Whether politics had anything to do with their quarrels I don't know, but three or four months later I was one day quietly writing in my room at St. Jean-de-Luz, when the servant came to tell me that a lady was asking for me, and much to my astonishment, I saw the young girl whose parents had since taken their Summer quarters at Biarritz. "I come to ask you a favour," said she, cordially shaking hands with me; "it is but a trifling matter. I bring you a little parcel which I want you to address to Eduardo. I have broken off with him: he has turned quite a Federalist, and a fearfully violent one. He is now at Barcelona, and I want to send him all his letters back. As I do not wish any of my friends to know what I am doing, neither that his friends should recognise my handwriting when he receives the letters, I thought you would be about the best person I could apply to. You will probably soon leave here and forget all about us;" and she handed me a packet of fully six or seven pounds weight, which a professional novel-writer would probably have paid very dear for, as its contents would have given him an invaluable material for writing a most lifelike Spanish love-story.

I am afraid, however, that my praise of the Spanish women may be interpreted in the sense of my having been so allured by their physical charms as to overlook their defects. But I don't believe that such a supposition would be correct. The profound admiration which I feel for the Spanish woman does not limit itself to her appearance and features; it is her kindness, the tenderness of her heart, which is clearly perceptible in every act of her life, that I admire, much more still than her beauty, her natural wit, or any other external attractions. In the lowest classes you see almost the same merits as you meet with in the highest circle. The wife of a peasant is just as loving to her husband, just as careful about her children, and just as kind to everybody surrounding her as the wife of a grandee. She is even, perhaps, more so. Whether you knock at the door of an inn, or of an isolated farm, all the women of the house come to receive you, and there is not a thing that will be refused to you. If you fall ill, whether it be at an hotel, a lodging-house, or the residence of a friend, you may be perfectly sure of having such kindness and attention paid to you as you could scarcely find in your own home. All day long, the ladies, old and young, as well as all the

servant girls of the house, will not leave you alone for a moment; they will surround your bed and really enervate you through the minute attentions they show to one.

With a view not to be accused of partiality, I will again adduce other people's observations on the work of mercy which the Spanish women are doing all through the Peninsula. A writer in *Macmillan's Magazine*, publishing his impressions of life in the interior of Spain, speaks thus on the subject of Spanish charity:—

"But there was one sight in Cadiz that I had long yearned to see; a sight that, once seen, will never be by me forgotten, and one that should make the name of Cadiz dear to every true and loving English heart. I mean the *Casa de Misericordia*; or, as it is now called, *El Hospicio de Cadiz*. Thither, on the first day possible to me, I turned my steps. The exterior of this institution, one of the most benevolent in the world, has nothing to recommend it. It is simply, as 'Murray' says, a huge yellow Doric pile fronting the sea.

"The first thing that struck me as I waited for a moment while the porter went to ask the Rectora to show us over, were the bright faces and the ringing laughter of some fifty children, who were playing in the capacious quadrangle and the beautifully-kept garden within the walls, where the heliotrope, dahlia, geranium, and many tropical flowers were in full bloom. Air, light, and cleanliness seemed characteristics of the place at a first glance.

"The Hospicio, perhaps, may be best described as an English

workhouse, stripped of its bitterness, and invested, if I may use the expression, with many privileges. It is a real rest, a real home for the poor who are *decentes* (respectable); a refuge for the young women who are homeless or out of place; a school and home for children; and an asylum for the aged of both sexes. The prison look, the prison restrictions, the refractory ward, and the tramps' ward—all these are unknown at the Hospicio. Accordingly, it is looked upon as a home by the hundreds of both sexes who flock to its shelter.

"The Home is supported by a yearly voluntary grant from the town government, the nearest estimate that I could obtain of the actual cost of keeping it up being £5,000 per annum. The actual number of inmates at the time was 842. The place is generally much fuller, the number of beds made up, or capable of being made up, being close upon a thousand.

