

twelve very young infants. The other dormitories were arranged on the same pattern, only, of course, the beds were on a different style, and suitable for the occupants they were intended to contain. In one of these sleeping-rooms there was a sick child; and I was very much pleased to see that one of the elder girls was sitting at the bed-side with her work, and helping the poor little thing pass away the weary hours in that great lonely room. So much was I pleased with this thoughtfulness, that I asked one of my guides whether the girl came to sit there of her own accord, or whether she was sent; and the Sister told me that when a child was ill, no matter how slightly, it was customary for some one to sit with her, but that there were always volunteers, and that it was scarcely ever necessary to mention anything about it.

Next we went to see the "turno," which, as I explained before, is the turning-box into which the foundlings are put from the street. This box occupies a niche in the wall of a most comfortable room, where one of the Sisters always sits during the day, and, in the night, a spring is attached to the "turno," which rings a bell in the next room, where one of the Sisters sleeps. Anybody wishing to leave a foundling has only to put it into the box, which is nicely padded, from the opening in the street, give it a push, which turns it round, the bell rings, and the child is taken out; and the parent or relation goes home with a light heart, knowing that the child will be cared for. The date and exact time of entrance is then taken down in writing by the sister in attendance, so that, should the parents or friends of the infant, at any future time, wish to take it away, the date and hour when it was deposited will serve to identify it.

It must not be supposed that these children are nearly all children of shame, for such is not the case, although, of course, they find a place and a refuge there amongst the rest. Very, very many of them are the children of very poor parents, who, not having sufficient to buy the many little things necessary for a baby, and most likely both father and mother being hard at work all day long, have not time to attend to it as it will be attended to here. Twice a week the relations are allowed to come and see the children, and they often bring with them little luxuries, such as they can afford.

Before we went away, we asked if we might send in some sweets for the children, and the Sisters said that they should be very glad. We came to the conclusion that an "arroba," 25 lb., would not be any too much; and on the following Sunday we had a large tray, filled up with a wonderful mixture of good things, carried into the casa before us. It was a pretty sight to see how the great and small seemed to enjoy their treat, and it was better still to see the genuine smile of pleasure on the calm faces of the Sisters of Charity—one of whom, by-the-bye, had a "sweet tooth" herself.

As I was leaving this very excellent institution, as is customary in Spain, I held out my hand to the Sisters, and said, "Estry á las pies de usted" (I am at your feet); and I was not a little surprised to see that they appeared to ignore my proffered hand altogether, until at last the eldest of them said, with a kind smile, "You know, señor, we have a custom not to shake hands with gentlemen, so you must not be offended at our not shaking hands with you. May God take care of you!" This "Dios guarda á usted" is a very common form of adieu.

On the following day, through the kindness of my friend and one of the *alcaldes*, an American gentleman and myself obtained permission to visit the prison,—the prison of the Inquisition,—and the principal charities of the city. This *alcalde*, who spoke very good English, with true Spanish politeness, not only placed his carriage at our disposal, but accompanied us himself. At the prison-door we were met by the governor and the jailor, with a strap holding some hundred or so of huge keys slung across his shoulder. I was told, on entering, that it would be advisable to smoke; and I soon found that this was too true, for, on getting well inside the building, we became conscious of a stench, only partly corrected by the smoke of our *cigarillos*. The building seemed to be a square, enclosing the exercise-ground, as well as I could make out; but, unlike an English or American prison, there seemed to be a lack of arrangement in the plan of the place. One by one the doors of the cells were opened for us all along these corridors, and what we saw in one we saw in all. A small cell, about 15 feet by 10, with an arched ceiling, although some of them were just double this size. Each cell had a window looking out into the square which the building surrounds, and contained, that is, the smaller ones, generally three prisoners and their beds, which are almost always provided by themselves. These men were nearly all engaged in knitting stockings, making sandals of *esparto-grass*, or some other feminine occupation. It seems a pity that they are not obliged to work at something more likely to keep themselves in health, and take some of the expense of maintaining them off the hands of the Government. The friends of prisoners are allowed to come and see them through a grating,

which opens to the street ; and one often sees in Spain a reproduction of that splendid picture of Phillip's, where the Spanish girl holds up her baby to the prison-bars to be kissed by its father, and the great basket of bread, and fruit, and wine lying on the pavement. The money for the stockings and sandals goes towards providing this basket of good things.

I must not forget to mention that the American gentleman who was with us had been several years in China, and spoke Chinese, and we were therefore not a little surprised to hear that amongst the prisoners was a Chinaman. He was dressed in ordinary European clothes; but as we entered his cell, occupied by six or seven prisoners besides himself, the difference in the cast of his features soon betrayed him. The poor fellow seemed to be surprised and delighted at hearing his own language spoken, although my American acquaintance did not get along very fast, as one was speaking in the northern dialect and the other in the southern. The Chinaman seemed to have forgotten a good deal of his own language, for very frequently he would answer some question in broken Spanish. However, after a little while, which was taken up by the two in making strange sounds and still stranger gestures, we learnt from our interpreter that John Chinaman had emigrated from his home in the north of China to California; that in San Francisco he had become the servant of a Spanish gentleman, with whom he went to Peru, where he lived several years, and at last came with him to Spain, where he had robbed his master, and so got shut up in the prison at Cordoba. Upstairs was in no striking respect different from downstairs, and needs no special detail. We walked along the old battle-

ments to a high tower, in which were some old and unused dungeons, circular, with a small hole at the side sloping upwards, so that about a foot of sky was all that an unfortunate prisoner could see.

In one of these dungeons a prisoner, some few years ago, made a resistance with stones from the wall of his prison against the door for two days, in which time he killed two jailors, but was at last shot himself. From the top of this tower, where a Civil Guard is always posted, overlooking the exercise-ground, and from which any prisoner attempting to escape could easily be shot, a splendid view of Cordoba, and its convent-crowned mountain, to the westward, is obtained. The river, the alcazar, the bishop's garden, the cathedral, the several other churches, and the cemetery, all lay at one's feet; and further away to the southward, on the highest hill-tops, were the old signal-towers which stretch from Cadiz to Madrid, and which served as a telegraph in the olden time. When we descended from this tower, we were shown into a room literally piled with old books, in manuscript, and with parchment covers. These contained the various indictments of the prisoners. Every one of them had its date written on the back, and we found on the shelves one with the date A.D. 1325. I have no doubt, had we examined carefully, we might have found much more ancient records. I was rather disappointed that the entrance to the torture-chamber of the Inquisition has been filled up, so that we could only see where the entrance was. It is supposed that all the instruments of torture, &c., are still there, and, in fact, that the place is just as it was left. One of the jailors said that he supposed if Don Carlos came to the throne they would have to open it again. I

should add, as showing the shocking state of Spanish law, that in one of the cells a very decent looking fellow came up to the alcalde, his hat in his hand, and said that he had been there for three weeks without being heard. The poor fellow's only offence was, that he had lost the paper which all Spaniards are obliged to have when they travel from their native town to another. This paper is signed by the authorities of the town from which the traveller comes, and sets forth his name, address, respectability, and so forth. My impression of the prison, as a whole, was, that it was horribly dirty, badly ventilated, and unwholesome; and that the system of herding several criminals together in a den like wild beasts, with nothing to do, and often without a hearing, must be very demoralizing, and more likely to encourage criminality than correct it.

