

deep, and provided only with dangerous ferries, becomes a most important military line in time of war. The river rises in the bleak *Sierra de Urbion*, near Soria, receiving the affluents of the hills above Logroño and the Montcayo, flows west, and below Zamora forms the boundary between Spain and Portugal. The whole course is about 500 miles. The name Ur, ἰδωρ, the Celtic Dwr, simply means *water*, as *Gave* does in the Pyrenees. This water *par excellence* is indeed an ἀριστον μὲν ἰδωρ, since, according to the proverb it is equal to chicken-broth in nutriment: *Aqua de Duero, caldo de pollos*—an axiom which our readers may well distrust, and put a real *poule* in their *pot*; the river moreover has the honour to give the title of Marquis to the Duke, *Palman* quam meruit ferat,—as on its banks, from first to last, he foiled the enemy, beginning with Soult at Oporto. Again it was by crossing the Duero in these parts that the Duke turned the French position, and drove the invaders headlong out of Spain by the death-blow he dealt them at Vitoria. Below Zamora are some wild passes and ferries, used by smugglers; the most remarkable are *el Paso de las Estacas*, that of the Stakes, and *el Salto de la Burraca*, the leap of the great she-ass (*Borico*), not the heaven-ascending mule of Mahomet.

Time-honoured *Zamora* is now a decayed place. Pop. under 9000. There is a tolerable *posada* on the *Plaza Santa Lucia*, and *de la Morera* on the *Plaza del Carbon* and another *del Peto*. The cathedral is the see of a bishop, suffragan to Santiago. The city bears for arms its bridge, with two towers and a flag. The name is said to be derived from the Moorish *Samuráh*, a city of "turquoises," which it does not signify* and of which it possesses none. In older books it is called *Ocellum Duri*, the eye, the cup of the Duero (*Keli*, Hebrew; calix). Be that as it may the very

* *Samur* is the Arabic name of a furred animal, *Mustela Scythica*, and is the etymon of the Spanish *zamarra*, jacket.

name awakes a thousand recollections in a Spanish bosom of mediæval chivalry, and romance, and the glorious past. Placed on the barrier Duero, and an important frontier town against Moorish invasions, it was recovered from the infidel in 748 by Alonso el Católico, and besieged in July, 939, by Abdu-r-rahman, a desperate battle was fought for its relief by Ramiro II. *Zamora* was then enclosed by seven lines of walls, and the intervening spaces defended by moats; 40,000 Moors are said to have been killed—to a man; the Spaniards, from being in want of everything, were unable to follow up their victory. *Zamora*, retaken and destroyed in 985 by the great Al Mansúr, was rebuilt by Ferdinand I., who gave it in 1065 to his daughter Urraca, who must not be confounded with her niece Urraca, the wife of Ramon of Burgundy, and *Reina proprietaria* of Spain. This once common name, which still exists in these parts, is pure Arabic, and means "brilliant in colours;" hence Mahomet's aforesaid mule, on which he ascended to heaven, was called *El Burac*. The term is also given to a delicious pear in Galicia, and to a chattering pie, *habla mas que una Urraca*.

Ferdinand, by his impolitic devise, dismembered a monarchy which his whole life had been spent in consolidating, and, like his seventh namesake, bequeathed a civil war to his heir Sancho, who, resenting the unjust partition, besieged *Zamora* in 1072. Then it was the well-walled city, *Zamora la bien cercada*, and was proverbially almost impregnable: *á Zamora, no se ganó en una hora*. Sancho, being enticed near the walls by Vellido Dolphos (*Ataulfo*), was assassinated on the 7th Oct. whilst in an unseemly position according to the old ballad, the Cid from want of spurs being unable to catch the traitor; but every one will read his *Romancero* on these sites. At this siege five Moorish kings (sheiks) brought him tribute, and saluted Ruy Diaz de Vibar with the

title of *Cid Campeador*—the champion Prince—just as our Wellington was called here *El Lor*, *El gran Lor*, “*The Lord*,” exactly as we say “*The Duke*.”

Pass out by the *Puerta de la Feria* into the pleasant Alameda to the ruined palace of Urraca, built at the extreme point of the city. The walls follow the irregularities of their rocky bases; her mutilated bust still remains over a gate, with the inscription, “*Afuera! Afuera! Rodrigo el soberbio Castellano*” taken from the old ballad, and allusive to the Cid’s being shut out when the traitor-assassin Dolphos was let in. Near this is the bishop’s palace, with its corridors and open gallery.

The see, fallen into abeyance during the time of the Moors, was restored by Alonso VI., son of Ferdinand I., whose heiress, Urraca, had married Ramon, brother to Pope Calixtus II. (obt. 1124) and thus through family interest at Rome many difficulties with contending prelates were got over. Bernard, then Archb. of Toledo, was a Frenchman, and filled the sees of Spain with his countrymen who introduced the simple solid Norman style of architecture, exactly as occurred at Tarragona. Geronimo, the confessor of the Cid, was appointed to Zamora with quasi-episcopal functions. The S. and dilapidated entrance of his cathedral deserve particular notice. Observe a truncated tower, the four round or Saxon arches, and the singular pattern-like rolls of linen, the plain curtains of wall strengthened by buttresses. The capitals of the pillars are in the bastard Norman-Gothic Corinthian style. The rose windows are fine, and the massy square tower and *cimborio* are quite cognate with the *Iglesia Vieja* of Salamanca. The two lateral aisles in the interior are low. The dome is picked out with a wavy pattern of gold on white. The *altar mayor* is composed of reddish marble pillars, with gilt bronze capitals, and the Transfiguration sculptured in marble is modern, and of inferior art. The old *retablo* was moved to the convent of San Geronimo. The *coro*, carved in a tedesque manner like

Rodrigo Aleman, is dated 1490. The open Gothic spire of the bishop’s seat, and the saints and figures above the dark-coloured stalls of the canons, the carved door with figures and Gothic work to the l. of the high altar, deserve notice. Among the tombs observe those of Bernardus, the first bishop, 1149, and near the door that of Bishop Pedro, 1254, confessor of St. Ferdinand, opposite to that of Bishop Suerus Perez, 1286. Other old tombs are in the *Capilla del Cardenal*, viz. Alvaro Romero, cloaked,—observe his sword; and in the *Capilla de San Miguel* that of canon F. M. de Baltas, 1308. The very ancient *retablo* is parted into six divisions, with paintings like Fernando Gallegos. The original cloisters were burnt in 1591, and the present, in simple Doric, were rebuilt in 1621. The N. entrance to the cathedral has unfortunately been modernised in the Corinthian style, which ill accords with the primitive elevation.

