

last I read for myself, and I read carefully, the New Testament, which you English deify. I re-read it with prayer; I read it, before I embraced its teaching, on my knees. I rose up a different man. I believed in the One God, the true Father of all who trust in Him; One who requires no sacrifice—nothing but the love of a true heart and sincerity.

“I do not,” he went on, “with yourselves, call my Saviour God, because He says, ‘*I am the way*’—the way, not the goal: thither I cannot follow you; but I look up to Him as the only perfect Son of God.

“Long time had I gone about, seeking rest, and finding none; at last I had found rest to my soul—rest for which I thank my God daily.”

The words were evidently the utterance of a true, loyal, and religious soul, and of an inquiring and lofty mind; as I understand them, the speaker's position was that of the Unitarian Church; he believed in one God, and in one perfect Son of God, sent by Him to be men's guide and pattern, and there he stopped. Whether or no he went further, with Arianism, I cannot fairly remember. But it struck me at the time, that for a soul so devout and earnest the whole truth would be revealed; the whole Evangelical faith, in all its fullness and blessedness, would be, I felt sure, finally grasped by his heart and soul.

The lecturer then went on to say that he and several hundreds of his fellow-countrymen, chiefly Indian barristers and men of the other learned professions, had formed a sort of religious confraternity, or club, on the religious foundation he had explained, called the Brahma-Somaj, and that their tenets were fast gaining ground among the educated Brahmins; that they were gathering daily disciples “from the thou-

sands" (I quote his own words) "who are now in India going about, *having cast off their old faith, seeking for some faith on which to stay their soul.*"

The parallel between the religious state of the "thousands" here referred to and the "thousands" of Spain, among educated men, the writer conceives to be a very close one. Not for one moment does he intend to imply that the branch of the Catholic Church established in Spain—a Church which has given to its sons and daughters a duly-ordained ministry, and Christian rites, and religious instruction, and in whose sublime churches the thousands of its faithful have made their hearts' desire known to their God, aye, and still make it known—is not one in which men may find all things necessary to salvation; but he says and means, because the fact is one patent to him, and freely conversed of in street, drawing-room, plaza, and casino, by Spanish gentlemen and others of the lower class (who are not too indifferent—alas! with most of these the thoughts soar not above the search for daily bread)—and it is simply this: that the case of the educated Spanish gentlemen, and especially of professional men, tradesmen, and literary men and artisans—the state of all, in a word, who travel, think, or read—is exactly analogous to the state of his fellow-countrymen described by Cheshub Chunder Sen.

Like them, they have unobtrusively but certainly cast aside the faith in which they were brought up, and, having nothing sure, nothing established, nothing of a church, a public service, and the sympathy needed by mankind in its religious aspirations, which a church and assemblies foster, to which to cling, and on which to anchor their souls, they are simply going

about, seeking some one to lead them by the hand; some one whose talents and character give him a claim to be trusted, to guide and direct their minds and souls; some one to help them to rise—as they do wish, and long, and pray to rise—above the dead level of indifferentism, and the weary, meaningless, round of daily life, daily work, or daily idleness; casino, politics, and cigarillo.

What, then, are the signs by which this state of religious feeling is betokened, and on what grounds is it justifiable to present so melancholy a view of religion?

I answer, one must be guided by four different signs of the times in forming an estimate: the tone of conversation in social circles; the statistics of church-going; the observation of various small facts in connexion with this great subject, all of which are small, it is true, but, like the eddying straw of our trite English proverb, “serve to show the course of the stream”; and, lastly, books and literature.

(a.) The decay of religious faith is shown by conversation in the social circles of Spain, especially among the more ardent of the Republicans.

There are three different names by which Republican Spain of the present day, in the districts from which I write, calls her sons, namely, *Ateos*, *Indiferentes*, and *libres pensadores*; that is, Atheists, those indifferent to religion at all or undecided, and free-thinkers.

These are terms of daily use among us. A man, however, would never say of himself, “I am an *Ateo*,” although he *might* (and very frequently *does*) apply that “word without hope” to his friend’s state of mind. The “*El Credo*” of the *Ateo* is something of

this nature—a credo, if it can be called a credo at all, which has come into this country with freedom of French literature. A man reads little, prays little, thinks a good deal, and observes a good deal. He comes to the conclusion that *to sin* is according to nature (*muy natural*), and, therefore, that He who has proclaimed that *to sin* is worthy of blame, and shall be punished, cannot be the Author of Nature; for he reasons, “Why did God make it natural to me to sin, and yet say, ‘I will punish you if you sin’?” He goes further. He says, “I see Nature; I feel her power; I know in many things she is right. I do not see God; I do not feel His power. I see the poor oppressed; I see sin triumphant; I see the Church proclaim things in His name, as celibacy, clearly against Nature. Nature exists, as I can prove; I cannot prove that God exists; therefore, I believe that Nature is God; for Nature is stronger than any thing.” Such is the *Credo*, such the profession of hundreds of men of this belief, if it can be called a belief. They are sometimes known by the name of *Materialistas*, although this term implies something still more faithless. For instance, a *Materialista* would say, if his fellow-creature showed any deep penitence, any deep religious melancholy, “Oh! it is the work of Nature; bodily illness is diseasing his mind.” Some of the coarser forms would go even further; but of these it is not needful to speak.

The position of the *Indiferente* is less defined, and more common. It is a state of heart and mind, this indifferentism, which, from many different causes, does not care at all for religion or feel its power; and yet would, and does, saunter into church on the proper days, and listen to the music, and to the sermon, if at all

a striking one. Here is one reason, which incidentally I may be pardoned for introducing, why the clergy of Spain have so completely lost their hold on the minds of *men*: their sermons never strike home, never fairly meet a doubt, seldom inculcate the moral teaching of Christ. An *Indiferente* often becomes indifferent from long continuance in sin or prayerlessness; still more often, from utter indecision of character. He is a man who reads, cursorily, the religious literature of France, of what is here designated the French Liberal School. He commences with a book read by all the educated Spaniards—'Vie de Jésus,' par Ernest Renan, or 'Les Apôtres,' by the same author. Doubts are instilled into his mind—a mind in all probability of very barren soil before; the weeds grow up and flourish. He has no one to advise him; he does not go deeply into the subject; he is too careless and too pusillanimous, and has too much love for his wife's feelings and respect for his Church, to throw off the mask and openly say, "I do not hold the old El Credo"; so he goes on, and is called, and truly, one of the *Indiferentes*. Thousands are in this state of mind; like the disciples of the Brahma-Somaj, they are going about seeking rest, and finding none.

