

rey es ley, "The king is law," was a terrible and humiliating sentence. But representative governments have sometimes greater inconveniences amongst a people too unenlightened to control their courts, and make sovereigns bow before that public opinion, which is indeed the Queen of the World. In Spain there are two governments, one ostensible and responsible, the other hidden and irresponsible; one in front of the Parliament, the other behind the Throne; one preparing laws, the other obstacles and impediments; one submitting measures, the other intriguing for its downfall—the Ministry and the Camarilla.

But let the latter pause and tremble in its mad career. Swift and terrible is the rising passion of a southern people. The rending asunder of Quesada, of the Governor of Cadiz, of the hundred victims of Barcelona and Valencia, are fearful proofs of the sudden waking and destructiveness of their vengeance; but what were these to that horrible massacre of the friars in 1834, when the appearance of a mortal epidemic gave currency to the ignorant rumour that the waters of Madrid were poisoned, and scores of miserable victims were slain at the foot of their altars—slain by a Christian people, who, at other times, before they were maddened by the passion of fear, were ready to kiss the hem of the garments of the now accused *religiosos*: such a mystery is the heart of man, compounded of the lamb and tiger!

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE REPRESENTATIVE CHAMBERS.—SKETCHES OF PARTY LEADERS.

UNDER the Constitution of 1837, the name, together with the ancient institution of the *Córtes*, was abolished; and to gratify the semi-republican tendencies of the *Exaltados*, the designation and some of the forms of the new legislative assembly were borrowed from the United States of America. The Chamber of Peers was called a Senate, the Chamber of Deputies a Congress. This nomenclature originated partly in error. In America it is not either Chamber that is called a Congress, but the union of both. The Spanish reformers meant to have called the lower House, like the Americans, their Chamber of Representatives, but mistook. They called their spade a shovel, but the original name survives. The elective principle applied to both Chambers, destroys the system of balances and adjustments, which makes an Upper Chamber valuable. Instead of two separate heads and tongues, it is like two tongues wagging in the same mouth, with a surplus of noise to the same tune; or like an enormous bell with two clappers.

It was a bad but happily an practicable thing to do away with the time-honoured name of the *Córtes* of Spain! Spanish constitution-mongering in the

old and new world has been a long series of "fantastic tricks," ever since the Constituent Córtes, which assembled at Cadiz in 1812, decreed that "we proclaim, sanction, and legalize the One, Holy, Roman, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, *and no other*, on the Spanish soil." There is here a smell of burnt flesh; and yet these men were for the most part republicans!

There are occasions, however, when the name of Congress is not inapplicable to the Spanish representative Chambers, as at present constituted. In acts of great importance and solemnity, both Chambers become amalgamated, combining in one grand representation of the national will, and deciding by a joint vote of the majority of the two Houses, whose separate individualities are for the time lost and forgotten—a peculiarity to be witnessed only in Spain.

This is indeed a Congress. Queen Isabel's majority was carried thus in November last. But the plan is more fanciful than deserving of imitation. In one respect the Spanish Congress perfectly resembles the Congress of the United States; I mean in the length of the speeches. Upon remarkable occasions, it is quite common for the orations of the leading men to be adjourned from day to day, as with the Transatlantic statesmen; and on the late palace affair, Olózaga, De la Rosa, Lopez, Murillo, and Cortina, spoke each at least two days.

The incredible subserviency of the Deputies to the Cromwellian dictatorship of Narvaez, was made manifest in the permission which the Chamber accorded by a large majority to Narvaez's war-minister

to proceed before the military tribunal against one of its own members, Señor Mateo y Calvo, charged with having conspired to assassinate the Captain-General. Calvo was not a military man—unamenable therefore to a court martial; and the rights of the civil tribunals and prerogatives of the Chamber of Deputies were both outrageously violated. That compromise was the prelude to more scandalous proceedings, and the Chamber, first submitting to be gagged, was next deliberately strangled.

