

for the men to wear masks, except in the streets, the women have decidedly the advantage, which they avail themselves of in a manner, that adds infinitely to the frolicsome pleasure of the entertainment. The gentlemen, on the other hand, not being able to distinguish the ladies, and fearful of whispering words of love, lest perchance the object of their attentions should prove to be their own sweetheart or jealous wife, are necessarily on their guard in their conduct towards the gentle sex.

The masqueraders, however, in the open air have a much greater license, the men as well as the females being equally disguised and screened from observation. These persons belong almost exclusively to the lower orders. Many of them have guitars, upon which they perform some favourite air, while their companions join lustily in the chorus. The spacious squares are crowded with hundreds of people, the larger number of whom are arrayed in curious and fanciful dresses, and provided with every variety of hideous mask.

The Plaza de San Antonio is by far the most popular place of resort. Entering upon this splendid area, we were quite bewildered

with the magnificence of the scene. It was densely thronged with a gay concourse of human beings, enjoying themselves in every conceivable way, and presenting, in the aggregate, an effect very similar to that of a mammoth fancy ball. The sound of music fell upon our ears, which we soon discovered to proceed from a circle of dancers, who were performing their mystic evolutions in the centre of the grand square. Tall white edifices towered around, while rows of orange trees, along the side walk, cast their long and flickering shadows upon the pavement. The stars burned brightly in the clear heaven, and a soft breeze, laden with the delicious perfume of lemon blossoms, gently refreshed our waning senses. The moon had disappeared from view and the midnight festivity was still at its height.

The solemn hour of one had just sounded like a funeral knell, when, more exhausted than desirous of slumber, we turned to retrace our steps homeward to our hotel.

Our ears were startled in the morning by a report that a young girl had on the preceding evening thrown herself from the balcony of a house near our hotel, and had died immediately

of the injuries she had received. The incidents relating to her sudden end were briefly these : A gentleman in Seville had given us a letter of introduction to his nephew residing in Cadiz, which we duly delivered. The young man honoured the epistle of his uncle by inviting us to his house, and offering to do anything in his power to serve us or add to the pleasure of our visit. Two evenings previous I had met him at the entrance of a masquerade, and had asked him if he did not intend to participate in the ball. "Yes," said he, "but I am expecting a young lady here to-night with whom I have recently had a quarrel, and I wish to see how she will conduct herself." He was proceeding to inform me of the particulars of the affair, when the conversation was suddenly interrupted and broken off by a gentleman, who had something of importance to say to him. Bidding him "good evening," I mingled with the crowd of masqueraders within, and had not from that moment seen or heard anything more of him.

But his words, few and unsatisfactory as they were, had made so deep an impression upon my mind, that the tale of the recent suicide brought them instantly to my remembrance, and filled

me with a fearful sense of awe. I believed, as it from a presentiment, that our new acquaintance was concerned in the late catastrophe, and so anxious were we about the matter, that we dispatched Pascual to make inquiries, in order that we might satisfy our minds on the subject. He shortly returned, verifying in every respect the suspicions which we had already entertained. It appeared that the young man whom we have just introduced to the reader, was painfully jealous of the Spanish maid whose fatal end was now the topic of conversation in every mouth. He had visited her at an early hour on the night before, and had in the most violent terms charged her with having gone to the masquerade in company with a certain individual, whom he regarded as a rival. She denied strongly his groundless charge, and begged him to have mercy upon her. Blinded, however, with rage, he refused to listen to her, but declared his intention of leaving at once the house never to return. "Then," said she, with the calmness of pride and despair, "go, if you please ; but you shall soon know that Madelina was ever true, and that you alone she has too deeply loved."

Rushing frantically into the street,— oh, God !

what a horrible spectacle met his eye ! She whom he had so cruelly injured, and who had worshipped him as the idol of her heart, was a mangled and lifeless corpse at his feet. She had thrown herself in her desperation from the balcony of her chamber, and the departure of her innocent and loving soul had been instant. The young man, paralyzed at the sight, fell down in agony upon the cold pavement, and was carried in a state of insensibility to his father's house. We never saw him afterwards.

