

The poor criada came in, and she, too, called him "Tuno." Then she went for her mother; the mother held the little animal by the tail; the daughter, Isidra, beat his ribs black and blue with her broom, and then, that breaking, with her clenched fist. I ventured to suggest that there was a great "danger of a dissolution of partnership" between tail and ribs if Picho, struggling, was held by the tail. "Bueno," said the old mother, "we must all depart, soul from body, some day."

Next day, to try and make the poor little beast more popular with us, they took him down, mother and daughter, to the washing-trough in the dusky olives around our town, and brought him into the room, held up, like a dead hare, by the hind legs, dripping wet. "Is he not beautiful now?" Next morning, his *morale* utterly destroyed, Picho went down to the little backyard, where the chickens were kept, and killed half-a-dozen before breakfast. The two servants beat him unmercifully, and we gave him to them to give away to any one who should take a fancy to him.

"Bueno," said the young criada; "like the rest of us, he must have ups and downs in life; just now he is descending from *carne* to *garbanzos*," *i. e.*, from meat to peas!

* * * * *

One day, shortly afterwards, at early dawn, I passed along the streets. In the dusky light I saw a little, dirty-yellow coloured body lying in the road; the cart of some early muleteer had passed over its ribs and crushed them—it was the body of a dog very like to Picho. Round the little neck was a cord. This throwing out of a strangled animal into the

streets is the rule in the towns of the interior. Constantly, in your promenade, you have to step across the body of cat or dog; and so dry is the air, that no offensive smell ever proceeds from these carcasses in this climate. I went to inquire of the servants, "Where was Picho?"—"Dead, and cast out," was the answer. "Tuno had a fit last night, and died."

Perhaps so. But there was a bit of string round Tuno's neck. Well, he would never have ranked with "Cerf-vola," had he lived ever so long; so perhaps it is best that he has gone, potentially good, we will hope, to the place where all good little dogs go!



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

CHAPTER XXVII.

A SPANISH WINTER GARDEN, WITH SOME NOTICE OF
SIMPLES.

As a rule, in the interior of Spain, at least in that part of Spain from which I write, the *useful* gardens are on the outskirts of the townships; and the small courtyards of the houses, if devoted to gardening, are merely filled with flowers in pots, one or two orange-trees, and the like, for ornament more than for use.

Bacon's Essay has immortalized the old-fashioned garden of England; and how many a knotty point has been settled, how many a bright and holy idea inspired, how many a ruffled spirit calmed beneath the trees, and among the gay parterres, and on the smooth, eye-soothing green turf of the English garden!

The Spanish "huerta," a word which is nearly equivalent to our English word "market-garden," is of two kinds—first, the market-garden, rented by some gardener, in the vicinity of a town, held at a fixed rent, and cultivated to supply the town with vegetables, fruit, and flowers; secondly, the huerta, or garden, belonging to the owner of some large house, or "palacio," in a town, with a small, but often beautifully fitted-up, little stone house within its walls, whither the master of the house and his family may retire for coolness during the parching heats of the summer months.

The huerta of the interior has always a peculiar and picturesque quiet beauty of its own. Enclosed in its crumbling, grey, stone walls, with its old stone gateway, surmounted by a cross, also of stone, oftentimes belted in with groves of glaucous-leaved olives, or, in some parts of Spain, orange-trees, and always green and cool-looking, it contrasts strikingly with the barren plains around it, and, when you enter, seems quite like an oasis in the desert.

The cause of its fertility is not seen until you enter its walls, when the most prominent object that will strike you is a clump of trees at one end, formed of the pimiento, or pepper-tree, the orange, the acacia, or more often a single fig-tree of great age, with a rough table or two at its foot, and two or three ricketty chairs. Under the leafy shade (if in summer) of the fig-tree is a large well, or cistern, covered with luxuriant grass, ice-plants, and the like; and, with a hugh pole resting on his collar, an old, broken-down mule is slowly going circuit around the well; if not blind from natural causes, he is sure to be artificially blinded. Gently, from morn till eve, he walks round and round the well, stopping to rest and muse as often as he lists, unless the gardener, who is at work hard by, gazes up from his work, and, seeing him halt, shouts dictatorially, leaning on his fork, "Arre, moo . . . lo."

This is the old Moorish "noria," or well, and is universally used in the interior for the irrigation of lands and huertas. It may be thus described. The well is a large stone cistern; the pole, above spoken of as resting on the top of the mule's collar, is attached to a huge, lumbering, wooden wheel, reaching down into the waters of the cistern; on this wheel

are fastened (usually simply with common esparto-grass cord) some thirty or forty common pitchers, holding, perhaps, two quarts apiece (are not these "the pitcher broken at the fountain, the wheel broken at the cistern," of Eccles. xii. 6?); each one of these, as the wheel slowly revolves, catches up a small amount of water, and each, as it comes to the surface of the well and slowly rolls round in its turn, is, for a moment, necessarily with its mouth downwards, and discharges its water into a wooden trough, so placed as to catch much of the liquid stream from each little pitcher discharging in its turn.

The trough carries the water into one, two, or three large stone reservoirs, each about two or three feet deep—seldom more in those that I have seen—the sides of which are formed of slabs of stone, sloping gently inwards. The water from these reservoirs is, as often as needful, suffered to run into a stone trough that encircles the garden, and in which, at regular intervals, are holes leading into the natural trenches in the earth of the garden, each trench encircling a bed of vegetables or flowers. This irrigation goes on well nigh every day, and the fresh, damp scent of the huerta, when you enter it from the crackling olive-groves or the dusty road, is truly refreshing and delightful.

Nor are the sloping stone sides of these reservoirs without their use. They are apportioned into separate spaces, and are hired by the washerwomen of the neighbouring town for a halfpenny an hour, for a stand for washing their clothes. All the washing of the interior is done in this way. The clothes are washed in the usual fashion, with soft-soap, and dipped again and again into the reservoir, and

rubbed, with no gentle hand, on the sloping stone sides of the reservoirs.

The Spanish "lavandera" never rubs the clothes with her hand: she does it entirely on these stones.

It is a picturesque and striking sight in the evening to enter one of these huertas, the large reservoirs of which are a favourite of the washerwomen. You pass through a belt of grey olives, and suddenly come upon the old "noria," and upon a row of some forty of these busy people, all chattering, talking, and singing at their work, and dressed in every variety of costume, and in the gaudiest colours imaginable—a short, bright yellow serge petticoat, with a deep scarlet border, being one of the favourites. But colour—in their dress, their shops, their sweetmeats—is a passion with the gay, ephemeral Andaluzes. I asked a poor man, who was eating his morsel of bread, with coloured lard, why he did not buy white lard? "Because it is more pretty coloured."

