

events of the "dos de Mayo" (the 2nd of May), however, proved to Napoleon that the enmity of the Spanish nation was deep and undying. The gauntlet of defiance was flung at his feet, and the guerilla warfare of the Spaniards showed their determination to resist the invader.

In 1812, Wellington, at the head of the Anglo-Spanish army, entered Madrid, and the Constitution was adopted by the Commission of Regency at Cadiz during the same year. Ferdinand, not content with annulling all their actions on his return to his capital in 1814, and abrogating the Constitution of 1812, persecuted all those who had been connected with its organisation; and to this fatal step may be traced most of the sad revolutions and scenes of bloodshed, which have since desolated Spain. The restoration of an absolutism, under which they had long been groaning, rankled deep in the heart of the nation; the sovereign endeavoured to make himself popular in Madrid, and, like despots in other countries, sought to amuse the people by fêtes and all sorts of innocent amusements; but in 1820, the spirit of discontent again burst forth, and Ferdinand was obliged to adopt once more the Constitution of 1812.

Three years of civil war ensued, when the French were at length summoned to assist the sovereign in recovering the absolute power he had lost. The Duke d'Angoulême and his troops entered Madrid, and then proceeded to storm Cadiz, where the Constitutionals held the King as prisoner. When he was restored to his capital, free again to exercise his own will, the oaths he had taken to abide by the Constitution were annulled, his promises broken, and the blood of Riego, as well as many of the Constitutionals, flowed upon the scaffold. Ten years of comparative peace and tranquillity followed, until the death of Ferdinand in 1833, when his infant daughter

ascended the throne under the guardianship of her mother. Civil war now burst forth; the standard of Don Carlos was raised in the Basque provinces, and the Queen-mother, in order to save her daughter's throne, was obliged in 1836 once more to subscribe to the Constitution, which was modified the following year to suit the circumstances of the country.

In 1839, the treaty of Vergara put an end to the misery of civil war, and Don Carlos retired to France. The "Progresistas," as the ultra-Liberal party are here termed, finally triumphed; the Queen-mother was obliged to leave Spain, and Espartero was named Regent. Well had it been for Spain had she never been allowed to set her foot again in the land to which her avarice and her intrigues have proved such a curse. Opinions, of course, differ much on Espartero's government, his talents, or his energies were doubtless unequal to the post he occupied, and he soon fell before the well-arranged plots of the Queen-mother. After Espartero's flight, in 1843, the young Queen was declared of age; intrigues followed on intrigues; in the course of a twelve-month nine successive governments held the reins of power; but at length, in 1844, Christina triumphed, and General Narvaez became President of the Council. His will was law; he ruled with an iron hand. In the first year of his power several insurrections occurred in Alicante and in other places, which were quelled at the expense of a great sacrifice of human life. It was for the part he took in putting down the disturbances of Alicante that the late President of the Council, Roncali Conde de Alcoy, is chiefly remembered.

Narvaez continued to govern with an almost absolute power, and under his administration the marriages of the Sovereign and her sister were arranged. All these events are too recent and too well remembered to need

repetition. Narvaez was succeeded in the administration of the government by Bravo Murillo, who, it was said, boasted that he could rule with the pen as well as Narvaez ruled with the sword. Following in the steps of his neighbours on the other side of the Pyrenees, he at length thought the time had arrived for a coup d'état, and the 2nd of December in Paris was succeeded by a prorogation of the Cortes in Spain; and the period of the proclamation of the empire was selected as the most judicious moment for a reform in the Constitution, which famous decree was promulgated while we were in Madrid.



LA BOLERA.

## CHAPTER XII

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Lo mejor del mundo es la Europa (¡ cosa clara !); la mejor de las naciones de Europa es la España (¡ quien lo duda !); el pueblo mejor de España es Madrid (¿ de veras ?); el sitio mas principal de Madrid es la Puerta del Sol—ergo, la Puerta del Sol es el punto privilegiado del globo.—EL CURIOSO PARLANTE.

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MADRID — PUERTA DEL SOL — HOTELS — PRADO — CARNIVAL — BULL-FIGHTS — MERINO — THE COURT — SOCIETY — THE THEATRES — LITERATURE — ALCALA DE HENARES — CARDINAL XIMENES — CERVANTES — ARCHITECTURE — PALACE OF MADRID — ARMOURY — PLAZA MAYOR.

ALTHOUGH the approach to Madrid does not present the attributes of a capital, the interior is handsome; and the two principal streets which lead from the Prado are

very fine. Perhaps one of the first things which strikes a traveller is the absence of a cathedral, an object which one naturally expects to find in every great city; Madrid, however, does not aspire to this dignity. It is only a town or a "villa," and, although honoured by the epithets of "imperial and crowned, loyal and noble," the favoured abode of monarchs, and the metropolis of the country, it still remains subject to the Archiepiscopal see of Toledo, and has no bishop or cathedral of its own. Neither do the churches contain anything remarkable. The Church of the Buen Suceso, in the Puerta del Sol, is the most fashionable, mass being performed there at a later hour than at the others, but nothing can be more mean or common-place than the interior.

