

supporting some five hundred tons of granite rock four feet over the head of the workers. Knowing well the dangerous nature of a fall, which would absolutely make "the pit shut her mouth upon them," and, perhaps, leave them with a huge barrier of granite rock between themselves and the exit from the mine; knowing, too, the shock, the vibration that a blast necessarily gives to everything in its immediate vicinity (I have seen the naked rock tremble, the lamps go out, or burn blue, the men's frames near me shake like aspens), the miners, for sheer convenience' sake, determine to blast just underneath the props and planking. If a fall be the result, it may be they are dead men.

As regards deaths from accident, these are not common. In one mine that I visited lately, where two hundred men were employed, the captain told me that, in the past two years, only two or three had occurred.

To the honour and credit of the Spanish Government, it must be here said that their supervision of the mines, especially of those owned by foreigners, and the strict, unflinching scrutiny made, and inquiry held, as to the causes of any accidents that may occur, is almost unequalled. Instant notice of any accident must be given to the civil authorities of the nearest town by the mining-agents. The Spanish civil engineers are on the spot in a trice. Generally they declare the accident was the fault of the works, &c., and inflict a heavy fine upon the owners.

It should here be stated, that the remarks above offered upon the diseases of the lead-miner of Spain, are gathered as well from personal observation as from the information kindly afforded to the writer of

there pages by two Spanish mining surgeons of eminence, of much experience among the Spanish miners,—men who have seen and sympathized with the miner in every stage of accident and disease; seen and tended him in the darkness of the mine, when stricken down by heavy misadventure, or when, wrapped in his manta, in the last stage of calentura, he turns his face to the wall doggedly and quietly, if not with Christian resignation, surrendering himself to his fate.



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

CHAPTER IV.

MINER'S MEDICINES.

HAVING spoken of his diseases, let me speak of some of the miner's own favourite medicines. He is a man who has a great faith in simples. Sage-tea is one of his favourite stomachics and cooling mixtures. In every case of faintness from a severe accident, the moment he comes to himself, he calls out, "A cup of tea, for the Lord's sake!" Tea is a luxury unknown to him save medicinally, and he has a marvellous faith in its curative and restoring powers. Probably it has a greatly beneficial effect in such cases, because it has never been used before, and, therefore, like the effect of a small quantity of stimulant on a person unaccustomed to the use of stimulant, it has a power which on the English tea-drinker would be lost. A decoction made of the leaves of the calentura-tree (*Eucalyptis globulus*), and drank either hot or cold, is one of his remedies for fever. For biliousness, with feverish symptoms, his wife would give him the juice of two oranges, squeezed into a tumbler, with the value of four cuartos in magnesia. But there is one medicine which, in the heats of summer, or the snows of winter, is ever within the miner's reach, and in which, for himself, his wife, and his children, he places the most implicit reliance for cleansing and purifying the blood and strengthening the system, namely, sarsaparilla. This medicine is taken in the

form of a refresco by men, women, and children, at the little stalls of the coffee and aguardiente sellers. Wherever there is a little stall for bunuelos, a kind of snake-shaped cake fried with oil, aguardiente, and vinos, there is found the large bottle of sarsaparilla.

As regards the ordinary fare of the Spanish miner, it is somewhat as follows:—Suppose him to belong to the day shift, he starts from his home, dressed as before described, with his thick knotted stick, or oftener, perhaps, a thin iron bar with a crook, used as a walking-stick, and, if the morning be chilly, his rug over his shoulders; if hot, his jacket is thrown over his left shoulder, and he walks in shirt-sleeves. The women, with their hot coffee, and bunuelos, and aguardiente daintily spread on little boxes, are squatting along the road to the mines at their different points of vantage, and he stops at his customary "House of Call." He first drinks a wine-glassful of pure aguardiente, to keep the cold out. This costs two cuartos (two farthings) a glass, and has not much raw spirit, but mint, aniseed, and other aromatic ingredients. The aguardiente Valenciano is the favourite. It is pure white, rather like milk-and-water in colour, and is a capital stomachic, and for keeping the cold out invaluable. Then he eats a bunuelo or two, two of which cost a cuarto. This is, as has just been said, a kind of fritter, about the thickness of a man's thumb, and of a circular or twisted shape. It is made and fried in the streets, and would be nice were it not that the oil in which it is fried (with an egg or two, if the proprietress of the stall be a liberal soul) is so unduly strong. Then the miner has possibly a tiny cup of black coffee, with a dash of aguardiente in it, costing two cuartos more.

Thus fortified, he proceeds to the scene of his work, generally humming the customary wild ditty of the Andaluz, the words of which are simply a narration of any passing object that strikes his vagrant mind. Here are two of these extempore ditties, extemporized on the spur of the moment, and suggested by the passing sights:—

“A big man walking with a sti-i-i-i-i-ck,
A little man riding by his si-i-i-i-i-de!”

And again, as a poaching-dog glided out of sight among some dusky olives, with something unlawful in his mouth:—

“Yellow dog with stolen morsel in his mouth----- outh,
Through the olives he go-o-o-o-o-es!”

The cadence at the end of each line is a series of rising, and then suddenly one or two low notes. It is a most wild, most monotonous ditty, and is peculiar to Andalusia in great measure. It meets one's ear from the fishing-boat, the olive-grove, the donkey-back, the shop, the street, until one's ear fairly tires of it.

Arrived at the mine at about 6:30 A.M., the miner joins his own working-party, one or two of whom have brought a frying-pan. Under the shelter of some tree or wall they sit down and make a fire. Each has brought, be it said, bread and fruit, the *fruta del tiempo*, or fruit of the season, whether it be orange, melon, or grape. Each one, again, has brought some vegetables, or meat, or olive-oil. “Without *aceite*” (oil), say the miners, “no comida.” The frying-pan is filled with the humble stores of these poor, hardy, contented fellows. One slices half-

a-dozen potatoes into it; another shreds a bundle of pimientos (capsicums); a third adds some lumps of goat's flesh, or baccalao (dried cod). The oil is poured over the savoury mess, bay-leaves are added, and then there remains nothing for the miner to do but to fry and eat the savoury mess in which his heart delighteth. All eat, with wooden or metal spoon, out of the frying-pan, which is placed in the midst of the little group. Breakfast ended, each takes out his clasp-knife (the famous navaja) and eats a portion of his bread and fruit, which last two comestibles always form the conclusion of the meals of the Spanish poor. The bread is coarse and cheap, and is sold in round flat cakes of one or two pounds weight.

On a chill, windy morning it is quite a picturesque sight to see a group of these miners, or of ploughmen, their primitive ploughs, each with its team of two mules, yoked abreast, standing on the brown, thistle-elad furrow in the field, huddled together under the lee of some crumbling grey stone wall, taking their breakfast, wrapped in their huge rough, rusty, chocolate-coloured mantas, and each with the inevitable cigarro de papel, or paper cigarillo, between his lips.

Breakfast over, the miners descend at 7.30 A.M., for the eight hours' work underground. They take with them nothing but fruit, bread, water, and tobacco for making the cigarillo. At 11.30 A.M., when four of the eight hours' work are over, they eat bread and fruit. At 4.30 P.M., they come to the surface, and are trudging home; eat bread and fruit again. At about 6 or 6.30 P.M., the miner is at his home with his wife and bairns. The greater number of these men, who earn (for Spain) fair wages, marry young, and husband and wife have the meal of the day, the evening

meal, together, eating out of the same dish, crouched over the tiny "braseró" of charcoal, the niños having been safely stowed away in bed.

To describe the different dishes with which the Spanish girl rejoices her husband's and her own heart at night, would be out of place. But I will give one or two typical dishes, describing only those which I have seen, and of which I have partaken. Let me premise that, both at the tables of rich and poor in the interior, the meat from which the soup has been made is piled upon a dish, covered with vegetables, and called "cocida." It is, of course, goat's meat (*carne de macho*), or mutton; the former being the winter and spring, the latter the summer, meat of the interior, boiled to rags, much of the same kind of material to which the Guardsmen of London were condemned so long.

Beef, in the pastureless and arid lands of Andalucía, is an unheard of luxury, save for the two days that follow a bull-fight, when, for obvious reasons, such as it is, it may be had.

