

same wild, monotonous air, the same melancholy modulations, prevail in each song—songs so peculiar in their music that the notes could not be written, nor could an Englishwoman acquire the art of singing them correctly.

The Spaniard is passionately fond of these wild ditties; they have a strange hold on his heart and fancy; and English music he despises. "Of course, no Inglés can sing our songs; for in England they sing quite differently." The singer and player both receive 2s. 8d. per night, and wine, &c. Sometimes some real, wandering gipsies will be paid for the night, and beguile the time with the dances of Andalucia, accompanied by the guitar and castanets. Every one in the audience who can do so is expected to keep time by the clapping of his hands; and every one shouts, "Holé, holé-é-é," at the top of his voice. So exciting is the scene that one can hardly refrain from joining, as every nerve of the dancers quivers and vibrates, and the beads of perspiration fall down their faces.

But better than the song and dance—for are not these ever at hand?—the Andaluz miner loves the theatrical representation. It may be one of the capital Zarazuelas, which are great favourites, and, although rude, spirited. The bell has rung; the curtain goes up; the pianist is at his post; the prompter's whisper is heard from the box. In front of a huge looking-glass sits a withered and repulsive-looking old woman. Her doncella, or lady's-maid, a dark-eyed, graceful girl, is preparing her mistress for the theatre, to which a certain Don José is to escort her. The old crone "fancies herself" to a tremendous extent; and when rouge, scent, paint, and cosmetic have been freely

applied, she looks truly hideous. But she loves herself, and love, they say, is blind!

Don José is dear to the old lady, and she firmly believes that she is dear to him; but he has merely courted her to win the person of her maid! Don José comes; he looks at the old woman, with a sly under-glance at the young one. With a cold shudder he shuts his eyes, and kisses the old crone's painted hand fervently.

The sweetly pretty daughter of the old lady now enters. She is to be left at home, while her old-young-lady mother goes to the theatre. She kisses her mother, and with tears welling from her expressive, lustrous, black eyes, sings a touchingly pathetic song, which brings down roars of applause from the two hundred miners and peasants:—

“Vamos á dormir, vamos á llorar,  
Mientras al Teatro se va mia mama.”

“We to our beds must go, we both must moan,  
While to the theatre mother has gone.”

Don José deposits the old lady at the theatre, slips away, and comes back to dress his hair at the looking-glass and make love to the lady's-maid. She enters the room and offers to finish his hair-curling, &c., for him, which she does with a comical mixture of bashfulness and love, the two singing a really pretty duet, “Thanks to Heaven, the old lady has gone!”

But to pursue the scenes any further would be useless and a waste of time; enough to say, that the love of the Don is found out by the old lady, that he pulls down her false hair, that wit and grotesque action abound. The Spaniard is always ready to applaud anything good, and to hiss mercilessly any piece of

bad acting. But spirit, broad wit, and extravagance are his idea of what is good acting.

And now let us leave the *café* and the stage, and pick our way to a sad and sin-stained house. Fain would I leave unmentioned this, the last part of my subject, relating to the most objectionable phase of the miner's life. Only let me say, that while I relate the naked truth, hideous as it surely is, my readers must recall what I have said ere this about the great disadvantage under which the Spaniard, in this respect, labours; namely, the evil example set before him in his boyhood.

Immorality in England, if I may be allowed the expression, is not immorality here. Here, impurity is talked of, not with bated breath, but as though it were a matter of course, and universal in the daily talk of social life.

Houses of ill-fame, alas! abound on all sides, offering their temptations freely to those who require little temptation enough to lead astray their wandering steps, and make them fall; and the gay banter, and lit-up rooms, and freedom of these unhappy homes, seem to have a marvellous attraction for the poor, hard-worked pitman, who spends most of his day at the end of some dark level underground, in a space six feet in height by four in width.

Alcahuetas, or procuresses, are a well-known class—wretched old women, who walk about the streets to entice young girls from thirteen to sixteen into their vile dens, from which, to speak figuratively, there is no return. Over such hellish portals well might stand the poet's words:—

“All hope abandon, ye who enter here.”

Mothers, too, forgetting natural affection, honour, and

duty, not unfrequently take their daughters to these evil houses, sitting down quietly to chat with the scarcely less vile ama, or mistress of the house, while her young daughter is being seduced in the next room, the mother receiving, as blood-money, perhaps three or four dollars, or less. Blasphemy, too, is added sometimes to this unnatural crime,—a woman known to me, as she left her daughter at one of these houses in the embrace of some lewd debauchee, saying, “Vaya usted con Dios y con la Virgen!” (“God and the Virgin accompany you!”)

Another mother whipped and starved her two daughters until they yielded to her unnatural resolve, and, it is needless to say, falling, they never rose again. But, truly, one’s heart bleeds, and one’s blood boils, at such things; and, for the poor fallen girl, as well as for the poor miner,—taking into account the fearful strength of their early temptations, the dreadfully polluted atmosphere in which they are brought up from early childhood, their no religion, and few ennobling influences,—taking, I say, all this into account, one can but feel that they are of those who, having received but little, are of those on whom there is no room for harsh judgment.

God forbid that such things should be; but they are, and the facts here chronicled are merely such as have come under the writer’s personal experience, or have been verified carefully by him.

Tyrannically is the Spanish girl guarded until her marriage, fenced in by external precautions, taught little or nothing of that inward guide which alone, if cultivated, is stronger than the magnet’s force, harder and safer than the bar of iron, truer and sterner than the guardian mother. Bitterly, when bolt and bar are



withdrawn by her marriage, does she resent her former treatment, and wildly does she throw down the reins of self-control, even, alas! in some cases, conniving at the sin of a younger sister. I speak of the few, of the lowest classes.

The married life, alas! has too often its degrading blots, the husband and wife having each their "querida" or "querido."

But this is the dark side of the picture, and gladly I throw down my treatment of this part of the subject, a part which, to be truthful, and present a faithful portrait of the Spanish miner, I could not dismiss unnoticed.



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

## CHAPTER VIII.

## CORNISH MINERS IN SPAIN: A STUDY OF CHARACTER.

To transport Cornwall into Spain—the land of fantastic, drifting mist, and iron-bound coast, and sounding sea, to the sunny, cloudless skies, and dusty plains, and sweltering olive-groves of the Spanish Black Country—to bring the thoughtful, grim, Puritanical, repelling Cornishman to the reckless, light-hearted, easy-going, and attractive Andaluz, seems a strange course at first, and it will naturally be asked, “What has Cornwall and the Cornishman to do with Andalucia and the Andaluz?” To many who read these pages it may be unknown that Cornwall, with her old spirit of enterprise, and Devonshire have formed in the wilds of Spain, wherever mineral abounds, several colonies of their stalwart sons, consisting of mining agents (called here “captains of the mine”), engineers, pitmen, dressers, smelters, and others, who live, surrounded by Spaniards, on the lonely, and oftentimes unhealthy, mines, bound together by a sort of natural freemasonry, suffering often great privations,—such as the lack of good food, the scarcity of books and newspapers, and the want of society,—but working pluckily, and with a perseverance and skill unknown to the Spaniards, and still, to a certain extent, preserving intact their national, or rather provincial, characteristics, while adding to them, imperceptibly to themselves, but surely as the blazing

sun of Spain bronzes their face, a certain quaint, Spanish humour and drollery, a certain liberality of thought and opinion, which go far to fill up the blanks of the Cornishman's always fine and manly, but somewhat unattractive, character.

Taking, in his own land, his character very much from the surrounding scenery of rugged rock, and gnarled trunk, and barren grey moorland, and drifting mist, and breaking sea, the Cornishman here loses much of his inherent ruggedness of character. Perhaps the bright sun melts off some of the angles; certainly, the novelty of the surroundings, and the magnitude of the scale of scenery, and the intercourse with foreigners, broadens his mind, and he learns at last to believe that Cornwall is (possibly) in England, and not "England in Cornwall." "I never thought a Catholic could be a good man," said a stalwart pitman to the writer the other day, "until I came to Spain."

The writer's duties, for a long time past, have necessitated his spending much of his time among the Cornish miners, employed some by English, some by French, some by Spanish, some by German Mining Companies in Spain; and although his work has oftentimes been very weary, yet even when baffled by disappointment, when scorched by the tropic sun, when drenched to the skin by the fierce tropic rains, or beaten back by the fierce, cold *levante*, or east wind (that scourge of the pedestrian in Spanish wilds), the thought that he was in duty's path has ever sustained and even cheered him; while the warm, hearty, iron grip of the Cornishman has welcomed, and the gay, witty prattle and courteous speech of the Spaniard has enlivened, his path; the study

of the two very opposite phases of character occupying, in contemplation or writing, many a dull and idle hour.

