

PEEPS AT MANY LANDS

SPAIN

BY

EDITH A. BROWNE

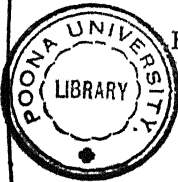
WITH TWELVE FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS
IN COLOUR

BY

TREVOR HADDON

AND

EDGAR T. A. WIGRAM



LONDON

ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK

1910



A WATER CARRIER. *Page 29.*

9782

Usain

to

TO SALOME

This to you, my ideal of a travelling comrade, as a souvenir of our joyous tramp-holiday in Spain, and of all the happy wanderings in which we twain have been friends amongst strangers, oft under conditions most strange.

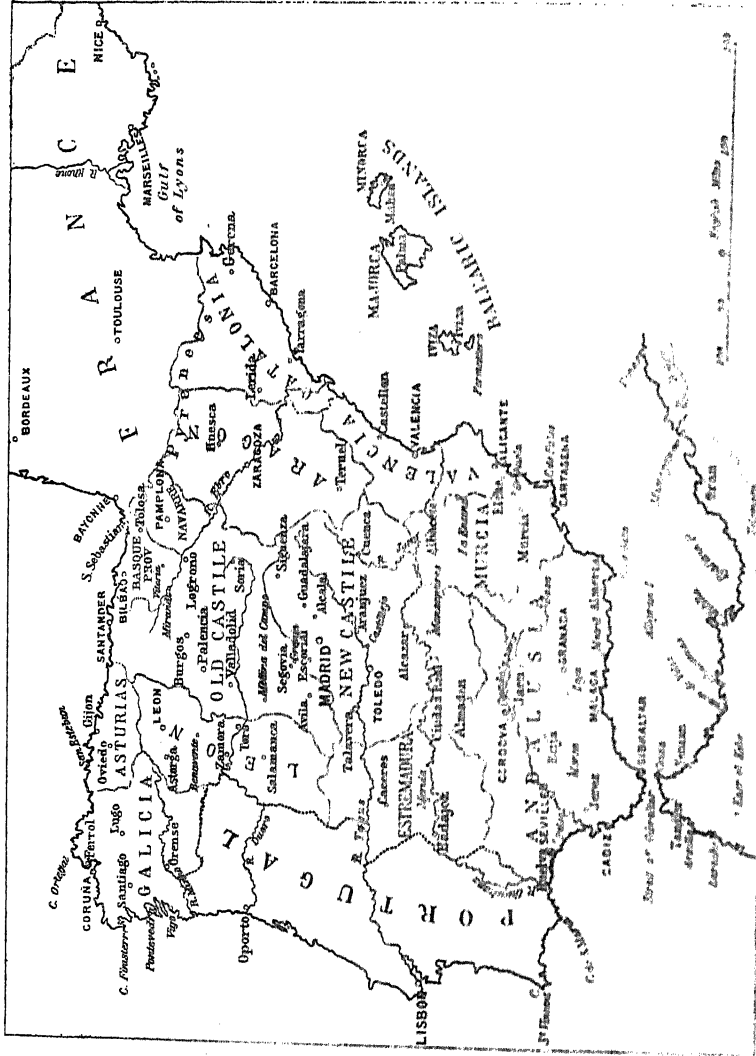
CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE BOYS AND GIRLS OF SPAIN	7
II. A CHRISTENING FESTIVAL	11
III. HOME, SWEET HOME	14
IV. LOCAL PECULIARITIES	20
V. THE LAND OF ALL DELIGHTS	24
VI. THE ALHAMBRA	30
VII. HIGH DAYS AND HOLIDAYS	38
VIII. HIGH DAYS AND HOLIDAYS (<i>continued</i>)	45
IX. CHARACTERISTIC SCENES	49
X. THE BUILDERS OF SPAIN	54
XI. A PEEP AT MADRID	62
XII. A PEEP AT MADRID (<i>continued</i>)	65
XIII. A BULL-FIGHT	73
XIV. THE HARVEST LANDS OF SPAIN	81
XV. SPANISH INDUSTRIES	87
XVI. THE STRANGER IN SPAIN	91

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

A WATER-CARRIER	<i>frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
COURTING	8
A SPANISH "PATIO"	17
AN ANDALUSIAN DANCE	24
THE ALHAMBRA	33
THE COURT OF THE LIONS: MOONLIGHT	40
SEGOVIA AQUEDUCT	49
ESCORIAL—FROM THE EAST	56
MOSQUE AT CORDOVA	65
A BULL-FIGHT	72
PACKING LEMONS, MALAGA	81
A STREET, ELCHE	88

Sketch-Map of Spain on page 6



SKETCH-MAP OF SPAIN.

SPAIN

CHAPTER I

THE BOYS AND GIRLS OF SPAIN

You must have seen some of the pictures of Spanish boys and girls painted by the great Spanish master Murillo. Let me recall a few of them to your memory.

There is the "Young Peasant-Girl with Fruit." She stands in the fair, open country, her smiling face peering out at you from her kerchief-draped head, and one hand clasping a basket of the richest fruits of the earth. Her costume, picturesque though it be, proclaims her a member of what we call the working class, but there are no careworn lines furrowing her brow and mocking at her youth. Poor she is, without a doubt, in the worldly sense of the word, even though her simple daily food includes many of the finest varieties of sun-loving fruits that we look upon as luxuries; but all life, we feel, must be a luxury to this beauteous little maiden, whose whole being radiates happiness and content.

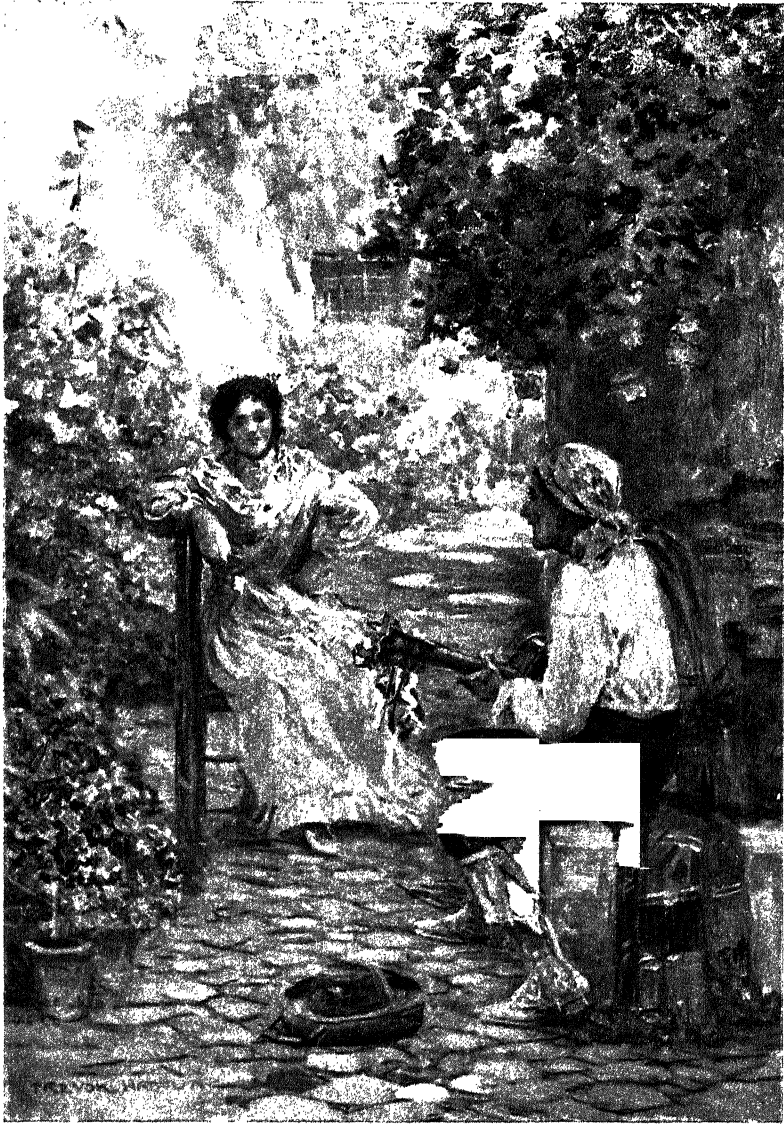
Again, there is the "Spanish Flower-Girl," who looks out of the picture at you with mellowing eyes,

Spain

now shimmering with the youthful joy of life. How plainly those eyes tell you that she is growing into a typical Spanish woman! Already she can talk with them, having that natural gift for their emotional language which is common to all her countrywomen. In a few years, maybe months, they will be burning love-stars, glowing through the grated window of her bedchamber, and drawing magic from the guitar of her lover who serenades his beloved in the street below. Or those same eyes may some day be flashing hatred that would make your Northern blood run cold. Following a Spanish custom among her sex in the matter of adornment, the girl is wearing a flower in her hair. The choice blooms she is offering for sale are daintily held in an embroidered scarf, which is thrown over one shoulder and puckered up by a light touch of her hands into a "basket" for her treasured stock-in-trade.

Then, there are Murillo's very poor little peasant-boys. Barefooted and ragged though they be, would you call them sons of misfortune? Notice their well-rounded limbs; look at their laughter-lit faces; and behold this one, with head thrown back and wide-open mouth, ready to make short work of a big bunch of grapes; that one with bulging cheek and three-parts of a fine juicy melon still in hand; another with a chunk of bread in his chubby fist.

All Murillo's peasant children, be they successful-looking little workers or beggarly ragamuffins, provide a feast for the eye which revels in sunshine and colour, and awaken delight in the heart and mind of anyone



COURTING. Chapter III.

The Boys and Girls of Spain

who can appreciate those types of personal beauty in which temperament plays an active part. Above all, they arouse a feeling which compels the belief that all Spanish children must have been very happy in the days when Murillo lived, for we know that this famous master painted things as they actually were. And if you are at all familiar with his pictures, you already have a very good idea of the life which Spanish children lead; for all changes are wrought very slowly in their homeland, and, luckily for them, no change has yet been mooted which is likely to spoil an inheritance that puts them, from the day of their birth, among the most fortunate little people in the world.

One of the most deeply-rooted national characteristics is the love which Spanish parents of all classes lavish on their children. Nothing is too much trouble for father and mother where the welfare of their family is concerned, and within broadest limits of reason the boys and girls of Spain enjoy freedom to do as they like. There are, of course, lesson-times, and the boys in particular have to work very hard at school. Moreover, it is the duty of many of the peasant children to help keep the home together by selling flowers and fruit, or by labouring in the vineyards and orange-groves. But Spain is so constantly keeping national festivals that every other day in this country seems a holiday, and even on working days there is ample leisure for both children and grown-ups to make merry to their hearts' content.

Boys and girls frequently play together. Most of their games are simple and pretty, and nearly all are

Spain

enacted to the accompaniment of a gaily-sung doggerel or nursery rhyme. A favourite game for boys and girls is "Ambo, ato." In this the one who is selected as *it* has to choose a partner, but first she stands alone while the others join hands, close round her in a circle, and whirligig merrily as they sing a quaint rhyme. Then the one who is *it* is bidden choose whom she will. When she has singled out her mate her companions ask in chorus: "What will you give him?" Thereupon the little maid holds out an orange, a pomegranate, a bunch of grapes, or a flower, and the boy of her heart steps shyly forth to join her in the middle of the ring. The circle closes up, and, singing at the top of their voices, the happy youngsters dance jubilantly round and round the little couple of the moment.

The tiny tots among the girls are very fond of playing "Tintarella," a game which is not quite unknown in our own country. The players divide off into couples, and partners stand toe to toe and grip hands firmly; the fun lies in spinning round as fast as possible. In Spain the children always sing some merry rhyme as they whirl round in the "Tintarella."

With the boys the game of "Torero" has no rival. This, their favourite amusement, is a miniature bull-fight, a playground version of the great national sport of Spain. The captain of the ring is generally elected to play bull. With a basketwork cover on his head, the bull is let loose, to be chased and harried by the boys, whom he, in his turn, does his best to butt in a manner that shall be worthy of his most honourable position as star performer.

A Christening Festival

CHAPTER II

A CHRISTENING FESTIVAL

ALL Spanish children have a long string of Christian names. In the case of girls these invariably include some title of the Blessed Virgin, such as Dolores, Immaculata, or de la Concepcion. A boy, too, is generally given one of the Virgin's names to single him out as the Church's son of the Holy Mother, as well as the numerous masculine Christian names which hand him over to the care of some patron saint, give him a feast-day, which is an annual event of even more importance than his birthday, and stamp him as the son of his father, the special charge of his godfather, the direct descendant of his grandfather, and the nephew of various uncles several times removed.

The christening ceremony is always a great event in a family. The most important preliminary is the choice of godparents, and before the final selection is made there is a great discussion in the bosom of the family as to which friends or relatives are most suitable for the post. And in Spain the post of godparent is not a sinecure, involving a more or less dilatory interest in the spiritual welfare of the godchild. Spanish godparents have a very high idea of their moral responsibilities, and they do not shirk their worldly duties, albeit these are of a very expensive nature. By solemn oath they bind themselves to bring up their godchild should the real parents die; but though the worst may

Spain

not happen, they have many claims to meet in the best of circumstances.

First, there is the christening gift to be made. That, of course, does not strike you as at all an unusual demand on the godfather's purse ; but what of the next occasion, that must be celebrated by a handsome present ? Not many of you, I fancy, have a beautiful jewel which was presented to you in honour of your first tooth. Yet not only must a Spanish godfather make the appearance of his godchild's first tooth a festival for the baby, but nurse, too, expects her services in the interests of that tooth to be recognized by a handsome gift of gold money. As to the annual festivals which no good godfather in Spain would dream of overlooking, their name is legion ; there is the child's name-day, which is to say his patron saint's day, New Year's Day, and a countless number of national feast-days.

Following close on the selection of godparents comes the christening ceremony. With rich and poor alike this is the occasion for a merry party of friends and relatives ; but if you would see a national christening in its full splendour, you must take part in the ceremony which makes the heir of some old country family a member of the Catholic Church. On such an occasion the whole country-side makes holiday. Early in the morning the home of His Majesty the Baby is invaded by guests and sightseers, who come from far and near, on horseback or muleback, or in a conveyance that may be anything from a stately coach to a rickety two-wheeled cart.

A procession is formed, headed by the local guard in

A Christening Festival

uniform. Behind this official ride all the guests who can boast of a mount of any description. Next in order come two four-horse carriages, the first containing the baby, nurse, and godparents; the second, the father and other relations—not the mother, however, for she waits at home to welcome the heir on his return. The carriages of honour are followed by the motley collection of guests' conveyances, and in the rear is a contingent of servants and farmers on the estate, who march solemnly in pairs.

The procession wends its way to the parish church in the nearest village, and on nearing the square falls in with a crowd of villagers, whose excitement is at present kept well within bounds. At the church door the guests are each given a lighted taper, whereupon they line up on either side of the entrance, and wait while the godfather, with the baby in his arms and the godmother at his side, passes through their ranks, followed by the father and other near relatives. The first notes of the church organ are heard, the procession begins to move slowly up the aisle, and within a short time the ceremony at the font has been performed and the service is over.

As the church bells ring out the joyful news that the child has now been baptized, the orderly scene in the square is changed in a twinkling to pandemonium. Men and women are shouting, gesticulating, children are scrambling helter-skelter to the door. A moment ago no one would have imagined there were half as many youngsters in the whole village. What an anxious minute it is for the little ones! The godfather

Spain

is coming out to shower coppers among them, and they all want to be in the thick of the fight.

The procession begins to re-form, and at an auspicious moment, when there is a temporary lull in the excitement around, the baby is driven off homewards, to be followed far by a thousand echoes of "Long life!" mingled with congratulations to the proud and happy relations.

Home reached, the baby is handed to the mother, who has been anxiously and eagerly awaiting his return. Then comes a magnificent baptismal breakfast, and the final scene of the banquet, as of the whole ceremony, is the drinking of the baby's health.

CHAPTER III

HOME, SWEET HOME

It is a curious fact that in a country where a poetic genius for love-making is inborn in the heart of every man and woman, custom has made it as difficult as possible for young people to find their mates.

