FORD RICHARD

# GATHERINGS FROM SPAIN

# Richard Ford
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*Gatherings From Spain:*

# Содержание


| | |
|---|---|
| PREFACE | 4 |
| CHAPTER I | 6 |
| CHAPTER II | 16 |
| CHAPTER III | 41 |
| CHAPTER IV | 53 |
| CHAPTER V | 69 |
| CHAPTER VI | 90 |
| CHAPTER VII | 115 |
| CHAPTER VIII | 132 |
| Конец ознакомительного фрагмента. | 142 |

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## PREFACE

MANY ladies, some of whom even contemplate a visit to Spain, having condescended to signify to the publisher their regrets, that the Handbook was printed in a form, which rendered its perusal irksome, and also to express a wish that the type had been larger, the Author, to whom this distinguished compliment was communicated, has hastened to submit to their indulgence a few extracts and selections, which may throw some light on the character of a country and people, always of the highest interest, and particularly so at this moment, when their independence is once more threatened by a crafty and aggressive neighbour.

In preparing these compilations for the press much new matter has been added, to supply the place of portions omitted; for, in order to lighten the narrative, the Author has removed much lumber of learning, and has not scrupled occasionally to throw Strabo, and even Saint Isidore himself, overboard. Progress is the order of the day in Spain, and its advance is the more rapid, as she was so much in arrear of other nations. Transition is the present condition of the country, where yesterday is effaced by to-morrow. There the relentless march of European intellect

is crushing many a native wild flower, which, having no value save colour and sweetness, must be rooted up before cotton-mills are constructed and bread stuffs substituted; many a trait of nationality in manners and costume is already effaced; monks are gone, and mantillas are going, alas! going.

In the changes that have recently taken place, many descriptions of ways and things now presented to the public will soon become almost matters of history and antiquarian interest. The passages here reprinted will be omitted in the forthcoming new edition of the Handbook, to which these pages may form a companion; but their chief object has been to offer a few hours' amusement, and may be of instruction, to those who remain at home; and should the humble attempt meet with the approbation of fair readers, the author will bear, with more than Spanish resignation, whatever animadversions bearded critics may be pleased to inflict on this or on the other side of the water.

# CHAPTER I

A general view of Spain – Isolation – King of the Spains – Castilian precedence – Localism – Want of Union – Admiration of Spain – M. Thiers in Spain.

## KING OF THE SPAINS

## LOCALISM OF SPANIARDS

THE kingdom of Spain, which looks so compact on the map, is composed of many distinct provinces, each of which in earlier times formed a separate and independent kingdom; and although all are now united under one crown by marriage, inheritance, conquest, and other circumstances, the original distinctions, geographical as well as social, remain almost unaltered. The language, costume, habits, and local character of the natives, vary no less than the climate and productions of the soil. The chains of mountains which intersect the whole peninsula, and the deep rivers which separate portions of it, have, for many years, operated as so many walls and moats, by cutting off intercommunication, and by fostering that tendency to isolation which must exist in all hilly countries,

where good roads and bridges do not abound. As similar circumstances led the people of ancient Greece to split into small principalities, tribes and clans, so in Spain, man, following the example of the nature by which he is surrounded, has little in common with the inhabitant of the adjoining district; and these differences are increased and perpetuated by the ancient jealousies and inveterate dislikes, which petty and contiguous states keep up with such tenacious memory. The general comprehensive term "Spain," which is convenient for geographers and politicians, is calculated to mislead the traveller, for it would be far from easy to predicate any single thing of Spain or Spaniards which will be equally applicable to all its heterogeneous component parts. The north-western provinces are more rainy than Devonshire, while the centre plains are more calcined than those of the deserts of Arabia, and the littoral south or eastern coasts altogether Algerian. The rude agricultural Gallician, the industrious manufacturing artisan of Barcelona, the gay and voluptuous Andalucian, the sly vindictive Valencian, are as essentially different from each other as so many distinct characters at the same masquerade. It will therefore be more convenient to the traveller to take each province by itself and treat it in detail, keeping on the look-out for those peculiarities, those social and natural characteristics or idiosyncracies which particularly belong to each division, and distinguish it from its neighbours. The Spaniards who have written on their own geography and statistics, and who ought

to be supposed to understand their own country and institutions the best, have found it advisable to adopt this arrangement from feeling the utter impossibility of treating Spain (where union is not unity) as a whole. There is no king of *Spain*: among the infinity of kingdoms, the list of which swells out the royal style, that of "Spain" is not found; he is King of the Spains, Rex Hispaniarum, *Rey de las Españas*, not "*Rey de España*." Philip II., called by his countrymen *el prudente*, the prudent, wishing to fuse down his heterogeneous subjects, was desirous after his conquest of Portugal, which consolidated his dominion, to call himself King of Spain, which he then really was; but this alteration of title was beyond the power of even his despotism; such was the opposition of the kingdoms of Arragon and Navarre, which never gave up the hopes of shaking off the yoke of Castile, and recovering their former independence, while the empire provinces of New and Old Castile refused in anywise to compromise their claims of pre-eminence. They from early times, as now, took the lead in national nomenclature; hence "*Castellano*," Castilian, is synonymous with Spaniard, and particularly with the proud genuine older stock. "*Castellano á las derechas*," means a Spaniard to the backbone; "*Hablar Castellano*," to speak Castilian, is the correct expression for speaking the Spanish language. Spain again was long without the advantage of a fixed metropolis, like Rome, Paris, or London, which have been capitals from their foundation, and recognized and submitted to as such; here, the cities of Leon, Burgos,

Toledo, Seville, Valladolid, and others, have each in their turns been the capitals of the kingdom. This constant change and short-lived pre-eminence has weakened any prescriptive superiority of one city over another, and has been a cause of national weakness by raising up rivalries and disputes about precedence, which is one of the most fertile sources of dissension among a punctilious people. In fact the king was the state, and wherever he fixed his head-quarters was the court, *La Corte*, a word still synonymous with Madrid, which now claims to be the only residence of the Sovereign – the residenz, as Germans would say; otherwise, when compared with the cities above mentioned, it is a modern place; from not having a bishop or cathedral, of which latter some older cities possess two, it has not even the rank of a *ciudad*, or city, but is merely denominated *villa*, or town. In moments of national danger it exercises little influence over the Peninsula: at the same time, from being the seat of the court and government, and therefore the centre of patronage and fashion, it attracts from all parts those who wish to make their fortune; yet the capital has a hold on the ambition rather than on the affections of the nation at large. The inhabitants of the different provinces think, indeed, that Madrid is the greatest and richest court in the world, but their hearts are in their native localities. "*Mi paisano*," my fellow-countryman, or rather my fellow-county-man, fellow-parishioner, does not mean Spaniard, but Andalucian, Catalonian, as the case may be. When a Spaniard is asked, Where do you come from? the reply is, "*Soy*

*hijo de Murcia – hijo de Granada*," "I am a son of Murcia – a son of Granada," &c. This is strictly analogous to the "Children of Israel," the "Beni" of the Spanish Moors, and to this day the Arabs of Cairo call themselves *children* of that town, "*Ibn el Musr*," &c.; and just as the Milesian Irishman is "a *boy* from Tipperary," &c., and ready to fight with any one who is so also, against all who are not of that ilk; similar too is the clanship of the Highlander; indeed, everywhere, not perhaps to the same extent as in Spain, the being of the same province or town creates a powerful freemasonry; the parties cling together like old school-fellows. It is a *home* and really binding feeling. To the spot of their birth all their recollections, comparisons, and eulogies are turned; nothing to them comes up to their particular province, that is, their real country. "*La Patria*," meaning Spain at large, is a subject of declamation, fine words, *palabras*– palaver, in which all, like Orientals, delight to indulge, and to which their grandiloquent idiom lends itself readily; but their patriotism is parochial, and self is the centre of Spanish gravity. Like the German, they may sing and spout about *Fatherland*: in both cases the theory is splendid, but in practice each Spaniard thinks his own province or town the best in the Peninsula, and himself the finest fellow in it. From the earliest period down to the present all observers have been struck with this *localism* as a salient feature in the character of the Iberians, who never would amalgamate, never would, as Strabo said, put their shields together – never would sacrifice their own local private interest for the general

good; on the contrary, in the hour of need they had, as at present, a constant tendency to separate into distinct *juntas*, "*collective*" assemblies, each of which only thought of its own views, utterly indifferent to the injury thereby occasioned to what ought to have been the common cause of all. Common danger and interest scarcely can keep them together, the tendency of each being rather to repel than to attract the other: the common enemy once removed, they instantly fall to loggerheads among each other, especially if there be any spoil to be divided: scarcely ever, as in the East, can the energy of one individual bind the loose staves by the iron power of a master mind; remove the band, and the centrifugal members instantaneously disunite. Thus the virility and vitality of the noble people have been neutralised: they have, indeed, strong limbs and honest hearts; but, as in the Oriental parable, "a head" is wanting to direct and govern: hence Spain is to-day, as it always has been, a bundle of small bodies tied together by a rope of sand, and, being without union, is also without strength, and has been beaten in detail. The much-used phrase *Españolismo* expresses rather a "dislike of foreign dictation," and the "self-estimation" of Spaniards, *Españoles sobre todos*, than any real patriotic love of country, however highly they rate its excellences and superiority to every other one under heaven: this opinion is condensed in one of those pithy proverbs which, nowhere more than in Spain, are the exponents of popular sentiment: it runs thus, – "*Quien dice España, dice todo*," which means, "Whoever says Spain, says everything." A

foreigner may perhaps think this a trifle too comprehensive and exclusive; but he will do well to express no doubts on the subject, since he will only be set down by every native as either jealous, envious, or ignorant, and probably all three.

## DISUNION OF SPANIARDS

## ADMIRATION OF SPAIN

## M. THIERS IN SPAIN

To boast of Spain's strength, said the Duke of Wellington, is the national weakness. Every infinitesimal particle which constitutes *nosotros*, or ourselves, as Spaniards term themselves, will talk of his country as if the armies were still led to victory by the mighty Charles V., or the councils managed by Philip II. instead of Louis-Philippe. Fortunate, indeed, was it, according to a Castilian preacher, that the Pyrenees concealed Spain when the Wicked One tempted the Son of Man by an offer of all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. This, indeed, was predicated in the mediæval or dark ages, but few peninsular congregations, even in these enlightened times, would dispute the inference. It was but the other day that a foreigner was

relating in a *tertulia*, or conversazione of Madrid, the well-known anecdote of Adam's revisit to the earth. The narrator explained how our first father on lighting in Italy was perplexed and taken aback; how, on crossing the Alps into Germany, he found nothing that he could understand – how matters got darker and stranger at Paris, until on his reaching England he was altogether lost, confounded, and abroad, being unable to make out any thing. Spain was his next point, where, to his infinite satisfaction, he found himself quite at home, so little had things changed since his absence, or indeed since the sun at its creation first shone over Toledo. The story concluded, a distinguished Spaniard, who was present, hurt perhaps at the somewhat protestant-dissenting tone of the speaker, gravely remarked, the rest of the party coinciding, —*Si, Señor, y tenia razon; la España es Paradiso*– "Adam, Sir, was right, for Spain is paradise;" and in many respects this worthy, zealous gentleman was not wrong, although it is affirmed by some of his countrymen that some portions of it are inhabited by persons not totally exempt from original sin; thus the Valencians will say of their ravishing *huerta*, or garden, *Es un paradiso habitado por demonios*, – "It is an Eden peopled by subjects of his Satanic Majesty." Again, according to the natives, Murcia, a land overflowing with milk and honey, where Flora and Pomona dispute the prize with Ceres and Bacchus, possesses a *cielo y suelo bueno, el entresuelo malo*, has "a sky and soil that are good, while all between is indifferent;" which the *entresol* occupant must settle to his liking.

Another little anecdote, like a straw thrown up in the air, will point out the direction in which the wind blows. Monsieur Thiers, the great historical romance writer, in his recent hand-gallop tour through the Peninsula, passed a few days only at Madrid; his mind being, as logicians would say, of a *subjective* rather than an *objective* turn, that is, disposed rather to the consideration of the *ego*, and to things relating to self, than to those that do not, he scarcely looked more at any thing there, than he did during his similar run through London: "Behold," said the Spaniards, "that little *gabacho*; he dares not remain, nor raise his eyes from the ground in this land, whose vast superiority wounds his personal and national vanity." There is nothing new in this. The old Castilian has an older saying: —*Si Dios no fuese Dios, seria rey de las Españas, y el de Francia su cocinero*– "If God were not God, he would make himself king of the Spains, with him of France for his cook." Lope de Vega, without derogating one jot from these paradisiacal pretensions, used him of England better. His sonnet on the romantic trip to Madrid ran thus: —

> "Carlos Stuardo soy,
> Que siendo amor mi guia,
> Al *cielo de España* voy,
> Por ver mi estrella Maria."

"I am Charles Stuart, who, with love for my guide, hasten to the heaven Spain to see my star Mary." The Virgin, it must be remembered, after whom this infanta was named, is held by every

Spaniard to be the brightest luminary, and the sole empress of heaven.

## GEOGRAPHY OF SPAIN

# CHAPTER II

The Geography of Spain – Zones – Mountains – The Pyrenees – The Gabacho, and French Politics.

FROM Spain being the most southern country in Europe, it is very natural that those who have never been there, and who in England criticise those who have, should imagine the climate to be even more delicious than that of Italy or Greece. This is far from being the fact; some, indeed, of the sea coasts and sheltered plains in the S. and E. provinces are warm in winter, and exposed to an almost African sun in summer, but the N. and W. districts are damp and rainy for the greater part of the year, while the interior is either cold and cheerless, or sunburnt and wind-blown: winters have occurred at Madrid of such severity that sentinels have been frozen to death; and frequently all communication is suspended by the depth of the snow in the elevated roads over the mountain passes of the Castiles. All, therefore, who are about to travel through the Peninsula, are particularly cautioned to consider well their line of route beforehand, and to select certain portions to be visited at certain seasons, and thus avoid every local disadvantage.

# GENERAL VIEW OF SPAIN

One glance at a map of Europe will convey a clearer notion of the relative position of Spain in regard to other countries than pages of letter-press: this is an advantage which every schoolboy possesses over the Plinys and Strabos of antiquity; the ancients were content to compare the shape of the Peninsula to that of a bull's hide, nor was the comparison ill chosen in some respects. We will not weary readers with details of latitude and longitude, but just mention that the whole superficies of the Peninsula, including Portugal, contains upwards of 19,000 square leagues, of which somewhat more than 15,500 belong to Spain; it is thus almost twice as large as the British Islands, and only one-tenth smaller than France; the circumference or coast-line is estimated at 750 leagues. This compact and isolated territory, inhabited by a fine, hardy, warlike population, ought, therefore, to have rivalled France in military power, while its position between those two great seas which command the commerce of the old and new world, its indented line of coast, abounding in bays and harbours, offered every advantage of vying with England in maritime enterprise.

Nature has provided commensurate outlets for the infinite productions of a country which is rich alike in everything that is to be found either on the face or in the bowels of the earth; for the mines and quarries abound with precious metals and marbles,

from gold to iron, from the agate to coal, while a fertile soil and every possible variety of climate admit of unlimited cultivation of the natural productions of the temperate or tropical zones: thus in the province of Granada the sugar-cane and cotton-tree luxuriate at the base of ranges which are covered with eternal snow: a wide range is thus afforded to the botanist, who may ascend by zones, through every variety of vegetable strata, from the hothouse plant growing wild, to the hardiest lichen. It has, indeed, required the utmost ingenuity and bad government of man to neutralise the prodigality of advantages which Providence has lavished on this highly favoured land, and which, while under the dominion of the Romans and Moors, resembled an Eden, a garden of plenty and delight, when in the words of an old author, there was nothing idle, nothing barren in Spain – "nihil otiosum, nihil sterile in Híspaniâ." A sad change has come over this fair vision, and now the bulk of the Peninsula offers a picture of neglect and desolation, moral and physical, which it is painful to contemplate: the face of nature and the mind of man have too often been dwarfed and curtailed of their fair proportions; they have either been neglected and their inherent fertility allowed to run into vice and luxuriant weeds, which it will show against any country in the world, or their energies have been misdirected, and a capability of all good converted into an element equally powerful for evil; but pride and laziness are here as everywhere the keys to poverty, *altivez y pereza, llaves de pobreza*.

# CLIMATE AND ELEVATION OF SPAIN

The geological construction of Spain is very peculiar, and unlike that of most other countries; it is almost one mountain or agglomeration of mountains, as those of our countrymen who are speculating in Spanish railroads are just beginning to discover. The interior rises on every side from the sea, and the central portions are higher than any other table-lands in Europe, ranging on an average from two to three thousand feet above the level of the sea, while from this elevated plain chains of mountains rise again to a still greater height. Madrid, which stands on this central plateau, is situated about 2000 feet above the level of Naples, which lies in the same latitude; the mean temperature of Madrid is 59°, while that of Naples is 63° 30′; it is to this difference of elevation that the extraordinary difference of climate and vegetable productions between the two capitals is to be ascribed. Fruits which flourish on the coasts of Provence and Genoa, which lie four degrees more to the north than any portion of Spain, are rarely to be met with in the elevated interior of the Peninsula: on the other hand, the low and sunny maritime belts abound with productions of a tropical vegetation. The mountainous character and general aspect of the coast are nearly analogous throughout the circuit which extends from the Basque Provinces to Cape Finisterre; and offer a remarkable contrast to those sunny alluvial plains which extend, more or less,

from Cadiz to Barcelona, and which closely resemble each other in vegetable productions, such as the fig, orange, pomegranate, aloe, and carob tree, which grow everywhere in profusion, except in those parts where the mountains come down abruptly into the sea itself. Again, the central districts, composed of vast plains and steppes, *Parameras, Tierras de campo, y Secanos*, closely resemble each other in their monotonous denuded aspect, in their scarcity of fruit and timber, and their abundance of cereal productions.

## ZONES OF SPAIN

Spanish geographers have divided the Peninsula into seven distinct chains of mountains. These commence with the Pyrenees and end with the Bætican or Andalucian ranges: these *cordilleras*, or lines of lofty ridges, arise on each side of intervening plains, which once formed the basins of internal lakes, until the accumulated waters, by bursting through the obstructions by which they were dammed up, found a passage to the ocean: the dip or inclination of the country lies from the east towards the west, and, accordingly, the chief rivers which form the drains and principal water-sheds of the greater parts of the surface, flow into the Atlantic: their courses, like the basins through which they pass, lie in a transversal and almost a parallel direction; thus the Duero, the Tagus, the Guadiana, and the Guadalquivir, all flow into their recipient between their distinct chains of

mountains. The sources of the supply to these leading arteries arise in the longitudinal range of elevations which descends all through the Peninsula, approaching rather to the eastern than to the western coast, whereby a considerably greater length is obtained by each of these four rivers, when compared to the Ebro, which disembogues in the Mediterranean.

The Moorish geographer Alrasi was the first to take difference of climate as the rule of dividing the Peninsula into distinct portions; and modern authorities, carrying out this idea, have drawn an imaginary line, which runs north-east to south-west, thus separating the Peninsula into the northern, or the boreal and temperate, and the southern or the torrid, and subdividing these two into four zones: nor is this division altogether fanciful, for there is no caprice or mistake in tests derived from the vegetable world; manners may make man, but the sun alone modifies the plant: man may be fused down by social appliances into one uniform mass, but the rude elements are not to be civilized, nor can nature be made cosmopolitan, which heaven forfend.