The third class of unorthodox Spaniard is perhaps the most common—the man who does not hesitate to call himself one of *los libres pensadores*, "the free-thinkers." This term, in England, is usually applied to one who has cast off much, or all, of his faith in God. Here, however, the term has no such meaning. It simply means one who chooses to think for himself, and embrace that creed which he believes best for his temporal and eternal welfare. Thousands of the educated sons of Republican Spain would think it no

discredit to themselves or others to say, "I am a free-thinker," or, "He belongs to the free-thinkers," because the term, in Spain, conveys no idea at all of disbelief in a personal God and Father of us all: it simply denotes what is called in England Broad Churchism. And men say, truly enough, there is more religion where there is life, thought, inquiry, restlessness, than in the torpor of indifferentism, or the dead slumber of one who is too careless about religion to take any pains about it, and therefore gives a careless acquiescence to statements and doctrines about the truth of which he has taken no pains to inquire—the "belief" of one who has never *disbelieved*, simply because he has never really believed at all. This class of *libres pensadores* is composed chiefly of *educated Republicans*. This freedom of religious thought, which came in with the Republic—a sort of fierce reaction after the tight curb of Roman Catholicism in the Queen's time—is the *typo*, or type, of the modern statesman, orator, literary man of Spain. Although none of the three classes here alluded to are, strictly speaking, confined to the Republican ranks, yet they chiefly exist among the Republicans.

Having sought, with all candour, to explain the religious status of the three great bodies of educated Spaniards known in social circles as Atheists, Indifferents, and Free-thinkers, the writer of this review of Spanish religious feeling continues his description of the first and most superficial of those signs of the times by which the state of that religious feeling may fairly be appreciated:—*Conversation in the educated circles of Spain.*

And here, for a moment, I would pause. Those in England into whose hands these pages may fall, will

naturally complain, and with some apparent truth, "The writer keeps on speaking about educated men and Republicans, do not the masses of the poor enter into his account?" The question is a fair one, and shall be fairly answered. The answer is this. The population of Spain, by our last Government returns, was sixteen millions; and, by the same documents, twelve millions were returned as "unable either to read or to write." Surely one can only speak, when one speaks of the state of feeling in a nation on religious or political matters, of the opinions of those who can read or write at least a little. Were I to write of the state of religious feeling among the *uneducated* in the town of the interior, in the fishing-village of the coast, in the vineyard or the olive-press, I should merely sum it up in three words:—superstition, carelessness, blind discontent. Before the end of these volumes, a few words shall be devoted to the uneducated masses; but, be it remembered, wherever there is an absence of education, there is present blind and palpable imitation of others; and the poor, rude, suffering fisherman or goat-herd has often said to me, when asked as to his religion, "I am an Evangelico"; and when pressed to explain, he would say merely the name of some Protestant church, or some popular leader of thought in his country, and add, with true Spanish pride, "He and I have common ground."

Recurring to my subject—the state of religious feeling as indicated by the conversation current in social circles—let me say, that never have I heard, and never again would I wish to hear, such utterances of utter unrest, utter—I was going to say—despair, as I daily and hourly hear now around me.

This state of unrest and disquietude, and fruitless quest of the good and the stable, perplexes and dismays the heart and paralyzes the thought. One is fain to ask again and again the old question, "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?" And again and again the self-same answer is given back, "Dark and stormy. Dark and stormy." And truly our night *is* dark and stormy. Well do I remember, in the days of youth, passing down one of the back streets of London's lowest quarters, and speaking to a poor old withered-up crone who sat on her lowly doorstep. Before her, overshadowing her little home, were a Wesleyan chapel, a Mission chapel of the Established Church, and a Roman Catholic church. "To which of all those, mother," said I, "do you go to worship?" And the answer came back, quietly but firmly, from her trembling lips, "*I looks only to One above.*" And one cannot help feeling that only and entirely the help in which that poor woman trusted *can* save and redeem Spain of to-day.

The attitude of the thinking mass of Spaniards reminds one daily of the question asked in Holy Story, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" But one listens in vain for the answer from the self-same lips, "Thou (and only Thou) hast the words of eternal life."

If you shall be conversing with a Spanish gentleman of Republican views on the subject of religion, his words will be very few; but they will be *very* sad. The following conversation occurred a short time since between the writer and a literary man in Spain of real culture and refinement. He himself introduced the subject on which I write by saying to me, "I believe you are a Protestant?" After answer-

ing his question, I merely said, "You have now the advantage of me: are you not yourself a Roman Catholic?"—"Yes," was the reply; "yes. I am a Roman Catholic—that is to say, I have not renounced that *credo*; it is more convenient not to have an open rupture. But," said he, "I believe really in nothing of the ceremonies or rites of my Church; I pray to God at home; I believe in Him, and in Jesus Christ. I consider myself exactly at the stand-point of your English Church. I despise the music, the processions, and the unintelligible tongue of my Church's services; I hate to see money given for such things; but I do feel the need of public worship without all this. Four bare walls and a pure heart are all that is needed to serve and love God." He added a few words to this effect, that no appeal to the senses should ever be made in a church—nothing touched save a man's heart.

I did not press the subject further, for both his heart and my own were too full. Yet once again let me recur to a few words said to me by a Spanish student—words which, spoken but a few weeks since, have never left my memory. We were supping together, merely discussing the subject of art in this country; and, as conversations (even in Spain!) will fall into the religious groove, at last we spoke of religion. He was a Roman Catholic, but, as he himself allowed, "Indiferente." He was speaking of public prayer, and I merely remarked that, as he never went to public prayer, I supposed he found an equal solace in private prayer. I then spoke of sermons, and added, "Do you find no help in the sermons of your clergy?"

This then was, word for word, to the best of the

writer's recollection, the language of his reply:—
“The English pray; they try to act up to their religion, because they can believe it: we cannot, with modern literature at hand, swallow *our* religion at a gulp. You must give up one of the two. I hold to neither. As to us, as a rule, we do not pray to God. You ask about sermons: well, I went into a church the other day to listen to one who was said to be a good preacher. He did, truly, preach magnificently; I never saw a man with such a flow of language; he was an orator! But” (*pero*, the constant Spanish antithesis) “with all his flow of language, I only remembered two things as I left the church: he compared the exceeding purity of the Virgin to a cup of silver and a tower of ivory; and there was no room at all for God or Jesus Christ. These clergy, who aspire to guide us to peace here, and in the next (*if there be a next*) world,” continued he, “never preach about *the only two things worth preaching about, Virtue and the Almighty.*”

As usual, then, with the education of his order, this young fellow simply believed in and longed for tidings of the Christian moral code and the Fatherhood of God. For *that* his soul thirsted; for *that* he went to church. He was a hungerer and thirster, I truly believe, after righteousness—a few simple words would have gone straight to his heart; for those few simple words he looked and waited, and for them, alas! he looked and waited in vain.