The existing constitution of the Senate is entirely a hybrid creation. It is compounded of royal nomination and popular election, one-third going out by rotation, and being subject to re-election, at every period when the Chamber of Deputies is renewed. It thus endeavours to amalgamate democracy with dependence on the crown, and the result is that it is neither flesh nor fowl, and has no real influence in the State. When quiet is restored, and organisation has proceeded a certain length, attempts will probably be made to establish an hereditary peerage, with entails of 60,000 reals (600*l.*) a-year in families possessed of real property; the bishops and grandees to have seats in the Chamber. This project has been spoken of at the Casino clubs of Madrid. A few of the bishops are usually elected members of the Senate. When vacancies arise, the people return three names, from which the crown selects one.

The Spanish are very eloquent in their representative Chambers—very fluent at least, impassioned, and bombastic. Beyond the precincts of Congress, one seldom hears a popular speech: conversation, the

tertulia, the café, absorb the electricity of the political masses, and the eloquence of popular assemblies outside the Córtes is unknown. I speak now of normal conditions of society; for at periods of "pronouncement," when every village arrogates to itself unlimited sovereign power, there is talk enough in the revolutionary Juntas. But beyond the vortex of anarchy and rebellion, the public meeting—that magnificent institution, as sacred to liberty as trial by jury and habeas corpus,—is as unknown here as in France.

The principle of public meeting is the safety-valve of a state, and had it been known and duly exercised in Spain, we should have heard but little of the recent Pronunciamientos. Strong resolutions, remonstrances with the Chambers, and petitions to the Crown, would have been their constitutional and equally effectual substitute; and the parliamentary battle, strengthened by these allies, and backed by the legitimate pressure from without, would have superseded the horrid bombardments, the marching and countermarching of troops, the frequent demoralization, and the disgraceful compromises which will be long unhappily remembered. The uses of a Parliament are not yet understood in Spain, nor the irresistible power of a constitutional opposition, without needless appeals to arms.

The following is the portrait of a Spanish Speaker, or President of the Congress, painted by himself: "The President announced to the Congress that five incidental propositions had been laid on the table, in relation to the affair of Olózaga. The five distinct

propositions were then read. Señor Cortina (the Progresista leader) wished to address the Congress with a view to prove that these propositions could not be entertained (a right which he claimed under the 111th article of the Reglamento).—*President.* No other has permission to speak but Señor Bravo Murillo! (This Deputy is a violent Moderado, to which party the President, Pidal, belongs, and the effects of a speech in his striking manner in preference to one from Cortina, would most materially serve the President's party). Several Deputies protested against this decision of the President, and confused murmurs arose from several benches.—*President.* No other has permission to speak but Señor Bravo Murillo!

“The voices of Señores Lopez, Alonso, and Ovejero were heard demanding permission to address the Chamber, amidst great confusion and the noise of many other voices. For a long period there reigned amongst the Deputies a frightful uproar; each sought a different thing; each uttered expressions in opposite senses; nothing could be heard amidst the prolonged din and clamour in the Chamber. Order being somewhat re-established, at the request of Señor Cortina the 111th article of the Reglamento was read, in which it is stated that a motion to the effect that a given proposition cannot be entertained shall have preference over all others. (This clearly made out Cortina's right).—*President.* No other has permission to speak but Señor Bravo Murillo!—*Several voices.* This is to stifle the voice of the Deputies: This is to trample on the law.—*President.* No one can speak unless

give him permission. No other shall speak but Señor Bravo Murillo!" And Bravo Murillo did speak a speech which lasted to the end of the sitting, and which it was impossible therefore to neutralize by a prompt reply; a speech full of the grossest affronts and invectives against all the leaders of the Progresista party; a speech replete with prepared malignity, and which this President probably had read beforehand.

The number of Deputies is 241, and of Senators 145. The expenses of the Houses of Senators and Deputies are set down in the estimates for 1844 at 979,620 reals, or about £10,000. In Spain they pay their representatives.