La Magdalena, a church of the Templars, and at their suppression given to the Order of St. Juan of Jerusalem, is a simple solid edifice of the twelfth century. Observe the masonry of the exterior, the deeply-recessed entrance, with remarkable circular arches above, highly enriched, partly with Norman, partly with Moorish patterns, and the high altar, with a beautiful round arch and mouldings: observe also the rose window above, formed with small columns, precisely like that in the Temple church at London. Before entering the inner portion, on each side of the lofty pointed arch are two ancient tombs of members of San Juan. Notice the cross and the spiral pillars which support the canopies, also the enriched portal; visit also *la Plaza de los Momos*, and observe the singular façade of a *casa solar*, with *ajimez* windows, and the peculiar Valentian doorway, with large fan-like stones in the arch-work.

The natural strong position of *Zamora* led Moore to urge the Junta of Salamanca to repair the defences, and receive there his stores, but his retreat

had commenced before these procrastinating semi-orientals—socorros de España—had done deliberating (Schepler, ii. 119). Had Zamora been made tenable, Moore would have fallen back on it, instead of on *La Coruña*, and thus Portugal would have been spared the murderous ravages of Soult. The sins of the dotard Junta were visited on ill-fated Zamora. After Cuesta and Blake's disgraceful defeat at Medina del Rio Seco, it permitted the French under Darricaut and Maupetit to master the once strong place in less than half an hour! *Oh dedecus ingens!* A change indeed had come over the land since the day when

*Con Zamora aver batalla
Azaz es cosa pesada.*

Although no resistance was made, the craven town was sacked, neither age nor sex were spared, and the principal persons executed. Zamora, afterwards plundered by M. Foy, has never recovered these visitations. The victory of Salamanca delivered Zamora; its evacuation by Foy was a blundering operation, for had he held it, the Duke's plans would have been deranged (Disp. Aug. 18, 23, 1812).

On quitting it, the wretchedness of the peasantry increases; their cabins are of mud, their furniture and agricultural implements are rude in form and material. Their carts—and they prevail all over the N.W. provinces—are the unchanged *plaustra*; the solid wheels, the Roman *tympana*, mere circles of wood without spokes or axles, resemble mill grinding-stones or Parmesan cheeses; they are such as the old Egyptians used, as seen in hieroglyphics (Wilk. i. 369), and no doubt exactly like those sent by Joseph for his father (Gen. xlv. 19). The type is Oriental, and still is used among the Affghans and Spaniards, who are unadvanced coachmakers. The whole wheel, neither designed nor drawn by a Buonaroti, turns round together with a piteous creaking, which whines all over the north-western portion of Spain. The drivers, whose ears are blunt and teeth edgeless, delight in this exeru-

ciating *Chillar, el Chirrio*, Arabicè *charrar*, to make a noise, which they call music; this they delight in because it is cheap, and plays of itself. They, moreover, think it frightens wolves, bears, and the devil himself, which it well may, for the wheel of Ixion, although damned in hell, never cried more piteously. The shrill sounds, however, serve as warnings to other drivers, who, in narrow paths and gorges of rocks, where two carriages cannot pass, have this notice given them, and draw aside until the coast is clear.

From Zamora the naturalist may make many excursions: the botanist should visit *la dehesa de San Andres*, 1 L., and the geologist go to *Muelas*, 4 L., in the angle of the confluence of the Esla and Duero: here, curiously formed and marked, calcareous stones and crystals are found, and the peculiar clay is considered the finest in the Peninsula for kitchen ware. It was by this line that the Duke, in May, 1813, by a masterly move to the L., passed the Duero in the Portuguese frontier, turned the French positions, and pounced on them at Vitoria. He himself crossed the deep foaming river on the 29th, at *Miranda*, in a basket slung on a rope from rock to rock (Nap. xx. 7). A fine wild country, covered with aromatic underwood, and intersected with trout-streams, intervenes to *Villafranca del Bierzo*. Those who can rough it might first visit *Carbajales*, 4 L. from Zamora, a town belonging to the Duque de Frias. Pop. about 1000. The neighbouring *la Peña colorada* and *monte Valdoradas* abound in *caza mayor y menor*; take local guides to unravel the net-work of trout-streams, which come down the fan-like offshoots of the serpentine *Sierra de Culebras*, and empty themselves into the *Aliste*. From *Carbajales* the sportsman might either strike off W. 4 L. to *Alcañices*, a small town with 500 souls, 9 L. from Zamora, on the confines of Portugal, where there is excellent cover, or he might cut across to *Puebla*

de Sanabria, 3 L., and thence over the *Vierzo* to Villafrañca, through some of the best fishing districts in Spain.

Leaving *Zamora*, the high road continues uninteresting until after passing *Santa Eufemia*, when an opening discloses *Benavente* in the distance, with its fine castle rising on a knoll to the l. out of a girdle of trees. Before arriving at the town, the *Esla*, which coming down from *Roncesvalles* forms one of the large tributaries of the *Duero*, is crossed in a clumsy ferry-boat. Here one of the first encounters took place between the British and French cavalry: early in Moore's retreat (Dec. 29, 1808), Lefebvre Desnouettes, at the head of 600 of the Imperial Guards, attacked the English rear, and was held in check by Col. Otway, with only 200 men, until Lord Paget came up with some of the 10th, and in "an instant" (says Napier) "the scene was changed, and the enemy were seen flying in full speed towards the river, the British close at their heels." Lefebvre Desnouettes was taken prisoner, when his indignation was increased by the derisive laughter which his sullen looks and torn coat excited among the English soldiers—*du sublime au ridicule il n'y a qu'un pas*. Buonaparte, an eyewitness of this event, wrote the following account to be read in Paris in his 21st bulletin—"Le général, emporté par cette ardeur qu'on a si souvent reproché au soldat Français, passa la rivière à la nage pour se porter sur Benavente, où il trouva toute la cavalerie de l'arrière garde Anglais: alors il s'engagea un long combat de 400 hommes contre 2000; il fallut enfin céder au nombre. Cette échauffourée a dû convaincre les Anglais de ce qu'ils auraient à redouter de pareilles gens dans une affaire générale."

Lefebvre's subsequent breach of parole is well known; but Buonaparte, instead of sending him back "a prisoner," as the Duke would have done, had any English officer been capable of such dishonour (Disp. Oct. 20, 1809), approved of his conduct, Spain.—II.

and reinstated him in the command of his chasseurs. Can it be wondered, under such circumstances, "that the Duke could place no confidence in the parole of any French officer" (Disp. June 30, 1811), not even on Soult's, their chief (Disp. Sept. 11, 1813)? Yet now, M. Foy having ascribed the bravery of English soldiers to beef and rum, opines "that honour is a motive too delicate for their dense organization, and that even our officers lack the exclusive idolatry of the French to it" (i. 235, 241).

Crossing the *Esla*, *Benavente*, with its long, mud, *cob* walls, and huge ruined castle, rises on a gentle eminence. Pop. about 2400. There is a decent *posada* outside the town, on the road to *Astorga*; the town dull and poverty-stricken. The castle, the *Alcazar* of the *Pimentels* now merged in the *Osuna* dukedom, once the great lion, is far inferior in size and details to many of our Welsh castles; while the material is a reddish coarse stone, with a considerable portion of mere *cob*. It is entered by a gentle ascent: passing under an arch between two towers, with a defaced *Santiago* on horseback over the portal. The *Torre Pastel* bears the date Mayo 20, 1462. Here are the arms of the *Pimentels*, once the powerful Counts of *Benavente*, the sheikhs or lords of all around, to whose ancestor the castle was granted in 1394. The inside is all a ruin, having been gutted by *Soult* when retreating from *Oporto*. The patio is still strewn with fragments of sculpture. In the upper story was the state gallery, where yet are some remains of Moorish *Turkish* and *azulejo* in the windows: a portion of the grand staircase exists. The view over the bald plains of *Leon* and mountains towards *la Puebla de Sanabria* is extensive; the river front is the strongest; the coarse masonry is ornamented with a huge stone chain and the projecting balls so common at *Toledo*: below are what were the gardens of the *Duchess*, before desolated by the destroyer. A pretty walk, *el Caracol*, leads under

the trees and by a trout-stream. The *Santa Maria* church in Benavente has a remarkable tower, circular chapels, and round Saxon arches. The rude peasants of these cereal districts celebrate the great festivals at *Villa nueva del Campos*, 4 L., held Sept. 14, and at *Villarin de Campos*, 4 L., celebrated on the last Sunday of September; then they offer to the tutelal image as much corn as the devotee weighs himself when put in a scale held by the curate. A fair, bull-fights, and dances conclude these pious acts.

There is a carriageable communication from Benavente to Leon, 11½ L., over an uninteresting corn plain, through *Toral de los Guzmanes* 4½, *Ardon* 3½, and Leon 3. The road to the l. to *Orense*, 33½, is full of alpine and river beauty (see Route 70).

At *Benavente*, (Dec. 28, 1809) Moore's retreat may be said to have commenced: here the laurel was wreathed with the cypress, and the sins of official epigrammatists were washed out by brave men's blood. His career, was marred from the beginning by Mr. Canning, the "evil genius of the Peninsula," according to Napier. In Oct. Moore had been sent to the Peninsula, with some 25,000 men, without any specific instructions beyond a direction to act in concert with *Spanish* generals! The bleak Castiles, almost impracticable in winter from cold and rain, were chosen. Moore crossed the frontier in October, and in that nick of time, three ill-appointed Spanish armies, his allies, that were to be led by "children in the art of war," had melted like snow wreaths before the martial French, almost before attacked. Blake, on the 11th, was beaten at *Espinosa*, Belvidere having on the 10th been routed at Burgos; and ere Moore reached Salamanca Castaños had been crushed at Tudela; soon after, the affair of Somosierra gave Madrid to Buonaparte; so much for Spanish co-operation. Thus at the beginning, as to the end of the war, were the English left to bear the whole burden. 25,000 British troops were now op-

posed to 250,000 French veterans, flushed with victory; yet the Duke of York had counselled our imbecile ministers not to send less than 60,000 English to the Peninsula, which he was prepared to furnish: he felt that no little war ought to be carried on; but peddling, paltry politics prevailed,—this (says Napier) mere handful was embarked, and then without money, plans, or scarcely ammunition. Moore, who had now become the principal instead of the auxiliary, for "il n'y a que les Anglais à craindre," said the shrewd Buonaparte, was next lured into the Castiles by the asinine juntas, and by our ambassador, Mr. Frere, who did his best to deceive and destroy Moore, by enticing him on to Sahagun. At that moment Buonaparte rushed (Dec. 12) like lightning from Madrid, and in ten days, defying the elements, reached *Astorga* with 80,000 men. Moore, ignorant of his peril, remained the 22nd and 23rd of Nov. at *Sahagun*, urged even then by Frere and Morla to advance on Madrid, when one step would have caused certain ruin. But the truth flashed across his martial mind, and he retreated with unexampled decision, baffling Buonaparte, who arrived twelve hours too late at Benavente: then the *échauffourée* of the Esla gave him some forebodings of what might happen "dans une affaire générale" (see p. 633). Remembering *Acre*, and prescient of Waterloo, he declined risking his reputation in the fastnesses of Galicia; having delegated that to Soult, he only himself advanced to *Astorga*, where (Jan. 1, 1810) he reviewed 80,000 Frenchmen pitted in pursuit of 19,053 English infantry, 2278 cavalry, and 63 guns, a force magnified by him into 30,000 or 40,000. He then departed on the pretence that he had received important intelligence from Germany which required his return: being however so little pressed that he dauded ten days at Valladolid, routing the English in his bulletins, paper pellets of his brain.