"The place is open to all who need assistance, on their presenting at the door an order from the town government testifying that they are *decentes*.

"The aged poor come in, and live and die here, surrounded by all the little comforts that old age stands in need of; if they like they can go out for a while to visit their friends, and return to their home again. On all the feast-days (and their name in Spain is legion), their friends and relatives have free access to them, as well as on Sundays. The friends may bring them whatever they like in the shape of food, or wine, or, if they have money, they can send out and buy it for themselves. The men can have their smoke as at their own house—a luxury denied, and how needlessly! in some English workhouses.

"As regards the children's department, any child is qualified to enter the Home, until it can obtain its own living, who is either an orphan or one of a large and poor family. They are all divided into classes. Any parent can come to the Home

and obtain leave of the Rectora to take her child home for the day, from nine o'clock until the set of sun. The children are first taught to read, write, cipher, and sing; they then are taught any trade that they or their parents desire. . . . . .

"Thence, to see the convalescents (of a House of Mercy) dining. In a long, cheerful room, there they were, looking over the bright, blue sea, and eating heartily, and trying to talk. For they could only *try*. They were men from every clime and of many tongues, for this institution takes in all alike; an English sailor, who had fallen from the mast, and whose captain paid for him; one or two Finlanders, in the same case; an American, from 'Philadelphy,' as he said; one or two Moors, and several Spaniards, made up this strange but cheerful dinner-party. The American told me 'they were very comfortable quarters,' with a genuine new-country twang.

"The whole work is done by seven superintending Sisters of Mercy, whose smiling faces are a medicine in themselves. They wear a simple black dress, plain black cross, and white starched cape or collar; and if they have any pride, it seems to me it is to do good."

Mr. Augustus Hare, in his "Wanderings in Spain," gives the same testimony in favour of the natural kindness of the Spanish nation, and I insist here so much on this point because, thanks to Mr. Ford, an opinion has been spread abroad that nothing was more horrible than the cruelty and disregard with which the sick and the poor were treated in the public institutions of Spain. Justly enraged against the Spanish doctors, "the

base, brutal, and bloody *Sangrados*," Mr. Ford went on attacking everything with which they were connected. But in this, as in many other things, the Spanish nation is greatly abused.

"We have quite laid aside (says Mr. Hare) all thought of the mistrust which is a necessary habit in Italy. . . . Even the poorest peasant who has shown us our way, and who had walked a considerable distance to do so, has invariably refused to receive anything for his services; yet all are most willing and anxious to help strangers. . . . . The temporal works of mercy—to give bread to the hungry, and drink to the thirsty, to take care of the sick, to visit the captive, and to bury the dead, these are the common duties which none shrink from."

What Mr. Hare says here obviously refers to the kindly feelings not only of the Spanish women, but of the men as well, and the affectionate nature of the Spaniards in general is scarcely better illustrated in anything than in the relations between master and servant. Of course, if you would judge by the state of these relations in Madrid, you would never come to any favourable conclusion, for, *tel maître tel valet*, and the corrupted Madrid politicians and *empleados* have duly spread their wretched influence throughout all classes; but outside of the capital, wherever you go—provided you are capable at all of treating a poorer human being than yourself as one morally equal to you

—you will never have the slightest reason for complaining of the Spaniard of even the very lowest class. Mr. Ford says, for instance, with reference to the Spanish servant:—

"To secure a real good servant is of the utmost consequence to all who make out-of-the-way excursions in the Peninsula; for, as in the East, he becomes not only cook, but interpreter and companion to his master. It is, therefore, of great importance to get a person with whom a man can ramble over those wild scenes. The so doing ends, on the part of the attendant, in an almost canine friendship; and the Spaniard, when the tour is done, is broken-hearted, and ready to leave his home, horse, ass, and wife to follow his master, like a dog, to the world's end."