Certainly, if an Englishman "in society" desires to learn how he may come to value mankind, and "honour all men," he should serve a few months' or years' apprenticeship in the wilds of the Spanish Black Country, for there he will learn to value and love those who, at first intercourse, are apt, whether Spanish or English, to be abrupt and even repulsive in manner, while at heart most loving, and full of sterling good qualities.

It may be worth a passing thought, the question how far many men are spoiled by the blessing of living, as it is called, "in society,"—by which the writer means in a place and among surroundings where they meet daily so many, that they pick out, as it were, the most attractive for their friends; and too often pass by many from whom they might glean the best things—cleverness concealed under eccentricity, great warmth of heart under semi-rudeness, great forbearance and patience under dullness or apparent mediocrity.

One, men say, is not "in society" (perhaps he is the better man for that!); another is (so they choose to think) "rather eccentric"; a third is "too uninteresting." And so men pass by one and the other, neither doing any good to, nor receiving any good from, them.

Of all the many whom we meet in our daily walk of life, we value but few, too often simply because we know none; and we know none thoroughly, because in the number of acquaintances offered to us in a country like England we find, or fancy that we find,

a compensation or substitute for a few true friendships, thus valuing quantity above quality.

Such was not the method of Him, who, walking among His fellow-men with an all-discerning eye, could call no one "common or unclean." So did not He.

It is true that we often seem, on a superficial survey, to have nothing in common with the majority of men whom we meet; but may there not be among them many whom a closer knowledge would enable us not only to value but to love?

My walks around the mines, which, at the spot whence I write, lie dotted over the country from a mile to four miles apart from each other, have been most uninteresting as regards sport and scenery. True, one may carry a gun and get a chance shot at a snipe in the hollows, or a plover on the barren slopes, or a raven, or half-gorged white vulture, on his return to the crags and mountain fastnesses of the Sierra; but such chances, in a country singularly treeless and open, are few and far between. The scenery, too, is devoid of water and of wood; dusky glades of olives succeeding to slope after slope of broad beans or barley; in the distance, the magnificent serrated ridges of the Sierra Nevada, Sierra de Jaën (this last a very fine range, unmarked on the best maps), and the Sierra Morena, now red with the morning sun, now blue, purple, and crimson in the hazy heat of the noon-day; the road beneath one's feet either knee-deep in dust, or flooded with streams of down-pouring water—a road that knows no "happy mean"; blocks of granite sticking up here and there, and low-roofed ventas (boasting bad wine and worse company), built of the same material; these, with now and then a rather

fine tumble of bare granite rocks, were the not very interesting surroundings of the writer's walks.

And if the walks, as regards scenery, are barren of interest, certainly the chosen companions of his tramps were even more so. These were the "guards of the mines." In Spain there are "guards" of everything: the guard of the "campo," the guard of "the olives," the guard of the rich man's "casa." Generally, men are picked out for their good conduct to fill these posts, and who generally combine a keen love of sport with their jealous care of their owner's property. These men wear a brass plate upon the breast, bound over the left shoulder with a broad leather strap, the plate bearing the name of their mine or master. Gun on shoulder, they wander about the premises at night, and hesitate not to take a hot shot at any luckless intruder.

My favourite companion, a night-guard on an English mine, always rode behind me, an attendant being necessary in this country, both for appearance and for safety, whether you be afoot or on horseback. Juan, with his cigarette in mouth, esparto-grass sandals, and long Moorish gun slung at his saddle-bow, cut a singularly eccentric figure. But his donkey, a white male, was as eccentric in character as his master in appearance. Whenever he espied a lady-donkey in front, he bolted (only, however, directing his attention to those of his own spotless colour), and, if sharply reined in, gave utterance to a roar so long, so loud, so pitiful, that every donkey within a radius of half-a-mile would express his ostentatious sympathy with him. The bit is not used for donkeys or mules in the interior of Spain, an iron band across the nose serving the same purpose. Even in Cadiz

and Malaga one constantly sees a pair of high-spirited carriage-horses with no other curb than this nose-band, and the thought has suggested itself to me that this is the meaning of the Scriptural phrase, "I will put my hook in thy nose."

Very forbidding is the approach to a Spanish Government mine—the long, dusty rock-strewn road, lined with its ambling, lead-laden donkeys, each carrying 2 cwt. of mineral in a couple of small sacks. Now and then a litter resting in the middle of the road on its way to the hospital, the four sturdy bearers wiping their perspiring brows. Here and there, half-hidden by wild thyme and rosemary and tangled bents, hard by the road-side, you will come upon the shaft of some ancient mine, usually of an oblong shape, denoting its Roman or Phœnician origin. Strange to say, although oftentimes seventy feet in depth, these disused shafts have no railing around them, and nothing to warn the traveller of his danger.

The mine here alluded to is a Spanish Government mine, one of the wealthiest in the country. It consists, so far as architecture is concerned, of one large, low-built granite quadrangle, wherein live the governor and the *employés*, the house of the former being easily distinguished from the rest by the small patches of white paper pasted over the doorway upon the outside. These are the *multas*, or papers denoting the pecuniary mulcts or forfeits of those miners who have neglected their work, with the names of the offenders appended. In a Spanish mine, these fines are very severe, and, the money being stopped from the week's pay, there is no escape.

The Spanish "working-engineers" are certainly clever artisans, to judge of the many by those I have

known; and the Spanish civil engineers and mine inspectors are among the best educated and most skilful surveyors, and most pleasant companions (many are men of high family), that one could wish to meet with; yet the Spanish Government mines constantly prefer to employ, as their working engineers, Englishmen.

The two maquinistas on this mine, Paul and Michael, were both typical Cornishmen, and vividly recalled some of the characters in "Westward Ho!" to my mind—the one deeply religious, the other with an innate love of adventure almost amounting to recklessness. They both "hailed from" the western wilds of Cornwall, and lived together in a tiny one-storied shanty close to their engines. Michael, or Don Miguel, was a splendid specimen of the powerful, dare-devil, adventurous spirit of the West of England; he had been pitman at Botallack, shared in the pilchard fisheries, had come to Spain, not so much for the higher rate of wages as for adventure. "Though I have got a wife and child at home, I don't mean to join them until I have been to South American mines. Perhaps I'll die abroad, as grandfather did; he always said he would, and so do I. It runs in the blood, I s'pose."

To show the rough character of those really hearty and honest men, Michael's first greeting of myself may be quoted. "Come at last, have ye? The right time, too!" Then (seeing I hesitated),—"Come in and take the luck of the pot; no lies about it; you won't be asked a second time. If it were the Queen of England, I wouldn't say more, and we shan't see she." The sturdy, independent spirit, tinged with religion, found utterance in the older man, as we



ate our Dutch cheese and crisp endive, and drank our Val-de-Peñas wine, while an unsightly Spanish woman prepared a bowl of gazpacho for our delectation:—"There were twenty men tried for my situation, but I didn't care for twenty, no, nor for twenty hundred. Why should I block my fancy for others? But," he added, with real seriousness, "I *du* think 'tis wrong to spend my Sundays as I *du*."

Of course, on the Spanish mines no difference is made between Sunday and week-day, the festivals being the only general holidays; and each man can claim a holiday either on the day of his own patron saint, or that of one of his mates. These poor fellows' lot is somewhat hard, owing to the causes above mentioned; and, leaving a wife and young family at home, their hearts are often wrung by the black-edged letter that comes to tell them of the loss of one of their loved ones. Such a missive came to one of the Welsh captains of a mine which I visited; and the poor fellow—a stalwart, handsome Welshman, who, in his few years "on the mines" had saved several thousand pounds—said to me, as he spoke of his darling's grave,—“Write an epitaph for her, sir; and, mind ye, it is to be something strange!” He meant, I suppose, uncommon! But whether this enforced separation, with the meeting of husband and wife but once in three years, led, as in this man's case, to a tightening of the strings of love, or whether, as in others, alas! it leads to immorality, and to their loosening, it is equally hard.

Several points in the peculiar character of the Cornish miner in Spain must be now briefly dwelt upon. Among others, it must be mentioned that he is full of anecdote when a stranger visits him. In

fact, his loneliness and isolation forces him to bottle up all his stories until the rare opportunity comes of retailing them. And, I must say, I have heard more stories full of dry humour when sitting with these men than anywhere else; stories spoiled, however, by the slowness of their narration, the *modus operandi* of telling them being two words, a mouthful, a collection of thought, then two words more. One or two of these men's stories are worthy of being repeated.