We were very glad to get out into the fresh air again, and next drove to the "Casa de Locos," madhouse. Here we were met by a Sister of Charity, who very politely put the house at our disposition, and accompanied us over it—at least, that part of it devoted to mad women. These poor creatures were all locked in their little rooms, which had a barred window looking on the passage. At most of these windows the occupants of these little rooms sat blankly looking out into the garden, which they could see through the French windows at the other side of the passage. Some of them seemed glad to see strangers, and wished to talk, whilst others retreated into the darkest corners of their rooms, and sat there muttering to themselves. One woman in particular, whose mania seemed to be dress, put her hand through the bars, and caught hold of the Sister, and begged her

to buy a new shawl, exactly like the one she had on, only new. "Now, how much do you think it would cost?" she asked. And the Sister said, "About two dollars, I should think." The poor thing thought for a minute, and then said she did not think it would be so much, but, at any rate, she must have it to-morrow morning, and that she would pay for it. The Sister quieted her by saying she would think about it, and we passed on. I was behind, and as I passed, her thin bony hand caught hold of me, and, pulling me to the bars, she asked, in a mysterious whisper, if I thought she would really get the shawl; and when I told her that I supposed so, she seemed satisfied, and smiled and winked in a very knowing sort of way. I afterwards learned that this poor wretch had asked the same thing for several years. At the door of one of the dormitories, where the less violent sleep, which were all very clean and nice, we were asked to wait, as there was a "furiosa" inside, who it would be best to remove or quiet. When we entered, we saw no signs whatever of any violent maniac, and I don't know whether she was still there, or had been removed. On reaching the foot of a broad and handsome staircase, we were given in charge of a man-keeper, who took us over that part of the establishment devoted to men.

Here, as downstairs, each madman was sitting looking out of his window, and, on seeing us, a great cry was raised for tobacco—"Un cigarillo, por Dios." I gave one of them a cigarette, and was about to supply him with a match to light it by, when the keeper politely interfered. He said we should presently see how very nearly one of these madmen had burnt the place down a few weeks ago with a match supplied

by a stranger. However, he lit the poor fellow's cigarillo for him at his own, and gave it to him, but said we had better not take any notice of them, as even lighted cigarettes were dangerous in the hands of madmen.

Some of the poor fellows were singing, some of them were surly, and others one could see rolled up in the darkest corners of their dens, who never spoke, so the keeper said, and never moved, unless it was for food. At last we came to the cell formerly occupied by the wretched man who had tried to burn down his door. All the woodwork was charred and scorched, and the walls were quite black. He had taken his straw bed and put it against the door, and then set fire to it with a match which he had concealed somewhere about him. We went to see him afterwards, and found him sitting at the window of his dark room. He immediately asked for something to smoke; and when the keeper told him no, and reminded him of what he had done, he did not seem to recollect anything about it. It seems a pity to box these poor unreasoning creatures up like wild beasts, and I cannot think that in such a condition there is any chance of reason returning.

From here we crossed over the way to the Hospital, exactly opposite, where we met with nothing but kindness from the Sisters of Charity in charge. In each ward were some ten or twelve beds, very clean and comfortable-looking. These wards are high and airy, and light streams in through the long windows, making them look very cheerful. Each patient has his ticket placed over his bed, with his illness described thereon, and the amount and class of his rations, &c.

In the kitchen three Sisters were preparing a great variety of dishes for the invalids, and the smell was a sufficient guarantee of the quality. The larder was very much the same as those in the Casa de Expositos and the madhouse, and require no comment. In the kitchen we noticed a magnificent marble table, and also a large marble bath, now used for washing plates, &c. Another marble table, of the same dimensions, viz., about seven feet by four, we found in the surgery. These tables and the bath were hewn out of one piece of marble, and are supposed to be very ancient. Everything here was orderly, clean, and comfortable; and I thought that I should not mind falling ill without friends so much, if I could come here, and be nursed and attended by those good and kind Sisters, who seemed ever willing and pleased to make the sufferer's lot more bearable. It is impossible to give too much praise to these good women; who frequently come from the best families of Spain, and devote their lives to the relief of sickness, to the education of poor children, and "to visit the widows and fatherless in their affliction, and to keep themselves unspotted from the world."

We next visited the Casa de Hospicio, or Refuge for old poor people. On passing through the outside door, we found ourselves in an open "patio," or quadrangle, in the centre of which grew orange and lemon trees surrounding a fountain; and round the outside wall of which ran a covered walk, floored with red brick. On the opposite side to the street-door, a flight of broad steps of soap-stone lead into the interior of the building. On reaching the top of these steps, we were shown some very cheerful-looking dormitories, with numbered beds, each inmate of the charity having

his number. The kitchen was, like the others, remarkable for its cleanness. Here were two very pretty Sisters cooking, and a boy cutting up mountains of bread. As basket after basket was carried out, I asked whether there were enough inmates to eat it all, and was told that there were about three hundred. (?) On one side of the patio was a room fitted up with towels, and some hundred or so of washing-basins, fitted in a double row, in a solid brick framework, covered with white china tiles. Each basin was full of water, and one of our party remarked that they did not appear to be much used, as there was no dirty water, and all the towels were clean; but, be that as it may, the fact that the poor old people could wash if they liked, showed the thoughtfulness of the founders of the charity.

As we left this capital institution, where the aged poor can, without shame, find an asylum during their old age, in thinking over all I had seen, I could not help feeling surprised that here, in Spain, where everything is supposed to be behind the times, the charitable institutions should be so thoroughly good, and should answer so perfectly the purposes for which they were intended. We afterwards visited the Ayuntamiento, or Council Chamber, of the city; but, apart from a very ancient portrait of the elder Seneca, who was a native of Cordoba, there was nothing worth seeing here.

What struck me most in the whole of our excursion, was the uniform gentleness of the different Sisters of Mercy we met in the course of our visit. Without exception, one and all brought a smile with them into the wards of the Hospital where sickness and death were struggling for the mastery—all had kind words

for their self-imposed charges; and every little child in the Foundling, every poor creature in the Mad-house, and every suffering patient in the Hospital, wore a smile on their faces when one of the Sisters approached. Thank God that there are such women, who, to help their suffering brethren, will leave all behind, and suffer themselves, as we know they must suffer! May God reward them, and bless their work!



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

CHAPTER V.

"EL PAJARO," THE DECOY-BIRD.

FROM the heather-clad sierras of Galicia, from wandering, gun in hand, by its tumbling trout-streams, and among its sombre pine-forests, the haunt of the red-deer, the wolf, the boar, and the bear, to descend to the homely and unsportsman-like chase of the red-legged partridge with a decoy, or call-bird (*el pajaró*), seems a drop indeed. But when one has spoken of the "*caza mayor*," or chase of the larger animals, one must speak also of the tamer ways of hunting, the "*caza menor*," which includes the chase of the hare, rabbit, and partridge, and such small fry.

My object here is to present a faithful picture of Spanish life and character, especially in the interior, and no sketches of sport would be complete in which one short chapter was not devoted to the partridge-shooting in the Campo with a decoy. Every morning, in these towns, the spectacle is seen of the gentlemen of the town starting out on horseback, each one closely followed (as is the universal custom on a ride) by his servant on a donkey, carrying the gun of his master, and the small wire cage of *el pajaró*, or the decoy partridge.

Utterly distasteful as was the thought of this kind of sport to one who loves wandering with his gun and fishing-rod as much for the sake of the exercise and the scenery as for that of the slaughter, I yet deter-

mined to put my pride in my pocket, and go out for a day's shooting among the red-legs with the decoy.

The most successful at this sort of sport—if it be worthy of that name—was my own barber, who, although a keen sportsman in other branches of the *caza menor*, had made decoy shooting his *spécialité*. No one could enter the shop of Pedro de Dios without feeling that its owner was of a sporting turn. The walls of the long, dark, hair-besprinkled sala—where his four lads shaved and cut hair for all ranks of the town, from the herdsman in his sheep-skin to the señor in his capa—were painted with various sketches of the *caza*, both mayor and menor, in the most glowing colours imaginable. On the side of a sierra, of most unpoetic purple hue, a huntsman was potting at an impossible stag; on the opposite wall two hounds, of tawny red, were just making the final clutch at the tail of a poor frightened puss, while in puss's very path, as though to scare her from front and rear also, two men were giving the *coup de grâce* to a dying roebuck. At the two ends of the sala hung, in wild profusion, gaudy-coloured ducks, wild cats, foxes, and wolves, with a whole bunch of the "perdices" (red-legged partridges), forming the crowning feature of this gorgeous panorama, the "act the last, scene the last." In a dark corner of the room stood, in a small, conical-shaped wire cage, only just large enough for the poor creature to turn itself round in, the poor pajaro, or decoy-bird, a fine specimen of the male red-legged partridge. He stood upon a little carpet of dirty wool, which formed the lining of his cage; but his legs and feet showed signs of humour breaking out, his eye was dull, and his tail feathers nowhere. Close by his side stood the *escopeta*, or gun of Pedro.