Notwithstanding the tragedy, which had cast a blight upon our spirits, and thrown the neighbourhood into a momentary panic, the festivities of the Carnival were in no degree interrupted or disturbed. The day passed by as gaily and joyously as before. Hats innumerable were demolished ; my own *sombrero*, which I had purchased only a few days previous, fell a victim to the mischievous mirth of the fairer portion of the populace. Every balcony throughout the entire length of the street was thronged with frolicsome damsels, each of whom was supplied with a silken bag, filled with beans, or something of the kind, with which she industriously pelted the passers-by. This curious

missile was secured by means of a cord of sufficient length, by which it could be immediately withdrawn as soon as the purpose of its mission had been accomplished. No distinction of persons was made, but every body, old men, priests, and soldiers, were alike assailed, and no one took the slightest offence, but on the contrary, seemed to enjoy the fun exceedingly.

Our neighbours on the opposite side of the street kept up an incessant warfare with their confectionery bags against every one who chanced to pass within the limits of their jurisdiction. From our position on an upper balcony, we carefully watched the proceedings of the girls, selfishly congratulating ourselves that we were beyond the reach of their well-loaded projectiles. While we were indulging in this feeling of fond security, suddenly a missile whizzed through the air, and striking my hat with extraordinary force, sent it rolling to the farthest extremity of our apartment. Looking instantly in the direction from whence the attack proceeded, I perceived that one of the damsels, who had been watching us from below, had stolen up quietly to the top of the house, where, being but little above the level of our chamber, she had dispatched the

messenger, which had committed such havoc on my dilapidated sombrero. Though we were inclined to pardon the young lady, yet our incorrigible Pascual was evidently bent upon some plan of revenge. At length a thought seemed to strike him. Seizing an immense horse-blanket, which Ronalds always carried with him for his individual comfort, he secured it in the middle with a long cord, and then taking advantage of the most favourable opportunity, he threw it with such dexterity, that it landed like a huge shawl directly over the shoulders of the girl who had attacked us, to the infinite merriment of herself and of all the others who witnessed this extraordinary exploit.

A brilliant illumination lit up the city in the evening, and the most unbounded mirth prevailed. Description even of the best kind is but a mockery of such unique and beautiful scenes. We participated in the frolic till the bells of the cathedral tolled the hour of midnight, and then retired, as the period of the carnival was at its close.

CHAPTER XVI.

A DAY AT XEREZ—PASSAGE THROUGH THE STRAITS—
SCENES AND INCIDENTS AT GIBRALTAR—JOURNEY TO
TANGIERS IN MOROCCO, BY WAY OF TARIFA.

BEING anxious to visit the wine-making district of Xerez, we set forth one lovely morning in order to carry this project into execution. Embarking in a small steamer, we crossed the beautiful bay in less than an hour, landing at a well-built and pretty town, called "El Puerto de Santa Maria," but generally referred to, simply as "El Puerto." Here the traveller will find a comfortable, though unpretending hotel, the "Vista Alegre," where he will be able to secure a well cooked repast, and if he needs it, likewise a decent bed, unhaunted by

fleas, or gallinippers of any kind ! Such pleasant quarters are deserving of notice, if for no other reason than their extreme rarity, as Spanish *Fondas* are, as a universal rule, the worst provided, and most uncomfortable in the world. This is obviously owing to the fact, that Spain is the most lone and isolated country in Europe, both on account of the formidable barriers that nature has thrown around it, as well as the elaborate train of circumstances, by which travellers have been heretofore almost literally excluded from the Peninsula. The complaint, therefore, that travelling accommodations are so inferior, has been but slightly regarded, and in consequence, the stranger must expect to encounter many inconveniencies, and be prepared with philosophy to meet them, if he would enjoy to the fullest extent, his wanderings in this strange, mysterious, and romantic land.