The oratorical talent arrayed in the present Congress is such as no Legislative Chamber in Europe might be ashamed of; it comprises the following Deputies:—Lopez, Olózaga, De la Rosa, Cortina, Isturiz, Bravo Murillo, Madoz, Posada, Gonzalez Bravo, Cantero, Donoso Cortés, Alonso, Gonzalez, Castro y Orozco, Alcon, Sartorius, Roca de Togores, Caballero, Carrasco. It is singular what a number of great historical or celebrated names are to be found in the list of actual Spanish Deputies. The list comprises the following:—Cid, Gonzalez, Rodriguez, Cortés, Saavedra (Cervantes), Murillo, Cano, Herrera, Velasquez, Calderon, Lope (3), Zaragoza, Alva, Ramirez, Suarez, España, Alonso, Nuñez, Alvarez. And to wind up the catalogue, I find the names of both Don Quixote and Sancho in the Deputies; Gomez Sancho, and Quixada, which latter name Cervantes declares in his opening chapter to be a variation in the spelling of his hero's patronymic.

Don Joaquin Maria Lopez is pre-eminently the eloquent popular orator of the Spanish Chambers. His ancient democratic habits have never deserted him; and even in power he is more of the tribune than the minister. The violent outrages on the Constitution, which marked the career of the Provisional Government, are not to be charged so much on him as on the necessities of his position, the requisitions of certain of his colleagues, and the irresponsible military authority, backed by 50,000 bayonets, at his elbow. Spain is not England; and had Lopez not dismissed constituted bodies by the dozen, and held reasons of state more cogent than the letter of the law, he could not have stood for an hour against the unscrupulous intrigues which from every side assailed him. Let the fall of Olózaga, attesting their infernal coil and constrictor power, be the test of Lopez' clear-sightedness.

Though fiercely democratic in all his opinions, and though his hand has strongly helped to strip the Church and Aristocracy of their loaded wealth and privileges, if there is one quality for which he is more remarkable than another, it is his chivalrous loyalty to the crown. Yet in the affair of Olózaga he took the decided part which befitted his character. His parliamentary oratory is of a more brilliant class than that of any member of the British senate—I will not say that it is of a higher order. Its fault is, that it is too ornate. It reminds you of the perpetual glitter, and sometimes palling richness, of Curran and the old Irish school. The vocation of Lopez was to be a poet. His imagination is perhaps the most fervid in Europe.

Some of his flights are of extraordinary beauty. The only drawback is, that you sometimes doubt his sincerity.

Señor Lopez is the most eminent member of the Spanish Foro; and I speak from a tolerable knowledge of the English and French bars when I say, that no bar in Europe possesses so brilliant an advocate. He is at times extremely elaborate—but the art is not obtrusive, and the dazzling glitter is often quite overpowering. His eloquence is not formed, like that of Olózaga, on any classical model, but is as original as the style of Victor Hugo. When Lopez gave up the Provisional Government, on proceeding to re-open his advocate's box he tapped his head in the Chamber and said, "Behold the only patrimony of my children!"

This statement and significant gesture were both full of meaning. He has a very numerous family, and provides for them entirely by his professional exertions. It is a most creditable distinction in Spain, where office is sought almost exclusively for its emoluments, that Lopez has been at three different times a minister of the crown, and retired thrice from that government, of which he was always the most influential member, without any permanent office, or title, or decoration; without a cross or a riband to display upon his breast, in a country where these favours are most extensively distributed. Even from the premiership of the Provisional Government, by which high titles and orders were lavishly disseminated amongst the leading instruments of a successful national movement, and from the side of a Queen whose majority

had been just proclaimed, he withdrew to private life in a strictly private capacity, without a charge upon the pension-list for himself or any of his connections, without an inscription in the court-list or a real of the public money. Five hundred different lucrative and permanent offices were at his disposal, but he preferred a practising lawyer's independence.