Spanish girls are always under the watchful eye of some staid female attendant ; they are never allowed to go out for a walk alone, even in the daytime, and the utmost precautions are taken to see that they are never left alone in a room with a man, no matter how great a friend of the family he may be. Under these conditions it is not surprising to find that surreptitious methods of sweethearting are resorted to ; but all such

Home, Sweet Home

methods are of a romantic nature, as, for instance, moonlight serenading, and passing glances, lingering looks with eyes well trained to deliver messages which lips cannot speak when there are other ears to hear than those for which they are intended. And sometimes in spite of the strictest vigilance of the girl's mother in particular, and all her female relatives in general, the young couple will manage to steal away together for a brief spell ; or when there is an old family servant on duty, a little bribe gallantly administered with much flattery may effect the same happy result.

Frequently the lover-man's diplomacy is a long and vain expenditure of energy, for Spanish women are born coquettes, and they thoroughly enjoy the fine art of attracting and receiving court. But frequently, too, these clandestine preliminaries end in an engagement, and by the time a Spanish woman pledges her word to marry she has generally had enough of playing with love to satisfy her romantic soul, is sure of her mind, can trust to the genuineness of her feelings, and will settle down to make her lover and beloved a most loyal and devoted wife.

Spanish men make very good husbands. A Spanish boy is always devoted to his mother, and learns through his love for her to reverence his wife. The women as a whole take no interest in the progressive movement of their sex afoot in other parts of the world, and the only right claimed by the majority is to be petted and made much of in their homes. But although custom has decreed that the men shall not make any intellectual

Spain

demands on the women, and the women shall be content with the homage and adoration of the men, fortunately there is something in feminine Spanish nature which prevents the women from degenerating into spoiled babies and dressed-up dolls. That something, which has made for the salvation of the sex and for the general welfare of the country, is the maternal instinct, with its kindred spirit, the love of home.

There is no country in the world—no, not even England—where home-life is a higher ideal than in Spain, and it is the women who make the homes there so dear to the heart of every member of their family.

Let the abode be rich or poor, cheerfulness always reigns supreme within its precincts. Mother may have had a tiring, worrying morning, but she plays a Spanish version of "This little pig went to market" with her treasured baby as though she were still a merry child herself. A little later she will be preparing her husband's midday meal, singing the while. She may not have much to give him to eat, but the dishes are sure to be tasty, and she will lead the gay chatter which makes a feast of the repast, however frugal it may be. The evening meal finds her in the same good spirits, and the children—such of them as are not yet happily asleep—are full of fun and frolic. There are no sullen faces, no grumblings and growlings, no discordant elements to popularize public entertainments and social gatherings. Consequently, the Spanish husband prefers as a rule to stay at home for his evening's amusement; he is quite pleased if a neighbour drops in for a gossip,



A SPANISH PATIO. Page 17.

Home, Sweet Home

a hand at cards, or a game of dominoes, but he is also perfectly content to be alone with his family.

Loyalty and devotion are in themselves fine traits, but the loyalty of the Spanish wife, the devotion of the Spanish mother, are priceless virtues, for from them are bred that cheerfulness which does so much to make the home a magic circle.

The poor peasants live in little cottages or tiny hovels. Truth to tell, they do not always keep their rooms scrupulously clean; but as whitewashed walls are very common, even the homes which disimprove most on acquaintance present a pleasing appearance as a rule when first seen. The nobility have their country mansions and estates, or fine residences in the large towns, but among ordinarily well-to-do folk it is a common practice for several families to share one house.

One of the most attractive features of a great many Spanish dwellings is the Oriental *patio*, or court, round which the house is built. The *patio* usually has a fountain in the centre, and while shady trees add to the enticement of this spot as a cool retreat, there are thick carpets of gay flowers to rejoice the luxury-loving Southern heart. In the summer an awning is drawn over the *patio*, seats are taken out, very possibly a piano, too, and the family or families in the surrounding house spend much of their time in this delightful out-of-door room.

The smallest Spanish hovels bear witness to the national love of flowers. Often you see the windows of tumble-down dwellings in the meanest of streets richly bedecked with rows of plants, creepers climbing

Spain

over the walls, flowers growing out of nooks and crannies here, there, and everywhere, and trees rising from the roofs. This national passion can naturally expend itself more freely in the southern districts, where sun-loving vegetation flourishes in reckless profusion; and it is here that we find the most beautiful garden-houses and the wonderful fairy gardens, with magic fountains, orange-walks, myrtle-thickets, lemon-groves, palm-aisles, fern-grottoes, stately cypresses, spreading cedars, gorgeous oleanders, and flower-laden terraces. Rich colours flash in the sunshine; cool water bubbles up on every side; the air is delicately perfumed with a thousand fragrant scents. It is difficult to imagine a more sumptuous banquet than that which is provided by a Spanish garden as you wander around, wideawake to its delights; but if you would really feast with the gods, hearken to the call of the trees, and, with the burning kiss of the sunshine on your brow, the rich bouquet of Nature's perfume intoxicating your whole being, go dream within the leafy portals of their magic shadowland.

To return to the commonplace, one of the most striking features of Spanish municipal and household arrangements is the very general use of electric light. You travel miles beyond the civilization of a big town, toil up a very winding path, and arrive late at night in a little out-of-the-way village on the top of a high hill. Primitive is the only word to describe your surroundings, yet when you muster up courage to enter the only inn, you are greeted by a cheering flash of electric lights, and there is electric light in your bedroom to

Home, Sweet Home

put to flight any fears aroused by your first sight of the ramshackle hostelry, fears which might very well have brought you a sleepless night under the ghostly influence of a flickering candle.

During the period when gas was popular in other countries Spain was too far behind the times to adopt that method of lighting. She has jumped straight away from candles and olive-oil lamps to electric light, and by the very general use of this up-to-date method of illumination she is ahead of many other more generally advanced countries in the matter of lighting facilities.

The streets of many of the smallest towns are now lit by electricity. The street lamps formerly in use were very quaint. On the top of a wooden post was a close-meshed network receptacle, made of thick, strong wire, in shape very much like a frying-pan ; this was filled with chips and logs of pine-wood, which, when kindled, gave quite a good light. Stacks of wood were stored at the base of each post, and the lamp-lighter not only had to go his round to light the lamps, but it was his duty to feed them, so that they kept on burning throughout the night. At festival times copies of the old street-lamps are still sometimes used for illumination purposes, to show the children how their native town was lighted in the days not long gone by.

To let you see how far electric lighting has been brought within the bounds of possibility for the masses of Spain, I will give you some idea of the cost thereof. On inquiring of a peasant how much she paid for this modern convenience, she explained to me that she had one light in the living-room and one in the sleeping-

Spain

room. For economy's sake, the fittings were so arranged that she must switch off the one before she could use the other, and on these terms her bill amounted to one and a half pesetas a month—about 1s. 3d. in our money.

CHAPTER IV

LOCAL PECULIARITIES

WITHIN certain limits it is possible to generalize about Spain and the Spaniards, but broad statements by themselves would give you a far too rough idea of the country and its inhabitants. For here is a land parcelled out among several peoples of different races, with different manners, different customs, different styles of dress, and various other distinctive characteristics. So let us go a-wandering round and about the kingdom, for only in this way can we get into touch with local peculiarities.

In the north-west are the Basque Provinces, the home of a people who are said to be descended from the earliest inhabitants of Spain. The Basques are very proud of being the oldest race in the country; indeed, they all claim to be noblemen, and even the poor occupants of a dilapidated cottage are wont to have armorials sculptured over their humble abode. They are very proud and independent, but most hospitable, and renowned for being thoroughly truthful and honest. They have many quaint old customs, special dances and amusements, a distinct fashion in

Local Peculiarities

dress, and a language of their own, which is said to have been spoken at one time throughout Spain. Among their curious customs is the practice of offering bread and corn to deceased relatives and friends on the anniversary of death. Their most famous dances are the "Zorcico," the "Carrica," and the "Espata," performances of which are given on the occasion of Basque holidays; the weird movements are executed to the accompaniment of primitive varieties of the bagpipe, tambourine, and fife, interspersed with wild cries of delight. Basque women are fair-complexioned, very handsome in the days of their youth, and their crowning glory is their hair, which is worn in long plaited tresses hanging down the back; their head-gear, however, a black or brown cloth hood, tends to detract from their charms. The men's dress is extremely picturesque: it consists of a dark green or brown velvet suit, the jacket short, the trousers long and loose, a bright blue or red sash, either sandals or wooden shoes, and a mushroom-shaped cap.

Nature has made a very pretty picture of the Basque district; it was designed in one of her gentle moods, and has an atmosphere which is restful rather than stimulating. The landscape is thickly covered with clusters of hills, richly garbed with oaks, chestnuts, and pines. Embosomed in the hills are beautiful green valleys, with verdant meadow-lands and fertile fields of maize, and many clear little trout-streams bring the great gift of water to the land. Amidst such well-ordered surroundings whitewashed cottages and strongly-built houses are grouped into neat villages,

Spain

which have straight roads, intersecting each other at right angles, good bridges, a tidy public square, a school, a church, and almost invariably a fives-court, for the pursuit of the people's favourite game, known as "Pelota."

East of the Basque Provinces lies Navarre, also a country of many hills and few plains. The people who inhabit the highland regions are very much like their Basque neighbours, and they speak the Basque language. Those who live on the plains resemble their neighbours on the other side of the province, the Aragonese, at whom we will now take a peep.

The old kingdom of Aragon embraces three provinces of modern Spain—namely, Huesca, Zaragoza, and Teruel. Here we can get into touch with untamed Nature, for in the north of the district are the Spanish Pyrenees, with their magnificent heights and wildly grand passes. Aragon as a whole, however, is an agricultural country of great fertility.

The Aragonese are noted for their love of liberty. Temperamentally they have qualities which are generally regarded as Northern rather than Southern attributes; for instance, they are vigorous and active, cold and serious, thus being strikingly different from the average Spaniard, who is of a highly emotional nature, gay of heart, and a devoted disciple of *Mañana* (to-morrow)—that is to say, his guiding principle in life is "Never do to-day what you can possibly put off till to-morrow."

Aragonese men wear a costume which is distinct from the dress favoured in any other part of Spain. They have knee-breeches, generally of cotton velvet,

Local Peculiarities

generously decorated about the pockets and knees with filigree buttons and silver coins ; blue woollen stockings, and sandals ; a short black velvet waistcoat, also ornamented with filigree buttons, over which no coat is worn ; and a broad bright red or blue sash, in which they carry numerous small possessions. The head-gear is sometimes a slouched hat, but more frequently a coloured kerchief is fastened like a band round the forehead, leaving the upper part of the head bare.

Going eastward from Aragon, we wander into Catalonia, which consists of the modern seaboard provinces of Gerona, Barcelona, and Tarragona, together with the inland province of Lerida. The Catalans are the merchants and business men of Spain, the most industrious, enterprising, and ambitious part of the whole population. This active commercial district is often called "Spanish Lancashire," and its hub, the city of Barcelona, is known as the "Manchester of Spain."

Barcelona is, I expect, connected in your mind with the red flag of revolution ; you think of it as the home of anarchy, the place where a bombshell may burst at any moment. In paying your first visit to the city you are surprised to find yourself in a thoroughly commercial atmosphere. Important-looking shops, palatial offices, big banks and financial houses meet your eye on every side ; business men of all types hurry past you in the streets ; in the port you see the mercantile flag of almost every nation. You are all at sea, and maybe a trifle disappointed ; you cannot explain to yourself exactly what you expected to find in Barcelona, but in your dreams there were indications of plots being

Spain

hatched, the streets were alive with processions and meetings, or deserted, save for two or three desperadoes stealing round a corner under cover of night to some secret assembly of revolutionary confederates. The terrors of Barcelona have been much exaggerated, you tell yourself, and just at that very moment you notice a couple of policemen. You must have passed several of their fellows, but you were too busy with other sights to see them. Now that you get your first impression of a Barcelona policeman, you marvel at his appearance. He is armed to the teeth, and looks like a soldier ready for the battlefield. Truly there must be more of revolution than meets the eye in this peaceful-looking, busy trading city, or why should the guardians of the law be equipped in this bloodthirsty way?

Thus I argued to myself on my first day in Barcelona, but I spent a most delightful time there, and in spite of the armed policemen—or, perhaps, because I became so accustomed to the sight of them—I left feeling very sceptical about the city's reputation as a hotbed of anarchy. A few days later a bomb was exploded in the street I had so often frequented, opposite the very hotel where I had stayed, and several people were killed.

CHAPTER V

THE LAND OF ALL DELIGHTS

WE have taken a flying leap from the far north of Spain to the extreme south. We are in Andalusia, the most fascinating region of the whole country, where



THEY'RE IN A HURRY

AN ANDALUCIAN DANCE. Chapter V.

The Land of All Delights

all life is a merry-go-round, in an atmosphere charged with romance, glowing with sunshine, and radiant with colour.

Andalusia was the stronghold of the Moors during their period of supremacy in Spain, from the eighth to the fifteenth century. They divided this particularly beloved part of their whole conquest into four kingdoms—Seville, Cordova, Jaen, and Granada. These names are still in existence, and, although they now refer to smaller territorial districts, they embrace some of the finest monuments of Moorish architecture in the world. But it is not only the magnificent buildings in the south which bear testimony to the keen intelligence, wondrous skill, and refined taste of the Moors. Throughout all Andalusia Moorish influence is strongly felt; the cottages of the poorest peasants show how the Moorish ideal of cleanliness so permeated the country that it became a lasting power—for the meanest Andalusian home has freshly-whitewashed walls, snowy curtains, clean rooms, and, however destitute it may be of furniture, there are flowers blooming everywhere, so that joy and beauty are the heart and soul of the tidy scene; the whole sunny province is rich in cool fountains, which proclaim the Moorish love of water; and there is much that is Oriental in the Andalusian temperament.

The Andalusians, however, have not inherited the agricultural enterprise of the Moors. The excellent irrigation methods introduced by the Arabs are frequently neglected; scientific efforts at cultivation are hardly ever dreamed of; the most primitive implements

Spain

are used, because it is too much trouble even to think of replacing them. As a result, there are waste tracts of land, some of considerable extent ; but Nature left to her own devices makes such an excellent farmer in this Southern sunny territory that, in spite of the indolence, indifference, and ignorance of the labourers, the fertile soil of Andalusia produces many a rich harvest and a wealth of flowers most fragrant and fair.

The Andalusians have all the best qualities of their defects. Away from them, we may condemn their idle habits, their exaggerated methods of expression, their superstitious beliefs ; but when we are with them, idleness becomes the virtue of infectious joy and happiness ; exaggeration figures as the dramatic instinct ; superstition is national romance. In Andalusia we unconsciously learn the importance of not being in earnest, as, willy-nilly, our every stern principle is magnetically charmed away and scattered to the winds.

The most beloved vagabonds are to be found in Seville, where singing, dancing, courting, and bull-fighting make up the common round. True, there are people who pick oranges for a few months in the year, but they so successfully manage to turn the whole harvest-time into a continuous series of festivals that the fruit-picking season cannot possibly be regarded as a business interval in their pleasure-loving lives. And there are upwards of five thousand workers at the tobacco manufactory, besides the thousands who keep shop in the city, or take some part in connection with the export trade in oil, olives, lead, copper, liquorice, and cork. But these Andalusians, who must be credited

The Land of All Delights

with pursuing some branch of labour, as employers or employed, have no faith in the gospel of work; they do not live to work: they work to live up to their joyous ideal of what life should be. Moreover, the typical representative of a most popular phase of ideal existence does not even pretend to follow any sort of trade. He hangs round a tavern, feasting on the notes of someone else's guitar, and cajoling this customer and that into taking pity on his thirst; he lies on his back in the shade, doing nothing, and doing it so picturesquely that you are tempted to hope he will never attempt anything more strenuous; when he wants excitement, he begs his way into the bull-ring; and when night falls, he sinks down to slumber on the steps of the nearest church.

Seville shares with Cordova and Granada the honour of being numbered amongst the most world-renowned treasure cities of Moorish art. The chief of the many important Moorish buildings and remains in Southern Spain are the Mosque at Cordova; the Giralda, the Alcazar, and the Casa de Pilatos, at Seville; and the Alhambra at Granada.