The "cocida" of *carne de macho* is first placed on table, covered with garbanzos—a sort of nutritious dried pea (*Cicer arietinum*), said to have been introduced into Spain by the Carthaginians, and, perhaps, rice. Then comes the soup, which is highly spiced with *pimientos picantes* (fiery capsicum), and strongly flavoured with bay-leaves. It is thickened with rice, or a rough kind of vermicelli, or sliced bread, and is very nutritious. Then comes the bread and fruit again. Then the friend drops in for a chat and a cigarillo; and with a glass of Val-de-Peñas, and the cigarillo and the guitar and the song, the Andaluz miner passes his evening. Here are one or two

typical dishes, very savoury—I have found them too savoury:—

(1.) The *pojera*.—I know not how to spell it as it is called in the Spanish interior. It is a kind of hodge-podge; meat, soup, bread, spices, bay-leaves, and every sort of vegetable are stewed or boiled up together, and it is eaten hot from the stewing-pan. This is a favourite winter dish.

(2.) *Gazpacho*.—Arabice, soaked bread. This forms the bulk of the fare of the poorer classes throughout the fierce heats of summer. It is a cooling diet, and very wholesome. When nicely made, it is a luxury. It consists of onions, cucumber, lettuce, radish, garlic, *pimientos*, all chopped up fine, and put into a bowl full of oil, vinegar, and cold spring water, with slices of bread floating in it.

(3.) *Bacalao-fry*.—The *bacalao* is a dried cod, hard as iron, and requiring six hours' soaking in cold water before it is in any way palatable. It is cut up into small pieces, and put in the frying-pan with a lump of fat, with vegetables of the season, and *pimientos picantes* or bay-leaves; then, covered with strong-smelling oil, it is fried, and is, the miners say, "*Muy rico*."

Three sorts of sea-fish.—The only sorts which ever find their way into the interior, and, of course, that only in the cold months, are used as the staple for the evening fry. The *atun*, a huge fish, of reddish-brown colour, caught at Cadiz, weighing from 50 to 150 lb., the flesh is like that of the sturgeon, but somewhat coarser, perhaps; it is sold by the pound, and is very cheap and common. It is reported to be very nourishing. These fish come into the mining-towns from the nearest station on donkey-back, and being

strapped two on each pad, the long tails dangling and flipping along the dusty road, is an unusual sight. Then there are the "boccarones," or anchovies, caught off Malaga, and sent in shoals to the interior; and the "sardinas," a small, high-flavoured, silvery fish, like a sprat.

As to drink, the miner takes his aguardiente and his Val-de-Peñas wine, costing about threepence-halfpenny per quart, whether white or red, or Catalan black wine. The Val-de-Peñas, if good, is something akin to Burgundy, and is grown in La Mancha.

As to amusements, the miner knows but few. If athletic, he "throws the iron bar," or "rolls the ball," an iron or leaden ball, six inches in diameter, along the road. If not, he plays "rouletta" in the street, or cards at his own home. On feast-days the cock-pit is open to him, or he takes his gun and dog and wanders over the Campo to try and pick up a hare, or red-legged partridge, or bustard. Dance and song and guitar fill up his holiday. In the mines owned by the Spanish companies the Sundays are not observed, but the feast-days, in some measure, take their place. In the mines worked by English or German companies, the Sundays are kept as far as is consistent with the safety of the mine. Gambling, if it can be called an amusement, is a passion with many of these men, nay, with well-nigh all of them.

Of anecdote belonging to the Spanish miner I have not much in this place to recount. I have said before that the criminal, fleeing from the clutch of the law, the "suspected" person, *i. e.*, suspected of political leaning against the existing Government, the debtor, the adventurer, and the peasant who cannot obtain in his own province employment sufficient to

support himself and his family, all flock to the mines for shelter, and support, and concealment; and it will readily be imagined that when so many strange elements enter into a large body of men, there are many of evil devices and unbridled passions, men given to drink, licence, and low debauchery. But this is far from being the rule. Still, we meet among the miners with many who, in England, would come under the appellation of "rough characters."

Here are a few trifling anecdotes, which came under my own personal observation, illustrative of certain aspects of mining life and character in Spain:—

When a late Government first came into power, not many months since, it was for a few weeks singularly lenient; soon, however, it became exceedingly severe. In one town, with which I was at the time well acquainted, no less than sixty persons, accused of political offences, were seized out of the population of 30,000, and, without a trial, were hurried off to the dreary exile of the swamps and savannahs of Cuba. "Better take them out on the Campo and shoot them at once," was the remark made to me by a gentleman with whom I was discussing the question. Confusion, sorrow, and heart-burning then reigned supreme, and man after man left his employment, his family, his trade, to seek shelter and work in the mines until the tyranny should be overpast.

In a mine that I knew of a political refugee sought employment and shelter. He worked underground, and his delicate white hand soon acquired, what with clay, tallow-grease, lead-dust, and hard work, quite a miner's horny touch. The civil guards heard of his whereabouts, and watched the shafts of the mine now and again. His ruse to escape detection was this:

when he ascended the shaft one of his most trusty friends went just before him; as he (the friend) emerged into the open air he scanned the country round, with keen, scrutinizing gaze, to see if the blue capa and red facings of a civil guard were lurking anywhere within eye-shot. If the enemy was at hand, this "advanced guard" simply looked down the ladder, and shouted, "Pedro, bring up that pick-axe that we have forgotten"; and it is needless to say that the poor fellow was underground again in a trice! Alas, his game was soon played out, and the ill-fated fellow has ere now shared the fortunes of his political comrades!

Tobacco for his cigarette is the miner's delight. He cannot live or work without it. Not the good, honest English cutty clay pipe, with its substantial "cut" of moist, aromatic shag tobacco, but snuffy-scented, dry powder, like a bad cigar pulverized, rolled up in the tiny papers sold at every corner, is the Spanish miner's joy. One evening, on the road to the mines, a gitano-looking man came up to me—it was at the close of a hot summer's day—and, in a most mysterious way, said, in a whisper,—“Cigarros, señor?” I was puzzled for awhile; and he then detained me by my arm, on which I bade him begone, and thrust him off. The man's dark figure and swarthy face followed me wherever I went, as I turned my steps homewards. I went into a venta, when I came out he was just outside; into a friend's house, he was fanning himself with a huge lady's fan just under the shade of some adjoining houses. I thought he meant mischief, and got a friend to walk the rest of my homeward journey with me.

The following morning I was called, ere dressed,

from my bed-room to speak to some one on important business. I hurried to the door, and there, with a huge sack half full at his feet, with his brass-earrings and his fan, stood my friend of the previous night. He was a contrabandista, or smuggler of Havannah cigars and tobacco, of which his sack was partly full. He explained that his business was brisk in mining localities; that he must be off speedily, and so on. I bought a few bundles of first-rate cigars for a very trifle, and bade him Adios.

Now and then a wild, lawless spirit sets a bad example among the mining population, and the bad example is followed by the younger men. At such a time the wine-shops will be full; the click of the navaja heard in the streets; and the hospital surgeons have extra work in dressing stabs.

Once, lodging in a street which was full of miners, I heard a desperate quarrel going on outside my windows, and the ominous click of the revolver or the knife. Fortunately, the guard came up, and prevented bloodshed. The two men, my next-door neighbours, had quarrelled, and turned out into the street at one in the morning, heated with passion and bad wine, to settle their dispute, which was, of course, about some wretched woman.

On another occasion, two bangs, louder than ever revolver produced, greeted my wakeful ears about the same time in the morning. On inquiry the next day, I found that some young miners, for a lark, had drilled a couple of holes in the stone wall of a poor old woman's house hard by, filled the holes with dynamite, and put a live fuse there. The dynamite explodes downwards, and so only a few fragments of the wall were blown out into the street. But it struck

me, at the time, as a rough style of practical joking. The miners are very fond of using this dynamite for fishing. On Sunday you see them by river, and tarn, and pool, exploding this stuff in the water. The fish rise to the surface stunned, and the men wade in and capture them. There is necessarily a large store of this explosive mineral in every mining town, and so this becomes a frequent pastime of the wilder sporting spirits. These miners, accustomed to face death and danger, have plenty of pluck and courage. During some of the Intransigente risings, our letters from England and France, and the North of Spain, were stopped, and lay, we heard, at a wayside station, some twelve miles from our town; whoever brought them must bring them through the very ranks of the foe. A miner volunteered; dressed himself as a melon-seller, and, unarmed, trolling forth his wild Andaluz ditty on the back of his donkey, his panniers filled with letters and newspapers, with a thin layer of melons at the top, he brought the letters to his town in safety. "I saw," said he, "the Intransigentes" (to many of whom he was well known) "sitting armed upon the rocks, just above one defile through which I had to pass."

And not only has the Spanish miner real courage, but he has a most loyal, most affectionate, and genuine feeling for his employers. I was once returning home late at night from some Spanish mines; one tired man, who was known to me, greeted me, and asked,— "Was I walking home alone?" On hearing that it was so, he shouldered his gun, and nothing would persuade him to leave my side until he had seen me within the precincts of the town where I dwelt. This is but one of many instances of the Spanish miner's

devotion to his employers, if kind and good to him; nor are instances wanting of the devotion and loyalty of these men to their employers, whether Spanish or foreigners, as a body.

For a Spaniard, the miner is rather given to drink, always commencing his morning with aguardiente, and ending the day with Val-de-Peñas; but I challenge any one to walk the streets of any English mining town, and find as little drunkenness as he would in Spain. Still, it must be admitted, that many of the miners—probably driven to it in great measure by their unhealthy life—indulge in too much stimulant.

The Spanish pitman is sadly underpaid; for his eight hours' underground work he only receives moneys equivalent to half-a-crown of English money daily, and, although provisions are cheap, and his manner of life, poor fellow, very simple, and his wants very few, this is most certainly far less payment than he is justly entitled to. He is paid thus little in this way. The captain of the mine measures out a mass of rock to be worked, by blasting and the pick-axe. It is so many square yards. A Spanish foreman of miners offers to do it for so much, his offer is accepted, he pockets at the rate of £5 to £7 per month for himself, but only pays the men two shillings and sixpence per diem.

CHAPTER V.

SURFACE-WORK AT THE MINES.

MARVELLOUS is the difference to any one who has studied carefully, as has the writer, the character of the Cornish miner of England and the Andaluz miner of Spain, between the leading features of character in the two. Sad as the mists that sweep his wintry wold, silent, contemplative, far-sighted, the rugged, independent Cornishman takes his way to his work. At evening he returns to his substantial fare, the loneliness of his cottage—for he cares for no noisy friends—and the study of his Bible, or some book deeply imbued with religion. Early the child of habit, he turns off to bed. Sunday comes, and he joins in the prayer-meeting, or teaches a class, or leads the sonorous singing of Wesley's hymns in his chapel on the grey hill-side. He is a man of few words on any subject other than religion; a man full of prejudices, full of obstinacy; a man who never acted on impulse in his life; a man who esteems lightly the trivial joys of life. Methodism and money are his all-in-all.

A very different being is the Andaluz miner. Bright as the sun that floods his morning path, noisy, thoughtless, impulsive, the courteous, ephemeral Andaluz sings his way to the mine, and plucks the wayside flower of the Campo to wear it in his button-hole or his sombrero. Life is a jest with him. At eve he returns to his home in the noisy town, to his light, savoury fry,

or salad, or soup; and, that finished, he seeks some house hard by where the song and guitar and dance will help to while away the weary evening. He reads no book but the book of busy life around him, which he scans as keenly and reads as truly as any one. On his Sunday or feast-day, he plays cards, or goes to the cock-pit, or plays the light guitar to the singing of his black-eyed wife, or wanders over the Campo, gun in hand. He is a man full of talk and prattle and lively joke; a man who never speaks of religion, or very seldom; a man full of strong, fiery passion, but without a spark of obstinacy about him; a man who always acts upon the impulse of the moment, who will stab, or offer his dinner, on the spur of the moment's impulse; he is a man who turns everything into a joke, shuts his eyes to what is serious, sucks mirth and merriment from the veriest trifles; amusement and the news of the day are his all-in-all.

Enough has now been said on the character of the miner for the present, and the writer offers in conclusion a short description of the surface-work, or processes through which the lead passes when it is brought to bank, before it is melted, an operation which he also briefly will describe, as he has seen it in Spain. Only let him crave some indulgence from the reader if his words be heavy on these points; for he is conscious of having studied the miner's life and character with a far keener interest than the working of the mine.

The lead of the three kinds above described—first, second, and third class—is brought to the surface by means of whims, to be crushed, and acted upon successively by water, fire, air, and zinc. The history of the lead, after it is once brought to bank, is

necessarily connected with the process of smelting, and, therefore, the scene shall be changed, and we will see the whole process as carried on at one of the largest smelting-works in Spain. Generally, the processes through which the lead passes at the mine itself are the being crushed and precipitated by the action of water; this done, it is put, in subsistence like gravel, into sacks, and sent on donkey-back to the nearest smelting-works; these last seldom being attached to the several mines.

But the smelting-works to which I now take you are situated on, and attached to, the mine whose ore they work upon; and, therefore, the whole process can be seen in its several consecutive stages. Situated in the remote wilds of the Campo, in a wild hilly district belted in with ridges of tawny red, crimson, and wooded sierra, clothed as to its every slope with thickets of encina (evergreen oak), chaparro, and other shrubs of the Campo, every slope covered with tough, or prickly, or aromatic shrubs, and dry bent-grass, the haunt of the hare, the wild cat, the red-legged partridge, the quail, and the bustard; where, as you wander, gun in hand, you see nothing, for mile after mile, but a few mine-chimneys standing up here and there and a few peasants cutting their donkey-loads of brushwood, and hear nothing but the wail of the plover; in a district where desolation is only atoned for by the rich tints of the naked sierra and the wild, rugged beauty of the scenery, stand the chimneys of the mine and the engine-houses of the smelting-works from which I write, the mine and works being superintended by a French company with Spanish *employés*.

Unsightly enough are the rude sheds, the tall, smoking chimneys, the huge piles of broken granite in

the midst of a scene which Nature has made so full of wild grandeur and desolate beauty. Here are the mouths of the several shafts of the mine, and all around them the smelting is carried on.

Save men and machinery there are no signs of life. Pool after pool, trough after trough, of yellow water is around you, water impregnated with lead; and chickens, cats, and dogs cannot live three months here; only men and rats can bear this atmosphere of lead; the mules are kept at a distance; the two or three horses, necessary for those *employés* who live upon the spot, look thin and dull of eye.

On a bright afternoon I went through the works with the manager, who had but lately come from the superintendence of a like establishment in Germany. He told me that he turned out, from the thirteen smelting-furnaces then at work, forty-eight tons of "soft," *i. e.*, finished, lead per diem, each ton consisting of twenty pigs, or oblong shapes of lead, which weigh 1 cwt. a-piece, and are strapped (two on each animal) on donkey or mule, and so sent off to the nearest railway station for transportation.

As we strolled from his house to the works my friend gave me some curious information on many points, which I shall here offer under the head of "Miscellanea."

And first, summing up the experience of many years of mining and smelting in Germany, England, and Spain, he assured me that for mining courage he considered the Spaniard had not his equal. "Why, look here," said he, "you may call it recklessness, but the Spanish miner will run like a cat up a nearly perpendicular wall of granite without fear, just grasping, with naked foot and hand, the little projecting pieces of the rock.

And as to ladders, why he doesn't care whether they are safe or unsafe." Then, in answer to my allegation that 2s. 6d. per diem, or even 3s., was far too little for such work as the pitmen did, he said,— "Well, it is not enough; but the Spaniard is not a man who lives for money, as does the Englishman; he can afford to sacrifice a day's wages for a day's amusement, and he cherishes his pride more dearly than his money." Thus I found that these poor fellows would sooner take "piece-work" below ground on their own account, and at their own responsibility—making, perhaps, only 1s. 8d. to 2s. per diem—than work under a ganger, and earn 3s. per diem. They can then say, "I am my own master; I take piece-work!"

My friend told me that he considered no man should be allowed to work below ground until he had attained his twenty-second year. He also said that he had pitmen as old as forty-five working below ground; but that at that age they were worn out, and put to perform, so long as they could, the easiest surface-work possible for them to obtain.