Moore, however brave and soldier-like throughout, sank under responsi-

bility, overrated the enemy, and underrated himself: he began by a mistake, thinking that "when the French had Spain, Portugal could *not* be defended." How thought the Duke? "If I hold Portugal, France cannot and will not hold Spain;" and *shall not*, he might have said. Moore, although always meditating a retreat, never made any preparations for one, either by sending to reconnoitre routes, or to prepare magazines and halting-places. He met with little aid from the Castilians, still less from the Gallicians.

Napier (iii. 3) has rescued his fair fame, and exposed the red-tapists by whom the brave soldier was sacrificed. "In Sir John Moore's campaign" (said the honest Duke) "I can see but one error; when he advanced upon Sahagun he should have considered it as a movement of retreat, and sent officers in the rear to mark and prepare halting-places for every brigade; but this opinion I have formed after long experience of war, and especially the peculiarities of Spanish war, which must have been seen to be understood; finally, it is an opinion formed after the event." The Duke was soon afterwards sent to Portugal, where the retreat to *la Coruña* was more than wiped off by the *sauve qui peut* from Oporto, whence Soult, after a trouncing, which Moore never received at all, fled under every circumstance of precipitancy and discomfiture.

The ten long leagues from *Benavente* to *Astorga* are dull and monotonous; the country is studded with vineyards and small villages: at *San Roman de la Valle* the mud-hills are excavated into *bodegas* or wine-cellars, whose contents proved more fatal to Moore's troops than any foe; but Bacchus has ever been more formidable to our soldiers than Mars. Readers of *Gil Blas* may look out for the caves into which he was carried by the robbers. The uncivilized peasantry wear *madreñas* or wooden *sabots*, turned up at the toe, and supported by clogs; they hobble along in torture, even youth looking care-worn and old; the

churches are mere barns, with a wall in front built up to a point, whereon is placed a niche for a bell, to which a staircase conducts. Passing *La Bañeza*, with a decent *posada*, pop. 2000, observe its fine alameda of poplars: now the snowy cloud-capped mountains close in as an amphitheatre, and seem to bar further approach. Soon *Astorga* appears, looking both warlike and picturesque; the ancient walls still speak the Roman, in spite of the recent paltry defences raised in the Carlist struggle, which speak the Spaniard. There is a tolerable *posada* just before entering the town.

Astorga—*Asturica Augusta*—in the days of Pliny (N. H. iii. 3), a "magnificent city," now is much decayed. Pop. under 3000. The bishopric, founded in 747 by Don Alonso el Catalico, is suffragan to Santiago; the town bears for arms a branch of oak, indicative of strength. The local histories are '*Fundacion, Nombres y Armas*,' &c., Pedro de Junco, 4to. Mad. 1634, and Pamplona, 1639; and a poor book, '*Historia de Astorga*,' Svo. Valladolid, 1840. Humboldt considers *Astorga* to be a vernacular Iberian name, and derived from *Asta*, "a rock, a rock-built place," e. g. *Astures, Astaba, Astigi*. The Spaniards, finding in Sil. Italicus (iii. 334) that one *Astyr*, son of Memnon, fled to Spain, consider him the founder of *Asturica*. Certainly it is most ancient; the walls are singularly curious, and there are two Roman tombs and inscriptions near the *Puerta de Hierro*, built into the breach as mere handy materials. Some others of the 3rd and 4th centuries, have been recently encrusted in the walls of the *Paseo Nuevo*, than which nothing can be more charming. Seen from the outside, *Astorga* has a venerable imposing appearance, with its infinite semicircular towers, which do not rise higher than the level of the wall; like Coria and Lugo, it gives a perfect idea of a Spanish city fortified by the Romans, of which so few specimens remain, since most were dismantled by Witiza: being so near the

mountains, the rivers *de Porcos* and *Tuerto* occasionally overflow, causing frightful ravages.

Astorga ranks as a grandee, for many Spanish cities and corporations have *personal* rank. It gives the title of marquis to the Osorio family, a ruin of whose palace yet remains; a portion of the fine library fortunately escaped Soult's camp-fires, and now belongs to the advocates at Edinburgh. Many of the gems had been previously extracted; the chocolate and *mantecadas* of Astorga are renowned, and are much more valued in Spain than books.

The Gothic cathedral, raised in 1471, on the site of one more ancient, has since been much modernised and disfigured; one tower is built of grey stone, the other, of red, is capped with a slated top. The exterior and entrance are churrigueresque, and the two lateral aisles are lower than the central one; observe the *reja* and elaborate *silleria del coro*, in the tedesque style of Rodrigo Aleman. The ridiculous drummers, naked women, and monsters, which ornament the organ contrast strangely with the venerable saints and bishops. The *trascoro* is very bad; the pulpit, with its medallions, is better; the cloisters are modern. The far-famed *retablo* is by Gaspar Becerra, who was born at Baeza in 1520, studied under Michael Angelo in Italy, and was patronised by Philip II.; his finest works are in the Castiles and centre of Spain. This *retablo*, executed in 1569, and perhaps his masterpiece, unfortunately has been much repainted: divided into three parts, the framework of the under story is supported by Berruguete pillars: the second tier has fluted columns and enriched bases; the third, has pilasters in black and gold. The carvings represent subjects from the life of the Saviour and Virgin; observe, especially, the Pieta, the Ascencion, and Coronation of the *Santisima*, and the fine recumbent females and Michael Angelesque "Charity." These nudities gave such offence to the thin-skinned, that they were about to be

covered, when the *Consejo* of Madrid interfered: these grand carvings are very Florentine and muscular. In the *Capilla de San Cosme* is the tomb of King Alonso, ob. 880, with ancient marble sculpture in low relief, from subjects of the New Testament.