Another leading topic of conversation is (as I have already mentioned) the deification of Nature. In high Republican circles in Spain it is constantly said, “We make war against all that is against Nature. It must be wrong.”

I once asked of a Republican orator, "How can you justify your fellows' act in turning the nuns out of their convent?"

"We would turn out the priests too, if we could, because we want all men not to be unnatural. Celibacy is unnatural."

"But is not *expulsion* a rough way of inculcating a moral lesson?"

"*Muy bien,*" was his answer; "but we must use rough measures sometimes."

The ignorance of their clergy, again, is a constant theme of conversation among the Spanish Republicans. They will have it—I know not with what truth—that the priests know little besides the lives of the saints and Latin books. As to geography, say they, or modern history, they know nothing; and modern literature they never read!

Many thoughts here force themselves upon me. Among others, fain am I to confess that a tribute is due to the worth of the priests. Where they *could* give to the poor, the writer of this work believes they freely gave of what they had. But now they are poor indeed, and rejected of men. Still their influence is great, and this for two reasons. First, because their hold on the women of a family is still great: the devout and simple-minded women of the family still give to their church and priest—still are regular at confession, prayers, and mass.

The second reason of their influence is this, that so many of the clergy come from influential families—are, in fact, *bene nati*. In Galicia and the North of Spain, the poor, and very oftentimes the uneducated, become clergymen. But in the interior, and in the South, as regards the town clergy, most, or, at least, many of

them, are well-born; and many a family puts its dullest member into the Church, as the *dernier resort*, that he may have a certain position and status in society. In the towns, however, the clergy are generally selected for the merits of their education and for their talents.

Gladly do I turn from this part of the signs of the times, merely adding a trifling anecdote which I heard some few months since in the best-educated city in Spain—the only city where one-half of the population can read or write. A Spanish woman went into church, a few minutes before service, to inquire who would be the evening preacher.

“*El chantre,*” was the answer. This would be equivalent in English, I suppose, to the precentor.

“*Que' lo oiga su abuela*” (“Let his grandmother hear it”), was the answer, as the woman swept out of the church.

To a candid mind this little anecdote (a “good story”) shows, surely, an irreverence for the Church which dismays one, on the one hand, but, at the same time, a real seeking and longing for that which, for so many hundred years, we have called, with truth, the good news of God.

How bitterly upon English ears would have fallen the words with which, a short time since, the streets of my town were ringing—“Our Castelar is the Saviour, the Christ of 1873!” One can only say, as one hears such words, that one’s best hope is that He whom they crucify may pray—as we doubt not He does pray for them—“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they say.” Alas! Castelar’s reign over these people’s hearts is short indeed; already are vague rumours of his unpopularity, and of “Pi y

Margall and the Cantonal system," floating about among us, though perhaps Spain has known no more liberal, religious, or noble leader than Emilio Castelar!

(b.) Among those signs by which the state of religious feeling may be known, I mentioned, in the second place, the statistics of church-going.

Very few men, as a rule, attend church. The old anecdote of Sydney Smith is constantly recalled to one's memory. He preached, we have heard, upon the text, "O that *men* would therefore praise the Lord for His goodness," when, Sunday after Sunday, his quiet village church was denuded of *men*. And in Spain the emphasis might well, and with reason, be laid upon the same word—"O that *men* would praise the Lord!"

What *is* seen in the churches of Spain—and I have gone to her country parish churches and to her large cathedrals—is this: the bright array of lights, the gaudy dresses of the saints, the black, white, and embroidered vestments of the priests, as in solemn silence they come forth to kneel and pray before the altar of our common God and Father. What is *not* seen is the bronzed face of the vine-dresser, the worn visage of the artisan, the pale face of the *littérateur*; the sailor, the soldier, the bookseller, the tailor. Where are they? They are not here!

What *is* heard in our Spanish churches is the unintelligible prayers of the priests; the ringing, joyous, inspiring clash of the music, oftentimes supplemented with the sweet carol of birds, the deep bass of the head singer. What is *not* heard is the answer of *men's* voices; what is not heard is the deep "Amen" to every prayer. It is not here! There is

no response from the men! They are away—at the Muséo, at “La Libreria,” at the Casino.

In Spanish churches you simply see and hear women—for the most part well-bred women—kneeling devoutly upon the rush-matting of the church, and praying to their God—I *must say* praying, to all appearances, most fervently, most earnestly. I have seen nothing in Spain of that looking round and back, so common with ladies in England, to scan every person who comes into the church.

It is said in England that one out of every six of our *male* population goes to a place of worship. Here we have no places of worship save those of the Established Church, and I fear that not one in every twenty-five enters these to pray!

I mentioned as the two last signs of the decay of religious faith, the transactions, however small, which have lately taken place, and the bookstalls of Republican Spain.

Let me touch upon these briefly, and then enter upon the *causes* of this revolt against religion, and the speculation, Whither does it tend?

(c.) If it has more than once been asserted, in the course of these remarks on the state of religious feeling in Spain, that the small occurrences of daily life, and the acts of the revolutionary party in the summer of 1873, have shown and are daily bearing witness to the decay of religious faith in Spain, these assertions, it shall now be demonstrated, are not made without sufficient grounds.

Enter many of the Government (“del Rey”) hospitals in Spain, and ask whether there is any religious service, any ministrations of clergy, in those towns where there has been a revolution—that

is, where popular feeling obtained for a while the mastery—and you will find that they no longer exist. They were dismissed during the summer revolution, and the chapel of the hospital is closed; the priest—an institution as old as the hospital walls—no longer lives within them, or attends to the sick and dying among its inmates.

Among the Foundling Hospitals, the Christian rite of baptism is, in many cases, no longer administered; in smaller hospitals, or homes, you will find, on inquiry, "We had a chapel, but have none now; the clergy lived here, but now only the doctors are allowed to reside on the premises." Go to many of the churches in Spain, whose walls, once richly gilt with the paintings of her great sons, attracted many a strange traveller's footsteps, and mark if in many of these cases they are not taken away. In some cases they were carried to a place of safety until this tyranny be overpassed; in a still greater number they were rudely torn down (I have seen some literally *torn* in the operation) and carried off to the Public Library or the Muséo, and thither you must follow if you would behold them.