Pedro, in common with all others of his special trade in the interior of Spain, added to his trade of barber those of "Dentista y Sangrador," *i. e.*, dentist and bleeder, which last appellations he deserved equally well with that of barber. He drew teeth and blood from all and any, and even went so far, in times of small-pox, as to add vaccination to his other surgical operations.

If you sat down in Pedro's shop to have your hair cut, just as he commenced, some poor, care-worn looking Spanish mother would appear at the door, and say, "Pray come at once, and bleed my child"; in which case he would smile blandly, and say, "Dentro media hora" (within half-an-hour), finish his task, and hurry off. For bleeding, which is the constant remedy in spring-time for the feverish diseases of men, women, and children, Pedro received only one peseta, a coin equal to tenpence of English money, and for tooth-drawing only fivepence! Constantly have I been sitting in Pedro's shop, and some unhappy creature has come in, seated himself beside me, and then and there been operated upon, the tooth extracted being handed round to be commented upon, and the instrument to be admired!

I fixed a day for shooting, or trying to shoot, the red-legs with the decoy; and on a bright, sunny morning in early March presented myself at the barberia of Pedro de Dios, ready accoutred for the rough walking of the Campo. An English sporting get-up is, perhaps, the best for an Englishman; but the Spaniard often wears a pair of canvas or flexible leather shoes or boots, or wraps several rolls of stout canvas round his feet and the lower part of the leg, binding it with thongs, and is thus enabled

to keep his footing where there is much rocky walking.

The rocky, or rather stony, sides of some parts of the Sierra are terribly trying walking, especially when one has a gun and other traps to carry; and in dry weather even the sides of the hills, as you descend, from the dry, hard nature of the baked earth, are almost as slippery as the rocks themselves. In such places, the man who is flexibly shod has a tremendous advantage over his companion of the iron English boot, and will outstrip him both in ascending and descending the sides of a hill, or Sierra.

The goatherds, and ruder sort of cazadores (sportsmen), invariably, when engaged in their respective avocations in a rocky district, are shod with sackcloth or canvas, as above described, it being rolled so thickly as to preserve the foot from injury from glass or rock, and the leg from the prickly brushwood.

Pedro wore the soft, I the hard, foot-gear. He had just finished bleeding a neighbour's child, and was free for the day. He first took down his pajaro in its cage, drew a nightcap over the latter, and slung it over his back. Then he took his becerra, or gun-rest, and strapped it across his back, throwing a thick rug over the two. He shouldered his gun, and off we tramped for the puestos, or shooting-posts, which lay some five miles out in the Campo, or wild country.

Let me offer a short explanation of the three Spanish words here used. The word "pajaro" simply is an equivalent of the English generic word "bird," but with the prefix "el" (English "the") before it, it always means, in the rude phraseology of the Spanish interior, "the decoy-bird." The word "becerra" means literally, I believe, "snap-dragon," but it

is used here to denote a gun-rest. This gun-rest is much like an English spade-handle, shod with an iron spike, but, of course, much shorter; so that when it is driven into the earth, the loop is just of the height of a man's head when he is sitting on the ground. In the loop of the handle, if I may so call it, is a small steel trough, just fitted to hold the gun-barrel, and moving noiselessly on a pivot, so that the gun-barrel can be turned to, and pointed at, any angle, high or low, to right or left. The "puesto," or post, is the ambush of the cazador, and will be presently fully described.

I have omitted mention of one very needful weapon which we carried with us, namely, a good stout bill-hook, for cutting off boughs of trees.

The walk, although the levante (east wind) blew keenly, and the March sun blazed down quite fiercely enough, was a very interesting one, so far as scenery was concerned. My companion was pleasant, but, like many fine sportsmen, very silent withal.

The country through which our road lay was of the wildest, only showing signs of cultivation at rare intervals, in the shape of an olive-grove crowning the slope of some hill less rocky than its fellows; or a field of sevada (barley), so dry and baked that the clods, like triangular bits of rock sticking up, absolutely bruised one's feet.

First, we passed through a wide plain of tawny red sand, and granite boulders here and there peeping out. It was completely dotted over with clumps of "gamon," or wild asphodel. (I am no botanist, but I give the names by which the several plants I speak of are here known; the botanical vocabulary of the interior is, however, very slender.) These clumps of

asphodel are, as far as the leaves are concerned, exactly similar to so many clumps of garden daffodil; but, unlike them, each clump shoots up from two to eight or nine succulent stems, each clothed towards the top with graceful bell-shaped flowers, in size and shape like those of the English blue-bell—but pure white, with tiny pink or purple stripes, and pink stamens. The effect of these flowers spangling the arid plain for half a mile is very beautiful. In these plains there are no large trees. In the arid plains whence I write, a wood is unknown; the trees do not average more than twenty feet in height, and are stunted, dwarfed, and dry-leaved.

Here and there, from among the asphodels, stood up little stunted trees of the encina, or evergreen oak (*Quercus ilex*), one of the commonest trees in the Spanish interior.

Waste after waste we tramped across covered with wild thyme (tomillo), looking brown and withered, but sweet enough in a pressed handful, and also with every sort of prickly, dry, aromatic underwood, the small, stunted holly growing about two feet high, and interlaced with dry bents (this holly is called "cojoco" by the peasantry); the "dractarma," or mare's tail; the "lentisco," or Spanish mastich shrub (*Pistachia lentiscus*), supposed by the peasantry to be very poisonous; these, with the clumps of asphodel, the dry, interlacing bents, and the clumps of green "juagarzo," formed a splendid cover for hares, rabbits, or foxes.

So I remarked to Pedro. "Si, señor" (Yes, sir), said he; "but since the Republic, every one in Spain is a sportsman, and every one carries an escopeta, and so we find now neither hare, rabbit, nor partridge

in the Campo,—no! hardly so much as a fox, or a wild cat!" It was true. Until Serrano's Government came in, the name of the cazadores was Legion: every one carried a gun, and betook himself to the Campo.

The most picturesque scene upon the road, or rather no-road, which we pursued, was at a turn where we followed a winding path, known only to sportsman or goatherd, round the bend of some hills. Under a stunted encina, two goatherds were sitting down, in their sheepskin jackets, huge mantas, and with a gun and a dog beside them, their flock of brown, black, white, and sandy goats browsing all around on the crisp, aromatic herbage; above their heads rose a huge hill, with square blocks of grey stone or rock (granite) piled in wild confusion one above the other—so grey, so serrated, that one almost seemed to be looking upon—

"The rough rude ocean frozen into stone,"

and down these crags or boulders, or rather square blocks of grey granite, came part of the flock of goats, gambolling and skipping down from one slat to another, as though enjoying the feat. Growing out from every crevice and hole in these stones were stunted encinas and chaparros, their dark green or glaucous foliage contrasting beautifully with the quiet, grey colour of the slats of stone. Far beyond us, and all around, lay the blue serrated peaks of the Sierra Morena; and, at our feet, a tiny stone well, of the purest water, gushing from the rocks, with a well-worn hole for a man to stoop down and drink of the crystal stream. I was just kneeling down to slake my thirst, when my companion sprang forward with a stick

which he carried. "Culebra," he cried ("adder"), as he aimed a tremendous blow at a spotted adder, that wriggled untouched into its hole just above the little well.

It was of a dark-brown colour, with bright yellow spots, and would have been in measurement about a foot-and-a-half long.

Spain abounds with reptiles, and at every footfall we scared a lizard, a scorpion, or an adder. The lizards (lagartos) shot away instantaneously into the nearest shrub; the adders moved more slowly, and we managed to despatch one on our return journey.

Along a ledge of rock, on one side of which was an olive-grove protected by a hedge of "pita" (aloe), the sword-like, spike-like leaves of which thrust their sharp points almost into our path—a path so narrow, so slippery, that, with my thick, English shooting-boots, and heavy load, and gun, I reeled over, and nearly fell three or four times; then up a steep mountain side, knee-deep in ground-holly, lentisco, bents, wild thyme, and the like—so we tramped along. At last we reached the top of the hill; and a more beautiful hill-top I never desire to behold. Splendid as cover for wild animals, bird, or beast, it was also equally splendid from its surroundings. Far away, in a belt, stretched the blue mountains of the Morena; at our feet lay the wildest of wild countries, covered with brushwood, from which rose up, here and there, slope afterslope, bristling with grey slabs of rock. A few tilled fields, and dusky olive-groves, and goatherds, just reminded us that man was near; but all the rest simply spoke of desolation, wildness, and the chace!