Before I take you specially to see one of these specimens, I want to tell you a little about Moorish architecture in general. The distinguishing features of the style include horseshoe arches; walls which have stone-embroidered bands of insertion for ornament, or which are worked like lace; richly gilded and painted ceilings, sometimes flat, sometimes consisting of numerous little concave parts, covered with a honey-comb pattern and grouped into domes. The carving

Spain

on these buildings always presents a flat surface to the eye. Sometimes the stonework is fretted and covered entirely with an openwork design, but in the case of solid walls the pattern is carved into the mass, a marked contrast in method and effect to the outward relief in which we are accustomed to see stone ornamentation. Moorish buildings are rich in white stonework that now has little or no trace of colour on the design worked therein; this gives the walls an appearance of being enriched with finely carved ivory, toned to wondrous cream, golden, and brown tints by venerable age. But all these magnificently decorative details must be sought within a Moorish pile, for externally the style is very plain. Even with this warning as guide, you will never forget your first feeling of surprise as you enter the portal of the building which introduces you to the style, the picture of its dowdy exterior fresh in your mind's eye, a vision of its gorgeous interior bursting on your gaze.

Now let us make a pilgrimage to the famous Alhambra at Granada. The name is frequently supposed to apply to one building, whereas it designates a fortified enclosure on a height, akin to a Greek acropolis.

Just as we should have to toil up a hill to a Greek citadel, so must we wend our way up the Alhambra Hill to the fortress which crowns it. We leave the city of Granada by way of a steep and narrow street which is devoted to the interests of the class generally known as tourists. *En route* we are greeted by a self-styled "Chief of the Gipsies," who is dressed for

The Land of All Delights

the part. He pesters us with attentions which have a very different exchange value in his estimation from what they come to have in ours; but at last we manage to get away from him in the flesh, bearing his photograph to remind us of our meeting with him—as if we should ever forget it—and leaving him with fifty centimos as a reminiscence of his latest prey. Presently we are entering the beautiful groves that are embosomed in a hollow between the Alhambra Hill and a neighbouring ridge. How deliciously cool it is among these richly-wooded slopes; after the scorching heat of the open road how grateful we are for the shade of trees, the sight and sound of rills trickling and tumbling all around, fountains playing near and far! We sit down to rest awhile, blessing the Moors for having converted a stretch of barren rock into a garden that seems a natural wilderness of leafy bowers and flower-decked dells, echoing with the music of flowing waters, the songs of birds, and the drowsy hum of insects.

Long have we sat watching the water-carriers climbing up the hill to fill their skins, hastening down on their way back to the city to sell the precious liquid.

“Agua! . . . agua-ah! . . . agua-a-ah!” The streets will soon be resounding with their cry, and it will not be long before they have all disposed of their supply.

You did not know that water has its price? The more you wander about this land, which is visited for months on end by a very thirsty sun, the better will you realize what it means to long in vain for a draught of cold water; and when you get home and see it flowing in a continuous stream till you choose to turn

Spain

off the tap, you will remember the moments of joy when you heard the cry of "Agua!" approaching nearer and nearer, and the hours of thirst-haunted endurance when you would have emptied your purse at the feet of a water-carrier if Fate had been merciful enough to send one your way.

We are tempted to linger on in these beautiful shady gardens. Another day we may come here to romance and dream to our heart's content, but to-day it is time to be up again and doing.

CHAPTER VI

THE ALHAMBRA

WE have reached the chief gateway to Granada's citadel. A look of disappointment overshadows your face-- how often have you dreamed of an enchanted Alhambra, and now what a prosaic reality meets your gaze! You survey solid walls; you glance up at sombre towers, telling yourself that genii would never choose to haunt such gloomy abodes, and there is a mixture of incredulity and despondency in your voice as you ask, "Is this really the Alhambra?"

Be of good cheer and have a little patience; you will soon be able to imagine you are in the homeland of Arabian Nights, but first we must face a few facts.

You will remember I told you that the name Alhambra does not properly refer to a palace, but to a fortified enclosure. This enclosure before which you

The Alhambra

are now standing was named after the Torres Berméjas, the "Red Towers" near by, which are the oldest portion of the fortifications. As early as A.D. 864 these towers were referred to by an Arabian poet as *Kal'at Al-hamra*, meaning the "Red Castle." Later on they were called *Medinah Al-hamra*, the "Red City"; and when the citadel facing you was in course of erection, the Red Towers were connected with this main fortress by an embattled wall. Although the connecting link has been destroyed, it is easy to understand why the whole acropolis of Granada has been named after the first towers of defences that were reared.

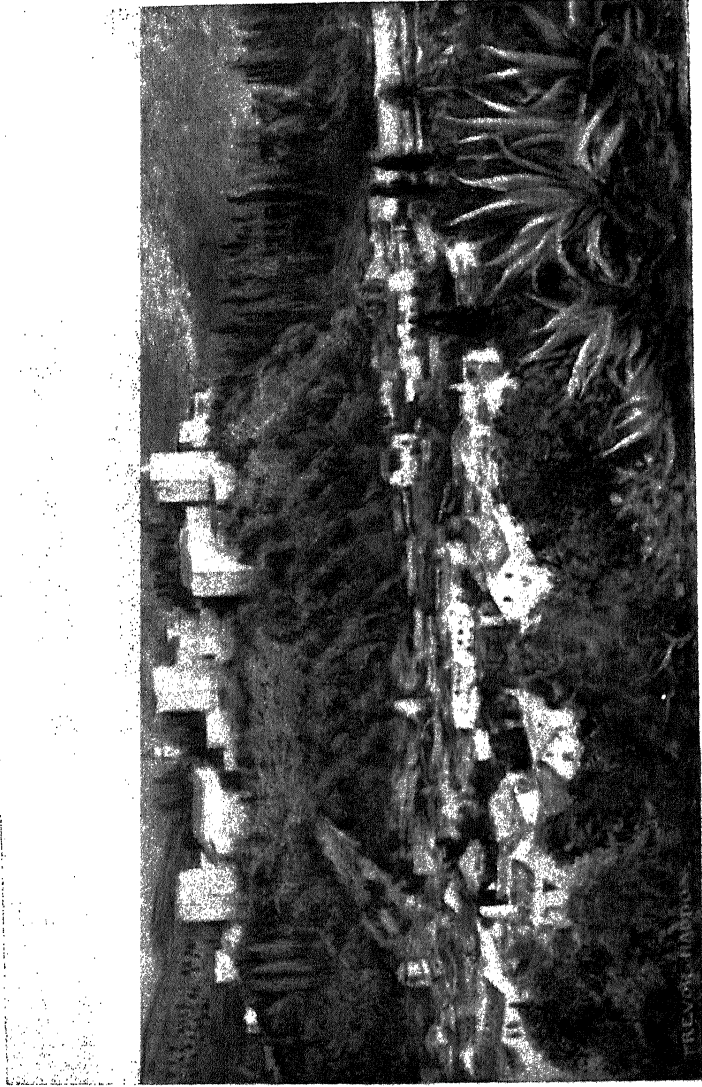
The Alhambra site is nearly 3,000 feet long, and measures over 700 feet in its widest part. The encircling walls, inset with numerous towers, are about 30 feet high and 6 feet thick; they girdle the summit of the hill, and in following the line of its edge up and down enclose a space which is roughly the shape of a grand piano. Within this area are many interesting Moorish monuments, and among them the palace, which is the centre of popular interest, the rightful owner of the name Alhambra, according to the popular vocabulary, and the only building which is represented by that name in the minds of most people who have not been to Granada.

The principal entrance-hall, by way of which I am now going to take you into the Alhambra, is called *La Torre de Justicia*, the "Gate of Judgment." To the Moors this porch was *Bábu-sh-shari-ah*, the "Gate of the Law," for it was their open-air court of justice. Look at the giant hand above the outer horseshoe arch;

Spain

that is believed to be a Moorish talisman against the "evil eye." Behold over the second arch another symbol, a key, the sign that the Prophet had been given Divine power over the gates of heaven and of hell. Here, too, over the inner doorway is an inscription in African letters, which records its elevation by Abu-l-wàlid Yusuf in 1348. The legend runs thus: "The warlike and just Sultan Yusuf . . . commanded this gate, called the Gate of the Law, to be built. . . . May Allah make it a bulwark of defence and inscribe its construction among the great and imperishable deeds!"

We pass through the main entrance into a lane bounded by massive walls, and emerge into the open, to find ourselves upon the extensive Plaza of Los Algibes, and in the heart of the busy industry of the water-carriers. This Plaza takes its name from the Moorish cisterns thereon, deep tanks built with vaults and horseshoe arches, which are fed by the waters of the Darro. In a corner of the square is a well with an awning over it, the wholesale depot for the water-vendors of Granada. After breaking away from the fascination of watching the life round this well, we walk about the Plaza, feasting our eyes on the magnificent panorama which stretches up, down, and around. Over 450 feet below glitters the white city of Granada; upwards the eye travels over tree-clad slopes, lingering the while amidst shady groves and magnificent hanging gardens, till presently it seeks the superb heights of mountain ranges, and is finally drawn back to the Plaza by the magnetism of the



THE ACAPULCO - Cuernavaca VI.

The Alhambra

Moorish remains around ; for although the towers, ruined castle, and neighbouring buildings do not present a beautiful external appearance, there is magic in their tawny colouring, and somehow they succeed in making an irresistible appeal to the imagination.

To the west of the Plaza are grouped some fortifications, mostly in ruins, but including some watch-towers that are still in a good state of preservation ; this is the site of the Alhambra Castle, the Alcazaba. East of the square rises the incongruous mass of an unfinished sixteenth-century palace, a whim and fancy of Charles V. In other surroundings it would have done some credit to his taste, but the Græco-Roman pile is distinctly out of place here, which offence is generally supposed to have been heightened by the ruthless destruction of a part of the famous old palace for the sake of additional ground-space for the new one.

We leave the Plaza and wend our way past the Palace of Charles V., to the old town of the Alhambra, which was the headquarters of numerous distinguished men and women connected with the Court, together with other lesser lights, composing a total population of about twenty thousand. We wander about the remaining area of the platform, see the modern hill-town, which practically consists of one little street that caters for visitors, and come back to the unfinished palace.

“ But where is *the* Palace ? ” you ask, adding in an even more querulous tone : “ You have taken us all over this fortress, and still we have not seen what we specially came to look at.”

I quite sympathize with your impatience, but let me

Spain

defend myself for having aroused it. I am sure you would have wanted to look round the whole fortress before leaving it, and upon this theory I have but left the best till the last. Moreover, I wanted you to realize how easy it is to miss the famous treasure-house, even when you walk about its immediate neighbourhood with both eyes wide open looking for it.

Now come with me behind this Palace of Charles V. You see a very poor-looking group of sheds—those constitute the Aladdin's wonderland which you have been longing to visit. Well may you look astounded, even though I have warned you that Moorish buildings are not attractive externally. According to custom, it was the interior of this royal residence that was called upon to express the ideals of designer and decorator; but, since things to which we have long looked forward with great expectations have a way of disappointing us when we see them, I want to bring your present expectations within bounds of reason before we enter the Palace of the Alhambra. Many alterations have been made in the original work; necessary restorations have been effected, sometimes without the necessary skill for following in the footsteps of the creators; a powerful enemy in the form of an explosion at a neighbouring powder factory has done much to wreck the building, and time has naturally played havoc with some of the details. Thus forewarned, you will not suddenly be brought face to face with anything that can hurl you from a fairy dreamland into a dull abyss of facts. Not that this Palace as it is lacks beauty. Even to-day it is rich in treasures; nevertheless, it has been despoiled,

The Alhambra

and only by being prepared for that fact is it possible to keep your imagination free from fetters. I am only going to show you pictures of a few beautiful things as they are, and leave you to conjure up visions of the magnificent whole as it was in the days of its glory.

The present insignificant entrance is a small wicket-gate in an obscure corner. It leads straight into the great oblong Court of the Myrtles, in the middle of which is a miniature lake, bordered by carefully-trimmed myrtle hedges, orange and lemon trees. The side walls are modern, but the colonnades at either end are beautiful specimens of Moorish art. The front consists of two arcaded galleries, with a smaller closed gallery between, a light, fantastic structure composed of slim marble columns that have capitals carved in various designs, slender arches, and lattice-work windows. Opposite is a similarly wrought single arcade, above which rises the square, massive upper story of a tower.

The whole of the interior of this Tower of Comares is occupied by the great Hall of the Ambassadors, one of the richest gems of the Palace, and the room which pulsates with Moorish history in its most brilliant and vital phases. The Hall, which is approached from the Court of the Myrtles by a beautiful vestibule, is a lofty square apartment with massive walls, pierced by deeply alcoved windows, and a dome of larch-wood, which is adorned with painted stars, and further ornamented by ribs that intersect in numerous patterns. The original roof, however, was a wondrous piece of stucco honey-comb-work, but this collapsed, together with an Arabian Nights' arch of precious stones. Here are found some of

Spain

the most eloquent witnesses to Moorish magnificence—coloured tile dados, fantastic carving, elaborately-wrought inscriptions, rich splashes of red, blue, and gold, reminiscent of the glorious days when the whole Palace must have blazed with these gorgeous colourings. The Hall of the Ambassadors was the grand reception-room, where brilliant Court functions were held amidst the most luxurious surroundings that could be fashioned by Oriental wealth and taste. Not only were there enacted in this room many of the most important dramas that go to the making of Moorish history, but here took place one of the greatest scenes in the Moorish tragedy of fading supremacy. Within these walls was held the great council of 1491, at which it was decided that it was impossible to offer further resistance to the Christian power.

The Court of the Myrtles also gives access, through a narrow passage, to the Court of the Lions, which is an oblong surrounded by a low gallery. This latter is supported on one hundred and twenty-four white marble columns, that are irregularly placed, some in pairs, some isolated. At each end of the court there is an ornate little pavilion, with filigree walls and a graceful domed roof of the shape distinguished by the name of "half-orange." The whole design is beautifully proportioned, and delicacy of construction characterizes the workmanship. In the centre of the court is the fountain after which it is named; the alabaster basin is supported by twelve white marble animals, but it requires a good deal of imagination to find any resemblance to lions in these curious-looking beasts.

The Alhambra

Opening into the Court of the Lions are four very beautiful chambers, rich in specimens of decorative inscriptions, lacework walls, carved wood ceilings, and mosaic dados. The most noticeable inscription here, as in so many parts of the Palace, is the oft-recurring declaration: "There is no conqueror but Allah." The principal part of the Alhambra Palace was founded, in 1248, by Ibn-l-ahmar, who was greeted by his subjects as "The Conqueror" when he returned from the surrender of Seville. He replied, with a spontaneous adaptation of the Mussulman war-cry, "There is no conqueror but Allah," and adopted the words as his motto.

One of the gems of the Palace is the Mirador de Lindaraja, an elegant apartment with windows overlooking a beautiful garden, where stately cypresses rear their heads above box-hedges, and sweet flowers bloom among myrtle-bushes and orange-trees.

The luxurious suite of apartments known as the Bathrooms is very complete. The Chamber of Rest here ranks among the most elaborately decorated rooms in the Palace. It has a gallery, where musicians used to sing and play to the resting bathers; for as the ablution system was what we now call Turkish baths, repose formed an important part of the proceedings.

It requires many days to study the details of this famous Palace, and, since our time together is so short, I have only been able to give you a peep at some of the principal parts of the building. But before leaving its precincts I just want to explain to you that there are really three palaces here grouped into one. The oldest,

Spain

dating from the twelfth century, is called the Mexuar, and it opens out from one side of the Court of the Myrtles at a lower level ; it has a central court, with entrance and reception rooms at the head, and grouped round are various dwelling-rooms, one of which was converted into a Christian chapel in the sixteenth century. The workmanship of this oldest building is rude and unpretentious compared with that of the later palaces. Coming back to the Court of the Myrtles, we find here the second palace, designed on a similar plan, but executed in a very much more advanced style, as witness the magnificent Hall of the Ambassadors, which forms part of the thirteenth-century building in question. The third and most luxurious of this group, known as the Alhambra Palace, or popularly as the Alhambra, was constructed in the fourteenth century, and lies round and about the Court of the Lions.

CHAPTER VII

HIGH DAYS AND HOLIDAYS

THE gay, light-hearted, pleasure-loving Spaniard delights in merry-making, and numerous are the national excuses for public rejoicing. National holiday celebrations are supplemented by local gala-days in honour of patron saints, by local fairs, and local pilgrimages. And when custom fails to provide a general entertainment for the day, there is more than likely to be good reason for family festivities, in that this par-

High Days and Holidays

ticular day happens to be the anniversary of the saint after whom father, mother, or one of the children is named.