## ZONES OF SPAIN

*The first or northern zone* is the *Cantabrian*, the European; this portion skirts the base of the Pyrenees, and includes portions of Catalonia, Arragon, and Navarre, the Basque provinces, the Asturias, and Gallicia. This is the region of humidity, and as the winters are long, and the springs and autumns rainy, it should

only be visited in the summer. It is a country of hill and dale, is intersected by numerous streams which abound in fish, and which irrigate rich meadows for pastures. The valleys form the now improving dairy country of Spain, while the mountains furnish the most valuable and available timber of the Peninsula. In some parts corn will scarcely ripen, while in others, in addition to the cerealia, cider and an ordinary wine are produced. It is inhabited by a hardy, independent, and rarely subdued population, since the mountainous country offers natural means of defence to brave highlanders. It is useless to attempt the conquest with a small army, while a large one would find no means of support in the hungry localities.

*The second zone* is the Iberian or eastern, which, in its maritime portions, is more Asiatic than European, and where the lower classes partake of the Greek and Carthaginian character, being false, cruel, and treacherous, yet lively, ingenious, and fond of pleasure: this portion commences at Burgos, and includes the southern portion of Catalonia and Arragon, with parts of Castile, Valencia, and Murcia. The sea-coasts should be visited in the spring and autumn, when they are delicious; but they are intensely hot in the summer, and infested with myriads of muskitoes. The districts about Burgos are among the coldest in Spain, and the thermometer sinks very much below the ordinary average of our more temperate climate; and as they have little at any time to attract the traveller, he will do well to avoid them except during the summer months. The population is grave, sober, and

Castilian. The elevation is very considerable; thus the upper valley of the Miño and some of the north-western portions of Old Castile and Leon are placed more than 6000 feet above the level of the sea, and the frosts often last for three months at a time.

## GENERAL DROUGHT OF SPAIN

*The third zone* is the Lusitanian, or western, which is by far the largest, and includes the central parts of Spain and all Portugal. The interior of this portion, and especially the provinces of the two Castiles and La Mancha, both in the physical condition of the soil and the moral qualities of the inhabitants, presents a very unfavourable view of the Peninsula, as these inland steppes are burnt up by summer suns, and are tempest and wind-rent during winter. The general absence of trees, hedges, and enclosures exposes these wide unprotected plains to the rage and violence of the elements: poverty-stricken mud houses, scattered here and there in the desolate extent, afford a wretched home to a poor, proud, and ignorant population; but these localities, which offer in themselves neither pleasure nor profit to the stranger, contain many sites and cities of the highest interest, which none who wish to understand Spain can possibly pass by unnoticed. The best periods for visiting this portion of Spain are May and June, or September and October.

The more western districts of this Lusitanian zone are not so disagreeable. There in the uplands the ilex and chesnut abound,

while the rich plains produce vast harvests of corn, and the vineyards powerful red wines. The central table-land, which closely resembles the plateau of Mexico, forms nearly one-half of the entire area of the Peninsula. The peculiarity of the climate is its dryness; it is not, however, unhealthy, being free from the agues and fevers which are prevalent in the lower plains, river-swamps, and rice-grounds of parts of Valencia and Andalucia. Rain, indeed, is so comparatively scarce on this table-land, that the annual quantity on an average does not amount to more than ten inches. The least quantity falls in the mountain regions near Guadalupe, and on the high plains of Cuenca and Murcia, where sometimes eight or nine months pass without a drop falling. The occasional thunder-storms do but just lay the dust, since here moisture dries up quicker even than woman's tears. The face of the earth is tanned, tawny, and baked into a veritable terra cotta: everything seems dead and burnt on a funeral pile. It is all but a miracle how the principle of life in the green herb is preserved, since the very grass appears scorched and dead; yet when once the rains set in, vegetation springs up, phœnix-like, from the ashes, and bursts forth in an inconceivable luxuriance and life. The ripe seeds which have fallen on the soil are called into existence, carpeting the desert with verdure, gladdening the eye with flowers, and intoxicating the senses with perfume. The thirsty chinky dry earth drinks in these genial showers, and then rising like a giant refreshed with wine, puts forth all its strength; and what vegetation is, where moisture is combined

with great heat, cannot even be guessed at in lands of stinted suns. The periods of rains are the winter and spring, and when these are plentiful, all kinds of grain, and in many places wines, are produced in abundance. The olive, however, is only to be met with in a few favoured localities.

## GEOGRAPHY OF SPAIN

*The fourth zone* is the Bætican, which is the most southern and African; it coasts the Mediterranean, basking at the foot of the mountains which rise behind and form the mass of the Peninsula: this mural barrier offers a sure protection against the cold winds which sweep across the central region. Nothing can be more striking than the descent from the table elevations into these maritime strips; in a few hours the face of nature is completely changed, and the traveller passes from the climate and vegetation of Europe into that of Africa. This region is characterised by a dry burning atmosphere during a large part of the year. The winters are short and temperate, and consist rather in rain than in cold, for in the sunny valleys ice is scarcely known except for eating; the springs and autumns delightful beyond all conception. Much of the cultivation depends on artificial irrigation, which was carried by the Moors to the highest perfection: indeed water, under this forcing, vivifying sun, is the blood of the earth, and synonymous with fertility: the productions are tropical; sugar, cotton, rice, the orange, lemon, and date. The *algarrobo*, the

carob tree, and the *adelfa*, the oleander, may be considered as forming boundary marks between this the *tierra caliente*, or torrid district, and the colder regions by which it is encompassed.

Such are the geographical divisions of nature with which the vegetable and animal productions are closely connected; and we shall presently enter somewhat more fully into the *climate* of Spain, of which the natives are as proud as if they had made it themselves. This Bætican zone, Andalucia, which contains in itself many of the most interesting cities, sites, and natural beauties of the Peninsula, will always take precedence in any plan of the traveller, and each of these points has its own peculiar attractions. These embrace a wide range of varied scenery and objects; and Andalucia, easy of access, may be gone over almost at every portion of the year. The winters may be spent at Cadiz, Seville, or Malaga; the summers in the cool mountains of Ronda, Aracena, or Granada. April, May, and June, or September, October, and November, are, however, the most preferable. Those who go in the spring should reserve June for the mountains; those who go in the autumn should reverse the plan, and commence with Ronda and Granada, ending with Seville and Cadiz.

## SPANISH MOUNTAINS

Spain, it has thus been shown, is one mountain, or rather a jumble of mountains, – for the principal and secondary ranges

are all more or less connected with each other, and descend in a serpentising direction throughout the Peninsula, with a general inclination to the west. Nature, by thus dislocating the country, seems to have suggested, nay, almost to have forced, localism and isolation to the inhabitants, who each in their valleys and districts are shut off from their neighbours, whom to love, they are enjoined in vain.

The internal communication of the Peninsula, which is thus divided by the mountain-walls, is effected by some good roads, few and far between, and which are carried over the most convenient points, where the natural dips are the lowest, and the ascents and descents the most practicable. These passes are called *Puertos—portæ*, or gates. There are, indeed, mule-tracks and goat-paths over other and intermediate portions of the chain, but they are difficult and dangerous, and being seldom provided with ventas or villages, are fitter for smugglers and bandits than honest men: the farthest and fairest way about will always be found the best and shortest road.

The Spanish mountains in general have a dreary and harsh character, yet not without a certain desolate sublimity: the highest are frequently capped with snow, which glistens in the clear sky. They are rarely clad with forest trees; the scarped and denuded ridges cut with a serrated outline the clean clear blue sky. The granitic masses soar above the green valley or yellow corn-plains in solitary state, like the castles of a feudal baron, that lord it over all below, with which they are too proud to have aught in

common. These mountains are seen to greatest advantage at the rise and setting of the sun, for during the day the vertical rays destroy all form by removing shadows.

## THE PYRENEES

These geographical peculiarities of Spain, and particularly the existence of the great central elevation, when once attained are apt to be forgotten. The country rises from the coast, directly in the north-western provinces, and in some of the southern and eastern, with an intervening alluvial strip and swell: but when once the ascent is accomplished, no *real* descent ever takes place – we are then on the summit of a vast elevated mass. The roads indeed *apparently* ascend and descend, but the mean height is seldom diminished: the interior hills or plains are undulations of one mountain. The traveller is often deceived at the apparent low level of snow-clad ranges, such as the Guadarrama; this will be accounted for by adding the great elevation of their bases above the level of the sea. The palace of the Escorial, which is placed at the foot of the Guadarrama, and at the head of a seeming plain, stands in reality at 2725 feet above Valencia, while the summer residence of the king at *La Granja*, in the same chain, is thirty feet higher than the summit of Vesuvius. This, indeed, is a castle in the air – a château en Espagne, and worthy of the most German potentate to whom that element belongs, as the sea does to Britannia. The mean

temperature on the plateau of Spain is as 15° Réaumur, while that of the coast is as 18° and 19°, in addition to the protection from cutting winds which their mountainous backgrounds afford; nor is the traveller less deceived as regards the heights of the interior mountains than he is with the champaigns, or table-land plains. The eye wanders over a vast level extent bounded only by the horizon, or a faint blue line of other distant sierras; this space, which appears one townless level, is intersected with deep ravines, *barrancos*, in which villages lie concealed, and streams, *arroyos*, flow unperceived. Another important effect of this central elevation is the searching dryness and rarefication of the air. It is often highly prejudicial to strangers; the least exposure, which is very tempting under a burning sun, will often bring on ophthalmia, irritable colics, and inflammatory diseases of the lungs and vital organs. Such are the causes of the *pulmonia*, which carries off the invalid in a few days, and is the disease of Madrid. The frozen blasts descending from the snow-clad Guadarrama catch the incautious passenger at the turning of streets which are roasting under a fierce sun. Is it to be wondered at, that this capital should be so very insalubrious? in winter you are frozen alive, in summer baked. A man taking a walk for the benefit of his health, crosses with his pores open from an oven to an ice-house; catch-cold introduces the Spanish doctor, who soon in his turn presents the undertaker.

# THE PYRENEES

As the Pyrenees possess an European interest at this moment when the Napoleon of Peace proposes to annihilate their existence, which defied Louis XIV. and Buonaparte, some details may be not unacceptable. This gigantic barrier, which divides Spain and France, is connected with the dorsal chain which comes down from Tartary and Asia. It stretches far beyond the transversal spine, for the mountains of the Basque Provinces, Asturias, and Gallicia, are its continuation. The Pyrenees, properly speaking, extend E. to W., in length about 270 miles, being both broadest and highest in the central portions, where the width is about 60 miles, and the elevations exceed 11,000 feet. The spurs and offsets of this great transversal spine penetrate on both sides into the lateral valleys like ribs from a back-bone. The central nucleus slopes gradually E. to the gentle Mediterranean, and W. to the fierce Atlantic, in a long uneven swell.

This range of mountains was called by the Romans *Montes* and *Saltus Pyrenei*, and by the Greeks Πυρηνη, probably from a local Iberian word, but which they, as usual, catching at sound, not sense, connected with their Πυρ, and then bolstered up their erroneous derivation by a legend framed to fit the name, asserting that it either alluded to *a fire* through which certain precious metals were discovered, or because the lofty summits were often struck with lightning, and dislocated by the volcanos. According

to the Iberians, Hercules, when on his way to "lift" Geryon's cattle, was hospitably received by Bebryx, a petty ruler in these mountains; whereupon the demigod got drunk, and ravished his host's daughter *Pyrene*, who died of grief, when Hercules, sad and sober, made the whole range re-echo with her name; a legend which, like some others in Spain, requires confirmation, for the Phœnicians called these ranges *Purani*, from the forests, *Pura* meaning wood in Hebrew. The Basques have, of course, their etymology, some saying that the real root is *Biri*, an elevation, while others prefer *Bierri enac*, the "two countries," which, separated by the range, were ruled by Tubal; but when Spaniards once begin with Tubal, the best plan is to shut the book.

## THE GABACHO

The *Maledêta* is the loftiest peak, although the *Pico del Mediodia* and the *Canigú*, because rising at once out of plains and therefore having the greatest apparent altitudes, were long considered to be the highest; but now these French usurpers are dethroned. Seen from a distance, the range appears to be one mountain-ridge, with broken pinnacles, but, in fact, it consists of two distinct lines, which are parallel, but not continuous. The one which commences at the ocean is the most forward, being at least 30 miles more in advance towards the south than the corresponding line, which commences from the Mediterranean. The centre is the point of dislocation, and here the ramifications

and reticulations are the most intricate, as it is the key-stone of the system, which is buttressed up by *Las Tres Sorellas*, the three sisters *Monte Perdido*, *Cylindro*, and *Marboré*. Here is the source of the Garonne, *La Garona*; here the scenery is the grandest, and the lateral valleys the longest and widest. The smaller spurs enclose valleys, down each of which pours a stream: thus the Ebro, Garona, and Bidasoa are fed from the mountain source. These tributaries are generally called in France *Gaves*,[1] and in some parts on the Spanish side *Gabas*; but *Gav* signifies a "river," and may be traced in our *Avon*; and Humboldt derives it from the Basque *Gav*, a "hollow or ravine;" cavus. The parting of these waters, or their flowing down either N. or S., should

[1] The word *Gabacho*, which is the most offensive vituperative of the Spaniard against the Frenchman, and has by some been thought to mean "those who dwell on Gaves," is the Arabic *Cabach*, detestable, filthy, or "qui prava indole est, moribusque." In fact the real meaning cannot be further alluded to beyond referring to the clever tale of *El Frances y Español* by Quevedo. The antipathy to the Gaul is natural and national, and dates far beyond history. This nickname was first given in the eighth century, when Charlemagne, the Buonaparte of his day, invaded Spain, on the abdication and cession of the crown by the chaste Alonso, the prototype of the wittol Charles IV.; then the Spanish Moors and Christians, foes and friends, forgot their hatreds of creeds in the greater loathing for the abhorred intruder, whose "peerage fell" in the memorable passes of Roncesvalles. The true derivation of the word *Gabacho*, which now resounds from these Pyrenees to the Straits, is blinked in the royal academical dictionary, such was the servile adulation of the members to their French patron Philip V. *Mueran los Gabachos*, "Death to the miscreants," was the rally cry of Spain after the inhuman butcheries of the terrorist Murat; nor have the echoes died away; a spark may kindle the prepared mine: of what an unspeakable value is a national war-cry which at once gives to a whole people a shibboleth, a rallying watch-word to a common cause! *Vox populi vox Dei.*

naturally mark the line of division between France and Spain: such, however, is not the case, as part of *Cerdaña* belongs to France, while *Aran* belongs to Spain; thus each country possesses a key in its neighbour's territory. It is singular that this obvious inconvenience should not have been remedied by some exchange when the long-disputed boundary-question was settled between Charles IV. and the French republic.

## THE PYRENEES

Most of the passes over this Alpine barrier are impracticable for carriages, and remain much in the same state as in the time of the Moors, who from them called the Pyrenean range *Albort*, from the Roman *Portæ*, the ridge of "gates." Many of the wild passes are only known to the natives and smugglers, and are often impracticable from the snow; while even in summer they are dangerous, being exposed to mists and the hurricanes of mighty rushing winds. The two best carriageable lines of intercommunication are placed at each extremity: that to the west passes through Irun; that to the east through Figueras.

The Spanish Pyrenees offer few attractions to the lovers of the fleshly comforts of cities; but the scenery, sporting, geology, and botany are truly Alpine, and will well repay those who can "rough it" considerably. The contrast which the unfrequented Spanish side offers to the crowded opposite one is great. In Spain the mountains themselves are less abrupt, less covered with snow,

while the numerous and much frequented baths in the French Pyrenees have created roads, diligences, hotels, tables-d'hôte, cooks, Ciceronis, donkeys, and so forth; for the Badauds de Paris who babble about green fields and *des belles horreurs*, but who seldom go beyond the immediate vicinity and hackneyed "lions." A want of good taste and real perception of the sublime and beautiful is nowhere more striking, says Mr. Erskine Murray, than on the French side, where mankind remains profoundly ignorant of the real beauties of the Pyrenees, which have been chiefly explored by the English, who love nature with all their heart and soul, who worship her alike in her shyest retreats and in her wildest forms. Nevertheless, on the north side many comforts and appliances for the tourist are to be had; nay, invalids and ladies in search of the picturesque can ascend to the *Brèche de Roland*. Once, however, cross the frontier, and a sudden change comes over all facilities of locomotion. Stern is the first welcome of the "hard land of Iberia," scarce is the food for body or mind, and deficient the accommodation for man or beast, and simply because there is small demand for either. No Spaniard ever comes here for pleasure; hence the localities are given up to the smuggler and izard.

## FRENCH POLICY

The Oriental inæsthetic incuriousness for *things*, old stones, wild scenery, &c., is increased by political reasons and fears.

The neighbour, from the time of the Celt down to to-day, has ever been the coveter, ravager, and terror of Spain: her "knavish tricks," fire and rapine are too numerous to be blinked or written away, too atrocious to be forgiven: to revenge becomes a sacred duty. However governments may change, the policy of France is immutable. Perfidy, backed by violence, "ruse doublée de force," is the state maxim from Louis XIV. and Buonaparte down to Louis-Philippe: the principle is the same, whether the instrument employed be the sword or wedding ring. The weaker Spain is thus linked in the embrace of her stronger neighbour, and has been made alternately her dupe and victim, and degraded into becoming a mere satellite, to be dragged along by fiery Mars. France has forced her to share all her bad fortune, but never has permitted her to participate in her success. Spain has been tied to the car of her defeats, but never has been allowed to mount it in the day of triumph. Her friendship has always tended to denationalise Spain, and by entailing the forced enmity of England, has caused to her the loss of her navies and colonies in the new world.

"The Pyrenean boundary," says the Duke of Wellington, "is the most vulnerable frontier of France, probably the only vulnerable one;" accordingly she has always endeavoured to dismantle the Spanish defences and to foster insurrections and *pronunciamientos* in Catalonia, for Spain's infirmity is her opportunity, and therefore the "sound policy" of the rest of Europe is to see Spain strong, independent, and able to hold her

own Pyrenean key.

## THE PYRENEES

While France therefore has improved her means of approach and invasion, Spain, to whom the past is prophetic of the future, has raised obstacles, and has left her protecting barrier as broken and hungry as when planned by her tutelar divinity. Nor are her highlanders more practicable than their granite fastnesses. Here dwell the smuggler, the rifle sportsman, and all who defy the law: here is bred the hardy peasant, who, accustomed to scale mountains and fight wolves, becomes a ready raw material for the *guerrilleros*, and none were ever more formidable to Rome or France than those marshalled in these glens by Sertorius and Mina. When the tocsin bell rings out, a hornet swarm of armed men, the weed of the hills, starts up from every rock and brake. The hatred of the Frenchman, which the Duke said formed "part of a Spaniard's nature," seems to increase in intensity in proportion to vicinity, for as they touch, so they fret and rub each other: here it is the antipathy of an antithesis; the incompatibility of the saturnine and slow, with the mercurial and rapid; of the proud, enduring, and ascetic, against the vain, the fickle, and sensual; of the enemy of innovation and change, to the lover of variety and novelty; and however tyrants and tricksters may assert in the gilded galleries of Versailles that *Il n'y a plus de Pyrénées*, this party-wall of Alps, this barrier of snow and hurricane, does

and will exist for ever: placed there by Providence, as was said by the Gothic prelate Saint Isidore, they ever have forbidden and ever will forbid the banns of an unnatural alliance, as in the days of Silius Italicus:

> "Pyrene celsâ nimbosi verticis arce
> Divisos Celtis laté prospectat Hiberos
> Atque æterna tenet magnis *divortia* terris."

If the eagle of Buonaparte could never build in the Arragonese Sierra, the lily of the Bourbon assuredly will not take root in the Castilian plain; so sings Ariosto:

> – "Che non lice
> Che 'l giglio in quel terreno habbia radice!"