The value of irrigated land in Spain is ten or twelve times the value of land unirrigated. A great part of Spain is treeless and riverless, and the only annual crops are the barley, or "sevada," broad beans, or "habas," and the universal "garbanzos," all of which, of course, come on but once a year. There being neither shade nor water, nothing but these would grow and come to perfection.

On the irrigated grounds, however, the melons and succulent vegetables, so absolutely needful to sustain the very life in the hotter months, grow freely; and a good gardener will get as many as four good crops off his land in one year. Be it remembered, it is a semi-tropical climate, and the fierce heat succeeding the spring and late autumn to the equally fierce rains, the

plants grow and come to perfection as quickly as in a hot-house. Indeed, if you walk out in summer on a day when the sun has come out after a sudden down-pour, the earth absolutely steams with the damp heat rising. So great is the known value of every sort of irrigation, from the homely "noria" to the Moorish irrigation works of Valencia and the surrounding country, that in some of the ancient decrees of Spain land is granted "with the free use of the waterworks of the Saracens."

And now let us pass through these grey-leaved olive groves that belt it in, and enter a typical huerta of the interior. Close to the stone gateway (I describe a garden which I constantly visit) is a little wooden cross set up against a wall. It is very flimsy, but none are sacrilegious enough to take it away or pull it down. It marks the scene of a murder five years ago, and you can just decipher the name of the murdered man upon it. Before your eyes, as you enter (it is early in February), lie four spreading plots of green, each, however, of a different hue, covering a large area of ground, for these huertas are often very large. One is a plot of "papas," or potatoes, now high above the ground, and in full leaf. Here and there you may even see one of the purple flowers half-hidden by the rich green leaves. The potato is not popular with the Spanish poor, and does not form at all a staple article of food; still it is coming slowly into use among them. It is possibly a vegetable of too solid and bilious a character for these sunny skies and parching airs. Talking to a Spanish gentleman about the papas lately, and observing to him that much of our English bone and muscle took its origin from the potato diet, he said,—“The

prison authorities at ——” (naming a neighbouring town) “have put the prisoners on papas two days a week. Poor wretches! worse and worse, from garbanzos to papas, what *will* they come to!” The plot of papas is made pretty—how tasteful the Spaniards always are!—by turfs of early-sown sevada (barley), growing in regular rows amongst the potatoes. This is only used for the horses’ and mules’ “green meat,” and is not suffered to get to maturity.

The next plot, the sober glaucous-green of which contrasts well with the rich bright green of the papas, is of “cardos.” *Cardo* is a generic name in Spain for thistles of all sorts and kinds, but the cardo of the garden—called indiscriminately, *Cardo de comer*, or *Cardo dulce*, by the Spanish peasant, *Cardo hortense* by the botanist or scientific gardener—is a sort of artichoke, in leaf much like the common English artichoke. Its graceful, spreading, drooping leaves make it one of the most elegant vegetables of the Spanish garden. The stalk is eaten towards the root; cut into small pieces and boiled in milk, it is much used at all tables.

Contrasting with the rich green of the papas and the grey leaf of the cardo, is the deep green and dark purple of the “verengenas,” or egg-plant (the *Solanum melongena*, I believe, of the botanist). The leaf is dark-green, and the stalk and fruit purple. The fruit is of the shape and size of a hen’s egg, and is a common article of food, boiled or fried with beans, among the poor. They will even eat it raw, with a bit of bread and lard, and tell you it is “muy rico,” although a more insipid morsel I never ate.

The fourth contrast is a far-spreading bed of crisp, blanched, endives, or “escarolas” (*Cichorium*

endiva), the faded green and yellow and white leaves of which contrast prettily enough with the darker plots. Throughout the winter endives are a constant guest at the tables of all classes. They are considered in Spain as "a medicine for the blood at spring-time," and the poor have the greatest faith in the medicinal qualities of the endive. They are bleached simply by being covered with the earth for a few days; and you will daily see the gardener, with his short, heavy hoe (*azada*) heaping the earth over a few of his treasures. The *azada* is not above two feet long in the handle, and the ironwork is very clumsy, as are all the gardening and agricultural implements of the interior. The Spaniard will not listen to reason on these points. You will see a row of thirty men hoeing wheat with these short, heavy hoes, causing them to stoop most painfully; and if you suggest a longer handle, they will say, "Bien; but when I am tired I can smoke a cigarette."

Sometimes in these gardens the colours will really be beautifully arranged, and the gardener points with pride to this his handiwork. Indeed, all the Spaniards have a great deal of taste in their arrangement of colour, both in dress and in gardens.

Straight across the middle of the wide garden runs a little avenue of the graceful oleander-trees, their pods full of wool now bursting open. Their drooping boughs meet twenty feet overhead, and lend a grateful shade even from the winter's sun, which is beginning to make itself felt.

Trees are scattered in clumps or straggling rows all over the ground. Here is a little avenue of pomegranates, their delicate, bare sprays bearing here and there half a pomegranate that has remained

unplucked and burst its leathery rind upon the tree, and now shows its rich crimson flesh. The pomegranates are also medicinal. Coming in first at the close of the summer heats, they are supposed by the Spanish poor to strengthen one to resist the calentura. Their name is "granada." The skins grow as hard as wood, and preserve the rich crimson flesh until March. At this time they are carried about, and sold four for a farthing. They are exactly like the dry poppy-heads used by the English peasantry in the Midland Counties to make "poppy-tea" to soothe a restless baby; but when first gathered the granadas are of a rich red and yellow colour, and when some have burst on the tree, ere they are plucked and all are ripe, I know no brighter tree than this. The fruit is, in taste, sweet, luscious, and somewhat sickly, but it leaves an acid bitter taste in the palate after being eaten.

Here, too, are the almond-trees (*almendras*) in full wealth of blossoms. The trees, indeed, bare of foliage, are smothered in flowers like our peach-blossom, and the sweet smell and hum of bees remind one of an English lime avenue, and of the old lines—

"Ere the bees had ceased to murmur
In the sombrage of the lime."

In the huertas near Seville and Cordova, the orange-trees, standing in little clumps, or in regular avenues, or trained along the grey walls, form the most beautiful and striking feature of the garden, especially at this season of the year, when the fruit shines like balls of gold among the glossy dark-green leaves.