Astorga, when utterly unprovided, was assailed in February, 1810, by the French under the cruel Loison, who was nobly repulsed by the gallant José Maria de Santocildes, with a few raw soldiers. Junot came next, March 21, and threatened to put the whole town to the sword; and then, in spite of the advice of his engineers, rashly tried to storm the town by the *Puerta de Hierro*, but was beaten back. Santocildes, deserted by Mahy, who ought to have relieved him, and having expended his scanty ammunition, capitulated April 22, after a noble defence. Junot then dismantled the works, and destroyed the fine palace of the Astorga family, of which only two turrets and some armorial shields remain, and are best seen from the garden of the Moreno family, in whose house Moore was lodged. In 1812, Castañón, with 15,000 Gallicians, was here detained three months by Gen. Remond and only 1500 gallant Frenchmen. This was the manner in which the "Hero of Bailen" co-operated with the Duke, and at the moment when Marmont was in his front; indeed, he was so inconvenienced by this slowness that he thought of coming himself, for, as he said, "It is ridiculous to talk of Astorga as a fortified place; it is a walled town, which could not have stood *one day* against a regular attack" (Disp. Feb. 23, 1811).

Astorga is the capital of *La Maragateria*, or the country of the *Maragatos*, which is about 4 L. square. It contains 36 villages—*San Roman*, near *Bañeza*, being one of the best. The unamalgamating Maragatos, like the Jews and gipsies, live exclusively among their own people, preserving their primeval costume and customs, and never marrying out of their own tribe. The women, who remain at

home, do all the work in house and field, while their undomestic nomade husbands are always out and about. Almost all are *ordinarios*, or carriers: their honesty and industry are proverbial; they are the channels of most traffic between Galicia and the Castiles, being seldom seen in the S. or E. provinces. They are dressed in leather jerkins, *jubonetas*, and wide breeches, *zaraguelles*, with long brown cloth gaiters, or *polainas*, with red garters and slouching flapping hats. Observe the models of their costume, figures of painted wood, which strike the hours on the clock on the *plaza* of *Astorga*, and that of *Pedro Mato*, who holds a weathercock at the cathedral. The dress of the Maragata is equally peculiar; she wears, if married, a sort of Moorish head-gear, called *El Caramiello*.

The whole tribe assembles twice a year at *Astorga*, at the feasts of *Corpus* and the *Ascension*, when they dance *El Cañizo*, beginning at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and ending precisely at 3. If any one not a *Maragato* joins, they all leave off immediately. This dance as well as their marriage ceremonies is very peculiar.

The origin of the *Maragatos* is doubtful. Some derived the name from *Mauri Capti*, Moors taken in battle, and certainly the Moors and Moriscoes were the great carriers of Spain. The *Maragatos* are, at all events, *arrieros*—*arre* Arabicè, *gee up*—indeed, most words relating to the barb and carrier-caravan craft are Arabic, and prove whence the system and science were derived by the Spaniards. Thus purely Arabic are the names of animals, *Recua*, *Jaca*, *Acemil*, *Alfana*, *Alhamel*, *Almifor*; their colours and qualities, *Alazan*, *Lozano*, *Zaino*, *Haron*, *Haragan*, *Rodado*; their helpers, instruments, burdens, and language, *Zagal*, *Albeitar*, *Alforjas*, *Telliz*, *Fardo*, *Forrage* (forage), *Zalea*, *Atahorre*, *Grupa*, *Acial*, *Albarda*, *Almohaza*, *Jamuga*, *Atahona*, *Guian*, *Arre*, *Anda*, etc.

The *Maragatos* are celebrated for their fine beasts of burden; indeed, the mules of Leon are renowned, and the asses splendid and numerous, especially the nearer one approaches the learned university of Salamanca. The *Maragatos* take precedence on the road: they are the lords of the highway, being the channels of commerce in a land where mules and asses represent luggage rail trains. They know and feel their importance, and that they are the rule, and the traveller for mere pleasure is the exception. Few Spanish muleteers are much more polished than their beasts: However picturesque the scene, it is no joke meeting a *recua* of laden *acemilas* in a narrow road, especially with a precipice on one side—*cosa de España*. The *Maragatos* seldom give way, and their mules keep doggedly on, and as the *tercios* or baggage projects on each side, like the paddles of a steamer, they sweep the whole path. But all wayfaring details in the genuine Spanish interior are calculated for the *pack*; and there is no thought bestowed on the foreigner, who is not wanted, nay is disliked. The inns, roads, and right sides, suit the natives and their brutes; nor will either put themselves out of their way to please the fancies of a stranger: The Peninsula is too little travelled over for its people to adopt the mercenary conveniences of the Swiss, that nation of innkeepers and coach-jobbers.

The difficulties and over-haste of Moore's retreat began after *Astorga*, for up to then, he had hoped to bring the enemy to a general action. The high road to *Lugo* is a superb monument of mountain engineering. The leagues, marked by milestones, are very long, being *de marco*, or of 8000 yards each. The climate is cold and rainy, and the accommodations fit only for swine; bad even in summer and peace, how fearful must they have been during the snows and starvation of a December retreat!

