

party proposing to take thought proper to covet, — was quite enough to startle those plain people, all the world over, who had been taught to consider good faith as sacred, and rapine a crime. But when such a scheme was advocated, boldly and constantly, in the public journals of the aggressive nation, without provoking a universal, nay, even a general expression of indignation and shame, — when, in the ports of that nation, expeditions were set on foot and men and munitions of war were got together for the purpose of invading the coveted territory, and either seizing it, or revolutionizing its population, with a view to its ultimate acquisition, — it is hardly to be wondered that the civilized world should have poured forth unanimous denunciations. The people of the outraged nation had certainly a reasonable apology, if they forgot the soft words and the forbearance which became them as Christians. The Spaniards have a national endowment of fortitude, which is remarkable. San Lorenzo, whose gridiron is immortalized in the Escorial, is said to have suggested, when they were broiling him, that they had better turn him on the other side, as that nearest the coals was, he thought, sufficiently cooked. His descendants, upon the present occasion, behaved as well as it was reasonable to anticipate from even such an example. But there are limits even to the spirit of martyrdom, and it is not in human nature that men should be altogether patient and philosophical, when they witness a systematic and deliberate organization for the robbery and murder of their brethren. Nor is their equanimity at all likely to be increased, by the fact that national insult is added to private injury, and that men who are carrying out, and

presses which are glorifying, the principles and practices of the Norse freebooters, should be thanking God they are free and enlightened, and not like the "ignorant, uncivilized race" which they are about to plunder and slay.

While, then, it was generally conceded in Madrid, that the United States executive government had done its best, in view of its limited powers, it was equally clear that those powers were more than necessarily circumscribed, — at all events practically, — and there was enough in the demonstrations of the American press, — enough, with shame and sorrow be it said, in occasional expressions which disgraced the American Congress, — to satisfy the Spaniards that there was danger before them from the possible action of our people and the weakness and imperfection of our laws. Their ideas were, besides, affected further by their own notions and habits of government. Accustomed to the *surveillance*, and the rapid, secret, and unscrupulous action of a detective police, they could not comprehend the tardy and imperfect operation of that popular, free system, which leaves so much undiscovered and unpunished, lest any should, perchance, be unduly suspected or oppressed. They could not understand how a warlike expedition could be set on foot, in any country, without its being known, immediately, to the government, and it was inconceivable to them that a suspected person could be left at large, without connivance on the part of some of the authorities. They felt and knew that their own government had the means of preventing the preparation for such outrages in its ports, and that its powers would be exercised, immediately

and effectually, to suppress and punish. They had some difficulty, therefore, in being persuaded that they had not a right to expect what they felt themselves bound and were always ready to render, and what the United States, upon at least one memorable occasion, had exacted from them at the point of the bayonet.

There was another cause of irritation and anxiety, which, though unfortunate, was natural. Very few American newspapers reach the Peninsula, and the information as to American affairs which is derived from the European journals is generally meagre and partial. The principal details which were received and reproduced by the Madrid press were furnished by the *Crónica*, a newspaper published at New York, in the Spanish language, and commonly asserted, in Madrid, to be supported by the Cuban government. It would be impossible for any thing to be more elaborately and systematically unjust, than the mass of that paper's editorial observations upon the character and sentiments of the people of the United States, — an injustice which it is difficult not to pronounce wilful, in view of the general intelligence which pervades the journal, and precludes the imputation of ignorance. At the time referred to, the good faith of the American government was constantly impeached in the *Crónica*, and the integrity and sincerity of the Cabinet officers were systematically assailed. The wholesome and honest public feeling and opinion which pervaded so large a portion of the American community and found such frequent utterance in the columns of its influential journals, were studiously ignored, or broadly denied to exist. It seemed, in fine, the whole, unscrupulous effort of the paper to create

and strengthen the impression that our government was without faith, or power for good, and our people destitute alike of truth and honesty. The tenor of my own views, as already expressed, will, I think, be some guaranty to the reader, that I have no sympathy — not the most remote — with the perpetrators of the outrages in question, nor any national super-sensibility, which would lead me into an overstatement of the misrepresentations to which I am referring.