All around the walls grow the pitas, or aloes (*Agave Americana*), with their bold, towering, snow-white

leaves; the prickly pear, the sweet, but well-nigh flavourless and sickly fruit of which, about the size and shape of a small hen's egg, and covered with prickles fine as thistle-down, but most irritating when they get beneath the skin of your hand, is in season in August, September, and October; the chumba, or chumbo, a sort of diminutive prickly pear to all appearance (in many of these instances I quote the *popular* name in use among the peasantry and gardeners); the pelotilla de diablo, or "Devil's balls," a small prickly shrub, with bright purple flower, and covered with small bright yellow balls, like pistol bullets for size and hardness, and utterly useless; the marisma, a small wild plant, with tiny glaucous and brown leaves, often used in some parts of Spain to make a hedge round a plot of garden ground; the taraji, with its tiny creeping thread-like sprays; the flor del principe, or red geranium, even now bright with blossoms, and growing in clumps five feet high on every bit of waste ground; the flor de l'espada, or sword-plant, with its white lily leaf, and long, graceful, crimson blossoms hanging withered from the stem; clumps of stunted adelfa (oleander), the *Nerium oleander* of the botanist; the uñas de soro (hawk's claw), a small pointed leaf, about an inch high, growing in profuse abundance; the Malva rosa, a name given to the shrubby scented geranium; heliotrope; reeds; cambrones, or buck-thorns (*Rhamnus catharticus*), growing in a rough untidy hedgerow; these, with clumps of romero and allucema (rosemary and lavender), make up the "confused element" in the Spanish garden. The lavender is still in bloom!

Rosales (rose-bushes), a bushy evergreen plant, like the English box, and flor del principe, form the borders

to many of the beds, which are thus, summer and winter, prettily and brightly edged.

All the land, you will see, or nearly all, is intersected with little trenches, some six inches deep, for irrigation; and along the sides of every trench grow rows of dravanos, a very large radish, eaten raw, fully as large as an English carrot of ordinary size; cerbolias (winter onions), the very chief ingredient in the savoury stews, soups, salads, and gravies of the country during winter; apio, or celery, of which is made one of the most aromatic liqueurs of Spain, bearing the same name, and said to be a marvellous tonic and strengthener of the digestive organs; and hundreds of tiny spring lettuce plants, just rising above the ground.

Here and there are rows of tomatos, the love-apples of the Spaniard, now drooping and leafless. The fruit, if eaten by the lover and the loved at the same time, is supposed to stimulate affection by the unlettered Spanish peasantry. There ought to be no lack of mutual love, for throughout the summer—from July, indeed, until Christmas—tomatos, stewed, fried in oil, boiled with sweet herbs or *au naturelle*, or raw, are eaten by the million, and, indeed, form almost the staple of their food. I have remarked this about the tomatos, that when, in the exceeding heat of summer, all solid food is distasteful, or when you have been walked off your stomach—to use an old pedestrian's phrase—and cannot take any solid, you can eat even tough meat, or a slice of bread, with stewed tomatos: they give a certain tone to the stomach.

Here, too, you will see withered pimiento plants of every sort and kind; they are, in shape, like capsciums, and are of two kinds—the larger, which is a

spiral pod, quite hollow, about five inches long, flavourless, save a slight bitter, leathery, and tough, used universally for fries, and even raw from August, when they come in green, to Christmas; and the smaller, or pungent kind, used for flavouring stews, &c.

The enormous heaps of the larger kind (*Pimiento dulce*), green, yellow, and flame-coloured, form the most noticeable feature among the autumn fruit-stalls of the Plaza in the interior; they are piled up in heaps, two, three, and four feet high, and for a few cuartos (farthings) you may buy a lapful. What their excellence is, I know not; but they are said, even by Spanish doctors, to be "extremely good for the health." These are preserved in syrup for the winter and spring, and are eaten with dessert; but they are of a sickly flavour, if they have any flavour at all!

The smaller kind (*Pimiento picante*), the shrubby capsicum, or "bird-pepper," is well known in England, and used for imparting pungency to various articles of food. These are but sparingly used. The pungency of the seed is intense, but they are supposed by the Spaniards, who, with reason, deem "the fruits of the earth in due season" to be medicines for the body at the several seasons of their maturity, to "give a winter appetite," coming, as they do, towards the close of the summer or autumn.

As to flowers, you will see, in the Spanish winter garden, about December, the carnation (clavel) and clove-pink, the dahlia, the flor del invierno, or chrysanthemum, the aleli, or wall-flower, in full bloom; while the narcissus, hyacinth, lily, lemon-geranium, copete, or tuft-flower (a kind of marigold); flor de la serra, a pretty creeper; convolvulus; campanilla, or bell-flower (a kind of epiglottis); malva blanca (white

mallow); malva de olor, or fragrant mallow; chicharo de olor (sweet pea); mimosa, capuchina (nasturtium); uña de leon, or lion's nail, a small plant with an orange blossom, in its shape and tawny colour like a diminutive lion's nail, often flowering throughout the winter; yerba becerra (snap-dragon), called by the peasantry, I know not why, *sapo*, a toad; malacarra, a plant bearing in early spring a small flower of a very pale, beautiful blue; alfilera (so called from *alfiler*, a pin), bearing on every little spike a light yellow flower; siempreviva, *i. e.*, ever-alive, a small kind of wall-flower; and a hundred others, all are showing bright and fair, well above ground, and promising many a sweet and various-coloured nosegay for April and May, and indeed much earlier.

One or two of the most beautiful flowers have been omitted from this list: the graceful trompeta, an exotic shrub, growing some eight or ten feet high, with spreading foliage, and, when in bloom, spangled all over with trumpet-shaped flowers, soft as velvet to the touch, pure white, and looking quite like wax flowers, if it be any flattery to the Almighty's handiwork to compare it to that of men! This plant, which is a great favourite in the patios of private houses and public hospitals, came, I believe, from Las Philippinas. Then there is the madreselva, or honeysuckle of Old England, in full blossom, supplying some grace to the trellis-work, with its leafless vine, the hiedra, or dark-leaved ivy, climbing by its side; the myrto; the bocamiella—literally, honey-mouth—a pure white flower, of which I do not know the proper name, giving a most delicate scent; the hibisco, or Syrian mallow (*Hibiscus Syriacus*); the dama de noche, or queen of night, a shrub which yields its perfume only

beneath the influence of the dews of night, whence its name; and the suspiros—these last, I think, if my memory serves me in good stead, are the mimulus of the English garden. Let me add that the last-named four flowers are amongst the greatest favourites here: the bocamiella, the hibisco, the dama de noche, and the suspiros.