The older man of my two entertainers aforesaid (Don Pablo) had worked in England for a certain Mr. Dunn, a rigid Quaker. Mr. Dunn one day asked Paul to take luncheon, and Paul refused; but afterwards he repented, and went to ask for the food. "No," was Mr. Dunn's answer, "you said you would not, and I never allow any lies to be told in my house."—"So," said Paul, "I lost my dinner." Next week, Paul returned to his work, the thought of his lost meal still rankling in his mind. Mr. Dunn asked him again whether he would take some luncheon, and, determined this time not to be done (forgive the play), Paul said "Yes." A huge Cheshire cheese was set before him uncut, and Paul inquired of his host, "Where shall I cut it?"—"Just where you please," said Mr. Dunn.—"Then," said Paul, "I'll cut it at home, and—you won't have any lies told in your house, you know."

The moment one of these men tells a story, it is a *point d'honneur* that his fellow should cap it with another.

When this story was finished, another "English artisan in Spain," of the same ready wit and rough-hewn calibre, joined us. He was a smith by profession, and, in appearance, the very type of him who stands

“under a spreading chestnut tree.” This poor fellow, originally of Tynemouth, had lost twelve children in Spain and his wife; he had been twenty-four years in the country, and had had what is commonly called a rough time of it. When his children were born he had hesitated to have them baptized by the Spanish priests, owing to the belief, prevalent among these poor, and oftentimes ignorant and prejudiced, men in Spain, that, if baptized by the Spanish clergy, his children might be called upon, as Spanish subjects, to take up arms for their country. And so the poor fellow had buried his unbaptized children in the mountains, taking their bodies up at night, slung upon a mule’s back! Very pathetic were the simple words in which he commented upon this sorrow: “I can tell ye, it went uncommon hard with me to have to do it; it oftentimes nearly made me throw (*i. e.*, vomit).” For seven or eight years he had been engaged in making a railway in the north of Spain, and his experiences, when related, were most interesting. He used to sleep, week after week, his rug rolled round him, in a disabled railway carriage; once, for three months, he never undressed, and never interchanged a word with any one save his two hundred Spanish workmen! “But,” said he, a tear rolling down his rugged cheeks, “I experienced, when I laid up ill in a tiny, hill-side cottage in the north, more kindness than I have ever received before or since. The peasantry used to leave, by night, skins of wine outside the door, and, to this day, I have never found out who were my benefactors.” Thus testifying to the warm, generous nature of the peasantry of the north of Spain.

This man had been so long in Spain—all his children, too, had (naturally enough, being born in

Spain) spoken Spanish so much from their youth up, that his English—a mixture of the North Country dialect and the patois of the Spanish miner—was almost unintelligible to me, as he recounted, as his contribution to our round table, how “he never refused to take a boite with any one, because once he left grandfeyther’s mooton to run home and be in time for a bit o’ roomp-puddin’ at whoam. When he got there, the other childer was doin’ apple-doomplin’; so he took and axed sister to bring back the roomp-puddin’, and she took and give him such a hidin’ as he never had before; since which he had never refused a bite, whenever, however, and wherever he could get it!”

This story met with great approval from the rest of us: it was such a simple, rough, and pathetic tale, and told with real difficulty, in the nearest approach to his native dialect which he could command.

These men very soon become considerably Spaniardized themselves. They stay in the country, perhaps, for twenty or twenty-five years, until they have, by sheer hard work and fair fighting, amassed a few hundred pounds, when they either, tempted by the bright sun and the high wages, settle down among the Spanish mines, or else return to the old country, to find the home broken up, the friends dead and gone, the links too often snapped, and their constitution enfeebled by the Spanish heats, and wholly altered,—utterly unable to bear well the damps of Cornwall or the cold of the North Country. Their grown-up children constantly marry among the Spaniards, and make Spain their home, talking, at last, a jargon (when they essay to speak English!)

so strange, that it would puzzle even Professor Max Müller himself.

In marrying a Spanish girl, the Englishman in Spain either takes his chosen spouse to the Cathedral at Gibraltar, to be married after the rites of the Protestant Church, or else, as is too often the case, he makes, to save trouble, a "recantation" of his old faith, and is received into and married after the rites of the Romish Church. For the Protestant marriage of a Spanish girl is not recognized as such in Spain; and even the officials who take the annual census of the names and ages of the several households in any town, persistently call the lady thus married by her maiden name alone, and enter her as such on their list. Sometimes, but not often, an illicit connexion, ending in marriage, springs up between the English miner and some dark-eyed Spanish lassie; but it may be they marry after all, and the Spanish law (offering, as it does, a good field of study for English jurists) legitimizes all the children born before wedlock the moment the marriage is concluded.

Having spoken of these men's lonely and isolated life; of their warm hospitality; of their rugged, broad wit; of their extraordinary patois; of their hardships and their frequent intermarriages with the Spaniards,—a few lines shall be added with regard to their intercourse with the Spanish miners under their command. The state of the case, briefly put, is something like this:—The Englishman has no courtesy and very little tact; and quarrels and "desgustos" arise between the two from the following causes: (1) because the Englishmen, for the most part, do not understand or speak the language really well, and so make mistakes, and give and take offence; and

(2) because they do not understand, and make allowance for, the peculiar temperaments, ideas of caste, and notions of the Spaniards. The Englishmen are too matter-of-fact for the Spaniards. The Englishman thinks to himself, "Have not I treated that man fairly?" whereas the poor Spaniard, with more refinement, if less truth and solidity, says to himself, "Has he not spoken rudely to me?"

One is constantly reminded of the story of a Sussex peasant and his wife, who, in the following anecdote, typify exactly these two phases of human character. A poor wife goes to visit her husband in the stocks, on the village green, and says to him, "They can't have put you there, John?" and the poor fellow, with Cornish matter-of-fact, says, "But they have, though!" But though he is—according to Spanish ideas—discourteous and too matter-of-fact, the Spanish miner looks up to his English captain for his dogged determination and pluck, for his truthfulness, for his strength of limb. The Cornishmen are self-possessed, mentally and physically powerful; and the Spaniards respect them accordingly for their *sang-froid* and their strength.

As an instance of the *sang-froid* of the English miners and captains in Spain, the following may be quoted. The smith above referred to said to the writer, "I've been twenty-four years in the country, and I've never met with any contradiction from a Spaniard, barrin' as my life has been twice attempted."

Again, a Spanish miner, discharged for a third offence, once came at this man (who had no weapon) knife in hand, to deal him a deadly blow. The North Countryman folded his arms, and stood like a rock.

The Spaniard, seeing his right hand near his breast, and surprised by his coolness, said, "Ah, you have a revolver!"—"Well, then," said the North Countryman, eagerly seizing the suggestion, "I am the best man! And," added he, telling me the story, "I reckon I did not tell any lie, either!" And any one, looking at his muscular frame, and cold, stern eye, would have believed that he was "the best man."

This same man told me that once a man of his own gang drew his knife upon him. They closed and wrestled, and the Spaniard was thrown, and his knife taken from him. "Good-bye, señor," said he, as he went away. "Of course it is good-bye for ever; I shall be turned off now."—"Not at all," said the Englishman. "I bear you no ill will, and only threw you because you forced me to it. If you don't say a word, I never shall."

But it is time to leave the "Bed of Rosemary" (these mines have strange names,—"The Omlet," "St. Peter," "The Broad Shaft"), and to wend our way across the rocky, broken ground towards a little, isolated, desolate mine, on which lives "Captain Jack, the Preacher."

These Cornishmen are most of them Methodists, and some of them are rendered still more severe in character by an admixture of teetotalism; the characters formed out of, or braced by, these various conflicting elements, forming the most marked contrast to that of the thoughtless, ephemeral, tolerant Andaluz.

A good man, according to his light, a true and brave man, but one without real liberality and without real human sympathy, so self-opinionated as almost to "divide the world around him into my idee

and humbug,"—such, if you can conceive of it, is Captain Jack, the Preacher.

Captain Jack had been leader of a class in the wilds of Western Cornwall, and he could never forget it, nor could I. Never did I cross the sandy, rocky, thyme-covered waste which led to his lonely cottage, without a cold shudder; for I well knew that, however tired and thirsty I might be, no refreshment or rest was forthcoming until after a good argumentation. Of "living nearer to God," of "sins blooded out," of "buildin' upon the Rock," was Captain Jack's daily converse.

