be urged:

“The first, that the laws of Spain give unto the Gitános the alternative of residing in large towns, which, it appears, would be better than expelling them. But experience, recognised by grave and respectable men, has shown that it is not well to harbour these people; for their houses are dens of thieves, from whence they prowl abroad to rob the land.

“The second, that it appears a pity to banish the women and children. But to this can be opposed that holy act of your majesty which expelled the Moriscos, and the children of the Moriscos, for the reason given in the royal edict. *Whenever any detestable crime is committed by any university, it is well to punish all.* And the most detestable crimes of all are those which the Gitános commit, since it is notorious that they subsist on what they steal; and as to the children, there is no law which obliges us to bring up wolf-whelps, to cause hereafter certain damage to the flock.

“IT HAS EVER BEEN THE PRACTICE OF PRINCES TO EXPEL THE GITANOS.

“Every one who considers the manner of your majesty's government as the truly Christian pattern, must entertain fervent hope that the advice proffered in this discourse will be attended to; more especially on reflecting that not only the good, but even the most barbarous kings have acted up to it in their respective dominions.

“Pharaoh was bad enough, nevertheless he judged that the children of Israel were dangerous to the state, because they appeared to him to be living without any certain occupation; and for this very reason the Chaldeans cast them out of Babylon. Amasis, King of Egypt, drove all the vagrants from his kingdom, forbidding them to return under pain of death. The Soldan of Egypt expelled the Torlaquis. The Moors did the same; and Bajazet cast them out of all the Ottoman empire, according to Leo Clavius.

“In the second place, the Christian princes have deemed it an important measure of state.

“The emperor our Lord, in the German Diets of the year 1548, expelled the Gitános from all his empire, and these were the words of the decree;—‘*Zigeuner quos compertum est proditores esse, et exploratores hostium nusquam in imperio locum inveniunt. In deprehensos vis et injuria sine fraude esto. Fides publica Zigeuners ne datur, nec data servator.*’

“The King of France, Francis, expelled them from thence; and the Duke of Terranova, when Governor of Milan for our

lord the king, obliged them to depart from that territory under pain of death.

“Thirdly, there is one grand reason which ought to be conclusive in moving him who so much values himself in being a faithful son of the church,—I mean the example which Pope Pius the Fifth gave to all the princes; for he drove the Gitános from all his domains, and in the year 1568, he expelled the Jews, assigning as reasons for their expulsion those which are more closely applicable to the Gitános;—namely, that they sucked the vitals of the state, without being of any utility whatever; that they were thieves themselves, and harbourers of others; that they were wizards, diviners, and wretches who induced people to believe that they knew the future, which is what the Gitános at present do by telling fortunes.

“Your majesty has already freed us from greater and more dangerous enemies; finish, therefore, the enterprise begun, whence will result universal joy and security, and by which your majesty will earn immortal honour. Amen.

“O Regum summe, horum plura ne temnas (absit) ne fortè tempssisse Hispaniæ periculosum existat.”

## CHAPTER XI.

Various laws issued against the Spanish Gypsies, from the time of Ferdinand and Isabella to the latter part of the eighteenth century, embracing a period of nearly three hundred years.

PERHAPS there is no country in which more laws have been framed, having in view the extinction and suppression of the Gypsy name, race, and manner of life, than Spain. Every monarch, during a period of three hundred years, appears at his accession to the throne to have considered that one of his first and most imperative duties consisted in suppressing or checking the robberies, frauds, and other enormities of the *Gitános*, with which the whole country seems to have resounded since the time of their first appearance.

They have, by royal edicts, been repeatedly banished from Spain, under terrible penalties, unless they renounced their inveterate habits; and for the purpose of eventually confounding them with the residue of the population, they have been forbidden, even when stationary, to reside together, every family being enjoined to live apart, and neither to seek nor to hold communication with others of the race.

We shall say nothing at present, as to the wisdom which dictated these provisions, nor whether others might not have been devised, better calculated to produce the end desired. Certain it is, that the laws were never, or very imperfectly, put in force, and for reasons with which their expediency or equity (which no one at the time impugned) had no connexion whatever.

It is true that, in a country like Spain, abounding in wildernesses and almost inaccessible mountains, the task of hunting down and exterminating, or banishing the roving bands, would have been found one of no slight difficulty, even if such had ever been attempted; but it must be remembered, that from an early period colonies of *Gitános* have existed in the principal towns of Spain, where the men have plied the trades of jockeys

and blacksmiths, and the women subsisted by divination, and all kinds of fraud. These colonies were, of course, always within the reach of the hand of justice, yet it does not appear that they were more interfered with than the roving and independent bands, and that any serious attempts were made to break them up, though notorious as nurseries and refuges of crime.

It is a lamentable fact, that pure and uncorrupt justice has never existed in Spain, as far at least as record will allow us to judge; not that the principles of justice have been less understood there than in other countries, but because the entire system of judiciary administration has ever been shamelessly profligate and vile.

Spanish justice has invariably been a mockery, a thing to be bought and sold, terrible only to the feeble and innocent, and an instrument of cruelty and avarice.

The tremendous satires of Le Sage upon Spanish corregidores and alguazils are true, even at the present day, and the most notorious offenders can generally escape, if able to administer sufficient bribes to the ministers\* of what is misnamed justice.