A word about the two last-named plants. With regard to the dama de noche: in the bright sun, when all the other flowers of the garden pour out their richest perfume on the air, the dama de noche closes its petals and gives no scent. It is an untidy, straggling-looking shrub, too, with a leaf something like that of the English laurustinus, and, when one sees it by day, one is tempted to despise it; its flowers are closed, its scent is not. One passes down the self-same path, by the self-same shrub, when the dews of night are falling fast; every flower has "gone to bed" with the setting sun—has ceased to smile or scent the air; but the pale flowers of "la dama de noche" are wide open, and are giving their sweetness to the dewy night air. I have ever thought the dama de noche the very type and symbol of the friend or the brother *known by adversity*; of the man who is not half so fascinating as the crowd of his fellows—the man who, perhaps rather vulgar, rather uncouth, even ugly or disagreeable, yet in the *time of adversity* proves himself the true man, and, *if that time never comes*, passes by you in the street, the party, or sits with you at the fireside, year after year, and perhaps passes to his grave unvalued and unknown!

Who would deem Isaac Jarman a "storm-warrior" who saw him smoking his short cutty on Ramsgate Pier?

The "suspiro" is a little flower, delicate as a convolvulus, and, like it, closing its petals at night. The noticeable features in speaking of this plant are, that the same plant bears flowers of three different colours—light crimson, crimson and yellow streaked, and yellow; and that the Spanish ladies take the flowers off the plant and string them upon a straw, and then carry them about—they look *very* gay and pretty—until evening. Oftentimes a Spanish lady will pluck a quantity, impale them, and offer her friend this quaint bouquet, in the months of August and September, when they are in flower.

There are other trees, too, than those I have mentioned, overshadowing the huerta; the many sorts of pinos (pine trees)—pino real, or royal pine—pino rodeno, or clustering or circlet pine—pino majoletto, something like our "arbor vitæ"; the bastard tobacco, a straggling, graceless shrub; the cypress; the medlar (not common); the walnut-tree; the "palmera" (rare here, but common in Valencia, Granada), its graceful foliage rising from its conical-shaped, above-ground stem, almost like a bulb; the grape-vines twining, now dead and withered, over their trellis-work of stone and iron; the beautiful pimienta, or pepper-tree, combining the grace of the weeping-willow with the beauty of the acacia foliage; the acacia; here and there, though rarely, a pear, or plum, or apple tree; the licorice-tree, bearing the "oroyuz" of the Spanish peasant—the well-known Spanish licorice" of England's coughing and sore-throated population, called "glycyrrhiza," a name much akin to, although more unpronounceable than "licorice." The *twigs* of this tree are sold in every Plaza of the interior as soon as the cold weather sets in, and every poor Spanish

mother (especially in La Mancha) whose child has a "tuss" or cough (Latin, *tussis*) buys a farthing's-worth, and makes a decoction for her child. Now and again a lime-tree, with its wealth of pale, chrome-yellow fruit, and perhaps a stray ilex, or wild olive, make up the shade of the huerta of the interior.

They are, like most of the trees in the interior, stunted, but far from graceless.

Other vegetables, too, "fill up the corners": little plots of turnips, which are dug and eaten only from Christmas to March, and are, in shape, like a carrot, from the loose soil in which they grow, and which they can penetrate; carrots; remolacha, or beetroot, not at all a favourite; acelga (*Beta vulgaris*), or "white beet"; and parsley, with coliflores (cauliflowers) and col, or plain old English cabbage, are grown and eaten, but not with any great "gusto," on the part of the Spaniard of the interior.

The *black flower* of a species of turnip is also eaten at Christmas; it is supposed to be, like our "turnip-tops," a herb full of a wholesome bitter.

Before we take our leave of the huerta, I must crave leave, for fear of being thought an ignoramus, to introduce you to the herb garden, and to the lodge of the gardener.

By the way, I have omitted one plant, the dandelion (*diente de león*), which the Spanish gardener cherishes and reveres; he sends a few leaves to the Plaza with his endive or lettuce, and all the Spaniards hold it to be a specific for liver complaints and lowness of spirits. "Is he so dejected? Let him eat salad of *diente de león* and endive." "Will she not return his love, poor boy? he looks so pale, and his hands are growing so thin. Let them both, at the same hour, eat tomatoes."

So say the Spanish "old wives" of the interior; and, in the first case, I fancy it is not an "old wives' fable."

Wonderful is the faith of the Spaniard of the interior in "simples," and his simple faith often shows a childish, and therefore a deep providence of his God. "Why," says he, "did God put such and such a plant that heals sore throats by the river-side? Simply because in that place sore throats will be; and He who sends the sore throat sends by its side the remedy."

He will have it, that you never need have recourse to foreign drugs; that the All-Wise has planted, in each locality, on mountain side, by stagnant mere, by flowing river, or in marshy plain, the very plants which can heal and cure the diseases of that special locality.

"Why go to Peru for bark? We have a better bitter here. Why take minerals for liver when the dandelion and endive grow hard by?" So will the educated and uneducated Spaniard often speak! I must frankly confess that, from a few months' study of English botany, I have come to exactly the same conclusion as the Spanish peasantry, namely, that the All-Wise has planted in each locality the plants which will cure the diseases of that locality.

I have experimentally tested my theory, and the experiments have more and more confirmed me in my belief, and given me a deeper respect for the science of old herbalists, and a simpler trust in the providence and love of the All-Wise.

The answer to my theory, I am well aware, will be this:—"Yes, but in England, and other highly-civilized countries, we contract, from travelling in

foreign climes, and from leading a high-pressure, artificial, and unnatural life, unnatural diseases."

That is so; and the same ship that brings the traveller home from Peru can bring with it the bark to heal his foreign disease. But if, as in the good old days (as is the case with the *Spaniards* of the interior now), we travelled but once a year, and then *slowly*, had no excitement of telegraphic messages and daily papers, I believe we should find, by the brink of the river on which our cottage stood, the specific of our home disease!

And now, here are *some* of the simples, some of the herbs, all about the garden, in little clumps, cherished with real care. Many and many a poor, careworn woman, who cannot afford the "two pesetas" for the visit of a doctor, comes here—how often have I seen it—at early morn, with her sick child, and asks the gardener to prescribe, and he does so. And the two cuartos (farthings) are paid, instead of two pesetas; and the same amount of good, I fancy, is done to the child. At any rate, Nature and the wisdom of God have as much to do with "the cure."

First, here are clumps of "mejorana," sweet marjoram, the *Origanum majorana* of the botanist: the leaves, boiled down, and made into tea, form a capital cordial, which is put into a drop of aguardiente, and will most surely cure hiccough and flatulence.

Here is a plant, trailing along the ground, in appearance and leaf just like a wood-strawberry; it is called by the gardener "ojo de cinco puntas" (*i. e.*, eylet of five points); and the leaf, boiled down, is supposed to be one of the best *febrifuges* in Spain. I can find no botanical name by which to identify this plant; but I once, I believe, in an attack of fever, took it,

and the advantage I derived was marvellous. The prescription of the Spanish doctor merely said, "Febri-fugii," but I believe what he gave me was the "ojo de cinco puntas."