Facts and circumstances, such as the *Crónica*, in the spirit I have spoken of, took pains to promulgate, were published for truth, as the testimony of eyewitnesses, in the newspapers of Madrid. “*Se lee en un periodico de Nueva York*,” they would say, — “We read in a New York paper the following,” &c., &c. ; and the public, not familiar with the mysteries of journalism, took for granted that the “thrilling narratives” with which they were regaled were the concurrent testimonials of the indigenous press of New York, and thought it astonishing that the *pueblo Norte-Americano* should not only be so full of villany, but so barefaced in pleading guilty to it. It is but proper to admit that the commentaries of the Madrid papers were extremely moderate, in view of the facts which they believed to be thus in their possession. A supposed determination on the part of England to annex California would, I am sure, condense more hard names and indignant eloquence into the editorials of any one of our village newspapers, than the whole Madrid press gave vent to, under similar circumstances. But it will, nevertheless, be readily imagined, that such things could not fail to awaken suspicion and apprehension, even in those who did not credit them

altogether, and that, most naturally, there existed much question of our motives and action, even among those whose political principles led them to admire our institutions, and take pleasure in our prosperity and greatness. It cannot be denied that they had in fact much solid reason to think ill of us, and plausible grounds for doing so even to a far greater extent than we really deserved.

I had fortunate opportunities of meeting in Madrid with many gentlemen from Cuba, of intelligence and influence, and of all shades of political opinion. The unreserved expression of their views, and the details of fact with which many of them favored me, enabled me to form perhaps as accurate an idea of the politics of the island, as even a visit there would ordinarily afford a stranger. Parties, I was told, were, in the main, but three. Among them, the uncompromising friends of the existing state of things occupied the first place in political power and ostensible influence. To this class belonged, of course, all the government officials, with their friends and dependents, — all the military men, — many of the wealthier Creoles and the numerous resident Spaniards, engaged in private pursuits. These last are principally Catalans or Basques, — mostly the former, — with the courage and energy characteristic of their respective provinces. Considering themselves still as citizens of the Peninsula, and looking forward to an old age of competence, at home, from the fruits of their temporary exile, they naturally incline towards maintaining the predominance of the mother country against the immunities which the Cubans, as naturally, covet. They are most of them wealthy; almost all in promising or prosperous business. If taxes are high,

they thrive notwithstanding. If government is arbitrary and exacting, it still leaves them the means of getting rich and escaping in comfort. Their acquisitions and prospects, therefore, are things far too serious and substantial to be put upon the hazard of any revolution, and they consequently form a conservative phalanx, which it will be found extremely difficult at any time to break. They will be ready, in any crisis, to place at the disposal of the government a large portion of their wealth, for the preservation of the rest, and they themselves will form no trifling accession to the military strength of the island, — the civil broils of latter years in Spain having unfortunately left few from the northern provinces unaccustomed to bearing arms, or ignorant of military discipline.

The extreme party on the other side — that alone to which immediate or forcible annexation would be tolerable — is, I was told, and as subsequent events have shown, quite insignificant in influence, character, extent, and true patriotism. It of course embraces, as all parties of extreme opinion do, some few sincere enthusiasts; but its principal recruits are from the ranks of those who have nothing to lose, and those who, having fallen under the ban of the government, have fortunes to redeem or injuries to revenge. Its members are chiefly Creoles, or strangers who have no other livelihood than opening mine Ancient Pistol's oyster. In a country with different political and social habits and organization, the many grievances which really irritate and seriously oppress would render desperate adventurers like these a possible nucleus of dangerous agitation. But political abstractions melt away under that burning sun, and

the population is neither large nor concentrated enough, nor sufficiently accustomed to political discussion, to be easily moved by the ordinary appeals which have so much force in popular governments and colder climates. The Cubans, besides, are of too lax a fibre, and too fond of pleasure, for any of those doings with which "fierce democracies" are wont to thunderstrike old systems. Pine-apples and cigars, — the opera, the *paseo*, and the sea-breeze, — are far pleasanter things, even under a Captain-General, than the dust and blood (besides the trouble) of a doubtful revolution. The enervating influences which have made the stalwart language of Castile a lisping bastard on the Creole's lips, have emasculated his character also, and destroyed within him the virile independence and proud fortitude which centuries of oppression have not taken from the old Castilian heart. The spirit of the radical party, therefore, is of as little practical consideration as its numbers.

