

it is rendered very gay by the numbers who come to take advantage of the sea bathing. The cathedral is a modern structure, full of costly marbles, but exhibiting more richness than good taste. It was built nearly entirely at the expense of the late bishop, who devoted all his resources to this object. He was greatly beloved, and died, as he lived, almost in poverty. The most interesting building in Cadiz is the old Capuchin Convent, now a school for children. In its gardens are some of the finest palm-trees in Andalucia, and amongst them I noticed the doum-palm which grows in Upper Egypt. In the church are some fine works of Murillo, and no one can contemplate the altar-piece of the "Marriage of St. Catherine," without feelings of interest, for this, the artist's last performance, was in reality the cause of his death. He fell from the scaffold while painting it, and was so severely injured that he was conveyed to Seville, where he died shortly afterwards. This altar-piece was finished by one of his pupils.

A pleasant sail may be taken round the bay. The low ground at the upper end presents a curious appearance from the pyramids of salt which glitter in the sun: large quantities are produced by simple evaporation beneath the sun's rays. Salt is another of the Government monopolies in Spain. They carry their fear of its being interfered with to such an extent, that they do not allow any water to be taken from the sea lest a few grains of salt might be extracted from it. To procure a salt-water bath you must have a permission signed by a medical man, or give a gentle fee in the right quarter. Fancy Protection, not satisfied with endeavouring to fetter the produce of the earth, but seeking to extend its dominions over the very waters of the ocean!

A visit should be paid to the Caraccas, formerly the great naval arsenal; but its workshops are now tenant-

less and deserted. The country that possessed the first navy in the world, whose galleons brought the tribute of new worlds to her shores, has never recovered the fatal battle of Trafalgar, when she paid for her alliance with France by the destruction of her fleet. Much as one may moan over the ruins of stately edifices, whose architectural beauties may have been defaced by revolutionary madness, or the fury of invading armies, there is yet something more painful in remains such as these, where once the busy hum of active industry resounded. The former tell of the wealth or of the piety of private individuals; but the latter speak of the wealth and power of a nation—attest the dominion it formerly exercised—the grandeur of empire which has passed away. Well indeed may Spain exclaim in the words of her poet :

Aprended, flores, de mi  
Lo que va de ayer á hoy ;  
Que ayer maravilla fué  
Y hoy sombra mia, no soy.





MANTILLA DE TIRO.

## CHAPTER IX.

The sacred taper's lights are gone,  
Grey moss has clad the altar stone,  
The holy image is o'erthrown,  
The bell has ceased to toll.  
The long-ribbed aisles are burst and shrunk,  
The holy shrines to ruin sunk,  
Departed is the pious monk,  
God's blessing on his soul!

REDIVIVA.

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A RIDING TOUR TO GRANADA—PORT ST. MARY'S—XERES—THE CARTUJA—SUPPRESSION OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS—MONASTIC RUINS—START FROM XERES—ARCOS—HOSPITALITY—SPLENDID SCENERY—A FOREST RIDE—MID-DAY HALT—ABSENTEE PROPRIETORS—EL BOSQUE—MORE HOSPITALITY—BENIMOHAMMED—GRAZALEMA—NADA PARTICULAR—THE THEATRE—STRANGERS A DECIDED NOVELTY—ROAD TO RONDA.

It was on one of those delicious spring days that gladden the month of May in this heavenly clime, that we went on board the steamer which plies between Cadiz

and Puerto Santa Maria, or "the Puerto," as it is more emphatically called by the inhabitants of the neighbouring towns. The bay never wore a lovelier aspect; the snow-white city rising from the blue waters, with its green balconies so fresh and bright, and in the distance the tall peaks of the Serrania of Ronda, whither we were about to bend our steps.

All looked beautiful, and our spirits too were buoyant, animated by the scene around, and the prospect of a regular expedition before us—a good scramble through the wild Sierras. No one who has not made this sort of tour can understand the full enjoyment to be derived from it—an enjoyment which those who study only how to travel with the greatest amount of comfort can never appreciate. Let none whose ideas of travel and its delights are associated with rolling over a capital road in a luxurious carriage drawn by four swift horses, and looking forward all the while to the well-dressed dinner and warm rooms, all in readiness for their reception,—let none who consider these things an indispensable accompaniment to travelling venture on an excursion through the mountains of Andalucia. But to those who for a while can postpone personal indulgences for the contemplation of the beauties of nature, who love to see something of the manners and habits of the people in whose land they are wandering, who care not for the fatigues and discomforts they may have to encounter, but are ready to be satisfied with everything, and take all that may befall them with a light heart and a merry laugh, a riding tour is one of those enjoyable events which only those who have tried can thoroughly appreciate.