In many of the Spanish Government mines the pitmen are, some of them, only of the age of seventeen! These, working before their frame is settled and their stamina fixed, die young, or have to turn to other work. In Germany, the system of Government supervision of mines is more strict and better than in France, Spain, or England. In each mining town there are a set of duly-qualified engineers stationed, sometimes as many as eight or ten in number, where the mines are numerous. These men each hold a book of mining regulations,—in shape it is like a large pocket-book, and bears the Government stamp,—

and supply a copy of the same to all the mine-owners, agents, engineers, &c. These men wear a recognized uniform, and have absolute authority to descend and explore any part of any mine; and should a boiler be dirty, a rope rotten, a ladder unsafe, or anything be found of neglect, they can fine the manager £20, or more, on the spot, and stop the mine if the fine be not paid and the defect amended.

Some Spanish surface-men were frying their meal upon the burning lead, thus eating a dinner impregnated with lead-smoke. My friend, who had warned them of the danger and folly of this, quietly, there and then, vindicated his authority by fining each of the culprits. Said one of them, "Well, but it's just the same to me whether I die to-day or next year!" I noticed a large reservoir of what looked beautifully clear water, and inquired if, in summer, a bath in it, for master and men, might not be advantageous. "Never," said he, "bathe in water near a lead-mine; it is strongly impregnated with lead. And in spring, never bathe in any stagnant water; it is sure to beget a calentura."

On the stone walls, which separated one part of the works from another, I noticed a quantity of blue-coloured blotches, and was informed that it was the oxide of lead from the smoke of the chimney, which had come down in the damp or rain, and settled there. From forty-five to fifty per cent. of this poison, for such it is, is contained in this smoke.

The lead is raised from this mine, here varying from 500 to 980 feet in depth, in large iron buckets, which are wound up to surface by "whims." The three different classes of whims in work here are:—

- (1.) the primitive, or man-whim of the early miners,

in which three or four men turn the huge creaking handle, with a Spanish "Yo-heave-ho," like the cry of the fishermen turning the windlass on the beach of our South Coast fishing-towns: this is the man-whim; (2) the mule-whim, worked by two mules yoked abreast; and (3) the steam-power whim, which last, of course, is the latest introduction.

These whims are much like those used in the Cornish mines, consisting of a shaft sunk in the rock, generally round in Spain, as opposed to the square shaft of some of the Cornish mines, and a hollow cylinder of wood, turning on a perpendicular axis. While one bucket, or, as the Cornish men call it, "kibbal," is being raised full, the other kibbal is descending empty, so that no time is lost.

The lead of the first class, that is, lumps of the mineral taken from the pure rich lode by pick or blasting, looking like shivered blocks of pure mineral, is shot out on the ground, and carried straight to the furnace. The lead of the second and third classes, the former being embedded in lumps of granite, the latter in dust and offal, is carried a few yards, to undergo the first, or water, operation of its purifying.

The water operation or process is as follows:—The lumps of granite are crushed into the consistency of gravel by huge iron rollers. This is put by shovelfuls into huge troughs of water, or subjected to the influence of a running stream of water. If the troughs be used, they are worked up and down in small cisterns of water, and the water washing over carries away the stone and granite elements, the lead, from its greater specific gravity, being left behind. The men and women engaged in this work earn from 10*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* per diem. It is dirty, heavy work,

and nearly all, men and women included, work up to their ankles in water, and work eight hours per diem.

There is then left a certain amount of lead, but still with a large admixture of stone, granite, offal, dust, &c. This, which looks like discoloured gravel or discoloured sand, is wheeled off to the first smelting-furnace, and we come to the second, or fire operation or process. Here are the master smelters, each one of whom, standing before his furnace with his two firemen, look red-faced, worn, and streaming with perspiration. All have a short blue jersey, sandals of esparto-grass or canvas, or bare feet, and thick dark serge and woollen trousers. The master smelter earns one dollar (that is, 4s. 2*d.*) per diem, the firemen, 1s. 8*d.* to 2s. The lead is shovelled into the heat. You wait a few minutes, and presently the mineral is red-hot. The master smelter opens, with a long iron pole, a tiny door,—an operation which, for obvious reasons, is called tapping,—and lo! into a huge cauldron, sunk in the ground at your feet, comes winding down from the furnace, in a long, winding, scarlet, or rather vermilion stream, coiling about as it comes down like a huge snake, the red-hot molten lead.

The cauldron looks at first—it is called, in smelting phraseology, not the cauldron, but the “pot”—like a huge vessel full of vermilion paint. At last it grows lead-colour, and then the fireman casts in a handful of dust from the floors. This is to purify the liquid molten potful of mineral. A cloud of thick yellow smoke, as he stirs the dust in, rises up, and, with its sulphurous stench sickens, with its blinding cloud blinds you. You cannot see the men working at the next furnace, five yards off. This smoke is the most

dangerous atmosphere of the smelting-works; it gives a heavy cough, sickens, and, if you are much in it, finally gives you lead-colic. The smoke clears away at last, and you see that all the particles of offal, of dust, &c., are lying in a thick coating at the top of the pot. This coating, an admixture of lead with dust and dross, is taken off with a huge iron ladle, and sent back to be re-smelted with the next batch of foul lead. This operation is called "skimming."

The lead in the pot is still molten and liquid. The master smelter comes up, with iron ladle; at his side, on the ground, stand several massive iron "moulds," or oblong shapes, with the stamp of the smelting firm, and the title of the mine, embossed in raised iron capital letters, at the bottom of each mould. The lead is filled into these moulds, and, as lead will not stick to iron, in about five minutes the lead has cooled, and is in solid oblong forms, or "pigs," turned out of the mould upon the floor, and left to cool. Each mould of lead, of the larger size, weighs 145 lb., and sixteen of these pigs go to the ton. The price of this lead fluctuates from £17, which is low, to £25, which is well nigh the highest price attained, per ton. In the shed where I stood to watch this operation four furnaces were at work, and the atmosphere was simply impregnated with lead. Three shifts of men are at work, each taking an eight hours' spell of duty; and thus, day and night, the furnaces are at full smelting power. The moulds of lead above described are about two feet long, four inches high, and five inches broad. These moulds of lead are what is called "hard" lead—that is, they have another operation yet to go through, namely, the process of "desilverizing," or extraction of all the silver from them, after which

they are called "soft lead," and are sent into the English or French market.

I think I have mentioned that each one of the thirteen furnaces in operation on these works turns out forty-five tons of hard lead per diem! Whence comes the tremendous demand for lead? is a question the writer has often asked, and of which he has never received a satisfactory solution.

Hard by the furnace-house stands the shed for the "blast-engine," a small but powerful machine, for giving "blast" for the first process of desilverization. English industry and mechanical skill are represented even in these far-off wilds, for I noticed on this engine the words, "Ransome, Sims & Head, Ipswich, England."

We come now to the process of desilverization. On an average, every ton of lead from the mine in question contains twelve ounces of pure silver, and it is therefore worth while—"it pays," to use the mining phraseology—to extract it. The operation is thus performed, in two different ways:—First, the lead is re-molten in a furnace, to a certain extent; the blast from the engine is brought to bear upon it, and the lead runs off easily, while the silver remains fixed. This is the common means of "desilverizing"; but a later method, although only at present in use in one or two, at most, of the smelting-works of Spain, yet is a far superior method. It is briefly this:—The pigs of hard lead are again smelted in another set of furnaces, and poured into a large "pot," capable of holding ten tons of the molten liquid. A certain percentage of zinc, I know not what particular proportion or preparation, in powder is stirred in the lead, and it attracts and brings to it all the silver; the "pot" is

then skimmed, and a "refiner" finishes the work at leisure. The lead is then poured once more into the moulds, and is "soft lead." It is strapped on mule or donkey back, and sent off to the nearest station.

There is but one more operation that I need notice. It is the "smelting" of the slag, or refuse from the first operation. It is done at what are called the "high-furnaces," and from this slag a certain proportion of pure lead is obtained.

The coal for heating the furnaces costs in Spain £2 10s. per ton, thus forming a most expensive item in the mining account. It is brought from England, or from the mines of Belmez, and finds its way to each distant mine, from the nearest railway station, in panniers on mule or donkey.

Coal is a luxury unknown to the Spanish poor, who still warm their feet over the tiny brasero of carbon or charcoal; even using the tiny charcoal made from the olive-trees, and called "picon," the fumes of which are rank poison.