This is largely had recourse to by the poor, when the "calentura," that foe of the Spaniard in autumn and spring, regularly lurking in the wild campo, or by the sluggish stream, seizes him in its deadly grip.

Then there is the "flamenquilla," or yellow marigold, of the use of which I know nothing, but that it is used medicinally.

Then there is "pesote," a red herb, evergreen; it is boiled down into tea, and used for every sort of colic and stomach-ache, among children especially, but also among adults.

There are also green and red sage (*sabia*), the name being derived from the Spanish verb "saber," to be wise; following, therefore, the same etymology as the English words "sage," and "sage" = wise man; the "incensa," a tiny herb, with little glaucous-green, thread-thin sprigs, said by the Spanish poor to be one of the best-known cures for rheumatic pains. They boil it down, then steep wet rags in the decoction, and apply them to the parts affected.

Then there is the "ruda," or rue (*Ruda cabruna*), the bitter succulent little leaves of which are pounded or bruised and put into the ear of any one suffering from ear-ache, and are considered a sure and speedy cure. The "pita sabia," or aloe-leaved sage, is used *au naturelle* for poultices, and, as is the case with our house-leek in England, is very healing; it grows chiefly in pots, and is like a diminutive aloe, but has serrated edges. The value attached to the curative properties of this plant is something marvellous.

But I will digress no more upon "simples," hoping to give them the consideration which they deserve in another page.

There are, even now, one or two trees or plants, frequent among us, which I have forgotten to mention: the "membrilla," or quince tree, the delicious cheese of which (like our damson-cheese), called "carne de membrillo" (flesh of quince), is carried round from house to house at Christmas, for sale, and without a store of which no Spanish house-wife would face Noche-buena (Christmas-Eve); the Indian corn, or maize, which grows to an enormous height here; the arbutus tree, the pink berries of which, called "madronios," are highly esteemed as a soporific, and are given by mothers to their children to lull them to sleep, just as a Midland County mother in England would give her child "poppy-tea," or a drop of "Godfrey's cordial" (like the poor flowers of the suspiro, the berries are impaled on straws, three or four of which are sold for one farthing) — and the little plantations of mint, "menta."

So much for the Spanish "huerta," so far as its *natural* produce goes. *Very simple*, as you will have seen, is the poor Spaniard in his medicines. A Spanish peasant told me the other day that "there were two specifics worthy of heaven." The one was, a farthing's-worth of powdered magnesia put into the juice of an orange, to cure feverish symptoms; the other, to cure biliousness, was the juice of two lemons squeezed into a cup of *café noir* and drunk before breakfast. "And these two," said he, "are the best of the best medicines!"

Sarsaparilla, given to all the children in the hot

months as a "refresco," is the only other Spanish simple that occurs to my mind.

Beyond their own beaten path, too, the Spaniards are very ignorant. A few months since a railway-station near my home was planted with shrubs supposed to keep off *calenturas*, or fevers, by their mere presence, or, if the leaf was boiled in water, to cure them. I visited the low-lying station and looked at the young trees; I asked the porters the name. "No se," was the answer of one and all; "but they are, at any rate, *calentura-trees*."

Let me be pardoned if I, like the Spaniards, very ignorant, have made some slight blunders in the names of the various plants, and sometimes given the botanical name in Spanish, sometimes in Latin.

For quiet, peaceful thoughts, commend me to a garden; or a fishing-boat rocking out upon the grey sea of our south coast of England; or to talk with a child. A well-known preacher has said that "the smell of a spring flower, or the question of an innocent child," often opens and blesses the heart. Certainly, the smell of an English cowslip or primrose would, out here, bring back many thoughts of bright and happy days and green fields.

A short time since I went into the huerta above described, for a stroll round it in the grey of evening. There is, in all these huertas, a little "lodge," or two-roomed house, for the gardener; it consists of two rooms on the ground-floor, dark, and the floor simply pitched with common pitching-stones. Beds (such as they are!), dogs, cats, and rugs lie all over the floor; chairs there are hardly any. Passing up the huerta, I asked to be allowed to work a bit with the gardener's short hoe. I said, "Ah, I should work harder than

you do, and get through more work." "Bueno," was his touching and pathetic answer; "but I don't get the same food and wine that you do."

His little child, poor fellow, was dying of calentura, and when I said how deeply I felt with him, "Well," said he, "is it not best to go young? you do escape such a lot of sorrow." Was not his philosophy, stoical as it was, very fine? "Whom the gods love, die young."

One of this man's little children, at this time, plucked me a bunch of winter flowers, and gave them to me with the words, "Have you no flowers in England, Captain of Soldiers, that you come out to our huerta?"

In each of these huertas stands a tiny stone lodge. Is not this the "lodge in the garden of cucumbers" of Isaiah i. ? I have often seen these tiny "lodges" surrounded by melons, to the growth of which, in late summer and autumn, the gardens are partly devoted.

I would venture to call attention to the succulent and juicy character of all the fruits and vegetables of Spain; the hard apple of England and the pear are hardly known.

And let me advise any one anxious to learn the names of flowers, fruit, and vegetables, as I was when I first came to Spain, not to ask an English-speaking guide to accompany him as an "aide," or he will surely destroy all the romance of the garden scenery.

When I first came to Spain, and attempted to botanize, I took with me as guide a Spaniard who knew a little English. All went smoothly enough until the end of my researches in the garden, when a rather

pretty flower was brought me by the gardener's child. A little idea of beauty floated peacefully in my brain. I handed it to the guide: "Pumpkin-flower, by the Lord," said he; "some of our pumpkins have a skin like ebony, and weigh from 60 to 200 lb.!"

Alas! my dream was ended! We had descended to weights and measures, and—"pumpkins." My dream was over!



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

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

CHAPTER XXVIII.

WORDS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATED IN SPANISH
WILDS.

DURING my sojourn in the Spanish interior, few things have struck me more forcibly than the constant illustration of the words of Holy Scripture in the language, scenery, customs, &c., of the country.

Let us take a day's walk into the campo (open country) and observe this for ourselves. I shall be much surprised if you, gentle reader, do not acknowledge at the end of our excursion that you have shared my interest.

Here, ere we leave the town, comes the long string of mule-carts, shaking over the unpaved streets, and you will notice that hardly a single mule has any bit in its mouth. How, then, are they restrained? If you look more closely, you will see that each one has a small curved band of iron over the lower part of his nose, just resting on the nostrils, to which the two ropes (the only reins known in the interior) are attached. This, surely, is the true clue to the meaning of the phrase, "I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips" (2 Kings xix. 28), which, in other days, often has puzzled me. Should it not be, I speak with all deference to Hebrew Scholars, "I will put my hook *on* thy nose." In the case of an ill-tempered, or runaway mule, both the hook and the bit will be used.