Don Francisco Martinez de la Rosa may be said to be the personification of the Moderado party, of which he is by far the most illustrious member. His high literary reputation—his well-established European fame, make all Spaniards proud of him, and his is the rare fortune to have soared above the reach of jealousies. His excellent and classical tragedies display the same qualities of mind which shine in his parliamentary oratory—refined and severe taste, lucid and methodical arrangement, great clearness of statement, well-chosen, not redundant, ornaments; occasional but most felicitous illustration.

His eminent characteristic is correctness;—correctness in his views—correctness in his language—correctness in his life—correctness in his deportment; and his eloquence has but one fault—that it is too elaborately correct. He is, unmistakeably, an honourable man and gentleman; and these qualities, not over-abundant amongst those who surround him, are the more beneficial to his personal influence, because the more conspicuous. He is a good logician, and he is likewise an accomplished sophist; preferring the former weapons when the case will admit of his using them, but not despising the latter when he is hard pressed. Surrounded by such an atmosphere—

exposed to such unscrupulous assaults—it is hard to forego even equivocal means of triumph: it were idle to look for a perfect man in Spain. Martinez de la Rosa is a native of Granada, and another proof that the most brilliant geniuses of Spain and France are from the south. He is one of the representatives of Madrid. Moderado principles receive great encouragement in the south from the fact that Martinez de la Rosa, the head of the party, is one of its illustrious sons. The brilliant and chivalrous history of his own Iliberian kingdom—*

“El mas hermoso que el sol alumbra,”

(The loveliest that the sun enlightens) as a Grana-dine poet most truly declares it—has been well illustrated by De la Rosa; who has sung the exploits of its most distinguished warrior, and thrown much light upon its antiquities, in his novel of “Isabel de Solis.” Isturiz, next in importance as a Moderado leader, is also from the south, being a native of Cadiz; which was likewise the birth-place of Mendizabal.

Don Manuel Cortina, the parliamentary leader of the less “exalted” Progresistas, is a man of great tact and sagacity, of grave and mature judgment, of powerful argumentative eloquence. He has been extremely steady and consistent as a politician, more firm than decorative, more logical than brilliant, but withal a very pleasing speaker; in exposition most clear and masterly; and one who, perhaps, more than any other, has secured and retained the confidence of the bulk of the nation. Señor Cortina, like most of

* The ancient name of Granada.

the eminent men of Spain, is a native of the South, and represents the province of Seville in the Congress. Don Manuel Cantero, another very prominent leader of the same party, is one of the representatives of Madrid. The leading men are invariably returned for two or more provinces, and make election of whichever they please; for the most part preferring those of which they are natives, or with which they are allied by close political relations. The rich Marquis de Casa-Irujo represents Cordova, where he has much property; and the aristocratic radical, Count de las Navas, who plagues successive ministries with exaggerated *interpelaciones*, is a representative of Salamanca.

It was well said by Cortina, in the affair of Olózaga, that the question was not between an individual and the Sovereign, but between Doña Isabel and the Constitutional Queen of Spain. Cortina is an active bright-eyed little man, and is commonly called *El Sevillanito*, or "the little Sevillian."

The leader of the Republican party in the Congress is Señor Aiguals de Izco, a large-bearded, wide-breeched man, something like our own Muntz in appearance and politics. His tone of voice, however, is more sepulchral, more like that of a true Capuchino, or Franciscan friar of the most rigid school. I believe much of Izco's gravity to be affected, and his general manner assumed, by way of attracting personal notice, and selling the journal *Guindilla*, of which he is editor and proprietor. He represents the extreme Left, as Cortina represents that part of it which is next the Centre, or Young Spain.

This latter party consists of about thirty Moderados and twenty Progresistas, for the most part young men, who stick marvellously well together, and hold in their hands the balance of the Córtes. They look on while the older members of the assembly contend, pronouncing judgment, and reversing the order of the world by which the old passed sentence on the young. That their vigorous and flaming ardour should have superseded the ancient Moderados as it has done, is just what might have been expected; and to make good the general system, the head of this party was a premier, and late an editor—the sarcastic man of the *Guirigay*.

CHAPTER XIX.