I noticed, as we left the works, a shed full of lead in the rough state, *i. e.*, partly admixed with granite; and on asking my companion how much there was lying there waiting its turn to be smelted, he informed me that each of the two sheds contained some 800 tons, more or less. I quote this simply to give some idea of the scale on which the lead-mining and smelting of the ore is carried on in this country.

Walking homewards in the bright evening of the Spanish spring day, for it was March, it was a striking thought that for upwards of half a mile the road was "burrowed under," and that one's fellow-creatures were winning their bread 900 feet below one's path!

Some mention should be made of the "runs" or

falls of earth and rock. I noticed several little valleys, as it were, of broken ground and rock, and my companion told me they were "runs," or places where the earth had fallen in upon the mine. And now the "day-shift" are on their homeward road with us, and we must say "Adios" to the men at the mines.

Two beauties of the dreary mines shall here be mentioned. The roof of the "old mines" (*i. e.*, those unworked for some time) is covered with the most exquisitely-graceful stalactites, of snowy whiteness, of carbonate of lime; and ferns of unimagined grace droop from the damp, dark soil of the unused shaft. Thus far, Nature throws her graceful veil over the deformity left by man. The second beauty has ceased, or nearly so. Until the decadence of religious observances, which came in with the fall of Isabella of Spain, there used to be suspended in each mine, on the first level, a tinsel image of Nuestra Señora (the Virgin); two tiny oil lamps (miner's lamps) were, night and day, burning before it, since each miner, as he ascended, poured, as a thank-offering, what remained of the oil in his lamp into the Virgin's lamps, which were thus ever alight. This spectacle is now but rarely to be witnessed.

CHAPTER VI.

CHARACTER AND SOCIAL STATE OF THE SPANISH CONTRASTED WITH THAT OF THE ENGLISH MINER.

THE two classes of men which it is here attempted to describe present a very marked contrast both in character and social state. And, first, as to the character of these two classes. No one can have been conversant with the English miner without having noticed how deeply the religious element—of a kind oftentimes mistaken, and sometimes amounting even to austerity—enters into, and forms a leading feature in the character of the English miner. I speak specially of the miners of Cornwall and Wales, having not had sufficient experience of the miner in the North to justify me in estimating his character. And this religious element—which is common to the English peasant classes, whether a man be the old-fashioned, honest, simple-hearted churchman, who takes “the parson” as his oracle, sits under him, as a matter of course, twice every Sunday, and rejoices to hear “our parson deliver himself beautiful,” or whether he be the austere, unreasoning Calvinist of the Sussex weald; or the self-opinionated and harsh-judging, but earnest and ecstatic, Methody of Cornwall or the Midland Counties—this religious element seems to me hardly to enter at all into the character of the Spanish peasant or miner, the two presenting on this point, therefore, a decided contrast.

The phraseology of the English miner, his words, in health or in sickness,—if not downright offensively and obtrusively religious, as is oftentimes the case,—are, at least, tinged with the religious element. How often, in visiting the sick or dying among this latter class, do we hear, it may be from blanched and trembling lips, the language of a most Christ-like resignation, of a most child-like trust in the Lord of us all, a most bright and blissful hope for the future!

“It is the Lord’s will; let Him do what seemeth Him best.”

“This parting would be bad, if it weren’t for the thought of Heaven.”

Or, if the strong man be leaving all that he loves on earth, how often will his last words, as he leaves his wife and children to the tender mercies of a cold and hard-hearted world, be—“The Lord will provide. He never leaves those that trust Him.”

Again, how touchingly is the true nature and attitude of prayer depicted in the word used commonly by the poorer classes in the Midland Counties, where praying is invariably called begging; and to pray, to beg.

And, in health, the English miner takes a pride in his religion, and in all its accompaniments. His amusements are few, but his religious excitements are many. He pays to belong to the “connexion”; he leads a class, he is anxious to be appointed an itinerant preacher, and is ready to serve his apprenticeship for that purpose “on trial,” and thenceforward to preach, and lead the sonorous, rough-cutting Wesley’s hymn in the little stone chapel on the grey hill-side.

The following may be quoted as an instance of the religious element in the Cornish miner’s character. One of these men told me that the two finest sayings

he ever heard were those of a dying man, who, on being pitied, said,—“Don't pity me. Down goes the body, up goes the soul to glory!” And that of an infirm man, who, for want of room inside, was compelled to ride upon the step of a Cornish coach. One of the inside passengers asked of him,—“Is your life insured, old gentleman?” And the answer was,—“No; but my soul is!”

Again, the religious emotions of the English miner, and others of different employments in his own rank of life, often (far oftener than is supposed) finds vent in a sort of religious verse, or rather doggerel, of which the following lines, composed by a man of low estate, are here subjoined from a heap of the same now lying before me, as being eminently characteristic. They are entitled—

Lines on a Fire witnessed September 21st, 1872.

I.

“Behold, our *newmerus* stacks of corn,
How beautiful they stand;
Like jewels they our farms adorn,
All over England.

II.

In them we all can plainly see
The Bread that giveth life
To all the human family
While in this world of strife.

III.

Of every sight they are the best,
Setting but one aside;
And that is Christ, who giveth rest
To all for whom He died.

IV.

But 'tis an awful sight to see
Our corn to ashes burn,—
A lesson, sir, for you and me,
If we can only learn.

V.

The wheat and barley, beans and straw,
Was there consumed by fire ;
A sight which we together saw,
But could not it admire.

VI.

Some in their hearts with secret prayer
Addressed the heavenly throne ;
While others did profanely swear,
And did their God disown !

VII.

This fire reminds me of a day,
Which like an oven will burn,
When sinners will be turned away
Who now salvation spurn.

VIII.

O, may we learn the lesson given,
That, when our life is past,
We may receive the joys of heaven,
Which will for ever last !

IX.

No fires there to burn our grain,
No tears to wipe away ;
But perfect happiness will reign,
Through one eternal day.

X.

There, with the Father and the Son,
And the Good Spirit too ;
We hope to live, when we have done,
With fires here below."

And not only are the ideas and the talk of many of the lower classes in England thus coloured and tinged, or even saturated with the religious element, but their hope, on the bed of pain and death, oftentimes burns with a lustre almost unearthly—a sure, blunt, matter-of-fact belief in Heaven and immortality as things tangible, unknown among men who are far their superiors in education, and, perhaps, even sometimes in moral conduct. Of this personal religion—of this child-like trust, of this calm, Christian resignation in time of suffering or death; of this bright hope of immortality, little—aye, passing little—is found in the character of the Spaniard of the same social position. He does not, it is needless to say, read the Bible—that rich store-house of thought and religion—it is not found on his shelves, and, were it put into his hand, not one in eight could read it. His conversation is entirely free from being tinged with the religious element, and, when he touches upon these matters, so dear to the heart of his English brethren, it is too often with an admixture of levity which is strangely out of place. Thus, a religious miner, whose boast it was that for many years he had never failed to purchase (the honour is paid for) the privilege of carrying one of the images in the processions of La Semana Santa, said to his master, a well-known Spanish mine-owner,—“I have had a bad time lately, and cannot afford to pay for the privilege of being one of the bearers of San Juan. Will you advance me the money? For I could not bear to miss the performance of that sacred duty; and won't I just shake him!”

Indeed, the religious indifference of the miner's character, compensated for, in some degree, in social

intercourse, by his strict sense of honour and his easy good-nature, is as marked as the earnestness of the Cornishman. It is to be feared that his religion has lost its vital power, and has but little hope upon him. When the tinkling bell of the procession carrying the Host to some dying brother is heard coming slowly down the street, the miner, with his wife looking idly on, will merely say, "It is so and so dying. Bueno" (well); then idly light his cigarette, and dismiss the matter.

Sometimes, however, among the women of the mining population, will be found a really strict and simple religion. A Spanish nurse, whom I well knew, was one out of many instances of this. Whenever she had a few moments to spare, she would be found sitting on the door-step or at the open window, reading one of the books of the "Misa," or one of the multitude of printed prayers to "Nuestra Señora," or religious tracts, which are sold for a couple of farthings apiece at the corner of every street. Every night thrice she rose to count her beads and pray, sitting, half-audibly. One night her adopted child's fate was trembling in the balance, for he had been drawn for the army, but was seeking exemption on fair grounds. As the old church-clock tolled the hour each time, she rose from her bed, counted her beads, and prayed for her favourite's deliverance. The fatal morning dawned,—exemption was not to be his. I saw her on her return from the Governor's office. "How are you, Alfonsa?" I inquired; and the touching answer came from her quivering lips as the tears rolled down her careworn face, "Bien, con mucha pena," that is, "Well, but with many a pang." Nothing shocked poor Alfonsa so much as to hear it said, "To-morrow

we will do this or that." She always, in an earnest voice, added, crossing her breast, "Si Dios quiere" (if God will). But she, poor thing, was very ignorant; and, on the sorrowful occasion just referred to, she deemed that her prayer was not granted, nor even heard, because God was angry with her for having neglected some religious ceremony of her parish church!