Having engaged a one-horse vehicle termed a *calesa*, we journeyed towards the city of Xerez, the distance thither being between six or eight miles. Though the scenery is not particularly striking, this is nevertheless quite an agreeable drive. The surface of the country was wholly destitute of trees, yet the low and swel-

ling mounds were enamelled with rich grasses and flowers, presenting a most cheerful aspect to the eye. Through the midst of the broad valley to the right, the stream of the Guadalete wound like a serpent through the softly carpetted meadows, while upon its green and fertile banks, numbers of fine cattle were roving in peaceful tranquillity and scattering upon the quiet air the gentle tinkling of melodious bells.

In the course of a couple of hours, we reached the termination of our journey. The city as we approached it, offered an agreeable and interesting spectacle, being situated on an eminence, and completely encircled by undulating hills, festooned with vines and dotted with flourishing *haciendas*. Xerez is a place of immense antiquity, and its origin, like that of many other cities in Spain, is involved in obscurity.

Directing our *calesa* to the "Fonda" in the grand Plaza, we there secured tolerable rooms, and after dispatching a hearty meal of sundry chickens and boiled beef, accompanied with a bottle of excellent sherry wine, we sallied out in high glee to reconnoitre the town. Pascual being well acquainted with this vinous city, took us at once to see the great-

est Bodegas, or wine storehouses, within the compass of its walls. The proprietors of these establishments are accustomed to treat visitors, particularly Englishmen, with the utmost politeness and hospitality. The most successful wine merchants are foreigners, being chiefly from France and Scotland. The Spaniards themselves are not especially fond of the wine, as they find it too strong and heating to be drunk freely in their climate.

The quantity annually manufactured at Xerez, ranges from twenty to thirty thousand butts, which contain severally from one hundred and eight, to one hundred and twelve gallons. These vary in price from two to five hundred dollars per butt, according to the age and quality of the wine. The Bodegas are enormous, substantially constructed buildings, and though above ground, are remarkable for their coolness and freshness at all hours of the day. One of these establishments we were told, contained upwards of ten thousand well-filled butts. Here we were honoured by the gentlemanly superintendent with a glass of delectable "Muscadel," said to be from eighty to ninety years of age. It was nearly of the consistency of pure oil and of the

richest flavour conceivable. This was not on sale, but was carefully guarded as a treasure, and used moderately in improving the flavour of younger and inferior wines. With tasting so many different brands, we became unconsciously and unintentionally, somewhat sublimated, feeling ourselves quite as tall as steeples, and as formidable as an army of Philistines!

On the following morning we rode out to the Carthusian convent, which is located about two miles to the east of the city, and is one of the most magnificent structures we had ever seen. It fell a victim to the decree of suppression in the year 1836, and is now but the mere shell of what it once was, having been rifled of many of its best pictures, and despoiled of its most valuable furniture and elegant decorations. It still merits, however, the careful attention of the traveller, who should by no means neglect the opportunity of visiting it.

Returning to Xerez, we made arrangements for our immediate transit to Cadiz, as we had already engaged our passage in the steamer which was to leave for Gibraltar on the ensuing day. Performing this trip without any notable incident or adventure, we dined for the last

time with our estimable Consul, to whom we are under deep obligations for his kindness, but whose generous old face we never expect to behold again.

The reader I am convinced will believe me, when I say that we took our final departure from Cadiz with the sincerest and most heartfelt reluctance. Pascual, on the contrary, left with undisguised pleasure, and was absolutely frantic with joy at the delicious prospect of so soon setting foot upon that tremendous citadel of British power, where the friends of his youth still lived, and where he himself had been born.