A short, thick-set, uneducated man, with a keen, kindly eye, a hearty grip of the hand, and a prayer for all, such was Captain Jack. The very isolation of the mine where he dwelt—a very small one—had tended to make his character sterner and his opinions more fixed than they would otherwise have been. That the Preacher tried to do his work, I know well; that he succeeded, I am not so sure. There was in his character a sad lack of human sympathy, and, without that, no man can win men.

Religion of a certain sort makes some really nice characters strangely offensive, and I was always glad when the Captain laid aside the "spiritual man," as he called it, and, after the sermon and prayer, became once more the "natural man." I loved to see his kind, bright smile and old self come back, as he lit his short black clay, and poured out a bumper for the "old woman," and me, and himself.

For the sturdy, middle-aged Cornishman who comes out here from his own solitudes simply to live a few peaceful years of hard work, and save a lump of money (by high wages, coarse cheap fare, and living on the



mines rent-free), the life of the mining captain in Spain may be very well; at any rate, it is harmless, if he escapes calentura, and may do good. But for any educated gentleman, who has not many resources in himself, and has been accustomed to society at home, and books and papers, to come and live upon these mines,—and many, even now, are trying the experiment,—I should give the advice *Punch* gives “to those about to marry,” namely, “don’t.” The climate is disagreeable, and, if not absolutely unhealthy, very trying; the society is uncongenial; the country is most unsafe; the sport wretched.

And, as regards the middle-class mining captain, it is questionable whether he very greatly benefits himself by leaving his native shores. True, the wages are fair; for an agent, £150 per annum, with house (such as it is), servant, firing, and lights free, being about the average. But we cannot look at life only from a financial point of view. The agent has to run the risk of calentura, or fever; also he is in a strait for years until he has acquired the language of his new country. Then he has to leave his wife and children behind him, only seeing them once in every three years for three months (the time and period allotted by the companies). True, he has permission to bring them, but he must pay their passage; and, when here, his wife has no society, his children no opportunity of getting educated.

## CHAPTER IX.

### EL CARNAVAL IN A SPANISH MINING DISTRICT.

THE Spaniard of the interior treats life as a jest, and never loses an opportunity of showing that he does so. While his sun shines brightly, while the castanets click and the guitar tinkles, he lives—lives for the day, forgetful of the morrow. Should the sun be overcast, should illness come on, he creeps into the darkest and most remote corner of the room, and curses the “unkindly fate” that tempers the sunshine of his life with the shower, and spreads the dark cloud of illness over his house as well as over the skies of his land.

The seasons of his Church’s festivities are true galadays to him. He throws himself into every amusement, and spends his last penny on glitter, music, and better fare.

Ask him why he does not lay by for a rainy day, he will say, “I don’t know that it will ever come, and I certainly shall not be happier for thinking of it.” Or ask him why he does not save for old age, and he will tell you, “Perhaps I shall never reach it.”

Carnaval-time is with him a season of amusement—a scene of noise, and glitter, and mirth, in the rude, strange revelry of which he is quite at home, and with the childish delights and amusements of which he can fully feast his mind. In “Los dias del Carnaval,” or,

as they are called by the higher class, the "Carnestolendas," his soul delights: in the prospect of their coming, in their delights when they have come, in their memory when gone, he lives, and smokes, and smiles.

What is it to him that but last night a batch of political prisoners went guarded closely past his door, for whom Carnival had, and will have, thoughts and memories all too joyless? What to him that the poor lassie next door is going to fast, and sew, and weep, for the conscripts have been drawn again, and her Novio has been drawn for service?

Long before the streets were placarded with the huge posters, or, as they are called here, "Los Bandos," saying that the 15th, 16th, and 17th, being "Los dias del Carnaval," masks and mascaradas may be worn in the streets "until set of sun," and a general holiday observed; long ere this, the town of which I write—a large country town under the ragged woods and barren granite peaks of the Sierra de Jaën—was waking up: making dresses, buying masks, idling, gambling, smoking, dressing up figures in all sorts of strange costumes, laughing, or working, if needful, to save a few pesetas for the Carnaval.

On Sunday, February 8th, the scent of the coming festivities hung not lightly in the air. At eleven o'clock two bulls, dressed out in gayest streamers, headed by a brass-band playing its loudest and its liveliest, and followed by a crowd of gaily-dressed men and women of the lower orders,—peasants, muleteers, artisans, gitanos, in every conceivable costume,—promenaded the streets, and then proceeded to the bull-ring. The bull-fight then took place—a subject already sufficiently described. Thousands thronged the ring;

even the poorest had his peseta ready to pay for admittance.

Next day entered my trusty Manchegan servant, her pensive face bright with smiles. "Good news for the English officer! Mañana, carne de toros en la Plaza!" (Beef in the market to-morrow!) Never, by any chance, do you get beef in the interior save after a bull-fight: it cannot be killed, owing to the heat and its bulk, in the summer; and, owing to the absence of fodder,—I mean grass and herbs, the Campo being barren and often treeless,—no cattle are seen in the winter months. So, mañana, for the first time during my residence here, since the last bull-fight, nearly eight months ago, we had beef. Joyous sound! joyous smell! Thoughts of a good dinner, after living on coarse fish, and goat's flesh, and dry hares, and still drier red-legged partridges, for months, to get a slice of beef. I thought, "I will eat it; I will close my eyes; I will stop up my ears; I will put an English pipe between my lips, and I will resolve that I am in England!"

It was not to be. The beef was like boiled shoe-leather, and smelt badly.

Not contented, not satiated with the bull-fight, the cock-pit must also be open for the Spaniard. It is simply one pitched room, in a small house on the outskirts of the town; and thither, about once a fortnight, flock the partisans of this cruel sport. The tinker, the miner, the small tradesman, the fondista, will keep his cock, and back it, on Sundays, for an ounce of gold; or, if he cannot afford that, for a dollar or so. The passion, in Spain, is not for sport, but for the gambling which is a frequent concomitant of the sport. With all classes gambling is one of the recognized and

lawful pursuits, or, at least, pleasures of life. You shall be sitting in a small public gaming-room, devoted to "rouletta," in will walk a peasant, who has been hoeing beans all the week at two pesetas (20*d.*) per diem; he will stake a dollar, lose it, and walk out with a smile. The cocks may be seen in little wicker coops, side by side with decoy-partridges, standing in the sunny street, their masters sitting beside them on the pavement outside their house-door. The best fighters come from England, and an English cock is backed readily at two to one. The tails of these cocks are cut off, and, with their feathers clipped and docked, they present, eating their wheat or barley and shreds of raw goat's flesh, a pitiable and disgusting sight. The fight generally results in a death!

Throughout the week before Carnival gaming was everywhere to be seen. The small itinerant carriers of "rouletta-boxes," which are about the size and look much like the organ of the itinerant organ-grinder in England, flocked into the town, each box being well filled with biscuits—the same crisp, well-curled, flimsy biscuit that is eaten with an ice in England—and instilled into the veriest child the first idea of gambling. The wheel and numbers are on the lid of the box: the child puts a farthing on the box, and says, "Numbers 3 and 5"; the wheel turns, and, if it stops at 3 or 5, the child gets a pennyworth of sweet biscuits. Frequently I have seen a mother give her children—perhaps of the age of five or six years!—a farthing a piece, and lead them through the throng to the rouletta-box.

Games of the very roughest kind were the order of the day. Here is a description of one or two. A heavy water-pitcher was slung upon a rope, fastened, from

window to window, across the street in which I live; traffic—traffic means only panniered donkeys and mules, and an occasional horse or lumbering mule-cart—went on uninterruptedly, for, as soon as a muleteer wanted to pass, the two tallest girls or women, who were amusing themselves with the rope-and-pitcher play, lifted it over his head with a small, forked stick. Imagine this in one of the chief streets of an English country town of 30,000 inhabitants! What would Policeman A 1 not have to say to it? “Thoroughfare obstructed.—Disorderly lot.”

The rope-and-pitcher game is this: one of the party is blinded, and allowed to make so many slashes in the dark at the pitcher; but he cannot see, and the party tell no tales, so one of the hoydens who stand by ties a string to the pitcher, and, when the blindfolded boy is just getting near the mark, she pulls it along the rope to the farther end. Whoever hits and breaks the pitcher wins, and then the fragments are used for an “all-round” game of ball!