But such cases are the exception, and are far from being the rule. And if, in his carelessness about public worship, about his private devotions, and in the general absence of that definite personal religion, and sense of responsibility to his God, the Spanish miner presents so marked a contrast to his English brother, so also is the child-like trust in God, and the Christian resignation in times of trial, which characterize the latter, too often absent.

Seldom, if ever, do you hear those well-worn words, "The Lord will provide," or any word denoting the existence of trust in the Fatherhood of God, from his lips. In their place are found words and ideas which have a far different colour. "I suppose they will be able to rub on;" or, "It is bad, very bad, most unlucky." In fact, trust in his "luck" takes the place with him of trust in his God. True, no one is so cheerful, so joyous as the poor Spanish miner; but his joy is a surface joy, his cheerfulness is built upon no foundation. He is light-hearted rather because he refuses to think at all about the future, with all its unknown dispensation of weal or woe, than because he can leave it in the hands of a Providence which he feels to be all-merciful and all-wise.

And as regards Christian resignation, when days are dark or friends are few, but little is found in the

Spanish miner's character. His resignation is rather the resigning himself into the hands of a merciless necessity, than those of a kind and wise Providence. "It is hard, but it is my fate;" or, "Bad, but one can't control these things;" or, "Ah! life is a mule-cart journey, you must get into some ruts," are some of his common phrases. And of that bright hope of immortality which so often has astonished and delighted one when seen bearing its blessed fruit at the death-bed of a poor labourer or miner in some rude cottage or outlying hamlet in England, the poor Spaniard has but little share.

By his rude *cuatré* (small bedstead used by the better class of miners), still oftener by his rude litter spread upon the brick-floor of his one room, his wife and some other good woman will repeat, as he turns his face to the wall to die, the prayer to God, to Christ, to the Virgin guardian of the town in which he lives, but his lips hardly respond; he is thinking of his work, of his employers, of all that he is so soon to lose, rather than of all that he so soon may gain. But he does not complain, — and that is great praise; seldom does suffering of body wring a murmur from the blanched lips of the dying Spaniard. "If I am to die, what matters it whether it be to-day or to-morrow?"

There is, however, one point in which the Spaniard, with his indifference, his ignorance, his superstition, contrasts very favourably with the Englishman. "Cant"—by which I mean that excess of superficial religious talk so common among the Methodists of Cornwall and Wales—is a thing unknown to him; nor does he ever condemn, or even harshly judge, the religion of his neighbour. And in this last-named

point, both among high and low, the Roman Catholic Church strikes me as grafting a more favourable, because a more modest and charitable, spirit upon her sons. Where all are under the Church and her decrees, there, then, is found not egotism, no exaltation of self, no religious pride. Perhaps the Puritanical spirit finds the grey skies and sombre mists, and rugged sounding shores of the Cornishman, better suited to its development than the bright skies and sunny plains of Spain,—though whether or no climate and scenery have, together with race, their share in fostering any special phase of Christianity in a country, is too deep a matter to be more than mooted here.

In another point the character of the Spanish contrasts favourably with that of the English miner. The former is, essentially, a sober man. Rarely is he "given to drink." He always commences his morning with a dram of aguardiente; but this is needful for the climate, to fortify the inner man; indeed, if you take the Spanish miner before he has had this potion, he is more inclined to be quarrelsome than at any other time of the day. The proportion of "drinking men" in any Spanish mine is about three per cent., whereas in England, although not more than that number may be regular drunkards, yet there are very few who do not sometimes "break out," and go "on the spree."

Again, the Spaniard is the very child of mirth, the Englishman of seriousness. The Spaniard sings as he goes to his work, sings as he returns from it, sings at his work; plucks the bright flower of the Campo to put it in his button-hole; loves society and good-fellowship, and spends his evening trolling forth to

the tinkling guitar the wild ditties of his land, of love, and mirth, and jest.

How different is the Englishman! Life is no jest to him,—rather it is a serious reality. In silence he wends his way in the grey of morn to his work; silently he works; silently he returns homewards; silently he smokes his substantial English clay-pipe, and drinks his muddy ale, only now and then speaking a word or two, those words being the result of the musing of many minutes!

As regards contentment, the Spaniard, again, bears off the palm from his better-fed, better-housed, better-educated brother. No matter how small his wages, he never dreams of striking: coarse though his fare, it is eaten with a smile; comfortless though his lodging, he will welcome you to it as his "casa"; standing out in marked contrast to his brother across the sea, who is seldom, if ever, really contented.

Again, the Spaniard is the very child of courtesy; he is, as it were, one of "Nature's gentlemen." He could not say or do a rude thing. To walk with the stranger; to relieve him of any load he may be carrying for a mile under a burning sun; to offer you—and the offer is meant—a share of his simple meal, if you chance to come upon him when dining,—is simply his habit.

The story told of a rencontre between the late Bishop Wilberforce and a Berkshire peasant lad is not without its point under this heading. The Bishop's keen eye, during a confirmation, espied the countenance of a lad presented for that rite which he thought he recognized as the countenance of one whom he had previously confirmed, and, on his chaplain apprising the lad of that prelate's surmise,

"Him's a loiar, then," was the rejoinder of this wild bustard of the Berkshire Downs! A Spaniard would shrink in horror from the bare idea of using such language.

The impulsiveness of the Spaniard, again, comes out in marked contrast to the slow, calculating disposition of his English brother. As an instance of the two characters, the following anecdotes may be cited. A Spanish miner, with whom the writer of these pages was living, took umbrage at the conduct of some woman—of very shady character, alas!—towards himself, and, in his passion, turned the woman out of the house, saying, "She is a *mala muger*" (a bad woman). I said nothing; but two hours afterwards he had invited the "*mala muger*" to the share of his homely fare, merely saying, in answer to my look of surprise, "No one can afford to throw stones." An English miner, if my memory serve me correctly, acted very differently on a similar occasion. His neighbour's wife had grievously gone wrong in breaking the wedding tie, and it came to his ears. He slowly lit his clay-pipe, meditated for a whole evening, and then, having made out the bearings of the case entirely to his own satisfaction, and the unhappy girl's condemnation, he announced, as he rose to retire to bed, the conclusion to which his cogitations had led him in the following terse sentiment:—"Why, I'm saying to myself, you must be a naughty woman; surely you must,"—a conclusion on which he afterwards doggedly acted to the end of his days.

Sad as is the impurity before marriage, which most certainly does exist both among the mining and agricultural populations in parts of England, it must be confessed that it is more than equalled by the tone of

morality after marriage in the Black Country of Spain.

It is no uncommon thing for a woman to have her "querido" (favourite, or darling), and the husband, in his way, being equally guilty, both are fain to wink at the delinquencies of the other. And although the mother guards her daughter from all opportunity of misconducting herself, by external precautions of the most stringent and tyrannical nature before marriage, yet cases are not uncommon where a mother will actually sell the honour of her daughter, a child of fourteen or fifteen, for the trifling sum of a few Spanish dollars. The indifference with which impurity is looked upon and spoken of in the Spanish mining-districts (and, perhaps, in others also) is something truly alarming.

I have said, that a certain sense of honour and a great natural warmth of disposition aid in compensating for the Spaniard's want of definite religion and sense of moral duty. And instances of the former are not wanting in the daily life of the Spanish miner.

A short time since, two Spanish pitmen quarrelled below ground, and decided on repairing to the bank to settle their quarrel by the knife. The one went up by the ladder, his adversary, feeling weak, requesting to be wound up in the bucket, showing his perfect trust in the good faith of his foe. Most carefully, indeed with extra precautions, when he arrived at the bank, the miner brought his adversary safely to the surface. The two men fought, and the man who had so carefully brought his adversary into the daylight fell, mortally wounded, by his hand.