The scenery of the Straits called forth our warmest admiration. On our right towered the gigantic mountains of Barbary, while to the left rose in bold relief the stupendous and clearly defined coast of sunny Spain. In the afternoon the Rock of Gibraltar loomed majestically in the distance, while upon the African shore, and nearly opposite the famous garrison, stood the mammoth form of "Gibel Mo-osa," lifting its rocky summit in grandeur to the sky. These are the celebrated "Pillars of Hercules," like faithful sentinels, ever watching the narrow entrance of the Mediterranean sea.

It was within an hour of sunset when we reached Algeciras. This town is situated on the western side of the bay, and is the usual touching place of the foreign steamers: the distance from thence to Gibraltar is ten miles by land, but scarcely more than five by water. Upon reflection we concluded not to cross over until the morning, as there was a possibility of our arriving too late for entrance within the town, the gates of which are closed regularly at sunset. We found a comfortable inn at Algeciras, where we spent a very pleasant evening. This place contains fifteen thousand inhabitants, and has upon the whole quite a picturesque and lively appearance. It is tolerably well fortified, and has a strong body of guards constantly upon the beach, in order to prevent the smuggling of tobacco and other interdicted articles from the English garrison into Spain. Since Narvaez came into power the national vigilance has been such, that the secret traffic formerly so extensive between Algeciras and Gibraltar, is now almost entirely destroyed.

The daughter of our host, who was a delightful girl, as well as an accomplished musician, played for us during the evening a variety of favourite

Spanish airs, and also sang for us with consummate taste, several of the sweetest national songs. In her company the hours rapidly passed away, and we were not at all sorry that we had restrained our impatience, and adopted the sage conclusion of remaining where we were for the night. At length we retired to rest, but not a moment of sleep visited our eyelids. Poor Pascual was so excited and so full of plans of future enjoyment, that his tongue hardly discontinued its loquacious vibrations for a single instant, until the night had passed away and the rosy dawn appeared.

Taking the first steamer, after having despatched an early breakfast, we crossed the noble bay in about half an hour, and set foot, with a feeling of inward satisfaction, upon that mighty rock, whose name of terror had rung in our ears from infancy, and inspired our minds with mingled sentiments of admiration and dread. Though the practical utility of this mighty fortress may reasonably be doubted, as, on account of the width of the Straits, a fleet of vessels may pass within sight of its bristling galleries with impunity, yet the moral sway it has exerted over the destinies of Europe, is indis-

putably vast, as well as favourable to the sacred cause of international harmony and peace. Gibraltar is the key-stone of Spain, and consequently the nation which holds possession of this impregnable position, must of necessity wield a tremendous influence over the magnificent land of the Spanish people. Had it not been for the interference of the British nation, Spain would long ere this have fallen a victim to the avaricious cupidity of France. The former has held forth her muscular arm of protection and preserved the old and chivalrous kingdom from her foreign foes, and has, moreover, restored its tranquillity, when menaced by civil strife. Indeed, England is justly entitled to the profoundest gratitude of each and every loyal subject of Spain.

Were it not for the low and sandy strip, called the Neutral Ground, Gibraltar would be completely encompassed by the sea. On the landward side the rock rises precipitously to an enormous height, and, with a single round from its galleries, could sweep the most formidable army, like feathers, from the surface of the plain below. An attack on this quarter, even by the combined forces of the world, would be

as dreadful and calamitous to the besiegers, as if they were to rush in battalions from some awful precipice into the sea. Treason and stratagem are the only enemies which Gibraltar, in its pride and omnipotence, has to fear. Secure in its invincible strength, it may laugh at the futile efforts of the congregated hosts of earth. No power can take it from the Lion's grasp—no human agency can effect its destruction! The hands of man have adapted, but they did not erect it! Silent and lonely, it stands firm in the midst of dashing waters, the calm spectator of two oceans and two continents, and tells of the skill and grandeur of man, and of the eternal wisdom and sublimity of that great Being, who created the planets and the stars.

