

Spain of a vital portion of its harness. A sergeant may be an excellent practical gunner, and be able to lay a piece accurately; but that does not qualify him to command a battery. Scientific acquirements and training are necessary, a mastery of technique and tactics, quickness of resource, and the habit of authority. The promoted sergeants were wanting in these essentials, and the Carlists soon found out the weak spot in the armour.

The strength of the permanent army is fixed annually by the Cortes, and every Spaniard above the age of twenty is liable to be drawn, and has to serve four years under the flag. The nation is divided for military purposes into five captain-generalcies, the commandant of each of which holds a rank corresponding to a British field-marshal. The nominal strength of the infantry in round numbers is about 60,000; artillery, 9,500; engineers, 2,300; and cavalry, 11,500. Then there are the provincial militia, some 44,000 strong; the carabineros, or revenue police, 12,000; and the Guardia Civil, 10,000. These Civil Guards are picked men, robust, strapping, seasoned fellows, and are distributed over

the country like the French gendarmery, to whose duties theirs are similar. They form a *corps d'élite*, and are the very mainstay of order. In fact, without them life and property during times of political commotion would very often be at the mercy of any horde of ragamuffins with weapons in their hands and the courage to use them. They are handsomely uniformed, wearing cocked-hats of the pattern of those to be seen in the prints of the First Napoleon, fine cloth tunics of dark blue, with epaulettes of white cord, and yellow side and cross-belts, and present a manful, soldierly appearance. From their valour and topographical knowledge they have been very serviceable in carrying on the guerrilla warfare with the Carlists, and are the terror of brigands and evil-doers. If all the troops were as orderly and well disciplined as these, Government would be easy, and those at its head might afford to be firm, regardless of mob clamour. In short, these magnificent Civil Guards are the best military force the country possesses. Some of them are mounted (and capittally mounted too), and all have an elevated notion of duty. A mutiny is

never inaugurated by the Civil Guards. They stick to each other like wax, and are faithful to the powers that be, regardless of their political colour, so long as those powers are accepted by the nation. Dynasties may change and depart, as Ministries do; but the Guardia Civil is an organization immutable and goes on for ever. The one charge made against them has its warrant in necessity. When a prisoner is sent to gaol in some remote town under escort of the Civil Guards, he often makes an attempt to run away, and is invariably shot between the shoulders. No strict inquiry into the circumstances is made—it is an understood practice—a rascal is got rid of, to the relief of the community, by a quick and economic method, which is a desirable improvement on the laggard processes of law.

The cavalry is controlled by a director-general, who has a respectable staff of subordinates at his disposal. There are only two regiments of cuirassiers—the 1st, or King's; and the 2nd, or Queen's. There are two regiments of carabineers known as Calatrava and Bailen. There are eight regiments

of lancers, viz., Farnesio, Villaviciosa, España, Sagunto, Santiago, Montesa, Numancia, and Lusitania. The hussar regiments are but two, Pavia and the Princess's. Prim's son, a boy of fifteen, was captain in the former, and the veteran Espartero honorary colonel of the latter. The name of a former colonel, Don Pedro Elio, "who died gloriously on the field of honour," like Latour d'Auvergne, first grenadier of France, is also borne on the rolls of the Princess's. There are six regiments of mounted chasseurs—namely, Almansa, Alcántara, Talavera, Albuera, Tetuan, and Castillejos, and two squadrons of Galicia and Mallorca respectively. These men, as far as I have seen, are well horsed, Andalusia furnishing some capital chargers, well-made and well-paced, and up to decent weights. There is nothing peculiar in the cavalry uniform, which is formed upon the French model. In fact, it would be difficult to distinguish the dragoons from the French dragoons, but that they have a seat and know how to keep it, and that their helmets are of a round Roman style, with a rising sun in a circuit of rays right in front.

The remount depôts are at Granada and Córdoba, and there are four establishments where sires for cavalry purposes are maintained at the expense of the State—namely, Córdoba, Baeza, Llerena, and Alcalá de Henares (the latter exclusively for the use of the mounted artillery). There is also a military school for the cavalry, maintained on the same system as that of the French at Saumur.