This was written long ago, and things have not changed since. One day last July, whilst riding along the high-road near Alsasua, I noticed by the roadside a poor little chap of about fourteen or fifteen years of age, almost bare-footed, for the remnant of hempen sandals could certainly not be counted for much, a pair of cotton trousers, a cotton shirt, and a cotton handkerchief tied round his head, forming his costume. He was crying bitterly, and this caused me to stop and ask him what was the matter. "Nothing," he said, in a rude, harsh voice, evidently displeased by my interrogatory;

but as I went on talking he soon told me that he had come all the way from Lerin, with a view to enlist in one of the Carlist battalions, and that the chiefs refused to accept him on account of his youth and short stature. "They would not take me even as a trumpeter," said he, still crying bitterly, "and I have now nowhere to go, for I left my master, in whose service I was engaged as a mule-driver." I then asked him if he knew anything about horses? "Why, I tell you," answered he, in an almost coarse tone, "that I have always served as a mule-driver. I don't think there is a great difference between a horse and a mule." The rough but honest look of the boy caused me to take him into my service, and in about a fortnight he was so accustomed to the work he had to do that I could easily dispense with two perfectly unpolishable orderlies, granted to me from the staff of Don Carlos, and the little Cipriano Solano became my valet, my cook, my groom, and everything else.

When once, during our rambles, we reached a village within about three miles of his native place, he suddenly disappeared for several hours, and came back with his mother and three sisters, all of whom he introduced to me in the most friendly manner. The women shook hands with

me, presented me with a lot of apples, grapes, and eggs, and began at once to treat me in the way they would have treated a member of their own family. The mother, during the conversation, took me apart, and anxiously asked me not only to be kind towards the *chico* (little one), but especially to watch over his morals. "Do not leave him alone with that disreputable lot of volunteers," said she. "They are all very brave and nice fellows, but they are so very, very fast, and Cipriano is quite a child yet," added she, and two big drops of tears appeared on her long eyelashes, and rolled down her old, parchment-like face.

The little boy was so short that when he had to groom my big chestnut mare he was compelled to stand upon a chair, or upon the stump of a tree, yet he did the work always thoroughly. It was sometimes difficult to bring him to understand how you wanted a thing to be done, but, once he had learned a thing, he would not only not neglect doing it, but become quite proud of his accomplishment, and frequently give instruction to his comrades. Two or three times I took him over to France, and though he did not know a word of Basque, still less of French, he got on remarkably well. For the sake of fun, a party of

friends and myself made him once ride behind us when we were going to some races at Biarritz. We had tickets for the committee's enclosure, but Cipriano having none, was stopped by a gendarme, who began to argue with him. We left him purposely behind, watching the result of the discussion, and in a minute or two saw the boy give a kick to his horse, and almost jump over the gendarme's head, swearing most unceremoniously at the puzzled guardian of order. When the races were over, Cipriano handed me a couple of francs in small coin, and, on my inquiring what the money was, he explained that he had been paid for the horses he held during the race. He understood, that since he was in my service, anything he earned was my property. As to take any interest in the race when there were horses to be attended to, that was out of the question.

At St. Jean-de-Luz, the boy gave me some trouble once. He had taken his after-dinner *siesta* in an empty omnibus standing close by his stable, and went to sleep. A batch of urchins, discovering him there, proceeded to take away his sandals and his cap, as a practical joke, when he woke up and began to fight the whole party, furiously crying out, in Spanish fashion, for their *tripas* (bowels). A policeman just passing

by captured him, and locked him up for having fought, as well as for being "a Spaniard without a passport properly *visé*," and I had some difficulty in rescuing the little savage. But apart from these little extravagances, the boy's attachment to myself, and still more, I believe, to his horses, had really no limits. When I had to return to England, and first told him of it, he became fearfully cross, did not answer a single word, but left the room before I had time to tell him what I wanted, and disappeared for the rest of the day. When I inquired of the servant of the house where he was, I learned that he had locked himself up in the stable, was crying all day, and had not taken any food whatever. All attempts on my part to persuade him that I would probably soon come back again, were of no avail. He became somewhat less morose only when he learned that a colleague of mine, a gentleman he knew well, had bought two of my horses, and was willing to take him into his service. I am, however, afraid the boy will never forgive me my having abandoned him. On the day I started from St.-Jean-de-Luz I sent several times for him, wishing to bid him good-bye, and to make him a little present. But he never came, and after having answered to the last messenger I sent for him, that he did not

wish to see me, disappeared from his stable, so that I had to take the train without even shaking hands with him.