GONZALEZ BRAVO AND HIS MINISTRY.

DON LUIS GONZALEZ BRAVO, the late Spanish premier, is a person of singular conceit and vanity, which he shows in his countenance, air, and movements. He has the affectation of figuring as a great character, and throws himself into very theatrical attitudes in the Congress, talking loud, while far abler men are addressing the House, to his partisans around him, and perpetually showing off as a leader. He is foppish in his person, cherishing his black locks with great care, and endeavouring, by his rapid turns of body and remarkable gestures, to impress observers with a notion of his immense vivacity and quickness.

He is a native of Jaen, for which province he is Deputy. His eloquence, which must be admitted to be effective at times, is indebted to his self-sufficiency and impetuous vehemence for its buoyancy. You may look for all that passion can accomplish there, but for nothing of the triumphs of reason or of wisdom. He is a great master of sarcasm, and so entirely unscrupulous that he pours forth the most tremendous and cutting invectives, with a recklessness equal to that which he displayed three years back in writing down Cristina, and an indifference to the care of his personal reputation so excessive, that, during his first week as minister, he pocketed, without notice in any

shape, the lie twice given him in the Chamber ! It is only in a revolutionary country that a man of Gonzalez Bravo's youth and unsettled, equivocal character, could have ascended to the post of Prime Minister.

His elevation is likewise a proof of the influence of journalism in Spain, and of the success of newspaper violence—another phase of revolutionary times. His paper, *El Guirigay*, or “The Slang,” was one of the least scrupulous of its class of satirical and personal journals, and contributed beyond doubt, as much as the bill for the regulation of municipalities, more than Espartero's ambition, and not much less than her unfortunate *liaison*, to the expulsion of Maria Cristina from the Spanish soil. From a violent Exaltado-Progressista it is amusing, in the rapid revolution of three years, to see this young man converted into a decided Moderado, and raised to the premiership in the interest of that Regent whom he so successfully ruined ! It must be confessed that within those three years he has felt his way very ably in the *Córtes*, acquired daily additional weight, and shone as an orator in some of the most animated and striking displays which have been witnessed of late years in that assembly. His satirical talents have been transferred from the desk to the tribune, with fresh zest and *gusto*, and his impassioned energy appears to increased advantage since the pen has been exchanged for the *puissante propagande de la parole*.

These are precisely the attributes which fascinate youthful, ardent, and ambitious men, and which conferred upon Luis Gonzalez Brabo—for thus he prefers to write the name—the command of the powerful

phalanx of fifty united members, which, planting itself between the old Moderados and the less "exalted" Progresistas, decides almost every parliamentary contest, and calls itself "Joven España." But his qualities were speedily proved to be overrated; and before he was a week in office, the world inquired with amazement how the premiership of Spain could be conferred on, in every sense, so insignificant a man.*

The first affair by which Don Luis Bravo became known to fame, was his connexion with a very extraordinary and peculiar local society, called the *Partido del Trueno*, or Thunder Club, a society of riotous young bloods, who delighted in nocturnal attacks upon the audiences returning from theatres, the guests from tertulias, and the other street-passengers of Madrid; a worn phase of the mischievous disposition, persevered in with such mysterious pertinacity at home, to appropriate bell-pulls and street-knockers. The exuberance of still wilder southern spirits, impelled Gonzalez Bravo and his friends to serious personal outrage, and in one of these scuffles he received a pistol-bullet, by which his life was nearly forfeited. This equivocal specimen of a statesman was supported by the French embassy; and the character of his father before him was likewise equivocal, or rather

* The Prime Minister, when he should be writing sage decrees, was scribbling scurrilous paragraphs: from his portfolio peeped forth old numbers of "*The Slang*," and his official robes could not hide the harlequin's jacket. "Vistan me, dijo Sancho, como quisieren, que de cualquier manera que vaya vestido, seré Sancho Panza;" "Let them dress me up as they will, however I am dressed, I shall still be Sacho Panza."

not at all equivocal, he having been dismissed from the Treasury for malversation.