We were on a table-land of short, thymy turf, dry as stubble from the long droughts, and dotted all over with thickets of evergreens and clumps of aromatic brushwood. The breeze, though cold, was delightfully refreshing after such a clamber; but, alas! that need, that *one* need, of suffering humanity in Spain, namely, water, was not to be had. We had both forgotten our water-bottle, and had not brought so much as an orange. So we knew our fate: we must wait till set of sun, with parched lips and thirsty.

But, fortunately, I had brought up a tiny flask of Catalan wine! The turf of this table-land was so short, the surface of the ground so level, that it would have made a first rate bowling-green; and then, the prospect—it was simply magnificent!

With a glass, we could see the shelving stones, the grey-granite slabs bristling up one of the hill-sides; and these, my companion said, were the haunt of numberless foxes. These foxes live and bring up their young in the crevices of these huge stones, and there is no "stopping *their* earths"; once run to ground, they are safe. But not only foxes, but wolves—a stray wolf or two from the Sierra Morena—often bear their young there; and, last summer, a friend of mine took, with great difficulty, a nest of three or four young wolves from their hiding-place amid the crevices of these grey rocks, and tried to bring them up by hand—by the bottle, as it were! He failed, however, for one and all of the young ones died within three months of their capture.

I thought of the litter of wolves—I scanned the grey rocks for the foxes. I gazed in admiration on the wild, barren scene around and below me; but my dreams and thoughts were soon dissipated when

Pedro handed to me the bill-hook, and bade me cut boughs!

We had come to one of the best of the puestos. The puesto, or post, is of two kinds; sometimes, in stony pieces of ground, it is a small circular enclosure of stones, loosely piled on one another, in which case a small crevice is left for the gun. Here, however, the puesto was of the ordinary kind—namely, of brush-wood. The way it is made is this. A spot is selected where there are one or two clumps of evergreen brush-wood, about eight feet in diameter, the brush being about two to three feet high. The sportsman clears a circular space inside, large enough for him to lie down in, and cuts a small opening in front for the rest. We chose a good puesto, cleared off the loose brush-wood placed by the last occupant to thicken the walls of the puesto, and then cut plenty of fresh boughs, and cleared a larger space within; then we wove green boughs around the rest, and stuck it firmly in the ground in the hedge of the puesto. Round the old stump of a tree, called "the decoy-rest," we twined evergreen, to make it look "natural," as my companion called it, and put a screen of the same round the cage, so that, when placed upon the rest, the sides were hidden by the green fringe of lentisco, and the top of the cage was open to the blue sunny sky. We drew the nightcap off the cage, and put it on the top of the stump. In a moment, ere we could jump over the sides of the puesto, and ensconce ourselves within it, the decoy-bird (a male red-leg) began his peculiar call—calling, chucking, whistling, and crowing in turns. "Do-it-quick, do-it-quick, do-it-quick, chuck, chuck, chuck, crr-r-r-ow—chuc-chic, chuc-chic, chuc-chic—wh-h-h-h-ew!"

Just as we had fairly settled ourselves in the small circle of evergreen, up rode a Spanish caballero of the town, a famous cazador, his servant on a donkey close behind him, carrying his master's gun.

"What, you've taken the best puesto, you thieves!" He, too, had come out for his day's decoy-shooting, and was evidently chagrined, though he laughed good-humouredly enough as he trotted across the short turf and sand of the plateau to the next puesto, at finding his favourite lair pre-occupied.

I pulled out a few sandwiches, and offered part to my companion. "No," said he, "it is Friday, and we eat no flesh on that day in Spain; although, for my part, I do not see why flesh is worse for the stomach on Friday than on any other day. But, there, I don't know."

We watched and waited hour after hour. At last we heard the answering call of another partridge, and heard the whir of its wings as it flew a short distance towards us—the red-legs are not flyers, but run like greyhounds—and rustled about in the brushwood. However, it never came within sight or gun-shot, and not another bird was heard. A "slower" day's sport—if sport it can be called—it has never been my lot to have; and, lying cramped up in the tiny space, with a burning March sun overhead, and the chill east wind driving through the green walls of our little circle, I felt simply uncomfortable and dispirited; and talking and smoking are, of course, unallowable. It may suit the Spaniards, who are somewhat indolent, to lie ensconced in these tiny puestos and breathe the sweet hill air, and turn over lazily for a shot at fifteen yards, but commend me rather to a ramble over moorland or stubbles, or wanderings along many miles

of quiet river, fishing-rod in hand, or a frosty night upon the edge of the mere, when wings come flapping heavily landwards from the stormy sea.

Homeward we tramped, for the pajaro had become sulky and would not call; and as we tramped across a bit of broken ground, Pedro consoled himself for his disappointment by bringing down a partridge. Then we beat some heathery ground for hare or rabbit, but without success; saw a stray fox or two sneaking home to his "earth," or rather, to his "rock," in the grey pile of stones and rocks; flushed a small flock of avefrios, a sort of plover, and saw a green lizard of large size—nearly a foot long.

My musings, as we tramped home as quickly as we could—for, although armed, it is by no means safe to be out on foot in the Campo after dusk—were all upon the poor pajaro, and the treacherous trade to which he is apprenticed.

I remember an old man, a gardener, in England, telling me, almost with the tears in his eyes, that his neighbour had succeeded at last in teaching his parrot to swear; "and," he added, to my infinite amusement, "it do seem such a shame, sir, to make the poor bird commit such a sin!"

If the pajaro be a moral agent, as was the parrot in my poor gardener's philosophy, it certainly is a shame to let him allure his fellows into danger or death, especially if, as is often the case, his victim be a widow, or a young maiden lady seeking for a husband!

CHAPTER VI.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS IN SPANISH WILDS.

PERHAPS one of the most striking features in the character of the Spaniard is his exceeding cheerfulness—a cheerfulness that no adverse circumstances (save illness) seems to be able to daunt. And he is a man very easily contented. The rudest joke affords him a laugh, the simplest, roughest festivity can cheer and delight him.

Among Spanish amusements, the annual fairs and the festivals of Mother Church stand in the foremost places. Christmas, with its cold east wind, tempered by the ever-glowing sky; Holy Week, with its winding processions, ushering in the glorious Resurrection morn, succeeded by other spring and summer festivals,—add each their quota to the poor Spaniard's modest "roll of delights," until the harvest is reaped, the sacks safely stored in the cameras of the owners, the paja laid up for the horses' winter supply, when, suddenly, harvest and granary are forgotten, and one fair in swift succession succeeds to another. It may here be noted that, as it appears to me, the Spanish working-man's and tradesman's character contrasts most favourably with that of his compeer in England. In the latter country, both the "time to work and the time to play" (the latter, probably, because it comes so rarely) are not used, but abused; or, in other words, an Englishman makes it his business to gain

money, nay, even to grub for money, and he begrudges every holiday or half-holiday, which loses him, as he thinks, a certain portion of his labour and his capital.

“Carramba,” said a poor Spanish agricultural labourer to me, when I told him that his grey-smocked brothers over the water had only two holidays in the year, except the sober Sunday; “Carramba, what is the good of life at all, at that price?”

The remark struck me as forcible and true. The Spaniard, as regards play and work, keeps to the golden mean. He is never so absorbed in business as to be unwilling to shut his shop and take a holiday with his dependents; and, when taking his holiday, he rarely exceeds the bounds of temperance and moderation, and is ready to return to work as lightly as he went to play. If to “use this world without abusing it” be the right rule of life, in this respect the joyous Spaniard has the best of it.

Some description shall now be given of a few of the Spanish holidays.