Let us begin the Spanish round of public holidays at Christmas-tide. The great time for fun and frolic is Christmas Eve, *La Noche Buena*. The churches are a blaze of lights. The markets are packed with pyramids of oranges, melons and lemons. The shops are brilliantly illuminated and profusely decorated with ribbons and flowers, and equally gorgeous booths cater for the extra custom at this period of feasting and revelry. Bonfires are lighted; a great slaughter of turkeys is enacted, to the loud accompaniment of protests screeched by the flocks of birds awaiting their last moment; streets are thronged with an excited populace, diving in and out of shops, dancing on the pavements, processing along the roads, lingering to enjoy the sights; and everywhere there are sounds of music—tambourines jangling, guitars tinkling, voices ringing out the joyous refrain :

“This is the eve of Christmas ;
Let us drink and take our fill.”

Nacimientos take the place of our Christmas-trees. These are pasteboard representations of the Nativity, with terra-cotta figures. In a manger lies a model of the Infant Christ, near by stand the Holy Mother and St. Joseph, the ox and the ass are enstalled, the Wise Men are worshipping the Holy Child, and there are angels hovering around. *Nacimientos* are eagerly purchased by the children, who love them dearly, and

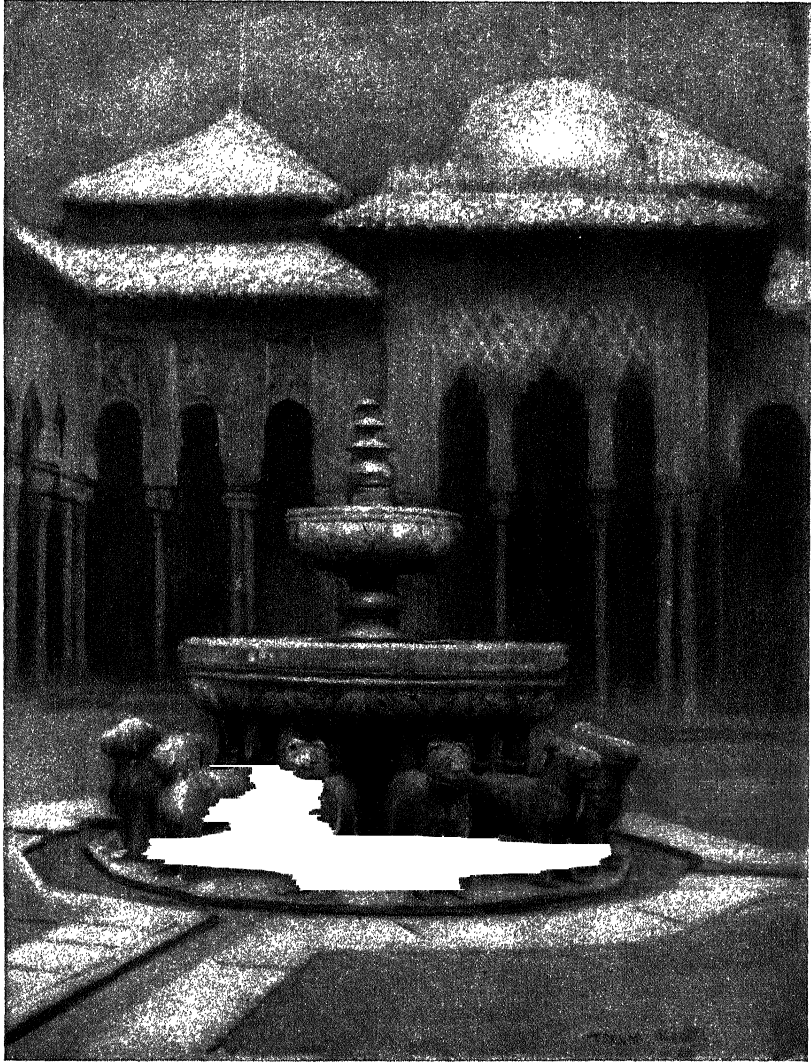
Spain

there is one lighted up in every house, from the richest mansion to the poorest hovel.

Many supper-parties are given on Christmas Eve, but all the festivities come to an end shortly before midnight, when the church-bells summon all good Christians to Mass. In one respect Christmas Day in Spain is like our Boxing Day, for this is the time when the postman and numerous other "outside" servants expect a Christmas-box; it is also the custom in Spain, as with us, for the family to give presents to the household servants on this anniversary.

New Year's Day is but a minor festival. Nevertheless, it is revered as a faithful fortune-teller, for there is a general belief that this day's events will govern the whole year's luck. Empty pockets on the first day of the year mean empty pockets for the next twelve months; a full purse on January 1 augurs a full purse onwards to December 31. There is also a superstition akin to our anxiety that the Old Year shall be let out of the house, and the New Year ushered in, by people who have hair of fixed lucky shades. In Spain the all-prevalent anxiety on New Year's Eve concerns the first person who will be met outside the house in the New Year. If a wealthy man is encountered, good luck is in store; but if a beggar is the first passer-by, ill luck may be expected.

Twelfth-Night Eve, January 5, brings the festival best beloved by children. The morrow is the Feast of the Three Kings, the anniversary of the occasion when the Wise Men sought Christ to present Him with their gifts, and in memory of this sacred event Spanish



THE COURT OF THE LIONS—MOONLIGHT. *Page 36.*

High Days and Holidays

children are presented with gifts at Epiphany-time. Spanish boys and girls await the coming of the Magi in just the same high state of excitement as English boys and girls await Father Christmas, and they too have to make preparations for the occasion. Instead of hanging up a stocking at the foot of the bed, they put out a shoe on the balcony, and in it a wisp of straw for the Magi's horses. Then the little people go to bed ; but it is difficult for them to sleep, for out of doors a great uproar is being made. Numbers of young men, attended by the usual crowd of vagabonds, are rushing to meet the Magi ; the procession, carrying ladders, torches, and drums, surges from one gate of the city to another. There is no sign of the Wise Men coming this way ; surely they must be coming that way or by the other road. At sunrise the people begin to go home, dejectedly giving up all hope of meeting the Magi till next Twelfth-Night Eve. A little later the children begin to awake and steal out on to the balcony. Yes, the Magi have been through the town, for all the wisps of straw have gone, and all the shoes are packed with presents. And if anyone doubts the testimony of the shoes merely because the crowd who went to look for the Wise Men did not find them, there is some further strong evidence to prove that the immortal visitors came this year as usual, for there are many sensible little boys and girls who are quite certain that they heard the clattering hoofs of the Magi's horses first in the distance, then coming nearer and nearer, so near that . . . well, just at that moment they fell asleep.

Spain

Another January festival is the Feast of St. Anthony, the patron of mules, donkeys, and horses. On St. Anthony's Day the cattle that are under his especial care are marched forth to receive a blessing, but for days beforehand there is great excitement over the preparations for the ceremonial. Special attention is bestowed on the festival toilet of the mules and donkeys, and the gipsies, who can clip skilfully and artistically, are called upon to help dress them. Here is a picture of a mule ready to set out on the journey to the priest, who is awaiting his curious flock in some distant centre of civilization. The legs and under part of its body are ornamented with their natural winter covering; its head is bedecked with a bright scarlet silk net and a bridle, whose silver bells tinkle under the slightest provocation; a beautiful bunch of flowers has been worked by the clippers on its shoulders; over its back are slung gaily-coloured saddle-bags; and on its hind-quarters are clipped a collection of decorative details, such as stars, daggers, guitars, flags, and darts. The final scene of this festival is charged with excitement; among the animals waiting their turn to be taken to the priest to receive their barley wafer there is a dual spirit of rivalry working in the interests of noise—all the horses combine to neigh against the braying of all the donkeys, whilst each animal endeavours to make its voice heard above that of its neighbours. The mules in particular add to the general commotion when the time comes for being led up to the priest, for it is then that they are in their most stubborn mood, and ready to

High Days and Holidays

kick out vigorously at anyone who may try to get them to move in the priest's direction. The attendants lose patience and temper, blows are returned for kicks, angry voices are often heard loudest amidst the din, and a general pandemonium makes the ceremonial of blessing the animals unique as a sacred festival.

February brings carnival-time, the merriest season in the whole of Spain's merry year. Democracy reigns supreme, everybody being as good as his neighbour when all are masked and disguised. The streets are a constant scene of revelry, from midday till midnight, for the three days preceding Ash Wednesday. Peasants and nobles make up the gay throng of maskers, but for the time being the courtier poses as a beggar, the beggar as a courtier; staid citizens don fancy costume, and rush about in a wild state of excitement, their schoolboy hearts rejoicing over one prank and planning another; ladies being driven round to see the sights smile graciously on the motley band who hold up the carriage to pay homage to the fair occupants; the air rings with the shouts of joy sent up by children's voices, and is gay with multi-coloured showers of confetti, rained down with as much zest by the grown-ups as by the energetic boys and girls. Two characteristic features of these festivities make carnival-time in Spain an ideal season of rejoicing: there is no drunkenness, and liberty is never allowed to degenerate into licence.

Ash Wednesday brings carnival to an end with the ceremony of "burying the sardine." The nature of the sardine and the method of interring it differ in

Spain

various parts of the country—a little piece of pork is buried deep in the earth, or a piece of meat is thrown into the river—but whatever be the particular custom followed, the significance thereof is the same in all parts of Spain: the time of feasting has passed, the Lenten season of fasting has come round once more. All through Lent devout Spaniards throng the churches, and keep candles burning at the numerous shrines. Holy Week brings its series of most interesting sacred customs. Again these differ with locality, but they are all related through the national spirit of devotion to the Church. One of the most popular Holy Week ceremonies takes place on the Thursday at Madrid. After morning service the Queen receives about a dozen paupers at the Royal Palace, washes their feet in commemoration of Christ washing the disciples' feet, and concludes the *lavatorio* by distributing alms.

Good Friday is the occasion of a grand procession in every village and town, the great feature of which consists in the "Pasos," or groups of sculptured effigies, which are painted and dressed up to represent scenes in the Passion. Many of these Pasos are of great value, both intrinsically and as works of art; some of the finest are the property of religious associations in Seville, a city which is specially famous for its Good Friday procession. Here the great sacred drama is known under the name of "El Carnaval Divino"—a very suggestive title, which calls up a general picture of the procession in all parts of the country.

On Easter Sunday all traces of mourning have vanished, and Spain is once more *en fête*. The

High Days and Holidays

churches are profusely decorated with flowers, and everyone attends morning service in best clothes ; the women are especially noticeable by a universal change in a detail of national costume, for this is a special occasion when they wear white mantillas instead of the everyday black ones. In the afternoon the best bull-fight of the year takes place in every town which favours the national sport, and from far and near there flock to every arena men, women, and children, chattering excitedly and incessantly in sporting phraseology about their favourite bull-fighter and the various details of the ring.

Another prominent national festivity is celebrated on Corpus Christi Day, which generally takes place the first Thursday after Trinity Sunday. Pasteboard giants are a great feature of the grand processions which parade the streets on this occasion. Nearly every Spanish town numbers a team of these giants among its municipal properties, and they are as dearly beloved by Spanish children as was "Snap" in the not-long-ago days by English boys and girls.

CHAPTER VIII

HIGH DAYS AND HOLIDAYS (*continued*)

AMONG local holidays celebrated by every city, town, and village in honour of its patron saint, the Day of San Isidro of Madrid is particularly remarkable for its festivities.

Spain

San Isidro was a pious ploughboy of Castile, who loved the birds of the air and the beasts of the field. He attended the ancient church of San Andres in Madrid, and there he was buried in 1130, leaving behind him at his death a reputation for being a very holy man, whose prayers had never failed to bring rain to the city in times of drought. When, in 1232, Madrid was suffering from the ill effects of a very dry season, the people prayed to San Isidro to intercede for them, and, according to an old chronicle, "his body, borne over the parching land, saved the crops from destruction beneath the scorching sun by bringing floods of rain, which nearly drowned the bearers." Thereupon Madrid adopted her benefactor as her patron saint. San Isidro's body was removed to the Church of San Isidro, Madrid, in 1769, and there it still rests, together with the remains of his equally revered wife, Santa Maria de la Cabeza; but the site of his first burial-place at San Andres is still kept sacred to his memory, and the church has a curious wooden effigy of him in quaint costume.

On San Isidro's Day, May 15, Madrid does honour to her patron saint, and thoroughly enjoys herself in upholding the custom. There is a procession through the principal streets to the Hermitage of San Isidro, which is built over a miraculous well; and the route seems to be the centre of a big fair, whose extensive show-ground is replete with every mirth-provoking medium, and thronged with people bent on enjoying all the fun. Crowds congregate around motley collections of good things to eat, bits of finery, and sacred

High Days and Holidays

souvenirs, displayed in booths, on stalls, and on trays slung by gay ribbons round old and young necks. There are merry-go-rounds, side-shows, tents for dancing, and many instrumental devices for making those shrill noises without which no gathering of the masses seems able to be happy and content. But allied with all these worldly ingredients of fun and frivolity there is a religious element, which makes San Isidro Day's celebrations in Spain closely akin to the miraculous-cure pilgrimages at Lourdes, in the Pyrenees, and at the island of Tenos, in Greece. A very brisk trade is done in little jars for the transportation of water from the well at the Hermitage, for this holy liquid is believed to be endowed with healing properties. Among other tokens for sale in direct connection with the principal show—the procession—are pictures of the patron saint, designed for mural decoration, or set in some way for personal adornment ; glass piglets, in honour of St. Isidro's lowly calling ; pig bells, which, after they have been blessed, are considered to be a talisman against lightning ; and glass whistles in the disguise of roses, which can be worn in the buttonhole, but, better still, can be used to make a noise in imitation of the call with which San Isidro used to entice the pigs under his care to come to him.

Among the local fairs that are of a purely worldly nature, that held at Seville about the middle of April is the most famous. But the annual fair at the smallest village is equally a sight not to be missed ; indeed, it has the distinction of concentrated local character, whereas the great fair at Seville is more of a national

Spain

fête. At fair-time all the inhabitants of a village are a family party of merry-makers : the squire is "hail-fellow-well-met" with the labourers on his estate, the squire's wife romps with the boy and girl peasants, the squire's son plays cavalier to the village beauty. Everyone is adorned in the best bibs and tuckers of local costume ; everywhere is heard the music of castanets and guitars, bidding the merry-makers trip the light fantastic toe in some local form of dance. By day the pedlars constitute one of the most attractive sights of the fair : those who trade in spindles and distaffs carry their wares tied round their waists ; some, who sell sweetmeats, fruit, needles and cottons, and suchlike oddments, display their goods on flower-bedecked trays slung round the neck by bright ribbons ; and some general dealers balance on their heads a pyramid of hats for stall. At night, illuminations and fireworks contribute largely to the fun of the fair.

The festivals which are constantly affecting a small section of Spanish society here, there, and everywhere throughout the land, are known as name-days. These celebrations are nearly related to our birthday festivities, and, like them, only concern one member of a family in particular, and relatives and friends in general. Every Spaniard is named after a saint, and the special day dedicated by the Church to the memory of his patron saint is name-day for him. Each member of a family, from the oldest to the youngest, is the hero or heroine of an intimate circle on his or her own name-day, and mother's name-day in a Spanish home is of the same special importance as is mother's birth-



SEGÓVIA AQUEDUCT. Page 55.

High Days and Holidays

day in an English home. Flowers, fruits, and sweets are the leading varieties of presents. The family in which the name-day occurs frequently gives a *tertulia*—an evening reception of an informal nature: people drop in to offer congratulations and express good wishes, and there is a considerable amount of talking, some music, dancing, and perhaps a game of whist. Only the lightest of refreshments are served at *tertulias*, which are not peculiar to name-day celebrations, but are a very usual medium of social intercourse; water is often the only beverage handed round.

There is one Spanish festival of particular interest to the women. This is San Juan's Day, June 13, when Cupid is cajoled and propitiated. The Spanish girl who is anxious for a sweetheart steals out in the early morning to bathe her face in the waters of a fountain, and the Spanish girl who already has a lover goes through the same ceremony to insure his constancy. Heart-shaped cakes are another of the love-customs of this day, and rosemary and verbena are burned as offerings to the god of love.