The reader, whilst perusing the following extracts from the laws framed against the Gitáños, will be filled with wonder that the Gypsy sect still exists in Spain, contrary to the declared will of the sovereign and the nation, so often repeated during a period of three hundred years; yet such is the fact, and it can only be accounted for on the ground of corruption.

It was notorious that the Gitáños had powerful friends and favourers in every district, who sanctioned and encouraged them in their Gypsy practices. These their fautors were of all ranks and grades, from the corregidor of noble blood, to the low and obscure escribano; and from the viceroy of the province, to the archer of the Hermandad.

To the high and noble, they were known as Chalanés, and to the plebeian functionaries, as people who, notwithstanding their general poverty, could pay for protection.

A law was even enacted against these protectors of the Gitáños, which of course failed, as the execution of the law was confided to the very delinquents against whom it was directed. Thus,

\* A favourite saying amongst this class of people, is the following: "Es preciso que cada uno coma de su oficio;" i. e., every one must live by his trade.

the Gitáno bought, sold, and exchanged animals openly, though he subjected himself to the penalty of death by so doing, or left his habitation when he thought fit, though such an act, by the law of the land, was punishable with the galleys.

In one of their songs they have commemorated the impunity with which they wandered about. The escribano, to whom the Gitános of the neighbourhood pay contribution, on a strange Gypsy being brought before him, instantly orders him to be liberated, assigning as a reason that he is no Gitáno, but a legitimate Spaniard :—

“ I left my house, and walked about,  
They seized me fast, and bound :  
It is a Gypsy thief, they shout,  
The Spaniards here have found.

“ From out the prison me they led,  
Before the scribe they brought ;  
It is no Gypsy thief, he said,  
The Spaniards here have caught.”

In a word, nothing was to be gained by interfering with the Gitános, by those in whose hands the power was vested ; but, on the contrary, something was to be lost. The chief sufferers were the labourers, and they had no power to right themselves, though their wrongs were universally admitted, and laws for their protection continually being made, which their enemies contrived to set at nought ; as will presently be seen.

The first law issued against the Gypsies appears to have been that of Ferdinand and Isabella, at Medina del Campo, in 1499. In this edict they were commanded, under certain penalties, to become stationary in towns and villages, and to provide themselves with masters whom they might serve for their maintenance, or in default thereof, to quit the kingdom at the end of sixty days. No mention is made of the country to which they were expected to betake themselves in the event of their quitting Spain. Perhaps, as they are called Egyptians, it was concluded that they would forthwith return to Egypt ; but the framers of the law never seem to have considered what means these Egyptians possessed of transporting their families and themselves across the sea to such a distance, or if they betook themselves to other countries, what reception a host of people, confessedly thieves

and vagabonds, were likely to meet with, or whether it was fair in the *two Christian princes* to get rid of such a nuisance at the expense of their neighbours. Such matters were of course left for the Gypsies themselves to settle.

In this edict, a class of individuals is mentioned in conjunction with the Gitános, or Gypsies, but distinguished from them by the name of foreign tinkers, or *Caldéros estrangéros*. By these, we presume, were meant the Calabrians, who are still to be seen upon the roads of Spain, wandering about from town to town, in much the same way as the itinerant tinkers of England at the present day. A man, half a savage, a haggard woman, who is generally a Spaniard, a wretched child, and still more miserable donkey, compose the group; the gains are of course exceedingly scanty, nevertheless this life, seemingly so wretched, has its charms for these outcasts, who live without care and anxiety, without a thought beyond the present hour, and who sleep as sound in ruined *posadas* and *ventas*, or in ravines amongst rocks and pines, as the proudest grandee in his palace at Seville or Madrid.

Don Carlos and Donna Juanna, at Toledo, 1539, confirmed the edict of Medina del Campo against the Egyptians, with the addition, that if any Egyptian, after the expiration of the sixty days, should be found wandering about, he should be sent to the galleys for six years, if above the age of twenty and under that of fifty, and if under or above those years, punished as the preceding law provides.

Philip the Second, at Madrid, 1586, after commanding that all the laws and edicts be observed, by which the Gypsies are forbidden to wander about, and commanded to establish themselves, ordains, with the view of restraining their thievish and cheating practices, that none of them be permitted to sell any thing, either within or without fairs or markets, if not provided with a testimony signed by the notary public, to prove that they have a settled residence, and where it may be; which testimony must also specify and describe the horses, cattle, linen, and other things, which they carry forth for sale; otherwise they are to be punished as thieves, and what they attempt to sell considered as stolen property.

Philip the Third, at Belem, in Portugal, 1619, commands all

the Gypsies of the kingdom to quit the same within the term of six months, and never to return, under pain of death; those who should wish to remain are to establish themselves in cities, towns, and villages, of one thousand families and upwards, and are not to be allowed the use of the dress, name, and language of Gypsies, *in order that, forasmuch as they are not such by nation, this name and manner of life may be for evermore confounded and forgotten.* They are moreover forbidden, under the same penalty, to have any thing to do with the buying or selling of cattle, whether great or small.

The most curious portion of the above law is the passage in which these people are declared not to be Gypsies by nation. If they are not Gypsies, who are they then? Spaniards? If so, what right had the King of Spain to send the refuse of his subjects abroad, to corrupt other lands, over which he had no jurisdiction?

The Moors were sent back to Africa, under some colour of justice, as they came originally from that part of the world; but what would have been said to such a measure, if the edict which banished them had declared that they were not Moors, but Spaniards?

The law, moreover, in stating that they are not Gypsies by nation, seems to have forgotten that in that case it would be impossible to distinguish them from other Spaniards, so soon as they should have dropped the name, language, and dress of Gypsies. How, provided they were like other Spaniards, and did not carry the mark of another nation on their countenances, could it be known whether or not they obeyed the law, which commanded them to live only in populous towns or villages, or how could they be detected in the buying or selling of cattle, which the law forbids them under pain of death?

The attempt to abolish the Gypsy name and manner of life might have been made without the assertion of a palpable absurdity.

Philip the Fourth, May 8, 1633, after reference to the evil lives and want of religion of the Gypsies, and the complaints made against them by prelates and others, declares "that the laws hitherto adopted since the year 1499, have been inefficient to restrain their excesses; that they are not Gypsies by origin or nature, but have adopted this form of life;" and then, after



forbidding them, according to custom, the dress and language of Gypsies, under the usual severe penalties, he ordains:—

“1st. That under the same penalties, the aforesaid people shall, within two months, leave the quarters (barrios) where they now live with the denomination of Gitános, and that they shall separate from each other, and mingle with the other inhabitants, and that they shall hold no more meetings, neither in public nor in secret; that the ministers of justice are to observe, with particular diligence, how they fulfil these commands, and whether they hold communication with each other, or marry amongst themselves; and how they fulfil the obligations of Christians by assisting at sacred worship in the churches; upon which latter point they are to procure information with all possible secrecy from the curates and clergy of the parishes where the Gitános reside.

“2ndly. And in order to extirpate, in every way, the name of Gitános, we ordain that they be not called so, and that no one venture to call them so, and that such shall be esteemed a very heavy injury, and shall be punished as such, if proved, and that nought pertaining to the Gypsies, their name, dress, or actions, be represented, either in dances or in any other performance, under the penalty of two years' banishment, and a mulct of fifty thousand maravedis to whomsoever shall offend for the first time, and double punishment for the second.”

The above two articles seem to have in view the suppression and breaking up of the Gypsy colonies established in the large towns, more especially the suburbs; farther on, mention is made of the wandering bands.

“4thly. And forasmuch as we have understood that numerous Gitános rove in bands through various parts of the kingdom, committing robberies in uninhabited places, and even invading some small villages, to the great terror and danger of the inhabitants, we give by this our law a general commission to all ministers of justice, whether appertaining to royal domains, lordships, or abbatial territories, that every one may, in his district, proceed to the imprisonment and chastisement of the delinquents, and may pass beyond his own jurisdiction in pursuit of them; and we also command all the ministers of justice aforesaid, that on receiving information that Gitános or highwaymen are

prowling in their districts, they do assemble at an appointed day, and with the necessary preparation of men and arms they do hunt down, take, and deliver them under a good guard to the nearest officer holding the royal commission."

Carlos the Second followed in the footsteps of his predecessors, with respect to the Gitános. By a law of the 20th of November, 1692, he inhibits the Gitános from living in towns of less than one thousand heads of families (*vecinos*), and pursuing any trade or employment, save the cultivation of the ground; from going in the dress of Gypsies, or speaking the language or gibberish which they use; from living apart in any particular quarter of the town; from visiting fairs with cattle, great or small, or even selling or exchanging such at any time, unless with the testimonial of the public notary, that they were bred within their own houses. By this law they are also forbidden to have fire-arms in their possession.

So far from being abashed by this law, or the preceding one, the Gitános seem to have increased in excesses of every kind. Only three years after (12th June, 1695), the same monarch deemed it necessary to publish a new law for their persecution and chastisement. This law, which is exceedingly severe, consists of twenty-nine articles. By the fourth they are forbidden any other exercise or manner of life than that of the cultivation of the fields, in which their wives and children, if of competent age, are to assist them.

Of every other office, employment, or commerce, they are declared incapable, and especially of being *blacksmiths*.

By the fifth, they are forbidden to keep horses or mares, either within or without their houses, or to make use of them in any way whatever, under the penalty of two months' imprisonment and the forfeiture of such animals; and any one lending them a horse or a mare is to forfeit the same, if it be found in their possession. They are declared only capable of keeping a mule, or some lesser beast, to assist them in their labour, or for the use of their families.

By the twelfth, they are to be punished with six years in the galleys, if they leave the towns or villages in which they are located, and pass to others, or wander in the fields or roads; and they are only to be permitted to go out, in order to exercise the

pursuit of husbandry. In this edict, particular mention is made of the favour and protection shown to the Gitános, by people of various descriptions, by means of which they had been enabled to follow their manner of life undisturbed, and to baffle the severity of the laws :

“Article 16.—And because we understand that the continuance in these kingdoms of those who are called Gitános has depended on the favour, protection, and assistance which they have experienced from persons of different stations, we do ordain, that whosoever, against whom shall be proved the fact of having, since the day of the publication hereof, favoured, received, or assisted the said Gitános, in any manner whatever, whether within their houses or without, the said person, provided he is noble, shall be subjected to the fine of six thousand ducats, the half of which shall be applied to our treasury, and the other half to the expenses of the prosecution ; and, if a plebeian, to a punishment of ten years in the galleys. And we declare, that in order to proceed to the infliction of such fine and punishment, the evidence of two respectable witnesses, without stain or suspicion, shall be esteemed legitimate and conclusive, although they depose to separate acts, or three depositions of the Gitános themselves, *made upon the rack*, although they relate to separate and different acts of abetting and harbouring.”