Having mentioned the Puerta del Sol, one must speak of this famous spot, this resort of the idlers of Madrid, and the centre of the town. Its name leads one to expect some great gateway, some fine remnant of antiquity, but the Puerta del Sol is nothing more than a very common-place-looking plaza, with an insignificant church at one end, which is honoured with an illuminated clock at night. A large paved space in front of this church serves as a lounge for those who wish to discuss the scandal and politics of the day, and affords a charming excuse for doing nothing, an occupation in which Spaniards are not loath to indulge. The corners of the streets of the Carmen and the Montera are quite full of idlers, rendering it no easy matter for carriages to force their way among the crowd who stand staring, talking, and examining the various amusements advertised for the evening, and the "affiche" of the approaching bull-fight. Were this called the Plaza del Sol, it would not be inappropriate, for the sun shines here with undiminished ardour during the whole of the day.

The principal streets diverge from the Puerta del Sol,

the Calle Alcalá, and the Carrera San Geronimo, leading to the Prado; the others branching into the different parts of the town. The houses in Madrid are very lofty, more in the French style, and families live on separate floors as in Paris. The entrances to some are not particularly attractive, being occupied by little stands where all sorts of cheap goods are sold, and cobblers and shoemakers abound. The shops in Madrid have a great show of rich and costly materials in the windows, in the way of dress and ornaments for the table, &c. The hotels are certainly not such as one might expect to find; the largest is in the Calle Alcalá, the "Peninsulares," where most of the diligences stop, and anything more dirty or disagreeable, can hardly be imagined. There is an immense table-d'hôte, where a large and motley assemblage of people are generally to be met with at five o'clock. All nations and all languages, all classes and all kinds are there assembled, without any particular regard as to their rank or position in society. Russian princesses, with their extensive suites, English engineers preparing to take advantage of the railroad mania which has seized upon Spain; artists from all quarters, anxious to copy the treasures of the Madrid gallery; French actors and actresses, and Italian opera-singers, fulfilling their engagements in the capital; English travellers rushing through Spain, seeking to "do" everything in some infinitesimal space of time. When we were there the guests enjoyed an unusual privilege, for at one side of the table sat the immortal Holloway, who had come to diffuse the blessings of his pills among the benighted inhabitants of Madrid.

Although the hotels may not be good, still there are many very comfortable lodgings to be had, all within an accessible distance of the Puerta del Sol, and in these the traveller, who contemplates making an extended

stay, will find it more advisable to establish himself. The Calle Alcalá is a noble street, though many of the houses are not sufficiently lofty. The descent to the Prado is planted on both sides, with avenues of acacias. This celebrated promenade is a fine broad walk, overshadowed with trees, and extending an immense length; the large centre space is reserved for pedestrians, and on one side is the fashionable drive. It is also ornamented with several fine fountains. Here in the afternoon may be seen all the world of Madrid driving and walking.

Among the pedestrians there is nothing strikingly different from the appearance that such an assemblage would present in any other country, excepting, of course, the mantillas, which are still very much worn in Madrid. Here and there a priest may be seen passing among the throng, with his long black cloak and strange uncomfortably shaped hat, which mark the dress of the clergy; but even they are beginning gradually to lay these aside, and dress like other people. Almost the only peculiarity of costume which still exists on the Prado is in the person of the *nodrizas*, or nurses, who come mostly from the provinces of Biscay and the north, and always retain their own national costume while residing in the families of the nobility at Madrid. Some of these women are very good-looking, and in many families no expense is spared upon their dress, which generally consists of a black velvet jacket, and gay-coloured petticoat with broad bands of gold or silver tissue, making it very showy, and the costume is completed by a kerchief tied over the head.

And here numbers of well-appointed carriages parade up and down every day, backwards and forwards, and among them now and then those of the different members

of the royal family, the Queen herself sometimes joining the throng. Her Majesty, however, seldom makes her appearance until very late, when the majority of the world are about returning home, her hours rather tending to reverse the night and day. She is now on sufficiently good terms with the King for him to accompany her in her drives, and the little Princess is generally in the arms of her governess, with the nurse by her side, decked out as magnificently as the *nodriza* of the heiress to the throne might well expect to be. A pretty drive to the Fuente Castellana forms a continuation of the Prado, and here people get out of their carriages to walk a little. The gayest time to see the Prado is during the Carnival, when Madrid certainly presents as lively a scene as can anywhere be witnessed. The line of carriages then extends up to the Church of the Atocha, and the whole Prado is ringing with the squeaking of masks, diversified with all the varied costumes and strange dresses adopted on such occasions. Parties of masks in carriages and on horseback enliven the paseo; and it would all be charming if one could only forget the intensity of the cold that prevails at this period, but the biting air of Madrid does not tend to enhance one's enjoyment. But for once the Madrileños seem to forget the disagreeables of their climate, and devote themselves "con amore" to all the fun and frolic of the Carnival. The masks have certainly the best of it, their disguise sheltering them alike from the inquiring glances of friends, and the piercing blasts of the Sierra.