The third division — if parties and principles have any thing reasonable in them — should be, and I was told it was, by far the most numerous, as it is certainly the most patriotic of the three. It is composed, mainly, of the Cubans themselves, but embraces the best elements of intelligence, enterprise, and virtue to be found among them. Its members have simply in view the interests of the island and its inhabitants. They are wedded to no particular scheme or system, and are willing to support any which will secure to them a rational freedom, and an exemption from oppressive and unjust burdens. They have no preference for independence, except as a means of securing these benefits, and regarding it, under the circumstances, as a perilous,

and most doubtful experiment, they are many of them anxious, and almost all of them content, to continue the colonial relation. Other things being equal, or, indeed, approximating equality, — it would never occur to them to imagine a transfer of their dependence from the mother country to the United States. All their national peculiarities — the sympathy of race, a common language, historical associations, family ties, and national customs and tastes — incline them irresistibly towards the land of their origin. The Spaniards are not of a blood that readily amalgamates, and least of all with the Saxon or any mixture of it. But the predilection of the intelligent Cubans for the Spanish connection, though a strong one, is, nevertheless, not blind. They complain of bad government, and are earnest in insisting, so far as they lawfully may, upon having their grievances redressed. This is not the place to inquire how far their complaints are well founded. That the evils which produce them have been greatly overstated, both as to number and aggravation, I have no doubt. This has been particularly the case in the many absurd publications which have been made in the United States, with a view to stimulate and keep up the annexation and invasion excitements, and which have misled so many to suffering and death. But, on the other hand, it is only just to say, that, among the many intelligent Cubans I have met, I do not remember one — no matter what may have been his politics — who has not spoken, in strong language, of grievous abuses as existing. Such unanimity cannot certainly be without cause. That the government of the island is neither more nor less than a military despotism, all the world

knows. Its responsible and lucrative offices are, almost exclusively, in the hands of *empleados* from the mother country, where, indeed, Cuba is held, as Mistress Page was by her enamored knight, to be "all gold and bounty." Politicians who have rendered services which the coffers of the Peninsula are too empty to compensate conveniently, and aspirants to place at home who are needy and dangerous, are rewarded habitually, or propitiated, as the case may be, by a chance of picking the colony. The administration of justice is admitted, on all hands, to be tardy, costly, and corrupt. Nowhere, I was told, does the *escribano* system, with all its consequences, — "insani præmia scribæ," — flourish half so gloriously. Taxation, if not so exorbitant as is sometimes pretended, is unquestionably unequal and needlessly oppressive. The restraints on commerce, and the subserviency of its regulations to Peninsular interests, contribute to render that oppressiveness still more unwelcome, — while the fact, that all the impositions which weigh so heavily upon the colonists go to the support of an administration of strangers, or the maintenance of a government across the ocean, suffices, of itself, to throw on the colonial relation a certain shade of inevitable odium.

It is not to be concealed, that the pressure of these things is made more galling, even to the most loyal of the Cubans, by the proximity of this republic. They cannot avoid feeling that the palpable contrast between our relative prosperity and progress and theirs is mainly attributable to the difference in political institutions and their administration. Every unsuccessful applica-