In one town where I was in the spring of last year, I was surprised by a little crowd gathering round my door, and by a sharp double knock. On opening the door, the gaily-caparisoned head of a magnificent snow-white sheep was thrust in. Gay ribbons and gold streamers covered her body, and almost hid her well-combed hair. On her forehead, in the shape of a cross, were bound, with gold ribbon, three shining ounce-pieces of gold. A sweet-looking young priest stood on one side of the pretty creature, which tossed its meek head ever and anon, as though proud of its trappings, and on the other the master of the ceremonies, who requested me, in honour of the

Virgin of —, patroness of the town, to buy half-a-dozen tickets, entitling me to join in the raffle shortly to be held for the sheep and her three gold pieces.

Each ticket cost two reals (fivepence), and some thousands were sold, the whole sum realized being spent in decorating the churches of the town, and giving a magnificent display of fireworks on the night of the festival of Nuestra Señora de —."

There is another custom in Untrodden Spain chiefly to be found in the least-known towns of Andalusia. It is exactly similar to an Irish wake.

A little child has died, and is to be buried. The friends, fellow-workmen, neighbours, all come to the house where the little one lies, gaily decked out with flowers and tinsel, in its white flimsy coffin. There is music and dancing, there is eating and drinking. The mother is in the room, and receives, not sympathy, but congratulations, and at last, with joy, the little one, thus early delivered from the "waves of this troublesome world," is followed to its grave by the long and lively train of friends and followers.

It should here be added, that there is a peculiar sweet cake made specially for these funeral feasts.

However much the idea of festivity at such a season may grate upon some deeply sensitive minds, it must be acknowledged that this modest expression of joy is more in accordance with the sentiments of the English Church, expressed in her magnificent funeral service, than are the hushed voices, and darkened room, and mock tears, so familiar to us at the funeral of an English innocent.

The Spanish mother, tender-hearted and loving as she is, oftentimes, when spoken to sympathetically about the loss of her darling, will say that "It is

better for the little one, and that, therefore, it behoves her not to repine;" or she will say, "It may be it is taken away from the evil to come." And by such speeches the exquisite German poem (Andersen's) has often been vividly brought before my mind, where a German mother, overcome with grief at the loss of her darling, is brought to resignation and calmness by the guardian angel of the little child placing before her tearful and bewildered gaze the book of what that child's life would have been had it been spared.

"Then she saw her child, her heart's dear treasure,
 Fated not to joy and peace, alas!
 Fated, not to know a pure life's pleasure,
 But through want, and sin, and shame to pass!

Then the mother knew her human blindness,
 And, even through her tears, she brightly smiled:
 'Blest,' she said, 'be God, who in His kindness,
 Bore from earth, and sin, and woe, my child!'"

I quote from the beautiful rendering of Mr. W. C. Bennett.

Speaking of Spanish mothers' feeling, it may not be out of place here to mention a most touching and pathetic epithet applied by some of them (of the lowest rank) to the life of one who has missed his mark in the world, and lain down in sorrow. Of such a one they say, "It was a broken life."

A beautiful sight, connected with the feasts of the Church, may often be witnessed on the eve of the feast in some of the least-known towns. You will be stumbling along the dark, unpaved streets in some dim-lit town, and suddenly you will see a little knot of men and women, of the poorest class, gathered under the oil-lamp that hangs over the crumbling

door of some tiny chapel. You will hear, ever and anon, a little whirl of murmuring voices, uttering in unison the same response. Look in, and on the right side of the small, old-fashioned altar, beautifully lit with wax candles, will be seen five or six young women kneeling two and two. Their heads are lowly bowed, their hands are clasped in prayer. In front of the altar three priests are praying, in Latin, that the sins of these five penitents, for such they are, may be pardoned and forgotten.

Standing out in marked contrast with the darkness, profanity, and bustle of the streets without, this little scene has much the same effect on one as the coming upon some moss-grown, crumbling cross, or the ruins of some ancient chapel, in the wilds of the Devonshire or Cornwall seaboard. It calms the spirit, it gives the too-weary mind a moment's repose, it lifts the heart awhile to heaven, and thought of better things.

In the town from which I write, a long succession of fairs commences in August, and hardly dies out until September has made its acquaintance. The town is roughness itself. The thermometer in the shade stands at 102° at mid-day! All the "seeing the fair," then, must be done either before 8 A.M. or after 5 P.M., and, indeed, both in fair times and in ordinary times, those are the hours when most of the business is done. From 5 A.M. to 7 A.M. more money probably changes hands than during the whole after-part of the day.

The first fair, lasting one week, and held annually, is the Jarra Fair, or, as it is more commonly, but less correctly styled, the Jarro Fair. Be it remembered that, in Andalucia, the one great need of rich and poor—the one luxury which all can and will have—is

pure, cold spring water. Now, owing to the intense heat, water kept in any glass or common crockery vessel grows tepid and unpalatable; and, therefore, the whole of the water for drinking purposes is kept in the light-coloured, porous Andujar jarras, or small pitchers. These being porous, a free evaporation is continually going on, and the dish in which they stand is filled with the water that filters through their porous sides. Just on the same principle, I suppose, that to perspire freely cools the blood, so the constant filtration through the sides of these vessels keeps the water within as cold as snow on the hottest day. The blessing of these jarras can only be known by experience, and I can only wonder that some enterprising spirit has not long since taken a cargo to England for use during the summer months.

These jarras are brought in huge cases, filled with straw, on the back of mule or donkey, some millions being annually sold at the fair. In shape, they are not only useful, but frequently most graceful, being made after the style of the old Roman and Etruscan pottery-ware. They vary in price, according to size, style, and workmanship, from one penny up to four or five shillings. Some are made to stand as ornaments upon the table of Dives; some can be slung behind the cart of the farmer; some can be carried, by a tiny handle, by the miner on his way to work. The sight, when all adown one whole long street the ground is covered with these jarras, in piles five feet high, of every size and shape, is a most striking one. All the housewives of the pueblo are here, wrangling about prices, and laying in their store of jarras for twelvemonths (for, remember, no jarras, no jewellery, no books, can be bought in this town until

the fairs come again). We will say it is night; tiny oil-lamps, stuck here and there among the jarras, yield their dim light. There is no footfall heard, although thousands are thronging the street, for it is covered deep with chaff and straw; every now and then you see a space cleared, and by the lurid glare of a fire on the ground, you see a cauldron of hissing hot oil, and three women and a man are plunging snake-like forms of flour and oil into the oil. These are the makers of the famous oil-cakes, called "bunuelos," which are in great demand at early morn and late evening. They are eaten hot, and, although rich and oily, are far from being unpalatable. Only look at that eager crowd of poor men and women waiting until the last made hissing batch of bunuelos has sufficiently cooled to allow of its being handled!

But, hark! one would hardly believe, in this town, secluded as it is, that at this late hour (for it is already past ten o'clock) one hears the whistle of an engine, and its snort and scream. Yet so it is. It comes from yonder dark entrance, from which falls one lurid strip of light on some grimed and eager faces. You push your way in, and are in the presence of gambling by steam!

Gambling surely has never before been brought to such rude perfection. Here is the engine, snorting and panting; in front stands the table, duly numbered, and parted into little plots. The gambling is conducted on this wise. A man chooses his favourite number on the table, and deposits on it whatever stake he purposes to risk; four or five balls are thrown into a sort of funnel by the master of the ceremonies, and one is instantly shot out upon the table, with a

shrill scream, by the power of the engine. If it be our hero's number borne upon the ball, he stands to win, whatever it be, that number of the piece of money he staked. The table is only numbered up to seven, so that a man staking a real can never win more than seven like pieces.

It was, when I saw it, a striking sight, this old, barn-like room, its screaming engine, its crowd of eager gamblers, chiefly miners, peasants, olive-dressers, and artisans of the lowest class.

Gambling and cruelty to animals are two of the vices sucked in with mother's milk in this country. The little child of three years old is led by its mother to try its luck for a cake, chavo in hand (the chavo is about a farthing), on the street roulette-table!

Immediately that the "Jug-Fair," as the English will persist in calling it, instead of by its own graceful title, "Feria de Jarras," is concluded (it lasts about a week), commences the fair general. The streets are covered over with a rough awning, and the booths are making a gorgeous show. The wholesale saddler, the wholesale jeweller, the knife-seller, the gun-maker, all have set up their stores, under booths of wood-work and canvas, or in some room of a private house or shop rented for the fair time, and a large amount of money changes hands. The stalls really make a beautiful show, and articles (as jewellery) of the value of twenty and even twenty-five pounds are bought. In fact, the whole town takes holiday, has saved up its money, and lays up a store of goods for the year. And, *mirabile dictu!* books can actually be bought!