The following article is curious, as it bears evidence to Gypsy craft and cunning.

“Article 18.—And whereas it is very difficult to prove against the Gitános the robberies and delinquencies which they commit, partly because they happen in uninhabited places, but more especially on account of the *malice* and *cunning* with which they execute them ; we do ordain, in order that they may receive the merited chastisement, that to convict, in these cases, those who are called Gitános, the depositions of the persons whom they have robbed in uninhabited places shall be sufficient, provided there are at least two witnesses to one and the same fact, and these of good fame and reputation ; and we also declare, that the *corpus delicti* may be proved in the same manner in these cases, in order that the culprits may be proceeded against, and condemned to the corresponding pains and punishments.”

The council of Madrid published a schedule, 18th of August, 1705, from which it appears that the villages and roads were so much infested by the Gitáno race, that there was neither peace nor safety for labourers and travellers; the corregidores and justices are therefore exhorted to use their utmost endeavour to apprehend these outlaws, and to execute upon them the punishments enjoined by the preceding law. The ministers of justice are empowered to fire upon them as public enemies, wherever they meet them, in case of resistance or refusal to deliver up the arms they carry about them.

Philip the Fifth, by schedule, October 1st, 1726, forbade any complaints which the Gitános might have to make against the inferior justices being heard in the higher tribunals, and, on that account, banished all the Gypsy women from Madrid, and, indeed, from all towns where royal audiences were held, it being the custom of the women to flock up to the capital from the small towns and villages, under pretence of claiming satisfaction for wrongs inflicted upon their husbands and relations, and when there to practise the art of divination, and to sing obscene songs through the streets; by this law, also, the justices are particularly commanded not to permit the Gitános to leave their places of domicile, except in cases of very urgent necessity.

This law was attended with the same success as the others; the Gitános left their places of domicile whenever they thought proper, frequented the various fairs, and played off their jockey tricks as usual, or traversed the country in armed gangs, plundering the small villages, and assaulting travellers.

The same monarch, in October, published another law against them, from St. Lorenzo, of the Escorial. From the words of this edict, and the measures resolved upon, the reader may form some idea of the excesses of the Gitános at this period. They are to be hunted down with fire and sword, and even the sanctity of the temples is to be invaded in their pursuit, and the Gitános dragged from the horns of the altar, should they flee thither for refuge. It was impossible, in Spain, to carry the severity of persecution farther, as the very parricide was in perfect safety, could he escape to the church. Here follows part of this law.

“ I have resolved that all the lord-lieutenants, intendants, and corregidores shall publish proclamations, and fix edicts, to the effect that all the Gitános who are domiciled in the cities and towns of their jurisdiction shall return within the space of fifteen days to their places of domicile, under penalty of being declared, at the expiration of that term, as public banditti, subject to be fired at in the event of being found with arms, or without them, beyond the limits of their places of domicile; and at the expiration of the term aforesaid, the lord-lieutenants, intendants, and corregidores are strictly commanded, that either they themselves, or suitable persons deputed by them, march out with armed soldiery, or if there be none at hand, with the militias, and their officers, accompanied by the horse rangers destined for the protection of the revenue, for the purpose of scouring the whole district within their jurisdiction, making use of all possible diligence to apprehend such Gitános as are to be found on the public roads and other places beyond their domiciliary bounds, and to inflict upon them the penalty of death, for the mere act of being found.

“ And in the event of their taking refuge in sacred places, they are empowered to drag them forth, and conduct them to the neighbouring prisons and fortresses, and provided the ecclesiastical judges proceed against the secular, in order that they be restored to the church, they are at liberty to avail themselves of the recourse to force, countenanced by laws declaring, even as I now declare, that all the Gitános who shall leave their allotted places of abode, are to be held as incorrigible rebels, and enemies of the public peace.”

From this period, until the year 1780, various other laws and schedules were directed against the Gitános, which, as they contain nothing very new or remarkable, we may be well excused from particularizing. In 1783, a law was passed by the government, widely differing in character from any which had hitherto been enacted in connexion with the Gitáno caste or religion in Spain.

## CHAPTER XII.

Carlos Tercero—His law respecting the *Gitános*.

CARLOS TERCERO, or Charles the Third, ascended the throne of Spain in the year 1759, and died in 1788. No Spanish monarch has left behind a more favourable impression on the minds of the generality of his countrymen; indeed, he is the only one who is remembered at all by all ranks and conditions;—perhaps he took the surest means for preventing his name being forgotten, by erecting a durable monument in every large town,—we do not mean a pillar surmounted by a statue, or a colossal figure on horseback, but some useful and stately public edifice. All the magnificent modern buildings which attract the eye of the traveller in Spain, sprang up during the reign of Carlos Tercero,—for example, the museum at Madrid, the gigantic tobacco fabric at Seville,—half fortress, half manufactory,—and the Farol, at Coruña. We suspect that these erections, which speak to the eye, have gained him far greater credit amongst Spaniards than the support which he afforded to liberal opinions, which served to fan the flame of insurrection in the new world, and eventually lost for Spain her transatlantic empire.