CHAPTER IX

CHARACTERISTIC SCENES

SPAIN still maintains the old-world institution of night-watchmen. City streets are now brilliantly illuminated by electric lights; many of the smallest towns are lit up by the same bright process, yet almost every muni-

Spain

cipality has its *serenos*, whose business it is to parade and serenade the sleeping district allotted to their care. They generally manage to wake up fully half the neighbourhood in the zealous discharge of their duties, for they shout the hours at the top of their voices; to do them justice, however, there is quite a melodious refrain to their cry: "Twelve o'clock, and all serene!"

The *serenos* are generally old men, and, truth to tell, they seem naught but an ornamental relic of the dark past in the midst of up-to-date municipal methods for looking after the comfort, convenience, and safety of the populace. They make very picturesque figures as, clad in cloaks with pointed hoods and slouch hats, and carrying javelins and lighted lanterns, they wander about the deserted streets. Occasionally they serve a more practical purpose than that of keeping up an old custom and adding to the romantic charms of Spain: they carry keys to all the street-doors on their round, and if a householder happens to lose his way when returning late from a particularly merry party, a *sereno* will guide him home and let him in his own door. And in the out-of-the-way villages, whose rough tracks are not yet sentinelled by standard lamps, the *sereno* still fills the all-important part of night-guard.

Picturesque figures, too, are the Civil Guards, but their position in the Spanish Government service is very different from that of the *serenos*. They are a modern institution in the interests of public safety, and so efficiently and effectively have they carried out their arduous duties in the past, so zealously do they pursue

Characteristic Scenes

their good offices in the present, that Spain now enjoys the reputation of being a very secure travel-land for both natives and visitors.

The Civil Guards were first organized about the middle of last century, for the purpose of stamping out brigandage. From the outset they seem to have worked together for the honour of their corps, and there is little doubt that they owe their present most honourable position as much to that guiding force as to the courage and excellent deportment for which they are equally renowned. They made themselves so useful in the discharge of their original duties, and won such a splendid reputation for reliability, that they were not disbanded after they had freed the country from the tyranny of brigands.

The present body of picked men numbers about 20,000 foot and 5,000 horse guards, who fill the dual rôle of policemen and soldiers. They are recruited from experienced army men of high character, and from a cadet college, where the children of Civil Guards who have died for the cause of duty receive a free training for the constabulary. The necessary qualifications for service are an unblemished record for good conduct, fine physique, physical fitness according to the standard of a searching medical examination, and ability to read and write well. Broadly defined, the present duties of the force include the protection of persons and property under every condition of danger, and the men are trained to be just as capable of dealing with the emergencies of flood, fire, or earthquake, as of bringing to justice anyone who defies the law.

Spain

The well-groomed Civil Guards look very smart in their uniform. They wear a dark blue tunic, trousers of the same colour, with red stripes down the legs, light buff-coloured belts, and a glazed shako; the cavalry carry heavy Dragoon swords of the world-famous Toledo make, revolvers, and short carbines, and the foot guards are armed with English rifles and bayonets.

The Civil Guards always do duty in pairs. A couple are stationed at every town and village in Spain, and constitute quite a common street sight; but it is in the course of railway travelling that the foreigner becomes most familiar with the "twin guards," for a couple of these men meet every train at every station.

The goatherd milkman and his flock make a quaint street picture. The herdsman goes his round walking at the head of his procession of goats. A customer opens a window and calls to him to stop, at the same time lowering a pail attached to a rope. He takes out the coin that comes down in the pail, milks one of the goats till the bucket contains the money's worth, gives the signal to "haul up," and goes on to serve the next customer in the same way.

The method of washing clothes in Spain is by no means peculiar to the country, but in that it is so very different from the English way, it affords a novel spectacle. Washing-day starts with a journey to a favourite stream, generally the one nearest the house. When all the soiled linen has been carried to the scene of action, the actual business of washing begins. The washerwoman kneels down on the bank and uses the

Characteristic Scenes

stream as wash-tub, the stones as scrubbing-board. When the clothes are clean, they are spread out on the grass to dry, or hung on the bushes and trees. Quite a large party is wont to congregate at one and the same stream, and the banks on either side are often lined for a considerable distance with prostrate figures in various attitudes. Some of the women are kneeling, their backs comparatively straight, their heads bent, as they carefully examine a garment to see whether it is quite clean ; some leaning so far over the water's edge to rinse their linen in a clean pool among the stones that they look in imminent peril of losing their balance and getting a rinse themselves ; some wringing, others rubbing, all busily chattering, as they pursue the various details that go to make up the family washing-day.

The bullock-cart makes a very pretty picture of country life. The cart itself is a somewhat small vehicle of rough workmanship, but the oxen yoked to it are, as a rule, fine beasts. They walk with slow, stately steps, and the peasant in charge has little to do on the journey beyond leisurely pacing the way a few feet ahead of them.

A most fascinating country scene in the North is a maize-bedecked farmhouse. The Northern regions are very sandy, and many a wide stretch of land glows like purest gold in the brilliant sunlight. Amidst such surroundings you frequently see a house covered with the staple product of the neighbouring fields, harvested for the drying stage : the ears of maize hang in thick orange-hued clusters around all the windows,

Spain

over the door, and under the projecting roof, and combine with the landscape setting to form a wondrously beautiful study in gold.

CHAPTER X

THE BUILDERS OF SPAIN

THE builders of Spain have given us one of the most complete and faithful histories of the country on record. Since they belong to many nations, that history is necessarily a series of chapters, dealing in various languages with various epochs; but each chapter is charged with the romance of life, and there is not a dry detail in the whole story.

In order to enjoy and appreciate that story, you must be able to follow each instalment in its original medium of expression. Hence you must be prepared to study several building languages, but I shall do my best to make that task quite easy by teaching you the very simple ABC from which each is developed.

First, let me give you a comprehensive glance at all the buildings in Spain. Notice that the styles manifest powerful Roman, Moorish, and Viking influences, and at once you see that the old Romans, the Arabs, and the Northmen have played a very active part in Spanish history. There are, moreover, indications of a pre-historic race, who piled up enormous stones into monuments that resemble Druidical remains, whilst various modifications of Roman, Moorish, and Northern building principles combine to show how many different

The Builders of Spain

forces have contended for supremacy on the Spanish arena.

The Romans began to gain power in Spain as early as 900 B.C. ; they gradually acquired supremacy, and their domination lasted until A.D. 414. Spain was a favourite province of the old Roman Empire, as witness the magnificent cities which were founded on this conquered soil. Those cities, scattered far and wide, have been engulfed in other civilizations ; but existing Roman buildings are so splendid, even in their ruinous state, that we are justified in concluding they must originally have entered into the design of remarkably beautiful and highly cultured centres of Roman civilization.

The aqueduct at Segovia (see illustration) will give you a good idea of the science of Roman building construction. Columns and round arches form the working basis of all designs. Rigid strength is the guiding principle by which the parts are combined into a secure whole, every support being sufficiently massive to stand inert under its burden.

The principal types of Roman buildings in Spain are bridges, aqueducts, military roads, walls, towers, triumphal arches, and amphitheatres. Even if you did not know anything about ancient history, would not such buildings inspire you to conjure up a picture of the social, domestic, and military life of the Romans in Spain?

In 409 a number of Visigoths settled in the central regions of Spain. These Visigoths, or Western Goths, were a branch of the great Viking family, who played

Spain

the most active part in the barbarian invasions by which the Roman Empire was eventually overthrown. Naturally you know quite sufficient about those vigorous Northern forefathers of ours to understand how it came to pass that the earliest Gothic settlers in Spain soon made themselves masters of the country.

The Gothic Empire in Spain lasted for three hundred years, during which time very little building seems to have been done ; certainly there were not many monuments of an enduring nature erected. This is not surprising, seeing that the Goths had not yet settled down in the course of their career to a study of the peaceful arts, and that the particular period in question was the time when all Europe was a battlefield, on which the European nations were struggling, in the midst of dissension to be born from an alliance between conquering barbarians and conquered Romans or between different branches of the barbarian tribes. Under such circumstances, all the more remarkable are the few extant specimens of Visigothic buildings in Spain. The most perfect are the simply designed, primitively constructed little churches of San Roman de Hornija, near Toro, dating from 646, and San Juan de Baños, near Valladolid, erected about 661.

In A.D. 711 the Moors won the battle of Jerez, or of the Guadalete, and thus put an end to the Gothic rule in Spain. I have already pointed out to you the chief characteristics of the Moorish style of architecture, and shown you one of the most famous buildings erected by Moorish artists and craftsmen. I would like to explain to you now, however, that I chose the



ESCORIAL FROM THE EAST. Page 59.

The Builders of Spain

Alhambra Palace as a specimen of the style simply because I felt you must be already familiar with it by name, and for that reason you would be specially interested in it. As a matter of fact, much of the Alhambra Palace exhibits the decadent stage of Mohammedan architecture. The finest specimen of the pure Moorish style in Spain is the ninth-century mosque at Cordova. Toledo is also rich in a small mosque erected about the same time.

During the gradual Christian conquest of Mohammedan Spain many of the Moors continued to live in the captured towns. They worked for their Christian masters, and actually built some of the Christian churches. In adapting their style of architecture to meet the necessities of Christian worship they created a new building style, known as *Mudejar*, specimens of which are only found in the Spanish Peninsula. The conquered Moors worked for Jews as well as Gentiles, as witness some interesting synagogues in the Mudejar style at Toledo and Segovia.

The Moors were not expelled from Spain till near the close of the fifteenth century, but for some time previously they had only upheld their supremacy in the South. In the Northern districts, which had completely freed themselves from Moorish domination, Christian architecture was developed on the general lines that were being followed throughout Western Europe. The name "Romanesque" is given to the style in which Western European buildings were erected between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, because that style is generally considered to be founded on

Spain

Roman building models and Roman methods of building construction. In reality, Romanesque includes the several styles of building practised by the newly-born European nations, all based on Roman art, but each with national characteristics, and all, again, striving to express new artistic ideals, and to develop an entirely new system of building construction. There are many beautiful examples of Romanesque churches in Northern Spain. Their characteristic features are highly ornamental doorways and central towers, and the situation of the choir in the centre of the nave, instead of in the more usual position to the east. The doorway of the cathedral of Santiago and the old cathedral at Salamanca are among the finest specimens of Spanish Romanesque, and the exquisite cloisters of Gerona and Tarragona are unrivalled.

By the end of the thirteenth century the European Pointed style of architecture, commonly known as Gothic, had won for itself a firm position of favour in Northern Spain. This is the style embodying the ideals which the Romanesque builders strove so hard to put into practice.

The keynote to the science of Gothic building construction is *balance*, and to Gothic art, *individuality*. The old system of insuring stability was to let every support have the maximum strength necessary for bearing its special burden of a dead weight; by the new Gothic system, weights were distributed in such a way that they did not bear down with their whole force on the supports, but helped those supports to hold them in position. The pointed arch was the main

The Builders of Spain

factor in helping the Gothic builders to realize the dreams of their Romanesque predecessors. Spain has some magnificent buildings in the Gothic style, which is characterized by lightness, elasticity, and loftiness; pointed-arch windows, doorways, and vaulted roofs; and sculptured ornamentation, which manifests individuality of thought and feeling. The finest Gothic cathedrals in Spain are those of Toledo, Leon, Burgos, and Segovia, together with the cathedral at Salamanca which is known as "La Nueva," to distinguish it from its old Romanesque companion.

The Renaissance movement in Europe struck a blow at Gothic architecture through the new enthusiasm which sprung to life for all things classic. The Spanish builders, however, did not fall under the spell of classic models, classic methods, until the sixteenth century, some considerable time after the builders in other parts of Europe had forsaken the Gothic style. When, however, they did begin to adopt the Renaissance style, they were particularly active, with the result that Spain is one of the best countries in which to study the revival of the classic science and art of architecture. Nearly all the important towns are rich in specimens of Renaissance buildings, and it is in the midst of a keen competition that the monastery of the Escorial has won fame as the leading Spanish example of the style.

The gigantic granite edifice known as the Escorial is regarded by the Spaniards as the eighth wonder of the world. It stands among the pine-clad slopes of the Sierra de Guadarrama, about one and a half hours' journey by rail from Madrid—an isolated pile that at

Spain

first sight strikes wonder into the mind by its vastness, but which leaves the heart cold, since it speedily breeds oppression by its general gloominess and prison-like appearance.

The great building, which includes a palace, a church, and a monastery, was erected by Philip II., partly in compliance with his father's desire to have a royal tomb-house for himself and his descendants, and partly in fulfilment of a vow made in gratitude after a battle fought on San Lorenzo's Day, victory being ascribed to the aid lent by that saint in answer to a special petition. The reasons for founding the Escorial are stated fully in a document written and signed by Philip, which runs thus :

“In acknowledgment of the many and great blessings which it has pleased God to heap on us and continue to us daily, and, inasmuch as He has been pleased to direct and guide our deeds and acts to His holy service, and in maintenance and defence of His holy faith and religion, and of justice and peace within our realms ; considering, likewise, what the Emperor and King, my lord and father, in a codicil which he lately made, committed to our care, and charged us with, respecting his tomb, the spot and place where his body and that of the Empress and Queen, my lady and mother, should be placed ; it being just and meet that their bodies should be most duly honoured with a befitting burial-ground, and that for their souls be said continually masses, prayers, anniversaries, and other holy records, and because we have, besides, determined that whenever it may please God to take us away to Him, our body

The Builders of Spain

should rest in the same place and spot near theirs . . . for all these reasons we found and erect the monastery of St. Lorenzo el Real, near the town of El Escorial, in the diocese and archbishopric of Toledo, the which we dedicate in the name of the Blessed St. Lawrence, on account of the special devotion which, as we have said, we pay to this glorious saint, and in memory of the favour and victories which on his day we received from God. Moreover, we found it for the Order of St. Jerome, on account of our special affection and respect for this Order, and that which was also bestowed upon it by the Emperor and King, my father."

The foundation-stone of the Escorial was laid in 1565, and the building was completed in 1584. Since it is a lengthy and depressing undertaking even to glance at the numerous details of this vast structure, I do not propose showing you all round, but will take you straight away to see the great sight of this show-place—the Pantheon.

Far be it from me to speak irreverently of such a solemn spot as a burial-ground, but the whole garish aspect of the royal tomb-house conveys the idea of an elaborately staged spectacle. Philip II. is not responsible for this incongruous chamber of death; although he built the Escorial as a tomb-house for his father, he designed a plain vault for the actual tomb. The Pantheon was a later addition, originated by Philip III., and completed by Philip IV. in 1654. The upper entrance is a confusion of coloured marbles and gilded ornaments. A flight of polished marble steps leads down to a little octagonal apartment, the burial-

Spain

place of nearly all the Kings and Queens of Spain since its erection. Shining marbles and gilt bronze enter ostentatiously into the decorative scheme. The wall-space is almost wholly devoted to a series of niches, in which stand black marble urns, all alike, nearly all occupied, one or two waiting for . . . the grim suggestiveness of these empty urns makes you shudder. Well may your blood run cold as you think upon death amidst such theatrical surroundings.

CHAPTER XI

A PEEP AT MADRID

MADRID, in the present stage of its development, takes rank among the great European capitals. It is the centre of a network of railways and telegraph-wires; the streets are wide, well paved, well kept, well lighted, and traversed by a constant series of electric tramcars, which cover the ground at up-to-date speed. It has capital lungs in its spacious squares, that are laid out, park-wise, with trees, lawns, flower-beds, and fountains. It boasts some remarkably fine shops, big hotels, and excellent restaurants, and its public and private buildings are on a large scale.

But this description lacks character, you say, and you would fain grumble at me because I have indulged in generalities instead of giving you a special picture of the special city which enjoys the proud distinction of being the capital of Spain. Your grievance is

A Peep at Madrid

essentially akin to the grievance I cherish against Madrid itself. It makes no special impression ; it has no special character, no individuality—in a word, there is nothing Spanish about the capital of Spain, nothing to identify the first city in the land with the romantic history of a country that has struggled so hard to maintain its nationality.