Again, you may see a crowd of three hundred

Spanish miners forming a ring around two of these combatants. The fact of a fight is soon known to the Municipal Guards, who, sword in hand, hasten to the spot, probably to find one being carried off to hospital mortally wounded. Should a single foul stroke have been given, the bystanders will detain the survivor, and hand him over to custody as a coward and a villain; but should the fight have been a fair one, the survivor, though wounded, will make, or have made for him, a safe escape, nor will one lip be opened to inform against him and betray his name.

To sum up what has been said in terse, but true sentences, it may be asserted that the Spanish miner is the very child of mirth, the English of seriousness. The Spaniard loves the song and the dance; the Englishman, his beer drank in silence, and his own fireside. The Spaniard loves to wander; the Englishman's boast is that he has worked on one farm for twenty years. The Englishman seeks to save money, and increase his wages; the Spaniard never saves, he lives but for the passing hour, and would think "agitation" too much trouble. To the Spaniard (of course, when I say Englishman and Spaniard, I allude to the peasantry), life is a jest; to the Englishman, a reality, and a stern one. The Spaniard is naturally polite; the Englishman naturally boorish. The Spaniard affects dressiness, even in his rags, and has a passionate love for gaudy colour; the Englishman affects a decent dress only on Sundays, and is content with the old grey, brown, or white smock-frock; or, in these enlightened days, when smocks are, I hear, fast disappearing, he is pleased with the customary suit of solemn black. The Spaniard plucks the bright flower of the Campo, and puts it in his button-hole; the English-

man, regardless of its charms, plods his way past his canker-rose or cowslip unheeding. The Spaniard is passionately fond of music and noise—his mule without bells were no mule to him; the Englishman likes quiet, and is not musical, as a rule. The Spaniard loves society; the Englishman, solitude. The Spaniard is ever contented; the Englishman, ever prone to grumble. The Spaniard has an abundant store of natural wit; the Englishman, *poco, poco*. The Spaniard is naturally intelligent; the Englishman, naturally obtuse—what intelligence he has, he owes to the village school. The Spaniard is naturally demonstrative and affectionate on the impulse of the moment; the Englishman takes a long time to like you, and then he never lets you know it. The Spaniard has no sense of truth or truthfulness; the Englishman loves either. The Spaniard is uneducated; the Englishman, educated. The Spaniard makes the best of things—he is easy-going; the Englishman seeks to better them. The Spaniard never reads; the Englishman reads much. The Spaniard is very talkative; the Englishman, very taciturn. The Spaniard is passionate; the Englishman, morose or sullen. The Spaniard thinks nothing of cursing; the Englishman thinks it wrong. The Spaniard has no sense of personal religion; the Englishman, in all cases, a certain sense. The Spaniard, as a composer, composes profane, the Englishman sacred, doggerel. The Spaniard uses the knife; the Englishman, his fists. The Spaniard has naturally the manners of a gentleman, be he ever so low; the Englishman has none, so far as I know, but what have been drilled into him. The Spaniard's skies are bright; the English, overcast. The Spanish cigarillo and wine are light and ephemeral; the Englishman's clay-

pipe and beer are most substantial. The Spaniard's food is light; the Englishman's, very solid. The Spaniard is loose in morals; the Englishman, strict. The Spaniard is madly enraged; the Englishman, doggedly brutal. The Spaniard is proud of his country and family; the Englishman, self-respectful. The Spaniard is reckless from not thinking of danger or of life; the Englishman, courageous—he weighs the issues, and makes up his mind to risk the stake at all hazards. The Spaniard is cruel to his beast; the Englishman, merciful. The Spaniard is generous on impulse; the Englishman, from principle. The Spaniard is thoughtless, and free from care; the Englishman, contemplative, and full of care. The Spaniard is boastful; the Englishman, not so. The Spaniard is somewhat idle; the Englishman, somewhat too industrious. The Spaniard lives in an untidy stone shanty; the Englishman, in a neat cottage, with a garden and a beehive. The Spaniard meddles in politics; the Englishman leaves them alone. The Spaniard seldom shows his religion by word; the Englishman, very often. The Spaniard is a sober man; the Englishman, prone to drink. Very affectionate, very warm-hearted, with a certain keen sense of honour,—bright, cheerful, genial, sober, and full of courage,—the Spanish miner's chief faults, perhaps, are his untruthfulness, his passionateness, and his want of purity. And, as to his social condition, it will hardly bear comparison with that of his brother in England.

Good education, good fare, good lodging, are ever offered to, if not accepted by, the English miner; and, in addition, his wages are constantly on the increase. Not so with the Spanish miner. His educa-

tion is nothing at all. True, the Spanish Education Department theoretically provides that every son of the soil shall be compulsorily educated, but the practice differs widely from the theory. Not one miner in five can read or write, and, if he can, his choice of books is very limited. The books offered him are either superstitiously religious or violently political. Such a flood of true religion and useful learning as is offered to the English poor, in the cheap literature of the day, is wholly unknown to Spain of to-day.

And the Spanish miner's fare is most ephemeral compared with that of his English brother. It may be here noted that the Spanish miner has just begun to drink and value English beer. He says,—“It nerves my arm; it cures my cough!” Truly the beer, potatoes, dumpling, and pork of the sturdy Cornishman will build up a stronger frame than fruit and light acid wine, than soup and savoury fries!

As to the lodging of the Spanish miner. In one close, ill-ventilated room will sleep ten or twelve strong men. Many, for the summer months, sleep in tiny shanties, thatched with rushes, flocking into the towns when the winter rains commence; or, if the miner has a tiny stone house to himself, it has no windows, it is stone-flagged, it is crowded with pigs or poultry, too often not his own; and, should the cold hand of sickness be laid upon him, his fare and treatment in the hospital of his township is poor indeed. Not long since, in an hospital with which I was acquainted, it was proposed to vote twopence per diem as an allowance for the food of each sufferer!

How different, how far more blissful, the lot of his brother in England! Even as I write fancy brings

before my eyes the regular work, the high wages, the ample fare, of the English miner, and, standing out in bitter contrast to that of the Spaniard, his neat cottage, with its glass windows, maybe his trim garden, his village school, his grey and lichened church. True, his lot may have, doubtless has, its hardships, but it is bright compared with that of the poor Spaniard,—and more, it is, by contrast, a blissful lot.

Drawing this chapter to a close, my mind cannot help following the poor Spanish miner to his hospital bed, and his last, long home. To be bled by unskilful physicians, after the long journey in the litter from the distant mine, the scene of his accident; to lie gasping out his last with little definite hope for a bright future; to know that, "when all is o'er," no decent, comely burial will be his, but a rough passage to his last resting-place, and a shallow grave,—all this is sad enough, yet over it all the poor Spaniard triumphs, surely in some strength not his own. Cheerful he lives, uncomplaining and grateful he turns his pallid face to the wall, and allows his spirit to pass, without fear, into the hands of Him who gave it.

CHAPTER VII.

AMUSEMENTS OF THE SPANISH MINER.

WE have now accompanied the poor Spanish miner in the dull routine of his daily or nightly toil; we have followed him to the mine and through the mine; we have seen him hewing or blasting in the dim smoky light in the granite womb of the earth. His diseases, and their causes and remedies, the accidents to which he is liable, have all been briefly touched upon, not, the writer hopes, without enlisting the interest and sympathy of all his readers with the cheerful, warm-hearted, heedless worker. We have followed the lead from the lode, or vein, to the surface, and seen it in its various stages, from the dressing-floors to the furnace, until it pours out, in a crimson, livid stream, into the moulds to be shipped for the market.

It is but a plain unvarnished tale that has been placed before the reader's eye of the Spanish miner as he is to-day, as he will be to-morrow. His living, his dress, his coarse ephemeral fare, his peculiarities of disposition have been dwelt upon; and his general happiness, his contentedness, his courtesy, and his keen sense of honour have (Chapter VI.) been contrasted with the discontent, boorishness, and seriousness of his English equal, together with his dogged and persistent habit of condemning others less

blessed or weaker than himself. The writer has written wholly without bias; he has drawn no conclusions, he leaves it to his readers to do so.