We have said that he left behind him a favourable impression amongst the generality of his countrymen; by which we mean the great body found in every nation, who neither think nor reason,—for there are amongst the Spaniards not a few who deny that any of his actions entitle him to the gratitude of the nation. "All his thoughts," say they, "were directed to hunting—and hunting alone; and all the days of the year he employed himself either in hunting or in preparation for the sport. In one expedition, in the parks of the Pardo, he spent several millions of reals. The noble edifices which adorn Spain, though built by his orders, are less due to his reign than to the anterior one,—to the reign of Ferdinand the Sixth, who left immense treasures, a small portion of which Carlos Tercero devoted to these purposes, squandering away the remainder. It is said that Carlos Tercero was no friend to superstition; yet how little did Spain during his time

gain in religious liberty. The great part of the nation remained intolerant and theocratic as before, the other and smaller section turned philosophic, but after the insane manner of the French revolutionists, intolerant in its incredulity, and believing more in the 'Encyclopédie' than in the Gospel of the Nazarene."\*

We should not have said thus much of Carlos Tercero, whose character has been extravagantly praised by the multitude, and severely criticised by the discerning few who look deeper than the surface of things, if a law passed during his reign did not connect him intimately with the history of the *Gitános*, whose condition to a certain extent it has already altered, and over whose future destinies there can be no doubt that it will exert considerable influence. Whether Carlos Tercero had any thing farther to do with its enactment than subscribing it with his own hand, is a point difficult to determine; the chances are that he had not; there is damning evidence to prove that in many respects he was a mere Nimrod, and it is not probable that such a character would occupy his thoughts much with plans for the welfare of his people, especially such a class as the *Gitános*, however willing to build public edifices, gratifying to his vanity, with the money which a provident predecessor had amassed.

The law in question is dated 19th Sept. 1783. It is entitled, "Rules for repressing and chastising the vagrant mode of life, and other excesses, of those who are called *Gitános*." It is in many respects widely different from all the preceding laws, and on that account we have separated it from them, deeming it worthy of particular notice. It is evidently the production of a comparatively enlightened spirit, for Spain had already begun to emerge from the dreary night of monachism and bigotry, though the light which beamed upon her was not that of the Gospel, but of modern philosophy. The spirit, however, of the writers of the *Encyclopédie* is to be preferred to that of Torquemada and Moncada, and however deeply we may lament the many grievous omissions in the law of Carlos Tercero (for no provision was made for the spiritual instruction of the *Gitános*), we prefer

\* For the above well-drawn character of Charles the Third I am indebted to the pen of Louis de Usos y Rio, my coadjutor in the editing of the New Testament in Spanish (Madrid, 1837). For a further account of this gentleman, the reader is referred to 'The Bible in Spain,' Preface, p. xxii.

it in all points to that of Philip the Third, and to the law passed during the reign of that unhappy victim of monkish fraud, perfidy, and poison, Charles the Second.

Whoever framed the law of Carlos Tercero with respect to the Gitáños, had sense enough to see that it would be impossible to reclaim and bring them within the pale of civilised society by pursuing the course invariably adopted on former occasions—to see that all the menacing edicts for the last three hundred years, breathing a spirit of blood and persecution, had been unable to eradicate Gitanismo from Spain; but on the contrary, had rather served to extend it. Whoever framed this law was, moreover, well acquainted with the manner of administering justice in Spain, and saw the folly of making statutes which were never put into effect. Instead, therefore, of relying on corregidores and alguazils for the extinction of the Gypsy sect, the statute addresses itself more particularly to the Gitáños themselves, and endeavours to convince them that it would be for their interest to renounce their much cherished Gitanismo. Those who framed the former laws had invariably done their best to brand this race with infamy, and had marked out for its members, in the event of abandoning their Gypsy habits, a life to which death itself must have been preferable in every respect. They were not to speak to each other, nor to intermarry, though, as they were considered of an impure caste, it was scarcely to be expected that the other Spaniards would form with them relations of love or amity, and they were debarred the exercise of any trade or occupation but hard labour, for which neither by nature nor habit they were at all adapted. The law of Carlos Tercero, on the contrary, flung open to them the whole career of arts and sciences, and declared them capable of following any trade or profession to which they might please to addict themselves. Here follow extracts from the above-mentioned law.

“Art. 1. I declare that those who go by the name of Gitáños are not so by origin or nature, nor do they proceed from any infected root.

“2. I therefore command that neither they, nor any one of them shall use the language, dress, or vagrant kind of life which they have followed unto the present time, under the penalties here below contained.



“3. I forbid all my vassals, of whatever state, class, and condition they may be, to call or name the above-mentioned people by the names of *Gitános*, or *New Castilians*, under the same penalties to which those are subject who injure others by word or writing.

“5. It is my will that those who abandon the said mode of life, dress, language, or jargon, be admitted to whatever offices or employments to which they may apply themselves, and likewise to any guilds or communities, without any obstacle or contradiction being offered to them, or admitted under this pretext within or without courts of law.