The Engineers are quite as tall but not so sturdy as our Grenadiers, and look up to their work. This was the favourite force of Prim, and it is only second to the Guardia Civil in its obedience to constituted authorities. From what I hear the men are carefully trained in sapping and mining, though of them, as of Spanish soldiers universally, one is compelled to say that they have too much leisure, and when soldiers have too much leisure the Devil invariably finds them occupation. The value of the artillery, which had been one of the best organizations of its class in Europe, as I have already said, at that precise epoch ranked at *nil*. Reports were circulated every day that the difficulties in this branch of the service had been arranged, but the

wheels want such a dose of oil in Spain that one can never be certain that the machine is in order till it moves. The artillery is denuded of officers, and the infantry and cavalry have officers too often that are valueless ; and in that lies the secret of the deterioration of an army which was once, and still might be made, capable of great things.

There are forty regiments of infantry, numbered as ours were, but known also by distinctive names, generally those of the locality in which each was originally raised. Thus the 1st Regiment is Rey, or the King's ; the 2nd, Reina, or the Queen's ; the 3rd, the Prince's ; the 4th, the Princess's ; the 5th, the Infante's ; the 6th, the Regiment of Saboya ; the 7th, of Africa ; and then come those with territorial titles—the Regiments of Zamora, Soria, Córdoba, San Fernando, and so on, until we reach the 40th, which is called the Regiment of Málaga. The 14th, 29th, and 30th are respectively known as the Regiments of America, of the Constitucion, and of Iberia.

Each regiment consists of three battalions, except the 20th (the Guadalajara) and the 34th (the

Granada), which have but two; and in each battalion there are six companies. Nominally, each company numbers about 80 rank and file, but he would be a wise man who could say how many answer to the roll-call in the existing state of disorganization. There are twenty-four battalions of handy light troops, who are equal to almost anything human in the way of marching. Agile and untiring, sound in wind and limb, they can get over an extraordinary length of ground with a speed that would not discredit professional walkers in England. The French foot-chasseur, who can put on an astonishing spurt now and again, is no rival to the Spanish cazador.

The infantry uniform is almost exactly that of the French—long grey capote, blue tunic with the number of the regiment on the collar, and red trousers. Instead of a shako the head is protected by a projecting cap of cloth and glaze, something like a stiffened Glengarry without ribbons. Those absurd white gaiters which gather dirt so quickly when it is wet under foot, and give the French soldier incessant bother to look after their pipe-

claying, are replaced in the Spanish service by calfskin buskins and black cloth spatterdashes. Few more sensible uniforms are to be met with in Europe. Properly officered, there is nothing to prevent the Spanish infantry from regaining the prestige it once held. The men have the right stuff in them, are temperate and frugal, cheerful under privation, and hardy as wild ducks. They do not want pluck either; they have the reputation of showing a good deal of dash in their pursuit of the Carlists; but that is no fair criterion of what they could do when pitted against the troops of some great Power in ordered line of battle. Good lungs are indispensable in Carlist warfare, as an officer who was hunting them for six weeks in Catalonia, and never caught one, begged me to recollect. "You want men who can breast hills," he said. But good lungs are valuable in a campaign anywhere, and looking at these lively, well-set Spaniards as they trot along under their packs, I must say they favourably compare with those weakly men of the French line I saw staggering to the Eastern Railway Terminus at Paris, on their way to Metz,

in 1870, or with some of the lank striplings I saw defiling before Victor Emmanuel at Somma in the autumn of 1872.

The Minister of War (Cordova) and the Minister of Marine (Béranger) are good. The general and the admiral had really no politics; but they knew their respective departments better than any men in Spain. Cordova comes of a fighting family, and "ran the army," to use an expressive Americanism, under Isabella, under the Serrano-Prim Administration, under Amadeus, and would, I dare say, under Don Carlos, if he came to-morrow. In fact, the general is a military Vicar of Bray, but for the less egotistical motive that he loves his profession, and does not care to see it and Spain go to the bad, which Spain would if the army did. But he is not a Republican, neither is Béranger; and the sovereign people will only be governed by Republicans. They will not permit men of another party even to do them a service. Therefore the general and the admiral, and their colleagues of the Finance, Public Works, and the Colonies, have patriotically made up their minds to retire. Thus,

for the moment, stands Spain, ruled by an Assembly divided against itself and an Executive in a state of dissolution.

