

terised his administration. There were many notabilities present, the Cardinal-Archbishop of Toledo, and one or two other bishops; Narvaez, too, had arrived from his retreat at Loja to mix himself once more in public affairs, little dreaming how soon the orders of exile he had issued against so many, would be put in force against himself. Concha and O'Donnell, Conde de Lucena were also among those pointed out to our notice; the former who had been Captain-General of Cuba at the time of the piratical expedition made by Lopez, the latter the representative of a family of whom nearly every member fell in the civil wars of their adopted country. We drove to the Diputados afterwards, but everything there was as quiet as though no meeting had taken place.

The Congreso is a fine building in the Carrera San Geronimo, with a statue of Cervantes in the plaza in front of it. The hall itself is semi-circular, and rather theatrical in its effect, with galleries for the corps diplomatique, and other spectators. There is a stage for the President and his secretaries, and a tribune whence members may address the house if they like; but they seldom avail themselves of the privilege, preferring to speak from their seats. Over the doors, are inscribed in letters of gold the names of the various martyrs who have suffered death for the cause of the Constitution; and when one reflects on the government they have, and the character of public men in Spain, one feels tempted to think they might have sacrificed their lives in a better cause. The ceiling is painted in brilliant frescoes and very gaudy. The committee-rooms are all very prettily fitted up, the walls done in scagliola, but nothing can be more unsuitable than their general aspect for the transaction of business; they have very much the appearance of a French café, and seem as if intended rather for

the discussion of a glass of eau sucré than of the stern and important affairs of state.

The day after the Cortes were dissolved, the decree appeared in the Madrid Gazette, proposing a change in the Constitution, rendering it little more than a name, and following in fact in the steps of their neighbours, proposing to hold their sessions with closed doors, &c. To the end of this decree, another was appended, forbidding the press to make any comments upon the measure, which was to be submitted to the Cortes for approval when it met again, as the authorities considered it unwise to allow people's minds to be prejudiced. This, at all events, was honest, and more to the purpose than the idle theory by which the Spanish press is supposed to be at liberty to express its sentiments freely; while every paper, whose opinions do not harmonize with those of the government, is seized, or obliged to withdraw its leading article, in order to be able to keep faith with its subscribers. This occurs now almost every day, and the newspapers appear with the stereotyped heading: "Nuestro numero de hoy ha sido recogido," (our number of to-day has been seized). Scarcely any of these journals escape the amputation of some limb; and the mutilated newspaper is forthwith dispatched to the subscribers, deprived of that portion which would probably have possessed the greatest value in the eyes of the public.

The measure which attacked the Constitution, proved most distasteful to the military and those who had exercised their energies, defending the throne of Isabel Segunda as a constitutional Sovereign. Difficulties soon arose; the minister of war, who had signed the decree for the banishment of Narvaez, refused to proceed to extremities, and exile a few more refractory generals to the Philipines. The Bravo Murillo cabinet fell, and its chief followed Narvaez to Bordeaux. Some say it bowed to the

universal opinion of the country, which triumphed even when the press was silenced; according to others, it fell before the resistance of a small party, whose object would not have been attained had it remained in power. A new government was then formed under Roncali, which outlived the re-assembling of the Cortes but a short period. General Lersundi succeeded, and is still prime minister; but what line of policy will be pursued by the present cabinet, remains yet to be developed.

People, however, must be actuated by higher and better principles, before things can really improve in this unhappy land; they must learn to prefer public to private interests, before there can be an honest or an upright government in Spain. From the highest to the lowest, all are corrupt: the government bribe alike the electors and the elected; taxes are remitted, patronage is dispensed, trade encouraged, every engine that a ministry, backed by hundreds of employés, can command, is set in motion to return the candidate who will be most pliant when elected. People in Spain only seek to obtain office for the advantages to be derived from it, or the benefits that may accrue to their families; in fact, they do not seem to understand, there can be a possibility of people seeking office with any other view. That there are exceptions, no one can doubt; but the prevalence of the complaint is too manifest, and the state of public morality has sunk so low, that such peccadilloes are considered as a matter of course, and do not call forth either astonishment or reprehension.

The problem of constitutional government in Spain has still to be solved. With nations, as with individuals, inveterate habits will for a time survive convictions, and a long-misgoverned country may, even whilst attaining to better things, practically adhere to that which, as a system, it repudiates. Such is the condition of Spain;

virtually trammelled, whilst theoretically free—encumbered by an antiquated régime, for which it sees no substitute, and which suddenly to suspend, would derange the whole machinery of government. Hence it is, that in the midst of those able disquisitions on national rights which, so long as they were tolerated by the government, did honour to the public press of Spain, and in some sort to its people, we are startled by the spectacle of ever-pliant Parliaments, and of Executives, of whatever shades of politics, foregoing, when in power, the principles which placed them there, and falling back upon a policy incompatible with the existing institutions.* In this spirit did Narvaez banish hundreds; and in the like spirit did Bravo Murillo banish him. Whence this inconsistency, amongst a people naturally intelligent, and disposed to make the system they have chosen a reality?

It has been said, that all nations have as good government as they deserve; an axiom, which, as applied to Spain, would certainly estimate her deserts at a very humble rate. It may be true of settled countries, but Spain, it should be remembered, is in the transition state, impatient of misrule even whilst enduring it. Trained in the school of absolutism, its continuance to the present time has been with her rather a necessity than a choice; more familiar to Spaniards than acceded to by them. The very elements of a better practice have to be created, and preconceived notions not only abandoned, but enlightened ones acquired. It was probably in despair of accomplishing these objects, and of coping with the present but by a recurrence to the past, that the late

* Señor Bertram de Lis, the Minister for the Home Department under Bravo Murillo, suspended a newspaper in Barcelona after it had by his direction and for the very same cause been prosecuted and *acquitted*. But this very man, as Under-Secretary of State in a previous ministry, retired from office rather than give his sanction to a law moderately restraining the Press.

Bravo Murillo ministry, instead of seeking a legitimate remedy in the diffusion of education, &c., became in its latter days so excessively reactionary; throwing amongst the people a very firebrand, in the form of a royal decree, proposing a change in the Constitution, by which amongst other reforms, as they were called, the discussions in the Cortes were to be secret, unreported by the press, and its president named by the crown. But the measure would seem to have been as impossible as it was inexpedient.

Men are still to be found in Spain, who rather than grapple with a present though temporary evil, would stamp it with all the sacredness of law, and perpetuate the same ruinous state of things, from which it has struggled so hard to emerge. Doubtless, the race that is now springing up, will be in a less difficult position: to them the past is mere history, and thus with fewer incongruities to reconcile, it may in time bring the administration of the country to harmonize with its institutions. That ill-timed decree was fatal to the Bravo Murillo ministry. Narvaez, quick to profit by this false move of his adversaries, emerged from his retirement in Loja, and with other influential persons, sought to put in nomination for the new Cortes men on whose constitutional principles they could rely. Though this was done in rigid observance of the law, and with a moderation little characteristic of the man, he was ordered to quit Spain in forty-eight hours under the absurd pretext of inspecting the condition of the Austrian army.

Nothing could be more unwise than this step. It put him once more in the right with the nation, by making a political martyr of the man whom they feared, and whose influence it had been their constant aim to neutralize. Narvaez afterwards insisted on his return to Spain, in order to take his seat in the Senate, and

addressed one or two very energetic expostulations to the Sovereign. On the one hand the law upheld him in his demand, whilst on the other his return was opposed to the views of the court. An illustrious personage is even reported to have said, "That both could not remain in the country."

It is to be lamented that qualities so eminent as those which distinguish the Duke of Valencia, should be obscured by defects which give his enemies a vantage-ground, and in some measure neutralize their effect. His temper is said to be hasty, and imperious to his colleagues; his language, when irritated, coarse and offensive; and his system of government more befitting the camp than the cabinet. But he has ever been loyal to his Sovereign, and staunch to his followers and his party; and if he cannot command the love of the public, he knows better than most men how to profit by its fears, and has ever applied this knowledge to the maintenance of public order. His will and energy are indomitable; and his display of them in 1843, when he threw himself, a denounced man, into the very heart of Spain, with a handful of followers, in face of an opposing army, and caused it to fraternize with his little band to the downfall of the regency, will ever stamp him as a man of that rare daring of which heroes are made, and which, though seemingly rash, had its origin in sound calculations and discretion.

At that period he found an army ill paid, and consequently undisciplined, and the ready tool of ambitious and turbulent leaders. He left it, on resigning office, effective and loyal. It must be confessed, however, that his military predilections raised it to a dangerous ascendancy, and that if it has since been confined within constitutional bounds, it is due to the foresight of his successor, Bravo Murillo. The Duke of Valencia is like-

wise lavish in his expenditure, and, like most Andalusians, fond of pomp and display ; forming, in this particular, a striking contrast with the sober and retired habits of the other.

The admirers of Bravo Murillo describe him as possessing a fixity of purpose, unsurpassed by Narvaez himself, tempered by courtesy, and an ear ever open to all applicants. Educated for the law, he is fluent and argumentative in the Chambers, indefatigable in business, and has unquestionably surpassed cotemporary statesmen in seeking to promote the industry and material interest of his country. During his time, Spain witnessed the novelty of having her civil as well as her military list paid to the hour ; and all state contracts entered into by him were punctually met. The loss of such a man is hard to replace in Spain, making more grave the error he committed, which drove him from her counsels. General Roncali, Conde de Alcoy, who succeeded him, was an untried statesman, with no very enviable celebrity as the stern avenger of an insurrection in Alicante and Cartagena in 1843. By disclaiming the retrograde policy of his predecessors, he somewhat calmed the tempest they had raised. But the sincerity of this disclaimer might well be doubted on the part of a ministry which tyrannized over the press beyond all precedent, and tampered in the most shameless manner with the election of Deputies.

One or two instances out of a thousand may show the manner in which ministerial influence is exerted. In Pinos de la Valle, in the province of Granada, the Alcalde, whose office it is to preside over the elections, was suspended by the Governor as being adverse to the government candidate, and a claim against the town of two hundred pounds was remitted on consideration of the ministerial candidate being returned. In the town of Orgiba, in the same province, a fine of like amount was

imposed, and a further one threatened, should the ministerial candidate not be returned; and as if this were insufficient, the Alcalde was suspended, the second Alcalde was put aside, and a friend of the candidate named to conduct the voting, although a criminal suit was actually pending against him. It may be asked how a government can be allowed to exercise so shameless and baneful an influence? The discussion is, indeed, a wide and difficult one; but one predominating cause may be found in that insatiable rage for government employment which pervades Spain. It is essentially a nation of two classes—"empleados," or persons holding office, dependent on the government for their very bread, and "pretendientes," or those who are seekers after place. Had Le Sage written in the middle of the nineteenth, instead of at the commencement of the eighteenth century, he could not have depicted the system more to the life. Public employment is the primary resource of every needy man who can read and write, as well as of thousands who cannot; the very door-keepers and porters, who encumber the public offices being Legion. It has been computed that their numbers have quadrupled within the present century; and, as a consequence, the administration of the country is some four times more complex and inefficient. Nor are the social evils of such a system less disastrous, at once draining the fields of their legitimate cultivators, and drawing off from the industrious pursuits of life those of the middle classes, whose labour and enterprize should enrich the country. There is, however, in Congress a phalanx of enlightened and determined men bent on sweeping away these relics of a past time, and whose voices will at length be heard. Although forming but a minority within the walls, they carry weight and conviction without them; and to this party, and its principles, many look for the ultimate regeneration of

their country, and for rendering its institutions a reality.