Nothing, did I say? Well, I have been speaking of Madrid as she reveals herself in general aspect, and in so doing I have not exaggerated her very ordinary appearance as a wealthy, busy city, and nothing more. If you are bent on discovering Spanish features in the capital, I must admit they are to be found ; but either you must choose the time of your visit to coincide with some special period of festivity—such as carnival season, Christmas Eve, or a bull-fight Sunday—or you must search the everyday life and movement of the streets with diligent eyes till finally you espy a country cousin in picturesque national costume, or, maybe, a loyal daughter of Spain, who, despite the fact that she belongs to the cosmopolitan capital, has not yet discarded the mantilla for the latest fashion in French hats.

“Why, then, should anyone ever go to Madrid for pleasure?” you ask, adding, in a somewhat aggrieved tone : “Why have you guided us there?”

Pleasure-seekers who have anything of the artist in them go to Madrid over and over again, and many a time will you want to return to the Spanish capital if you are a lover of pictures. For here is situated one of the finest picture-galleries in the world—the finest, if rated by its exclusiveness, without any thought of

Spain

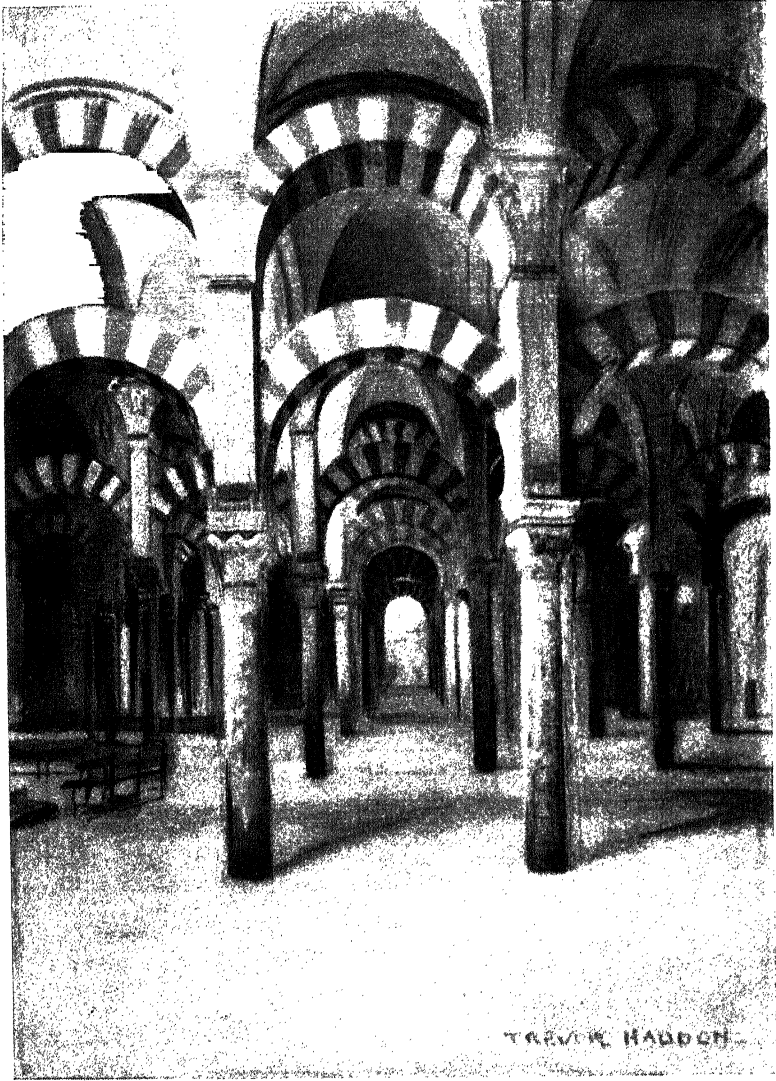
historical completeness as a factor in appraising its worth.

The Royal Picture-Gallery is situated on the Prado, the fashionable promenade of Madrid ; hence the name by which it is generally and widely known—"The Prado."

The Prado collection does not pretend to be an international history of painting. Originally the pictures did not form a single public exhibition, but several royal collections, the various gems having been acquired individually by Spanish Sovereigns for the adornment of the various royal palaces. The collectors were all connoisseurs, each imbued with personal taste to influence his choice, but everyone endowed with a desire for the best. Now that these gems are all housed together, they make their home a unique picture-gallery, in that it consists entirely of master-pieces. And now you will readily understand how it is that the Prado is purely a pleasure resort, in the highest sense of the term, and not an academy.

But if you are an art student, there is one master whose magnificent career you can follow step by step in the Prado as nowhere else in the world ; for here are gathered together the finest creations of the wondrous genius of Velasquez in all its phases. It is the dream of every art-lover, be he master, student, or mere beauty-worshipper, to make a pilgrimage to the Prado as the shrine of Velasquez.

In addition to the unrivalled collection of Velasquez gems, the Prado's priceless treasures include some of the best and most famous creations of the greatest



MOSQUE AT CORDOVA. Page 27.

A Peep at Madrid

Spanish, Italian, and Flemish masters ; indeed, there is hardly a world-famous master who is not represented by a world-famous creation in Madrid's world-renowned picture-gallery.

CHAPTER XII

A PEEP AT MADRID (*continued*)

BEFORE leaving Madrid, you will like to see the Royal Palace, since it is the home of an English Queen. The building was begun in 1737, and its first royal occupant was Charles III., who took up his abode there in 1764. It forms a square, about 471 feet each way, and rises, in three stories, to a height of 100 feet. The base is of granite, the upper part of white stone. In style the Palace is typical of Spanish Renaissance work in its late and impure phase ; it has the classical form without the classical spirit. But although from an architectural standpoint the building is unsatisfactory, being squat, heavy, monotonous in general appearance, and confused in detail, it ranks as one of the finest royal palaces in the world, by virtue of its building material of white stone, which looks like marble, the magnificent decorative features of the interior, and the treasures it enshrines.

The lower story is plain and massive ; the one above is lighter-looking, having columns and pillars of mixed classical designs dividing a row of high and narrow balconies. The upper story is pierced by mean-looking windows, and the slate roof is crowded with

Spain

garrets, the abode of pensioned Court flunkeys and innumerable pigeons. The principal royal apartments overlook the garden and command a fine view of the Guadarrama Mountains. The chief salon, the reception or throne room, with its rock-crystal chandeliers, colossal mirrors, marble tables, numerous gilded details, and painted ceiling, representing the "Majesty of Spain," is a magnificent example of State splendour. There are many other apartments furnished on a princely scale, and particularly noticeable among the specimen pieces are countless clocks, the hobby collections of Ferdinand VII. and Charles V. The grand staircase of black and white marble is of truly noble design, and the marble lions are beautifully executed. Placing his hand ecstatically on one of these lions, Napoleon, entering the Palace for the first time in 1808, exclaimed :

"Je la tiens enfin cette Espagne si désirée."

And as he ascended the stately steps, he turned to his brother Joseph and added :

"Mon frère, vous serez mieux logé que moi."

It was not for long that the French were able to maintain their hold on Spain. Wellington was at their heels, and when, in the course of his great campaign, he entered Madrid in triumph on August 12, 1812, he stayed at the Royal Palace.

We are going to plunge straight from high life into low life, from the stately splendour of a royal abode to the simple poverty of a common lodging-house.

It so happens that I owe to Madrid one of the most interesting experiences that has fallen to my lot. There

A Peep at Madrid

I sampled life in a foreign doss-house, and, thanks in great measure to the companionship of an ideal travelling comrade, I was able to see the humorous side of the situation, even whilst culling that experience, and can look back on the little adventure as a pleasant surprise, which gave me the satisfaction of getting into personal touch with a phase of Spanish life that is unfamiliar to many a Spaniard, and, generally speaking, quite out of the visitor's sphere.

The incident was indeed a surprise, and I must admit that in its early stage it did not give promise of any pleasing element—quite the reverse.

The circumstances which led up to the astounding revelation were quite ordinary. My friend and I are of one mind as wanderers in foreign lands: when we go to a strange country we like to be as the natives, to sleep in native hotels or inns, live on native fare, travel with the natives in such conveyances as demonstrate the standard of comfort for the masses, as distinct from the classes, who can base their mode of living more or less on the English or Parisian model. We steadfastly avoid the hotels which boast, "Ici on parle français" or "English spoken," knowing that we shall either be asked in unintelligible gibberish to pay exorbitant prices for indifferent accommodation, or run the risk of being ruined in a really first-class establishment, where it is possible to be "at home from home"—in which case, why leave home?

In making inquiries before we left England about the hotel accommodation at Madrid, we learned from an Englishman exactly where to find an inn that would

Spain

be just the very place to suit us. Somebody had once told him that he had heard from somebody, who knew someone who had been told by someone else that there was a very good Spanish inn situated in the heart of Madrid, where a comfortable bedroom could be had for the modest sum of a peseta (about 10d.) a night, including light and attendance, with absolute freedom to meal out. The address was forthcoming, and we made a note of it. We also confided to each other later on that we thought there must be something "fishy" about that inn. We would certainly hunt out the place if it was still to be found, but we would be very careful to make further and full inquiries before coming to any decision with regard to staying there.

It so happened, according to the way in which we arranged our programme, that we passed through Madrid *en route* for Toledo, previous to making a stay in the capital. We had a couple of hours to spare between the arrival and departure of trains. What to do? Why not seek out that inn and see what it was like? Capital idea! If there were no such place, or if it proved an impossible rest-house, we could have a look round at the hotels; it would be good to know before we left Madrid where we were going to stay when we came back.

We found that so-called inn without much difficulty. It was, as we had been told, situated in the centre of the city, most conveniently cornered in a quiet street of good appearance, running parallel to the main thoroughfare. It was quite an imposing-looking establishment, and we came to the conclusion, as we

A Peep at Madrid

mounted a broad flight of steps leading to the bureau, that the place had changed hands, and been raised to the dignity of an hotel. It did not seem at all probable that the rooms were now a peseta a night.

A well-groomed man in white uniform came forward to greet us in the office. In answer to our inquiries, he informed us that the *best* single bedrooms were 1 peseta a night, the *best* rooms with two single beds 1½ pesetas. We asked to see one of the latter. He selected a key, led us down a wide corridor that looked spotlessly clean, and opened the door of an equally clean-looking, fresh-smelling room. Certainly there was no superfluous furniture in that room, no attempt at decoration; but this is an advantage, rather than a drawback, in a strange apartment. It was large and airy; the walls had just had a new coat of whitewash. There were two iron bedsteads, with snowy-white coverlets, a couple of chairs, a table, and an enamelled washstand. Impressed by the courteous manners of our cicerone, the spaciousness and cleanliness of the establishment, and the atmosphere of peace and quietude, we booked the room for a specified date, and took the first opportunity of rejoicing over our good luck in hearing of the place and getting a room there.

One Saturday night we arrived back in Madrid. We had come up by the last train, and it was very late, but we were perfectly at ease, seeing that we knew where we were going to stay. We drove straight to our destination. This time, instead of finding ourselves on the threshold of an empty doorway, we stood on the curb looking in bewilderment at a crowd of

Spain

men, women, and children who blocked up the entrance. We called someone to take our luggage, dismissed the cab, and edged our way through the crowd, only to find ourselves caught in another throng that was wending its way upstairs. That broad flight of steps, which we had previously mounted in solitary state, was now packed with men in shirt-sleeves, soldiers of the line, women with babies in their arms, and ragamuffin children. We were carried up with the stream, never dreaming that we should not break clear before we reached the bureau.

Suddenly we were brought to a standstill at the back of a queue. As we took our turn to move forward and came nearer to the office, the truth dawned on us. We looked at each other, but said never a word; silently we agreed to see the thing through. In due course our turn came to have a key handed to us over the counter, and we found our own way to our room. But we did not have to let ourselves in; that little service was undertaken as a personal act of grace by an attendant, who had already taken up his official position for the night on a bench just outside our door. Whilst the key was being turned we had leisure to watch a pedlar let himself in at a door opposite, and notice a peasant, his buxom wife, and several children, enter a room on our right.

Left to ourselves in our own apartment, I broke the silence—that is to say, the silence between us two; but I had to raise my voice to make myself heard above the din without.

“Do you know we’re in a doss-house?”

A Peep at Madrid

"A first-class one," came the cheery reply.

"And evidently a favourite."

"Saturday night, you see—soldiers on week-end furlough, country cousins in town for Sunday. . . . By the way, perhaps there's a bull-fight to-morrow . . . if so, we're in luck . . . and that would easily account for a specially busy night here."

"Are you really prepared to stay in this place?"

"The room looks just as clean as when we first saw it. Besides, we can't go out into a strange town and look for an hotel at this time of night."

That settled the question, and I proceeded to turn down the snowy coverlets and examine the beds. The sheets were clean, inasmuch as they were not begrimed, but obviously they had been slept in. I called the attendant, and told him to bring all fresh bedclothes for both beds, at the same time slipping a coin into his hand. He returned presently with the desired luxuries, remade the beds, and went away smiling, as though he were highly amused by our eccentric ideas; but he came back unbidden over and over again, each time with something new that he had thought of to make us more comfortable.

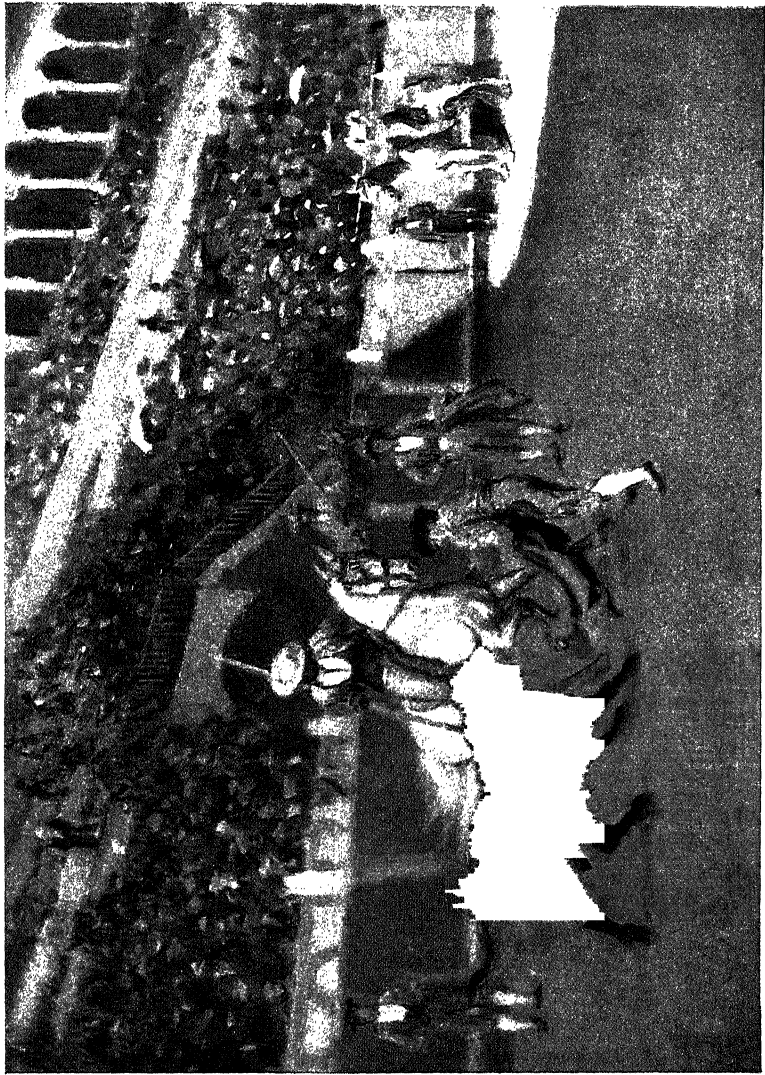
We went to bed, and, tired out, fell asleep. An odd rebel or two defied Keating, and woke us up in the early hours of the morning. We made tea, got out the biscuits, sat down side by side at the table, had a festive picnic, laughed over past adventures in the night, told ourselves how we should laugh over the present one when we were well on the other side of it, and, growing drowsy, leant our arms on the table for pillow, bent

Spain

our heads down on them, and dozed off into a semi-slumber. But when morning came we were quite sure we had not dreamed that people had been on the move in the building all through the livelong night. Nevertheless, we both agreed that we had often passed a night in far more uncomfortable and "lively" surroundings, and been obliged to pay through the nose for the experience into the bargain.