Meanwhile the army is hurrying to the devil at the double-quick. The troops which fell back on Pampeluna, after the affair at Monreal, broke into open mutiny a few days afterwards. Some of them raised cries in favour of Don Carlos, others in favour of Don Alfonso ; and the majority threw up their caps and shouted enthusiastically for the Republic, meaning always that Federal Republic which they did not understand, and which had not yet been created. The latter demonstration was quite as much a breach of discipline in its way as the others. It was stated that agents of the Carlist party, which was strong in Pampeluna, provoked these disturbances in the first instance, plying the men with liquor, and supplying them with money. At all events, that is how the Government accounts for the outbreak. In their turn the Republicans got excited, and instigated the soldiers to demand that the thirteen Carlist prisoners they had taken should be shot without trial or benefit of clergy, in

defiance of the laws of honourable warfare. These Republicans are not scrupulous. They talked of massacring all the Carlist sympathizers in Pampe-luna—in short, of commencing a sort of Sicilian Vespers on a smaller scale; and so threatening did their attitude become at one period, that the priests in the town had to disguise themselves as peasants and fly to the mountains, and the laymen who were suspected of a love for Royalty had to block up their doors and windows. This was what one of the few trustworthy journals of Madrid, *El Imparcial*, related, and may account for the inactivity of the gallant General Nouvilas quite as much as that sore throat which confined him to his room.

In Catalonia the disorganization was worse. The battalion of Chasseurs of Manila separated into several parties, which were wandering over the province, spreading terror wherever they went. The patriotism of the volunteers of the Republic had been invoked to try and bring them back to discipline. Such an attempt might lead to combats that would have the result of embittering still more the spirit of the freebooters, which those

soldiers were in the fullest sense of the word. Persuasion by gunpowder, when employed by irregulars, seldom pacifies regulars. Either of two events was possible—those soldiers would get the better of the volunteers, or might turn over to the side of Don Carlos. Meantime the Carlist bands in the province are increasing, and have the field pretty much to themselves. Four hundred officers of the army came to Madrid the other day, and are now walking about the capital *en pékin*. Like the frozen-out gardeners who parade London suburbs in the depth of a hard winter, they've "got no work to do," but, unlike those impostors, they are really anxious for a job. I have chatted with some of those officers, and I know several of them would not be averse to flashing a sword for the son of their former Queen. They had to leave their regiments because they could no longer command them. The bonds of discipline were completely smashed. The men were unmanageable. In some barracks Phrygian caps were as common as the regulation head-gear. The sergeants of the line, jealous of the promotion of the sergeants of the

artillery, thought they should have their turn; and the privates did not see the justice of volunteers being offered two pesetas, or about 1s. 7d. a day, while they, who did more and better work, encountered more risks, and suffered more hardships, received but a miserable pittance of a few pence. The general in command was recalled, and Contreras sent down in his place. He has a reputation as an unimpeachable Republican, one of old standing, and not "for this occasion only;" and much faith was reposed in the influence of his name. But Contreras failed to charm; and, indeed, he appears to have gone the wrong way about his business. An officer whom he put under reprimand went to two barracks and tried to rouse the men to mutiny. He failed; but the men were so little careful of discipline that they let him depart in peace. At last two adjutants on the personal staff of Contreras arrested him and brought him before the General. What course did the General, whose authority had been thus grossly set at defiance, adopt? Order the offender to be shot? No. That would be the mode in a serious army. But

Contreras is not Suwarrow. He dismissed the mutineer in epaulettes with a fatherly admonition—appealed to his better feelings. In all likelihood, General Contreras felt that he could not afford to be justly severe. The army was too restive.

Private letters from Barcelona do not mince the matter. The few columns which went out against the Carlists refused to march unless they were headed by detachments of Republican volunteers. The officers ran serious personal risks in their quarters. One of them was condemned to death by a mock court-martial of his own men, and was actually put on his knees preliminary to being shot, when a sergeant interposed, and harangued his comrades into moderation. But all the sergeants have not the good sense and courage of that worthy fellow. Some privates in Barcelona have been trying to have their own profit out of the Republic, by discharging themselves from further service without as much as asking leave; they have sold their uniforms to the dealers in old clo', and are going about the streets in peasant dress, making no secret of their intention to give

up the trade of fighting. The great anxiety of the Republican man-at-arms in Spain is to turn his sword-bayonet into a sickle, and his rifle into a mattock. That is what he pretends; I hope he has not a sly hope of vegetating for the rest of his days in lazy vagabondage, with occasional spasms of brigandage just to keep his hand in at shooting. A training in the Spanish army is not exactly the thing to fit for the peaceful and toilsome monotony of industrial occupations.