tion to the home government for measures of redress of course heightens the effect of that contrast, and proportionally inclines them to turn from a system which perpetuates misrule, to one which furnishes such practical demonstration of its efficiency for good. If, therefore, all the freebooters who disgrace our shores were driven from them, — if the few shameless presses were silenced which proclaim as honorable and patriotic the breach of our treaty faith and the total abandonment of national honor, — the Cuban government itself alone might give efficiency, and weight, and final success to the project of annexation. A very interesting pamphlet, presenting this view of the subject, was published in Madrid while I was there, by Don José Antonio Saco, a distinguished Cuban, who, although an anti-annexationist, was then reaping in banishment, at Calais, the reward of his honest but too candid zeal. The liberal newspapers adopted and advocated his ideas, with a great deal of freedom and force, while the government organs, of course, denounced them as treasonable and absurd. The columns of the latter journals were filled, meanwhile, with letters from Havana, which gave magnificent accounts of public displays, operatic *fiestas*, and balls and banquets enthusiastically attended, at the palace of the Captain-General, — all obviously got up as proof conclusive of the splendor, happiness, and plenty which flourish under the existing system. For men mad enough to think that such things can long disguise the evils or retard the overthrow of a bad government, there is no hellebore except the fate which they invoke. Nor can that fate, in its good season, fail to overtake them, if they so continue to deserve it. Now,

it will be comparatively easy for the Spanish government, in the patriotic reaction after the defeat of Lopez, — the loyal rallying of all parties and classes around the throne, — to put an end to discontent and danger. The most moderate reforms, — the mere foreshadowing of something better, — any thing that may give, or seem to give, an earnest of a more liberal system to come, — will suffice to revive hopes and quicken and confirm allegiance. Every year of delay will render the task more difficult and the result more problematical.

It requires, one would think, but ordinary forecast and familiarity with human nature to perceive all this; but men in power, and especially in Spain, seem cursed with the fatality of thinking that the present is all of time. The pleasure and pride of governing and getting rich by it appear to absorb all other considerations, even with men whose capacity and experience of public affairs ought to teach them that duty is worth discharging, as a matter of policy and reputation at all events, to say nothing of principle. Causes, however, will not cease to operate, because politicians choose to disregard them. The flood-tide of the ocean had small care for Canute. Unless there be a change, and a most decided one, in the attitude of Spain towards her chief colony, there must, sooner or later, but inevitably, be a repetition of the memorable lesson, "*C'est trop tard!*"

But let it not for a moment be inferred from this, that there is or can be any real sympathy, on the part of the inhabitants of Cuba, with the expeditions of the buccaneers who have given so much trouble to them, and brought so much discredit on us, of late. Results have been demonstrative enough on this point. What

the Cubans desire is improvement, not revolution, — protection to property, and personal security, under a better government and better laws. If they cannot obtain these things from the mother country, they may be forced or tempted to seek them in the last resort, as I have said, under the auspices of a powerful and freer nation. But this will be in the last resort only, and peacefully, if possible. Revolt would, at the best, involve consequences which it is horrible to contemplate. The Spanish government has announced its inflexible determination, that the island shall continue Spanish or be made African. “*Cuba ha de ser Española ó Africana.*” The hour in which the standard of revolt should be successfully reared, would see the slaves let loose upon their masters. The rapine, murder, and incendiarism of a single day of servile triumph could never be repaired, to the present inhabitants of the island. Others might come after them and prosper, — the island itself might become rich and great in time, under other institutions, — but the men of this day and the things that are theirs would disappear in the conflict. The power of the Union might conquer, — it could not save. If, then, the Cubans would have so much reason to dread the drawing of the sword, with all the force of this republic on their side, it presupposes madness in them to imagine that they can seriously countenance revolt, with no other reliance than the Falstaff regiments of our steamboat “patriots.” There is double reason for their shrinking from the struggle in that shape. Success would be as bad as defeat. The motives and hopes of such adventurers as would seek their shores under such banners could only be based on

plunder. Of necessity they would be in search of better fortunes. Whence would the plunder — whence would the fortunes — come? All the generals and colonels, all the governors and other miscellaneous functionaries and heroes who might lead or follow the liberating chivalry, would of course expect a pound of pay to every ounce of glory. They would take leave to dictate their own rewards, and to apportion them, if there were need, at the point of the bayonet. Unhappy Cuba would have cause to sigh, amid the seven devils that had come to her, for the single one she had been so anxious to cast out. It cannot be that the Cubans are blind to all this; and the hopes and calculations which rest on the existence of such blindness must be frustrated. Even among the Antilles there are people who have heard of Æsop, and remember the fable of the horse who submitted to the rein that he might take vengeance on his enemy, and was ridden and driven for ever after, — the drudge and victim of his friend! They must have read our history but little and ill, not to have learned that “annexation” is equivalent to absorption, and that the “proud bird” in which we glory so much has claws and a beak for his own edification, as well as benignant wings for the protection of dependent poultry.