What can be more exhilarating than the fresh mountain air, the early rising, the wild life of going where you like and stopping when it pleaseth you; the mid-day halt for refreshment in some shady spot where the air is cooled

with running water, the ride again at each turn offering some enchanting prospect, ever-changing, ever-varying; and then the arrival; the preparations for the evening meal, and for passing the night as comfortably as means will allow, affording a never-ending source of amusement; the groups scattered round the fires at the country ventas; the constant intercourse with the people among whom you are so completely thrown, the insight it affords you into their habits, the plans to be arranged for the morrow, all combine to give to riding excursions in these Southern climes a peculiar charm! The bright, unclouded sky above infuses into one fresh life and vigour; and after such expeditions, all other modes of travelling appear flat and uninteresting.

Our steamer was not the most orthodox specimen of naval architecture; but it did all that was required of it, and carried its passengers backwards and forwards three or four times a-day under the guidance of an Irish engineer, who doctored the machinery whenever it fell sick, and who declared that it went "as well, if not better," than when it was new. Myles Cogan was the name of the guardian-angel who had presided over the safety-valves of this crazy old thing for upwards of six years; and a very characteristic specimen he was of his race, with his shrewd, laughing, grey eye, his mouth stretching from ear to ear, and his whole countenance beaming with good-nature. He has taken to himself a Spanish wife, and the youthful offspring claim a common descent from the O'Cogan and the Cid, "the shamrock of Erin and the olive of Spain." He was charmed at finding some of his countrymen on board, and offered his services in the fashion of his adopted land; at the same time wisely retiring to perform for us the most effectual service in his power, that of guiding us safely into the harbour of Port St. Mary.

The Custom House officers not finding that our baggage contained many contraband articles, were content to let us pass without molestation; and having engaged our places in the diligence which runs between this place and Xeres, we proceeded to refresh ourselves at the hospitable mansion of a friend, where we were most warmly and kindly received. This place is uninteresting, but is much frequented in summer by those who fly from the heat of Seville and the neighbouring towns; there are likewise some resident wealthy families, the wine trade being carried on almost as extensively here as at Xeres, for which latter town it serves as the point of export.

Our diligence started very punctually, and we were soon ensconced in the interior with two such companions! Two perfect specimens of the oldest, fattest, and ugliest women that this land—which, by the way, is not deficient in such articles—could produce. In these sultry climes beauty quickly passes away; and certainly the more ancient portion of the population, be they male or female, retain very little of the good looks with which they may have been blessed in their more juvenile days. One of our friends was endowed with a most remarkable appendage, which lent an additional charm to her countenance, in the shape of a pair of black, wiry moustaches, whose luxuriance would have shamed many a young aspirant to such honours. The heat was great, and was rendered still more insupportable by the dust—that curse of this dry, thirsty land, which envelopes you on the high road, and forms no small addition to the many inconveniences which accompany travelling by diligence in the Peninsula.

The country was arrayed in an emerald garb, the corn was ripe—and indeed much of it had been already cut—the road was in capital order, and the view over the bay

from a small eminence quite magnificent. The distant city seemed no unworthy rival of stately Venice, as she rose from the ocean, with her sea-girt walls and snow-white houses, and from that distance appeared so lovely, that the proud Queen of the Adriatic need hardly have felt herself injured by the comparison. Near the road, about half way to Xeres, a small ruined castle, embosomed in trees, is pointed out as the prison of the fair Blanche of Bourbon, the injured and persecuted wife of Peter the Cruel. Here, they say, she was murdered by the orders of her husband, who, after the death of his favourite, Maria de Padilla, finding no longer any excuse for treating her with his previous neglect, determined to put her out of the way, in order to free himself from an alliance which he had always regarded with horror. I know not why tradition should have selected this spot as the scene of this foul crime, for historians seem tolerably agreed that she was murdered at Medina Sidonia, in the fortress of which place she had been for some time imprisoned. The noble-minded governor refused to obey the cruel mandate, but a tyrant always finds minions ready to minister to his cruelty; and Ortiz de Zuñiga was quickly replaced by one who consented to sacrifice the mild and virtuous queen at the command of his royal master.

Whether this spot be or not, the scene where the ill-fated Blanche terminated a life of suffering, the plains below are classic ground in Spanish history. Through them a silver stream may be seen meandering, its waters now glistening in the sun, now concealed, its course only marked by the sails of the small boats which are taking their cargoes of wine down from Xeres to the Puerto. This stream is the Guadalete, which eleven hundred years ago flowed down in the self same course, red with the blood of contending armies; and on those

plains was decided the fate of the Gothic empire in Spain. On the low ground which intervenes between this river and the town of Medina Sidonia, the armies of the Moslem and the Christian met. At the expiration of eight days of continuous conflict, the Cross was trampled in the dust, and the Caliphs of the East claimed one of the fairest provinces in Europe as their own. The remnant of the Christian host fled into the remote corners of the Asturias, whence the descendants of Pelayo gradually emerged to regain the kingdom that Roderick had lost. The fifteenth century beheld the final destruction of the Moslem power in the west of Europe; but the same century saw it established in the east, and the banner of Islam waved upon the walls of Constantinople a few short years before it was lowered from the citadel of Granada.