Considering its clientèle, that doss-house was remarkably clean, and it was certainly conducted in a most orderly manner. Massed in memory with all the native Spanish inns at which we stayed, it has a place of honour for its freshness of atmosphere, and, judged by comparison, even its sanitary arrangements now seem to me to have been planned on some sort of hygienic system.

There is just one other never-to-be-forgotten reminiscence connected with the place. As we were leaving, we paused to read some printed and framed rules that hung at the top of the staircase. One regulation concerned family beds: there was a limit to the number of relations that might occupy any one of these at the same time, and a sliding scale of charges according to the actual number, within bounds, availing themselves of this collective sleeping accommodation.



A BULL FIGHT. Chapter XIII.

A Bull-Fight

CHAPTER XIII

A BULL-FIGHT

I AM not going to enter into any humanitarian discussion on the subject of bull-fighting, nor shall I raise any argument in connection with Sunday amusements. I am simply going to take you to see the Spaniards revelling in their national sport, and we must go to the *fiesta* on the usual day devoted to its celebration. As we are in Madrid, we will visit the bull-ring there, for it is famous as one of the two great centres where the best bull-fights take place, the other famous home of this pastime being Seville.

It is Sunday morning. We make our way to the booking-office in the city to secure our tickets. Even at this early hour we feel the glare and heat more than a little trying, and when we take our places in the auditorium of the bull-ring, the sun will have had several more hours in which to scorch the air, and will then be doing his worst to dazzle and frizzle. Readily do we see the advantage of paying a little extra for a *boletín de sombra*—a “ticket in the shade.”

Soon after lunch we join the bubbling stream of excited folk wending towards the arena. There is no necessity to ask the way; everyone is going in the same direction with the same object. We have only to join the throng and move with it, and so infectious is its enthusiasm that we shall press forward much too eagerly to be in any risk of getting left behind. We

Spain

walk far, but the distance does not seem long—there is so much to interest us all around. A constant procession of carriages fills the roadway: fashionable Madrid is driving to the scene of its great national drama. All the nobility and gentry have turned out for the occasion in their most gorgeous carriages, attended by their flunkies in smartest livery; all the cavaliers are groomed to perfection; all the ladies are arrayed in exquisite Parisian gowns of the latest model, but every one of them has resisted the temptation of putting on the chic Parisian hat that goes so well with her costume, for to-day the mantilla must be worn in honour of so distinguished a national ceremony. And constantly our attention is drawn from the classes to the masses, from the carriage-folk to the teeming majority of pedestrians that surges along the streets. To-day we can see the populace of Madrid, of its environs, of the far and distant neighbouring towns and villages, displaying the splendour of national costume in its picturesque local varieties of dress, headgear, and jewels.

The multitude leads us beyond the city and up a boulevard slope on the outskirts. Now we are in the heart of a gala scene: the stately carriages have been joined by all manner of plebeian conveyances; refreshment-stalls to right and left are already doing a brisk trade; impish little ragamuffins, vagabondish cheap-jacks, and experienced pedlars, are all vying with each other to dispose of fans displaying the most dramatic scenes of the ring, pictures of the afternoon's principal performers, and paper rosettes in the colours of the day's heroes.

A Bull-Fight

We pass through a gate in the high boundary-walls of the arena, and find ourselves in a spacious circular corridor, with numerous side-tracks leading into the lower tiers of the auditorium. Our reserved places are in the upper part of this open house, and as we mount flight after flight of steps, and pass story after story of lofty arcades, we begin to feel we are in a huge building. But it is impossible to realize the colossal scale on which this sports-ground is laid out until we are seated aloft, looking far down into the vast arena, taking a sweeping glance of the auditorium, which encircles it tier beyond tier, and noticing the densely packed thousands that are already massed together between the great vacant spaces which are waiting to accommodate the thousands more spectators who are flocking to the scene. It is a merry throng in whose midst we find ourselves—a gaily-dressed, excited democracy, in which aristocrat and peasant are united by common interests, common enthusiasm, common pride. We are in a thoroughly sporting atmosphere, but Spain is a most sober country so far as drinking is concerned, so we are not distracted by any rowdyism, any brawling, any side-shows of fisticuffs.

The period of waiting passes all too quickly in these surroundings, where the spectators in themselves constitute a most vivid and interesting drama of life. The appointed hour for the great spectacle of the day has arrived. The president has entered the presidential box, the signal is given, the opening ceremony begins.

Forth into the arena march the performers, grouped in picturesque array. The procession is headed by

Spain

two caballeros, solemn-looking figures in black velvet costumes, mounted on black steeds. They are followed, on foot, by the two espadas, the principal actor and his understudy, whose part is a single-handed contest with the bull in the last scene; these heroes of the day are gaily attired in their sporting colours—crimson and gold, orange and purple, blue and red, or some equally striking combination. Behind the espadas ride half a dozen picadores, clad in broad-brimmed felt hats, short cloaks, and long, steel-plated leathern leggings, and carrying spears. Next in the procession walk the eight banderilleros, a most conspicuous and gorgeous group in knee-breeches, who lavishly splash the scene with colour; their waists are girdled with silk sashes of the brightest dyes, their legs are clad in stockings of vivid and varied shades, and in their hands are curiously-shaped darts, ornamented with rainbow-hued ribbon streamers. The rear is brought up by stablemen leading the horses which are to drag the carcasses out of the arena, and which are dressed for their part in fine trappings and rich plumes.

The procession wends its way slowly across the ring, salutes the president, and breaks up, those who are to take part in the first act distributing themselves about the arena, the others retiring behind the scenes. The caballeros remain facing the president; again they salute, a shrill trumpet-cry rings out, and the president throws down the key of the *toril*—the bulls' den. A few moments later the first beast dashes into the arena. The sport has begun in real earnest; bull and men have met together in the ring to fight to the death. It

A Bull-Fight

is universally known that the bull's fate is already sealed, but none can yet tell how drastically the beast will avenge its own death ere it draws its last breath.

The banderilleros seem to play a somewhat cowardly part at first, for as the bull dashes hither and thither, they vault the barrier round the arena to get safely out of its way. We soon discover that they are fully justified in their action. This is a scientific game of skill, and the proceedings have not yet come within the bounds of science. The bull, just let loose from its dark cell, is blinded by the sunlight, and is plunging aimlessly about in a wild revel of freedom; it would be mad folly for one man to meet it single-handed in this mood—there is no sport in an absurdly unequal contest. Presently the animal grows more accustomed to the light, and, spotting a particular picador, makes a direct attack. The mounted combatant has a sporting chance with his adversary, but even so the banderilleros make ready to back him up should the necessity arise. As the bull comes to close quarters, the picador tries to wound it with his spear. Perhaps he succeeds, and the bull rushes off at a tangent. Maybe he fails, and there is a tense moment as the bull makes a lunge with its horns at the horse, and the rider falls to the ground with his gored steed. The man will surely be killed, you think, and you hold your breath and tremble in an agony of fear. But your neighbours are more enlightened; they know the chances are well in favour of the picador making good his escape. The ladies hide their faces behind their fans in case an accident *should* happen, but the men shout with excite-

Spain

ment at this semi-critical juncture. The banderilleros hasten to draw off the bull by waving red flags before its eyes, the picador is disentangled—if he did not manage to free himself as he was falling—he is assisted to his feet, because he cannot rise unaided in his heavy accoutrements, and the horse is examined. Is the poor hack quite *hors de combat*? No; it is being coaxed, prodded, and helped into an upright position. As the picador remounts to await another attack, the applause of the multitude rends the air. And the more often he can repeat the whole performance, the greater will be the ovation accorded him when his sorry hack at last lies dead.

But all the horses are not necessarily killed in the fray, and the picadors may not all have been thrown before the president gives the signal which brings the first act of the drama to a close, and heralds the second act. The banderilleros now play the principal part; their business is further to infuriate the bull by sticking their darts into its shoulders. Each in turn, armed with a couple of banderillas, deliberately marches to meet the beast, and with raised arms prepares to run his darts home. In the course of this act there are some really splendid exhibitions of athletic skill and agility, and it is characterized throughout by a fine display of courage. In the final scene firework banderillas are often used, the explosion taking place within the bull's hide.

Again a signal from the president. The arena is cleared; for a second the bull has the ring to itself. With his trustworthy Toledan blade in one hand and

A Bull-Fight

a red flag in the other, the chief espada is standing before the presidential box, formally asking permission to kill the beast, and pledging himself to perform the deed in a manner that shall do honour to Madrid and to the glorious traditions of his profession. A second later a trumpet sounds, and he steps into the arena to meet his adversary in a duel. He is greeted by the audience with wild applause, which suddenly dies into an intense silence as he advances to meet the foe. For a considerable time he plays his adversary, exhibiting many skilful tricks of his profession, and some of the specially courageous and pretty athletic feats that have already won for him a high place of honour as a popular hero; and perhaps the bull attacks him in a way that gives him a chance to try a new feat.

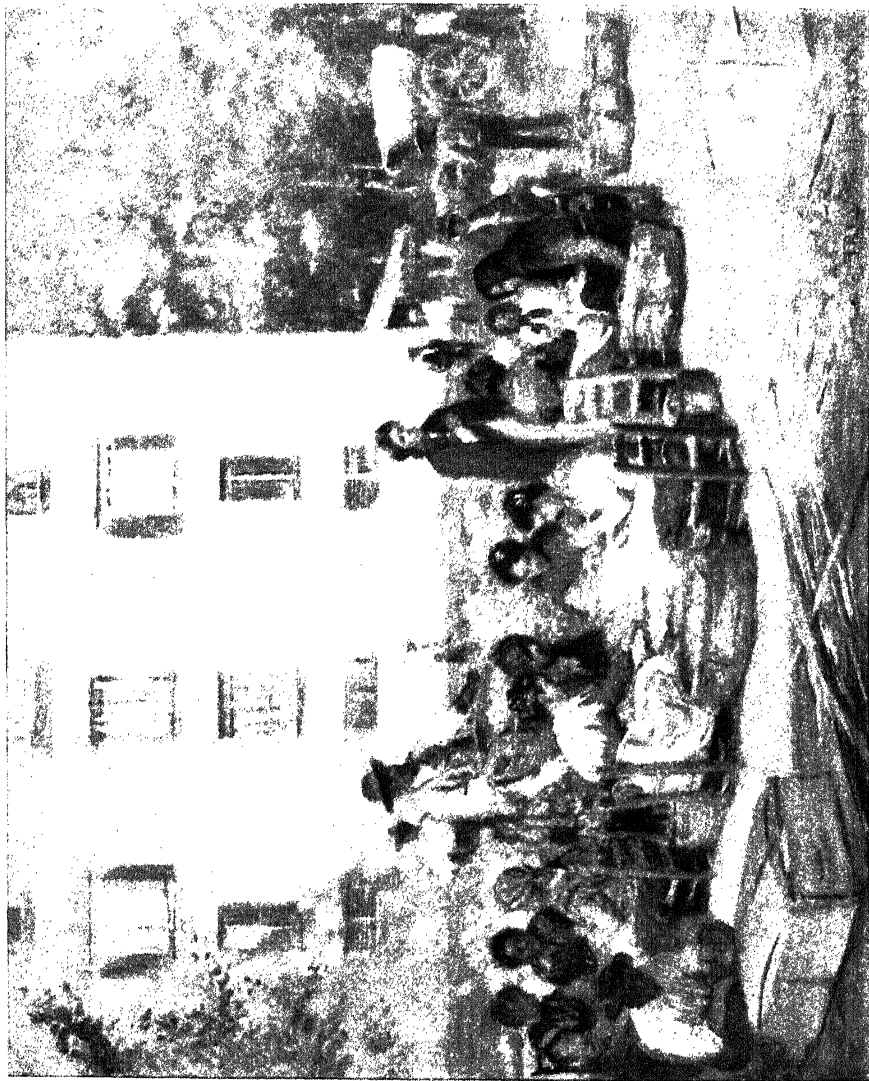
Why does he not strike the death-blow at the first opportunity? Why should he prolong the period during every second of which he is in imminent peril of being done to death himself on the horns of the bull? Remember, this vast crowd around you has not collected for the purpose of seeing a bull tortured and slaughtered; they have come to testify their faith in the national sport. This is the climax of a great sporting drama; the espada is a master of the great art of bull-fighting, and alike to himself and audience he is responsible for seeing that the performance is brought to a close in a truly grand finale.

And the present espada is a great master. See the raging beast charging straight for him, the while he stands his ground, cool and resolute, alert but unflinching; see it getting closer and closer, till now it is

Spain

actually near enough to make a thrust with its horns. . . . They touch the motionless figure; in another second. . . . No, no! do not hide your eyes; the most wondrous scene is crowded into this second. The man escapes death by a slight sway of his lithe body, puts his foot between the bull's horns, and springs clean over the beast. He has mocked the monster by using its weapons as tools for sport; he has played a game in imitation of the grim tragedy which it was on the very point of enacting. A great master this espada, without a doubt, but he means to be something more. This afternoon he is going to raise himself above his fellow chiefs—to become known throughout the length and breadth of Spain as the hero of heroes, one of the very greatest of all espadas, or die in the attempt. See, he is going to respond to an encore; he is going to throw himself once more. It seems a miracle that he is again able to go through that extraordinary feat, but it is safely accomplished after many a hairbreadth escape; and now at last he is watching for his opportunity to strike the death-blow. Presently he is standing face to face with the huge beast; there is a quick flash of steel; the bull staggers, drops on its knees, and falls with a thud on the ground. The fight is finished; human courage and scientific skill have conquered brute force.

The tension is released, deafening cheers ring out, the vast audience roars and surges, whilst the hero walks quietly, unassumingly, towards the president's box. He salutes the master of the ceremonies and bows to the spectators. A bouquet is thrown to him



PACKING LEMONS. MALAGA. PAGE 82.

The Harvest Lands of Spain

as an official tribute, and for a few minutes the air rains caps, gloves, favours, and even costly gifts, around him in the arena. Then the moments of his magnificent triumph are brought to an end. The band strikes up; horses are led into the ring and harnessed to the carcass of the bull and the mangled remains of the picadores' hacks, which are dragged at galloping speed out of sight; sand is raked over the ring; watering-carts come to lay the dust; and the arena is ready for a repetition of the whole performance.

The afternoon's programme usually consists of six events, all alike, except that the last bulls let loose in the arena are generally the fiercest.

CHAPTER XIV

THE HARVEST LANDS OF SPAIN

SPAIN is an agricultural country; her people have always preferred farm-life to factory-life, looked down on trade as a plebeian mode of making a living that is unworthy of a nation of gentlefolk, and honoured as a genteel calling any occupation in direct connection with the land. Nevertheless, the prosperity of Spanish agriculture is much more the result of the naturally favourable conditions of climate and soil than of enterprise. The agricultural implements in general use are very primitive, and the methods of cultivation are far behind the scientific times of the agricultural world at large. True, a general spirit of progress is now

Spain

influencing Spanish ideas and Spanish practices, but the consequent changes are demonstrated by individuals rather than by the populace, by localities rather than by the whole nation. In agriculture, for instance, some up-to-date innovations have certainly been made: there are some Government model farms and agricultural schools; agricultural exhibitions are held, and modern implements are imported. But such progressive assertions are only founded on isolated examples. It is the rule rather than the exception for Nature to get very little assistance from man in creating the Spanish harvests.

The chief crops are maize, corn, olives, and an abundance of Southern fruits, such as oranges, lemons, citrons, pomegranates, dates, melons, and grapes. Artichokes, peas, beans, and other vegetables, grow luxuriantly in some regions; rice is produced in considerable quantities; mulberry-trees grow well in the neighbourhood of Valencia; a little sugar-cane is cultivated, and a little less cotton.

Maize flourishes in the North of Spain. It is sown in May and the early part of June in straight lines, and is ploughed in or trodden in with the foot. July is the busy season for weeding—quite a working month, indeed—and in August or September comes the harvest; but toil during this period is relieved by numerous rural festivities, in which dancing is the most popular form of rejoicing. You will remember that I told you the ears of maize are hung about the outside of the farmhouses to dry, and that the landscape is dotted with most fascinating pictures in consequence.

The Harvest Lands of Spain

The principal farm implements used in the cultivation of this grain are the wooden plough, a pickaxe, a two-pronged fork, and flails for thrashing.