## THE PYRENEES

This inveterate condition either of pronounced hostility, or at best of armed neutrality, has long rendered these localities disagreeable to the man of the note-book. The rugged mountain frontiers consist of a series of secluded districts, which constitute the entire world to the natives, who seldom go beyond the natural walls by which they are bounded, except to smuggle. This vocation is the curse of the country; it fosters a wild reliance on self-defence, a habit of border foray and insurrection,

which seems as necessary to them as a moral excitement and combustible element, as carbon and hydrogen are in their physical bodies. Their habitual suspicion against prying foreigners, which is an Oriental and Iberian instinct, converts a curious traveller into a spy or partisan. Spanish authorities, who seldom do these things except on compulsion, cannot understand the gratuitous braving of hardship and danger for its own sake – the botanizing and geologizing, &c., of the nature and adventure-loving English. The *impertinente curioso* may possibly escape observation in a Spanish city and crowd, but in these lonely hills it is out of the question: he is the observed of all observers; and they, from long smuggling and sporting habits, are always on the look-out, and are keen-sighted as hawks, gipseys, and beasts of prey. Latterly some who, by being placed immediately under the French boundary, have seen the glitter of our tourists' coin, have become more humanized, and anxious to obtain a share in the profits of the season.

## THE PYRENEES

The geology and botany have yet to be properly investigated. In the metal-pregnant Pyrenees rude forges of iron abound, but everything is conducted on a small, unscientific scale, and probably after the unchanged primitive Iberian system. Fuel is scarce, and transport of ores on muleback expensive. The iron is at once inferior to the English and much dearer: the tools

and implements used on both sides of the Pyrenees are at least a century behind ours; while absurd tariffs, which prevent the importation of a cheaper and better article, retard improvements in agriculture and manufactures, and perpetuate poverty and ignorance among backward, half-civilised populations. The timber, moreover, has suffered much from the usual neglect, waste, and improvidence of the natives, who destroy more than they consume, and never replant. The sporting in these lonely wild districts is excellent, for where man seldom penetrates the feræ naturæ multiply: the bear is, however, getting scarce, as a premium is placed on every head destroyed. The grand object is the *Cabra Montanez*, or *Rupicapra*, German Steinbock, the Bouquetin of the French, the Izard (*Ibex*, becco, bouc, bock, buck). The fascination of this pursuit, like that of the Chamois in Switzerland, leads to constant and even fatal accidents, as this shy animal lurks in almost inaccessible localities, and must be stalked with the nicest skill. The sporting on the north side is far inferior, as the cooks of the table-d'hôtes have waged a *guerra al cuchillo*, a war to the knife, and fork too, against even *les petits oiseaux*; but your French *artiste* persecutes even minnows, as all *sport* and fair play is scouted, and everything gives way for the pot. The Spaniards, less mechanical and gastronomic, leave the feathered and finny tribes in comparative peace. Accordingly the streams abound with trout, and those which flow into the Atlantic with salmon. The lofty Pyrenees are not only alembics of cool crystal streams, but contain, like the heart of Sappho, sources

of warm springs under a bosom of snow. The most celebrated issue on the north side, or at least those which are the most known and frequented, for the Spaniard is a small bather, and no great drinker of medicinal waters. Accommodations at the baths on his side scarcely exist, while even those in France are paltry when compared to the spas of Germany, and dirty and indecent when contrasted with those of England. The scenery is alpine, a jumble of mountain, precipice, glacier, and forest, enlivened by the cataract or hurricane. The natives, when not smugglers or *guerrilleros*, are rude, simple, and pastoral: they are poor and picturesque, as people are who dwell in mountains. *Plains* which produce "bread stuffs" may be richer, but what can a traveller or painter do with their monotonous commonplace?

In these wild tracts the highlanders in summer lead their flocks up to mountain huts and dwell with their cattle, struggling against poverty and wild beasts, and endeavouring really to keep the wolf from the door: their watch-dogs are magnificent; the sheep are under admirable control – being, as it were, in the presence of the enemy, they know the voice of their shepherds, or rather the peculiar whistle and cry: their wool is largely smuggled into France, and when manufactured in the shape of coarse cloth is then re-smuggled back again.

## THE RIVERS OF SPAIN

# CHAPTER III

The Rivers of Spain – Bridges – Navigation – The Ebro and Tagus.

## SPANISH RIVERS

THERE are six great rivers in Spain, – the arteries which run between the seven mountain chains, the vertebræ of the geological skeleton. These water-sheds are each intersected in their extent by others on a minor scale, by valleys and indentations, in each of which runs its own stream. Thus the rains and melted snows are all collected in an infinity of ramifications, and are carried by these tributary conduits into one of the main trunks, which all, with the exception of the Ebro, empty themselves into the Atlantic. The Duero and Tagus, unfortunately for Spain, disembogue in Portugal, and thus become a portion of a foreign dominion exactly where their commercial importance is the greatest. Philip II. saw the true value of the possession of an angle which rounded Spain, and insured to her the possession of these valuable outlets of internal produce, and inlets for external commerce. Portugal annexed to Spain gave more real power to his throne than the dominion of entire continents across the Atlantic, and is the secret object of every Spanish

government's ambition. The *Miño*, which is the shortest of these rivers, runs through a bosom of fertility. The *Tajo*, Tagus, which the fancy of poets has sanded with gold and embanked with roses, tracks much of its dreary way through rocks and comparative barrenness. The *Guadiana* creeps through lonely Estremadura, infecting the low plains with miasma. The *Guadalquivir* eats out its deep banks amid the sunny olive-clad regions of Andalucia, as the Ebro divides the levels of Arragon. Spain abounds with brackish streams, *Salados*, and with salt-mines, or saline deposits after the evaporation of the sea-waters; indeed, the soil of the central portions is so strongly impregnated with "villainous saltpetre," that the small province of La Mancha alone could furnish materials to blow up the world; the surface of these regions, always arid, is every day becoming more so, from the singular antipathy which the inhabitants of the interior have against trees. There is nothing to check the power of rapid evaporation, no shelter to protect or preserve moisture. The soil becomes more and more parched and dried up, insomuch that in some parts it has almost ceased to be available for cultivation: another serious evil, which arises from want of plantations, is, that the slopes of hills are everywhere liable to constant denudation of soil after heavy rain. There is nothing to break the descent of the water; hence the naked, barren stone summits of many of the sierras, which have been pared and peeled of every particle capable of nourishing vegetation: they are skeletons where life is extinct; not only is the soil thus lost, but the detritus

washed down either forms bars at the mouths of rivers, or chokes up and raises their beds; they are thus rendered liable to overflow their banks, and convert the adjoining plains into pestilential swamps. The supply of water, which is afforded by periodical rains, and which ought to support the reservoirs of rivers, is carried off at once in violent floods, rather than in a gentle gradual disembocation. From its mountainous character Spain has very few lakes, as the fall is too considerable to allow water to accumulate; the exceptions which do exist might with greater propriety be termed lochs – not that they are to be compared in size or beauty to some of those in Scotland. The volume in the principal rivers of Spain has diminished, and is diminishing; thus some which once were navigable, are so no longer, while the artificial canals which were to have been substituted remain unfinished: the progress of deterioration advances, while little is done to counteract or amend what every year must render more difficult and expensive, while the means of repair and correction will diminish in equal proportion, from the poverty occasioned by the evil, and by the fearful extent which it will be allowed to attain. However, several grand water-companies have been lately formed, who are to dig Artesian wells, finish canals, navigate rivers with steamers, and *issue shares at a premium*, which will be effected if nothing else is.

## SPANISH BRIDGES

The rivers which are really adapted to navigation are, however, only those which are perpetually fed by those tributary streams that flow down from mountains which are covered with snow all the year, and these are not many. The majority of Spanish rivers are very scanty of water during the summer time, and very rapid in their flow when filled by rains or melting snow: during these periods they are impracticable for boats. They are, moreover, much exhausted by being drained off, *sangrado*– that is, bled, for the purposes of artificial irrigation; thus, at Madrid and Valencia, the wide beds of the Manzanares and the Turia are frequently dry as the sands of the seashore when the tide is out. They seem only to be entitled to be called rivers by courtesy, because they have so many and such splendid bridges; as numerous are the jokes cut by the newly-arrived stranger, who advises the townsfolk to sell one of them to purchase water, or compares their thirsting arches to the rich man in torments, who prays for one drop; but a heavy rain in the mountains soon shows the necessity for their strength and length, for their wide and lofty arches, their buttress-like piers, which before had appeared to be rather the freaks of architectural magnificence than the works of public utility. Those who live in a comparatively level country can scarcely form an idea of the rapidity and fearful destruction of the river inundations in this land of mountains. The deluge rolls forth in an avalanche, the

rising water coming down tier above tier like a flight of steps let loose. These tides carry everything before them – scarring and gullying up the earth, tearing down rocks, trees, and houses, and strewing far and wide the relics of ruin; but the fierce fury is short-lived, and is spent in its own violence; thus the traveller at Madrid, if he wishes to see its Thames, should run down or take the 'bus as he can, when it rains, or the river will be gone before he gets there. When the Spaniards, under those blockheads Blake and Cuesta, lost the battle of *Rio Seco*, which gave Madrid to Buonaparte, the French soldiers, in crossing the *dry river* bed in pursuit of the fugitives, exclaimed, – "Why Spanish rivers run away too!"

## THE EBRO

Many of these beds serve in remote districts, where highways and bridges are thought to be superfluous luxuries, for the double purposes of a river when there is water in them, and as a road when there is not. Again, in this land of anomalies, some streams have no bridges, while other bridges have no streams; the most remarkable of these *pontes asinorum* is at Coria, where the Alagon is crossed at an inconvenient, and often dangerous ferry, while a noble bridge of five arches stands high and dry in the meadows close by. This has arisen from the river having quitted its old channel in some inundation; or, as Spaniards say, *salido de su madre*, gone out from its mother, who does not seem to

know that it is out, or certainly does not care, since no steps have ever been taken by the Corians to coax it back again under its old arches; they call on Hercules to turn this Alpheus, and rely in the meantime on their proverb, that all fickle, unfaithful rivers repent and return to their legitimate beds after a thousand years, for nothing is hurried in Spain, *Despues de anos mil, vuelve el rio a su cubil*. On the fishing in these wandering streams we shall presently say something.

The navigation of Spanish rivers is Oriental, classical, and imperfect; the boats, barges, and bargemen carry one back beyond the mediæval ages, and are better calculated for artistical than commercial purposes. The "great river," the Guadalquivir, which was navigable in the time of the Romans as far as Cordova, is now scarcely practicable for sailing-vessels of a moderate size even up to Seville. Passengers, however, have facilities afforded them by the steamers which run backwards and forwards between this capital and Cadiz; these conveniences, it need not be said, were introduced from England, although the first steamer that ever paddled in waters was of Spanish invention, and was launched at Barcelona in 1543; but the Spanish Chancellor of the Exchequer of the time was a poor red tapist, and opposed the whole thing, which, as usual, fell to the ground. The steamers on the Guadalquivir are safe; indeed, in our times, the advertisements always stated that a mass was said before starting in the heretical contrivance, just as to this day Birmingham locomotives, when a railway is first opened in

France, are sprinkled with holy water, and blessed by a bishop, which may be a new “wrinkle” to Mr. Hudson and the primate of York.

## THE TAGUS

There is considerable talk in Arragon about rendering the Ebro navigable, and it has been surveyed this year by two engineers – English of course. The local newspapers compared the astonishment of the herns and peasantry, created on the banks by this arrival, as second only to that occasioned when Don Quixote and Sancho ventured near the same spot into the enchanted bark.

There has been still older and greater talk about establishing a water communication between Lisbon and Toledo, by means of the Tagus. This mighty river, which is in every body’s mouth, because the capital of the kingdom of Port wine is placed at its embouchure, is in fact almost as little known in Spain and out of it, as the Niger. It has been our fate to behold it in many places and various phases of its most poetical and picturesque course – first green and arrowy amid the yellow corn fields of New Castile; then freshening the sweet Tempe of Aranjuez, clothing the gardens with verdure, and filling the nightingale-tenanted glens with groves; then boiling and rushing around the granite ravines of rock-built Toledo, hurrying to escape from the cold shadows of its deep prison, and dashing joyously into light and

liberty, to wander far away into silent plains, and on to Talavera, where its waters were dyed with brave blood, and gladly reflected the flash of the victorious bayonets of England, – triumphantly it rolls thence, under the shattered arches of Almaraz, down to desolate Estremadura, in a stream as tranquil as the azure sky by which it is curtained, yet powerful enough to force the mountains at Alcantara. There the bridge of Trajan is worth going a hundred miles to see; it stems the now fierce condensed stream, and ties the rocky gorges together; grand, simple, and solid, tinted by the tender colours of seventeen centuries, it looms like the grey skeleton of Roman power, with all the sentiment of loneliness, magnitude, and the interest of the past and present. Such are the glorious scenes we have beheld and sketched; such are the sweet waters in which we have refreshed our dusty and weary limbs.

## THE TAGUS

How stern, solemn, and striking is this Tagus of Spain! No commerce has ever made it its highway – no English steamer has ever civilized its waters like those of France and Germany. Its rocks have witnessed battles, not peace; have reflected castles and dungeons, not quays or warehouses: few cities have risen on its banks, as on those of the Thames and Rhine; it is truly a river of Spain – that isolated and solitary land. Its waters are without boats, its banks without life; man has never laid his hand upon its billows, nor enslaved their free and independent gambols.

It is impossible to read Tom Campbell's admirable description of the Danube before its poetry was discharged by the smoke of our ubiquitous countrymen's Dampf Schiff, without applying his lines to this uncivilised Tagus: —

> "Yet have I loved thy wild abode,
> Unknown, unploughed, untrodden shore,
> Where scarce the woodman finds a road,
> And scarce the fisher plies an oar;
> For man's neglect I love thee more,
> That art nor avarice intrude
> To tame thy torrent's thunder shock,
> Or prune the vintage of thy rock,
> Magnificently rude!"

As rivers in a state of nature are somewhat scarce in Great Britain, one more extract may be perhaps pardoned, and the more as it tends to illustrate Spanish character, and explain *las cosas de España*, or the things of Spain, which it is the object of these humble pages to accomplish.

The Tagus rises in that extraordinary jumble of mountains, full of fossil bones, botany, and trout, that rise between Cuenca and Teruel, and which being all but unknown, clamour loudly for the disciples of Isaac Walton and Dr. Buckland. It disembogues into the sea at Lisbon, having flowed 375 miles in Spain, of which nature destined it to be the aorta. The Toledan chroniclers derive the name from Tagus, fifth king of Iberia, but Bochart

traces it to *Dag*, Dagon, a fish, as besides being considered auriferous, the ancients pronounced it to be piscatory. Not that the present Spaniards trouble their head more about the fishes here than if they were crocodiles. Grains of gold are indeed found, but barely enough to support a poet, by amphibious paupers, called *artesilleros* from their baskets, in which they collect the sand, which is passed through a sieve.

## NAVIGATION OF THE TAGUS

The Tagus might easily be made navigable to the sea, and then with the Xarama connect Madrid and Lisbon, and facilitate importation of colonial produce, and exportation of wine and grain. Such an act would confer more benefits upon Spain than ten thousand *charters* or paper constitutions, guaranteed by the sword of Narvaez, or the word and honour of Louis-Philippe. The performance has been contemplated by many *foreigners*, the Toledans looking lazily on; thus in 1581, Antonelli, a Neapolitan, and Juanelo Turriano, a Milanese, suggested the scheme to Philip II., then master of Portugal; but money was wanting – the old story – for his revenues were wasted in relic-removing and in building the useless Escorial, and nothing was made except water parties, and odes to the "wise and great king" who *was* to perform the deed, to the tune of Macbeth's witches, "*I'll do, I'll do, I'll do*," for here the future is preferred to the present tense. The project dozed until 1641, when two other *foreigners*, Julio

Martelli and Luigi Carduchi, in vain roused Philip IV. from his siesta, who soon after losing Portugal itself, forthwith forgot the Tagus. Another century glided away, when in 1755 Richard Wall, an Irishman, took the thing up; but Charles III., busy in waging French wars against England, wanted cash. The Tagus has ever since, as it roared over its rocky bed, like an unbroken barb, laughed at the Toledan who dreamily angles for impossibilities on the bank, invoking Brunel, Hercules, and Rothschild, instead of putting his own shoulder to the water-wheel. In 1808 the scheme was revived: F$^{ro}$ Xavier de Cabanas, who had studied in England our system of canals, published a survey of the whole river; this folio '*Memoria sobre la Navigation del Tajo*,' or, 'Memoir on the Navigation of the Tagus,' Madrid, 1829, reads like the blue book of one discovering the source of the Nile, so desert-like are the unpeopled, uncultivated districts between Toledo and Abrantes. Ferd. VII. thereupon issued an approving *paper* decree, and so there the thing ended, although Cabanas had engaged with Messrs. Wallis and Mason for the machinery, &c. Recently the project has been renewed by Señor Bermudez de Castro, an intelligent gentleman, who, from long residence in England, has imbibed the schemes and energy of the foreigner. *Verémos!* "we shall see;" for hope is a good breakfast but a bad supper, says Bacon; and in Spain things are begun late in the day, and never finished; so at least says the proverb: —*En España se empieza tarde, y se acaba nunca*.

# DIVISION INTO PROVINCES

# CHAPTER IV

Divisions into Provinces – Ancient Demarcations – Modern Departments – Population – Revenue – Spanish Stocks.

IN the divisions of the Peninsula which are effected by mountains, rivers, and climate, a leading principle is to be traced throughout, for it is laid down by the unerring hand of nature. The artificial, political, and conventional arrangement into kingdoms and provinces is entirely the work of accident and absence of design.

These provincial divisions were formed by the gradual union of many smaller and previously independent portions, which have been taken into Spain as a whole, just as our inconvenient counties constitute the kingdom of England; for the inconveniences of these results of the ebb and flow of the different tides in the affairs of man's dominion – these boundaries not fixed by the lines and rules of theodolite-armed land surveyors, use had provided remedies, and long habit had reconciled the inhabitants to divisions which suited them better than any new arrangement, however scientifically calculated, according to statistical and geographical principles.

The French, during their intrusive rule, were horrified at this "chaos administratif," this apparent irregularity, and introduced

their own system of *départements*, by which districts were neatly squared out and people re-arranged, as if Spain were a chess-board and Spaniards mere pawns —*peones*, or footmen, which this people, calling itself one of *caballeros*, that is, riders on horses *par excellence*, assuredly is not: nor, indeed, in this paradise of the church militant, can the moves of any Spanish bishop or knight be calculated on with mathematical certainty, since they seldom will take the steps to-morrow which they did yesterday.

## PROVINCES

Accordingly, however specious the theory, it was found to be no easy matter to carry departementalization out in practice: individuality laughs at the solemn nonsense of in-door pedants, who would class men like ferns or shells. The failure in this attempt to remodel ancient demarcations and recombine antipathetic populations was utter and complete. No sooner, therefore, had the Duke cleared the Peninsula of *doctrinaires* and invaders than the Lion of Castile shook off their papers from his mane, and reverted like the Italian, on whom the same experiment was tried, to his own pre-existing divisions, which, however defective in theory, and unsightly and inconvenient on the map, had from long habit been found practically to suit better. Recently, in spite of this experience among other newfangled transpyrenean reforms, innovations,

and botherations, the Peninsula has again been parcelled out into forty-nine provinces, instead of the former national divisions of thirteen kingdoms, principalities, and lordships; but long will it be before these deeply impressed divisions, which have grown with the growth of the monarchy, and are engraved in the retentive memories of the people, can be effaced.

Those who are curious in statistical details are referred to the works of Paez, Antillon, and others, who are considered by Spaniards to be authorities on vast subjects, which are fitter for a gazetteer or a handbook than for volumes destined like these for lighter reading; and assuredly the pages of the respectable Spaniards just named are duller than the high-roads of Castile, which no tiny rivulet the cheerful companion of the dusty road ever freshens, no stray flower adorns, no song of birds gladdens – "dry as the remainder of the biscuit after the voyage."