Other games and amusements were of the following kind:—In the Plaza, or Market Square, where the scene is always a strikingly picturesque one, day and night, summer and winter, a young fellow, who had lost one leg in the war of the north, played the game of “Bull.”

This was the game; and the crowd around his play-circle was so dense, that I could hardly elbow my way into quarters sufficiently close to admit of my seeing it properly:—The man—a fine young Manchegan, of some twenty-three summers—took off his wooden leg, and poised himself perfectly, standing still, or hopping about, in the circle, on the uneven, half-pitched

ground. His companion, a boy about eight years of age, put on his head a huge pair of bull's-horns, with eye-holes, &c., and, thus accoutred, rushed and butted again and again at the *ci-devant* conscript, who, hopping nimbly aside with his one leg, and also with the help of a glaring scarlet handkerchief which he threw, if hard-pressed, over the boy's eyes, most neatly avoided the shock. This butting and hopping aside, sometimes round and round the ring, hotly pursued by the boy with the bull's-horns, sometimes merely letting the horns almost touch his stomach, and then deftly stepping aside, throwing the scarlet over the bull, would last as long as ten minutes. Then, taking off his cap, the hero solicited and received cuartos, or dineros of the better sort. The Spaniards were delighted; the Plaza rang with their shouts of "Olli!" "Olli!" and their laughter.

The game was strangely rough and rude; but, remember, we are in the interior. The surroundings, however, were picturesque. The Plaza, or broad open square, dotted all over with the fruit and vegetable-vendors' tents, changes its general hue from month to month. In the melon months its general hue is dark green. When the chestnuts, walnuts, and common nuts form the chief store, then the prevailing hue is a soberer one of russet-brown; but the moment that the naranjas, or oranges—the grand fruit of Spain—and lemons come into season, the whole place changes its colour, and the prevailing hue in January, February (this last the chief orange month—every child, every peasant, has his orange in hand or pocket), and March is the rich golden yellow of the orange. They lie in heaps all over the market-

square, and can be bought for less than a cuarto a piece; *i. e.*, four for a penny.

It has been well said, by an Englishman once well known, who has passed to his rest, that "of all the birds, he loved best the robin, because it always trilled out its plaintive ditty when the leaf of autumn began to fall, and the other birds ceased to sing."

"Sweet messenger of calm decay."

And, further, that "of all the fruits, he respected most the orange, because it came, with its cooling acid juice, cheap, and within the reach of every fever-stricken pauper in cottage or hospital, just at the time when other fruits could not be procured."

The Spaniard thinks the same; and he will tell you, "for bile, for calentura, for inflammatory attacks, God has sent an antidote in the orange of Spain." The great medicine for biliousness, costiveness, and for other complaints, among the Spanish peasantry of the interior, is the juice of an orange squeezed into a glass, with two farthings'-worth of magnesia.

The Spaniards believe firmly that the *fruta del tiempo* (fruits of the season) are the only proper medicinal agents, and they act upon their belief. Every mother gives her child daily three oranges; every peasant eats an orange three times a day, with a slice of bread, after his meals; and whether he be riding his donkey or driving his mule-cart, the peasant will not miss his orange.

If the one-legged man, and the *mascara de toro* assaulting him, were a great source of amusement to the simple-hearted, rude, and ephemeral crowd that daily hemmed them in, no less so were a tiny dog, who, shaven and shorn as to his hind-quarters to look



like a poodle, danced to the squeaking of a fiddle—this latter, as rare here as a guitar in England—and the wooden figures, stuffed with bolsters, which were set up, dressed out, outside several of the houses, to be looked at, pelted, and thrown over, amid roars of laughter, or carried on the shoulders of women up and down the street, in the midst of an admiring and vociferous crowd.

Such was the aspect of our town until the morning of Sunday, the 15th, dawned, and saw at every street-corner the huge posters announcing the advent of El Carnaval. Sunday, the first of the three days, was wet and cold, and only the very roughest and rudest masks were seen promenading the streets. Here was a man, dressed simply in his wife's embroidered petticoat, put on like a surplice, and a huge, triangular paper hat, black in colour, and two feet in height, with no mask on, but his face blackened, or painted scarlet. Here was another, dressed as a woman in her *deshabille*; the dressing-gown being a chintz window-curtain, loosely wrapped round him. He wore a mass of false hair, and a paper mask, a woman's face. In such-like rough costume, followed by a cheering crowd, did the few most resolute and determined masqueraders, of the lowest classes, promenade the dripping streets, embrace in the street any one they chose—it is not etiquette ever to attempt to discover who your saluter is—and enter houses to offer their congratulations in squeaking, falsetto voice.

The smaller *ventas* (wine-shops), with their cool, dark, den-like shops, their tiny dripping counters, green basins, and two huge casks of wine of La Mancha, the rough-red and the satiny-white (*Val-de-Peñas, tinto y blanco*), were thronged. But there was

no drunkenness to speak of, for the Spaniard, ill cultured as he is, is no drunkard.

On my return to my house from my dreary Sunday's walk, the middle and some of the better classes were all turning out in masks to a huge ball at the casino, which commenced at ten on Sunday night and ended at five on Monday morning.

One incident occurred, which may here be mentioned, at this ball. Men, of course, went, many of them in the dress of women; and no one could tell whether his partner was man or woman, for every one talks in a shrill falsetto. A friend of mine went to the ball, and selected the prettiest girl in the room, as a sensible man would naturally do, for his partner. They danced together three or four times, and at last he met an acquaintance unmasked, and asked if he knew who his partner was. "Well, then, if you want to know, you've been dancing all the evening with your own old cook,"—a lady who not only had passed her fortieth summer, but who had acquired the habit of drinking too much aguardiente at times, so that her name had become somewhat of a bye-word.

Monday dawned chill and wet. Towards two o'clock, when, on a sunny Carnival-day, the streets would be thronged, rain fell heavily, and only a few draggled mascaras (mascara is both the mask and the wearer of the mask) picked their way through the streets, where pools of water stood, and streams of water ran down.

"A very bad Carnival," said an old peasant of La Mancha to me, as he brought me in, in a common washhand-stand basin, about three pints of Limonada de vino. This is the Carnival-drink of the peasantry of La Mancha. It is simply a mixture of water,

orange-juice, spice, and white Val-de-Peñas wine. It is brewed in an ordinary bed-room basin, and each person dips his copa (wine-glass) into it, and drinks and smokes the Carnival nights away.

Many weddings took place in the three days of Carnival. The poor are married at the church. The higher classes in the interior are married first by the priest in the drawing-room of the bride's casa; that religious ceremony over, the civil judge of the township (the Juez) performs another civil or ceremonial marriage. He holds a book with the form of marrying, the couple stand before him, and he decrees "that the children born of such a marriage shall be legal heirs," &c. Then, in the evening, comes a supper and a merry dance.

Tuesday was a typical Spanish day, and in the joyous sunshine, at noon, every house (poor or rich) sent forth its crowd of *mascaras* to promenade the uneven streets until set of sun. The very servant who, an hour before, has brought you your dinner, comes up to you in the street, screams in your ear (often saying something vastly impertinent, because she wears a "cara," as the lower classes call the *mascara*), and calls you Don Juan, or Don Jaime, in shrill falsetto voice. All, in fact, who like this rough play—among the middle and poorer classes, men and women too; among the higher, only men—put on whatever costume they like, of the roughest sort, and walk the streets, saluting every hapless stranger whom they know by name, grasping his hand, and absolutely "button-holing" him, until he is deaf with their screaming in his ear. Sometimes the *mascaras* "hunt in couples;" sometimes surround you in a body of six or eight; sometimes—constantly, indeed, for this forms

a great portion of the fun—they enter your house; you cannot tell who on earth it is, for they are dressed as a bride, as a Hussar, as a Moor, as a miner in his underground dress; and it is considered “ill-form” to attempt to unveil your guest or pry into his secrets.

What is seen in the streets of the interior, then, at Carnival time is this:—A motley group of people, in every variety of costume, but, be it known, of the very coarsest and the very gaudiest that can be imagined, strutting up and down the streets, screaming out in falsetto, like parrots, entering houses, *sans cérémonie*, and greeting every one they know in a somewhat demonstrative and alarming manner. The streets are simply one mass of colour, glitter, and noise, for many of these groups have castanets, tambour, guitar, and many sing loudly. At every street corner you will see the “fandango” being danced—the typical dance of Andalusia—by a man and woman in costume. Here is one dancing pair that I noticed especially. The man was the type of an Englishman (!), wearing a tall black hat, long black coat, and grey trousers; his face was blackened. His fair partner was dressed in a short white linen skirt, with tawdry lace, cherry-coloured jacket, bare feet, and hands laden with brass and silver rings. A more grotesque couple I have seldom seen. And with what spirit they danced, in the dirty road, on the uneven, pitching stones, until the perspiration streamed off their faces!