“6. Those who shall oppose and refuse the admission of this class of reclaimed people to their trades and guilds, shall be mulcted ten ducats for the first time, twenty for the second, and a double quantity for the third; and during the time they continue in their opposition they shall be prohibited from exercising the same trade, for a certain period, to be determined by the judge, and proportioned to the opposition which they display.

“7. I grant the term of ninety days, to be reckoned from the publication of this law in the principal town of every district, in order that all the vagabonds of this and any other class may retire to the towns and villages where they may choose to locate themselves, with the exception, for the present, of the capital and the royal residences, in order that, abandoning the dress, language, and behaviour of those who are called *Gitános*, they may devote themselves to some honest office, trade, or occupation, it being a matter of indifference whether the same be connected with labour or the arts.

“8. It will not be sufficient for those who have been formerly known to follow this manner of life to devote themselves solely to the occupation of shearing and clipping animals, nor to the traffic of markets and fairs, nor still less to the occupation of keepers of inns and *ventas* in uninhabited places, although they may be innkeepers within towns, which employment shall be considered as sufficient, provided always there be no well-founded indications of their being delinquents themselves, or harbourers of such people.

“9. At the expiration of ninety days, the justices shall proceed against the disobedient in the following manner:—Those who

having abandoned the dress, name, language or jargon, association, and manners of Gitános, and shall have moreover chosen and established a domicile, but shall not have devoted themselves to any office or employment, though it be only that of day-labourers, shall be considered as vagrants, and be apprehended and punished according to the laws in force against such people without any distinction being made between them and the other vassals.

"10. Those who henceforth shall commit any crimes, having abandoned the language, dress, and manners of Gitános, chosen a domicile, and applied themselves to any office, shall be prosecuted and chastised like others guilty of the same crimes, without any difference being made between them.

"11. But those who shall have abandoned the aforesaid dress, language and behaviour, and those who, pretending to speak and dress like the other vassals, and even to choose a domiciliary residence, shall continue to go forth, wandering about the roads and uninhabited places, although it be with the pretext of visiting markets and fairs, such people shall be pursued and taken by the justices, and a list of them formed, with their names and appellations, age, description, with the places where they say they reside and were born.

"16. I, however, except from punishment the children and young people of both sexes who are not above sixteen years of age.

"17. Such, although they may belong to a family, shall be separated from their parents who wander about and have no employment, and shall be destined to learn something, or shall be placed out in hospices or houses of instruction.

"20. When the register of the Gitános who have proved disobedient shall have taken place, it shall be notified and made known to them, that in case of another relapse, the punishment of death shall be executed upon them without remission, on the examination of the register, and proof being adduced that they have returned to their former life."

What effect was produced by this law, and whether its results at all corresponded to the views of those who enacted it, will be gathered from the following chapters of this work, in which an attempt will be made to delineate briefly the present condition of the Gypsies in Spain.

THE ZINCALI;

OR,

AN ACCOUNT OF THE GYPSIES OF SPAIN.

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

UNTA DE ANDALUCIA

PART II.

# THE ZINCALI.

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## PART II.

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### CHAPTER I.

Badajoz—The Gypsies—The Withered Arm—Gypsy Law—Trimming and Shearing—Metempsychosis—Paco and Antonio—Antonio and the Magyar—The Chai—Pharaoh—The Steeds of the Egyptians.

ABOUT twelve in the afternoon of the 6th of January, 1836, I crossed the bridge of the Guadiana, a boundary river between Portugal and Spain, and entered Badajoz, a strong town in the latter kingdom, containing about eight thousand inhabitants, supposed to have been founded by the Romans. I instantly returned thanks to God for having preserved me in a journey of five days through the wilds of the Alemtejo, the province of Portugal the most infested by robbers and desperate characters, which I had traversed with no other human companion than a lad, almost an idiot, who was to convey back the mules which had brought me from Aldea Gallega. I intended to make but a short stay, and as a diligence would set out for Madrid the day next but one to my arrival, I purposed departing therein for the capital of Spain.

I was standing at the door of the inn where I had taken up my temporary abode; the weather was gloomy, and rain seemed to be at hand; I was thinking on the state of the country I had just entered, which was involved in bloody anarchy and confusion, and where the ministers of a religion falsely styled Catholic and Christian were blowing the trump of war, instead of preaching the love-engendering words of the blessed Gospel.

Suddenly two men, wrapped in long cloaks, came down the narrow and almost deserted street; they were about to pass, and the face of the nearest was turned full towards me; I knew

to whom the countenance which he displayed must belong, and I touched him on the arm. The man stopped, and likewise his companion; I said a certain word, to which, after an exclamation of surprise, he responded in the manner I expected. The men were Gitános or Gypsies, members of that singular family or race which has diffused itself over the face of the civilised globe, and which, in all lands, has preserved more or less its original customs and its own peculiar language.

We instantly commenced discoursing in the Spanish dialect of this language, with which I was tolerably well acquainted. I asked my two newly-made acquaintances whether there were many of their race in Badajoz and the vicinity: they informed me that there were eight or ten families in the town, and that there were others at Merida, a town about six leagues distant. I inquired by what means they lived, and they replied that they and their brethren principally gained a livelihood by trafficking in mules and asses, but that all those in Badajoz were very poor, with the exception of one man, who was exceedingly *balbalo*, or rich, as he was in possession of many mules and other cattle. They removed their cloaks for a moment, and I found that their under-garments were rags.