Sundays are fearfully desecrated. If it be true, as has often been asserted, that where, during the great French Revolution, Sundays were abolished, and every day of the seven was a working day—if it be true that the abolishing of the prescribed day of rest, and the incessant strain of work caused by it, led to disease of mind, and in many cases lunacy, one can but tremble for this country, for it seems that Sunday is often wholly, and the feast-days partially ignored.

Again, the aspect of the Church herself is wholly stagnant. With her 42,000 clergy, whose charge

are fearfully demoralized, and, in the interior, utterly ignorant—men who are joyless, religionless, mindless—one looks in vain for tidings of the newly-endowed home, the fresh school-walls, the congress, or the midnight mission. These are not. The faded dresses, and in many cases the worn and sad countenances of the clergy, too, all point, not to life, but to a slow decay.

In the interior, the frequent interments without religious rites, the secular and profane so-called baptisms, known as the "Civil Funeral" and the "Civil Baptism"; the sight of the priests, oftentimes forced, because their pecuniary support has been taken away, or at least is no longer paid at present by the Government of their country, to seek their bread in secular callings; the indecent behaviour of men, very often, who keep their hats on as the procession of the Host files by,—these, and such as these, are the signs of a deep-seated hatred to the religion of their forefathers, and of the reaction which has set in with the Republic against the Church established in this land.

Petty in some cases have been the means by which men of very ultra opinions have shown their contempt for the "Credo" in which they have been brought up. To change the name of a street because it bore a Saint's name, to mutilate a pillar because the figure of a Saint was sculptured upon it, these were unworthy of Republican Spain, and were and would ever be repudiated by all her right-minded sons. But such things were.

(*d.*) And if the general tone of conversation in educated Republican circles; if the statistics of church-going; if the daily events—trifling, perhaps, in themselves, but not trifling when viewed in connexion

with other things—all bespeak and bear witness to a growing dissatisfaction with their established religion, restlessness, and reaction, no less do the gaudy book-stalls of the cities of Spain show the same tendency to revolution.

For a few reals (a real = $2\frac{1}{2}d.$) the mind may have its glut of materialism and blank unbelief. Every school of thought here known as Liberal ("Liberal" meaning any work on religion which is not distinctively Roman Catholic) is represented on these shelves. To enumerate these cheap works would be a long and fruitless task; it would simply be to recapitulate the titles of the works of all the modern writers, French, German, English, and Spanish, of the various schools of free thought, beginning, as I have said, with the works of E. Renan, which are *very* popular here in Spanish translations, and ending with the countless little works of the modern Spanish thinkers—oftentimes mere imitations of the French authors and schools—bearing such high-sounding titles as 'The New Religion for the People,' or 'The Teaching of Natural Religion!'

II. The writer thinks that enough has been already quoted on the *first* subject proposed for consideration, and passes on to consider very briefly the two other subjects, or lines of thought, proposed at the commencement in connexion with the great subject of which he has merely endeavoured to present the picture as exhibited to the outsider.

He passes on therefore to ask, To what causes is the present state of religious feeling due?

The present state of religious feeling in Spain, then, is, he believes, simply a natural reaction from the

excessively tight reins with which her sons were held during the reign of the late Queen, and, of course, long before the accession of that sovereign. We all know that the starting back of the bow is fierce, sudden, and often self-destructive, when the string is suddenly relaxed; and that in proportion as had been the tightness of the restraint, so will be the fierceness of the recoil. And so, now that men are suddenly freed, by enactments of the Republic, from the necessity of subscribing to the doctrines of the Established Church,—now that liberty has been proclaimed after so many years of slavery,—it is not at all, the writer thinks, matter for wonder that their liberty should for a while be utter *licence* (as it certainly is). The wonder would be if such were *not* the case.

And, secondly, the reaction of feeling against the Established Church—for we must still call it so—is due in great measure to the abuses and superstitions which have existed in that Church. When reasonable men are compelled to belong to a society whose members in authority proclaim as truths doctrines which they cannot accept in any sense as true,—when they are compelled to acquiesce in what they believe to be gross superstitions,—they *will*, and in patient, indifferent Spain they *have*, for a while given a silent acquiescence. But now men travel, men read; education, though very slowly, *is* spreading even here; floods of books come in from France, Germany, and England—all are now free to buy and read them; and men see that they have *been blinded*; that the whole truth has not been proclaimed to them; and they will not, in so vital a matter as religion, any longer be trifled with. With one voice, from the educated artisan to the Chief of her Republic, the

educated sons of Spain say, "We will be free; we will serve God as our hearts tell us, and not submit the reason He has given us to the thralldom of Church decrees."

And, thirdly, the want of freedom and of a liberal and general education of the clergy of this land has been one fruitful cause of discontent. Many are men of education and culture, but not by any means all; and, as a rule, they are too much bound down by subscription to *this* article and *that* decree to have any original thought or research for themselves; they do not meet the doubts and acknowledge the tendencies of the age in which it has pleased God to cast their lot, and so they cannot guide, shape, and direct into its proper channel modern thought.

And, fourthly, the Church of this nation has fallen in the esteem of her children because she has not, as other Churches have, sought to *educate* the masses committed to her care: she has given them no fresh light of knowledge, and they cannot understand her services, these poor, uneducated masses; and so, receiving little, they—the most uneducated—though still afraid of, and full of awe for her power, do not *love* her in their heart of hearts, and, not loving, they cannot believe in her beauty or her wisdom.

And, lastly, the revolt against the religion of their land by her sons may be assigned to this fact, that nothing which is not based upon perfect truth can ever ultimately prosper. With all that is good in her, no thoughtful man can fail to see how much is withheld of Divine truth, how much is supplied of human invention, to the doctrine and discipline of the Roman Church. No warping of the truth, no withholding of the whole message of God, can prosper. Such is one

moral of the decay of religious faith among the thousands of my country this day !

III. But it is time to draw to a close remarks which have cost the writer many months of research and observation, but in the compilation of which he has never left his daily path of duty to seek his materials. He has merely thrown together, into perhaps a somewhat crude, but, he trusts, intelligible form, the result of a long sojourn in the country from which he writes, and from whose sons, of every shade of religious opinion, he has received unmingled kindness. Our third line of thought was this: to what is all this unsettlement of religious belief tending ?

The writer answers: *To good.* To the establishment of a purer, truer, more lightful religion in this land; a religion more Scriptural, more what the Spanish people call *Evangelical*, *i. e.*, Christian, in the broadest, deepest, widest acceptation of the word. Things, *as they are, cannot long remain.* Either the tight, fierce rein must be again had recourse to (that, the writer believes, never will, or can be), or, as most educated men think and say, a wave of truer, simpler, broader religion, of which this surf is but the prelude, will sweep over and cleanse this land. As in nature, so in things divine, things religious: when the storm is fiercest, it must soon be over; when the night is darkest, dawn is ever nearest. Man's extremity is ever God's greatest opportunity. How often, in the history of individuals and of nations, has the truth of these trite sayings been realized! The Renaissance in France, the Reformation in England,—how were these heralded in? And may the religious dawn of suffering, restless, aspiring Spain, be the

dawn of that true religion and useful learning which kindles more and more into the perfect, peaceful, shining day!

A short comparison between the state of the Church of this land and that of her Sister Church of England, shall, in conclusion, be offered.

The Churches of England and of Spain are, if the writer's recollection of the former serves him in good stead, both of them to be considered as sick men, and to be judged of accordingly. But there is a difference in sickness, and in the signs of it—a difference which, by practised eyes, is well understood.

In the sickness of the Church of England I see all the signs of a sick man, fretful, and anxious, and dissatisfied, and restless, it is true; but still of a sick man waking up to life again from the long slumber that had promised, at one time, to end in nothing but death. In the Church of England I see life—life in her many missions; *life* in her schools and churches, rising up in every desolate hamlet and every overpopulated outskirt of her large towns; life in her overflowing Congresses; life in the keen interest with which all her proceedings are canvassed and criticized by the public press; life in the existence of unorthodox ministers within her fold; life in her many religious dissensions: and, where life is, there is *hope*.

In her Sister Church of Spain I see no signs of life. Her clergy preach, one and all, as they preached one hundred years ago. Her chief prayers are still offered in a tongue "not understood" of her sons and daughters—the self-same lack of independence and of originality of thought is, as of old, imposed upon her ministers. Her services are magnificent, many of her churches and cathedrals sublime; but it is the

sublimity of a grand architecture, it is the attraction of a gorgeous and sensual ritual; there is spirited music and flashing lights, and a grand appeal to the senses. There are, it is true, none unorthodox among *her* ministers; but it is all too possible, as the experience of past ages has taught us, "Solitudinem facere, pacem appellare."

As for the living souls outside her churches, as for those that hunger and thirst for Hope and Truth and Love and Faith, where are they? Alas! they are not here!

In conclusion, the writer would observe, it may be true that in the Church of England there is a vast deal of mental unrest, a certain amount of alienation of the masses from their Church's services; but, be it remembered that in that country both clergy and statesmen and bishops are making gigantic efforts—by increased personal zeal; by increased manifestation of love for the masses; by the measures of educational improvement lately promulgated and acted upon; by the fixed determination of many of the most enlightened among the clergy not to tighten, but to loosen the reins, not to make narrower, but to make broader the terms of communion with their Church; by the increased education of the clergy, and their better acquaintance with *modern* and ancient literature,—by all these means, the writer says, the Anglican Communion is making visible and gigantic efforts to recover its lost ground—ground won from it during the repose of centuries.

And in speaking of the Church in England in comparison with that of Spain, ever must it be borne in mind that the majority of those who do not enter the doors of the church at least enter the doors of the

chapel; and that those who are not within the fold of England's Established Church are, at any rate, able to find shelter within the fold of some one of the many of her Christian communities; whereas that in Spain the case is wholly different. Here, there is no communion, save with the ancient Church by Law Established. "Leave her," men say. "Yes! But what then?" It is the question of many an uneasy soul in these days and in this country, "Lord, to whom shall I go?" Leave the Church's one fold, and you have left all—all the light, all the guide, and all the shelter, such as they are! Alone you pass out into the great darkness, yea, even into a darkness that may be felt; alone must you wander upon the mountains, seeking some track to guide your weary footsteps; alone must you lie down, as the shades of your last long night draw on—confused, bewildered, baffled, deserted, and in pain. It is so. He who leaves the "one fold" in Spain has "no place to flee unto, and no man cares for *his* soul." In his reading, in his thought, in his hope, in his prayer, in his belief, for *him* there is simple, sheer, utter loneliness: it is "*chacun pour soi*" in everything. That the *finale* of that proverb may also be true of the sons of Republican Spain—who have no anchor, sure and steadfast, of their souls—is the earnest hope, desire, and expectation of the writer of this work; that if, at present, it must be—and it must—"chacun pour soi," it may also be "*et Dieu pour nous tous*."

From a communication sent to the Editor of *Macmillan's Magazine*, and forwarded by him to the author of 'Untrodden Spain and her Black Country,' it would appear that some of the leading members

of the committee of the "Spanish Christian Church" have taken exception to the above statement,—“He who leaves the ‘one fold’ in Spain has ‘no place to flee unto, and no man cares for *his* soul.’ In his reading, in his thought, in his hope, in his prayer, in his belief, *for him* there is simple, sheer, utter loneliness: it is ‘*chacun pour soi*’ in everything.”

The writer of the statement complained of here begs to assure the members of the "Spanish Christian Church" that he intended neither to disparage nor to ignore their generous and devoted efforts to spread evangelical truth. Before writing his remarks, he had not only made himself acquainted with parts of their good work, but he had also attended some of their places of worship, and joined in the services there performed with sincere gratification.

His reason for not mentioning their labours is simply this—that the centres of Protestant Church life and work are so few and far between, that they can hardly be considered as havens for the majority of the Spaniards who have broken with their old faith. What, the writer would ask, is one room set aside for service in one of the largest towns of Spain?

But to the self-devotion and earnestness of many of the members of the "Spanish Christian Church" the writer is happy here to bear warm and favourable testimony; and especially he would speak of their success as regards *schools* for the children.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MURILLO'S HOUSE AT SEVILLA.

I HAVE often thought that the religious influence of natural or artificial beauty upon the heart and mind of man is greatly underrated, and, indeed, almost lost sight of. What I intend to convey by this statement is this, that the beauty or grandeur of nature spread around us is, by the Great Artist of Nature—next to prayer and earthly love, given and received, whereby chiefly we realize what Divine love must be—meant to be looked upon and used as one Divine means of elevating and refining man's heart and soul.