But however high an opinion one may have of the natural merits of the Spaniards, their ignorance never fails to shock the stranger. In high as in low classes it is equally amazing—and the more so as it is certainly not through a want of capacities or intelligence that the Spanish nation is kept so far behind those very nations of which it was formerly, in many respects, the teacher. Whether you take a Spaniard of the lower class and instruct and train him in something, or one of the upper classes, whose education has been specially favoured by circumstances, they are both equally sure to turn out as able men as you could find anywhere. Men like Señor Chao, the late Minister of Fomento; like Luis Maria Pastor, the economist, deceased a short time since; like Brigadier Ibañez, Director of the Geographical Institute of Madrid, and a number of others, would do, by their learning, honour to any country. The acquirements of the latter of these gentlemen had a European homage paid to them by his having been unanimously elected President

of the International Mètre Commission, to which every European country has appointed men highly respected for their scientific knowledge. But, unhappily, such cases are but rare, very rare exceptions. The ignorance of the great mass of the people, exceeds anything that can be seen *anywhere* in Europe, the Danubian Principalities and Turkey excepted. And one of the immediate results of this ignorance is, of course, a childish credulity on the one hand, and a childish inaccuracy in statements on the other. We constantly hear Englishmen complaining of the impossibility of getting from a Spaniard a straightforward answer to a straightforward question, and Spanish newspapers are frequently accused of simply telling lies. All these accusations have a great deal of truth in them, but they are certainly not the result of a deliberate desire on the part of Spaniards to tell lies, but simply the result chiefly of their ignorance, and partly of their temperament. Fancies, ideas, and beliefs have always played too prominent a part in the Spaniard's life to allow him to be a precise, matter of fact man; and in making a false statement—a statement in which he would himself not believe if he had thought for a

moment—the Spaniard does so simply because his imagination embellishes and ornaments, or disfigures, as the case may be, the plain, common fact, of which he has never been made to understand either the abstract or even the practical meaning.

It is surprising sometimes to watch how the simplest bit of news, which you may have communicated to a Spanish friend, will, within a few hours, be embellished, exaggerated, and rendered almost unrecognisable. I may just adduce one or two instances, out of a great many others which came under my notice, of the intense proclivity of the Spaniards in this way to disfigure and Homerise the most simple things.

One day, a couple of my colleagues and myself were chatting on a rather interesting subject to ourselves, but a perfectly indifferent one to other people—namely, "remittances." As a matter of course, everyone of us accused all the others of getting much more money than himself, and one of my fellow-workmen went so far as to express the belief that I received in a month probably enough to buy Cuba on the *Herald's* account. A few Carlist officers being present at this professional gossip, the English language was put aside; and how great was my astonishment

when, about a week later, I learnt that a firm belief had been spread all through the head-quarters of Don Carlos that I was an agent sent by the United States to look out for the means of purchasing Cuba. This information was given out at Don Carlos's dining-table as being perfectly certain; the Pretender, his generals and aid-de-camps firmly believed in it; and a couple of them, who were less ceremonious, even made me some not very friendly allusion on the subject, saying that my efforts were perfectly useless, and that Don Carlos would never sell the island. Yet, to the credit of all these gentlemen, I must say that, though they were thus made to believe my intentions to be very wrong ones, they never put the slightest difficulty in my way, and never showed to me anything but courtesy.