XI.

THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES.—TEATRO DE ORIENTE.—
MINISTERS AND OPPOSITION.—COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.
—SEATS OF MINISTERS IN THE LEGISLATURE.

ALTHOUGH legislative bodies, even under the most liberal system of suffrage, do not universally (with deference be it said) represent the best phases of the national spirit, intelligence, or taste, they are nevertheless sufficiently characteristic, always, in their deliberations, to interest a stranger greatly. This is particularly true of the more popular branch, where there are two. The Congress of Deputies in Madrid was accordingly one of my favorite places of resort. The new Palace, which the Deputies now occupy, at the head of the Carrera de San Geronimo, near the Prado, was not finished or dedicated to its legislative uses until some months after my return home. It is a large and costly building, but very badly situated, it seems to me, for effect, and, although rendered somewhat imposing by its size and classical pretensions, is wanting in dignity and taste. Théophile Gautier says that he doubts whether good laws can possibly be made under such architecture; but a

traveller from the United States must needs be more hopeful, in view of the excellent legislation which has now and then emanated from our own Capitol, in spite of its dome and the statuary on its portico and in its neighborhood.

The Congress held its sessions, during my stay, in the saloon of the Teatro (theatre) de Oriente, an immense building, then still unfinished, but since converted, at the expense of the government, into perhaps the most superb opera-house in Europe. It lies at the foot of the Calle del Arenal, the street which runs directly from the Puerta del Sol to the Royal Palace, and obstructs, with its huge, unsightly pile of bricks, the thoroughfare and view from the Puerta to the beautiful Plaza de Oriente. The French, during their occupation of Madrid, determined, with their usual good taste in such matters, that the avenue between the Puerta and the Palace should be direct and uninterrupted. As it cost them nothing to gratify their fancy, they caused the interposing buildings to be demolished accordingly. Ferdinand the Seventh, with his proverbial want of taste, and his recklessness in making all things bend to it, resolved, on his return, not to remedy the private wrong which the destruction of property had inflicted, but to throw away for his private amusement the public good which had been purchased by the sacrifice. It occurred to him, that he would like to have a theatre within a stone's throw of the Palace, so that he might step into it by a covered way, after dinner, without danger of the *pulmonía* or prejudice to his digestion. Straightway, therefore, arose the Teatro de Oriente, in the very course of the Arenal and the very line of

view from the Palace and the Puerta. In order to render the exploit as acceptable as might be to his people, he caused the massive foundations and ridiculously heavy walls of the structure to be laid with an utter contempt of cost, and provided the necessary funds by *arbitrios* upon the fruits of Malaga, and other equally rational impositions. “*Dios nos libre del despotismo!* — May God deliver us from despotism!” — was the fervent ejaculation, at this stage of his story, of the worthy *Progresista* who called my attention to these details. But Ferdinand did not live to consummate the triumph of his caprice over popular convenience, the beauty of the capital, and common propriety and sense. The political troubles which followed his exit were too engrossing to permit even theatres to be thought of or paid for, and the lumbering mass lay almost as he left it, until 1850, when Sartorius resolved to complete it under the auspices of his Department, so that the prestige of the *Moderado* dynasty might be strengthened, by the popularity of Alboni the singer and Fuoco the dancer. In the mean time, however, what had been meant for the amusement Ferdinand most loved (among those which were harmless) was applied to the purposes he most hated, — those of popular legislation. The saloon, a beautiful and commodious chamber, was finished and elegantly fitted up, in 1841, for the Congress of Deputies. All the necessary apartments for offices, committee-rooms, library and archives, were easily provided, without taxing half the capabilities of the enormous edifice, and — except for the name of the thing — Spain might have been spared, for at least another of her constitutional cycles, the cost of yet

another palace. Surely, in the state of her finances, Señor Conde de San Luis ! she might have managed to dispense with a government opera-house.

At the head of the saloon, towards the north, upon a lofty platform, was the throne, magnificent in drapery and gilding, guarded by couchant lions, gilded also. In front of this was the chair of the President, before whom the secretaries sat at their table. On each side was a sort of tribune or pulpit, whence orators might speak, if they chose, and from which the ministers read royal edicts on occasions of great state. Along the walls, upon the platform, were the diplomatic and other privileged galleries. The seats to which the public were admitted were at the lower extremity of the chamber. The benches of the members were placed in ascending grades, parallel with the length of the saloon, down the centre of which there was an open passage to where the halberdiers, in antique dresses, stood at the foot. None but the ministers were supplied with desks. Little slips or leaves of mahogany, attached to the backs of the benches, and so arranged that they could be raised and used by those sitting behind, for the convenience of taking notes, seemed to answer all necessary purposes. The ministers sat together, on the first front bench to the right, at the foot of the presidential platform. Immediately behind them were the seats of some of their most prominent supporters, and a little lower down, on the same side, were several of the leaders of the *Moderado* opposition. The *Progresistas* were principally grouped directly in front of the ministers on the opposite side of the central passage. The appearance of the body was,

on the whole, dignified and prepossessing, and although it numbered three hundred and fifty members, there was, even in the most excited debates, a general observance of personal and parliamentary decorum, which illustrated the proverbial good-breeding of the nation.

The President of the Deputies seems to exercise a much more arbitrary jurisdiction than the corresponding functionary with us. His control over the hours of meeting and adjournment appears to be discretionary, and his decision, upon questions of order and parliamentary privilege, to carry the force of law. If authority so large may sometimes (as it must) be abused, — especially where the influence of government is so marked, and where the Presidency must generally be within its gift, — there is, on the other hand, no doubt that time and disorder are greatly economized by it, and that a vast amount of empty and profitless debate is superseded. Nor, indeed, am I sure that the power of a partisan majority over freedom of speech is not less likely to be unscrupulously used by a single and solely responsible individual, — who, although elected by that majority, has yet his personal integrity and intelligence directly and conspicuously at stake, — than by the majority itself, in whose action responsibility is divided, and individual scruples are swept off their feet by the rush of the crowd.

The ministers of the crown are not *ex officio* members of the Cortes, but, if they belong to either of the legislative bodies, they may take part in the discussions of both, though without the right of voting except in that of which they are members. The administration is distributed into seven Departments, each of which has

its Secretary. The Minister of State discharges the usual duties of such a functionary. The Minister of Grace and Justice is charged with the superintendence of the legal and judicial system,—the control of ecclesiastical affairs, patents of nobility, pardons, privileges, and legal dispensations,—the custody and authentication of the laws of the realm,—and a thousand collateral branches of duty and patronage such as must necessarily belong to so comprehensive a Department. The Minister of *Gobernacion* (or of the Interior), has the control of police and taxes,—the post-office and the conscription,—the internal government of the provinces, so far as that belongs to the central authority,—the management of theatres and bull-fights, the press and the prisons. His jurisdiction embraces the colonies, and his duties therefore are complicated and almost incalculable. The Minister of Commerce, Instruction, and Public Works, and the Secretaries of Finance, War, and the Navy, exercise respectively their obvious functions. The seven Secretaries form what is called the Council of Ministers, which is presided over by one of their number, or by an eighth minister designated by the crown, in its discretion, and without any particular administrative duties. Narvaez, like a sensible man, chose to be President of the Council, and nothing more in name or duty, though every thing in power. He was rarely absent from the sessions of the Congress, and although he of course left to his colleagues the labor of discussing those measures which involved their particular Departments and the details of the administration, he was always on the alert, like a skilful general and brave soldier, watching the changes of the fight, and ready to

throw himself, sword in hand, wherever the enemy pressed fiercely.