At a place called El Portal, the wines of Jerez are shipped for conveyance down the river to the Puerto, where the Guadalete falls into the bay. A railroad is now, however, in progress between Xeres and Cadiz, and is rapidly approaching completion. The town presented a gay and animated appearance as we entered; it was Ascension Day, and many groups were scattered about in the Plaza enjoying themselves. Like most of the cities in Audalucia, it is clean and joyous-looking, the whitewashed houses and green balconies stamping it with the same peculiar character possessed by Seville. It contains many handsome houses, some the abode of ancient noble families, others belonging to those wealthy merchants whose fortunes lie in its vine-clad hills. It offers but little of interest in the way of architectural monuments. The enormous wine-stores or "bodegas" form the chief source of attraction, and are the "lions" generally visited by travellers. Here in large shed-roofed buildings, above ground, are ranged



hundreds and thousands of casks, containing wines of every price and quality, and affording to the connoisseur an interesting study, in learning how by frequent and skilful mixing of the produce of the different vineyards, the famous wines of Xeres are prepared for the foreign market.

The church of San Miguel is fine, the exterior remarkably pretty; but the richly decorated pillars of Gothic work are disfigured by such an incrustation of whitewash, that little of their beauty is left. The Collegiate church has not much to recommend it; it did not appear either to be much frequented, for we were there during the celebration of high mass, and the congregation did not consist of more than half a dozen old women; but then it was neither Sunday nor a fête day.

The object of greatest interest in the neighbourhood of Xeres is the celebrated Cartuja, or Carthusian monastery, which stands on an eminence about a league from the town, overhanging the Guadalete, and commanding an extensive view of the vineyards and corn-fields of the surrounding country, many a rich tract of which belonged to its former possessors. We spent a whole day there, sketching and wandering about its deserted halls and cloisters. The coach which conveyed us thither was one of those antiquated vehicles, which might have formed the pride of our ancestors some hundred years ago. It was drawn by five horses. They managed to carry us over the dangers of the road without any adventure worth recording; dragging us and our lumbering vehicle at a measured pace through the dust, which was nearly axle deep, and over ruts which would have upset anything but a Spanish carriage, driven by a Spaniard, and drawn by Spanish horses.

Like all Carthusian convents, it is a splendid pile of

building. Here the followers of San Bruno, if their enemies say true, made amends for the severity of the rules imposed on them by their founder, by enjoying every luxury wealth could afford. Extensive courtyards, now all covered with weeds and grass, led into a succession of patios and pillared cloisters, adorned with marble fountains or tall sombre cypresses. From the largest cloister—a magnificent square of a hundred paces—opened out the cells of the monks, disposed with every regard to comfort and neatness, being divided into summer and winter habitations, and having a small garden behind each, commanding the most enchanting views. Thence they could gaze upon their broad lands, and watch the proud steeds roaming through the pastures on the plains beneath. These served to keep up the fine race of Andalusian horses, for which the Cartuja was famous, an employment which however incongruous it may appear, with a life of religious meditation, formed one of the most important and lucrative occupations of the worthy monks. I cannot quite go as far as a Spanish writer, who declares no pilgrim ever visited this monastery without wishing to end his days in so enchanting a spot; but it is very beautiful, and sad indeed is the appearance it presents in its now dilapidated condition. A more melancholy scene I never gazed on than these deserted courts, where the silence of the monks has been succeeded by the silence of desolation, where the crumbling walls and desecrated altars bear witness to the sacrilegious hands which have invaded their holy places.

Such scenes as these, make us think of the days when the same might have been witnessed in our own country. We now contemplate the ruined monasteries of England with delight and admiration; the time which has elapsed since their destruction has softened down the harsher and more painful features of their fall; and as we gaze upon

them, enraptured with their picturesque appearance, we forget that they must have presented an aspect as sad as that of the one we had before us, when in the first fury of religious zeal, their altars were thrown down and desecrated; but here, it is all too recent, too present for even the passing traveller to gaze upon such desolate scenes unmoved. We cannot help grieving over the blind fanaticism, or rather heartless policy which could not even spare the consecrated piles, when it drove forth their unhappy inmates from the homes which they had reared with such skill and labour. And here the attacks on religious property had not even the apology of a change of creed; it did not come from those who were seeking to overturn the long established religion of the land. It came from her own sons—from those who, still professing obedience to the Church, deprived its clergy of all their revenues. The regular orders were almost entirely suppressed, and a certain number of secular clergy were placed on a par with the naval and military establishments, and received, and still receive, an annual stipend from the government.

It was in 1835 that this remarkable change took place in Spain—a change which however beneficial it may eventually prove, was accompanied by much hardship, suffering and injustice at the time. A strong feeling against the religious orders had been for some period gaining deep hold of people's minds. The abuses which existed in many convents, the conduct of the clergy themselves, and the manner in which men who had dedicated their lives to religious meditation and retirement from the world, forgot their vows amid the wealth and luxury they were enjoying, had predisposed all classes to look upon them with no very friendly eye; and this feeling against them was rapidly increased by the state of political parties in the Peninsula at that period. Under the plea