The three last days of the Carnival are amusing; but the grand scene of all is reserved for Ash Wednesday, a day in other countries more generally devoted to religious exercises, but here, by special permission, considered the last and merriest day of all. On Ash Wednesday is celebrated what the Madrileños call the *Entierro de la*



Sardina (the funeral of the Sardine), when the whole population flock down to the grand canal to spend the day, and bury the poor little fish. The origin of this singular custom seems enveloped in obscurity; and how such a burlesque on religious ceremonies should ever have been tolerated in a land where religion has held such a stern fierce rule, seems still more extraordinary. On this day, in the bustle of enjoyment, the cold and the unpropitious climate are forgotten, and all go forth, young and old, rich and poor, to assemble by thousands along the banks of the canal; vehicles of every description are in requisition, and rush down, in order that they may return to convey a fresh cargo to the busy scene.

And when you arrive at the canal you find the green banks covered with people, scattered about and seated in groups upon the grass, round a sort of pic-nic entertainment, feasting in every direction; while the sound of the guitar, and the wild notes of the seguidilla and the manchego, are mingled with the lively air of the "Jota Aragonesa." Multitudes of masks are moving about, some all heads, and some all legs; some clothed in harlequin colours, others mimicking some passing event of the day, and all is a scene of confusion and gaiety, until the attention is suddenly arrested by a funeral dirge, which breaks on the ear, and a procession appears bearing the corpse of the sardine to its resting-place. The bearers are dressed as penitents, with high-peaked caps, and chaunt the regular service for the dead in Latin; one precedes, throwing holy water on the body, and the whole ceremony is gone through according to the most orthodox formula. And every Ash Wednesday this same burlesque is acted, and the clergy, if they endeavoured, would now be unable to put an end to the ceremony, which time and custom have endeared to the Madrileños.

There was an attempt made to do so a year or two ago, but it failed most signally; and a small "pronunciamiento," as they call *émeutes* in this country, would probably have followed on such an infringement of their amusements. So the sardine is allowed to go to the grave with all the funeral honours; and while the people are enjoying themselves on the banks of the canal, the fashionables are taking their farewell of the carnival on the Prado. Such is Ash Wednesday in Madrid. Masks are allowed to appear once more on the following Sunday, called the "Domingo de Piñatas," when balls are given, and the scenes of the carnival are acted over again. There are a great many masked balls both in the theatres and in public rooms during the carnival, those at the Italian Opera House being particularly brilliant. Another gay time to see the Prado is in summer and autumn, on the days when the bull-fights are held.

The Plaza de Toros of Madrid is just outside the fine gateway, called the Puerta Alcalá, and the excitement and commotion in the neighbourhood on these occasions, could hardly be credited by those who have not witnessed these national spectacles. As they occur every week, one would imagine they could hardly excite so much sensation; but, on the days when they take place, the Calle Alcalá presents a scene of perpetual motion—omnibuses and carriages of all sorts and sizes, from the diligences, which are not unaptly called "primitivas," to the well appointed equipage of the grandee, or the now-disappearing calessa—all are rushing along in the same direction, while foot-passengers crowd the pavements. The Plaza at Madrid can accommodate twelve thousand persons, and is generally filled. Many of the most noble families in Madrid are constant and unfailing attendants in the arena; and many of the ladies, leaders of fashion, have lately appeared in the Maja dress, interesting them-

selves, with enthusiasm, in the respective merits of Cúchares and Chiclanero.

The Plaza itself is the property of the Hospital, which is assisted by the proceeds of a spectacle that, according to the bitter pen of Jovellanos, "provides it not only with money to cure the wounded, but likewise with wounded, on which to bestow its money—two indispensable requisites for the maintenance of such an institution." Spaniards turn the lash of their unsparing satire against bull-fights, but continue to patronise them—even foreigners, who are vehement in denouncing them, attracted by the novelty of the scene, seldom fail to attend—and the people, faithful to their favourite amusement, still flock in thousands to witness the corridas.

Madrid is a great place for spectacle. Processions and such things are very handsomely and tastefully arranged. I never saw a gayer or more brilliant scene presented by any capital than the day when the Queen first went to Atocha, in February, 1852, after the dreadful attempt on her life which was made by Merino. The Virgin of the Atocha is the favourite shrine of the royal family of Spain, and the especial object of their veneration; and to this church, which is situated at one end of the Prado, the Sovereign always goes on all particular occasions. The Queen was about to turn her steps thither after the birth of the young Princess of the Asturias, to present her daughter in the temple, when the dagger of the criminal arrested her steps, and her life was saved almost by a miracle. Such a deed struck horror and consternation into the mind of every Spaniard, introducing a fresh, and as yet unknown, crime in the annals of Castile.

Whether he was the agent of a conspiracy, as some would still believe, or acted solely upon his own impulses,