Take a man who from his childhood has been brought up in the narrow, noisy streets or back slums of some huge smoky city,—who has been insensibly lowered in character, hopes, and aspirations, year by year,—whose ears have long been accustomed to the squalling of dirty children and the indecent song,—whose one luxury has been the comfortless bench in the blazing gin-shop at the corner of his street; take such a one, who has been, to a certain extent, supported by some secret visitations of that spirit which, like the wind of heaven, "bloweth where it listeth," and let him walk on a soft, bright, English summer eve through and amongst the peaceful, lovely parterres of an English garden,—let him smell the sweet, chaste perfume of the rose,—let him sit and meditate upon the soft, wide-spreading lawn; take

him to the greenhouse, with its excelling wealth of tropic flowers; let him here "see the works of the Lord" in all their beauty, fresh from the Creator's hand,—would not he, for a while at least, be raised to despise his former pleasures, to dream of things, and of knowledge, and of beauty too wonderful for him?—would he not be half constrained to become a new creature? I think he would. Very beautifully has our English country poet said,

"God made the country, and man made the town;"

and a well-known preacher of our day has embodied the same idea in his usual terse and graphic language, where he says, "The question of an innocent child, or the smell of a spring flower," may be the means of awakening the slumbering heart and conscience of a careless man.

Let one who is simply immersed *in self*; who never looks above or beyond his own low, cunning, petty schemes; whose soul is dead to all that is grand and noble in life; or one who is conceited and proud, or one who glories in his own strength, and thinks that he is the great one of the earth in physical power,—let such a one wander down, on a wild stormy night, when all is blackness and darkness, and the winds hold fiercest revel, to the very edge of some bleak, lonely rock,—let him see and hear nothing but the white seething waters breaking in snow upon the reef, the roar of the retreating surge, and the distant thunder of the gun of some vessel labouring heavily and in distress; or let him stagger on deck in some fierce tropic storm, and see nothing but waves rolling mountains high, the dark clouds drifting across the sky, hear no sound but the wind howling through

the creaking rigging,—will not such a scene of wild, desolate grandeur, when the soul is brought, as it were, face to face with its God, have power to elevate and raise the soul above its own littleness and pride, and teach the great lesson “that man is nothing, and God all in all,” better than any other teacher?

Why has the sailor's name become a proverb among us to denote a certain bluff, blind superiority to all that is little, mean, and petty? Is it not because the wild scenery of coast and headland, of blinding spray, and rolling wave, is the tutor to his soul, and makes him partaker in part of its own grandeur of character?

Who, again, has not felt the effect of an English autumn landscape upon his own heart and mind? To walk, with tired, homeward-hastening feet, through wood and avenue, while the grass is growing dewy and dank under foot, when nothing is heard but the tinkling of the sheep-bell on the wold, and the hoarse cackling of the pheasant; scared from his roost, overhead, and the bark of the sheep-dog in some lonely farm, and the rustling red leaves, telling of change and decay, driven across the path,—to walk through such a homely scene often fills the mind with, to use a common phrase, “thoughts of better things”—holy, gentle, truthful, anxious thoughts, yet thoughts of peace and hope.

Every season, with its changing scenes, seems to me to awaken, if it be *allowed* to awaken, a different train of thought, and to have its distinct influence upon a man's heart. Whose heart has not bounded to see the green fields, and hear the bleat of the new-born lamb, and smell the first cowslip of spring-time?

Every different aspect of *scenery* seems to me also to have a different effect upon the mind. How many

a real prayer—not for earthly blessings, but, like all *truest* prayer, for spiritual blessings, to be made wise, and true, and good—has been prompted by the very natural surroundings of the spot where the long line of surf beats and breaks upon the desolate shore at the shades of eve—who has not felt it?

Could one have an impure thought as he wanders around his garden, with its peaceful flowers dripping with chaste dews of night, at *early morning*, and listens to the “sweep of scythes in morning dew”?

Could one be proud of his own mental, intellectual power, as he looks up on some keen, wintry night through the frosted, naked foliage at the heavens, studded with their myriad stars? Does not the very contemplation of them lead one to “look through Nature up to Nature’s God,” and say within one’s own heart, “How great is He whose hand made all these things; lo! heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him”?

Could one be faithless, and presumptuous, and boastful of his own strength who wanders amongst the colossal shattered rocks and mountain-passes of Ronda, the Styrian Highlands, or the Tyrol?

There are those, of course, on whom all these things have but *little* influence, there are those on whom they have long ceased to have *any*; but that they *may* have, and constantly *do* have, a really blessed effect upon man’s heart and soul, no one who thinks will deny.

There was much rough, stern truth in a father, who, speaking of a young man who had unhappily embraced the tenets of utter, blank Atheism, said,—“Take him out for a voyage to New Zealand in a good clipper, and *let him see a storm at sea*;” much

truth in the dictum of a poor Sussex peasant, who, returning from tending his flock on the short, thymy sward of the South Downs, on a lovely summer's eve, said,—“ One ought not to feel quarrelsome when the Lord has made all so peaceful;” much truth in the words, on the other hand, of a poor costermonger on a Spanish wharf, who, when the bargaining and haggling began at five o'clock on a dark, wintry morning, ere the sun had risen upon its hungry, eager crowds, and while the first rush was being made to the early “ coffee and aguardiente shop,” said,—“ *It is very hard to be religious if you have to get your bread here.*”

And if the beauty, or grandeur, or loneliness, or peacefulness of Nature have a certain power and influence on the mind of man, and beget in it similar feelings—throw, as it were, a tinge of their own hue over it, so surely does the beauty or grandeur of Art exercise upon it an influence corresponding in kind although not in degree.

It is for this reason, and not only for their intrinsic beauty, that we cherish and love so well, and prize so highly, the works of the great masters of painting, or poetry, or sculpture; because their contemplation has a directly beneficial effect upon the heart and soul, and is, as it were, as a handmaid for other more directly religious influences; and it is for this reason that many good and thoughtful men would desire to see the museum or the garden, each with its soul-elevating store of artificial or natural grandeur or beauty, opened to the working-classes on the Sunday. True, it is matter for regret that the opening of these places necessitates *hard work* on the part of a few on that day which should be a “ day of rest”; but look-

ing out into this strange, confused world of ours, is it not the *rule of life*, from the day when One suffered for all on Calvary, that *the one* should suffer for the good of the many?

I will not, in speaking of the effect upon the mind and heart of a peaceful contemplation of works of art-beauty, particularize much; but who can look on that exquisite copy of a great painting (now so common in Spain that the poor buy it for twopence-halfpenny) 'El Divino Rostro,' with the simple words under it,—

" See *what I* suffered for *thee* :
Say, what wilt *thou* suffer for Me ?"—

the Divine head of our blessed Lord, crowned with thorns; the drops of sweat, as it were blood, falling down; the exceeding intense agony and earnestness of that face,—who, I say, can look on that without feeling some response within him to the Divine question? I mention this instance—not even knowing *of which* of the great masterpieces it is a copy—simply because, during the months of my sojourn, it has taken such a hold on the heart and mind of religious Spain.