To the general fair succeeds the horse, mule, bullock, and donkey fair. It is held on a sandy common outside the town walls, man and beast alike

lying upon the ground, or under some rudely-constructed tent, for the night—no great hardship in this rainless clime.

Here you will see mules of enormous height; indeed, they make a far finer show than does the horse-flesh. Here, too, you will be assailed by the musical voice, deep-brown face, and outstretched hand of the wandering gitana (gipsy), come from the steppes of her barren La Mancha, eager to cull a few pesetas by telling you your *suerte*, or fortune. Marvellous is the accuracy with which these women will tell you, positively, facts with which human agency could hardly have supplied them. Indeed, how they find out what they say is, and ever will be, a marvel and a mystery to me.

But the feature that strikes me most in the fairs is the contentment, nay, the delight of the Spaniards, rich and poor, with a little. This contentedness of spirit is one of the brightest spots in their character. See the teeming crowds of rich, and poor, and middle-class, passing and re-passing each other in the gorgeous, sheltered street! All are sober, kindly, willing to be pleased, very courteous. The nobleman, from his "palacio," can stop and congratulate his grocer on having just secured his pretty bride, and married her civilly as well as ecclesiastically,—thus escaping, possibly, some conscription to come. There is no jostling, no rudeness, no pride of place!

By the way, my mention, just above, of a palacio may convey a very erroneous idea of the dwelling-houses so styled. The old-fashioned palacio is well worthy of description. It is still found in the old townships of the interior.

A long, low building, of one story; the walls made

of huge lumps of stone, and of enormous thickness; the floor of the rooms raised about two feet above the ground; five huge windows, with massive iron gratings, along either side. Such is the palacio, beheld from without. Enter it, and you will find that the house consists of very large rooms, opening, with folding-doors, one into the other,—the dining-room into the drawing-room, and the drawing-room into the bed-room, and so on. The rooms are high and airy, but always kept darkened. Above the ceiling is the camera, or granary, and (poor things!) one or two rooms for the female servants, the men-servants sleeping in the rooms above the olive-press! On one side, the windows open into the street, on the other, into a tiny garden, with luxuriant grape-vines and orange-trees. At the end of the little paved garden (for no grass grows in Andalusia) stands the olive-yard and olive-presses, the tanks of water, and the lofty stables. Such is the Spanish palace, of a type now fast going out! Perhaps mention should be made of the kitchen, where the ancient cook sits, in a room without ornament of any sort or kind, tending listlessly her charcoal fire on the hearth, and listening to the monotonous "Pip-pip-it, Pip-pip-it" of the quails, of which little cages hang all around the room; and also the "sunken room," as it is called, a room without a window, its floor sunk some three feet below the rest of the flooring, devoted entirely to the use of the mistress of the house in the burning, scorching heat and glare of the summer.

And now, as we leave my lady's dark and dismal, but, in summer, delightful bed-chamber, let us follow the crowd that is streaming on towards the Plaza de Toros, or bull-ring.

The bull-fight forms a prominent part in the programme of the fair's delights. Without it no fair were perfect. So often has this wretched sport been described (and so accurately, by an enthusiast of great experience, in these very volumes), that I shall say but little of it. But, to see all that was to be seen, I entered the bull-ring.

Unquestionably, the red, gold, blue, and green, gold-spangled dresses of the several orders of bull-fighters, trailing their graceful scarfs about the dusty arena,—the tiers of thousands of bright dresses and eager faces, one above the other,—the whirling of countless fans,—the enlivening strains of music,—the serried line of lancers, or cuirassiers, in front of the alcalde's stall, all seen beneath a glowing August sun,—have a most exhilarating, exciting effect.

But the first scene completely sickened me. The horses were posted,—weedy, wretched screws, valued at £3 a piece, and fit only for the knacker's-yard; each poor animal was blindfolded, the gates opened, the bull blundered into the arena. At last he fixed upon the weedy grey mare which stood just beneath me. The poor brute, blindfolded and tightly reined in, tried to move as the bull closed with it; in a moment his horns were deep in the cartilage of the front leg, and the animal was hoisted into the air. Then the bull was pulled off, and a crimson stream flowed down the poor brute's weedy, white, tottering legs. Two men thrashed it into the middle of the arena; the bull charged it again, tearing its bowels out to the length of two feet, throwing man and horse to the ground, and then, with crimsoned horns and forehead, rushing madly at another horse. A more disgusting exhibition I

never have witnessed than the first act in the bull-fight.

In the second act, when the horses have been killed and dragged out, and the sand sprinkled over their blood, there is a real trial of skill, and real feats of surprising courage and agility are performed by the bull-fighters. But the bull-fight has degenerated; and, whereas formerly the great aim was to bring powerful and valuable horses into the ring, and to save them, by skilful horsemanship, from hurt or harm, now the savage joy seems to centre in seeing the horse—man's truest and noblest friend in the dumb creation—tortured, beaten, and dying, before the eyes of those whom all his life he has served, a lingering and cruel death. Commend me to shooting, hunting, fishing, but never again will I see the bull-fight! *

From the glitter and noise of the bull-ring we may wend our way at eve to some of the back-streets of our town, and gain admittance to a little house, whence comes the tinkling of the light guitar. Ask some of the rough and humble, but joyous and kindly women, to show you three of the dances of the lowest orders in Andalusia, and, although convulsed with laughter, they will do so. Dances rougher or more curious were most surely never conceived! Here is one (wholly unknown, I believe), called "El pim-plon." It is danced (?) by two women. Each one squats upon the floor at one end of the room; then they commence jumping past one another, and back again, clapping their hands, and singing "Muncho trabajo, Muncho trabajo" (much labour), as fast as

* By far the best account of a bull-fight that I have seen, is that contained in the *Daily News* of September 11th or 12th, 1874, from the Madrid Correspondent of that journal.

they can, unassisted by the hands, and preserving their sitting posture. The exercise is fatiguing, especially when the bystanders are roaring with laughter at their frog-like movements; the perspiration pours down their bronzed faces, but it is a *point d'honneur* not to be the first to give in!

That dance finished, and a drop of common wine, strongly smelling of the pig-skin, handed round, they will commence a dance still more extraordinary and graceless. It is called "Los manjos de cinco gidos," in the rude *patois* of La Mancha. Each woman clasps her clothes firmly beneath her feet with her hands, which are thus fully occupied, and, for decency's sake, cannot be moved. She then sits like a sack on the floor, gives a kind of shuffling jump, and rolls over on her back. She cannot, for decency's sake, move her hands, and so has a hard task, wherein consists all the fun of this extraordinary dance, to recover (literally) her seat! The last dance is called "El negrito." It is very similar to the "Fandango," the man and woman standing opposite to one another, holding up the fists, and dancing back to back and face to face, singing some words of love.

Haply, if you go to these back-streets and bye-streets at fair-time, you will see a black-eyed damsel daintily present some adoring swain with a small *calavaso*, or pumpkin. This is a privilege of the fair sex, and is a polite way of telling some lover that his attentions are no longer acceptable!

But rough, rude, and primitive as are the fairs in the secluded townships of the interior, it must not be imagined that they are at all so in the large towns, as Sevilla or Cadiz. At Sevilla the fair is, I am told, simply beautiful; and at Cadiz the August fair is, as

I can testify from personal observation, well worth a visit to that cheerful, joyous, sea-girt town to see.

It is held on the long Alameda, called "Las Delicias," and is only in its beauty at night. On one side of the long and imposing array of stalls, &c., the waters of the blue Atlantic are for ever lapping the stones. On the other side rise an avenue of trees and the fine barracks of the garrison.