Leaving *Astorga*, we ascend, over a heath-clad "highland" country, to elevated *Manzanal*, and enter *El Vierzo*,

the Switzerland of Leon, a district of alpine passes, trout-streams, pleasant meadows, and groves of chesnuts and walnuts. *Bembibre*, pop. 500, lies with its old castle on the trout-streams Noceda and Baeza, amid green meadows, gardens, and vineyards whose wines were far more fatal to Moore's soldiers than the French sabres; so much for *Bembibre—bene bibere*. *Ponferrada* (Interamnium Fluvium), which is not entered, rises to the l. on the confluence of the Sil and Boeza. Pop. 4000. The bridge (Pons ferrata) was built in the eleventh century, for the passage of pilgrims to *Compostella*; who took the direct route along the Sil by *Val de Orras* and *Orense*. The town afterwards belonged to the Templars and was protected by the miraculous image of the Virgin, which was found in an oak, and hence is called *Nuestra Señora de la Encina*; it is still the patroness of the *Vierzo*. Gregorio Hernandez carved an excellent Magdalen for the parish church. *Ponferrada*, a good point of starting to see the ancient convents of this Thebaïs, and an excellent quarter for the angler, has a theatre and a nice *Paseo de la Cruz*. *Cacavelos* is a wretched hamlet; it has, however, a *posada*, where we slept. Between this and *Prieros*, 400 of the 95th and a picket of cavalry were attacked (Jan. 3, 1809) by Gen. Colbert and eight squadrons. He was killed, and his outnumbering force beaten back everywhere. Buonaparte's veracious version of this *defeat* ran thus in his 25th bulletin:—“L'arrière garde Anglaise était composée de 5000 hommes d'infanterie, et 600 chevaux; cette position était fort belle et difficile à aborder. Le Général Merle fit ses dispositions: l'infanterie approcha: on battit la charge, et les Anglais furent mis dans une entière déroute.”

Villafranca del Vierzo (*Posada Nueva*); pop. 3000, and truly Swiss-like, is placed in a funnel of mountains, with cottages, convents, vines, and balconies, and painter-like bridges hanging over the trout-streams the *Burbia*

and *Valcarce*; yet it is the abode of dirt, misery, and picturesque poverty. At the entrance, the large square fortress palace, with round towers at the corner, which belonged to the *Alva* family, is now a prison. Here *Romana*, in 1809, took 1000 of the French garrison prisoners. Here and in the *Vierzo*, although fish and fruit abound, rye-bread, or *Pan de centeno*, forms the scanty staff of life. This town, formerly the halting-place of the French pilgrims bound to *Santiago*, was hence called *Villa Francorum*. Given to a brotherhood of monks from *Cluny*, the name of the present *Colegiata* retains the origin in the corrupted *Nuestra Señora de Cruñego*, or *Cluniego*. 1 L. E. on the road to *Corullen* is another ancient church, *La Santa Marina*. The enormous Franciscan convent which overlooks the town on the r. was founded to expiate his proportionate crimes by Don Pedro de Toledo, the Viceroy of Naples, who, aided by Paul III., tried to introduce the Inquisition. The populace, in profane joy at this persecutor's death, exclaimed, “He has descended into hell for our salvation.” He bequeathed to the monks his fine library of Greek manuscripts, lost for ever, when the village was sacked in 1810.

Here, June 24, 1808, *Filangieri*, governor of *La Coruña*, was murdered by his troops because slow in proclaiming the cause of independence. This Italian by birth had the common military sense to see that *Fabian* and defensive strategies were those which history and the character of this country and people demonstrated as the best suited; this delay offended those Spaniards who were eager to rush into general actions and defeats, and his prudence was imputed to treachery; he was, moreover, a *foreigner*, whereat *Españolismo* took huff, and his conduct was called a *judiada*, the deed of a Jew (*Schep. i. 404*), accordingly his troops fixed their bayonets in the ground, with the points uppermost, and tossed their general on them, spiking him to death, as the

Carthaginians did Regulus. The Junta took no steps to prevent this crime: and Blake, who wanted to step into his command, and did succeed to Filangieri, only sent a preventive battalion *after* the deed was done.

Continuing our route over a noble road, the mountain barrier of Galicia is scaled by the Alpine pass *el Puerto de Piedrahita*, near *Doncos*. The Burbia to the l. forms the perfection of a trout-stream; this pleasant brawling companion to the dusty highway is tracked upwards and upwards, until it becomes a rivulet heard but not seen, amid its fringed, picturesque banks.

The road after the *Puerto* descends to wretched *Nogales*. A decent posada lies to the r. on leaving the town. The pastoral country has neither the charms of Switzerland or the plenty of England; damp, and with all the discomforts, it furnishes none of the luxuries of the Alps. There is no cream, butter, or strawberries. The squalid natives, tattered and half-clad, just vegetate and starve in ill-constructed hovels, fitter for beasts than men, and formed to admit, not exclude, the evils of the climate; the very swine have lost their Estremenian rotundity. The ascent continues to *Santa Isabel*, where the slate roofs are kept down from the winds by heavy stones. The women turn their brown petticoat *sayas* edged with white, over their heads, and thus form the genuine national *mantilla*. The grand road winds up the heights, with a tremendous precipice to the r., and a rapid river deep below; all around the grey rocks peep out of the cistus and heath. The fine bridge of *Corcul* spans with three arches a terrific ravine, and its creamy-coloured masonry is worthy of the Romans; here, from Moore's previous over-hasty destruction of heavy fourgons, the engineers failed from want of even tools in mining the bridge, which would have arrested the French pursuit at once; and although Moore was a whole day in advance, here 25,000*l.* in dollars

were thrown down the precipices; then, according to Buonaparte (bulletin 27), the French took "2 millions of francs, the English carrying of from 8 to 10 millions more;" thus was magnified into 660,000*l.* a sum proved by parliamentary papers to have only been between 60,000*l.* and 70,000*l.* But little Boney was truly great in the "lie circumstantial."

After *Sobrado* the country gets prettier and more English. As we emerge from the mountains, the noble Miño winds through pleasant meadows, but *Lugo* is not seen until nearly approached. There is a decent posada in the *Barrio de San Roque* before entering the town.