The “fandango” is a most peculiar dance. The two, each with the hands over the other’s shoulders, in every hand a castanet, which they keep on clicking, stand close to one another (face to face), and dance in an active, unceasing, untiring series of little tremulous shuffles, the whole frame seeming to

tremble. At the end of every minute the two pirouette round, and, face to face again, with clicking hands and whole frame vibrating, the guitar of their accompanist going tinkle, tinkle, tinkle monotonously, they commence another dance.

Here are some of the costumes which, while church-bells called to prayer, and beggars cried for "Una limosnita, por Dios" (an alms, for God's sake), and extra guards, with clanking swords, told no tale of peace or joy, thronged our streets:—A woman's petticoat, put on like a surplice, and a triangular hat, three feet high, and "shorts" and bare legs; mask, either blackened or scarlet face, or any sort of paper mask, long nose, or deformed nose, or no nose at all; woman's face, with woman's hair, and paint. These might be counted by the dozen. Spanish soldier's private dress, *i. e.*, long blue coat, and brick-dust coloured baggy trousers, and gaiters, green facings. Hussar uniform (all these faded or ragged)—light blue, yellow facings; black leather from the knee to the boot. Woman's dress—white skirt, with scarlet border a foot broad, yellow shawl, esparto-grass sandals, guitar or castanets; another—white dress plastered over with patches of yellow, red, and blue paper gummed on to the skirt, black mantilla. Here is another—An Indian, all covered with yellow and green paper, in strips, glued to his clothes. He looked like a wild Indian, or a walking forest of green and yellow, as the papers rustled, and flew up and down in the wind. All was colour, noise, and glitter.

But, to a thoughtful mind and a deeper-gazing eye, there was a sad and earnest background to the music and the paint of the light-hearted Andaluz. In the morning, and at mid-day, and at noon, as I passed

through the Plaza, the streets simply swarmed with beggars of every age and sort, men, women, and children, so wretched, so starved-looking, so fittingly dirty. They seized one's coat, if they were grown-up beggars; they showed their half-naked breasts; they thrust a stump of an arm into your face, tearing off the bandages; they showed their scars of scrofula or other affliction; the children seized your hand, kissed it, and would cling on like leeches. From one and all rose up the bitter, abject cry,—“For God's sake, señor, a bit of meat, a tiny bit, and the Virgin give you good health for ever and ever.” Poor, unhappy, forlorn crowd—they make one's very heart ache to look at them!

Then, sitting on the pavement all around the Square—I counted one row of sixty—were the labourers waiting to be hired for farm-work. Now and then a maestro would come up, and send off four or five to work; but when I passed at four o'clock there still sat there a crowd of these motley figures, poorly clad, many with naked feet, many with sandals, nearly all having no head-gear but a gaudy handkerchief tied over their crisp black hair. Poor fellows! with their rough vacant faces, and their unkempt dress, they seemed deserving of help; but work was scarce, and, like the labourers of ancient story, they sat there “all the day idle.”

Ash-Wednesday dawned, and one or two mascaras, in defiance of authority, still patrolled the half-empty streets; and, I believe, the “sardina” (a species of small, silvery fish, like the anchovy, which forms a staple article of food among the poor of the interior in the winter months) was carried out and buried, a ceremony still performed in some parts of Spain.

A few horns were blown here and there, I know not why, as I wandered home at dusk; and the soldier's bugle from the barracks outside the town, the setting sun, and the warm atmosphere, almost made one fancy that one was listening to the Aldershot bugle winding, on a bright, still summer evening, along the range of the Hog's Back!

Here is the prayer, sold for a farthing, and repeated aloud at the different houses of the town by poor and ragged vendors on Ash-Wednesday:—

“NA. SA. DEL CARMEN.

“ORACION. — Oh Virgen piadosísima! refugio y esperanza de pecadores, postrados á vuestros piés te suplicamos, por aquella honra que teneis de ser Madre de Dios, Virgen perpétua, que cuando mi alma pecadora salga de este cuerpo mortal, me la guardes y me la defiendas de los infernales espíritus, y cuando mi lengua no pueda llamaros, venid, Señora Madre mia del Carmen, acompañada de toda la córte celestial, y llevarnos seguros ante el acatamiento de vuestro dulcísimo Hijo Jesús, y para la hora de mi muerte le encomiendas mi alma: Virgen piadosísima, no nos desampares en aquella grave necesidad de la tremenda hora, y no permitas que por mis culpas se pierda en nosotros la sangre preciosísima que derramó tu dulcísimo Hijo Jesús.

“*Hay concedidas innumerables indulgencias por varios Excmos. é Illmos. Sres. Arzobispos y Obispos por rezar esta oracion y llevar consigo esta milagrosa imágen.*”

## CHAPTER X.

## LA SEMANA SANTA; OR, HOLY WEEK IN A SPANISH MINING DISTRICT.

To an outsider, dwelling in one of the most primitive old mining townships of Spain, the presence of Lent is marked by little of especial interest to the eye or ear. The "forty days" were ushered in by a Wednesday of glowing and well nigh scorching heat, the thermometer, towards the end of that season, standing in the shade at 75 and even 78 degrees.

The churches were draped in black; the priests looked wan and worn; every night, at the corner of every street, and even until one and two in the morning, the wild, wailing chant of the Lenten ditty, the words of which tell, in Latin, of the sufferings of the Lord Jesus, were heard, oftentimes breaking one's rest, and suddenly breaking off in a shout of laughter, which was strangely out of place in the mouth of the troop of boys of all ages who were the singers of a theme so solemn.

Twice a week might be seen the strings of donkeys, each bearing on his panniered sides a couple of huge "atun," the sea-fish chiefly sent to the interior during Lent, the long tails of which flipped up the dust as the donkey ambled along. My Manchegan servant-maid and her husband prepared a grand new dress for their patron saint, San Juan,—a dress of crimson silk,



with spangles of gold,—to be put on upon Easter Day. This was the gift of one of the parochial clergy.

Holy Week dawned at last upon a land utterly scorched up; upon crops of barley and wheat brown as sienna; upon plains of beans drooping as though they had been scalded with hot water; upon the wild flowers of the Campo, which should have been as a carpet of scarlet, and blue, and yellow, to the rock-strewn earth, all withering and discoloured.

My old Manchegan servant shook his head. "If rain does not fall, señor, in the Holy Week, God will send no rain at all." Bread had gone up two cuartos (farthings) in the one-pound loaf; the beggars added to their usual cry, "Ave Maria purissima, da me una limosnita, por Dios," the words, "Bread is going from the poor." Up to the Wednesday in Holy Week there was not a cloud seen in the sky; the earth was as iron, and the heavens above our head were as brass. Wearily I started for a four-mile walk along the rocky road to one of my most distant mines. The sun beat down fiercely as in summer; the levante (east wind) blew remorselessly along its clouds of dust. My usual companion, a Spanish miner, refused to converse about crops or weather; he was in the bitterest of bitter humours. Suddenly we came upon a Spanish peasant, with his sandals of esparto grass, trotting behind a donkey laden with a large pigskin of wine. "Caramba," said my companion, "if you are caught about to sell wine in the Campo, you will be fined 55 pesetas. I wish you joy."

The allusion was to the new "Bando" which had just been issued, and in which it was decreed that any person selling wine or spirituous liquors in the country should be mulcted in the sum of 55, and any person

committing the same offence in the town in that of 75 pesetas. This proclamation, issued by the Sub-Governor newly appointed under Marshal Serrano's Government, was considered severe; but as its provisions only extended from Holy Wednesday to the evening of Holy Saturday, it was obeyed in silence. It also, to insure the quiet of the town where it was promulgated, forbade, under a heavy fine, that any coach, mule-cart, or public conveyance should enter within the gates during the same period. This proclamation was, of course, a step in favour of the Established Church, whose ordinances, &c., have been set, as much as possible, at nought by the late Republican Governments.