Here, at night, for fourteen or fifteen days, is seen a truly beautiful sight. Festoons of lamps of every size, shape, and colour, extending, perhaps, for nearly a quarter of a mile, meet the eye,—there were eleven thousand at the fair I witnessed; open-air theatres, bands of military music, stalls of all that is gay and sparkling, extended along the sea-wall; thousands of people wandered up and down, forgetting troubles, enjoying the cool sea-breeze from nine to twelve o'clock P.M., listening to sweet music discoursed by the three military bands, while their children danced to the strains upon platforms raised here and there. The lord met the peasant and the peasant the lord on equal terms here. There were no wine-shops, and no drunkenness was seen, the potations being chiefly ices and light "refrescos"!

And now I will conclude, with a few characteristic anecdotes of the autumn of 1874, what, I trust, has been a bright and joyous chapter for my readers. Although little felt at such large towns as Cadiz or Sevilla, yet the severe conscription, or "quinta," as it is called, put a damper on our last autumn fair in the interior.

Just before the fair, in August, 1874, the conscription was proclaimed. Men married by the Church only, and not by the civil authorities (the only excep-

tions being those who supported an aged parent), up to the age of thirty-four years, were liable to be drawn, the price of exemption being fixed at £50.

To my town, resistance to this severe, but, possibly, needful decree, being anticipated, came the Carbineros, to keep order. Their dark, serried line was drawn up daily outside the room where the lots were being drawn. One man, under the influence of liquor, said, while the lots were being drawn, "What babies you are to stand this!" and endeavoured to create a disturbance. The Carbineros were almost about to fire; but suddenly one of their officers appeared on the scene, a stout cudgel in his hand. He administered a sound thrashing, there and then, to the culprit, and sent him off to prison—so roughly are the lower classes threaped down and ill used at will by the Government officials in Spain at the present day!

This last quinta was badly arranged. Consumptive men, unfit for service, were drawn, and had to pay the £50. Men long since dead were drawn, and actually called for. In one case, the officers went to a house, and said, "Who is the master of this house?" On which the man's wife, a regular virago, said (and very truly), "I am." So she, too, was drawn!

Great dissatisfaction prevailed at this severe conscription. Many fled to the Sierra, saying, "If shoot we must, let us shoot boars, and not brothers." Others said, "If we are sent to the North, leaving our families, we will fire in the air!"

But, as a general rule, the poor Spaniards take all these things with singular complacency, and only a

short time since I sat until twelve o'clock at night beside a young, cheerful-looking miner, who was composedly smoking his cigarette with me in a neighbour's house, and listening to a blind man's guitar. As we parted he said, "For the last time, señor, we meet; at daybreak to-morrow I join the Madrid garrison. I am a conscript."

"And your four babes, and your wife?" said I.

"I leave them to God's care; it is His will, señor. Adios!"



JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

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

CHAPTER VII.

ROBBERS OF THE SIERRA.

ONE morning my duties led me up to a mine some three miles distant from home. The September sun was then shedding down its fierce leave-taking rays, literally scorching man, and beast, and tree, and parching the dusty, rock-strewn roads. Travelling, especially on foot, at mid-day was impossible, so I resolved to start at daybreak, and take breakfast at the mine.

While sitting in the darkened room of one of the mining captains, we were surprised by a grey beard suddenly appearing through the window, almost encircled, Bacchus-like, by the tendrils of the vine that trailed in profusion over it, and by an excited and quavering voice announcing that "Four men were lying in wait in the olives, and intended relieving some Englishman of his impedimenta on his way home."

The excellent doctor had just, on his Andalusian steed, passed by on his morning rounds, distributing his aid and skill or word of kindly sympathy at every lonely mine. For a wonder, his servant was not with him. I, too, had come up without Juan, my faithful little armed guard.

Unto which of us two did this startling message apply? I was safe, for I had, fortunately, not left the

mine; but the doctor—alas! the kind, good, excellent doctor—had gone.

At this moment, the black, bead-like eyes and sturdy little figure of Juan appeared at the door. He had heard of my starting alone, and had (with that real willingness to serve and help which forms the brightest spot in the kindly Spanish character) ridden up, with his trusty escopeta, to guard me home. We instantly despatched Juan to stop the doctor, if possible, and bid him wait for a guard. As ill luck would have it, Juan, though mounted, and with his Moorish gun slung at his saddle-bow, had forgotten, in his hurry, his badge, the brass-plate carried on the breast, bearing the name of the mine of which he is the guardian. Now, with his badge, any one would have trusted Juan, but, without that official badge, it must be owned that Juan looked rather a suspicious character.

No wonder, then, that when Juan rode up neck-and-neck with the doctor, and bade him "halt," the latter thought he had evil intentions. But when, further, Juan imperatively demanded that he should follow him, for safety's sake, the doctor absolutely believed he was going to be led into an ambuscade, and, with a loud "Caramba, hombre," rode straight away from his would-be guardian.

A Spaniard loves nothing so well as a joke, and when Juan appeared among us at our breakfast-table, and related how he had been taken for the robber, he could scarcely tell his tale for laughing. Indeed, this recklessness of human life, this indifference to the danger of a brother-man, when once the danger really presents itself, seems to be part and parcel of the character of the Spaniard of to-day.

Here were four violent men lying in wait,—men who, probably, had often committed deeds of violence before this,—men, probably, driven out from the haunts of their fellows either for their crimes, or who, perhaps, had left their several pueblos, or townships, in order to evade the quinta, or conscription, lying in wait in order to rob, and possibly ill treat, some hapless man walking home alone,—and yet the little Spanish guard could actually roar with laughter while his friend went on into danger!

Two guards, armed to the teeth, accompanied me home on that day. One was Juan, who observed, with a sardonic smile, that “his escopeta alone was sufficient for any four olive-lurkers”; the other, a man noted for his fearlessness in disarming fighting-men of their naked knives.

As we walked, we scanned the glades of dusky olives far and wide. Not one soul did we see or meet, save one poor man and woman, sweltering along behind their laden donkey, returning, with the provisions for a week, from the nearest town. The woman, looking at our arms, turned pale, put up her brown withered hands, and, pointing to her tiny lodge on the slope of the olive-clad hill, said, “Turn in, caballero, turn in hither, I pray thee, and take a draught of Val-de-Peñas for your journey.” I thanked her, and declined, and she dismissed us with the usual benison, “Vaya usted con Dios, y con la Virgen.”

The olive-grovés, as they are, have no claim at all to be called groves. They offer no shelter from the sun, no concealment at all. They are simply slopes, planted with regular rows, about ten or more yards apart, of small, stunted trees, and, with a good glass,

a figure lying in the olives, unless beneath the shelter of the stone-walls which intersect them, would be seen at a considerable distance.

These four men, who would have robbed any hapless solitary stranger, were simple thieves, homeless fellows, living an out-of-door life, rifling hen-roosts, or robbing road-side -ventas. They are not considered caballeros, or gentlemen, while the real bandits or robbers of the Sierra are admired, rather than disliked, by the Spanish peasantry, and considered rather in the light of heroes than otherwise.

Of such was composed the band of men who took captive an Englishman, very lately, in the neighbourhood of the mining town of La Carolina, in some of the wild and wooded passes that abut upon the Sierra Morena, where the stag and wild boar, and flashing trout-stream, overhung by ilex and chaparro, offer plenty of sport but little safety for the sportsman.

A minute account of this gentleman's capture appeared, from his own pen, in the *Times*, shortly after his release, on July 13th, 1874. It shall be here, in part, reprinted, together with the letters of the brigands demanding ransom for him, which are herewith appended, literally translated.

Here is Mr. Haselden's account of his capture:—

“ On the 3rd inst. I started on horseback from these mines to proceed to Carolina, accompanied by my foreman. After a ride of two miles along a narrow path, surrounded by thick bushes and brushwood, two men, armed with Remington carbines, suddenly stepped out into the path four yards in front of me, and ordered me to dismount. My attendant, who carried a gun, found himself attacked in the same way by three others. Seeing resistance was useless,

we dismounted. They searched us for arms, and took away our watches, which they eventually returned. They then led the way to a ravine, where the brush-wood effectually concealed us. I was politely told it was only a question of ransom. I answered that I supposed so, but desired to know who was the chief of the band, as I did not wish to treat with all of them. On this, one of them told me he and another were the leaders. He then gave me a letter to read, in which they had fixed my ransom at £40,000. In this letter my brothers were repeatedly informed that I should be murdered if their request was not attended to. They also gave directions about sending the money. It was to be carried by a man dressed in black, with a white hat, and a red handkerchief in his hand. The man was to be mounted on a white mule. He was to go without arms and alone, unless he required a guide. The route was exactly laid down, with injunctions only to travel from sunrise to sunset. In case he should be robbed by other thieves, my brothers were to replace the money or I should be shot. I observed it was useless asking for such a sum—that we could not raise it. They, however, requested me to sign the letter, which I did. They ordered my foreman to take the letter to my relatives at Linares, entrusting him with our two horses, which were only in their way.”