Coming suddenly as we had from the brightness and beauty of Cadiz, the town of Gibraltar, though scrupulously clean, comfortable, and substantial, appeared to be wholly wanting in the elements of elegance and taste. This, however, be it remembered, is only the external aspect of the place. Enter its hospitable mansions and you will thank heaven in your hearts, that you are no longer in unsocial Spain, but surrounded by the benevolent countenances of

the majestic Anglo-Saxon race. Comfort, joy, and happiness shed their cheering rays around, while the heart of the wanderer regains its former energy and youth, as it tenderly reverts to the blessings and delights of home!

We found excellent accommodations at the Club-House, an establishment with which in all respects we were exceedingly pleased. Here we dined, and that too, in the liberal signification of the term, a feat which, we may truly say, we had not fully accomplished since leaving the limits of good and merry old England.

The mental elation of our valet was beyond description. He laughed, talked, raved, and flounced about, like a veritable bedlamite just escaped from captivity. Leaving us abruptly, he started off at once in quest of the humble cottage of his aged parents. Returning in the evening, he brought his brother with him, whom he introduced in the most high-flown and bombastic manner. "This brother of mine," said he, "has more knowledge in the tip of his little finger, than I have in my whole body. He speaks five languages, and is considered the best professor of the guitar and

teacher of singing in Gibraltar. You should by all means take a few lessons of him. He will teach you more in one hour, than anybody else could teach you in a week. He gives lessons every day to the officers, some of whom play very well, and consider my brother the most skilful performer in Spain."

To my astonishment, my friend Ronalds immediately struck up an acquaintance with Pascual's musical brother, and entered into an arrangement for taking half-a-dozen lessons of him on the guitar, two lessons per diem. Antonio, who was a shrewd fellow, suggested to his new pupil, that it would be a capital idea for him to carry home with him a choice collection of Spanish airs, as an agreeable souvenir of his travels, or as an acceptable gift upon his return, to present to some beautiful young lady, whom he wished to honour with some particular memento, or unique token of his regard. The wily professor furthermore intimated that he was in correspondence with a certain publishing house in Madrid, through which he could order anything that might be desired. "Now, if you wish it," continued he,

“ I will write on your account, and order a fine selection of Spanish music to be sent to my address without delay.”

Ronalds swallowed, like a hungry gudgeon, the tempting bait, and having but a slight conception of the amount of popular Spanish airs, told Antonio that he might order forthwith a collection of the national music, including compositions both of a vocal and instrumental nature. I am certain that my friend did not anticipate that the expense would be greater than from five to ten dollars. What then was his surprise, on receiving in due time a huge box of printed melody, accompanied by a bill, little short of one hundred and fifty dollars in extent ! Bearing his astonishment like a philosopher, however, he paid Antonio the required sum and declared himself quite contented with his purchase, which, as Pascual quietly remarked, would come into play one of these days, when our hero contemplated matrimony, and even, perhaps, afford him no inconsiderable assistance in winning a wife, as music and money have, from time immemorial, constituted the most irresistible attractions to the sex !

We spent a couple of interesting days in

examining the wonderful fortifications of the rock, in scaling the heights, and exploring the galleries, and were well satisfied with the result of our laborious climbings and indefatigable peregrinations. The view over the sail-dotted Mediterranean, from the signal-tower, with the grand coast of Spain, sweeping in curves almost to Malaga, and on the other side embracing the splendid panorama of the Straits nearly to Cadiz, with the tall mountains of Africa frowning on the opposite shore, is as impressive and glorious a spectacle as the human vision was ever permitted to behold. About mid-way up the heights is a remarkable cave, whose mysterious limits have never yet been discovered. A number of attempts have been made by members of the garrison, to explore the depths of this cavern, but hitherto without success. Indeed, these efforts have been attended in several instances with loss of life, and the bodies of some of those who have disappeared, in their vain endeavours to penetrate the deepest recesses of the cave, have never since been reclaimed. It has been conjectured, by certain observers, blessed beyond their species with vivid imaginations and calculating faculties, that the Rock of