The battalions of cazadores of Mérida and Barcelona, in garrison at Valencia, exhibited symptoms of discontent; but the officers were on the alert, and checked them on the spot. That is the only plan—nip the evil in the bud. It is the custom in Spain to confine troops to barracks during times of popular commotion. The artillery quartered at Valladolid caught the contagion of mutiny, and would have broken their bounds but for the prompt arrival of the captain-general and military governor, who succeeded with some trouble in pacifying them. These unpleasant tokens are not confined to the land forces; they are said to have

spread to the sailors and marines. A steamer was under orders to leave the port of Barcelona the other night, but the crew emphatically refused to go; they argued that they were entitled to be paid off, and enjoy liberty on shore, under the benign regulations of the Republic. To be brutally candid, the army has taken the bit between its teeth and bolted. I fear I am repeating a twice-told tale, but it is well that it should be impressed on the reader, that he may know what the cuckoo-cry of "No army" signifies. One of the leading points of the programme of the Spanish Republicans out of office was that a soldier was a machine, and that no soldier should exist in a free nation. Now that the Republicans are in office the soldiers take them at their word, and claim their discharges. The machinery is out of gear. The Republicans never contemplated that they would require soldiers to put down a civil war. Señor Figueras, in spite of all his eloquence and honesty, can hardly be more successful in pacifying turbulent Barcelona than General Contreras. Catalonia is as great a stickler for its usages as the Basque provinces are for their

fueros. One of the fueros of the Basque provinces is exemption from the quinta, or conscription; their only soldiers are the Miqueletes, a body of men somewhat like the Irish constabulary, who are not bound to act beyond their own provinces. Thus the army which is serving against the Carlists in Biscay, Alava, and Guipúzcoa, is in the provinces, but not of them. Catalonia cries out against the conscription, too, and Barcelona—hot-blooded, troublesome Barcelona, which never loses a chance of standing up for independent opinions—encouraged her garrison in the demand for its discharge.

The regular troops were to be replaced by the highly-paid volunteers. That was the proposition. But how is the increased call on the Financial Ministry to be met? Where is the money to pay these volunteers to come from? And without regular troops, what was to become of Cuba? The gold that is brought back from the Pearl of the Antilles is dearly bought with Spanish blood. People in England little dream what a drain that everlasting little-thought-of Cuban insurrection was upon

the Spanish army. Thousands of men perished in the island every year, not from the bullets of the insurgents, but from privations, fatigue, the torrid clime, and the deadly swamp fever.

In sum, the army has been petted; the army is spoiled; the army, like a wanton child, is naughty. Ministers have shown indecision in shifting generals, generals have set the example of indiscipline in tolerating mutinous officers, officers have thrown off their uniforms in dudgeon and despair, sergeants have waylaid the War Office, so to speak, with the cry of "Promotion or your life!" Can poor Pistolet of the rank and file be blamed if he sighs for freedom, his sweetheart, and his native village? The Republic promised him all these, and now he is wicked enough to ask for them. There is one way of bringing naughty children to their senses, but Pistolet is too big a boy to submit to the rod from a weakly master.

In the capital we were comparatively safe. Unless the garrison divided against itself or the ordinary troops and the Guardia Civil fell out, there was no danger of bloodshed in any quantity. The

population is not singularly ferocious. The privates move quietly in the streets in pairs, and are particular to salute their officers, though there is one officer, on an average, to every fifteen men, and most of these officers lack the thoroughbred air of gentlemen, and apparently have risen from a low social level. The sergeants are self-controlled, and brighten the promenades with their green worsted gloves and the great laced V's on their sleeves. I never miss a chance of admiring the garrison at parade. Physically the men are up to a high standard—superior to those of most European armies; morally they have the name of being patient and well-conducted; in formation they are steady, in dressing precise, and in movement they have a step as quick, but more *dégagé* than the Prussians. Were I a Spaniard, I would, every time I bent in prayer, offer up a supplication for the conversion—or perhaps the something else—of the bedizened culprits who are sending the soldiers to rack and ruin.

CHAPTER XII.

Luring the Reader into a Stony Desert—A Duel on the Carpet—Disappointment of the Special Correspondents—The People Amuses Itself—How the Ballot Works—A Historic Sitting of the Congress—Castelar's Great Oration—The Glory of Spain—About Negro Manumission—Distrust of "Uncle Sam"—Return of Figueras—The Permanent Committee—A Love-Feast of Politicians—The Writer Orders Wings.

It may be urged with some show of truth that under the mirage of the adventurous, I have lured the reader, anxious for the sensational, into exhausting deviations in the stony desert of politics. I am guilty, and I am sorry that I shall have to sin again—politics are so intimately interwoven with life in Spain. But it must not be imagined that these accounts of what happened more than a decade ago are no more useful or interesting than the stale report of the death of Queen Anne. In Spain history has the trick of literally repeating itself.