The party continued travelling all that day and night, their prisoner on a donkey, and they on foot; only resting for a short time on two occasions. On the road they fired three shots at a sportsman about three hundred yards off, who did not answer when called, fortunately without hitting him.

“We arrived at seven o'clock in the morning at the

place where they kept me all the time I was their prisoner. They formed a kind of hut by clearing a space of brushwood, joining the top branches, and covering them with more brushwood. The heat during the nine days I remained there was anything but agreeable. My bed consisted of brushwood and a manta, a kind of rug. They brought food, wine, and tobacco regularly. I was only threatened the first day, probably with the intention of making me write letters urging my brothers to send my ransom as soon as possible. This I refused to do, and seeing that their threats were useless they abandoned this system, and told me they did not intend to hurt me—that they were sorry to be obliged to place me under such restraint. During my captivity I was guarded by four of the robbers. One of the men who took me, and two others who showed themselves the next day, went forwards to secure the money. My guards were very cautious; they never put down a rifle without first withdrawing the cartridge. Most of the brigands appeared to be men who had not worked for some time back. Several of them expressed themselves well, although their chief subject of conversation referred to their former exploits and to the circumstances which had led them to adopt this mode of life. They disapproved of capital punishment. One of them said he was giving a good education to his son, and that if he thought he would take to his father's profession he would shoot him."

On the 13th, those who had been waiting for the ransom returned. Mr. Haselden then heard he was free, but was only allowed to start on his way back in the evening.

"The chief then gave me £6, saying I might re-

quire it on the road—that it would not be right for a caballero to go about without a penny. With Spanish politeness he excused himself for having detained me, and hoped I should find all my friends well at home. Not to be behindhand, I expressed the hope that the money would benefit them, ‘que les aproveche a ustedes e dinero.’ To one of them, a Malagueno, I said, ‘Hasta otra vista.’ He answered, ‘Yes, but under less damnable circumstances.’ The chief then informed me that henceforth I might travel about those mountains with safety, as they would be the first to take care no other band should molest me. I then mounted the mule, and, accompanied by one of the brigands, rode across the country for several hours. At midnight, on reaching a path which he said would lead to a house, he left me. About half-an-hour later I came upon some woodcutters, with whom I spent the rest of the night. Next morning one of them guided me to our mine, and thence I proceeded to Linares, where I arrived on the evening of the 13th. I then first learned the amount of the ransom sent—namely, £6,000. My relatives in Linares were nine days without hearing directly from me, with alternate hopes and fears, according to the different reports that went about the place, but without being certain whether I was alive or not.”

The following is a word-for-word translation of the first letter sent by the bandits to Mr. Haselden’s brothers, after being first submitted to him for perusal on the day of his capture, and signed by him. It runs thus:—

“Your existence depends upon four millions of reals, for we know very well that your capital amounts to more than one hundred millions of reals,

and so, even if you give us this sum named, you will still have sufficient for your sustenance and that of your family; and this is done so as not to embarrass your capital. Now, you have surely heard of Chico de Portero, of the city of Ciudad Real, who was simply quartered because his parents and the authorities did not send the amount we asked for. Well, we shall treat you in like manner, if you (?) do not send the amount asked for. If you choose to inform the civil or military authorities, it is a matter of no moment to us, but you will pay for it with your head! Two courses are thus open to you, either to give the required money or to lose your life, and, in this last case, we shall commit an outrageous deed with you—one that will serve as an example for the future. The money must all be sent in gold, without sign or mark, for, if mark or sign be found upon the gold pieces, you shall forfeit your life. Adios."

Particulars of the route by which the money is to be sent.

"The conductor of the moneys sent must be a person in your family's full confidence. He must be dressed wholly in black, with a white hat; in his hand he must carry a red handkerchief, and seem as though he were wiping the sweat from his brow; and he must be mounted on a white mule. He must go, first, from Linares to Guarraman, then to Cuesta, to Cuesta del Carreton, Venta de Robledo, Huerteruelas, Molina de las Tuntas, Las Azeas," &c. (here follows a string of a dozen small hamlets), "and, lastly, to Arrobas. If we do not come forward to meet him on his road, he must return by precisely the same road. Whenever he does not know the road, he is

free to take a guide from one of the villages, without, however, disclosing the object of his journey. He must ride from rise to set of sun. Where the setting sun overtakes him, there must he halt and pass the night, whether it be near a town or in the open campo, nor must he stay his footsteps at any of the pueblos (villages) above mentioned. If any one but ourselves should get hold of the money he bears, it will cost you (?) double the amount, or you will be shot. Therefore, it is to your interest to keep the affair secret, and not allow any one to accompany your messenger. If you do transgress these rules, you will be shot."

The use of the expression, "you will be shot," in a letter addressed to the family, must be explained in this way, namely, that the letter was, as it were, written to the unhappy captive, he being forced to sign and address it to his family, as though it were a letter from himself!

The letter was received, and a sum close upon £900 in gold was at once transmitted to these men. That sum, however, proved wholly insufficient to obtain the release of the unhappy captive. The only answer it elicited was the following, hastily written in pencil on a scrap of paper. The robbers, however, in it lowered their demand, as will be seen, from £40,000 to £10,000.

Second Letter of the Brigands.

"Received 100,000 reals, with which we can do nothing. If within five days we do not receive one million reals, be it known unto you that your beloved brother will be shot."

After eleven days' captivity the brigands accepted

the sum of £6,000, and Mr. Haselden was restored to his home and friends.

It will be asked, who are these robbers, and what steps were taken by the Spanish Government to capture them?

In answer to the first, reference may be made to another chapter in this book, where some account is given of them. They are sometimes men proscribed for political offences, who take their gun to the mountains when an adverse party comes into office, returning to the haunts of civilization when their own party is again in the ascendant. Oftentimes, again, they are men who have escaped from prison; still more often, men who have been pardoned (after lying for months, perhaps, under sentence of death) by one Government, but, with the advent of another, know well that their pardon will be cancelled. Many are convicts, who were released, as at Cartagena, by the Communists; some, again, have taken to the Sierra in order to avoid serving as soldiers against the Carlists. And, as regards the steps taken by the Government, the following may be said. Family influence or money will oftentimes procure a prisoner's release; and so, although one of this band was undoubtedly captured and confined for a night, yet ere morning he had escaped; indeed, when taken by the volunteers of the hill villages, he chatted gaily with them on his road to prison, and actually, a goat being killed on the march, he was appointed to cook the feast! No doubt his practice in the Sierra enabled him to perform his duty well.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOCIAL STATE OF THE HEART OF ANDALUCIA.

THE reader will, ere this, have formed for himself, from the foregoing pages, some estimate of the condition of the country which the writer has made his study. In this chapter it is proposed to give a bird's-eye view of the social state of the wilds of Andaluçia.

Let me commence with the laws, and those who break them. The laws of Spain, theoretically, the laws as they are written, are excellent and most elaborate; the laws practically and in working are bad.

In each town of importance there are three administrators of justice at the present moment: the *alcalde*, or chief magistrate, and the sub-*alcaldes*; the *juez*, or judge of the district; and (in Spain of to-day) the military governor of the province, and his sub-governors. The office of the *alcalde* is something partaking of the nature of mayor and corporation, sheriff, and Inspector of Education and Nuisances. The *alcalde* is elected each year, or oftener, by the votes of the township. He may be a gentleman, or a tradesman, or some one of even lower grade. Generally there are two *alcaldes* and two assistant-*alcaldes*. The *alcalde* receives all the taxes of the town, and he is bound, out of this revenue, to keep the roads in good