This first of prime ministers* is the living impersonation and type of the prevailing Spanish vice of embleomania or rage for office. He has no one qualification for ministerial functions—neither knowledge of history, of his country, or of mankind. Like the bulk of Spanish politicians, he derides the notion of patriotism; and as he did not enter office for his country's good, the conclusion is irresistible that it was for his own; but impurity of motives is so general a failing here, that their disguises are not even assumed. He held his portfolio for the squandering of places to himself, his family, and party.

The office-hunters of Madrid, epitomized in him, thank their God that they have a country to plunder, and crawl like vermin over the wasted bosom of Spain. When the tide begins to turn, that may happily carry them into power, they turn conveniently with it; and Bravo, who all his life was a Progresista, or Reformer, entered office as an Ultra-moderado, or Tory. His defence of the change was characteristic:—*No es ridículo estar para siempre el mismo?* “Isn't it ridiculous to be always the same?” Principle this school regards as a farce, stability as a bore, adherence to professions as the flattest imbecility. Narvaez wanted a pliant tool, and found one at hand in Gonzalez Bravo, who, driven to the wall in Congress by *interpelaciones*, to which he had not sense or

* It is a curious circumstance that the boisterous premier's name should exactly typify his roystering disposition, the patronymic *Bravo* signifying “wild.”

discretion to reply, declared that "he would answer no more questions;" and seems born to prove how incapable a minister may be made of a tolerable spouter.

But his capacity to feather the family nest has been strikingly developed, for one of his earliest acts upon receiving his portfolio, was to appoint his wife's brother, a hanger-on about the Principe Theatre, where the elder brother is one of the actors, to the post of State-groom to the Queen; and his father, dismissed lately from the Treasury by the uncompromising Calatrava, for declining to furnish accounts when charged with malversation, to the all-powerful office of Under-secretary to that same Treasury! He next appointed to the Diplomatic Corps—the palace was not enough—some of his own equivocal relations, and dismissed, in two days, to make room for his friends, one-half the political chiefs in Spain!

Four days after the Queen made her "solemn declaration," Bravo's ministry was completely formed, and on the 5th December the Decrees were read in the Córtes, which appointed to office the most extraordinary set of incapacities to whom portfolios had ever been entrusted even in Spain. At other times and occasions ministries were wont to be composed of men of ability, weight, experience, and standing; now they seemed to be selected from the respectable class of court-lacqueys and grooms.

High talents and statesmanlike faculties are sometimes looked for in these elevated departments; where there is neither talent nor statesmanship,

people wish to see gentlemanly deportment and an honourable reputation; and where neither character nor bearing is gentlemanlike or honourable, the least they can expect is high blood and aristocratic connections. Men do not like to be governed by shoe-blacks; but to be governed by unshining shoe-blacks, to be flayed alive by flunkies with a flunkey's range of intellect, is worse than Phalaris' bull, and might beget an Agrigentine clamour. The Spaniards declared that their new Ministry comprised "*todos los incapazes*,"—that Bravo, its worthy head, was the "*mas picaro y pillo*" in Spain, (epithets for which I refer the reader to the dictionary,)—and that Mayans was Minister of *dis-Grace* and *in-Justice*.

The incendiary rage of an Eratostratus for notoriety, the rash daring of a hare-brained Phaëton, were accurate types of the administrative madness of Bravo, who, not content with his impudent refusal to answer all questions, and his scornful closing of the Córtes, with his suspension of the legal re-organization of the municipalities and national militia, with the issue of an order by which was nullified the royal decree for the recognition of the honours conferred by Espartero, with his audacious reply to the Moderado leaders when they consulted him as to his future plan of Government,—“I mean to organize the country by Decrees, and afterwards to ask the Córtes for a Bill of Indemnity,”—proceeded like a true renegado-Republican in a Moderado livery turned up with Absolutism, to transfer the Inspectorship of the national militia from a civilian to the War Minister, preparatory to the disarming of that popular body,

and put forth a document entitled "*Heads of a Project for the Political and Social Organization of Spain*," which contained the bases of something still less than the banished Estatuto Real—a combination of downright re-actionary plans, concocted under the guidance of the virtuous Camarilla, insanely advancing towards a new Despotism, amidst the grim smiles of Absolutist agents, and the stupefied stare of the Spanish nation.