The kingdom of Leon stretches both to the r. and l. of Benavente; the portion to the l. is called *El Vierzo* or *El Bierzo*, a name corrupted from the Roman *Bergidum*, the *Interamnium Flavium* of Ptolemy. The site of which river-girt town, some have placed near *Carucedo* at *Castro de la Ventosa*, a wind-blown eminence, a Windsor which commands the district, and traces of walls yet remain; the *Vierzo*, one of the most interesting nooks in the whole Peninsula, is all but unknown to the English antiquary, artist, angler, and sportsman. The singular ecclesiastical details have only just been nibbled at by Southey (Letters, i. 105); here, indeed, is a fresh ground open to all *original* ladies and gentlemen who aspire in these threadbare days to book something new for the season. Nor are old printed books altogether wanting; in the ecclesiological branch the best is honest Ambrosio Morales, who was sent here in 1572 by Philip II. to inspect the archives and relics. His report, '*Viaje de Morales*,' fol. Mad. 1765, was published by Florez, who also dedicated the 14th, 15th, and 16th volumes of his '*España Sagrada*' to these parts and the vicinity; his maps of the bishopric of Astorga by *Manuel Sutil*, 1761, and of *Orense* by *Joseph Cornide*, 1763, will be found very useful in threading this intricate and alpine

country. The traveller should visit *El Vierzo* in the summer time, bringing plenty of tackle, and of course taking a local guide, and especially attending to the "provend."

The *Vierzo* extends about 10 L. E. and W. by 8 N. and S. This amphitheatre is shut out from the world by lofty snow-capped mountains, raised as it were by the hand of some genii to enclose a simple valley of Bas-selas. The great Asturian chain slopes from *Leitariegos* to the S.W., parting into two offshoots; that of *El Puerto de Rabanal* and *Fuencebadon* (Fons Sabatonis) constitute the E. barrier, and the other, running by the *Puertos de Cebrero* and *Aguiar*, forms the frontier; while to the S. the chains of the *Sierras de Segundera*, *Sanabria*, and *Cabrera* complete the base of the triangle: thus hemmed in by a natural circumvallation, the concavity must be descended into from whatever side it be approached; this crater, no doubt, was once a large lake, the waters of which have burst a way out, passing through the narrow gorge of the Sil, by *Val de Orras*, just as the Elbe forms the only spout or outlet to hill-walled-in Bohemia, the *kettle-land* of Germany.

The vicinity of mountains and the natural elevation render the winters cold, but the summers are delicious. The central portion, which is bounded to the E. and S. by the Sil, and to the W. by the Cua and then the *Burbia*, is in some portions a Swiss paradise, where *Ceres* and *Bacchus*, *Flora* and *Pomona*, might dwell together. The snow-clad *sierras* are the alembics of crystal streams, which descend into lochs, and feed rivers that teem with trout, while the woods and aromatic wastes abound in game of all kinds, both *caza mayor y menor*. Here grow hay, turnips, and potatoes, rare productions in the *tierras calientes*; while the verdurous meadows and thyme-clad hills, afford pasture for flocks of sheep, to tend which is one great occupation of the simple primitive natives. These districts shut out from the

world, attracted the notice of the re-
cluse in the 7th century. The spirit of that age was monastic, and the good work consisted in flying from the living into solitude; for the essence of the monk was to be alone and in the desert, *μονος εν τῷ ερημῷ*: and never was nature more enthroned in loneliness than here: nor are water and herbs, hermit's fare, wanting. Accordingly the *Vierzo* became a Thebais, and rivalled the holiest districts of Palestine in the number of its sanctuaries and saints, which, says Florez, (*Esp. Sag.*, xvi. 26), God alone, who can count the stars of heaven, could enumerate. The first founder, A.D. 606, was San Fructuoso, the son of the count or petty sovereign of *El Vierzo*,—a sheikh shepherd, whose wealth consisted in herds and sheep; his heir preferred flocks of holy monks. Having surrendered his worldly goods he settled in the *Puerto de Rabanal*, and founded the convent of *Compludo*. The fame of his sanctity, and the number of his miracles, attracted so many disciples, that Fructuoso, to escape the pressure from without, retired from one cave to another, and once was nearly killed, having been mistaken for a wild beast by a hunter. His biography was written by Valerio, one of his disciples. At the Moorish invasion these Christian valleys were ravaged, the monks dispersed, and their edifices destroyed; but the *religio loci* was indestructible, and when the Gothic kingdom grew in strength, a second founder arose about 890 in the person of San Genadio. The infinite number of early monasteries are referred to in the *Esp. Sag.*, xvi. Some of them have crumbled away from sheer age, others have been converted into parish churches for their respective hamlets, and many were burnt by the invaders.

To the military man the *Vierzo* is interesting as being the line by which Soult retreated in 1809 after he was so signally surprised and so soundly beaten at Oporto by the Duke. These

happy valleys, in which, amid a simple peasantry, hermits and philosophers had long dwelt in peace, were visited by the enemy, who, infuriated by defeat and disgrace, vented his rage on the poor villagers. Soult spared, says Monsieur Durosoir ('Espagne,' 146), neither sex nor age. Loison led the way; in the *Val de Orras* he is better known by the nickname *Maneta*, the bloody *one-handed*. He was the Alaric of Evora, the forager of women. "His misdeeds (says Southey, 35) were never equalled or paralleled in the dark ages, uncivilised countries, or barbarous hordes." "Le congé des Français (says Schepeler, ii. 374) en Galicie fut signalé le 27 par les flammes de 31 villages incendiés dans le Vierzo." Their progress is thus described by Foy (i. 62), quæque ipse miserrima vidit, et quorum pars magna fuit: "Ainsi que la neige précipitée des sommets des Alpes dans les vallons, nos armées immombrables détruisaient en quelques heures, par leur seul passage, les ressources de toute une contrée; elles bivouaquaient habituellement, et à chaque gîte nos soldats demolissaient les maisons bâties depuis un demi-siècle, pour construire avec les décombres ces longs villages alignés qui souvent ne devaient durer qu'un jour: au défaut du bois des forêts les arbres fruitiers, les végétaux précieux, comme le mûrier, l'olivier, l'oranger, servaient à les réchauffer; les conscrits irrités à la fois par le besoin et par le danger contractaient une ivresse morale dont nous ne cherchions pas à les guérir."

Who can fail to compare this habitual practice of Buonaparte's legions with the terrible description in Hosea (chap. ii.), of the "great people and strong" who execute the dread judgments of Heaven: "A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth; the land is the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness, yea, and nothing shall escape them."