Who, again, can look at the marvellous, the heavenly pensive sweetness of the 'Virgin and Child' of Alonso Cano, in Seville Cathedral, without feeling that there may be an exceeding sweetness, peacefulness, truthfulness, steadfastness, and purity, written in a woman's face—written so clearly and so indicative of character, as to remind one that human nature, although lower, need only be "a little lower" than the angels?

How many chords—to come to simpler and more

homely themes—have been awakened in how many thousand hearts by that picture of O'Neil's 'Eastward Ho,' that hung but a few years since on the walls of the Royal Academy in London.

The 'Good Shepherd' bearing home the sheep that was lost, or extricating it from the thicket, the 'Last Judgment,' the many *Matres Dolorosæ*, or that most striking illustration of "Neither do I condemn thee"—all these, and hundreds of others, which have exercised, and still exercise, a really blessed and elevating silent influence upon human nature, I pass over, merely asking those who read these pages to give a fair trial to two much overlooked means of grace, the contemplation of works of natural and artificial beauty or grandeur. True, they will never heal a broken heart or wash a sin-stained conscience, but, as handmaids of religion, they are blessed agents to elevate, and cheer, and charm.

Who, among painters, has done his work more nobly, or more skilfully, than the painter of Seville, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo?

It was a bright sunny evening in December, 1873, when, fresh from the contemplation of the fixed, dark, steadfast gaze of his 'San Francisco receiving the Stigmata' (now in the Academia de Bellas Artes at Cadiz), and his exquisitely sweet 'Angel de la Guarda,' or Guardian Angel—one of his most intensely beautiful paintings—in the cathedral of Seville, I bent my hasty steps towards the home of this great artist in Seville.

I passed through the narrow winding streets of the "Juderia," or Jewish quarter, now no longer restricted to the Jewish population. The sun hardly

ever looks upon these narrow paved paths, with their tall houses seeming almost to meet overhead; but they were growing wet with the evening dews, which fall heavily in winter in this climate, partly making up for the lack of rain.

In a little street, called now "Plaza de Alfaro," or running out of that little square, is the great painter's simple house, with "No. 2" written over its lowly Spanish portals. A Spanish man-servant and a dark-eyed, good-natured Andalucian lassie were standing laughing and love-making at the door. I told them my errand, and the girl pointed lazily—and wondering evidently what on earth the English señor had come to see the house for—to a little marble tablet just inside the door, fixed in the wall, to the left hand as you enter.

Like the house itself and all the surroundings, it was most unpretending and unobtrusive. On it was the simple inscription—

"En esta casa fué ciertamente
En la que murió
el día 3 de Abril de 1682
El insigne pintor Sevillano
Bartolomé Esteban Murillo."

It is a plain, white-washed, modest Spanish house, consisting of a ground floor and two upper floors. The little street in which it stands is narrow; part of the house fronts another house, the rest overlooks a garden, with a high wall around it, making the look-out from the lower rooms still duller than would a house fronting it. Under the wall of this garden a few muleteers and gitanos, in picturesque and gaudy costumes, their bronzed-brown faces reminding one of

the truthfulness of the great painter's colouring, were watering their donkeys and mules.

I asked leave to go over the house, and asked where, in which room, Murillo painted. "Why, how *can I* tell," said the good-natured lassie, "in which room he painted. *Every one says* that he painted under the orange-trees in the old walled garden of the alcazar opposite; but come (*vamos!*) over the house." So we went. On either side of the tiny "hall," as you enter, is a narrow door, each door opening into a small, narrow, ill-lighted room, with floors of common red tiles, and a dark cupboard in each room, if my memory serves me in good stead.

My Andalucian lassie trundled up the narrow winding stairs—so narrow, so dark, only the width of five bricks placed lengthways, and with a little fronting of worn wood-work. On the first story the doors are still small, the rooms dark and narrow. They were inhabited by a Spanish family, and I did not more than step inside them.

To the top, or second story, the staircase is little better than a creaking wooden ladder; but at the top my guide showed me a little niche in the wall. "Here," she said, "used to be one of his paintings." All the rooms have floors of red brick or tile; all are narrow and dark. On the top story is the old kitchen, the only inhabitant of which was a black, white-breasted retriever puppy, who welcomed us with every noisy demonstration of delight, and evidently did not at all appreciate the honour of being a prisoner in Murillo's kitchen! The shambles or the fruit-market would have been more, I fear, to *his* liking!

The lassie, romping with her mute companion,

threw open a door, through which I crouched and squeezed, and we stood upon the roof—a tiny space, sloping down to the front, only five yards by three, looking straight down into the walled garden of the alcazar, a typical Spanish garden, with its gorgeous orange and lime trees, its rich irrigated plots of vegetables, its square regular beds, and neat ever-green borders.

Here, I thought, more likely than in the dark, narrow rooms, the great master wrought. The view was very beautiful. Spanish housetops, remember, are not like our smoky English housetops, fit only for sparrows, and smoke, and cats. Spanish cities are *smokeless, chimneyless*; no smuts fly about; and on Spanish housetops we can safely dry our white snowy linen.

The view was very beautiful—over the old garden, over the tops of snow-white houses, with flat, brown roofs; above was nothing but the cloudless blue sky, with the setting sun sinking below the distant sierra, in red and golden splendours, to his rest.

And then I passed out; the dark-eyed hoyden locked up her dog once more in the classic kitchen, only too glad to return to her chat and her love-making.

This, then, was the humble house of the great painter. Here lived, and here died in April, 1682, aged sixty-four, by an unlucky fall from the scaffold, as he was painting one of his grandest, or at least most elaborate paintings, the 'Marriage of Santa Catalina,' which has been taken from its home in the Convent of Los Capuchinos, in Cadiz, during the Revolution of the summer 1873, and placed in the Academia de Bellas Artes, in the same city. Here,

in this humble house, lived and died the one, perhaps, of *all* painters who excelled in *every* style that he undertook: the *frio*, or dark and sternly marked, as in his 'San Francisco receiving the Stigmata'; his earliest style, the *cálido*, defined outline, with warmer colour, as in his 'Adoration of the Shepherds,' in the Gallery at Madrid; and the *vaporoso*, or blending style, something akin to the style of our own Turner, of which, as an example, may be quoted his 'Martyrdom of San Andrea,' also in the Madrid Gallery. Here dwelt and died the painter of the 'Holy Family,' work full of peace and love; of more than one *exquisite* "Concepcion"; of 'La Virgen de los Dolores,' so full of mournful pathos; of 'San Juan con el Cordero,' full of fervour; of 'San Francisco embracing his Crucified Son.'