The country is split into the same camps still, and occurrences similar to those of which I treat are certain to be presented to the world anew. The drama will be the same; the company only will be strange. And the information, such as it is, which I give now, may furnish the key to much that would otherwise be hard to unlock when the curtain rings up again.

Before one more error of political errantry, I must tell of a duel which did not come off, for the sake of its moral. This was how the affair arose. There was a discussion in the Assembly in reference to an alleged insurrection in Porto Rico. Señor Padiá asked, was it true that the insurgents had raised cries of "Death to Spain," and demanded the independence of Porto Rico, and the massacre of the local volunteers? Several members got up to speak, and one of them, for what reason I cannot fathom, characterized the question as "a farce unworthy of the Conservative party." After a little while Señor Ardanay proceeded to read some documents proving the reality of the disturbances. He was interrupted by a torrent of voices,

and Señor Padial shouted that the Civil Guards and volunteers of the island had got up the whole row, and that General Sanz was the author of the farce. General Sanz politely retorted, "Your worship is wanting in truth." Several honourable gentlemen sprang to their feet, and asked that Señor Padial's words should be taken down in writing. And then the Assembly became a bear-garden. Señor Olavarrieta claimed "la palabra," but the President would not give him the privilege of speaking. He spoke all the same, and said, "We shall not allow ourselves to be insulted by those señores," pointing to the Porto Rico deputies. The confusion became worse confounded. The President rang his bell, called "Order," and threatened to suspend the sitting. General Sanz then rose, looking wicked, and asked that the words offensive to the Civil Guards and the volunteers should be taken down in writing. As for what had been said offensive to himself, he asked nothing; he knew what course to take. In England this might have meant that the soldier would treat Señor Padial with silent contempt; in Spain, with

my preconceived notions of the pride of blue blood and the fire of Castile, and all the rest, I took it that it could only mean "pistols for two and coffee for one." The confession is sad; but the truth at any price, the truth is so rare under this sky. Sundry Special Correspondents who had come out to describe the revolution that would not come off, were cudgelling their brains to discover how they could assist at this passage of arms, in order that they might render a full, true, and particular account to the public. The encounter would have been more diverting than a bull-fight. Opinions were divided as to whether it was better to go disguised as a hackney coachman or an apothecary's assistant. I hurried, after dinner, to the Café Fornos, the great rendezvous of Madrid politicians, to hear the latest details of the pending affair of honour. It was to come off—no doubt of it; but when and where, I could not hear. Next morning I read that the difficulty had been arranged. It may be a satisfaction that the barbarous "code of honour" has fallen out of fashion in Spain; but it would be a still greater satisfaction if the practice of gentlemen

giving each other the lie in public were to fall out of fashion also. The scene was disgraceful, and I am glad to be able to add that most of the deputies were thoroughly ashamed of it; and in places of public resort some went so far as to say that they would take their seats no more in the Assembly. But they were in their places all the same on the following afternoon. The Congress of Spain is no more mannerly on occasions than legislatures elsewhere; but the occasions are rare.

My visit to the *Café Fornos* was not for nothing, after all. There was a scene there too. A group of low fellows, overheated with wine, entered about eight o'clock, while the immense hall on the ground-floor was crowded with Radical deputies, officers, and quiet Madrileños who frequent it nightly, and commenced bellowing for the Republic after their hearts—that is to say, the Republic, Federal, Social, and Uncompromising. The shout was taken up by another group outside, which blocked up the entrance in the *Calle de Alcalá*. It was evidently a premeditated manifestation. A Republican deputy who was present tried to calm the disorderly crew,

but to no purpose. They had come to shout, and they would have their shout out. Señor Estévez, the civil governor, was dining in a room upstairs, but Señor Estévez did not leave his repast. When the thirsty and uncompromising federal social citizens were hoarse they retired. They had effectually succeeded in annoying the coffee-drinking tyrants who had the impudence to wear broadcloth, and they withdrew to drain bumpers to their tremendous exploit elsewhere.

These individuals were all in favour of the "social liquidation." This cry of the drones had partisans in every citizen with an empty pocket and a patch on his garments, for it means that the provident shall be robbed to satisfy the improvident. But nathless these agitators, Spain, I was told, was likely to be quiet for five or six weeks—that is, quiet in the Spanish sense, with an insurrection in one stage of heat or another, smouldering or flaming, in half a dozen provinces. The elections would be tranquil, with "scrimmages" here and there; they would not be elections without. The voting is by ballot. Theoretically the system is