The thirteen divisions have grand and historical names: they belong to an old and monarchical country, not to a spick and span vulgar democracy, without title-deeds. They fill the mouth when named, and conjure up a thousand recollections of the better and more glorious times of Spain's palmy power, when there were giants in the land, not pigmies in Parisian *paletots*, whose only ambition is to ape the foreigner, and disgrace and denationalize themselves.

# PROVINCES

First and foremost *Andalucia* presents herself, crowned with a quadruple, not a triple tiara, for the name *los cuatro reinos*, "the four kingdoms," is her synonym. They consist of those of Seville, Cordova, Jaen, and Granada. There is magic and birdlime in the very letters. Secondly advances the kingdom of *Murcia*, with its silver-mines, barilla, and palms. Then the gentle kingdom of *Valencia* appears, all smiles, with fruits and silk. The principality of grim and truculent *Catalonia* scowls next on its fair neighbour. Here rises the smoky factory chimney; here cotton is spun, vice and discontent bred, and revolutions concocted. The proud and stiff-necked kingdom of *Arragon* marches to the west with this Lancashire of Spain, and to the east with the kingdom of Navarre, which crouches with its green valleys under the Pyrenees. The three *Basque Provinces* which abut thereto, are only called *El Senorio*, "The Lordship," for the king of all the Spains is but simple lord of this free highland home of the unconquered descendants of the aboriginal man of the Peninsula. Here there is much talk of bullocks and *fueros*, or "privileges;" for when not digging and delving, these gentlemen by the mere fact of being born here, are fighting and upholding their good rights by the sword. The empire province of the *Castiles* furnishes two coronets to the royal brow; to wit, that of the older portion, where the young monarchy was nursed, and

that of the newer portion, which was wrested afterwards from the infidel Moor. The ninth division is desolate *Estremadura*, which has no higher title than a province, and is peopled by locusts, wandering sheep, pigs, and here and there by human bipeds. *Leon*, a most time-honoured kingdom, stretches higher up, with its corn-plains and venerable cities, now silent as tombs, but in auld lang syne the scenes of mediæval chivalry and romance. The kingdom of *Gallicia* and the principality of the *Asturias* form the seaboard to the west, and constitute Spain's breakwater against the Atlantic.

## POPULATION

It is not very easy to ascertain the exact population of any country, much less that of one which does not yet possess the advantages of public registrars; the people at large, for whom, strange to say, the pleasant studies of statistics and political economy have small charms, consider any attempt to number them as boding no good; they have a well-grounded apprehension of ulterior objects. To "number the people" was a crime in the East, and many moral and practical difficulties exist in arriving at a true census of Spain. Thus, while some writers on statistics hope to flatter the powers that be, by a glowing exaggeration of national strength, "to boast of which," says the Duke, "is the national weakness," the suspicious *many*, on the other hand, are disposed to conceal and diminish the truth. We should be

always on our guard when we hear accounts of the past or present population, commerce, or revenue of Spain. The better classes will magnify them both, for the credit of their country; the poorer, on the other hand, will appeal *ad misericordiam*, by representing matters as even worse than they really are. They never afford any opening, however indirect, to information which may lead to poll-taxes and conscriptions.

## DIFFERENT RACES

The population and the revenue have generally been exaggerated, and all statements may be much discounted; the present population, at an approximate calculation, may be taken at about eleven or twelve millions, with a slow tendency to increase. This is a low figure for so large a country, and for one which, under the Romans, is said to have swarmed with inhabitants as busy and industrious as ants; indeed, the longest period of rest and settled government which this ill-fated land has ever enjoyed was during the three centuries that the Roman power was undisputed. The Peninsula is then seldom mentioned by authors; and how much happiness is inferred by that silence, when the blood-spattered page of history was chiefly employed to register great calamities, plagues, pestilences, wars, battles, or the freaks of men, at which angels weep! Certainly one of the causes which have changed this happy state of things, has been the numerous and fierce invasions to which Spain has been

exposed; fatal to her has been her gift of beauty and wealth, which has ever attracted the foreign ravisher and spoiler. The Goths, to whom a worse name has been given than they deserved in Spain, were ousted by the Moors, the real and wholesale destroyers; bringing to the darkling West the luxuries, arts and sciences of the bright East, they had nothing to learn from the conquered; to them the Goth was no instructor, as the Roman had been to him; they despised both of their predecessors, with whose wants and works they had no sympathy, while they abhorred their creed as idolatrous and polytheistic – down went altar and image. There was no fair town which they did not destroy; they exterminated, say their annals, the fowls of the air.

The Gotho-Spaniard in process of time retaliated, and combated the invader with his own weapons, bettering indeed the destructive lesson which was taught. The effects of these wars, carried on without treaty, without quarter, and waged for country and creed, are evident in those parts of Spain which were their theatre. Thus, vast portions of Estremadura, the south of Toledo and Andalucia, by nature some of the richest and most fertile in the world, are now *dehesas y despoblados*, depopulated wastes, abandoned to the wild bee for his heritage; the country remains as it was left after the discomfiture of the Moor. The early chronicles of both Spaniard and Moslem teem with accounts of the annual forays inflicted on each other, and to which a frontier-district was always exposed. The object of these border *guerrilla*-warfares was extinction, *talar, quemar y robar*, to desolate,

burn, and rob, to cut down fruit-trees, to "harry," to "razzia."[2] The internecine struggle was that of rival nations and creeds. It was truly Oriental, and such as Ezekiel, who well knew the Phœnicians, has described: "Go ye after him through the city and smite; let not your eye have pity, neither have ye pity; slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children and women." The religious duty of smiting the infidel precluded mercy on both sides alike, for the Christian foray and crusade was the exact counterpart of the Moslem *algara* and *algihad*; while, from military reasons, everything was turned into a desert, in order to create a frontier Edom of starvation, a defensive glacis, through which no invading army could pass and live; the "beasts of the field alone increased." Nature, thus abandoned, resumed her rights, and has cast off every trace of former cultivation; and districts the granaries of the Roman and the Moor, now offer the saddest contrasts to that former prosperity and industry.

## BUONAPARTE'S INVASION

To these horrors succeeded the thinning occasioned by causes of a bigoted and political nature: the expulsion of the Jews deprived poor Spain of her bankers, while the final banishment of the Moriscoes, the remnant of the Moors, robbed the soil of

[2] *Razzia* is derived from the Arabic *Al ghazia*, a word which expresses these raids of a ferocious, barbarous age. It has been introduced to European dictionaries by the Pelissiers, who thus *civilize* Algeria. They make a solitude, and call it peace.

its best and most industrious agriculturists.

Again, in our time, have the fatal scenes of contending Christian and Moor been renewed in the struggle for national independence, waged by Spaniards against the Buonapartist invaders, by whom neither age nor sex was spared – neither things sacred nor profane; the land is everywhere scarred with ruins; a few hours' Vandalism sufficed to undo the works of ages of piety, wealth, learning and good taste. The French retreat was worse than their advance: then, infuriated by disgrace and disaster, the Soults and Massénas vented their spite on the unarmed villagers and their cottages. But let General Foy describe their progress: – "Ainsi que la neige précipitée des sommets des Alpes dans les vallons, nos armées innombrables détruisaient en quelques heures, par leur seul passage, les ressources de toute une contrée; elles bivouaquaient habituellement, et à chaque gîte nos soldats démolissaient les maisons bâties depuis un demi-siècle, pour construire avec les décombres ces longs villages alignés qui souvent ne devaient durer qu'un jour: au défaut du bois des forêts les arbres fruitiers, les végétaux précieux, comme le mûrier, l'olivier, l'oranger, servaient a les réchauffer; les conscrits irrités à la fois par le besoin et par le danger contractaient *une ivresse morale* dont nous ne cherchions pas à les guérir."

> "So France gets drunk with blood to vomit crime,
> And fatal ever have her saturnalia been."

Who can fail to compare this habitual practice of Buonaparte's legions with the terrible description in Hosea of the "great people and strong" who execute the dread judgments of heaven? – "A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth; the land is the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness, yea, and nothing shall escape them."

## REVENUE

No sooner were they beaten out by the Duke, than population began to spring up again, as the bruised flowerets do when the iron heel of marching hordes has passed on. Then ensued the civil fratricide wars, draining the land of its males, from which bleeding Spain has not yet recovered. Insecurity of property and person will ever prove bars to marriage and increased population.

Again, a deeper and more permanent curse has steadily operated for the last two centuries, at which Spanish authors long have not dared to hint. They have ascribed the depopulation of Estremadura to the swarm of colonist adventurers and emigrants who departed from this province of Cortes and Pizarro to seek for fortune in the new world of gold and silver; and have attributed the similar want of inhabitants in Andalucia to the similar outpouring from Cadiz, which, with Seville, engrossed the traffic of the Americas. But colonisation never thins a vigorous, well-conditioned mother state – witness the rapid and daily increase of population in our own island, which, like Tyre

of old, is ever sending forth her outpouring myriads, and wafts to the uttermost parts of the sea, on the white wings of her merchant fleets, the blessings of peace, religion, liberty, order, and civilisation, to disseminate which is the mission of Great Britain.

The real permanent and standing cause of Spain's thinly peopled state, want of cultivation, and abomination of desolation, is BAD GOVERNMENT, civil and religious; this all who run may read in her lonely land and silent towns. But Spain, if the anecdote which her children love to tell be true, will never be able to remove the incubus of this fertile origin of every evil. When Ferdinand III. captured Seville and died, being a saint he escaped purgatory, and Santiago presented him to the Virgin, who forthwith desired him to ask any favours for beloved Spain. The monarch petitioned for oil, wine, and corn – conceded; for sunny skies, brave men, and pretty women – allowed; for cigars, relics, garlic, and bulls – by all means; for a *good government*– "Nay, nay," said the Virgin, "that never can be granted; for were it bestowed, not an angel would remain a day longer in heaven."

## THE BOLSA

The present revenue may be taken at about 12,000,000*l.* or 13,000,000*l.* sterling; but money is compared by Spaniards to oil; a little will stick to the fingers of those who measure it out; and such is the robbing and jobbing, the official mystification

and peculation, that it is difficult to get at *facts* whenever cash is in question. The revenue, moreover, is badly collected, and at a ruinous per centage, and at no time during this last century has been sufficient for the national expenses. Recourse has been had to the desperate experiments of usurious loans and wholesale confiscations. At one time church pillage and appropriation was almost the only item in the governmental budget. The recipients were ready to "prove from Vatel exceedingly well" that the first duty of a rich clergy was to relieve the necessitous, and the more when the State was a pauper: croziers are no match for bayonets. This system necessarily cannot last. Since the reign of Philip II. every act of dishonesty has been perpetrated. Public securities have been "repudiated," interest unpaid, and principal spunged out. No country in the Old World, or even New drab-coated World, stands lower in financial discredit. Let all be aware how they embark in Spanish speculations: however promising in the prospectus, they will, sooner or later, turn out to be deceptions; and whether they assume the form of loans, lands, or rails, none are *real* securities: they are mere castles in the air, *châteaux en Espagne*: "The earth has bubbles as the water has, and these are of them."

For the benefit and information of those who have purchased Iberian stock, it may be stated that an Exchange, or *Bolsa de Comercio*, was established at Madrid in 1831. It may be called the *coldest* spot in the hot capital, and the *idlest*, since the usual "city article" is short and sweet, "*sin operaciones*," or nothing has

been bought or sold. It might be likened to a tomb, with "Here *lies* Spanish credit" for its epitaph. If there be a thing which "*La perfide Albion*," "a nation of shopkeepers," dislikes, worse even than a French assignat, it is a bankrupt. One circumstance is clear, that Castilian *pundonor*, or point of honour, will rather settle its debts with cold iron and warm abuse than with gold and thanks.

The Exchange at Madrid was first held at *St. Martin's*, a saint who divided his cloak with a supplicant. As comparisons are odious, and bad examples catching, it has been recently removed to the *Calle del Desengaño*, the street of "finding out fallacious hopes," a locality which the bitten will not deem ill-chosen.

## SPANISH "STOCK."

As all men in power use their official knowledge in taking advantage of the turn of the market, the *Bolsa* divides with the court and army the moving influence of every *situacion* or crisis of the moment: clever as are the ministers of Paris, they are mere tyros when compared to their colleagues of Madrid in the arts of working the telegraph, gazette, &c., and thereby feathering their own nests.

The Stock Exchange is open from ten to three o'clock, where those who like Spanish funds may buy them as cheap as stinking mackerel; for when the 3 per cents, of perfidious Albion are at 98, surely Spanish fives at 22 are a tempting investment. The

stocks are numerous, and suited to all tastes and pockets, whether those funded by Aguado, Ardouin, Toreno, Mendizabal, or Mon, "all honourable men," and whose punctuality is *un-remitting*, for in some the principal is consolidated, in others the interest is deferred; the grand financial object in all having been to receive as much as possible, and pay back in an inverse ratio – their leading principle being to bag both principal and interest. As we have just said, in measuring out money and oil a little will stick to the cleanest fingers – the Madrid ministers and contractors made fortunes, and actually "did" the Hebrews of London, as their forefathers spoiled the Egyptians. But from Philip II. downwards, theologians have never been wanting in Spain to prove the religious, however painful, duty of bankruptcy, and particularly in contracts with usurious heretics. The stranger, when shown over the Madrid bank, had better evince no impertinent curiosity to see the "Dividend *pay* office," as it might give offence. Whatever be our dear reader's pursuit in the Peninsula, let him —

> "Neither a borrower nor lender be,
> For loan oft loseth both itself and friend."

Beware of Spanish stock, for in spite of official reports, *documentos*, and arithmetical mazes, which, intricate as an arabesque pattern, look well on paper without being intelligible; in spite of ingenious conversions, fundings of interest, coupons – some active, some passive, and other repudiatory terms and

tenses, the present excepted – the thimblerig is always the same; and this is the question, since national credit depends on national good faith and surplus income, how can a country pay interest on debts, whose revenues have long been, and now are, miserably insufficient for the ordinary expenses of government? You cannot get blood from a stone; *ex nihilo nihil fit*.

## PUBLIC DEBT

Mr. Macgregor's report on Spain, a truthful exposition of commercial ignorance, habitual disregard of treaties and violation of contracts, describes her public *securities*, past and present. Certainly they had very imposing names and titles —*Juros Bonos*, *Vales reales*, *Titulos*, &c., – much more royal, grand, and poetical than our prosaic *Consols*; but no oaths can attach real value to dishonoured and good-for-nothing paper. According to some financiers, the public debts of Spain, previously to 1808, amounted to 83,763,966*l.*, which have since been increased to 279,083,089*l.*, farthings omitted, for we like to be accurate. This possibly may be exaggerated, for the government will give no information as to its own peculation and mismanagement: according to Mr. Henderson, 78,649,675*l.* of this debt is due to English creditors alone, and we wish they may get it, when he gets to Madrid. In the time of James I., Mr. Howell was sent there on much such an errand; and when he left it, his "pile of unredressed claims was higher than himself." At

all events, Spain is over head and ears in debt, and irremediably insolvent. And yet few countries, if we regard the fertility of her soil, her golden possessions at home and abroad, her frugal temperate population, ought to have been less embarrassed; but Heaven has granted her every blessing, except a good and honest government. It is either a bully or a craven: satisfaction in twenty-four hours *à la Bresson*, or a line-of-battle ship off Malaga – Cromwell's receipt – is the only argument which these semi-Moors understand: conciliatory language is held to be weakness: you may obtain at once from their fears what never will be granted by their sense of justice.

## TRAVELLING IN SPAIN

# CHAPTER V

Travelling in Spain – Steamers – Roads, Roman, Monastic, and Royal – Modern Railways – English Speculations.

OF the many misrepresentations regarding Spain, few are more inveterate than those which refer to the dangers and difficulties that are there supposed to beset the traveller. This, the most romantic, racy, and peculiar country of Europe, may in reality be visited by sea and land, and throughout its length and breadth, with ease and safety, as all who have ever been there well know, the nonsense with which Cockney critics who never have been there scare delicate writers in albums and lady-bird tourists, to the contrary notwithstanding: the steamers are regular, the mails and diligences excellent, the roads decent, and the mules sure-footed; nay, latterly, the *posadas*, or inns, have been so increased, and the robbers so decreased, that some ingenuity must be evinced in getting either starved or robbed. Those, however, who are dying for new excitements, or who wish to make a picture or chapter, in short, to get up an adventure for the home-market, may manage by a great exhibition of imprudence, chattering, and a holding out luring baits, to gratify their hankering, although it would save some time, trouble, and expense to try the experiment much nearer home.

As our readers live in an island, we will commence with the sea and steamers.

## STEAMERS

The Peninsular and Oriental Navigation Company depart regularly three times a month from Southampton for Gibraltar. They often arrive at Corunna in seventy hours, from whence a mail starts directly to Madrid, which it reaches in three days and a half. The vessels are excellent sea-boats, are manned by English sailors, and propelled by English machinery. The passage to Vigo has been made in less than three days, and the voyage to Cadiz – touching at Lisbon included – seldom exceeds six. The change of climate, scenery, men, and manners effected by this week's trip, is indeed remarkable. Quitting the British Channel we soon enter the "sleepless Bay of Biscay," where the stormy petrel is at home, and where the gigantic swell of the Atlantic is first checked by Spain's iron-bound coast, the mountain break-water of Europe. Here *The Ocean* will be seen in all its vast majesty and solitude: grand in the tempest-lashed storm, grand in the calm, when spread out as a mirror; and never more impressive than at night, when the stars of heaven, free from earth-born mists, sparkle like diamonds over those "who go down to the sea in ships, and behold the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." The land has disappeared, and man feels alike his weakness and his strength; a thin plank separates him from another world; yet he

has laid his hand upon the billow, and mastered the ocean; he has made it the highway of commerce, and the binding link of nations.

The steamers which navigate the Eastern coast from Marseilles to Cadiz and back again, are cheaper indeed in their fares, but by no means such good sea-boats; nor do they keep their time – the essence of business – with English regularity. They are foreign built, and worked by Spaniards and Frenchmen. They generally stop a day at Barcelona, Valencia, and other large towns, which gives them an opportunity to replenish coal, and to smuggle. A rapid traveller is also thus enabled to pay a flying visit to the cities on the seaboard; and thus those lively authors who comprehend foreign nations with an intuitive eagle-eyed glance, obtain materials for sundry octavos on the history, arts, sciences, literature, and genius of Spaniards. But as Mons. Feval remarks of some of his gifted countrymen, they have merely to scratch their head, according to the Horatian expression, and out come a number of volumes, ready bound in calf, as Minerva issued forth armed from the temple of Jupiter.

## SPANISH ROADS

The Mediterranean is a dangerous, deceitful sea, fair and false as Italia; the squalls are sudden and terrific; then the crews either curse the sacred name of God, or invoke St. Telmo, according as their notion may be. We have often been so caught when sailing

on these perfidious waters in these foreign craft, and think, with the Spaniards, that escape is a miracle. The hilarity excited by witnessing the jabber, confusion, and lubber proceedings, went far to dispel all present apprehension, and future also. Some of our poor blue-jackets in case of a war may possibly escape the fate with which they are threatened in this French lake. But no wise man will ever go by sea when he can travel by land, nor is viewing Spain's coasts with a telescope from the deck, and passing a few hours in a sea-port, a very satisfactory mode of becoming acquainted with the country.