This custom is not confined to the interior. If you take notice of the carriage and pair of noblemen and gentlemen in such a town, for instance, as Cadiz, you will see that the majority of the horses have only the steel or iron band across the nostrils.

"Moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores," said the Divine Teacher of him who was "laid at the rich man's gate." Just before you is the casa of one of the "benignos," or "limosneros" of the town. In his porch, at his door, sits, and lies, and stands a sorrowing crowd of suppliants; some of them his old labourers, some chance visitors, many lame, who have been carried hither, or maimed, or suffering from scrofulous sores that have eaten away a part of the nose or eye. Soon the servant or mistress will come, with a little paper bag filled with coppers, and distribute them with moistening eye and lavish hand. But now there is only one attendant, a huge red dog, the type of the interior, who looks like a cross between greyhound and mastiff, and he is licking the hands and feet of some of his old friends.

A few doors from this house is the unpretending, curtained entrance to the church; and you pass in, to kneel for one moment in its dark, quiet, incense-scented aisles, on the humble rush matting where the "devout women" are kneeling in prayer.

As you enter, a beggar, who sits daily at this "gate of the temple," pushes aside the heavy curtain, and says, with the customary whine, "Una limosna, señor, por Dios," that is, "An alms, sir, for the love of God." Were there not two men in Holy Writ of whom, also, as they entered into the "Beautiful Gate" of their temple, a beggar "asked an alms"?

If you give him a trifle, he will say "The Lord

reward thee," reminding one of the words, "The Lord reward him according to his works," or "God give you and your wife health for ever." If you do not intend to give, do not say no, that offends the Spanish temperament, but say "Perdone usted por Dios, amigo," "Pardon me, for God's sake, friend," reminding one of the words of gentle remonstrance, "Friend, I do thee no wrong."

In this porch (I am now relating only what has befallen myself) you may see, as I myself saw but the other day, the counter-type of the "certain poor widow, who threw into the treasury two mites, which make a farthing." This was what I saw. It was at a church on the outskirts of the town of Jerez. There was a dark little vestibule to the church, only separated from the noisy street by a heavy curtain. Inside that vestibule were two or three alms-boxes; over one the inscription, "Para los niños espositos" (the foundlings); over another, "Divina pastora," which means, I presume, the Virgin; over a third, "Para el culto Divino" (for public worship in churches). Inside the church, exposed to the gaze of the worshippers, were alms-boxes for the same purpose. Thus, a giver obviously had his choice of "doing his alms before men," or "not letting his left hand know what his right hand did." As I stood for a moment in this little vestibule, only lit by one tiny wax taper burning before the altar of the Virgin in the wall, in came a sailor lad, about twenty years of age. He just peeped into the church, on whose "estera," or carpet of esparto grass, many were kneeling; then drew back, as if shrinking from their gaze. He looked at the titles of the three alms-boxes; then selected that "For Divine Worship," and dropped

in some small copper coins, his "widow's mite"; knelt for one moment in the dark vestibule before the altar, and passed out into the street unobserved. I was told that his action was probably a thank-offering for preservation from shipwreck.

Inside the church, too, you will notice that only a few who attend the Misa will take a prominent place; the majority will be found in the side aisles, away from the chief altar, hardly seen in the "dim religious light" of the church, and the Spaniards have some saying about this, which is founded on Our Lord's words,—“When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and, when thou hast shut the door, pray.” As we pass outside the town walls we come to the several patches of ground, each with a boundary line of stones around it, and now deep in barley or wheat straw. Across and around lads are driving the “wooden instruments” (1 Chron. xxi. 23), drawn by donkeys, to thrash the corn, and huge oxen are treading it out; but you will see, in every case, that the ox is “sin bozal”—*i. e.*, the “unmuzzled ox” (Deut. xxv. 4). These oxen, in size, fat, and weight, are enormous. At night, when their work is done, they will be seen standing at the edge of the floors, and eating the rich provision littered around them, quite surprising you by their bulk and sleekness.

It was a right royal present that Ornan the Jebusite offered to David,—“The oxen for burnt-offerings, and the threshing instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat-offering; I give it all.”

These “threshing instruments” are, in appearance, like a wooden frame-work, with wooden spikes like those of an English harrow. I know not how to describe them better.

There is another Scriptural expression, "The King of Syria had destroyed them, and had made them like the dust by threshing" (2 Kings xiii. 7). Surely this word "dust" should be chaff. The Spanish straw is powdered by the threshing, and is like chaff, but even smaller. It is the only provender for the Andalucian horse, and, with a handful of barley (which takes the place of oats), is his "feed" for each day. The imagery here, then, if my theory is correct, is that of the chaff, which is not only broken up, but is so light as to be driven by the wind.

When once the crops are gathered in, the campo is left to itself, and nowhere will you see more plainly the fulfilment of the primæval curse than here in Spain. Field upon field is covered with a dense crop of thistles, looking quite spectral and skeleton-like. They are all withered, without one trace of green, and look almost like a crop of some sort, so thick do they stand, and so tall are they. Some are nine, ten, and even twelve feet high.

Other plants grace the Campo, but all of the same hard, prickly sort. Such are the small-leaved holly, which grows in the interstices of rock and stone, with its tiny, half-brown, half-green, prickly leaf, called by the peasantry of La Mancha "chaparra," a word answering to our "bramble-bush"; the "abrojo," or small, prickly thistle; and the cardo. The thistle, however, alluded to above as covering wide tracts of country, is called "pincho" in the desolate steppes of La Mancha. It is of two kinds—"blanco" and "lanudo" (woolly).

These hard leaves, apparently without juice or sap, cover the campo, and I never ride across it without

thinking of the truth of the words, "Thorns also and thistles shall the earth bring forth" (Gen. iii. 18).

A walk in the interior of Spain is one of the best commentaries conceivable in that marvellous chapter in the Bible, the eighth of Deuteronomy.

It would be, were there more of the "fountains and depths" therein spoken, a "good land," with its rich ferruginous red soil, and its heat that forces vegetation on with tropical power.

In the eighth verse it is said of the Promised Land that it is "a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil, olive, and honey"; or better, "a land of olive-tree of oil."