Little, however, has been said about the amusements of the poor miner, when at winter-time the evenings draw in,—here night falls suddenly, like a pall, on the dreary landscape,—and when the wintry rains pour down in tropic torrents, and the streets are ankle-deep in black mud, rendered even blacker by the sickly flicker here and there of a tiny oil street-lamp. And when winter comes; when the wild wind from the Sierra sweeps the barren plains, and howls its mournful dirge through the windowless shutters of the poor miner's dwelling, enfolding one in its damp chill embrace as it is encountered at the corners of the straggling streets; when guitar and song are no longer heard in the streets, which echo sadly to the step of the lonely traveller; when the dark-eyed, gracefully-draped Spanish girl opens a little way the caged window, and looks anxiously up at the sky, only to close sorrowfully, and with a sigh, the shutters of her cage, and to go to bed, murmuring, with a shudder, "Ahi! Dios mio, que malo tiempo hace; no vendra!" ("Alas, what wretched weather! He will not come!")

No, little Novia; he will not come to press your white soft hand in his own, and think himself happy to stand at your bars for hours! Go you to bed, and may your dreams be pleasant ones!

Where, on such a night, are all those young fellows who, on a fine night, make the streets of a Spanish mining-town to ring again with their coarse jest and wild Andaluz impromptu song? Are they at home? Some of them, perhaps; but the some, it may be, are

but few; nor shall we find them until we go to the *café*, the gambling-room, and, alas! the brothel.

Each of these places, on such a night, will be crowded with these fearless, long-suffering, courteous, devil-may-care fellows, who go through life acting, only too literally, on the command, "Take no thought for the morrow."

The low *café*, where he sips his coffee and *aguardiente* in congenial company, hears his dearly-loved tinkling guitar, and can laugh at the coarse jests (very often jests at the expense of the priests, alas!) of the *comico* on the stage; the gambling-room, where he can satiate his keen appetite for speculation, and where the complicated game (which is the favourite) gives ample scope to those who desire to mulct him of his hard-earned wages; and, lastly, (oh que no!) the brothel, where he sits, even until the first streak of dawn looks in reproachfully upon him, listening to the sad-gay banter and loose jests of prostitutes. These three resorts are the haunt of the Spanish miner. He cares nothing if he lose the whole of his day's wages, paying down the money with a smile and devil-may-care air; nor is he ashamed to be seen coming from the haunt which is worse than the gambling-room. In these places he enjoys himself after his fashion. Noisy and boisterous in the two, in the gambling-saloon he is ever silent and keen-eyed.

The amount of gambling and prostitution is awfully large; it is immense. Yet, be it added that the sins and immoralities of these poor misguided men are, more than half of them, sins which he does not consider to be sins at all. He has been face to face with them from his earliest childhood; he has committed them under the eyes of his parents, unchecked, as

early as he was capable of so doing. Sins which are fostered oftentimes by the example of his father, his mother, and sometimes even of his priest.

In Spain the peccadillos of these last form a constant subject for the coarse jest and ridicule of the lower orders; but, as a priest, you may never criticize or decry what he says or does in church. There, at least, his office sheds rightly a halo of protection around him; there, he is God's appointed minister, and not to be criticized.

Taking all this into consideration, it is hardly wonderful that the Spaniard, child of impulse as he surely is, should obey his passions blindly, and that the self-control which he has never seen exhibited should be a stranger to him.

Arrived at his one room at evening from his mine, the miner sits down to his *céna*, or supper, which is possibly rice and goat's flesh boiled to rags, served up in one large dish or pan, into which all the other occupants of the same room also dip their spoons, sitting around the tiny deal-table in a circle. The regularity with which each, in his turn, takes his morsel, the regularity with which the spoons move dishward and mouthward, would surprise a stranger at first sight. This meal concluded, the poor fellow drinks a *caña* or two of Val-de-Peñas wine, lights his paper cigarette, and sallies forth to the places of resort above mentioned in the following order:—the *venta*, or wine-shop, the *café*, the house of ill-fame. The *venta* has been described in a previous chapter; it is enough to say that on a dirty night these tiny dark cells are thronged. At about 8:30 the wine-cup is laid aside, and the miner, with marvellous regularity, wends his way to the *café*.

The charge for entering the *cafés*, of which there are four in the town from which I write, is, on common nights, *nil*; on feast-days, a trifling sum paid at the door, namely, one real ($2\frac{1}{2}d.$), entitles you to a ticket for refreshment to that amount. The appearance of the *café*, with its saloon and small tables dotted about, is much like the saloon of an English gin-palace, and holds about 200 to 300. The room is so densely filled with smoke that you can scarcely see the stage at the farther end. A rude curtain falls in front of the platform, hardly concealing the rude attempts at scenery. All around you are miners sitting at the tiny tables, and your ear is half-deafened by the click of the dominoes; every one plays, and they are furnished gratis by the proprietor.

The time for which these men play this weary game, without even looking up, reminds me of a characteristic of the Spaniard which is greatly to his credit—he is essentially a patient man, never tired of waiting; he will light his cigarette, and sit on your doorstep, hour after hour, waiting your convenience, and, when summoned, will appear with a smiling face. The following anecdote may be cited as an instance. I told a Spanish miner to wait outside my house, and quite forgot that I had so done. Five hours afterwards, on starting for my ride, I saw him still waiting. Apologizing for my apparent rudeness, he said, “I am very much at your disposition, señor.” And one could not forbear inwardly drawing a comparison between this poor fellow’s perfect good temper and courtesies and the probable rough bearing of an English pitman under similar circumstances.

But it is time to seat ourselves among the homely, cheerful crowd at the *café*, and learn more of the

Spanish poor. Around us are men of every variety of provincial costume, every variety of occupation. In Spain the bitter distinction between class and class is unknown; the servant who waits at the table of the nobleman joins in the conversation of the table; the gentleman smokes his cigarette with the shopman; and so a few gentlemen are sprinkled here and there among this motley crowd of miners, shopmen, water-carriers, olive and vine dressers. Women are absent, save a few brightly-dressed gipsies, who set town etiquette at defiance, and, once seated, you (Oriental fashion, is it not?) clap your hands for the waiter, or make that hissing noise so common to direct attention in Spain. Coffee, milk, aguardiente, maraschino, rum, brandy, and lusciously sweet "gaseosas" (soda-water, lemonade, &c.), can be had, although the rum and brandy are execrable. "Refrescos" of sarsaparilla, lemons, almonds, &c., and other sweet and cooling drinks, are the fashion.

If you know the miners, one of your old friends will instantly hiss, and put a chair next to himself for you; he will insist on treating you, and be offended if you refuse. These poor fellows would sooner spend their last farthing than allow the Englishman to pay; and, frequently, when you have not seen him, your friend will have seen you, and paid the waiter for all you have had. You ask for your account, and the answer is, "Esta pagado" (it is paid for); nor will you ever know to whom you are indebted, the waiter being bound in honour not to disclose the payer's name! With such little outbursts of natural kindness, with such little amenities, do all, from the rude miner to the nobleman, soften and brighten life as they glide idly down its swift-flowing stream.

Sit down with these four men at the table in front of the stage. See, one has already "given the sign," as it is called, to the waiter that he means to treat you because he knows and likes you. Try and "give the sign" before him to the waiter, signifying that you yourself wish to stand treat, and you will invariably find your own pitman has been beforehand!

And now all around you are waiting for the tattered green curtain to rise, and time is hanging somewhat heavily on hand. Some one orders a bottle of lemonade, the cork of which, flying up, drops amid a group of dominoes; the miners are delighted with the joke; every one orders a bottle of the same, and the corks are popping all over the room; the lemonade, however, is left untouched, for the most part, these simple fellows having thus paid fivepence a-piece for this amusement!

Perhaps you have come without tobacco for your pipe. I did so once, and in a moment three pouches were lying on the table, the owners severally entreating me to "do them the favour of using it." So courteous, so easily pleased, so kindly is the Spanish miner.

The curtain rises, and the music begins, or the acting, as the case may be. Accompanied by a pianist, a dark-eyed girl, in flaunting dress, with ribbons of many colours, commences first one, then another, of the wild provincial ditties of Spain. The Malageña, or Malaga song, a great favourite; the Manchega, which makes the eye of the miner of La Mancha sparkle as he thinks of the wine-skins of those desert, yet wine-producing steppes; the Sevillana; the Gadi-tana; the Granadina, also a great favourite. The