The roads of Spain, a matter of much importance to a judicious traveller, are somewhat a modern luxury, having been only regularly introduced by the Bourbons. The Moors and Spaniards, who rode on horses and not in carriages, suffered those magnificent lines with which the Romans had covered the Peninsula to go to decay; of these there were no less than twenty-nine of the first order, which were absolutely necessary to a nation of conquerors and colonists to keep up their military and commercial communications. The grandest of all, which like the Appian might be termed the Queen of Roads, ran from Merida, the capital of Lusitania, to Salamanca. It was laid down like a Cyclopean wall, and much of it remains to this day, with the grey granite line stretching across the aromatic wastes, like the vertebræ of an extinct mammoth. We have followed for miles its course, which is indicated by the still standing miliary columns that rise above the cistus underwood; here and there tall forest

trees grow out of the stone pavement, and show how long it has been abandoned by man to Nature ever young and gay, who thus by uprooting and displacing the huge blocks slowly recovers her rights. She festoons the ruins with necklaces of flowers and creepers, and hides the rents and wrinkles of odious, all-dilapidating Time, or man's worse neglect, as a pretty maid decorates a shrivelled dowager's with diamonds. The Spanish muleteer creeps along by its side in a track which he has made through the sand or pebbles; he seems ashamed to trample on this lordly way, for which, in his petty wants, he has no occasion. Most of the similar roads have been taken up by monks to raise convents, by burgesses to build houses, by military men to construct fortifications – thus even their ruins have perished.

## LEGEND OF SANTO DOMINGO

The mediæval Spanish roads were the works of the clergy; and the long-bearded monks, here as elsewhere, were the pioneers of civilization; they made straight, wide, and easy the way which led to their convent, their high place, their miracle shrine, or to whatever point of pilgrimage that was held out to the devout; traffic was soon combined with devotion, and the service of mammon with that of God. This imitation of the Oriental practice which obtained at Mecca, is evidenced by language in which the Spanish term *Feria* signifies at once a religious function, a holiday, and a fair. Even saints condescended to

become waywardens, and to take title from the highway. Thus *Santo Domingo de la Calzada*, "St. Domenick of the *Paved Road*," was so called from his having been the first to make one through a part of Old Castile for the benefit of pilgrims on their way to Compostella, and this town yet bears the honoured appellation.

This feat and his legend have furnished Southey with a subject of a droll ballad. The saint having finished his road, next set up an inn or *Venta*, the Maritornes of which fell in love with a handsome pilgrim, who resisted; whereupon she hid some spoons in this Joseph's saddlebags, who was taken up by the Alcalde, and forthwith hanged. But his parents some time afterwards passed under the body, which told them that he was innocent, alive, and well, and all by the intercession of the sainted road-maker; thereupon they proceeded forthwith to the truculent Alcalde, who was going to dine off two roasted fowls, and, on hearing their report, remarked, You might as well tell me that this cock (pointing to his rôti) would crow; whereupon it did crow, and was taken with its hen to the cathedral, and two chicks have ever since been regularly hatched every year from these respectable parents, of which a travelling ornithologist should secure one for the Zoological Garden. The cock and hen were duly kept near the high altar, and their white feathers were worn by pilgrims in their caps. Prudent bagsmen will, however, put a couple of ordinary roast fowls into their "provend," for hungry is this said road to *Logroño*.

# ROAD TO TOLEDO

In this land of miracles, anomalies, and contradictions, the roads to and from this very *Compostella* are now detestable. In other provinces of Spain, the star-paved milky way in heaven is called *El Camino de Santiago*, the road of St. James; but the Gallicians, who know what their roads really are, namely, the worst on earth, call the milky-way *El Camino de Jerusalem*, "the road to Jerusalem," which it assuredly is not. The ancients poetically attributed this phenomenon to some spilt milk of Juno.

Meanwhile the roads in Gallicia, although under the patronage of Santiago, who has replaced the Roman Hermes, are, like his milky-way in heaven, but little indebted to mortal repairs. The Dean of Santiago is waywarden by virtue of his office or dignity, and especially "protector." The chapter, however, now chiefly profess to make smooth the road to a better world. They have altogether degenerated from their forefathers, whose grand object was to construct roads for the pilgrim; but since the cessation of offering-making Hadjis, little or nothing has been done in the turnpike-trust line.

Some of the finest roads in Spain lead either to the *sitios* or royal pleasure-seats of the king, or wind gently up some elevated and monastery-crowned mountain like Monserrat. The ease of the despot was consulted, while that of his subjects was neglected; and the Sultan was the State, Spain was his property,

and Spaniards his serfs, and willing ones, for as in the East, their perfect equality amongst each other was one result of the immeasurable superiority of the master of all. Thus, while he rolled over a road hard and level as a bowling-green, and rapidly as a galloping team could proceed, to a mere summer residence, the communication between Madrid and Toledo, that city on which the sun shone on the day light was made, has remained a mere track ankle-deep in mud during winter and dust-clouded during summer, and changing its direction with the caprice of wandering sheep and muleteers; but Bourbon Royalty never visited this widowed capital of the Goths. The road therefore was left as it existed if not before the time of Adam, at least before Mac Adam. There is some talk just now of beginning a regular road; when it will be finished is another affair.

## ROAD TO LA CORUNA

## CROSS ROADS

The church, which shared with the state in dominion, followed the royal example in consulting its own comforts as to roads. Nor could it be expected in a torrid land, that holy men, whose abdomens occasionally were prominent and pendulous, should lard the stony or sandy earth like goats, or ascend heaven-kissing

hills so expeditiously as their prayers. In Spain the primary consideration has ever been the souls, not the bodies, of men, or legs of beasts. It would seem indeed, from the indifference shown to the sufferings of these quadrupedal blood-engines, *Maquinas de sangre*, as they are called, and still more from the reckless waste of biped life, that a man was of no value until he was dead; then what admirable contrivances for the rapid travelling of his winged spirit, first to purgatory, next out again, and thence from stage to stage to his journey's end and blessed rest! More money has been thus expended in masses than would have covered Spain with railroads, even on a British scale of magnificence and extravagance.

To descend to the roads of the peninsular earth, the principal lines are nobly planned. These geographical arteries, which form the circulation of the country, branch in every direction from Madrid, which is the centre of the system. The road-making spirit of Louis XIV. passed into his Spanish descendants, and during the reigns of Charles III. and Charles IV. communications were completed between the capital and the principal cities of the provinces. These causeways, "*Arrecifes*" – these royal roads, "*Caminos reales*" – were planned on an almost unnecessary scale of grandeur, in regard both to width, parapets, and general execution. The high road to La Coruña, especially after entering Leon, will stand comparison with any in Europe; but when Spaniards finish anything it is done in a grand style, and in this instance the expense was so enormous that the king inquired

if it was paved with silver, alluding to the common Spanish corruption of the old Roman via lata into "camino de *plata*," of plate. This and many of the others were constructed from fifty to seventy years ago, and very much on the M'Adam system, which, having been since introduced into England, has rendered our roads so very different from what they were not very long since. The war in the Peninsula tended to deteriorate the Spanish roads – when bridges and other conveniences were frequently destroyed for military reasons, and the exhausted state of the finances of Spain, and troubled times, have delayed many of the more costly reparations; yet those of the first class were so admirably constructed at the beginning, that, in spite of the injuries of war, ruts, and neglect, they may, as a whole, be pronounced equal to many of the Continent, and are infinitely more pleasant to the traveller from the absence of pavement. The roads in England have, indeed, latterly been rendered so excellent, and we are so apt to compare those of other nations with them, that we forget that fifty years ago Spain was in advance in that and many other respects. Spain remains very much what other countries were: she has stood on her old ways, moored to the anchor of prejudice, while we have progressed, and consequently now appears behind-hand in many things in which she set the fashion to England.

The grand royal roads start from Madrid, and run to the principal frontier and sea-port towns. Thus the capital may be compared to a spider, as it is the centre of the Peninsular web.

These diverging fan-like lines are sufficiently convenient to all who are about to journey to any single terminus, but inter-communications are almost entirely wanting between any one terminus with another. This scanty condition of the Peninsular roads accounts for the very limited portions of the country which are usually visited by foreigners, who – the French especially – keep to one beaten track, the high road, and follow each other like wild geese; a visit to Burgos, Madrid, and Seville, and then a steam trip from Cadiz to Valencia and Barcelona, is considered to be making the grand tour of Spain; thus the world is favoured with volumes that reflect and repeat each other, which tell us what we know already, while the rich and rare, the untrodden, unchanged, and truly Moro-Hispanic portions are altogether neglected, except by the exceptional few, who venture forth like Don Quixote on their horses, in search of adventures and the picturesque.

## TRAVELLING

## CONTEMPLATED RAILROADS

The other roads of Spain are bad, but not much more so than in other parts of the Continent, and serve tolerably well in dry weather. They are divided into those which are practicable for

wheel-carriages, and those which are only bridle-roads, or as they call them, "of horseshoe," on which all thought of going with a carriage is out of the question; when these horse or mule tracks are very bad, especially among the mountains, they compare them to roads for partridges. The cross roads are seldom tolerable; it is safest to keep the high-road – or, as we have it in English, the furthest way round is the nearest way home – for there is no short cut without hard work, says the Spanish proverb, "*ho hay atajo, sin trabajo*."

All this sounds very unpromising, but those who adopt the customs of the country will never find much practical difficulty in getting to their journey's end; slowly, it is true, for where leagues and hours are convertible terms – the Spanish *hora* being the heavy German *stunde*– the distance is regulated by the day-light. Bridle-roads and travelling on horseback, the former systems of Europe, are very Spanish and Oriental; and where people journey on horse and mule back, the road is of minor importance. In the remoter provinces of Spain the population is agricultural and poverty-stricken, unvisiting and unvisited, not going much beyond their chimney's smoke. Each family provides for its simple habits and few wants; having but little money to buy foreign commodities, they are clad and fed, like the Bedouins, with the productions of their own fields and flocks. There is little circulation of persons; a neighbouring fair is the mart where they obtain the annual supply of whatever luxury they can indulge in, or it is brought to their cottages by wandering

muleteers, or by the smuggler, who is the type and channel of the really active principle of trade in three-fourths of the Peninsula. It is wonderful how soon a well-mounted traveller becomes attached to travelling on horseback, and how quickly he becomes reconciled to a state of roads which, startling at first to those accustomed to carriage highways, are found to answer perfectly for all the purposes of the place and people where they are found.

Let us say a few things on Spanish railroads, for the mania of England has surmounted the Pyrenees, although confined rather more to words than deeds; in fact, it has been said that no rail exists, in any country of either the new world or the old one, in which the Spanish language is spoken, probably from other objections than those merely philological. Again, in other countries roads, canals, and traffic usher in the rail, which in Spain is to precede and introduce them. Thus, by the prudent delays of national caution and procrastination, much of the trouble and expense of these intermediate stages will be economized, and Spain will jump at once from a mediæval condition into the comforts and glories of Great Britain, the land of restless travellers. Be that as it may, just now there is much talk of *railroads*, and splendid official and other *documentos* are issued, by which the "whole country is to be intersected (on paper) with a net-work of rapid and bowling-green communications," which are to create a "perfect homogeneity among Spaniards;" for great as have been the

labours of Herculean steam, this amalgamation of the Iberian rope of sand has properly been reserved for the crowning performance.

It would occupy too much space to specify the infinite lines which are in contemplation, which may be described when completed. Suffice it to say, that they almost all are to be effected by the iron and gold of England. However this *estrangerismo*, this influence of the foreigner, may offend the sensitive pride, the *Españolismo* of Spain, the power of resistance offered by the national indolence and dislike to change, must be propelled by British steam, with a dash of French revolution. Yet our speculators might, perhaps, reflect that Spain is a land which never yet has been able to construct or support even a sufficient number of common roads or canals for her poor and passive commerce and circulation. The distances are far too great, and the traffic far too small, to call yet for the rail; while the geological formation of the country offers difficulties which, if met with even in England, would baffle the colossal science and extravagance of our first-rate engineers. Spain is a land of mountains, which rise everywhere in Alpine barriers, walling off province from province, and district from district. These mighty cloud-capped *sierras* are solid masses of hard stone, and any tunnels which ever perforate their ranges will reduce that at Box to the delving of the poor mole. You might as well cover Switzerland and the Tyrol with a net-work of *level* lines, as those caught in the aforesaid net will soon discover to their cost.

The outlay of this up-hill work may be in an inverse ratio to the remuneration, for the one will be enormous, and the other paltry. The parturient mountains may produce a most musipular interest, and even that may be "deferred."

## DIFFICULTIES OF RAILROADS

Spain, again, is a land of *dehesas y despoblados*: in these wild unpeopled wastes, next to travellers, commerce and cash are what is scarce, while even Madrid, the capital, is without industry or resources, and poorer than many of our provincial cities. The Spaniard, a creature of routine and foe to innovations, is not a moveable or locomotive; local, and a parochial fixture by nature, he hates moving like a Turk, and has a particular horror of being hurried; long, therefore, here has an ambling mule answered all the purposes of transporting man and his goods. Who again is to do the work even if England will pay the wages? The native, next to disliking regular sustained labour himself, abhors seeing the foreigner toiling even in his service, and wasting his gold and sinews in the thankless task. The villagers, as they always have done, will rise against the stranger and heretic who comes to "suck the wealth of Spain." Supposing, however, by the aid of Santiago and Brunel, that the work were possible and were completed, how is it to be secured against the fierce action of the sun, and the fiercer violence of popular ignorance? The first cholera that visits Spain will be set down as a passenger per rail

by the dispossessed muleteer, who now performs the functions of steam and rail. He constitutes one of the most numerous and finest classes in Spain, and is the legitimate channel of the semi-Oriental caravan system. He will never permit the bread to be taken out of his mouth by this Lutheran locomotive: deprived of means of earning his livelihood, he, like the smuggler, will take to the road in another line, and both will become either robbers or patriots. Many, long, and lonely are the leagues which separate town from town in the wide deserts of thinly-peopled Spain, nor will any preventive service be sufficient to guard the rail against the *guerrilla* warfare that may then be waged. A handful of opponents in any cistus-overgrown waste, may at any time, in five minutes, break up the road, stop the train, stick the stoker, and burn the engines in their own fire, particularly smashing the luggage-train. What, again, has ever been the recompense which the foreigner has met with from Spain but breach of promise and ingratitude? He will be used, as in the East, until the native thinks that he has mastered his arts, and then he will be abused, cast out, and trodden under foot; and who then will keep up and repair the costly artificial undertaking? – certainly not the Spaniard, on whose pericranium the bumps of operative skill and mechanical construction have yet to be developed.

## BENEFITS OF RAILROADS

The lines which are the least sure of failure will be those

which are the shortest, and pass through a level country of some natural productions, such as oil, wine, and coal. Certainly, if the rail can be laid down in Spain by the gold and science of England, the gift, like that of steam, will be worthy of the Ocean's Queen, and of the world's real leader of civilization; and what a change will then come over the spirit of the Peninsula! how the siestas of torpid man-vegetation, will be disturbed by the shrill whistle and panting snort of the monster engine! how the seals of this long hermetically shut-up land will be broken! how the cloistered obscure, and dreams of treasures in heaven, will be enlightened by the flashing fire-demon of the wide-awake money-worshipper! what owls will be vexed, what bats dispossessed, what drones, mules, and asses will be scared, run over, and annihilated! Those who love Spain, and pray, like the author, daily for her prosperity, must indeed hope to see this "network of rails" concluded, but will take especial care at the same time not to invest one farthing in the imposing speculation.

Recent results have fully justified during this year what was prophesied last year in the Hand-Book: our English agents and engineers were received with almost divine honours by the Spaniards, so incensed were they with flattery and cigars. Their shares were instantaneously subscribed for, and directors nominated, with names and titles longer even than the lines, and the smallest contributions in cash were thankfully accepted: —

"L'argent dans une bourse entre agréablement;

Mais le terme venu, quand il faut le rendre,
C'est alors que les douleurs commencent à nous prendre."

## ANGLO-HISPANO RAILROADS

When the period for booking up, for making the first instalments, arrived, the Spanish shareholders were found somewhat wanting: they repudiated; for in the Peninsula it has long been easier to promise than to pay. Again, on the only line which seems likely to be carried out at present, that of Madrid to Aranjuez, the first step taken by them was to dismiss all English engineers and *navvies*, on the plea of encouraging native talent and industry rather than the foreigner. Many of the English home proceedings would border on the ridiculous, were not the laugh of some speculators rather on the wrong side. The City capitalists certainly have our pity, and if their plethora of wealth required the relief of bleeding, it could not be better performed than by a Spanish *Sangrado*. How different some of the windings-up, the final reports, to the magnificent beginnings and grandiloquent prospectuses put forth as baits for John Bull, who hoped to be tossed at once, or elevated, from haberdashery to a throne, by being offered a "potentiality of getting rich beyond the dreams of avarice!" Thus, to clench assertion by example, the London directors of the Royal Valencia Company made known by an advertisement only last July, that

they merely required 240,000,000 reals to connect the seaport of Valencia – where there is none – to the capital Madrid, with 800,000 inhabitants, – there not being 200,000. One brief passage alone seemed ominous in the lucid array of prospective profit – "The line has not yet been minutely surveyed;" this might have suggested to the noble Marquis whose attractive name heads the provisional committee list, the difficulty of Sterne's traveller, of whom, when observing how much better things were managed on the Continent than in England, the question was asked, "Have you, sir, ever been there?"

## LONDON RAILROAD MEETINGS

A still wilder scheme was broached, to connect Aviles on the Atlantic with Madrid, the Asturian Alps and the Guadarrama mountains to the contrary notwithstanding. The originator of this ingenious idea was to receive 40,000*l.* for the cession of his plan to the company, and actually did receive 25,000*l.*, which, considering the difficulties, natural and otherwise, must be considered an inadequate remuneration. Although the original and captivating prospectus stated "*that the line had been surveyed, and presented no engineering difficulties*," it was subsequently thought prudent to obtain some notion of the actual localities, and Sir *Joshua* Walmsley was sent forth with competent assistance to spy out the land, which the Jewish practice of old was rather to do before than after serious

undertakings. A sad change soon came over the spirit of the London dream by the discovery that a country which looked level as Arrowsmith's map in the prospectus, presented such trifling obstacles to the rail as sundry leagues of mountain ridges, which range from 6000 to 9000 feet high, and are covered with snow for many months of the year. This was a damper. The report of the special meeting (see 'Morning Chronicle,' Dec. 18, 1845) should be printed in letters of gold, from the quantity of that article which it will preserve to our credulous countrymen. Then and there the chairman observed, with equal *naïveté* and pathos, "that had he known as much before as he did now, he would have been the last man to carry out a railway in Spain." This experience cost him, he observed, 5000*l.*, which is paying dear for a Spanish rail whistle. He might for five pounds have bought the works of Townshend and Captain Cook: our modesty prevents the naming another red book, in which these precise localities, these mighty Alps, are described by persons who had ridden, or rather soared, over them. At another meeting of another Spanish rail company, held at the London Tavern, October 20, 1846, another chairman announced "a fact of which he was not before aware, that it was impossible to surmount the Pyrenees." Meanwhile, the Madrid government had secured 30,000*l.* from them by way of *caution* money; but caution disappears from our capitalists, whenever excess of cash mounts from their pockets into their heads; loss of common sense and dollars is the natural result. But it is the fate of Spain and her things, to be judged of by those who have

never been there, and who feel no shame at the indecency of the nakedness of their geographical ignorance. When the blind lead the blind, beware of hillocks and ditches.

## POST-OFFICE

# CHAPTER VI

Post-Office in Spain – Travelling with post-horses – Riding post – Mails and Diligences, Galeras, Coches de Colleras, Drivers, and Manner of Driving, and Oaths.

A SYSTEM of post, both for the despatch of letters and the conveyance of couriers, was introduced into Spain under Philip and Juana, that is, towards the end of the reign of our Henry VII.; whereas it was scarcely organised in England before the government of Cromwell. Spain, which in these matters, as well as in many others, was once so much in advance, is now compelled to borrow her improvements from those nations of which she formerly was the instructress: among these may be reckoned all travelling in carriages, whether public or private.

The post-office for letters is arranged on the plan common to most countries on the Continent: the delivery is pretty regular, but seldom daily – twice or three times a-week. Small scruple is made by the authorities in opening private letters, whenever they suspect the character of the correspondence. It is as well, therefore, for the traveller to avoid expressing the whole of his opinions of the powers that be. The minds of men have been long troubled in Spain; civil war has rendered them very distrustful and guarded in their *written* correspondence – "*carta canta*," "a letter speaks."