Gibraltar is a mere shell, being riddled like a honeycomb with an innumerable number of subterranean aisles and winding passages, which not only extend to the level of the sea, but communicate by means of a sub-marine gallery, with the opposite coast of Morocco. Should this be really the case, what an immortal prospect is offered to a second Guy Fawkes! Let him but snugly stow within the bowels of the rock, several thousand tons of gunpowder, and then by means of a match, in his own hands, ignite the combustible mass below, and oh! what power of language could express the tremendous and horrible catastrophe that would inevitably ensue. The rock itself would be blown into ten million particles, and the entire garrison sent literally and instantaneously to the other world. How awful the lurid glare, that would light up the waters far and wide, and how dire would be the panic that would spread among the fishes of the sea!

It is well known that Gibraltar is overrun with a peculiar race of apes or monkeys, though from whence these animals originally came, is still a matter of curious doubt and sage speculation. On pleasant days they may be seen, some-

times in considerable numbers, sporting with each other among the highest crags, and they are particularly visible during the prevalence of a severe east wind, which by operating disagreeably upon their nervous systems, induces them to seek the shelter of the western extremity of the rock. These ridiculous looking creatures are destitute of tails, which circumstance, as may be supposed, adds little to the symmetry or beauty of their personal appearance. They live upon roots, and upon the fruit which they contrive to steal from the various gardens, and upon the whole seem to lead quite an easy and comfortable life. Special laws have been promulgated for their protection, which secure them from the slightest molestation on the part of the garrison. It is a strange and remarkable fact, that no one has ever found the bones or carcasses of any of these animals upon the island, which goes far towards a proof, that like the human family, these monkeys are accustomed to bury their dead! Besides these harmless creatures, rabbits and partridges abound, and are equally secure from destruction or disturbance. These find food and shelter among the luxuriant thickets of wild plants, which even on this rocky island are said

to exceed four hundred in number. Truly, we were both surprised and delighted with the unexpected verdure which clothed with its emerald mantle certain portions of the rock, causing even its precipitous heights to bud and blossom like the rose.

The Alameda is exceedingly beautiful, and commands magnificent views of the bay, as well as of the opposite mountains of Barbary and Spain. It was formerly a sandy and useless flat, while now it is laid out in delicious avenues, which bloom with trees and flowers, and are enlivened with the cheerful notes of birds. In the open area, on the side of the main promenade, the military parades generally take place, and a most splendid spectacle is that which is at such times presented to the eye. It is a most exhilarating sight; an exhibition of skill and discipline, which we think we can venture to say, has never been surpassed, if equalled, elsewhere.

The martial music of Gibraltar is fine; such perfection of drum playing I never listened to before, and at times strange longings came over me, to hear it once again; and at evening, how did our hearts beat with emotion, as the sweet

and glorious strains of that divine air of England, "God save the Queen," floated to our ears upon the feathery pinions of the wind.

One of the most remarkable curiosities of the rock, is the picturesque ruin of a Moorish castle, which occupies an elevated position, and is the most conspicuous and interesting object upon which the eye can repose. According to an Arabic inscription over its southern gate, it was built in the year 725 by Abul Hajez, and is therefore one of the most venerable relics of the Spanish Moors. Near this dilapidated edifice is the entrance to the galleries, the construction of which was among the proudest triumphs of human skill, over the most formidable obstacles of nature. The numerous chambers are supplied with large port-holes, through which immense guns gape with their terrible mouths, threatening destruction to any haughty foe. The Hall of St. George is a majestic saloon, and is consecrated by the associations of the banquet of which the world-renowned Nelson here partook.

Having spent several days at Gibraltar, we resolved to make an excursion over the Straits of Barbary. As the voyage by sea was uncertain,