These remarks may appropriately be closed in the language of one of the most distinguished of that party, lately uttered in the Cortes. In a protestation against the coercion so shamefully exercised by government towards electors, Senor Madoz said: "What manner of governing is this? Anarchy, gentlemen, is not personified in the men who are called revolutionary, but in those who act thus. All is now distorted and reversed! We of the opposition are those who most faithfully uphold and serve the throne of Isabella II. You compromise it, and are placing it in imminent danger. We will ever defend it; and perhaps those who are now jeopardizing it, may, in the hour of danger, be the first to fly. Let the truth be said: I am one of those men who have most faith in a constitutional system. But my faith declines when I witness such things. We who have that faith should retire to our own homes, and proclaim ourselves partizans of a policy of retirement, in order not to become accomplices in this child's play, in which loyalty has no part, and in which meanness and intrigue are everything. For myself, I declare that if in 1853 we do not return to the pure forms of representative government, I shall not come again to Congress, for I have no wish to play a part in such a farce. Could we but hear from the House one word in reprobation of such enormities—could we but see one member of the government protest against such conduct, and display a wish to punish the offenders, I should be somewhat consoled, and still believe in the possibility of a representative government in Spain."



AT THE FOUNTAIN.

CHAPTER XVII.

Negra, ruínosa, sola y olvidada
 hundidos ya los pies entre la arena
 allí yace Toledo abandonada,
 azotada del viento y del turbion.

ZORRILLA.

TOLEDO—CATHEDRAL—CAPILLA MAYOR—MUZARABIC CHAPEL AND LITURGY—SAN JUAN DE
 LOS REYES—SWORD MANUFACTORY—BRIDGE OF SAN MARTIN—DECLINE OF TOLEDO—
 CASTLE OF SAN CERVANTES—BRIDGE OF ALCANTARA—ALCAZAR—MOORISH REMAINS—
 DEPARTURE—CORDOBA—THE MOSQUE—SAN NICOLAS—THE ANGELUS—CAMPO SANTO—
 ERMITAS AND THEIR OCCUPANTS—THE SIERRA—RETURN TO SEVILLE—CONCLUSION.

TOLEDO is, perhaps, the most interesting town in Spain, containing, as it does, beauty of situation with historic recollections. It is but a short distance from Madrid; a drive of about six hours over rather a good road taking you from the modern to the ancient capital. What a contrast do not those two cities present! the one, the mere butterfly of to-day, looking as though it had been raised by royal decree to suit the purpose of the hour; the other, throned upon her seven hills, affording in her ruined

walls and crumbling towers, the history of Spain's past glories. As you approach Toledo, the general aspect of the country improves, the broad Tagus is seen flowing through the plains, and entering the deep gorge formed by the cliffs on which the city itself is built; and after girdling the town, it continues its course until it loses itself in the ocean below the noble city, which ought to have been the capital of the Peninsula.

Toledo is entered by a massive gateway, over which the Imperial arms are placed; and as you ascend the steep declivities, you pass the Puerta del Sol, a fine Arabic portal no longer used. Climbing the hill, you cross the picturesque Zocodover, the great plaza, and arrive at the Fonda de los Caballeros, a clean little inn, where a good-natured old lady is ready to bid you welcome. The general appearance of Toledo differs from that of any other Spanish city; the old capital of the Recaredos, and centre of the Gothic empire, it can boast of great antiquity; as the seat of the Christian primacy, it has ever been the head-quarters of a wealthy hierarchy; the abode of prelates whose virtues have been an honour to the Church over which they presided, and whose wealth was ever expended in benefiting the needy, and encouraging art.

The streets of Toledo are narrow and tortuous, and the steep hills on which the town is built render it a constant succession of ascents and descents. The houses are lofty, and built of a dull reddish brick; they have hardly any windows looking into the street, and present therefore a most gloomy appearance, offering a complete contrast to the bright white and green streets of Seville. At Toledo, too, instead of light "cancelas," massive portals afford an endless study, with their rich variety of decoration, and the heavy wooden doors present an impenetrable bar to any stray peeps into the interior of the houses. The