There is the usual continental bother in obtaining post-horses, which results from their being a monopoly of government. There must be a passport, an official order, notice of departure, &c.; next ensue vexatious regulations in regard to the number of passengers, horses, luggage, style of carriage, and so forth. These, and other spokes put into the wheel, appear to have been invented by clerks who sit at home devising how to impede rather than facilitate posting at all.

## PUBLIC CONVEYANCES

Post-horses and mules are paid at the rate of seven reals each for each post. The Spanish postilions generally, and especially if well paid, drive at a tremendous pace, often amounting to a gallop; nor are they easily stopped, even if the traveller desires it – they seem only to be intent on arriving at their stages' end, in order to indulge in the great national joy of then doing nothing: to get there, they heed neither ruts nor ravines; and when once their cattle are started the inside passenger feels like a kettle tied to the tail of a mad dog, or a comet; the wild beasts think no more of him than if he were Mazeppa: thus money makes the mare and its driver to go, as surely in Spain as in all other countries.

Another mode of travelling is by riding post, accompanied by a mounted postilion, who is changed with the cattle at each relay. It is an expeditious but fatiguing plan; yet one which, like the Tartar courier of the East, has long prevailed in Spain. Thus

our Charles I. rode to Madrid under the name of John Smith, by which he was not likely to be identified. The delight of Philip II., who boasted that he governed the world from the Escorial, was to receive frequent and early intelligence; and this desire to hear something new is still characteristic of the Spanish government. The cabinet-couriers have the preference of horses at every relay. The particular distances they have to perform are all timed, and so many leagues are required to be done in a fixed time; and, in order to encourage despatch, for every hour gained on the allowed time, an additional sum was paid to them: hence the common expression "*ganando horas*" gaining hours – equivalent to our old "post haste – haste for your life."

## DILIGENCES

## EXPENSES ON THE ROAD

The usual mode of travelling for the affluent is in the public conveyances, which are the fashion from being novelties and only introduced under Ferdinand VII.; previously to their being allowed at all, serious objections were started, similar to those raised by his late Holiness to the introduction of railways into the papal states; it was said that these tramontane facilities would bring in foreigners, and with them philosophy, heresy, and

innovations, by which the wisdom of Spain's ancestors might be upset. These scruples were ingeniously got over by bribing the monarch with a large share of the profits. Now that the royal monopoly is broken down, many new and competing companies have sprung up; this mode of travelling is the cheapest and safest, nor is it thought at all beneath the dignity of "the best set," nay royalty itself goes by the coach. Thus the Infante Don Francisco de Paula constantly hires the whole of the diligence to convey himself and his family from Madrid to the sea-coast; and one reason gravely given for Don Enrique's not coming to marry the Queen, was that his Royal Highness could not get a place, as the dilly was booked full. The public carriages of Spain are quite as good as those of France, and the company who travel in them generally more respectable and better bred. This is partly accounted for by the expense: the fares are not very high, yet still form a serious item to the bulk of Spaniards; consequently those who travel in the public carriages in Spain are the class who would in other countries travel per post. It must, however, be admitted that all travelling in the public conveyances of the Continent necessarily implies great discomfort to those accustomed to their own carriages; and with every possible precaution the long journeys in Spain, of three to five hundred miles at a stretch, are such as few English ladies can undergo, and are, even with men, undertakings rather of necessity than of pleasure. The mail is organized on the plan of the French malle-poste, and offers, to those who can stand the bumping, shaking,

and churning of continued and rapid travelling without halting, a means of locomotion which leaves nothing to be desired. The diligences also are imitations of the lumbering French model. It will be in vain to expect in them the neatness, the well-appointed turn-out, the quiet, time-keeping, and infinite facilities of the English original. These matters when passed across the water are modified to the heroic Continental contempt for doing things in style; cheapness, which is their great principle, prefers rope-traces to those of leather, and a carter to a regular coachman; the usual foreign drags also exist, which render their slow coaches and bureaucratic absurdities so hateful to free Britons; but when one is once booked and handed over to the conductor, you arrive in due time at the journey's end. The "guards" are realities; they consist of stout, armed, most picturesque, robber-like men and no mistake, since many, before they were pardoned and pensioned, have frequently taken a purse on the Queen's highway; for the foreground of your first sketch, they are splendid fellows, and worth a score of marshals. They are provided with a complete arsenal of swords and blunderbusses, so that the cumbrous machine rolling over the sea of plains looks like a man-of-war, and has been compared to a marching citadel. Again in suspicious localities a mounted escort of equally suspicious look gallops alongside, nor is the primitive practice of black mail altogether neglected: the consequence of these admirable precautions is, that the diligences are seldom or never robbed; the thing, however, is possible.

The whole of this garrisoned Noah's ark is placed under the command of the *Mayoral* or conductor, who like all Spanish men in authority is a despot, and yet, like them, is open to the conciliatory influences of a bribe. He regulates the hours of toil and sleep, which latter – blessings, says Sancho, on the man who invented it! – is uncertain, and depends on the early or late arrival of the diligence and the state of the roads, for all that is lost of the fixed time on the road is made up for by curtailing the time allowed for repose. One of the many good effects of setting up diligences is the bettering the inns on the road; and it is a safe and general rule to travellers in Spain, whatever be their vehicle, always to inquire in every town which is the *posada* that the diligence stops at. Persons were dispatched from Madrid to the different stations on the great lines, to fit up houses, bed-rooms, and kitchens, and provide everything for table, service; cooks were sent round to teach the innkeepers to set out and prepare a proper dinner and supper. Thus, in villages in which a few years before the use of a fork was scarcely known, a table was laid out, clean, well served, and abundant. The example set by the diligence inns has produced a beneficial effect, since they offer a model, create competition, and suggest the existence of many comforts, which were hitherto unknown among Spaniards, whose abnegation of material enjoyments at home, and praiseworthy endurance of privations of all kinds on journeys, are quite Oriental.

## BEDS FOR TRAVELLERS

In some of the new companies every expense is calculated in the fare, to wit, journey, postilions, inns, &c., which is very convenient to the stranger, and prevents the loss of much money and temper. A chapter on the dilly is as much a standing dish in every Peninsular tour as a bullfight or a bandit adventure, for which there is a continual demand in the home-market; and no doubt in the long distances of Spain, where men and women are boxed up for three or four mortal days together (the nights not being omitted), the plot thickens, and opportunity is afforded to appreciate costume and character; the farce or tragedy may be spun out into as many acts as the journey takes days. In general the order of the course is as follows: the breakfast consists at early dawn of a cup of good stiff chocolate, which being the favourite drink of the church and allowable even on fast days, is as nutritious as delicious. It is accompanied by a bit of roasted or fried bread, and is followed by a glass of cold water, to drink which is an axiom with all wise men who respect the efficient condition of their livers. After rumbling on, over a given number of leagues, when the passengers get well shaken together and hungry, a regular knife and fork breakfast is provided that closely resembles the dinner or supper which is served up later in the evening; the table is plentiful, and the cookery to those who like oil and garlic excellent. Those who do not, can always fall back

on the bread and eggs, which are capital; the wine is occasionally like purple blacking, and sometimes serves also as vinegar for the salad, as the oil is said to be used indifferently for lamps or stews; a bad dinner, especially if the bill be long, and the wine sour, does not sweeten the passengers' tempers; they become quarrelsome, and if they have the good luck, a little robber skirmish gives vent to ill-humour.

## THE GALERA

At nightfall after supper, a few hours are allowed on your part to steal whatever rest the *mayoral* and certain *voltigeurs*, creeping and winged, will permit; the beds are plain and clean; sometimes the mattresses may be compared to sacks of walnuts, but there is no pillow so soft as fatigue; the beds are generally arranged in twos, threes, and fours, according to the size of the room. The traveller should immediately on arriving secure his, and see that it is comfortable, for those who neglect to get a good one must sleep in a bad. Generally speaking, by a little management, he may get a room to himself, or at least select his companions. There is, moreover, a real civility and politeness shown by all classes of Spaniards, on all occasions, towards strangers and ladies; and that even failing, a small tip, "*una gratificacioncita*," given beforehand to the maid, or the waiter, seldom fails to smooth all difficulties. On these, as on all occasions in Spain, most things may be obtained by good humour, a smile, a joke, a proverb, a cigar, or

a bribe, which, though last, is by no means the least resource, since it will be found to mollify the hardest heart and smooth the greatest difficulties, after civil speeches had been tried in vain, for *Dadivas quebrantan peñas, y entra sin barrenas*, gifts break rocks, and penetrate without gimlets; again, *Mas ablanda dinero que palabras de Caballero*, cash softens more than a gentleman's palaver. The mode of driving in Spain, which is so unlike our way of handling the ribbons, will be described presently.

Means of conveyance for those who cannot afford the diligence are provided by vehicles of more genuine Spanish nature and discomfort; they may be compared to the neat accommodation for man and beast which is doled out to third-class passengers by our monopolist railway kings, who have usurped her Majesty's highway, and fleece her lieges by virtue of act of Parliament.

First and foremost comes the *galera*, which fully justifies its name; and even those who have no value for their time or bones will, after a short trial of the rack and dislocation, exclaim, – "*que diable allais-je faire dans cette galère?*" These machines travel periodically from town to town, and form the chief public and carrier communication between most provincial cities; they are not much changed from that classical cart, the *rheda*, into which, as we read in Juvenal, the whole family of Fabricius was conveyed. In Spain these primitive locomotives have stood still in the general advance of this age of progress, and carry us back to our James I., and Fynes Moryson's accounts of "carryers who

have long covered waggons, in which they carry passengers from city to city; but this kind of journeying is so tedious, by reason they must take waggons very early and come very late to their innes, none but women and people of inferior condition used to travel in this sort." So it is now in Spain.

## CARRIAGES AND CARTS

This *galera* is a long cart without springs; the sides are lined with matting, while beneath hangs a loose open net, as under the calesinas of Naples, in which lies and barks a horrid dog, who keeps a Cerberus watch over iron pots and sieves, and such like gipsey utensils, and who is never to be conciliated. These *galeras* are of all sizes; but if a *galera* should be a larger sort of vehicle than is wanted, then a "*tartana*" a sort of covered tilted cart, which is very common in Valencia, and which is so called from a small Mediterranean craft of the same name, will be found convenient.

The packing and departure of the *galera*, when hired by a family who remove their goods, is a thing of Spain; the heavy luggage is stowed in first, and beds and mattresses spread on the top, on which the family repose in admired disorder. The *galera* is much used by the "poor students" of Spain, a class unique of its kind, and full of rags and impudence; their adventures have the credit of being rich and picturesque, and recall some of the accounts of "waggon incidents" in 'Roderick Random,' and

Smollett's novels.

Civilization, as connected with the wheel, is still at a low ebb in Spain, notwithstanding the numerous political revolutions. Except in a few great towns, the quiz vehicles remind us of those caricatures at which one laughed so heartily in Paris in 1814; and in Madrid, even down to Ferdinand VII.'s decease, the *Prado*– its rotten row – was filled with antediluvian carriages – grotesque coachmen and footmen to match, which with us would be put into the British Museum; they are now, alas for painters and authors! worn out, and replaced by poor French imitations of good English originals.

## THE COCHE DE COLLERAS

As the genuine older Spanish ones were built in remote ages, and before the invention of folding steps, the ascent and descent were facilitated by a three-legged footstool, which dangled, strapped up near the door, as appears in the hieroglyphics of Egypt 4000 years ago; a pair of long-eared fat mules, with hides and tails fantastically cut, was driven by a superannuated postilion in formidable jackboots, and not less formidable cocked hat of oil-cloth. In these, how often have we seen Spanish grandees with pedigrees as old-fashioned, gravely taking the air and dust! These slow coaches of old Spain have been rapidly sketched by the clever young American; such are the ups and downs of nations and vehicles. Spain for having discovered

America has in return become her butt; she cannot go a-head; so the great dust of Alexander may stop a bung-hole, and we too join in the laugh and forget that our ancestors – see Beaumont and Fletcher's 'Maid of the Inn' – talked of "*hurrying* on featherbeds that move upon four-wheel Spanish *caroches*."

While on these wheel subjects it may be observed that the carts and other machines of Spanish rural locomotion and husbandry have not escaped better; when not Oriental they are Roman; rude in form and material, they are always odd, picturesque, and inconvenient. The peasant, for the most part, scratches the earth with a plough modelled after that invented by Triptolemus, beats out his corn as described by Homer, and carries his harvest home in strict obedience to the rules in the Georgics. The iron work is iniquitous, but both sides of the Pyrenees are centuries behind England; there, absurd tariffs prohibit the importation of our cheap and good work in order to encourage their own bad and dear wares – thus poverty and ignorance are perpetuated.

The carts in the north-west provinces are the unchanged *plaustra*, with solid wheels, the Roman *tympana* which consist of mere circles of wood, without spokes or axles, much like mill-stones or Parmesan cheeses, and precisely such as the old Egyptians used, as is seen in hieroglyphics, and no doubt much resembling those sent by Joseph for his father, which are still used by the Affghans and other unadvanced coachmakers. The whole wheel turns round together with a piteous creaking; the drivers, whose leathern ears are as blunt as their edgeless teeth,

delight in this excruciating *Chirrio*, Arabicè *charrar*, to make a *noise*, which they call music, and delight in, because it is cheap and plays to them of itself; they, moreover, think it frightens wolves, bears, and the devil himself, as Don Quixote says, which it well may, for the wheel of Ixion, although damned in hell, never whined more piteously. The doleful sounds, however, serve like our waggoners' lively bells, as warnings to other drivers, who, in narrow paths and gorges of rocks, where two carriages cannot pass, have this notice given them, and draw aside until the coast is clear.

We have reserved some details and the mode of driving for the *coche de colleras*, the *caroche* of horse-collars, which is the real coach of Spain, and in which we have made many a pleasant trip; it too is doomed to be scheduled away, for Spaniards are descending from these coaches and six to a chariot and pair, and by degrees beautifully less, to a fly.

## THE COCHE DE COLLERAS

Mails and diligences, we have said, are only established on the principal high roads connected with Madrid: there are but few local coaches which run from one provincial town to another, where the necessity of frequent and certain intercommunication is little called for. In the other provinces, where these modern conveniences have not been introduced, the earlier mode of travelling is the only resource left to families of children,

women, and invalids, who are unable to perform the journey on horseback. This is the *festina lentè*, or voiturier system; and from its long continuance in Italy and Spain, in spite of all the improvements adopted in other countries, it would appear to have something congenial and peculiarly fitted to the habits and wants of those cognate nations of the south, who have a Gotho-Oriental dislike to be hurried —*no corre priesa*, there is plenty of time. *Sie haben zeit genug.*

## THE MAYORAL

The Spanish vetturino, or "*Calesero*," is to be found, as in Italy, standing for hire in particular and well-known places in every principal town. There is not much necessity for hunting for *him*; he has the Italian instinctive perception of a stranger and traveller, and the same importunity in volunteering himself, his cattle, and carriage, for any part of Spain. The man, however, and his equipage are peculiarly Spanish; his carriage and his team have undergone little change during the last two centuries, and are the representatives of the former ones of Europe; they resemble those vehicles once used in England, which may still be seen in the old prints of country-houses by Kip; or, as regards France, in the pictures of Louis XIV.'s journeys and campaigns by Vandermeulen. They are the remnant of the once universal "coach and six," in which according to Pope, who was not infallible, British fair were to delight for ever. The "*coche de*

*colleras*" is a huge cumbrous machine, built after the fashion of a reduced lord mayor's coach, or some of the equipages of the old cardinals at Rome. It is ornamented with rude sculpture, gilding, and painting of glaring colour, but the modern pea-jacket and round hat spoil the picture which requires passengers dressed in brocade and full-bottomed wigs; the fore-wheels are very low, the hind ones very high, and both remarkably narrow in the tire; remember when they stick in the mud, and the drivers call upon Santiago, to push the vehicle out *backwards*, as the more you draw it forwards the deeper you get into the mire. The pole sticks out like the bowsprit of a ship, and contains as much wood and iron work as would go to a small waggon. The interior is lined with gay silk and gaudy plush, adorned with lace and embroidery, with doors that open indifferently and windows that do not shut well; latterly the general poverty and *prose* of transpyrenean civilization has effaced much of these ornate nationalities, both in coach and drivers; better roads and lighter vehicles require fewer horses, which were absolutely necessary formerly to drag the heavy concern through heavier ways.

# THE ZAGAL

## DRIVING IN SPAIN

The luggage is piled up behind, or stowed away in a front boot. The management of driving this vehicle is conducted by two persons. The master is called the "*mayoral*;" his helper or cad the "*mozo*," or, more properly, "*el zagal*," from the Arabic, "a strong active youth." The costume is peculiar, and is based on that of Andalucia, which sets the fashion all over the Peninsula, in all matters regarding bull-fighting, horse-dealing, robbing, smuggling, and so forth. He wears on his head a gay-coloured silk handkerchief, tied in such a manner that the tails hang down behind; over this remnant of the Moorish turban he places a high-peaked sugarloaf-shaped hat with broad brims; his jaunty jacket is made either of black sheepskin, studded with silver tags and filigree buttons, or of brown cloth, with the back, arms, and particularly the elbows, welted and tricked out with flowers and vases, cut in patches of different-coloured cloth and much embroidered. When the jacket is not worn, it is usually hung over the left shoulder, after the hussar fashion. The waistcoat is made of rich fancy silk; the breeches of blue or green velvet plush, ornamented with stripes and filigree buttons, and tied at the

knee with silken cords and tassels; the neck is left open, and the shirt collar turned down, and a gaudy neck-handkerchief is worn, oftener passed through a ring than tied in a knot; his waist is girt with a red sash, or with one of a bright yellow. This "*faja*,"[3] a *sine quâ non*, is the old Roman zona; it serves also for a purse, "girds the loins," and keeps up a warmth over the abdomen, which is highly beneficial in hot climates, and wards off any tendency to irritable colic; in the sash is stuck the "*navaja*," the knife, which is part and parcel of a Spaniard, and behind the "*zagal*" usually places his stick. The richly embroidered gaiters are left open at the outside to show a handsome stocking; the shoes are yellow, like those of our cricketers, and are generally made of untanned calfskin, which being the colour of dust require no cleaning. The *caleseros* on the eastern coast wear the Valencian stocking, which has no feet to it – being open at bottom, it is likened by wags to a Spaniard's purse; instead of top boots they wear the ancient Roman sandals, made of the *esparto* rush, with hempen soles, which are called "*alpargatas*," Arabicè *Alpalgah*. The "*zagal*" follows the fashion in dress of the "*mayoral*," as nearly as his means will permit him. He is the servant of all-work, and must be ready on every occasion; nor can any one who has ever seen the hard and incessant toil which these men

[3] Faja; the Hhezum of Cairo. Atrides tightens his sash when preparing for action – Iliad xi. 15. The Roman soldiers kept their money in it. Ibit qui *zonam* perdidit. – Hor. ii. Ep. 2. 40. The Jews used it for the same purpose – Matthew x. 9; Mark vi. 8. It is loosened at night. "None shall slumber or sleep, neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed." – Isaiah v. 27.

undergo, justly accuse them of being indolent – a reproach which has been cast somewhat indiscriminately on all the lower classes of Spain; he runs by the side of the carriage, picks up stones to pelt the mules, ties and unties knots, and pours forth a volley of blows and oaths from the moment of starting to that of arrival. He sometimes is indulged with a ride by the side of the mayoral on the box, when he always uses the tail of the hind mule to pull himself up into his seat. The harnessing the six animals is a difficult operation; first the tackle of ropes is laid out on the ground, then each beast is brought into his portion of the rigging. The start is always an important ceremony, and, as our royal mail used to do in the country, brings out all the idlers in the vicinity. When the team is harnessed, the mayoral gets all his skeins of ropes into his hand, the "*zagal*" his sash full of stones, the helpers at the venta their sticks; at a given signal all fire a volley of oaths and blows at the team, which, once in motion, away it goes, pitching over ruts deep as routine prejudices, with its pole dipping and rising like a ship in a rolling sea, and continues at a brisk pace, performing from twenty-five to thirty miles a-day. The hours of starting are early, in order to avoid the mid-day heat; in these matters the Spanish customs are pretty much the same with the Italian; the *calesero* is always the best judge of the hours of departure and these minor details, which vary according to circumstances.