Here, in this humble home, he dwelt. Perhaps in the tiny plot of waste garden-ground, for such there is attached to the house, he tended his fruits or flowers; on these narrow streets, and on this self-same gorgeous sun, at any rate, his eye rested, day by day.

Strong men, so runs the adage, *make* circumstances; weak men are made by them. Truly Murillo was of the "strong"; his genius triumphed over all the sordidness of his house and its surroundings.

A few doors from the little house which "ciertamente" was that of Murillo, stands another, more pretentious, which claims the honour of having been the house in whose bright, quiet garden Murillo was wont to paint. The kindly señora, on my presenting my card and asking leave to enter the garden, at once sent her servant to conduct me thither. We passed through the courtyard of the house and into

the garden, which consisted of two small quadrangles, but, oh, so beautiful! Well might the great master exchange his dark, narrow rooms, and his tiny strip of sunny roof aloft, for the peacefulness and beauty of this quiet spot!

The orange-trees, crowded with green and yellow fruit, lent their shade, the lime-tree, with its larger fruit of sicklier hue, the fig-tree, with its broad, cool leaves, all grew in quiet profusion; hard by, sheltered by cypresses, was a tank, and a trickling, gurgling fountain of crystal water; the grape-vine climbed over a rustic trellis-work; the pimicento, or pepper-tree, the most graceful of Spanish trees—like to, but more graceful than, the English weeping-willow—lent also its shade. Two fountains, with their trickling waters, soothed the ear of those who sat and worked or read in this shady spot; magnolias, camellias, climbed the walls; the sweet lemon-verbena, the scented geranium, or “malvarosa” of the Spaniards, the heliotrope, the scarlet geranium, and the crimson and clove carnations, straggled over the trim box-hedges that enclosed their beds.

In the inner quadrangle, like the first, *very* small, an ancient mule, under the shade of a fig-tree, still more ancient, was slowly turning round the water-wheel, with its shining, dripping caskets, of an old Moorish Noria; all around him, and overhead, the lime-tree and the orange-tree showed their bright yellow fruit to the setting sun. Truly, I thought to myself, here a painter might paint, a poet sing to the tune of the turning wheel and the gushing fountains, with the scent of exotic plants filling the balmy evening air.

A few doors from this house is an open, small, dusty

space, a barren oval, belted in by stunted acacia trees, with a solitary gas-lamp in its centre; it is called now "Plaza de Santa Cruz," Santa Cruz being the name of a tiny church which, in 1858, was pulled down here. On one of the walls (of a private house) fronting this little hovel, is a marble tablet, with the inscription—

" Para perpetuar la memoria
de que en el ambito de esta plaza
hasta poco hace templo sagrado
hastan depositadas las cenizas
del celebre pintor Sevillano
Bartolomé Esteban Murillo
la Academia de Bellas Artes
Acordó poner esta lapida.

Modesto monumento, pero el primero
Que se consagra a su illustre fundador
1858."

And so, as the shades of eve drew on, I left the haunts of the great painter—the painter of truth and of *life* as *he* saw it, and as those in Andalusia see it at the present day.

Of Murillo's life I know nothing; but no scandalous or libellous report has ever, I believe, currently attached itself to his name, as it did for a period to that of another exceedingly beautiful painter, Alonso Cano, most falsely.

Murillo, however, neither *needs* nor claims any notice of his life; into *his works* he *threw* his life, and he lives in his works—works that have elevated and refined thousands of souls—and he cannot die; he needs no memorial stone, no tablet, no biography: as is the case with all the good and great, "his works do follow him"; and, perhaps, amid all his toils and labours to the last—for he died at the

age of sixty-four of a fall from a scaffold while painting one of his masterpieces—he looked forward to no reward for himself, but to the elevating and ennobling of others who should follow him, and could breathe that prayer so hard to be breathed by one living amid all the seduction of this present life, “Show Thy servants their *work*, and their *children* Thy *glory*.”



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

CHAPTER XXIV.

NOCHE-BUENA; OR, CHRISTMAS-EVE IN SPANISH WILDS.

“Esta noche es Noche-Buena,
Y no es noche de dormir.”

So runs a favourite Spanish couplet, in every one's mouth at this season, on the subject of Christmas-Eve. The lines, literally translated, simply mean—“This night is the Good Night, and the Good Night is not the night for sleep.” The Noche-Buena, or, to speak in language more orthodox, La Noche de Navidad of the Spaniards, is our Christmas-Eve.

Many who read these pages will be interested to know how the Noche-Buena is observed in the interior of Spain, with the feast-days that follow in its wake: the Pascua, or Christmas-Day; the Feast of San Esteban, or St. Stephen's Day; that of San Juan, or St. John's Day; and that of Los Inocentes, our Innocents' Day. To one who passes his first Christmas in a foreign land, with strange voices and stranger sights and sounds, there is, at that festal season, a blank and a miss—a want of something. Do you ask me what it is that one misses? It is the joyous peal of bells clashing out over frosty English fields, and bringing back—oh how many!—associations of the bright and blessed past; of days of childish joy, and innocence, and simplicity, when a toy or a few sweetmeats at Christmas had power to

cheer and charm the simple mind of the child; of holidays, when the dull desks of the cold school-room were left behind, and one sat with father, mother, and sisters round the dear old English fire; or, later on in life, of one's country curacy, when at Christmas-tide one had made glad many hearts with not much, but what is accepted by God and man alike, "quod potuit tamen fecit," and one sat down to the hearty Christmas dinner with the rector or squire, and made one of their genial party. One misses one's homely English poor very greatly at Christmas time abroad, I find. But there are other blanks. The memory at Christmas time, more than at any other time, wanders back to the well-loved faces that used to wear a sweeter smile than than at any other time. One has gone, another has gone; many an arm-chair is empty; the place one called "home" is home no more; and there may be a loved one stretched on the couch of illness even now; "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not," so the full heart ponders, and "you will take Benjamin away." All these things made my first Christmas abroad a dull one. And then how an Englishman in the interior of Spain longs for a good roaring fire to sit beside; and we have no fires, nothing but little braziers of charcoal, in the interior. And then how he longs for a good Christmas carol, and a sight of the frosty faces of the carollers, and the joyous sounds of their rude music, and a good hearty Church Service in the old church, decked with holly and mistletoe, and the dark green ivy: all these the eye and the heart look and long for, and they look and long in vain. Yes, in the landscape, in the skyscape (to use a word newly coined), in the sounds of men and things around one, Spain is indeed different from