I returned from a scorching, dusty walk in time to see the first procession of the Holy Week, which commenced at about half-past six on Wednesday evening. It was to start from the largest church in the town, and thither I wended my way. Outside the church was collected already, when I reached it at six o'clock, a crowd of 800 or 1,000 persons, chiefly men, the greater number of the mining or artisan class. They were standing in orderly and decent groups around the doors, and on the steps of the church, and far down into the streets, smoking, chatting, and discussing the all-important question, for the time, what sort of procession it would be this year. It should here be noted, that under the late Republican Governments, the shows and processions have deteriorated in character, and, owing to the law not holding its sheltering shield over them, much licence had become common; but now all has been altered.

The crowd had reached to some 2,000 ere the municipal guards, with their officer, came up, parting

the quiet but dense mass as they came, and forming in a semicircle in front of the church-doors, their glistening swords and red facings contrasting strangely with the peaceable appearance of the crowd.

I asked leave of one of these men to enter the church, and, with true Spanish courtesy, he replied, "It is open to all, strangers included; the religious ceremonies of Spain will bear inspection: enter, señor." A crowd was surging in and out of the church doors. I pushed in, and the sight within was a striking one. The building was naturally very dark, and darker still from the time of evening; the black drapery, and the wax candles lighting up one—only one—side altar. All over the rush matting of the church were men kneeling in prayer, or women sitting in the usual posture of Spanish women in church. Every seat was crowded, while up and down the aisles and nave passed a quiet, orderly crowd, not one member of which failed to sprinkle himself, on entering and leaving the church, with "agua bendita," the blessed or holy water. No service was going on, nor were priests or penitents to be seen as I passed up to the side altar, round which, in a semicircle, on frames, just like an English bier, ready to be borne forth, were grouped the images, each one larger than life, of our Saviour, St. John, the Magdalene, St. Luke, the Virgin, and other saints.

Suddenly, the crowd rising, surged towards the doors, and as I passed out into the quadrangle, two gentlemen, in plain English frock-coats and high hats, in deep mourning, attended by a single guard in uniform, passed swiftly into the church. As they entered, the brass band, which stood just within the portals of the church, commenced a low, wailing,

melancholy air, and every voice was hushed. This announced the advent of the Governor and one of the alcaldes of the town, who, when the Government at Madrid is favourably disposed towards the Established Church, invariably follow, in their official capacity, the processions, and attend the chief misas of their Church.

“When will the procession move forth?” I asked of a Spanish miner, slightly known to me, who played the cornet-à-piston in the band. He waved his hand towards the sun, now (it was nearly seven) sinking to rest, like a small golden ball, and said, “At set of sun.” As the sun sank below, or to the level of the horizon, shedding a ray of parting glory over the rocky, purple moorland, and making the distant Sierra look quite blue and sombre, the band struck up the Dead March in “Saul,” and eight men, barefooted, in long robes of sackcloth, girdled around the waist with a knotted cord of esparto grass, in which was stuck a small black cross, each one bearing a huge wax candle in his left hand, staggered down the church steps, bearing on their shoulders the image of the Saviour.

Each one of these men was masked, that is, his head was swathed in the same sackcloth, with two small slits, intended for eye-holes, but which seemed not always to be over the eyes. The image of Christ was slightly above the size of life. He was in a sitting posture, the tears flowing from His eyes. His dress was a simple dark-violet velvet cloak, with girdle. His legs were bare. His head was leaning on His left hand, His right pointing over the crowds. On His feet were sandals of esparto grass, as they seemed to me. The men bearing their Lord moved forward

about fifty yards, and planted Him upon the ground; while a crowd of fifty men, also in sackcloth, walking, taper in hand, two and two, barefooted as the rest, formed behind the image, the band playing, in repetition, stave after stave of the Dead March.

As the image was planted upon the stone-flags, about two hundred of the people—I need hardly add that I was amongst the number—fell down upon their kness in mute adoration. I only caught one whisper behind me, “The German cura (clergyman) goes on his knees too,” from a knot of Spanish miners, who, according to their various temperaments, religious ideas, and education, stood, crouched, or knelt just behind me.

A man, barefooted, robed in black calico—such it seemed to me—of the coarsest kind, descended from the church door, and putting to his mouth a long trumpet—also covered with black of the same material—blew three or four steady, prolonged, discordant blasts upon the instrument.

In a moment, the front bearers shouldered the image of Christ, and the long line of “penitentes,” or “humildes,”—for so the train of men in sackcloth are called,—marched forward with slow and solemn step. Every voice was hushed, every eye was fixed on the church doors whence the rest of the procession would come.

Although it was only set of sun, every one of the humildes, or penitentes, had lighted his wax or tallow candle, the length of these being, for the most part, about three feet, according to my measurement of one with which I was entrusted.

Then, from the church doors, the procession began to march forth. Next to the image of the Saviour,

“the Christ of us all” (for so we call Him here), came a banner of purple velvet, borne by two men (penitentes), with candles, in the midst of which banner hung a really beautifully painted picture of Christ, fainting beneath His Cross, and weeping, His tears bedewing the rough ground.

Then, walking two and two, as usual, barefooted, and masked as the others, came ten or twelve other penitentes, or humildes; then came the Magdalen—“the nearest to her suffering Lord who had done so great things for her,” as an artisan remarked to me. The Magdalen also was in a sitting posture, robed in a long drab cloak, her head between her hands, evidently weeping.

I turned round to my left, away from the procession filing out of the church doors, and a more striking sight it has never been my lot to behold. Right down the slanting, unpaved, uneven street, now crammed with thousands, moved the forefront of the long procession, the candles showing quite sickly and wan against the glow of the even yet sinking sun, the dark images standing out in bold relief against the steely-blue sky—the long line of pale sackcloth dividing the orderly but eager crowd.

Then came the image of the Virgin, robed in black velvet, bordered with spangles of gold, the costly garment she wore being new, and valued at £130 of English money. At sight of the Virgin, the patroness of the town from which I write, every knee was upon the earth—every eye, to my view, was hidden between the hands.

Then came, walking two abreast, some ten or twelve more penitentes, in the same coarse attire, of drab colour; then came St. John, partly robed in scarlet—

I know not why; and then, St. Luke. A long train of penitentes followed, all carrying lighted candles; then came the brass band, playing a mournful and stately refrain; then the priests, robed in black and white, one only being robed in dark purple; more penitentes; and then, with uncovered and bended head, dressed in decent black, the four chief officers of the town, walking abreast, and one more smaller image.

So they moved on, in a long, winding procession, down the narrow street of the Carneceria (flesh market), and right across the market square, or plaza, from which every tent, every mark of those that bought and sold, had been removed, leaving a bare, dusty quadrangle.

Every shop was shut, every window was crowded with ladies and gentlemen viewing the procession, all of whom were bareheaded. I followed in the wake of the long, sickly train of torches amid hundreds of others. Up one rough street and down another, for two weary hours, we wended our way; everywhere the procession was received with respect; everywhere the way was cleared for its approach.

At nine the procession, still attended by hundreds, returned to the dark and silent church; the images were disposed around the one dimly-lit altar; the crowds dispersed, each one, reverently and orderly, going to his own home.

In Spain, I have ever been struck and deeply impressed with the orderly conduct, the courteous bearing, of all those who attend any religious ceremony. There is no pushing, no jostling, as in England—all is quiet, sober, decent.

So ended Wednesday in Holy Week—whether religiously observed or no, I am not to say. What I

may say is, that it was observed in an orderly, an uncommon, and a striking manner.

And nearly all those composing the crowd were miners, and persons of still lower, even of the lowest, rank.

Let me pause for a moment here, in my description of La Semana Santa in the Black Country of Spain. Not one ribald word, not one profane jest, met my ears; but a friend, who was present, told me that on his pointing to the image of St. John, and saying, "Who is that?" a Spanish bystander said, with a ribald laugh, "Juan Ingles," *i. e.*, "John the Englishman"—in other words, "John Bull."

The same observer told me—and he is a man of the highest honour and veracity—that when he remarked to one of the crowd, "This is a beautiful procession," the answer was, "Buena, pero no vale la pena"; *i. e.*, "Good, but not worth the trouble!"

To me, however, the attitude of the crowd seemed the attitude of reverent and attentive worshippers. They surprised me by their orderly demeanour and reverence, rough miners as they were.

The next remark I would make is this. The humildes, or penitentes, as they are called, are of the people—miners, artisans, peasants, and a few gentlemen. They wear this rough sackcloth, they walk barefooted, they buy this dress out of their own earnings, and they pay six reals (1s. 6d. English money) to be allowed to walk in the processions. Is not this a great mark of faith—of a simple and childish faith, if you like, but still of faith?