Whenever a particularly bad bit of road occurs, notice is given to the team by calling over their names, and by crying

out "*arré, arré*," gee-up, which is varied with "*firmé, firmé*," steady, boy, steady! The names of the animals are always fine-sounding and polysyllabic; the accent is laid on the last syllable, which is always dwelt on and lengthened out with a particular emphasis —*Căpĭtănā-ā—Bändŏlĕrā-ā—Gĕnĕrălā-ā—Vălĕrŏsā-ā*. All this vocal driving is performed at the top of the voice, and, indeed, next to scaring away crows in a field, must be considered the best possible practice for the lungs. The team often exceeds six in number, and never is less; the proportion of females predominates: there is generally one male mule making the seventh, who is called "*el macho*," the male par excellence, like the Grand Turk, or a substantive in a speech in Cortes, which seldom has less than half a dozen epithets: he invariably comes in for the largest share of abuse and ill usage, which, indeed, he deserves the most, as the male mule is infinitely more stubborn and viciously inclined than the female. Sometimes there is a horse of the Rosinante breed; he is called "*el cavallo*," or rather, as it is pronounced, "*el căvăl yō-ō*." The horse is always the best used of the team; to be a rider, "*caballero*," is the Spaniard's synonym for gentleman; and it is their correct mode of addressing each other, and is banded gravely among the lower orders, who never have crossed any quadruped save a mule or a jackass.

## SWEARING

The driving a *coche de colleras* is quite a science of itself,

and is observed in conducting *diligences*; it amuses the Spanish "*majo*" or fancy-man as much as coach-driving does the fancy-man of England; the great art lies not in handling the ribbons, but in the proper modulation of the voice, since the cattle are always addressed individually by their names; the first syllables are pronounced very rapidly; the "*macho*," the male mule, who is the most abused, is the only one who is not addressed by any names beyond that of his sex: the word is repeated with a voluble iteration; in order to make the two syllables longer, they are strung together thus, *măchŏ – măchŏ – măchŏ – măcho-ŏ*: they begin in semiquavers, flowing on crescendo to a semibreve or breve, so the four words are compounded into one polysyllable. The horse, *caballo*, is simply called so; he has no particular name of his own, which the female mules are never without, and which they perfectly know – indeed, the owners will say that they understand them, and all bad language, as well as Christian women, "*como Cristianas*;" and, to do the beasts justice, they seem more shocked and discomfited thereby than the bipeds who profess the same creed. If the animal called to does not answer by pricking up her ears, or by quickening her pace, the threat of "*lă vărā*," the stick, is added – the last argument of Spanish drivers, men in office, and schoolmasters, with whom there is no sort of reason equal to that of the bastinado, "*no hay tal razon, como la del baston*." It operates on the timorous more than "unadorned eloquence." The Moors thought so highly of the bastinado, that they held the stick to be a special gift from Allah

to the faithful. It holds good, *à priori* and *à posteriori*, to mule and boy, "*al hijo y mulo, para el culo*;" and if the "*macho*" be in fault, and he is generally punished to encourage the others, some abuse is added to blows, such as "*que pĕrrō-ō*," "what a dog!" or some unhandsome allusion to his mother, which is followed by throwing a stone at the leaders, for no whip could reach them from the coach-box. When any particular mule's name is called, if her companion be the next one to be abused, she is seldom addressed by her name, but is spoken to as "*a la ŏtrā-ā*," "*aquella ŏtrā-ā*," "Now for that other one," which from long association is expected and acknowledged. The team obeys the voice and is in admirable command. Few things are more entertaining than driving them, especially over bad roads; but it requires much practice in Spanish speaking and swearing.

## SPANISH OATHS

## HINTS FOR HIRING

Among the many commandments that are always broken in Spain, that of "swear not at all" is not the least. "Our army swore lustily in Flanders," said Uncle Toby. But few nations can surpass the Spaniards in the language of vituperation: it is limited only by the extent of their anatomical, geographical, astronomical,

and religious knowledge; it is so plentifully bestowed on their animals – "un muletier à ce jeu vaut trois rois" – that oaths and imprecations seem to be considered as the only language the mute creation can comprehend; and as actions are generally suited to the words, the combination is remarkably effective. As much of the traveller's time on the road must be passed among beasts and muleteers, who are not unlike them, some knowledge of their sayings and doings is of great use: to be able to talk to them in their own lingo, to take an interest in them and in their animals, never fails to please; "*Por vida del demonio, mas sabe Usia que nosotros*;" "by the life of the devil, your honour knows more than we," is a common form of compliment. When once equality is established, the master mind soon becomes the real master of the rest. The great oath of Spain, which ought never to be written or pronounced, practically forms the foundation of the language of the lower orders; it is a most ancient remnant of the phallic abjuration of the evil eye, the dreaded fascination which still perplexes the minds of Orientals, and is not banished from Spanish and Neapolitan superstitions.[4]

[4] The dread of the fascination of the evil eye, from which Solomon was not exempt (Proverbs xxiii. 6), prevails all over the East; it has not been extirpated from Spain or from Naples, which so long belonged to Spain. The lower classes in the Peninsula hang round the necks of their children and cattle a horn tipped with silver; this is sold as an amulet in the silver-smiths' shops; the cord by which it is attached *ought* to be braided from a black mare's tail. The Spanish gipsies, of whom Borrow has given us so complete an account, thrive by disarming the *mal de ojo*, "*querelar nasula*," as they term it. The dread of the "*Ain ara*" exists among all classes of the Moors. The better classes of Spaniards make a joke of it; and often, when you remark that a person has

The word terminates in *ajo*, on which great stress is laid: the *j* is pronounced with a most Arabic, guttural aspiration. The word *ajo* means also garlic, which is quite as often in Spanish mouths, and is exactly what Hotspur liked, a "mouth-filling oath," energetic and Michael Angelesque. The pun has been extended to onions: thus, "*ajos y cebollas*" means oaths and imprecations. The sting of the oath is in the "*ajo*;" all women and quiet men, who do not wish to be particularly objurgatory, but merely to enforce and give a little additional vigour, un soupçon d'ail, or a shotting to their discourse, drop the offensive "*ajo*," and say "*car*," "*carai*," "*caramba*." The Spanish oath is used as a verb, as a substantive, as an adjective, just as it suits the grammar or the wrath of the utterer. It is equivalent also to a certain place and the person who lives there. "*Vaya Usted al C – ajo*" is the worst form of the angry "*Vaya Usted al demonio*," or "*á los infiernos*," and is a whimsical mixture of courtesy and transportation. "Your Grace may go to the devil, or to the infernal regions!"

Thus these imprecatory vegetables retain in Spain their old Egyptian flavour and mystical charm; as on the Nile, according to Pliny, onions and garlic were worshipped as adjuratory divinities. The Spaniards have also added most of the gloomy northern Gothic oaths, which are imprecatory, to the Oriental, which are grossly sensual. Enough of this. The traveller who has much

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put on or wears something strange about him, the answer is, "*Es para que no me hagan mal de ojo*." Naples is the head-quarters for charms and coral amulets: all the learning has been collected by the Canon Jorio and the Marques Arditi.

to do with Spanish mules and asses, biped or quadruped, will need no hand-book to teach him the sixty-five or more "*serments espaignols*" on which Mons. de Brantome wrote a treatise. More becoming will it be to the English gentleman to swear not at all; a reasonable indulgence in *Caramba* is all that can be permitted; the custom is more honoured in the breach than in the observance, and bad luck seldom deserts the house of the imprecator. "*En la casa del que jura, no falta desaventura.*"

## HINTS FOR HIRING

Previously to hiring one of these "coaches of collars," which is rather an expensive amusement, every possible precaution should be taken in clearly and minutely specifying everything to be done, and the price; the Spanish "*caleseros*" rival their Italian colleagues in that untruth, roguery, and dishonesty, which seem everywhere to combine readily with jockeyship, and distinguishes those who handle the whip, "do jobbings," and conduct mortals by horses; the fee to be given to the drivers should never be included in the bargain, as the keeping this important item open and dependent on the good behaviour of the future recipients offers a sure check over master and man, and other road-classes. In justice, however, to this class of Spaniards, it may be said that on the whole they are civil, good-humoured, and hard-working, and, from not having been accustomed to either the screw bargaining or alternate extravagance of the

English travellers in Italy, are as tolerably fair in their transactions as can be expected from human nature brought in constant contact with four-legged and four-wheeled temptations. They offer to the artist an endless subject of the picturesque; everything connected with them is full of form, colour, and originality. They can do nothing, whether sitting, driving, sleeping, or eating, that does not make a picture; the same may be said of their animals and their habits and harness; those who draw will never find the midday halt long enough for the infinite variety of subject and scenery to which their travelling equipage and attendants form the most peculiar and appropriate foreground: while our modern poetasters will consider them quite as worthy of being sung in immortal verse as the Cambridge carrier Hobson, who was Milton's choice.

## THE ANDALUCIAN HORSE

# CHAPTER VII

Spanish Horses – Mules – Asses – Muleteers – Maragatos.

WE now proceed to Spanish quadrupeds, having placed the wheel-carriages before the horses. That of Andalucia takes precedence of all; he fetches the highest price, and the Spaniards in general value no other breed; they consider his configuration and qualities as perfect, and in some respects they are right, for no horse is more elegant or more easy in his motions, none are more gentle or docile, none are more quick in acquiring showy accomplishments, or in performing feats of Astleyan agility; he has very little in common with the English blood-horse; his mane is soft and silky, and is frequently plaited with gay ribbons; his tail is of great length, and left in all the proportions of nature, not cropped and docked, by which Voltaire was so much offended: —

"Fiers et bizarres Anglais, qui des mêmes ciseaux
Coupez la tête aux rois, et la queue aux chevaux."

It often trails to the very ground, while the animal has perfect command over it, lashing it on every side as a gentleman switches his cane; therefore, when on a journey, it is usual to double and tie it up, after the fashion of the ancient pig-tails of our sailors. The Andalucian horse is round in his quarters, though inclined to be small in the barrel; he is broad-chested, and always carries his head high, especially when going a good pace; his length of leg adds to his height, which sometimes reaches to sixteen hands; he never, however, stretches out with the long graceful sweep of the English thorough-bred; his action is apt to be loose and shambling, and he is given to *dishing* with the feet. The pace is, notwithstanding, perfectly delightful. From being very long in the pastern, the motion is broken as it were by the springs of a carriage; their pace is the peculiar "*paso Castellano*," which is something more than a walk, and less than a trot, and it is truly sedate and sedan-chair-like, and suits a grave Don, who is given, like a Turk, to tobacco and contemplation. Those Andalucian horses which fall when young into the hands of the officers at Gibraltar acquire a very different action, and lay themselves better down to their work, and gain much more in speed from the English system of training than they would have done had they been managed by Spaniards. Taught or untaught, this *pace* is most gentlemanlike, and well did Beaumont and Fletcher and

as has been said, is the only attitude in which the kings of the Spains, true Φιλιπποι, ought ever to be painted, witching the world with noble horsemanship.

> "Think it noble, as Spaniards do in riding,
> In managing a great horse, which is princely;"

Many other provinces possess breeds which are more useful, though far less showy, than the Andalucian. The horse of Castile is a strong, hardy animal, and the best which Spain produces for mounting heavy cavalry. The ponies of Gallicia, although ugly and uncouth, are admirably suited to the wild hilly country and laborious population; they require very little care or grooming, and are satisfied with coarse food and Indian corn. The horses of Navarre, once so celebrated, are still esteemed for their hardy strength; they have, from neglect, degenerated into ponies, which, however, are beautiful in form, hardy, docile, sure-footed, and excellent trotters. In most of the large towns of Spain there is a sort of market, where horses are publicly sold; but Ronda fair, in May, is the great Howden and Horncastle of the four provinces of Seville, Cordova, Jaen, and Granada, and the resort of all the picturesque-looking rogues of the south. The reader of Don Quixote need not be told that the race of Gines Passamonte is not extinct; the Spanish *Chalanes*, or horse-dealers, have considerable talents; but the cleverest is but a mere child when compared to the perfection of rascality to which a real English

professor has attained in the mysteries of lying, chaunting, and making up a horse.

## MULES

The breeding of horses was carefully attended to by the Spanish government previously to the invasion of the French, by whom the entire horses and brood-mares were either killed or stolen, and the buildings and stables burnt.

The saddles used commonly in Spain are Moorish; they are made with high peak and croup behind; the stirrup-irons are large triangularly-shaped boxes. The food is equally Oriental, and consists of "barley and straw," as mentioned in the Bible. We well remember the horror of our Andalucian groom, on our first reaching Gallicia, when he rushed in, exclaiming that the beasts would perish, as nothing was to be had there but oats and hay. After some difficulty he was persuaded to see if they would eat it, which to his surprise they actually did; such, however, is habit, that they soon fell out of condition, and did not recover until the damp mountains were quitted for the arid plains of Castile.

## ASSES

Spaniards in general prefer mules and asses to the horse, which is more delicate, requires greater attention, and is less sure-

footed over broken and precipitous ground. The mule performs in Spain the functions of the camel in the East, and has something in his morale (besides his physical suitableness to the country) which is congenial to the character of his masters; he has the same self-willed obstinacy, the same resignation under burdens, the same singular capability of endurance of labour, fatigue, and privation. The mule has always been much used in Spain, and the demand for them very great; yet, from some mistaken crotchet of Spanish political economy (which is very Spanish), the breeding of the mule has long been attempted to be prevented, in order to encourage that of the horse. One of the reasons alleged was, that the mule was a non-reproductive animal; an argument which might or ought to apply equally to the monk; a breed for which Spain could have shown for the first prize, both as to number and size, against any other country in all Christendom. This attempt to force the production of an animal far less suited to the wants and habits of the people has failed, as might be expected. The difficulties thrown in the way have only tended to raise the prices of mules, which are, and always were, very dear; a good mule will fetch from 25*l.* to 50*l.*, while a horse of relative goodness may be purchased for from 20*l.* to 40*l.* Mules were always very dear; thus Martial, like a true Andalucian Spaniard, *talks* of one which cost more than a house. The most esteemed are those bred from the mare and the ass, or *"garañon"*[5] some of which are of

[5] The *garañon* is also called "*burro padre*" ass father, not "*padre burro*." "*Padre*," the prefix of paternity, is the common title given in Spain to the clergy and the monks.

extraordinary size; and one which Don Carlos had in his stud-house at Aranjuez in 1832 exceeded fifteen hands in height. This colossal ass and a Spanish infante were worthy of each other.

The mules in Spain, as in the East, have their coats closely shorn or clipped; part of the hair is usually left on in stripes like the zebra, or cut into fanciful patterns, like the tattooings of a New Zealand chief. This process of shearing is found to keep the beast cooler and freer from cutaneous disorders. The operation is performed in the southern provinces by gipsies, who are the same tinkers, horse-dealers, and vagrants in Spain as elsewhere. Their clipping recalls the "mulo curto," on which Horace could amble even to Brundusium. The operators rival in talent those worthy Frenchmen who cut the hair of poodles on the Pont Neuf, in the heart and brain of European civilization. Their Spanish colleagues may be known by the shears, formidable and classical-shaped as those of Lachesis and her sisters, which they carry in their sashes. They are very particular in clipping the heels and pasterns, which they say ought to be as free from superfluous hair as the palm of a lady's hand.

Spanish asses have been immortalised by Cervantes; they are endeared to us by Sancho's love and talent of imitation; he brayed so well, be it remembered, that all the long-eared chorus joined a performer who, in his own modest phrase, only wanted a tail to

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"Father jackass" might in many instances, when applied to the latter, be too morally and physically appropriate, to be consistent with the respect due to the celibate cowl and cassock.

be a perfect donkey. Spanish mayors, according to Don Quixote, have a natural talent for this braying; but, save and except in the west of England, their right worshipfuls may be matched elsewhere.

## ASSES OF LA MANCHA

## THE MULETEER

The humble ass, "*burro*," "*borrico*," is the rule, the as in præsenti, and part and parcel of every Spanish scene: he forms the appropriate foreground in streets or roads. Wherever two or three Spaniards are collected together in market, *junta*, or "congregation," there is quite sure to be an ass among them; he is the hardworked companion of the lower orders, to whom to work is the greatest misfortune; sufferance is indeed the common virtue of both tribes. They may, perhaps, both wince a little when a new burden or a new tax is laid on them by Señor Mon, but they soon, when they see that there is no remedy, bear on and endure: from this fellow-feeling, master and animal cherish each other at heart, though, from the blows and imprecations bestowed openly, the former may be thought by hasty observers to be ashamed of confessing these predilections in public. Some under-current, no doubt, remains of the ancient prejudices of chivalry; but

Cervantes, who thoroughly understood human nature in general, and Spanish nature in particular, has most justly dwelt on the dear love which Sancho Panza felt for his "*Rucio*," and marked the reciprocity of the brute, affectionate as intelligent. In fact, in the *Sagra* district, near Toledo, he is called *El vecino*, one of the householders; and none can look a Spanish ass in the face without remarking a peculiar expression, which indicates that the hairy fool considers himself, like the pig in a cabin of the "first gem of the sea," to be one of the family, *de la familia*, or *de nosotros*. La Mancha is the paradise of mules and asses; many a Sancho at this moment is there fondling and embracing his ass, his "*chato chatito*," "*romo*," or other complimentary variations of *Snub*, with which, when not abusing him, he delights to nickname his helpmate. In Spain, as Sappho says, Love is γλυκυπικρον, an alternation of the agro-dolce; nor is there any Prevention of Cruelty Society towards animals; every Spaniard has the same right in law and equity to kick and beat his own ass to his own liking, as a philanthropical Yankee has to wallop his own niggar; no one ever thinks of interposing on these occasions, any more than they would in a quarrel between a man and his wife. The *words* are, at all events, on one side. It is, however, recorded *in piam memoriam*, of certain Roman Catholic asses of Spain, that they tried to throw off one Tomas Trebiño and some other heretics, when on the way to be burnt, being horror-struck at bearing such monsters. Every Spanish peasant is heart-broken when injury is done to his ass, as well he may be, for

it is the means by which he lives; nor has he much chance, if he loses him, of finding a crown when hunting for him, as was once done, or even a government like Sancho. Sterne would have done better to have laid the venue of his sentimentalities over a dead ass in Spain, rather than in France, where the quadruped species is much rarer. In Spain, where small carts and wheel-barrows are almost unknown, and the drawing them is considered as beneath the dignity of the Spanish man, the substitute, an ass, is in constant employ; sometimes it is laden with sacks of corn, with wine-skins, with water-jars, with dung, or with dead robbers, slung like sacks over the back, their arms and legs tied under the animal's belly. Asses' milk, "*leche de burra*," is in much request during the spring season. The brown sex drink it in order to fine their complexions and cool their blood, "*refrescar la sangre*;" the clergy and men in office, "*los empleados*," to whom it is mother's milk, swallow it in order that it may give tone to their gastric juices. Riding on assback was accounted a disgrace and a degradation to the Gothic hidalgo, and the Spaniards, in the sixteenth century, mounted unrepining cuckolds, "*los cornudos pacientes*," on asses. Now-a-days, in spite of all these unpleasant associations, the grandees and their wives, and even grave ambassadors from foreign parts, during the royal residence at Aranjuez, much delight in elevating themselves on this beast of ill omen, and "*borricadas*" or donkey parties are all the fashion.