The heart of Don Carlos leaped with joy at Bourges, and the Pope's bosom at Rome yearned towards these purely-minded Apostolical agents. For ten years His Holiness had allowed the ecclesiastical affairs of this eminently Catholic country to pass without active intervention, in contempt and spiritual interdict, without recognition of its Crown, or its authorities, and scornfully withholding the necessary bulls for the canonical institution of the bishops named by the government.

All the urgent solicitations of the Queen Regent, and of Espartero during his subsequent regency, were unavailing to move or to bend the intractable tenacity of the Papal See. This new and unprecedented zeal seemed to indicate not so much a desire to recognize Isabella Secunda, as a wish to give force and encouragement to the principles adopted by her government. Orders were despatched to Monsignor Capaccini at Lisbon, to put himself in communication with the Spanish capital, and Señor Castillo y Ayensa was sent as Plenipotentiary to Rome to negotiate an arrangement of those ecclesiastical differences, which were now so much deplored. The position of the

Castilian crown and clergy was now a source of deep anxiety to His Holiness, though the legal claims of Isabel to that Crown, of Cristina to that Regency, were never before recognized; and the suspicion was assuredly encouraged that an approximation to the principles of Absolute Government was more valued at Rome than legitimate rights.

The appropriate close of this irrational year for Spain, and winding up of the affair between Olózaga and the Camarilla, was the summary termination of a session of the *Córtes*, with nothing done, and all debates made fruitless, by the grave, dignified, and consistent Bravo—a course superior to Penelope's undoing of the web, since thus without the trouble of unravelling, the threads were cut asunder; and remarkably consequential, seeing that Olózaga was dismissed for only threatening to do the same thing: a course, let it be added, sanctioned by obvious policy, since, the steed having scampered off, it was right that the grooms should be dismissed; and Olózaga's person being safe from dungeons, and his head from scaffolds, a show of Parliamentary proceedings was needless, as it could no longer bring that terrible naughty man into the sphere of the merciful charities of Narvaez, and the Camarilla.

Furthermore, by this course, an unpledged Prime Minister was saved the unpleasant necessity of avowing that he could not answer even an ordinary question in the *Córtes*, and barring out the schoolmaster contributed much to the facilities which "Young Spain" desired for spending a merry Christmas. The apples and nuts of office, set off with an abund-

ance of the rich minced-pies of the Treasury, which the young gentleman's father, as Under-Secretary, baked in his own oven, and stuck with stolen plums, furnished forth a truly agreeable repast; and not the less delightful, that the chuckling stuffers, who crammed thereat, had so cunningly shied the puzzling examinations of the Córtes. The mummers pranced at Madrid, while Ametler poured his shells into Figueras upon the Christmas night. But Spain looked on with a scowling brow, and an eye that flashed indignation; an outraged people regarded the scene with contemptuous disgust, which Europe shared; the Moderados, who lost their reason, and the Absolutists who called themselves Moderados, rushed madly on in their career of despotism, forcing a crisis by their violence, accelerating their merited downfall by a riotous extravagance of mischief, and the most tranquil spectators were swayed by a feeling of desperation.

The last day of the year was made memorable by an act, in which Bravo, like a Lord of Misrule in the heat of Christmas week, usurped legislative powers, the Chambers being closed by his mandate, and issued his Decree giving force, without alteration, except as to the Royal nomination of the Alcaldes, to that very law for the restrictive organization of the Municipalities, and for suppressing their right of petition on political questions, which Cristina signed at Barcelona on the 14th July, 1840, and which caused her to be expelled from the Spanish soil, amidst the thunders of a Revolution. On the same closing day of the year, the new ministers cleared out