The Eastern and South-Eastern regions form the paradise of the *naranjales*—or orange-grounds—and of the lemon-groves. The orange-trees constitute one of the most picturesque sights in the whole country. To walk among the *naranjales* in March, when they are in full bloom, is to wander among bowers of shining green leaves and fragrant white blossoms, in a perfumed dreamland of wondrous beauty. It is impossible to feel you are on earth amidst such surroundings; all your worldly senses are drugged, through your sense of smell, by the potent accumulation of a delicate fragrance, and you are magically wafted through the charmed air into the realms of romance.

Orange-trees begin to bear after the sixth year; they improve up to the age of twenty, after which they become more and more degenerate. The harvest lasts from October to March, and it frequently happens that you see young leaves, blossoms, and fruit at one and the same time on the same tree. The picking season, as I have previously told you, is one long, happy round of merry-making. The actual work, which is of a light and bright nature, is largely performed by boys and girls. The trees being low, the branches are easily reached by means of ladders; the picker goes up a ladder, carrying a basket slung by a cord round his neck, gathers one orange at a time, and gently drops it into the basket. When the baskets are full they are carried to a shed. Here the fruit is left for a short

Spain

time, so that the skin may harden, but still further precautions must be taken to guard against damage *en route* to the various import markets. You have often seen a wooden case packed with tissue-paper-covered balls, and one or two naked golden oranges lying on the top as a guide to the whole contents. Those bare oranges have been taken out of their travelling costume by the shopman, to be displayed as samples ; they, too, came over wrapped in tissue-paper, like their neighbours below. In Spain, children and young people are extensively employed as orange-packers, and very deft they are at their work ; they envelop each orange in its wrap with a single turn of the hand, and pack the fruit straight into a travelling-case at lightning speed.

The Eastern region is also famous for dates. The date-palms flourish at Elche, close to the town of Alicante. The gigantically tall trunks of these trees often rise to a height of 60 feet before they throw out their plume-like branches, which wave so gracefully aloft in the breeze. The fruit begins to ripen in November, and is ready for picking about January. Harvest-time in the date-forests is rich in both gorgeous and quaint scenes. The trees present a magnificent spectacle, with their deep golden clusters of fruit on tawny stems hanging in profusion around the summit of the trunks, beneath the shadow of sun-flecked green plumes that make their obeisance to the heavens on the very threshold of a sapphire-blue sky. Now watch the pickers at their labours. Here is a boy mounting to his task. He winds his legs round a tree, knots his

The Harvest Lands of Spain

bare feet, takes a grip with his hands, and clambers up the 60-foot branchless trunk as dexterously as a monkey. What a pigmy he looks now that he has reached the branches! Unless you have exceptionally long and strong sight, you need a good pair of glasses to see what he is doing. He passes a rope round his waist and the summit of the trunk, makes it fast, presses his bare feet against the tree, and leans very slightly back, with the whole weight of his body on the rope. That leaves his hands quite free, you notice, for picking. As he gathers the fruit he puts it into a basket, and when his basket is full he lowers it by a cord, and draws up an empty one by the same medium. When he shifts his position to the right or to the left, he looks as if he were miraculously moving in space, for the lean-back on the rope is so slight that his body is practically in a horizontal position, and in the quick movement that he makes you cannot see he is touching anything solid. But, as a matter of fact, just as the rope support encircling his waist and the tree enables him to rest firmly on his feet upon the trunk, so it enables him to walk round that trunk.

The vine grows in all parts of Spain, but flourishes in the South. In almost every village you can buy for a halfpenny a good meal of grapes, generally of a very good quality, and there are many places where, for the lavish expenditure of a penny, you can get more muscatels than would be good for you to eat at a sitting.

The mention of prices as a means of helping you to realize the richness of Spain as a vine-growing country

Spain

recalls to my memory a pleasing little incident which bears further witness to the fertility of the land.

I was walking along one day, feeling very hot and exhausted, when I struck a little hamlet, and espied in the window of what was apparently a cobbler's hut some fine-looking musk melons. Obviously they were for sale, as they were displayed amongst a motley collection of garden produce in the front of the window, the boots to mend and the mended boots being relegated to a shelf in the background. In spite of the fact that I was parched with thirst and very hungry—or more probably because I had passed that stage of famishing in which anything to eat or drink is supposed to be acceptable—I did not fancy any of the fruit in that window except the musk melons. You know what luxuries they are at home, and the prices they fetch in consequence. It so happened that on this particular occasion in Spain I had only about the equivalent of a couple of shillings in my pocket; was it too much to hope that I could bargain to bring one of those coveted melons within reach of my means? I entered the shop in a somewhat despondent mood:

“How much are your melons?”

The old cobbler rose, walked to the window, rummaged out the largest specimen, examined it all round, weighed it in his hand, and thought for a long minute; then, turning to me, he said very slowly, as if he were still working out the problem:

“I can't let you have it under . . . twopence.”

Spanish Industries

CHAPTER XV

SPANISH INDUSTRIES

NEARLY all the most important Spanish industries have been developed in connection with agriculture. Among them, wine-making holds a prominent position, and, as a branch of this industry, sherry-making is of special interest, as it is a prime factor of Spanish commerce.

Sherry, or Jerez, was first imported by England about the time of Henry VII. ; it became very popular in the days of Elizabeth, retained a hold on our wine-market throughout successive periods of change in popular taste, and has recently been coming more into favour with connoisseurs and leaders of fashion in the fine art of wine-drinking. It is made from Jerez grapes, which are of several varieties and flavours, natural differences which, combined with variations in the process of manufacture, account for the many classes of wine that are legitimately entitled to bear the family name.

Let us go into the vineyards at the time of harvest, and from there follow up, in a general way, the process of sherry-making. The grapes are picked and carefully sorted, and are then spread out on reed-mats to dry in the sun. They are next carried or carted to some near-at-hand centre, where the pressing operations are conducted ; and before they find their way into any artificial crusher they are naturally pressed by being trampled underfoot—which is to say, trodden in the wine-press of Biblical times. The juice is put into vats,

Spain

where it is left to ferment. After fermentation, the wine is racked from the lees ; it is then left to attain the age of four or five years, at the expiration of which period it can, if so desired, be exported. Before it is ready to leave home, however, it must be clarified and fortified by the addition of a little *madre vino*—very rich old wine.

The *bodegas*, or wine-cellars, of Jerez are the feature of the town ; they are vast shed-like structures, capable of holding several thousand butts, so, although they do not typify beauty, they represent considerable wealth. As the owners are very hospitable, even the visitor who does not represent some great import-house in the trade may make an acquaintance with all kinds of the genuine wine in these extensive sherry-making factories and sherry storage cellars.

The manufacture of olive-oil constitutes another leading Spanish industry. In the Central and Northern districts the olives are picked in November and December ; in the South the harvest is gathered in the autumn. Father climbs up the trees and beats off the fruit, whilst mother and the children scramble to pick them up. The berries are sun-dried a little, and then crushed in a primitive stone mill : there is a circular hollowed stone on the ground, into which the fruit is put, and another heavy stone is placed above and moved about by a mule to do the crushing. The crushed mass is transported on round mats, made of esparto-grass, to a press, where, by old-fashioned mechanical contrivances, the oil is set free, a great quantity being wasted in the process. The oil then



A STREET, ELCHE. Page 84.

Spanish Industries

has to stand for about a month, so that the refuse may settle ; after this, the clear oil is poured off, but when purer qualities are desired the settling and skimming processes have to be repeated.

The pickling of olives is another industrial source of wealth. The green berries are soaked in a weak solution of caustic potash, which softens the skins and extracts some of the bitterness. They are next washed very thoroughly, and put to soak in fresh water. Subsequently they are placed in brine, and when they have become sufficiently salted they are packed in barrels and despatched to wholesale warehouses. The big dealers bottle off the best olives for the high-class markets, and sell the inferior qualities in casks.

Spain takes a very active part in the raisin trade, exporting large quantities of the finest dessert fruit. The best-dried muscatels are produced by Malaga, which annually disposes of about two and a half million boxes, each containing twenty-two pounds. The grapes are dipped in a mixture of water, ashes, and oil, after which they are dried in the sun.

Silk is made at Valencia, where mulberry-trees thrive. The methods of manufacture are old-fashioned, but an export trade has been established, and is on the increase. The manufacture of cane-sugar is carried on in Malaga, which is the centre of the cane-growing districts, but this industry has not yet reached a high stage of development. The manufacture of cotton is in its infancy, and the once famous wool trade of Spain has now become of considerably less importance, owing to the slackness of Spanish sheep-breeders, and the keen,

Spain

intelligent competition of sheep-farming rivals in many other parts of the world. The cork-forests, notably those in Almoraima, are an important source of wealth.

Apart from agriculture, the chief industrial resources of Spain are centred in her mines, tobacco factories, and sword factories. The mineral wealth of Spain is enormous, and much care and attention are devoted to the development of the mining industry; it is in a healthy and flourishing condition, but the production is capable of being enormously increased by a wider application of improved mining methods, and by the provision of better local transport facilities. England is one of the best customers for Spanish ores; nearly all the mercury used in the British Isles comes from Spain, principally from Almaden.

The manufacture of tobacco in Spain has no connection with the country's agricultural wealth, since the raw material is all imported.

Spanish steel has always been famous, and, before the days of gunpowder, Spanish swords were of world-wide renown. The sword-makers of Toledo, Valencia, and Zaragoza were artists as well as armourers, and their highly ornamented masterpieces were fine works of art, as well as most trustworthy weapons. For practical purposes, good swords are still made at Toledo, but these modern weapons are a class of arms quite distinct from the romantic-looking blades designed for medieval warfare.

The Stranger in Spain

CHAPTER XVI

THE STRANGER IN SPAIN

A LITTLE knowledge of Spanish manners and customs adds greatly to the comfort of the stranger in Spain.

Foremost among the experiences which ignorance has the power of making very unpleasant are the constant encounters with beggars. Go where you will in Spain, you cannot escape the whining vagabond, and more than likely the creature is a revolting, disease-devoured spectacle, a hideous deformity, or at best a vermin-haunted mass of rags. But be careful how you express your opinions on the loafer problem to a Spaniard ; appearances certainly suggest that the self-respecting natives do not feel any responsibility in connection with their pauper brethren, whereas the actual position is quite the reverse. There is no national spirit of responsibility for the beggars, and it is difficult to conceive of such a spirit ever being created in Spain ; for here private charity has such a stronghold that everyone who does not beg gives to the beggars as a matter of everyday duty. The distribution of alms is a vital part of Spanish religion ; and apparently the beggars are encouraged to remain a feature of the populace, so that they may be supported in the interests of their patrons' spiritual welfare. This extreme point of view may not be quite so definitely expressed in the minds of all the givers, but both those who cast their bread on the waters, and those who are actuated by

Spain

simple goodness of heart, contribute to the same general result.

I have endeavoured to make you understand how it is that the beggars of Spain continue to thrive and multiply exceedingly; but always remember you are treading on very delicate ground whenever you begin to investigate the pauper problem of a foreign country, and be careful not to form opinions until you have studied the question in every light. Now I want to show you how useful it is for a stranger to have even the vaguest notion that religion and beggary are somehow related in Spain. You can only free yourself from the ever-recurring attentions of the men and women who beg "in God's name," by asking every time to be excused, "in God's name." It is useless to attempt to ignore these folk; persistently whining, they will follow wherever you silently lead the way, till they get some sort of satisfaction out of you. Nor will it help you to lose your temper and threaten to call the police. But if you quietly say, "My brother, will your worship excuse me, for God's sake?" any beggar-man will turn on his heel and leave you in peace; and if you address a beggar-woman in the same strain—as, "My sister"—she will do likewise.

I am afraid I am powerless to give you any unfailing remedy for the onslaughts of beggar-children, unless it be to defy any and every principle you may have with regard to indiscriminate charity, and distribute halfpennies to rid yourself of the nuisance every time the infantile pests attack you. I remember one horrible occasion on which I determined to be firm. Two little

The Stranger in Spain

urchins smiled up at me in the most bewitching manner, and pleaded in an ingratiating tone, "Thinko then-timos" (*cinco centimos*, a halfpenny). I shook my head, and walked on. On they came, merrily shouting, "Thinko then-timos, thinko then-timos!" They walked to heel; they came by my side, and patted me on the arm; they danced round me, still smiling, and coaxing, and cajoling in the same pretty little voices. Presently they changed their manner and their tone.

"Thinko then-timos!" the demand rang out defiantly, and almost simultaneously that demand was echoed by a dozen militant voices. Where did the other children come from? I have never solved that problem; they seemed to drop down through the air to the support of the ringleaders. Within a few seconds I was being held up by about two score young highwaymen and highwaywomen. Nothing would have induced me at that juncture to part with a single halfpenny; but how to make good my escape? I was longing to take one of the youngsters by the shoulders and make an example of him, but his cries would certainly have brought the whole neighbouring village round me in a storm of indignation. Fortunately, before I quite lost my temper, a man appeared on the scenes, took in the situation at a glance, and put the fiendish youngsters to flight.

It is a curious fact that, in the midst of this beggar-ridden country, it behoves one to be very careful not to give offence by offering a gratuity for every little service rendered. Many of the very poorest self-supporting Spaniards regard it as an insult to be offered

Spain

a tip. They will go far out of their way to show you your way, but they have no thought of making anything out of you for so doing. They regard themselves as gentlefolk and your equal, and without a doubt many a Spanish peasant is a born gentleman in manners, if not in rank ; so, in nine cases out of ten, particularly in the country, you can only give courtly thanks for courtly services.

Do not attempt to bring the same rules of conduct to bear on your intercourse with the Spanish gipsies as with the beggars of genuine Spanish extraction. The Spanish gipsies abound in Andalusia, where they live in caves. They have many traits and customs that are quite alien to the Spanish character and mode of life, and they compare very badly even with the worst specimens among the native beggars, whose profession they follow as a means of livelihood. From the picturesque point of view, they are most attractive, but beware of them, for they can demand your money in a most unpleasant fashion if you let yourself be tempted to go alone into their quarters.

Generally speaking, the golden rule for strangers in Spain is : Be patient and polite to all sorts and conditions of men under all circumstances. But, as a last peep at the country, I want to show you how progress is at work there, by telling you about an occasion when I broke that rule at the instigation of a native.

There is no more hopeful sign of progressive civilization than to find the lower classes taking up a stand against dirt. My comrade and I elected to spend one night at a so-called first-class railway hotel in Spain.

The Stranger in Spain

Our bedroom turned out to be the dirtiest, without exception, that we had ever had to face in the whole course of our travels. On consulting the time-table, we found that we could obtain release by catching a train that passed through the adjacent station between three and four in the morning. Directly we heard any movement in the station, I called through the bedroom window to attract attention. A porter appeared, and I told him to get the hotel door opened, and come up to fetch our luggage. When he arrived in our room, we pointed to the lively walls, in explanation of our desire to get out of the place as quickly as we could, and, with a sympathetic gesture of disgust, he picked up our portmanteaus. The moment we reached the platform he gave vent to his indignation. He knew all about it . . . the place was a disgrace . . . we must give the proprietor a lesson. The said proprietor was getting into his clothes to come down and make out our bill . . . on no account were we to pay him. All this, and much more, as we paced up and down the platform in the dawnlight ; and finally that porter instructed us how to protest fluently in his own language that we would not pay the bill. I volunteered to be spokesman, for, according to the method by which we always shared travelling business, that unforeseen task fairly fell to my lot. The porter repeated the lesson over and over again, and begged me to prove that I was word-perfect in it :

“Your beds are so dirty that we could not possibly sleep in them ; the room is so dirty that we could not possibly stop in it. . . . I am not going to pay the

Spain

bill. Here's a peseta to pay for the washing of the towels and the sheets . . . and if that doesn't satisfy you, I shall call the police."

I walked back, and entered the bureau ; there stood the proprietor in his shirt-sleeves, with a candle in one hand and my bill in the other. I said what I had to say very emphatically, and flung down the peseta. He looked at me in alarm, but did not utter a word, and when I walked quietly away, he did not attempt to follow me.

That porter had come under the influence of progress in more ways than one. He was not above a tip. But evidently his conscience troubled him by making him afraid that the hotel proprietor should suspect him. I looked up and down the platform, but he was nowhere to be seen, and I began to think that he was a paragon of all the virtues. Presently he appeared at the carriage-window, remote from the platform, to claim his well-earned reward.