They left me in haste, and went about the town informing the rest that a stranger had arrived who spoke Rommany as well as themselves, who had the face of a Gitáno, and seemed to be of the "erráte," or blood. In less than half an hour the street before the inn was filled with the men, women, and children of Egypt. I went out amongst them, and my heart sank within me as I surveyed them: so much vileness, dirt, and misery I had never seen amongst a similar number of human beings; but worst of all was the evil expression of their countenances, which spoke plainly that they were conversant with every species of crime, and it was not long before I found that their countenances did not belie them. After they had asked me an infinity of questions, and felt my hands, face, and clothes, they retired to their own homes.

That same night the two men of whom I have already particularly spoken, came to see me. They sat down by the *brasero* in the middle of the apartment, and began to smoke small paper cigars. We continued for a considerable time in silence sur-

veying each other. Of the two Gitános one was an elderly man, tall and bony, with lean, skinny, and whimsical features, though perfectly those of a Gypsy; he spoke little, and his expressions were generally singular and grotesque. His companion, who was the man whom I had first noticed in the street, differed from him in many respects; he could be scarcely thirty, and his figure, which was about the middle height, was of Herculean proportions; shaggy black hair, like that of a wild beast, covered the greatest part of his immense head; his face was frightfully seamed with the small-pox, and his eyes, which glared like those of ferrets, peered from beneath bushy eyebrows; he wore immense moustaches, and his wide mouth was garnished with teeth exceedingly large and white. There was one peculiarity about him which must not be forgotten: his right arm was withered, and hung down from his shoulder a thin sapless stick, which contrasted strangely with the huge brawn of the left. A figure so perfectly wild and uncouth I had scarcely ever before seen. He had now flung aside his cloak, and sat before me gaunt in his rags and nakedness. In spite of his appearance, however, he seemed to be much the most sensible of the two; and the conversation which ensued was carried on chiefly between him and myself. This man, whom I shall call the first Gypsy, was the first to break silence; and he thus addressed me, speaking in Spanish, broken with words of the Gypsy tongue:—

*First Gypsy.*—“Arromáli (in truth), I little thought when I saw the erraño standing by the door of the posada that I was about to meet a brother—one too who, though well dressed, was not ashamed to speak to a poor Gitáno; but tell me, I beg you, brother, from whence you come; I have heard that you have just arrived from Laloró, but I am sure you are no Portuguese; The Portuguese are very different from you; I know it, for I have been in Laloró; I rather take you to be one of the Corahai, for I have heard say that there is much of our blood there. You are a Corahano, are you not?”

*Myself.*—“I am no Moor, though I have been in the country. I was born in an island in the West Sea, called England, which I suppose you have heard spoken of.”

*First Gypsy.*—“Yes, yes, I have a right to know something of the English. I was born in this foros, and remember the day

when the English hundunares clambered over the walls, and took the town from the Gabiné: well do I remember that day, though I was but a child; the streets ran red with blood and wine! Are there Gitános then amongst the English?"

*Myself.*—"There are numbers, and so there are amongst most nations of the world."

*Second Gypsy.*—"Vaya! And do the English Caloré gain their bread in the same way as those of Spain? Do they shear and trim? Do they buy and change beasts, and (lowering his voice) do they now and then chore a gras?"\*

*Myself.*—"They do most of these things: the men frequent fairs and markets with horses, many of which they steal; and the women tell fortunes and perform all kinds of tricks, by which they gain more money than their husbands."

*First Gypsy.*—"They would not be callees if they did not: I have known a Gitána gain twenty ounces of gold, by means of the hokkano baro, in a few hours, whilst the silly Gypsy, her husband, would be toiling with his shears for a fortnight, trimming the horses of the Busné, and yet not be a dollar richer at the end of the time."

*Myself.*—"You seem wretchedly poor. Are you married?"

*First Gypsy.*—"I am, and to the best-looking and cleverest callee in Badajoz; nevertheless we have never thriven since the day of our marriage, and a curse seems to rest upon us both. Perhaps I have only to thank myself; I was once rich, and had never less than six borricos to sell or exchange, but the day before my marriage I sold all I possessed, in order to have a grand fiesta. For three days we were merry enough; I entertained every one who chose to come in, and flung away my money by handfuls, so that when the affair was over I had not a cuarto in the world; and the very people who had feasted at my expense refused me a dollar to begin again, so we were soon reduced to the greatest misery. True it is, that I now and then shear a mule, and my wife tells the bahi (fortune) to the servant girls, but these things stand us in little stead: the people are now very much on the alert, and my wife, with all her knowledge, has been unable to perform any grand trick which would

\* Steal a horse.

set us up at once. She wished to come to see you, brother, this night, but was ashamed, as she has no more clothes than myself. Last summer our distress was so great that we crossed the frontier into Portugal: my wife sung, and I played the guitar, for though I have but one arm, and that a left one, I have never felt the want of the other. At Estremoz I was cast into prison as a thief and vagabond, and there I might have remained till I starved with hunger. My wife, however, soon got me out: she went to the lady of the corregidor, to whom she told a most wonderful bahi, promising treasures and titles, and I wot not what; so I was set at liberty, and returned to Spain as quick as I could."

