

PREFACE.

It may appear almost superfluous that a preface should accompany a work like the present, but I must be excused in this instance, in order that I may render a passing tribute to the artist, who has kindly assisted me in the illustrations of the following pages. The landscape and architectural drawings are from my own sketches, but the figures are from the pencil of Mr. Egron Lundgren, a Swedish Artist now residing in Seville, whose admirable delineations of Spanish life and customs are well known to those who have had the pleasure of visiting his studio.

The reader will find in these pages the results of passing observations made during a two years' residence in the country. I have endeavoured to give a faithful description of the present state of Spain, a country for which I have always entertained feelings of peculiar interest, and of which I shall carry away many

pleasing recollections, of happy days spent beneath its sunny sky.

No books have been consulted in the preparation of this work, beyond the local histories of the various cities which we visited, and some of the Spanish historians: indeed, I had but few at my command. Under the disadvantages of being absent from England during the progress of this book through the press, I should have had even more diffidence in presenting it to the public, had it not been for the assistance of two or three kind friends, to whom I can hardly sufficiently express my thanks.

SEVILLE, May, 1853.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The whole of the Illustrations which accompany this Volume (from original drawings by Lady Louisa Tenison and Mr. Egron Lundgren) have been executed under the superintendence of that distinguished artist, Mr. John F. Lewis.

New Burlington Street, July 16, 1853.

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WOMEN AT CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

Un tiempo España fué; cien héroes fueron En tiempos de ventura,
Y las naciones timidas la vieron
Vistosa en hermosura
Cual cedro que in Libano se ostenta,
Su frente se elevaba;
Como el trueno a la virgen amedrenta
Su voz las asterraba.
Mas ora, como piedra en el desierto
Yaces desamparada

ESPRONCEDA.

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FROM THE ERMITAS—AQUEDUCTS—CERRO DE SN. ANTON.

It was a glorious evening in the beginning of October 1850, when we found ourselves steaming out of the Bay of Gibraltar on our way to Málaga, where we

were going to remain the winter. Nothing could exceed the beauty of the night. There was not a ripple on the sea; and as the steamer dashed along, the waters around sparkled with phosphorescent light, and millions of fire-flies seemed to be dancing amid the white foam which rose about us. There was no moon; but the stars were shining with the most intense brilliancy, standing out in the deep dark sky, and shedding so clear a light, that we could distinguish the grand outline not only of the rock itself, but of the range of lofty mountains stretching far away towards Tarifa, and marking on our left the long line of the Spanish coast whose soil we were about to visit for the first time.

No one can approach Spain without feelings of the deepest interest, different indeed from those which animate the traveller on first seeing the more classic shores of Greece or Italy, but still of a character which awakens many a stirring thought and cherished recollection. She has filled a great page in the World's History. The very darkness of her infancy is not in common with that of other countries. It embraces a period and events in which perhaps is to be found the surest clue to the earliest colonisation of the west of Europe and whatever of arts and of civilisation it may have then possessed. She, too, as well as other lands. had her fields laid waste by civil war and invasion: but in every phase of her story there is an interest peculiar to herself. Subject, in turn, to Carthage and to Rome; then conquered by the Goths, whose power fell to pieces on the banks of the Guadalete, she was laid low at the foot of the Moslem, until the germ of a new dynasty sprang up in the fastnesses of the Asturias. Divided into many kingdoms, almost incessantly at war with each other, her energies became

gradually concentrated on the one great object, that of rescuing her soil from its Mahommedan rulers.

Animated by religious enthusiasm, the untiring efforts of more than seven hundred years were at length crowned with success; and the triumph of the cross was rewarded with the discovery of a new world and a boundless empire. Rapidly rising to the highest pinnacle of greatness, the first among the nations in chivalrous renown, in military power, in wealth and commerce, she dazzled the world with her glories for a season, only to render more visible the darkness that has shrouded her since. Even in our own times. though her plains have been the battle fields on which the destinies of Europe have been partly decided, she is but little known and little visited; yet, proud even in her fall, she seems content that the stranger should pass her by unheeded, without lifting the veil which conceals her corruption and decay. Spain has been ever the favoured land of Romance; and some of her greatest heroes live but in the wild verses of her ballads. There is still a charm in this land of by-gone chivalry, which lingers about it, even after a long residence in the country and an acquaintance with the sad realities of its present state, have gone far to dispel the dreams in which imagination had so long indulged.

Our steamer was very comfortable—one of those Spanish vessels which run from Cadiz to Marseilles, stopping at all the intermediate ports. They regulate their progress so as to arrive during the morning or early in the day, at the several points they visit, where they remain some hours; thus affording the tourist a most delightful though rapid view of the southern and eastern shores of the Peninsula. We were on deck before sunrise, anxious to have the first view of our destination.

The sun was rising out of the waters as we approached, gilding the whole range of mountains, at the foot of which Málaga appeared with its famous fortress, the Gibralfaro towering to the right, and its lofty Cathedral elevated high above the surrounding buildings. From the sea the town appears small: the Cathedral seeming to form the principal portion. As we approached, it being some gala day, the guns from the fortress began firing; and no great effort of imagination was required to picture Málaga as it lay during its memorable siege; to conjure up the past, and see the Christian army encamped around—the low plain which stretches out to the left, and the surrounding hills covered with Castilian troops—the ensign of the cross floating over the tent of Ferdinand and Isabella—the blue waters whitened with sails bearing supplies to the camp of the besiegers—while the inhabitants of the town looked in vain for relief to the distant shores of Africa; their sacred banner still waving from the heights of the Gibralfaro. But a nearer approach soon destroyed the illusion—the Málaga before which the Catholic Sovereigns lay encamped suddenly vanished, and we saw before us the Málaga of the nineteenth century, flanked on each side by the tall chimneys of its iron-works, more befitting the neighbourhood of Liverpool or Glasgow than the sunny clime of Andalucia. But unpoetical and discordant with the scene around, as such erections may appear, it is upon them that the eye ultimately rests with greatest satisfaction, glad to see, that amid the lethargy that is so widely prevalent, there is still a sign of life and health and hope for the future.

The dreams of the past, first dispelled by the sight of the tall chimneys of the Heredias iron-works, were thoroughly banished when we cast anchor in the port: