

faultless, but in practice jugglery is possible, and does habitually occur. The *alcalde* has some influence in the matter, so has the parish priest, so has the nearest large landed proprietor, so has the local police functionary, and so has the mob. Ballot-boxes have been broken open or have disappeared mysteriously. And thus it happens that a Spanish constituency sends in a buff man as its representative by a crushing majority at one election, and a blue man or a red man by a crushing majority at the next. The constituency has not changed in the interval, but the Minister in the *Gobernacion*, or, as we should call it, the Home Office, has. There lies the secret.

I pass over small squabbles, which were of daily occurrence at the Palace of the Congress, to come to the sitting of the 21st March, 1873, which deserves to be handed down to history. On that day the Bill for the Abolition of Slavery in Porto Rico was introduced by Castelar, in a speech over which all Madrid went into raptures. The "inimitable tribune," as his admirers call him, surpassed himself. He led off in the usual oratorical style by pretend-

ing that he was not going to be oratorical—"the bench on which he sat was one for actions, not words"—and then, in the usual oratorical style, he contrived to say so many words that the official paper next morning was full of them.

His first speech, made when he was but twenty-one, in the year 1854, was on the very same subject, as he reminded his hearers. The Christian religion, he said in the course of his remarks, was the religion of the slave, and the Apocalypse the poem of the slave. Christ was the descendant of enslaved kings, a bondsman of Roman conquerors. But I must give up the attempt to follow the "inimitable tribune;" his lengthened and dazzling chain of eloquence was too elaborate to be picked up link by link. He was historical, passionate, and poetical by turns, but always intensely rhetorical, keeping a close watchfulness for effect, for Señor Castelar does not argue so much as declaim. He had the good taste to defend the Radical Ministry from the charge of having acted in favour of emancipation because the influence of the United States was brought to bear upon it. Such a course, he

asserted, would be unworthy of the dignity and independence of the country.

I must tell you that the way to make Spain recoil from doing an act she admits to be good and needful is to counsel her to do it—she will not be advised by others. It would not be Spanish. If a Spaniard has a notion of getting himself re-vaccinated, take care, if you are a friend of his, how you talk to him on the subject. If you recommend him to have the operation performed, he will change his mind at once. He will not be bidden, he will risk small-pox in preference. It may happen that he will die, but at all events he will have the satisfaction of having had his own way.

Señor Castelar flattered the self-love of his countrymen by assuring them that they were magnanimous of their own free will, and not because foreigners had advised them to be magnanimous. He next delivered himself of some tuneful periods about humanity, and then wandered off into a spoken essay on the behaviour of the great European Powers on this question of serfdom. He alluded to England as “the least democratic, but most liberal

of nations," and praised Russia for having set Spain the example of unriveting the shackles of the slave. He apostrophized the opponents of abolition, telling them that on their heads would fall the responsibility if the law were not passed, but that he and his colleagues would be answerable for the consequences if the law were passed. Then the speaker waxed patriotic, and spoke the stereotyped sentences on the glory and grandeur of Spain. Why should there be rivalries between Creoles and Peninsulars—those who were born in the colonies and those who were born in the mother-country? It was deplorable. Were they not all of the same race? Was not the blood of the Cid and of Pelayo careering in all their noble veins, and the spirit of Spain living in all their generous souls? His peroration was grandiloquent; he appealed to them to cease their bickerings, to close up their ranks, and to labour unitedly for the maintenance of order, authority, and the integrity of the territory, and they would earn the benediction of history and of conscience, which was much more, for it was the benediction of God.

At the close of his discourse, which was incontrovertibly a masterpiece, Señor Castelar was surrounded by numerous colleagues, and warmly congratulated. His speech established among other welcome things that the orator-minister was no atheist. His remarks breathed the truest Christianity. Next it was manifest that Spain, Republican as Monarchical, would not, without a bitter struggle, cede one inch of territory over which the national flag floated. Those who were interested in the retention of slavery in the colonies were the holders of slave property, and the deputies who had lived there and shaken the pagoda-tree to some purpose, and who, now that they were back in Spain, had a grateful recollection of what they owed to slavery. Those gentlemen predicted that the immediate emancipation of the negro would be the ruin of the colonies, and would inevitably lead to their loss by the mother-country. The Ministry of King Amadeus originally brought in the measure for the abolition of slavery in Porto Rico, preliminary to the introduction of another to get rid of the system in Cuba. The chief argument

against the measure was that it was due to intriguing on the part of American politicians, whose object was to smooth the way to the ultimate incorporation of the Antilles with the United States. The sincerity of American friendship is suspected by Spaniards. They know that Uncle Sam has a longing eye on the islands in the Caribbean Sea; and has already tried to negotiate Spain out of her American possessions. Spain, recollecting this keenly, mistrusts him. And Señor Castelar, whilst acquitting his predecessors in office of having acted at the suggestion of the United States, let it be very plainly understood that this Republic would fight that other and greater and aggrandizing Republic to her last man and last dollar, before she would consent to the abandonment of one square foot of soil. The vested rights of slave-owners would not suffer completely, for the bill embraced a proposition to pay them an indemnity equivalent to eighty per cent. of the value of their live chattels. Forty per cent. of this was to be guaranteed by the mother-country, and forty by the enfranchised colony, so that twenty per cent.

was the comparatively small pecuniary sacrifice the inheritors of an odious system would have to make to conscience.

Whether the manumission of the bondsman in Cuba, which was bound to come, would hasten the independence of that island—or, what was more likely, its annexation to the United States—I am not competent to pronounce. Ultimately, it is the conviction of the wise and experienced that the Queen of the Antilles must achieve her independence; but it will be less on account of abolition than for reasons geographical, climatic, and military. The ocean rolls between Spain and the sunny cluster of isles, the climate is deadly to the Spanish soldier, and the Spanish army cannot afford a perpetual depletion.

Nobody in Spain dares to defend slavery as moral, or protest against its abolition on grounds higher than those of political expediency. The adversaries of the bill affirmed that gradual abolition would be safer than immediate abolition, and that the matter could well afford to wait. The newly-proclaimed Republic had interests of far

greater present importance to attend to, they said ; but the philo-negrists retorted that it was a shame not to free the negro under the Republic, which was based on the broad principle of freedom to all, without distinction of colour, and that a beneficent and noble act could not be done too soon. If the Monarchy had lasted, there could be no denying it, this project of abolition would have been enacted without fail.

Late in the night, after Castelar had delivered his oration, Señor Figueras returned from his trip to the provinces. He was met at the railway-station by groups of friends, personal and political, and escorted to his residence, where he was serenaded by the band of a regiment of foot artillery. The night was dark and rainy, which was an ingratitude to the patriotism of the musicians. If it did not savour of ill-nature one might be permitted to remark that speeches, however splendid as specimens of composition from a bench, which the speaker admits should be one for acts, not words, and midnight clangours of a brass band under the dripping window-sills of a tired Minister, were

hardly what was needed most and first in the country. But Spain is not like any place else.

On the 22nd the Assembly sat until seven, when there was a break-up of two hours for refreshments; after which was held a night sitting (a most unusual thing), prolonged until half-past one the next morning. This was the last of that Assembly. The powers of the Cortes, save and excepting such as were purely legislative, were delegated to a Permanent Committee of twenty, which was to aid Ministers in their task, until the meeting of the Constituent Cortes. In the interval between the two sittings this committee was chosen by the nominating sections of the Radical and Republican parties respectively, all shades of opinion being represented upon it. The President of the Assembly, the four Vice-Presidents, and the four Secretaries, held *ex-officio* seats on the board. An analysis of the names of the twenty-nine shows that there were fourteen Radicals, eight Federals, four Conciliadores (who may be counted with the Federals), two Conservatives, and an Alfonsist.

This moribund sitting was unique in its unani-

mity and enthusiasm. The Bill for the Abolition of Slavery in Porto Rico was passed without a dissentient voice. There was kissing and clasping of hands, and friendly hugging all round. Señor Padial and General Sanz, who were anxious to fight a duel to the death a few days before, met in the Salon de Conferencias and made up their quarrel. They cemented their reconciliation with an embrace, and one sentimental Deputy who was looking on, cried, "May this be an auspicious omen of the union between Spain and the Antilles!" Señor Figueras promised that the Executive Power would faithfully see to the maintenance of order during the elections. Another señor proposed that the act they had accomplished on the date of the 23rd should be recorded on a marble tablet, to be erected in the chamber. The proposition was received with cheers; and truly the act which knocked the chains off the limbs of 35,000 slaves merited record. The Marquis of Sardeal, who occupied the presidential throne, prayed God to enlighten the minds of the Government and the Permanent Committee, and then declared the

Assembly dissolved. There were loud shouts for the "Federal Republic," and just one weak voice for the "Spanish Republic."

The clouds had blown over. Now was the hour for congratulations. Many persons who were preparing to send away their families resolved to let them remain. I had no further occupation in Madrid. A Deputy who had thirty years' experience of life in the capital told me that this was the last place in Spain where there was likely to be a disturbance for the present; but he added, "If you think of going elsewhere, be sure to give me an address where I can telegraph to you, for something may always turn up." I had waited nigh five weeks in the expectation of that something turning up, and at length I began to think I had better seek fresh fields and take a look at real Spain.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Writer Turns Churlish and Quits Madrid—Sleep under Difficulties—A Bad Dream—Santa Cruz again—Off St. Helena!—Dissertation on Stomach Matters—A Hint to British Railway Directors—"Odds, Hilts and Blades"—A Delicate Little Gentleman is Curious—The "Tierra Deleitosa"—That Butcher again.

"IF you want to see real Spain," said the British Minister to me, "don't stop here longer than you can help. Go south." That fixed me. With a natural impulsiveness I pronounced "the imperial and crowned, very noble and very loyal and very heroic town"—all which titles it bears—a fraud and a failure as far as my calling was concerned. There had been great cry and little wool. I was as churlish as a hangman cheated of his client. That terrible thing which was perpetually on the eve of coming to pass had not come to pass. After all, I reflected, it was for the better; for if there

had been stupendous tidings to wire, the Government telegraphic system would have broken down under the operation. A message more than twenty lines long was a shock to the clerks, and set them discussing so excitedly that they let the fire of their cigarettes die out. The "only court" grew hateful to my mind. It had produced no men to charm by, save Frey Lope de Vega Carpio, Don Pedro Calderon de la Barca, and the Maestro Tirso de Molina—and they were dead. It was a nest of political hornets, and head-quarters of hyperbole; flimsy feathers of lying gossip floated thick as midges in midsummer air; as in Athens, the populace spent its leisure, which was the best part of its life, in nothing but hearing or telling new stories. I would shake the dust of the Prado off my feet, in testimony against the unsatisfying capital. Architecturally, it was a higgledy-piggledy of houses on a high bare site; climatically, it was a mixture of furnace and hall of winds; socially, it was slow, and a disappointment; intellectually, it was below zero. My parting words—I cannot say my farewell—will be framed on

those of Jugurtha to Rome: "*Urbem venalem et mature perituram, si emptorem invenerit.*"

I paid a good-bye visit, with thoughts of a stirrup-cup, to Maceehan, at the Fornos, and discovered him listening to Bret Harte's poem of "Table Mountain," recited by Russell Young, who was lolling on a sofa in an upstairs cabinet. The dentist did not seem to "take much stock in it." An appreciation of the horrors of Chinese cheap labour requires a liberal antecedent education on the Pacific slope. Dr. Maceehan was, for his own sake, sincerely sorry I was going away; but for my sake he was glad, as I had been overworking myself, and was badly in want of a kick in the liver.

It is an error to speak of any city or people when you are under the influence of sluggish bile, for you are liable to do them injustice. It is a sin not to withdraw the unjust words. I am tempted to sin; but on consideration I follow the example familiar in a certain legislature, and take back the unparliamentary language into which I have been betrayed by jecoral derangement. Honour

to the manes of Uxem-Ali-Beck, Ambassador from the Shah of Persia, who came to Madrid in 1601, and fell in love there. He liked it. I fell in love ten times a day, but nobody would fall in love with me.

On a Sunday night at nine o'clock, I quitted the city, and on Tuesday morning I had my hair trimmed by a barber of Seville. The journey, like most long railway journeys, is one of infinite weariness to the flesh. The first-class carriages are roomy and well-padded, so that short travelling, except for invalids, is comfortable enough. The *correo*, or mail train—that which I took—leaves but once in twenty-four hours, and, in consequence of carrying the mails, has to stop at every station, so that its progress is slow, albeit the quickest to be had for money. There were nine sociable young Spaniards in the compartment with me. The gauge of the road is wide, admitting of five broad seats at each side, and the motion of the train is easy and nurses to sleep, without that violent rocking which one sometimes experiences while rattling northwards from London in the

Flying Scotchman. But the backs of the seats are stiff and straight as a Prussian drill-sergeant, and do not nurse, but "murder sleep," as I speedily found to my sorrow. However, they do nurse a crick in the neck. I was woke out of a wayward doze just as I was about to undergo the punishment of death by the garrote. I had been dreaming a fearsome dream. In a weak moment I had accepted the crown of Spain. I had granted my subjects every conceivable privilege, pandered to all their crazes, gone so far as to give them a bull-fight every day in the week and two on Sundays and festivals, paying all expenses out of my own royal pockets. But they were not to be satisfied, unless I would go into the bull-ring myself. That was the straw that breaks the camel's back. I flatly refused. They rebelled, kicked me off the throne, led me in a felon's yellow coat on a wretched donkey to the place of execution, and planted me in the fatal chair. Most poignant humiliation yet, all the crowned heads of Europe, led by the Czar of Russia, were invited to the spectacle and joined in a howling chorus of "Serve him right."

I looked my last around, and woke up with a toss of my noddle against the back of the seat. We were at Alcázar. A fellow-traveller kindly offered to let me lay my head between his legs if I would give him my carpet-bag for a pillow. There is nothing like reciprocal accommodation on a journey. I agreed, the train started again, and I lost myself in the land of Nod. This time I was following the campaign against the Carlists. Suddenly I was roused by a cry—

“Santa Cruz!”

I knuckled my eyes, the carriage was motionless, and I distinctly heard the name of the dreaded priest Santa Cruz repeated. This was no dream. Had I mistaken the terminus? Had I been speeding northwards all this time? I was in a most perplexed tangle of mind, half pleased at the prospect of meeting the redoubtable Cura in person, half apprehensive lest I might give lodging to a chance bullet, and miss the opportunity of describing him. As I was preparing to jump out, the train moved on anew. I turned to the railway guide and discovered the explanation of the

mystery. Santa Cruz is a station on the Andalusian line between Val de Peñas and Almuradiel. A third time I fell asleep, to be roused by another cry—

“St. Helena!”

Taught by former experience, I was not to be discomposed now. We had pierced the bowels of the Sierra Morena, and Santa Elena was but the name of a station on its southern side. The next time I fell off I enjoyed a genuine sleep. I do not think it would have roused me if “Salt Lake” or “Skibbereen” had been shouted in my ear through a speaking-trumpet.

At Menjibar, where we arrived about ten in the morning, there was a delay of twenty minutes for breakfast. By way of whet, I presume, my fellow-travellers all lit cigarettes as we were gliding up by the platform. This Spanish railway restaurant was a reproach to Mugby Junction. It was scrupulously clean, the fare was excellent, and the tariff moderate. The price of every article was legibly painted in distemper on the walls. Premising that a real is, roundly speaking, twopence halfpenny

of our money, a list of some of the viands and liquids to be had and their cost will be interesting—only the reader is requested not to open the book previous to bolting his food at the hurry-up and grab-all refreshment-room at Amiens, or when he is about to confront scalding soup and monumental sandwiches at some of our British buffets. It might ruffle his temper and jeopardize his digestion. A breakfast consisting of a couple of eggs, two plates of meat or fish, dessert, bread and wine, can be had for twelve reals. The wine is the common wine of the country, and pleasant and healthy tippie it is when you get used to it. You can procure a baby bottle full for one real, and if you like to be extravagant you can pay twenty-four for a bottle of Bordeaux, or forty for a bottle of champagne. The Bordeaux is too dear. As for champagne, nobody drinks that habitually except kings of the Bonanza dynasty; but myriads of men, especially at race-meetings, drink a beverage which they take for the bubbling, roseate, kindling nectar with inspiration in every wavering pearllet. "Fizz," I think they call it. I hope they enjoy it.

“Compound of crime at a sovereign a quart” (see James Smith’s poems somewhere), I call it. He who quaffs champagne at dinner, save on a foggy day, is unworthy of God’s gifts. The proper hour for the absorption of that delicious exhilarant is at eleven in the forenoon, and then but two glasses at the most should be taken. These glasses should not be the absurd shallow lapping-glasses, nor yet the slender stork-glasses, but the goodly tumbler. If it be summer, there should be a lump of ice in the crystal goblet; and the connoisseur will always hold it between him and the sunlight before imbibition, and ejaculate, “There’s a picture!” For these hints I am indebted to that princely gourmet of palate most exquisite, John Kavanagh, of the Inman ocean-ferry line, Founder and President of the Cocktail Club, of which I am the Laureate. Returning from our divagation, the amateur of beer may have a big bottle at these Spanish railway hotels for four reals, but I counsel him abstention. It is never advisable to drink beer in a wine-growing country. The soul of Sir Wilfrid Lawson would be elevated to the height of successful joke-

making at the catalogue of the teetotal drinks, which range from sugared water to milk and orangeade. My weakness is egg-flip. For dinner, which is to be partaken of at fourteen reals, one has a soup, a fry, an *entrée*, a roast, a salad, two sweets or fruits, bread and wine. The *entrées* are usually rib of mutton, veal or a beefsteak, which sometimes makes you think there is something like leather. A hen, which is a luxury, rates at fourteen reals, but a tortilla of the hen's eggs is to be preferred. If any complaints are felt to be necessary as to attendance or provand, the stationmaster has a volume wherein to write them down at the disposal of travellers.

From Menjibar we steamed along through a beautiful landscape of this beautiful province of Andalusia. The fields were emerald green and ought to be fertile, but they seemed to lack cultivation. Very few persons were to be seen working in them. In proportion as nature had been prodigal, man appeared to be lazy. Still, viewed as the painter, not the agriculturist would view it, the landscape was delicious in its quiet loveliness.

Patches of silvery grey—that dreamy neutral silvery grey which is to be caught in perfection on willows played upon by moonlight—here and there lightened the mellow masses of verdure. Those were olive groves. The hills on the horizon, seen through an odd curtain of rain, for the day was showery, had the vaporous hazy outline of some of Murillo's pictures. Anon we passed by the bridge of Alcolea, the scene of the defeat of Queen Isabella's forces under Nouvaliches by Serrano in 1868. The field is altogether too pretty to have been defiled by a sanguinary episode of civil war. A gently winding stream courses 'mid rich undulating meadows at the base of a ridge of hills covered with cottages enbowered in plantations and orchards. As if inflamed by the warlike associations of the locality, my companions produced sword-canes, dirks and poniards, and began comparing them with the air of experts. Not one of these sociable young Spaniards was unprovided with a lethal weapon. I was devoutly thankful that they had not got to talking politics on the road, or I might have had to deplore the absence of a bye-law applying to

passengers carrying edged tools from that code which so carefully shuts out the drunkard, and insists that nobody with a loaded gun or pistol shall enter a carriage.

At Córdoba the train stopped, and we changed carriages for the Andalusian capital. During my short stay I was invited to take my choice of a varied assortment of daggers, navajas, skeens, and stylets, which a sturdy hawker, who looked as if he knew how to handle them, had strung round his waist.

The fellow was a perfect walking arsenal, or rather a peripatetic bit of Sheffield, and expatiated affectionately on the temper and cutting qualities of his wares. I declined to buy. He showed his teeth, and told me I might go farther and fare worse. I was very happy to take him at his word, and get into a carriage that was going as far as Seville, which was occupied by only one person, a delicate little gentleman with a bright, keen, kindly face. To him came a courier as he leant out of the carriage-window.

“Why does one see so many Scotch caps about?” asked the little gentleman, in English.

“Because Gibraltar is near, and there are smugglers there,” answered the courier.

“Why does one see so many dogs about?” asked the little gentleman.

“Because they find more food here than at home,” answered the courier.

“Why does not one see the train start to time?” asked the little gentleman.

“Because this is Spain,” answered the courier.

That was conclusive, and the little gentleman drew in his head and sat down opposite me. He was a charming companion, a young American of culture and courtly manners, who was travelling in Spain for his health. He loved the country and the people, and told me many anecdotes of acts of kindness of which, being sickly, he had been the object from this strange, tender, passionate race, as ready with generous help as with the stiletto-point. Poor little gentleman! I fear he has made a void in some fond household long since, for he was sore stricken with decline.

“The Spaniard,” he said, “in fine, is the most courteous of men; he never sits down to eat in

your presence without offering you a share of his meal." And it is true.

From Córdoba to Seville the way lies through a land of delights—the “*tierra delectosa*” of Andalusia. Again we swept by green fields and silvery grey olive groves; anon we skirted vivid clusters of orange-trees laden with the great luscious fruit, which is ever in season. On we passed by plains bristling with huge spiky clumps of aloes alternating with growths of Barbary figs, until, towards twilight, we came in sight of the Guadalquivir with its boats, and on the farther side, near a copse of cypress, the walls of the Cartuja Convent, now turned into a porcelain factory by an enterprising Englishman, who makes imitation Moorish tiles where the hooded friars sang matins and lauds.

It was seven o'clock when we drove into “proud Seville,” too late to look at any of her marvels, but not too late to enjoy a good dinner in the *Fonda de Paris*, a namesake and branch of the hotel where I had been stopping at Madrid. My *vis-à-vis* at the dinner-table was the Saragossa butcher—I began to think now he was a political agent—who