Early in January, every ruddy, dusty slope, that you have long trodden with weary feet, thinking it could never be productive, puts on its robe of rich, deep green—not the light, vernal green of English corn-fields, but a darker and richer green; and when you examine the crop, you will find that a part is wheat, but the greater part by far is barley and broad beans, the *sevada* and *habas* of the country, the two staple commodities for man and beast. Here, every poor man, every beggar, has his beast; if he can live, the beast can live, for both eat plenty of the barley and the beans. In every garden stand two or three old fig-trees, under whose leafy foliage is the old Moorish "noria," or well, being slowly turned by an aged mule to irrigate the garden; and in June every poor man will have his handful of *brevas*, large black figs, full of saccharine matter, and considered most nourishing. They are, in the interior of Spain, of very great size; but the finest are to be seen in the fruit market at Lisbon, one of the most picturesque and gaudy scenes in the world, and well worthy—I

know no sight more worthy—of the pencil of Frith or Phillip; the fruit in such profusion, and of such luscious hues, the costumes so varied, the races of those who come to sell, judging by their dress and features, so manifold.

Englishmen think oftentimes that there is no nourishment in fruit. If they could only come out here and see the thousands upon thousands who have nothing, day after day, but fruit and bread, they would say with the poor Spaniard, "Bread is good; but with fruit it is palatable and supporting."

When one wanders along the streets of the interior in October, one sees the criadas, or servants, of the great houses carrying, two and two, huge (to use an English phrase) clothes-baskets piled with enormous pomegranates. Over the walls, too, and in the gardens—aye, more, in groves exactly like our English orchards—the pomegranate-trees hang and flourish: their rich fruit, with its bright yellow rind, if not picked in time, bursts open, showing the rich deep crimson-lake colour of its flesh. Thousands of the poor live on pomegranates (we call them "granadas" here) and bread; and the juice, luscious, sweet, and yet leaving an appetizing bitter on the palate, is considered a valuable tonic by the Spanish "medicos;" and also ranks high among the uncultured and uneducated, yet clever, old women of the Campo.

And as to the "olive-tree of oil" and the "honey" in the interior, your every-day walk is through groves of olive-trees. You walk from one township to another, you pass old Moorish wells, and grey crumbling walls, and gardens of melons, and gourds, and aromatic herbs; but these you soon pass from, and you find yourself, to use a Spanish expression, "among the

olives." The olive, the grey-leaved, the nutritious olive, is a short, stunted, glaucous-leaved tree, about fifteen or twenty feet high, with many stems. For miles and miles in the interior every slope of rich, red soil, covered with a loose coarse grass, is simply crowned with these dusky, stunted little trees. Most unobtrusive, they yet give life, and employment, and sustenance to thousands.

I had to walk one Sunday a journey of three miles, and my path was "through the olives." It was a lovely evening in January, the bright spring sun—for January in Spain is spring quite as much as our English March or April—was flooding with yellow light every hill-top and olive-crested slope. The olive-groves are called sometimes in Scripture "olive-yards," and the plantations of vines "vineyards"; and people narrow their ideas, and think of an English yard, and the dimensions of an English garden. But the "yard" is this—one or two square miles of hill and dale, covered with olive-trees, each planted about fourteen yards from the other, and enclosed in a high and solid, but crumbling and broken stone wall, with a door here and there. In the midst of these olives—you can hardly call them olive-groves, for that implies shelter and a forest-glade, and the stunted olives give absolutely no shade at all, or very little, to the passing traveller—stands the lonely, forlorn stone house of the olive-dresser. It is a small square house, built of massive stones, with a flat roof; two stone pillars stand in the front of the one door, with a trellice-work of rotten wood over them; leaning against the wall of the house, over this trellice-work, creeps and hangs the vine, all dead and sapless now, but, seen in summer, simply one mass

of green leaves and clusters of veritable grapes of Eshcol! In these homes of the olive-dresser are only two windows, both barred with iron, and without glass, as is the case in all the poorer houses of the interior.

This is the olive-dresser's home; and constantly you will see the master of the estate riding round "his olives," on his mettled Andalucian steed, and then, after marking one or two worthless trees, he will ride up to the door, and say, "Such and such an olive has no berries, 'Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?'" These words, once in the mouth of our Divine Master, are common in the mouth of the Spaniard of the present day. He has no mercy. Looking down from his horse, at the end of his rare visit, he will say to the olive-dresser, "Cut it down"; and the poor dresser will say,—because, surely, he has watched and tended the tree, and feels an interest in it, and hopes for it, and believes in it,—“Master, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it, and if it bear fruit, well, and if not, after that”—but not till after that—“thou shalt cut it down.”

It takes twenty years to make an olive-tree fully fruitful; it takes more than twenty years, surely, to make a man fully fruitful!

Is not the parallel complete, beautiful, and striking?

In the ninth verse of the eighth chapter of Deuteronomy it is written: “A land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass” (*i. e.* copper).

Lift up your eyes, and look at the prospect before and behind you! In the background, looking like fleecy, but well-defined snowy clouds, are the mountains of the Sierra that overlooks Granada; their white, snow-covered sides and peaks absolutely run and melt

into the deep-blue evening sky! Beautiful they are!—no sight more beautiful than a range of distant snow-capped hills (a real Sierra Nevada) seen under the sun of a winter day in Spain. But we, you and I, are in a working world; and in front of us rise some fifteen or twenty high brick or stone chimneys: these are the chimneys of the mines, of the mineral mines, lying right under and along the Sierra Morena!

Lead and silver, in small quantities with the lead, are found in profuse abundance in the Sierra Morena and also copper and iron—not in the valleys, but in the hills; indeed, in some places, as at Belmès, a township of this Sierra, the copper and iron and coal mines, although little worked, are, perhaps, some of the richest in the world.

The quicksilver-mines of Almanden, a town on the boundary-line between Andalucía and Estremadura, giving employment throughout the winter to some three or four thousand men; the copper-mines* of

* The following graphic description of the copper-mines of Rio Tinto is from the pen of a modern writer:—"The village is about a mile from the mines; the immediate approach is like a minor infernal region, the road being made of burnt ashes and escoriæ, and the walls of the houses being composed of lava-like dross. The inhabitants, haggard miners, creep about, fit denizens of such a place. . . . The view is striking from the hill; below lies the village, with its tinged river (Rio Tinto), a green coppery stream, which winds under a bank of firs, *la mesa de los pinos*, and through a cistus-clad valley. To the left rises the ragged copper-hill, wrapt in sulphureous wreaths of smoke, from the bowels of which the river flows out. . . . The stout miners who drive the iron wedges into the rock before blasting, work almost naked in a temperature of 80° Fahrenheit, their few clothes drenched with perspiration. The scene is gloomy, the air close and poisonous. Here and there figures, with lamps on their breasts, flit about, and disappear. . . . The copper is found in an iron pyrite, and yields about 5 per cent."