# THE MULETEER

## MARAGATOS

The muleteer of Spain is justly renowned; his generic term is *arriero*, a gee-uper, for his *arre arre* is pure Arabic, as indeed are almost all the terms connected with his craft, as the Moriscoes were long the great carriers of Spain. To travel with the muleteer, when the party is small or a person is alone, is both cheap and safe; indeed, many of the most picturesque portions of Spain, Ronda and Granada for instance, can scarcely be reached except by walking or riding. These men, who are constantly on the road, and going backwards and forwards, are the best persons to consult for details; their animals are generally to be hired, but a muleteer's stud is not pleasant to ride, since their beasts always travel in single files. The leading animal is furnished with a copper bell with a wooden clapper, to give notice of their march, which is shaped like an ice-mould, sometimes two feet long, and hangs from the neck, being contrived, as it were, on purpose to knock the animal's knees as much as possible, and to emit the greatest quantity of the most melancholy sounds, which, according to the pious origin of all bells, were meant to scare away the Evil One. The bearer of all this tintinnabular clatter is

chosen from its superior docility and knack in picking out a way. The others follow their leader, and the noise he makes when they cannot see him. They are heavily but scientifically laden. The cargo of each is divided into three portions; one is tied on each side, and the other placed between. If the cargo be not nicely balanced, the muleteer either unloads or adds a few stones to the lighter portion – the additional weight being compensated by the greater comfort with which a well-poised burden is carried. These "sumpter" mules are gaily decorated with trappings full of colour and tags. The head-gear is composed of different coloured worsteds, to which a multitude of small bells are affixed; hence the saying, "*muger de mucha campanilla*," a woman of many bells, of much show, much noise, or pretension. The muleteer either walks by the side of his animal or sits aloft on the cargo, with his feet dangling on the neck, a seat which is by no means so uncomfortable as it would appear. A rude gun, "but 'twill serve," and is loaded with slugs, hangs always in readiness by his side, and often with it a guitar; these emblems of life and death paint the unchanged reckless condition of Iberia, where extremes have ever met, where a man still goes out of the world like a swan, with a song. Thus accoutred, as Byron says, with "all that gave, promise of pleasure or a grave," the approach of the caravan is announced from afar by his cracked or guttural voice: "How carols now the lusty muleteer!" For when not engaged in swearing or smoking, the livelong day is passed in one monotonous high-pitched song, the tune of which is little in

harmony with the import of the words, or his cheerful humour, being most unmusical and melancholy; but such is the true type of Oriental *melody*, as it is called. The same absence of thought which is shown in England by whistling is displayed in Spain by singing. "*Quien canta sus males espanta:*" he who sings frightens away ills, a philosophic consolation in travel as old and as classical as Virgil: – "Cantantes licet usque, minus via tædet, camus," which may be thus translated for the benefit of country gentlemen: —

> If we join in doleful chorus,
> The dull highway will much less bore us.

The Spanish muleteer is a fine fellow; he is intelligent, active, and enduring; he braves hunger and thirst, heat and cold, mud and dust; he works as hard as his cattle, never robs or is robbed; and while his betters in this land put off everything till to-morrow except bankruptcy, he is punctual and honest, his frame is wiry and sinewy, his costume peculiar; many are the leagues and long, which we have ridden in his caravan, and longer his robber yarns, to which we paid no attention; and it must be admitted that these cavalcades are truly national and picturesque. Mingled with droves of mules and mounted horsemen, the zig-zag lines come threading down the mountain defiles, now tracking through the aromatic brushwood, now concealed amid rocks and olive-trees, now emerging bright and glittering into the sunshine, giving

life and movement to the lonely nature, and breaking the usual stillness by the tinkle of the bell and the sad ditty of the muleteer – sounds which, though unmusical in themselves, are in keeping with the scene, and associated with wild Spanish rambles, just as the harsh whetting of the scythe is mixed up with the sweet spring and newly-mown hay-meadow.

## COSTUME OF THE MARAGATOS

There is one class of muleteers which are but little known to European travellers – the *Maragatos*, whose head-quarters are at *San Roman*, near *Astorga*; they, like the Jew and gipsy, live exclusively among their own people, preserving their primeval costume and customs, and never marrying out of their own tribe. They are as perfectly nomad and wandering as the Bedouins, the mule only being substituted for the camel; their honesty and industry are proverbial. They are a sedate, grave, dry, matter-of-fact, business-like people. Their charges are high, but the security counterbalances, as they may be trusted with untold gold. They are the channels of all traffic between Gallicia and the Castiles, being seldom seen in the south or east provinces. They are dressed in leathern jerkins, which fit tightly like a cuirass, leaving the arms free. Their linen is coarse but white, especially the shirt collar; a broad leather belt, in which there is a purse, is fastened round the waist. Their breeches, like those of the Valencians, are called *Zaraguelles*, a pure Arabic word for kilts or

wide drawers, and no burgomaster of Rembrandt is more broad-bottomed. Their legs are encased in long brown cloth gaiters, with red garters; their hair is generally cut close – sometimes, however, strange tufts are left. A huge, slouching, flapping hat completes the most inconvenient of travelling dresses, and it is too Dutch to be even picturesque; but these fashions are as unchangeable as the laws of the Medes and Persians were; nor will any Maragato dream of altering his costume until those dressed models of painted wood do which strike the hours of the clock on the square of *Astorga*: *Pedro Mato*, also, another figure *costumée*, who holds a weathercock at the cathedral, is the observed of all observers; and, in truth, this particular costume is, as that of Quakers used to be, a guarantee of their tribe and respectability; thus even Cordero, the rich Maragato deputy, appeared in Cortes in this local costume.

## THEIR ORIGIN

The dress of the Maragata is equally peculiar: she wears, if married, a sort of head-gear, *El Caramiello*, in the shape of a crescent, the round part coming over the forehead, which is very Moorish, and resembles those of the females in the basso-rilievos at Granada. Their hair flows loosely on their shoulders, while their apron or petticoat hangs down open before and behind, and is curiously tied at the back with a sash, and their bodice is cut square over the bosom. At their festivals they are covered with

ornaments of long chains of coral and metal, with crosses, relics, and medals in silver. Their earrings are very heavy, and supported by silken threads, as among the Jewesses in Barbary. A marriage is the grand feast; then large parties assemble, and a president is chosen, who puts into a waiter whatever sum of money he likes, and all invited must then give as much. The bride is enveloped in a mantle, which she wears the whole day, and never again except on that of her husband's death. She does not dance at the wedding-ball. Early next morning two roast chickens are brought to the bed-side of the happy pair. The next evening ball is opened by the bride and her husband, to the tune of the *gaita*, or Moorish bagpipe. Their dances are grave and serious; such indeed is their whole character. The *Maragatos*, with their honest, weather-beaten countenances, are seen with files of mules all along the high road to La Coruña. They generally walk, and, like other Spanish *arrieros*, although they sing and curse rather less, are employed in one ceaseless shower of stones and blows at their mules.

The whole tribe assembles twice a year at Astorga, at the feasts of Corpus and the Ascension, when they dance *El Canizo*, beginning at two o'clock in the afternoon, and ending precisely at three. If any one not a *Maragato* joins, they all leave off immediately. The women never wander from their homes, which their undomestic husbands always do. They lead the hardworked life of the Iberian females of old, and now, as then, are to be seen everywhere in these west provinces toiling in the fields, early

before the sun has risen, and late after it has set; and it is most painful to behold them drudging at these unfeminine vocations.

The origin of the *Maragatos* has never been ascertained. Some consider them to be a remnant of the Celtiberian, others of the Visigoths; most, however, prefer a Bedouin, or caravan descent. It is in vain to question these ignorant carriers as to their history or origin; for like the gipsies, they have no traditions, and know nothing. *Arrieros*, at all events, they are; and that word, in common with so many others relating to the barb and carrier-caravan craft, is Arabic, and proves whence the system and science were derived by Spaniards.

## TRAVELLING IN THE INTERIOR

The *Maragatos* are celebrated for their fine beasts of burden; indeed, the mules of Leon are renowned, and the asses splendid and numerous, especially the nearer one approaches to the learned university of Salamanca. The *Maragatos* take precedence on the road; they are the lords of the highway, being *the* channels of commerce in a land where mules and asses represent luggage rail trains. They know and feel their importance, and that they are the rule, and the traveller for mere pleasure is the exception. Few Spanish muleteers are much more polished than their beasts, and however picturesque the scene, it is no joke meeting a string of laden beasts in a narrow road, especially with a precipice on one side, *cosa de España*. The *Maragatos* seldom give way, and their

mules keep doggedly on; as the baggage projects on each side, like the paddles of a steamer, they sweep the whole path. But all wayfaring details in the genuine Spanish interior are calculated for the *pack*, as in England a century back; and there is no thought bestowed on the foreigner, who is not wanted, nay is disliked. The inns, roads, and right sides, suit the natives and their brutes; nor will either put themselves out of their way to please the fancies of a stranger. The racy Peninsula is too little travelled over for its natives to adopt the mercenary conveniences of the Swiss, that nation of innkeepers and coach-jobbers.

## RIDING TOURS

# CHAPTER VIII

Riding Tour in Spain – Pleasures of it – Pedestrian Tour – Choice of Companions – Rules for a Riding Tour – Season of Year – Day's Journey – Management of Horse: his Feet; Shoes; General Hints.

## ROYAL ROADS

A MAN in a public carriage ceases to be a private individual: he is merged into the fare, and becomes a number according to his place; he is booked like a parcel, and is delivered by the guard. How free, how lord and master of himself, does the same dependent gentleman mount his eager barb, who by his neighing and pawing exhibits his joyful impatience to be off too! How fresh and sweet the free breath of heaven, after the frousty atmosphere of a full inside of foreigners, who, from the narcotic effects of tobacco, forget the existence of soap, water, and clean linen! Travelling on horseback, so unusual a gratification to Englishmen, is the ancient, primitive, and once universal mode of travelling in Europe, as it still is in the East; mankind, however, soon gets accustomed to a changed state of locomotion, and forgets how recent is its introduction. Fynes Moryson gave much the same advice two centuries ago to travellers in England, as

must be now suggested to those who in Spain desert the coach-beaten highways for the delightful bye-ways, and thus explore the rarely visited, but not the least interesting portions of the Peninsula. It has been our good fortune to perform many of these expeditions on horseback, both alone and in company; and on one occasion to have made the pilgrimage from Seville to Santiago, through Estremadura and Gallicia, returning by the Asturias, Biscay, Leon, and the Castiles; thus riding nearly two thousand miles on the same horse, and only accompanied by one Andalucian servant, who had never before gone out of his native province. The same tour was afterwards performed by two friends with two servants; nor did they or ourselves ever meet with any real impediments or difficulties, scarcely indeed sufficient of either to give the flavour of adventure, or the dignity of danger, to the undertaking. It has also been our lot to make an extended tour of many months, accompanied by an English lady, through Granada, Murcia, Valencia, Catalonia, and Arragon, to say nothing of repeated excursions through every nook and corner of Andalucia. The result of all this experience, combined with that of many friends, who have *ridden over* the Peninsula, enables us to recommend this method to the young, healthy, and adventurous, as by far the most agreeable plan of proceeding; and, indeed, as we have said, as regards two-thirds of the Peninsula, the only practicable course.

The leading royal roads which connect the capital with the principal seaports are, indeed, excellent; but they are generally

drawn in a straight line, whereby many of the most ancient cities are thus left out, and these, together with sites of battles and historical incident, ruins and remains of antiquity, and scenes of the greatest natural beauty, are accessible with difficulty, and in many cases only on horseback. Spain abounds with wide tracts which are perfectly unknown to the Geographical Society. Here, indeed, is fresh ground open to all who aspire in these threadbare days to book something new; here is scenery enough to fill a dozen portfolios, and subject enough for a score of quartos. How many flowers pine unbotanised, how many rocks harden ungeologised; what views are dying to be sketched; what bears and deer to be stalked; what trout to be caught and eaten; what valleys expand their bosoms, longing to embrace their visitor; what virgin beauties hitherto unseen await the happy member of the Travellers' Club, who in ten days can exchange the bore of eternal Pall Mall for these untrodden sites; and then what an accession of dignity in thus discovering a terra incognita, and rivalling Mr. Mungo Park! Nor is a guide wanting, since our good friend John Murray, the grand monarque of Handbooks, has proclaimed from Albemarle Street, *Il n'y a plus de Pyrénées*.

## HINTS TO TRAVELLERS

As the wide extent of country which intervenes between the radii of the great roads is most indifferently provided with public means of inter-communication; as there is little traffic, and no

demand for modern conveyances – even mules and horses are not always to be procured, and we have always found it best to set out on these distant excursions with our own beasts: the comfort and certainty of this precaution have been corroborated beyond any doubt by frequent comparisons with the discomforts undergone by other persons, who trusted to chance accommodations and means of locomotion in ill-provided districts and out-of-the-way excursions: indeed, as a general rule, the traveller will do well to carry with him everything with which from habit he feels that he cannot dispense. The chief object will be to combine in as small a space as possible the greatest quantity of portable comfort, taking care to select the really essential; for there is no worse mistake than lumbering oneself with things that are never wanted. This mode of travelling has not been much detailed by the generality of authors, who have rarely gone much out of the beaten track, or undertaken a long-continued riding tour, and they have been rather inclined to overstate the dangers and difficulties of a plan which they have never tried. At the same time this plan is not to be recommended to fine ladies nor to delicate gentlemen, nor to those who have had a touch of rheumatism, or who tremble at the shadows which coming gout casts before it.

## HEALTHFUL EXERCISE

Those who have endurance and curiosity enough to face a tour in Sicily, may readily set out for Spain; rails and post-horses

certainly get quicker over the country; but the pleasure of the remembrance and the benefits derived by travel are commonly in an inverse ratio to the ease and rapidity with which the journey is performed. In addition to the accurate knowledge which is thus acquired of the country (for there is no map like this mode of surveying), and an acquaintance with a considerable, and by no means the worst portion of its population, a riding expedition to a civilian is almost equivalent to serving a campaign. It imparts a new life, which is adopted on the spot, and which soon appears quite natural, from being in perfect harmony and fitness with everything around, however strange to all previous habits and notions; it takes the conceit out of a man for the rest of his life – it makes him bear and forbear. It is a capital practical school of moral discipline, just as the hardiest mariners are nurtured in the roughest seas. Then and there will be learnt golden rules of patience, perseverance, good temper, and good fellowship: the individual man must come out, for better or worse. On these occasions, where wealth and rank are stripped of the aids and appurtenances of conventional superiority, a man will draw more on his own resources, moral and physical, than on any letter of credit; his wit will be sharpened by invention-suggesting necessity.

Then and there, when up, about, and abroad, will be shaken off dull sloth; action – Demosthenic action – will be the watch-word. The traveller will blot out from his dictionary the fatal Spanish phrase of procrastination *by-and-by*, a street which leads

to the house of *never*, for "*por la calle de despues, se va a la casa de nunca*." Reduced to shift for himself, he will see the evil of waste – the folly of improvidence and want of order. He will whistle to the winds the paltry excuse of idleness, the Spanish "*no se puede*," "*it is impossible*." He will soon learn, by grappling with difficulties, how surely they are overcome, – how soft as silk becomes the nettle when it is sternly grasped, which would sting the tender-handed touch, – how powerful a principle of realising the object proposed, is the moral conviction that we can and will accomplish it. He will never be scared by shadows thin as air, for when one door shuts another opens, and he who pushes on arrives. And after all, a dash of hardship may be endured by those accustomed to loll in easy britzskas, if only for the sake of novelty; what a new relish is given to the palled appetite by a little unknown privation! – hunger being, as Cervantes says, the best of sauces, which, as it never is wanting to the poor, is the reason why eating is their huge delight.

## DELIGHTS OF A TOUR

Again, these sorts of independent expeditions are equally conducive to health of body: after the first few days of the new fatigue are got over, the frame becomes of iron, "*hecho de bronze*," and the rider, a centaur not fabulous. The living in the pure air, the sustaining excitement of novelty, exercise, and constant occupation, are all sweetened by the willing heart, which

renders even labour itself a pleasure; a new and vigorous life is infused into every bone and muscle: early to bed and early to rise, if it does not make all brains wise, at least invigorates the gastric juices, makes a man forget that he has a liver, that storehouse of mortal misery – bile, blue pill, and blue devils. This health is one of the secrets of the amazing charm which seems inherent to this mode of travelling, in spite of all the apparent hardships with which it is surrounded in the abstract. Oh! the delight of this gipsy, Bedouin, nomade life, seasoned with unfettered liberty! We pitch our tent wherever we please, and there we make our home – far from letters "requiring an immediate answer," and distant dining-outs, visits, ladies' maids, band-boxes, butlers, bores, and button-holders.

Escaping from the meshes of the west end of London, we are transported into a new world; every day the out-of-door panorama is varied; now the heart is cheered and the countenance made glad by gazing on plains overflowing with milk and honey, or laughing with oil and wine, where the orange and citron bask in the glorious sunbeams, the palm without the desert, the sugar-cane without the slave. Anon we are lost amid the silence of cloud-capped glaciers, where rock and granite are tost about like the fragments of a broken world, by the wild magnificence of Nature, who, careless of mortal admiration, lavishes with proud indifference her fairest charms where most unseen, her grandest forms where most inaccessible. Every day and everywhere we are unconsciously funding a stock of treasures and pleasures of

memory, to be hived in our bosoms like the honey of the bee, to cheer and sweeten our after-life, when we settle down like wine-dregs in our cask, which, delightful even as in the reality, wax stronger as we grow in years, and feel that these feats of our youth, like sweet youth itself, can never be our portion again. Of one thing the reader may be assured, – that dear will be to him, as is now to us, the remembrance of those wild and weary rides through tawny Spain, where hardship was forgotten ere undergone: those sweet-aired hills – those rocky crags and torrents – those fresh valleys which communicated their own freshness to the heart – that keen relish for hard fare, gained and seasoned by hunger sauce, which Ude did not invent – those sound slumbers on harder couch, earned by fatigue, the downiest of pillows – the braced nerves – the spirits light, elastic, and joyous – that freedom from care – that health of body and soul which ever rewards a close communion with Nature – and the shuffling off of the frets and factitious wants of the thick-pent artificial city.

## CHOICE OF COMPANIONS

Whatever be the number of the party, and however they travel, whether on wheels or horseback, admitting even that a pleasant friend pro vehiculo est, that is, is better than a post-chaise, yet no one should ever dream of making a pedestrian tour in Spain. It seldom answers anywhere, as the walker arrives at the object

of his promenade tired and hungry, just at the moment when he ought to be the freshest and most up to intellectual pleasures. The deipnosophist Athenæus long ago discovered that there was no love for the sublime and beautiful in an empty stomach, æsthetics yield then to gastronomies, and there is no prospect in the world so fine as that of a dinner and a nap, or *siesta* afterwards. The pedestrian in Spain, where fleshly comforts are rare, will soon understand why, in the real journals of our Peninsular soldiers, so little attention is paid to those objects which most attract the well-provided traveller. In cases of bodily hardship, the employment of the mental faculties is narrowed into the care of supplying mere physical wants, rather than expanded into searching for those of a contemplative or intellectual gratification; the footsore and way-worn require, according to

> "The unexempt condition
> By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
> Refreshment after toil, ease after pain."

Walking is the manner by which beasts travel, who have therefore four legs; those bipeds who follow the example of the brute animals will soon find that they will be reduced to their level in more particulars than they imagined or bargained for. Again, as no Spaniard ever walks for pleasure, and none ever perform a journey on foot except trampers and beggars, it is never supposed possible that any one else should do so except from compulsion. Pedestrians therefore are either ill received, or

become objects of universal suspicion; for a Spanish authority, judging of others by himself, always takes the worst view of the stranger, whom he considers as guilty until he proves himself innocent.

# Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.