*Myself.*—"Is it not the custom of the Gypsies of Spain to relieve each other in distress?—it is the rule in other countries."

*First Gypsy.*—"El krallis ha nicobado la liri de los Calés — (The king has destroyed the law of the Gypsies); we are no longer the people we were once, when we lived amongst the sierras and deserts, and kept aloof from the Busné; we have lived amongst the Busné till we are become almost like them, and we are no longer united, ready to assist each other at all times and seasons, and very frequently the Gitáno is the worst enemy of his brother."

*Myself.*—"The Gitános, then, no longer wander about, but have fixed residences in the towns and villages?"

*First Gypsy.*—"In the summer time a few of us assemble together, and live about amongst the plains and hills, and by doing so we frequently contrive to pick up a horse or a mule for nothing, and sometimes we knock down a Busnó, and strip him, but it is seldom we venture so far. We are much looked after by the Busné, who hold us in great dread, and abhor us. Sometimes, when wandering about, we are attacked by the labourers, and then we defend ourselves as well as we can. There is no better weapon in the hands of a Gitáno than his 'cachas,' or shears, with which he trims the mules. I once snipped off the nose of a Busnó, and opened the greater part of his cheek in an affray up the country near Trujillo."

*Myself.*—"Have you travelled much about Spain?"

*First Gypsy.*—"Very little; I have never been out of this province of Estremadura, except last year, as I told you, into



Portugal. When we wander we do not go far, and it is very rare that we are visited by our brethren of other parts. I have never been in Andalusia, but I have heard say that the Gitános are many in Andalusia, and are more wealthy than those here, and that they follow better the Gypsy law."

*Myself.*—"What do you mean by the Gypsy law?"

*First Gypsy.*—"Wherefore do you ask, brother? You know what is meant by the law of the Calés better even than ourselves."

*Myself.*—"I know what it is in England and in Hungary, but I can only give a guess as to what it is in Spain."

*Both Gypsies.*—"What do you consider it to be in Spain?"

*Myself.*—"Cheating and choring the Busné on all occasions, and being true to the erráte in life and death."

At these words both the Gitános sprang simultaneously from their seats, and exclaimed with a boisterous shout—"Chachipé."

This meeting with the Gitános was the occasion of my remaining at Badajoz a much longer time than I originally intended. I wished to become better acquainted with their condition and manners, and above all to speak to them of Christ and his word; for I was convinced, that should I travel to the end of the universe, I should meet with no people more in need of a little Christian exhortation, and I accordingly continued at Badajoz for nearly three weeks.

During this time I was almost constantly amongst them, and as I spoke their language, and was considered by them as one of themselves, I had better opportunity of arriving at a fair conclusion respecting their character than any other person could have had, whether Spanish or foreigner, without such an advantage. I found that their ways and pursuits were in almost every respect similar to those of their brethren in other countries. By cheating and swindling they gained their daily bread; the men principally by the arts of the jockey,—by buying, selling, and exchanging animals, at which they are wonderfully expert; and the women by telling fortunes, selling goods smuggled from Portugal, and by dealing in love draughts and diablerie. The most innocent occupation which I observed amongst them was trimming and shearing horses and mules, which in their language is called "mcnrabar," and in Spanish "esquilar;" and even whilst

exercising this art, they not unfrequently have recourse to foul play, doing the animal some covert injury, in hope that the proprietor will dispose of it to themselves at an inconsiderable price, in which event they soon restore it to health ; for knowing how to inflict the harm, they know likewise how to remove it.

Religion they have none ; they never attend mass, nor did I ever hear them employ the names of God, Christ, and the Virgin, but in execration and blasphemy. From what I could learn, it appeared that their fathers had entertained some belief in metempsychosis ; but they themselves laughed at the idea, and were of opinion that the soul perished when the body ceased to breathe ; and the argument which they used was rational enough, as far as it impugned metempsychosis :—“ We have been wicked and miserable enough in this life,” they said ; “ why should we live again ?”

I translated certain portions of Scripture into their dialect, which I frequently read to them ; especially the parable of Lazarus and the Prodigal Son, and told them that the latter had been as wicked as themselves, and both had suffered as much or more ; but that the sufferings of the former, who always looked forward to a blessed resurrection, were recompensed by admission, in the life to come, to the society of Abraham and the Prophets, and that the latter, when he repented of his sins, was forgiven, and received into as much favour as the just son.

They listened with admiration ; but, alas ! not of the truths, the eternal truths, I was telling them, but to find that their broken jargon could be written and read. The only words denoting anything like assent to my doctrine which I ever obtained, were the following from the mouth of a woman :—“ Brother, you tell us strange things, though perhaps you do not lie ; a month since I would sooner have believed these tales, than that this day I should see one who could write Rommany.”

Two or three days after my arrival, I was again visited by the Gypsy of the withered arm, who I found was generally termed Paco, which is the diminutive of Francisco ; he was accompanied by his wife, a rather good-looking young woman with sharp intelligent features, and who appeared in every respect to be what her husband had represented her on the former visit. She was