Rio Tinto, in Andalusia; the coal-mines of Arnao, a village in Leon; the iron-mines of Abando, near Bilbao,—these, with their teeming, well-paid populations and wealthy owners, if once visited, will give some idea of the truth of the Scriptural expression, “A land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig copper,” as denoting a people wealthy, well employed, and powerful.

In the barren, brown, dreary steppes of the province of La Mancha (probably so called from the Arabic *Manxa*, dry land), may be seen the plague of locusts. “When it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt . . . very grievous were they. . . . For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field.” Exod. x. 13, 14, 15.

To this day that scene is acted out in La Mancha and Estremadura. The east wind (called “levante” in parts of Spain, and dreaded for its unhealthiness) brings the locusts; like a dark cloud they sweep over the land, sparing no herb save the tomato. The poor Manchegan peasant will feed his pigs with them, but I believe will not eat them himself. Sometimes the soldiers are called in to wage war against and burn the swept-up heaps of the locusts.

Sometimes one of these swarms of locusts will settle on the plains of Andalusia that border on La Mancha, and eat all the herbs of the field, leaving a desolate wilderness in their train, as another wind sweeps them away.

Sometimes, too, they will come after the hail, the fall of which is sometimes a really serious matter: it sounds like the pattering of a shower of bullets upon the earth.

If you should enter some lordly house and ask for food, the patriarchal scene of Genesis xviii. 7. will be acted over again. No beef is killed, and no mutton can be hung for a single night during the greater part of the year; kids and fowls, however, are at hand, and a Spanish servant will go to the little flock of goats browsing hard by on the prickly aromatic herbs, and bring two kids under his arms, or a live fowl. In your presence he will feel whether it be tender or no, and then slay and cook it without more ado. "Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hastened to dress it." Here, too, is the flock, not driven, as in England, before the herdsman, but led by him. The several sheep or goats (for sheep and goats are here) know their master, and are known of him. And see two flocks of goats meet, and, lo! each flock follows its own herdsman, and "a stranger will they not follow." Here, too, comes a string of mules and horses, and round the neck of each leader is hung a bell (Zech. xiv. 20), and often an inscription on the collar by which it hangs. Here, too, is the maiden, her pitcher poised upon her head, going to fetch water from the purest spring. See how gracefully she carries it, her silver earrings tinkling as she goes. The constant form of address heard among the middle and lower classes, again, is "hombre" (man), "muger" (woman), implying no disrespect, reminding one forcibly of our blessed Lord's words,—"Woman, what have I to do with thee?"

Or St. Peter's,—“Man, I know not what thou sayest.”

Riding across the Campo, you will come to many gulleys, some dry, some with a little water trickling from stone to stone; and wherever these gulleys are, their course is marked by a fringe of trees and a carpet of rich green, looking like a little Paradise amid the desert of sand and thistles. Looking on such a scene, I have often felt the full beauty and graphic truth of that simile in the Bible,—“He shall be like a tree planted by the water-side”; and one understands the full force of the imagery of the inspired but unhappy seer in the Book of Numbers,—“How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side . . . and as cedar-trees beside the waters!”

The eagles flocking to the carcase; the hunted stag panting for the water-brooks; the young child and his mother riding on the ass, and father, staff in hand, following hard behind, journeying by night for some distant town; the heavens at mid-day “as brass”; the long lines of oxen drawing the plough; the oft-heard request, “Give me, I pray thee, a drop of water to drink, for I am thirsty”; the rose-pink oleanders (those lilies of the field) sleeping along the marshy brink of every stream; the wine-carrier with his huge leathern pigskin of wine; the gitano with his small bottle of pigskin for his journey; the treasure hid in the garden; the kiss (St. Luke vii. 45) so constantly given to your hand by any poor man whom you have served or helped; the sea falling on the rock or among the thorns,—all these sights and sounds the wanderer in Spain will daily see and hear.

But we must hurry home, every single stranger, rich or poor, saluting us with "Vaya usted con Dios" as we pass along. The sun, like a golden ball, is just sinking beneath the horizon, and in one quarter of an hour the pall of the evening will have fallen upon us. Truly "the night cometh," cometh in a moment, making walking or working impossible; the night "when no man can work."



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CHAPTER XXIX.

A STRING OF SPANISH ANECDOTES.

My English friends have a somewhat exaggerated notion of the wit and the clever proverbs of Spain. They have often asked me to send them home a "string of anecdotes, and of proverbs common among us out here."

This is always a hard task, because "a string of anecdotes and proverbs" is a something that has no bottom to it unless the anecdotes partake of the marvellous and the proverbs be singularly clever.

However, I will brave criticism, and jot down a few particulars from my journal, which may, at least, serve to give English friends some idea of Spanish life and character. And I will do so the more readily, because more serious themes are so shortly to be entered upon in this work.

As to proverbs, I have not only heard but experienced some very [true and shrewd ones. A few days since I was supping in the house of a friend. My chair was against the wall, and our kind host, hostess, and party were sitting in front of me, round the table. Contrary to my wont, I had (unhappily) told to one of the party what was voted a clever story some days before. Asked to repeat it, I refused; pressed still more, I refused again. My host rose, with carving-knife brandished. Instantly his daughter understood him, and readily quoted a well-known

Spanish proverb, "Entre la espada y la pared" (*Anglicè*, "For a man between the sword and the wall there is no refusal"). Of course I had to repeat in bad Spanish my bad story.

In Spain, as Spain now is, the proverb is one of frequent application. It is also a very old and trite one, used specially among the lower classes in cases of pecuniary need. I am not aware of any proverb in England so refined. We say, "The man was hard-up," or "up a tree"; the lowest Spaniard, when his friend has to sell off, will say, "Pobre, entre la espada y la pared, qué?"

A short time since, at the call of duty, I had to journey six miles by night, revolver in breast, ready cocked, in one of the most unsafe and badly-made roads of the interior. The journey was made in a springless mule-cart, with a kicking and obstinate mule. Several times we were shaken out of our seats; but in the journeys of the interior that is nothing at all. At last, however, down we went, and up again, like a tiny boat crossing one of the long swells of a south coast bar. I was thrown from my seat so roughly, that the finger I had twined in one of the iron rings of the cart was badly sprained (to this day I cannot make much use of it), and I was on my back in the cart. I said to the driver, "Señor, how long is this surf to continue?"—"Muy bien," was his quiet answer, as he smoked his shattered cigarillo (for he too had suffered), "a mule-cart journey is like life, all ups and downs; and, like life, we must bear it, and laugh it out." The proverb "A mule-journey is like life," was, I found, one common among the muleteers of the interior. I give one more Spanish saying, for I cannot call it proverb. A friend