ROUTE 70.—BENAVENTE TO ORENSE.

N.B.—These distances are given approximately, as authorities differ, some making the route 6 L. longer.

Sistrama de Tera	2	
Vega de Tera	2½	.. 4½
Mombuey	3	.. 7½
Remesel	3	.. 10½
Puebla de Sanabria	1½	.. 12
Requejo	1½	.. 13½
Lubian	2	.. 15½
Canizo	3	.. 18½
Navallo	2½	.. 21
Ferreiras	1½	.. 22½
Monterey	1½	.. 24
Villar del Rey	2½	.. 26½
Abavides	1	.. 27½
Ginzo de Limia	1	.. 28½
Allariz	2	.. 30½
Taboadella	1	.. 31½
Orense	2	.. 33½

The main picturesque and iniquitous communication between Vigo and Madrid, branches off to the l. from *Benavente*. The road is far from good, especially after *Requejo* to *Monterey*. A new *Carretera*, long in contemplation, has been longer delayed by local jealousies and the want of funds; a really good communication would be opened by it from the Atlantic to the capital. After leaving *Benavente* and crossing a tributary of the Esla at *Sistrama*, the beautiful Tera flows to the l., and is tracked upwards through its lovely *Vega*. At the village on the *Rio Negro*, a stream which comes down from *Carbajal*, is a remarkable image, called *Nuestra Señora de Farrapos*, Our Lady of "old clothes" (whom Jews might worship); this name was given because the beggars who are cured of diseases by her intervention dedicate their votive rags and tatters to her shrine. *Mombuey*, in its valley, has a fine oak-clad hill. Pop. 600, posada decent, wine good. *La Puebla de Sanabria*, the chief place of its mountainous *partido*, pop. 600, is built on a slaty slope, with the noble *Sierra de Segundera* rising to the N.W.; posada descent. This frontier *plaza* has some old walls and a castle on the eminence, and is a good point from whence to make excursions into the *Vierzo*, and especially to the lake and convent of *San Martín de Castañeda*. The romantic road now

turns towards *Requejo*, winding under an offshot of the *Segundera*, and is often almost impracticable in winter. It continues to be very indifferent by the *Portilla* of *Padornelo* to *Lubian*, where the *Sierra* rises to the r., and the frontier of Portugal, distant about 2 L., expands to the l. This is a district of smugglers; indeed, the whole intricate indented *raya*, from Ciudad Rodrigo to Orense and Tuy, is peopled by bold *Contrabandistas*, who constitute one-fifth of the male population, and carry on traffic, in localities where regular trade is in a state of congestion. *Canda* is placed in the *portillo* which divides Leon from Galicia. At *Cañizo*, with a poor venta, another road to Orense branches off to the r., by which 7 L. are saved; but it is an *atajo*, and very rough riding over hills and valleys. The line, however, is as follows:

Erosa	1	
Porto de Camba	2	3
Laza	1	4
Alvergueria	1½	5½
Pedreda	1½	7
Orense	1	8

Laza, pop. 900, is charmingly situated, with the *Sierra de Mamed* rising to the N., in a valley watered by two streams which flow into the *Tamega*, a beautiful trout river, which meanders down to *Monterey*. Near *Pedreda* a rivulet is crossed which flows into the *laguna* of the *Limia*. It is better to continue the under line, and proceed W.S.W. to *Verin*, pop. 800, placed on the l. bank of the *Tamega*, with the hill and imposing castle of *Monterey* rising opposite. There is a good stone bridge, but the river often in high floods inundates the village. The valley district abounding in fruit and vines, and the granary of Galicia, is a bosom of beauty and picturesque discomfort. S. of *Verin*, at *Villar de Ciervos*, near the Portuguese frontier, are some neglected tin-mines. Ascend to the castle of the Condes at *Monterey* to enjoy the fine view. The road now winds more N. up to *Villar del Rey*, and *Abavides*, by the ridge which divides the basins of the *Tamega* and trout and salmon stocked

Limia. The latter is crossed at *Ginzo*, a hamlet, with a decent posada placed below the *laguna*, in which the waters flowing from the *Sierra de Mamed* are collected, as it were, into a *pan-tano* or reservoir. This same *Mamed* hill, be it said, is beautiful as its namesake *Mamhead* near Exeter. This *Limia* is the real river of Oblivion, which has been confounded with the *Guadalete*, near Xerez. Another ridge divides this basin from that of the trout-river *Arnoya*, and tributary of the *Miño*. *Allariz*, the capital of its pretty *partido*, pop. 2500, might be made the angler and artist's headquarters. This walled place has a castle of the *Malpicas*, and two stone bridges. The huge square Franciscan convent, *Santa Clara*, was founded in 1292, by Violanta, wife of Alonso el Sabio: besides hers, there are ancient sepulchral memorials in the *Coro* of sundry *infantes* and of the *Biedma* family. The grand saint, however, is one *Brandeso*. Those who fish up the stream will find 1 L. another rural village called *Junquera de Ambia*: pop. 700, with an old priory, founded in 876 by Gundisalvo and Ilduara, buried here. W. of *Allariz*, and 3 L. from Orense, is *Celanova*, with the celebrated convent. See Index.

EXCURSIONS IN THE VIERZO.

Good starting points are from *Puebla de Sanabria*, *Astorga*, *Ponferrada*, *Villafranca*, and *Puente de Domingo Florez*, within which circle this preserve of monks and trout-fishers is enclosed. The chief monasteries worth notice are *San Martin de Castañeda*, *Santiago de Peñalva*, and *Carracedo el Real*. The best streams are the *Tera*, *Eria*, *Tuerto*, and *Orbigo*, which go to swell the *Esla*, and the *Cabrera*, *Burbia*, *Cua*, tributaries of the *Sil*, itself a prince of rivers. Starting from *Puebla de Sanabria*, taking a local guide, ascend the *Tera* to the *Lago*, distant about 2½ L., the reservoir of that sweet river, which rising in the mountains behind, near the *Portillo*, after flowing about 2 L. into its charm-