We are now at the morning of Holy Thursday; the same fierce sun is smiting down, the same rainless wind is blowing. At 6.30, nominally, the pro-



cession was to start from the same church, and I went to attend it. The images, the crowds, the dresses of the priests, were the same; but this time all the penitentes were robed in black gaberdines, tied round the waist with coarse knotted ropes of esparto grass instead of sackcloth. They wore, each one, a high peaked cap, called "caperuza," a word denoting the cowl of a monk with a peak. These caps, the peak of which was in many cases two feet high above the head, were of a coarse black calico, similar to the lining used for coats, &c., in England. Most of these men, who were the same with the sackcloth-clad men of the previous night, were also barefooted; but this night—and to the end of the *Semana Santa*—no more masks to the faces were worn by them. In much the same order as before the procession moved forth; but the effect of all these penitentes, in their black gaberdines, and lighted candles and bare feet, was most striking. But, above all this, every one of these men, or nearly every one, wore, lightly thrown upon his caperuza, a crown of thorns (on Good Friday no one of these penitentes was without it)—a crown about three inches broad, of what seemed to me wreathed and entwined twigs of the thorny barberry tree. And not only were all these men, who had sinned and come thus to make atonement, clad in this costume, but hundreds upon hundreds of the children of the lower, middle, and upper classes were clad in the same costume, and followed the procession, taper in hand.

One little boy thus clad, the son of a Spanish doctor well known to me, came to me, and said, "My taper is very heavy. Hold it for me, señor."

Clad in black, then, and crowned with thorns, the

procession walked round the town on Thursday night ; but, as they started, a novel feature presented itself. I heard the blare of a strange trumpet, the rattle of a muffled kettle-drum ; and twelve men, in buskins, short leather tunics of buff colour, and with steel helmets, quietly joined the procession as it started, falling in just behind the image of the Saviour. Each one carried a dagger in his belt, a huge battle-axe he swayed high above his head. "Who are these?" said I to a Spanish pitman, who stood beside me. "The Jewish soldiers, who destroyed our Christ," was his answer, promptly and readily given. He meant the Roman soldiers.

To the rattle of the soldier's kettle-drum, and the same grand music of the Dead March, once more we went around the town,—down steep hill, threading low alleys, up principal streets, returning at nine to the church from which we had started.

One custom of the Holy Week should be here noticed. These *humildes*, or *penitentes*, are men who have openly sinned, and desire to join in this procession barefoot as an act of humiliation. As soon as the procession has dispersed, they take handfuls of flowers, and, going to the windows of the houses around, they knock for an audience, of course pulling the black cowl over their faces before so doing. They proffer the flowers to some girl they care for, and, as she cannot see them, Spanish etiquette votes it quite allowable for her to converse with them at the barred window. Then they return, next day, to another procession or no, just as they will. The reason of this proceeding is as follows. Each penitente has been a peccador, a sinner, and, as such, is unworthy of the society of women who are pure and good ; but,

having walked once barefoot and in sackcloth, and once in mourning gaberdine, he considers that he has, as it were, paid his dues to God and his Church, and is free to love and be loved again.

On Thursday night a Spanish gentleman came in to chat for an hour with me. Our talk was all of "La Semana Santa" and its processions, and I said to him, "Will you not come with me to-morrow to the early service?"—"No, señor," was his answer; "the service is at 5:30, with its sermon, and, as all the penitentes have been sitting up all night, the church will be thronged, and the people, some of them, tipsy, and excited, and noisy." I said no more, but, at five on the morning of Good Friday, I rose, dressed, and, with my trusty Manchegan miner (my servant, who carried a huge iron bar for protection), I hastened to the Church of San Francisco. The morning was bitterly cold, but the clear, steely-blue of the heavens gave no sign of rain; outside the church was a crowd of some two thousand people of the lower class. The most noticeable feature in this crowd was the troops of penitentes, dressed in their high-peaked black caps, gaberdines, and sandaled feet. To-day, each one carried on his shoulder a black-stained cross of wood, about four feet long.

The crowd was surging in and out of the church doors. I pushed my way in. The sermon was being preached, in short but emphatic sentences, to the crowd that came and went up the narrow aisle. No one sat, no one stayed long, for were there not thousands waiting outside? I passed up to the pulpit with the crowd, and what I heard of the sermon was eminently good. It was delivered in short, jerky, emphatic sentences, like proverbs, so that each person might

carry away something to profit him. "Your sins have condemned you, have they not? Lay them, with the heavy cross, upon the back of your Jesus."—"Are you so happy that you need no more happiness? Come to Him who takes away the load and gives peace to all." And then, carried by the crowd, I passed out.

At 6:30 the crowd had become dense, the sermon was over. The procession came forth, in the chill early morn, in much the same order as on the preceding days. Just as it started, I heard once more the "rub-a-dub, rub-a-dub," of kettle-drums, and the Roman soldiers hurried up a bye-street and silently joined in the procession.

Too weary to follow the procession in its long and winding march, I went home to breakfast. My servant put on the table a scanty meal, and said,— "Muy mal dia hoy" (a bad day this). I said,— "Yes, a bad day for food, but a good day for us all."—"Si, señor," said she; "Jesus muy hermoso" (yes, sir; Jesus was very beautiful). She too, then, had seen the procession! A hasty breakfast and I hurried out, for was not the "Crucifixion en el Campo" (Crucifixion in the country) to take place, some half a mile off, at 7:30? To the usual spot I went, a little plain of rocky, dusty, treeless ground, half a mile outside the town. On the ground where, in former years, the Christ had been crucified, stood a crowd of about six to eight hundred persons, of the mining class. All were waiting, like myself, to see, as had been the custom, the Crucifixion acted out. We waited for half-an-hour; at last the cry was raised, "No Crucifixion this year." In a moment the crowd had dispersed, and we were all hurrying to the

church of San Francisco, to which the procession would return. I stood, with the alcalde of the town and the governor (thanks to their courtesy to "the stranger"), in a little balcony above the church doors reserved for "officials," and, headed by the image of the Christ, crowned with thorns and bleeding great drops of blood, the procession came to the doors of the church. I looked down and around, and the sea of eager, anxious, upturned faces, as the Christ was put upon a raised platform just beneath me, was indeed striking. There and then the ceremony of "selling the Lord" was gone through. (Be it remarked, on each day is acted out some one act in the last days of the Saviour.) The money was paid from one hand into another. All eyes—and there were at least four thousand pairs, I shall never forget that sea of faces—were fixed upon Him who was sold. As the last piece was paid, the Saviour's right hand went up slowly above the assembled crowd, as though in mute appeal against the treachery, and then, from the lips of four thousand of that assembled multitude, went up to Heaven and to God the fierce, earnest, faithful cry, "Agua, agua!" (water, water!) This was the miners' united prayer for rain! Once more, the Saviour raised His hand—once more went up to the steely sky, now growing blue and hot, the impassioned cry, "Agua, agua!"

All was over for the present. The man-servant (a miner) of an Englishman resident here said,—“I saw the clouds begin to gather the moment Jesus put up His hand.” And so it was! Ere five o'clock on Friday night a slight shower had fallen, with the wind; the clouds had gathered, and hung, as a cloud of mist, upon the clear horizon.

One more procession moved out ere the rain commenced that evening, and from one and all there went up to heaven, as they threaded the thronging streets, the "saeta" (Latin, *sagitta*), or ejaculatory prayer, like an arrow—shorter even than the ejaculatory prayer of the Gospel, "Agua, agua!"

The body of Christ—the dead Christ—under a glass case, was carried then. It was taken to the church, and reared up aloft, guarded by two angels. No man, even a dying man, I was told, could receive the Holy Sacrament from that hour until the Resurrection morn.

On Friday night late, I strolled down with a friend to the church to see the Roman soldiers keeping vigil and guard over the body of their Lord. We were a few minutes too late. The doors were closed; but, within the church, shrilly as the wind whistled around its antique buttresses, we could hear the measured tramp of the Roman soldiers keeping watch over the body of their Lord. To my mind recurred, as I stood at the chill corner of the street, the words, "Ye have a watch; make it as sure as ye can." So ended the "Watch-night" in my mining town.

Saturday morning dawned. Thank God it dawned as a day of clouds and of thick darkness! The rain poured down in tropical torrents, and each uneducated Spaniard said, "The Lord brought it when He moved His hand."

A few guns were fired off, a few explosions of dynamite took place in the public streets,—evidences of a ceremony which is called here "shooting Judas," akin to that of the Mexicans and other nations, who, even from their ships in the docks of the Thames, flog and drown the traitor Judas. Hundreds of