I may say, in this connection, that I could not avoid being frequently struck, in the Cortes, with the great advantage, in many points of view, of giving seats in the legislature to the chief counsellors of the executive. I do not, of course, speak with regard to the convenience of the members of the Cabinet themselves,—though there is no reason why that should not be consulted,—but in view of the many and great facilities which the system gives, for the transaction of public business. A thousand unimportant inquiries, gravely instituted by the House of Representatives of the United States, and entailing upon the heads of Departments the most wearisome and unnecessary waste of that time, which, when most faithfully and economically used, scarce suffices for the thorough discharge of their indispensable duties, might be satisfied, in a few moments, or altogether superseded, by a timely word or two of oral question and explanation. The gross and unbecoming personal attacks which have, of late, so unfortunately tended to make our executive dignities comparatively unattractive to those who could wear them most worthily, would not be half so frequent, I am sure, were the assailants confronted with the ability and character, which, at a distance and under so many disadvantages, may now be outraged with impunity. Suggestions, which the experience of a Secretary and his superior knowledge of details might enable him constantly and most advantageously to throw out, for the perfection of measures concerning his Department, now only, in most cases, reach the legislature indirectly, and often through the

medium of committees whose adverse views hardly transmit them fairly, and never fully.

Nor is there any evil very apparent which diminishes the force of these considerations. The fear of executive influence is a sorry bugbear,—for, if the executive is not present to speak for itself, it must needs, in the best way it can, procure others, among the legislators themselves, to speak for it,—and it is not very likely that corruption will be decreased by increasing the necessity for its application. Equally unfounded, too, is the notion that the presence of those who dispense patronage will be a restraint on legislative independence. The yeas and nays are far more tyrannical than any browbeating. Where every man's vote is known to his neighbor, or may be, those who vote to be profited will find no compulsion more stringent and domineering than that applied by their interests. If people are superstitious on the subject of keeping the legislative and executive functions distinctly apart,—a very singular superstition, by the by, under a constitution which embodies the veto power,—let them give the Secretaries the right to participate in the debates, but not to vote. Let each—if scrupulosity in the premises be deemed a virtue—be confined to the discussion of what involves his particular branch of the service, or at all events let none of them have a wider range than over matters purely executive. I do not, myself, see the necessity of any such restrictions. I think that what is called the “one-man power” is only dangerous in the newspapers. The legislature, within its constitutional province, is quite able to take care of itself, and in its customary practice of “platform” and President mak-

ing has an additional element of mastery, which renders it almost omnipotent. The introduction of the change I have commented on, instead of diminishing the legitimate or increasing the illegitimate sway of Congress, would, I am sure, have a contrary effect. It would make executive responsibility more certain, by rendering it more direct and unavoidable, and would, on the other hand, give to ability, candor, eloquence, and patriotism the opportunity of preventing misrepresentation and injustice, by being their own immediate interpreters.

XII.

GENERAL NARVAEZ. — MINISTERIAL PROFITS. — MARQUIS OF PIDAL. — ASTURIAN NOBILITY. — SR. MON. — PROHIBITIVE DUTIES AND THE CATALANS.

I HAVE already spoken of the Duke of Valencia, — better known as General Narvaez, — with the respect which I think his ability deserves, in spite of many things, in his political system and practices, which it is impossible not to condemn. The controlling position which he occupied, for some years, in his native country, and the remarkable energy and wisdom with which he managed to carry his government in peace through the stormy times which succeeded the last French revolution, have attracted much attention to him from the European world. Upon the Continent, his reputation, as a statesman and ruler, is very high. In England — particularly since his dismissal of Sir Henry Bulwer — there has been a disposition shown to treat him as a mere soldier of fortune, to whose greatness accident has stood godfather, and who could only be eminent, *inter minora sidera*, in Spain. As the most of what we know, in reference to Continental matters, comes to us from the British press,