Another case was still more characteristic, and perhaps, to a great extent, mitigated the prejudice which must have arisen against me in consequence of these Cuban suspicions. One of my talented colleagues was uncommonly short-sighted, wrote an abominably bad hand (as all great men are said to do), and was capable of writing at all only with a particular pen, which he usually carried in his pocket quite as if it were

a treasure. One day, when I noticed, during the siege of Tolosa, some steps he had taken to outdo me in communicating news to the Bayonne Telegraph Bureau, I chattingly told him that if he continued the practice I would rob him of his spectacles and his pen, and thus at once disable him. As on the former occasion, Carlist officers who were present laughed at my menace, and probably repeated the story to some of their comrades; for a few days later, when I came back to the Royalist head-quarters, and met Don Carlos, he thanked me most cordially, and in the presence of his staff, for the great devotion I had shown to the Carlist cause. Being quite puzzled to know what he meant, I asked him for what his thanks were offered. "Why," he said, "I was told you met at Tolosa another correspondent of the *Herald* who was on the Republican side, and had rendered him incapable of working by taking his spectacles and pen away, so that he should not be able to serve the cause of our enemies."

Insignificant as these facts are, they show how utterly unable Spaniards are plainly to look at plain things, or accurately to report the most common occurrence. It requires really a great effort on the part of a stranger to get accustomed to this peculiarity of the Spaniards, and not to

feel indignant at the Café and Puerta del Sol politicians in Madrid all day long exaggerating everything, spreading nonsense, bringing it into the papers, and making thus all the country lie as unconsciously as they are telling lies themselves.

This want of precision and correctness in statements and information is, however, not peculiar to the Spaniards only. The more a man is ignorant or a nation backward, the more they are sure to be credulous and unreliable. Look at the information the travellers get from savages about things they have actually seen, and compare them with those one gets from a well-informed Englishman or German, on events which neither have actually witnessed. Between these two poles of ignorance and knowledge, of loose fancy and strict matter-of-fact criticism, range the various nations of the world, as well as the individual human beings, according to the comparative degree of precision of their minds and of their faculties of observation. And, as a matter of course, the more the religion of a nation or of a man tends to paralyze the spirit of free inquiry, the more they must necessarily be liable to remain behind in this respect. This is one of the chief reasons why people belonging to the Catholic Church, notwithstanding their

high culture in every other respect, invariably proved more ignorant and less precise in what they knew, than those belonging to the Protestant Church; and Spaniards, constantly accused of telling lies, do so by no means more deliberately than the French or the Italians. The general unreliableness of the Latin race is but one of the natural results of the whole of their historical development, and the degree it is capable of reaching even in our days has been only too strikingly illustrated during the last French war, when all communications from French sources were, with scarcely any exception, utterly destitute of foundation. I made the sad experience of never having been able to arrive at anything like the truth all the time I was with the French army; and everyone knows that, not only when the disasters began, but at the very outset of the campaign, the French military authorities gathered their information about their own troops from English papers. At Metz, generals and staff-officers were constantly asking the numerous English correspondents for information of this sort, and at Châlons the officers of MacMahon's staff came several times a day to me to inquire whether I had not received the English papers, and whether I could

not communicate to them what was going on under the walls of Metz. The French disasters had been attributed to French heedlessness, and to the general mismanagement of the Empire. But a considerable portion of them could be clearly traced to the incapacity of the French of either carefully collecting information, or of transmitting it without disfiguring it. And if such is the case with France, what cannot be expected from Spain, a country in every respect much more susceptible of developing men's fancy at the expense of men's capacity of calm observation and inquiry?

But however great is still the ignorance of Spaniards as a nation, some improvement is already beginning to be perceptible at least in their governing classes. Spanish statesmen of our days are men of quite the average amount of knowledge spread throughout the same class of men abroad. While barely forty years ago the Government of the unlucky country was virtually in the hands of persons like the milliner Teresita, the all-powerful friend and counsellor of Christina; of Ronchi, the dentist of the Dey, a man who had to fly from Tangiers on account of his breaking a tooth of one of the Dey's wives; of the Marquis of Ceralbo who, when sent out to

find a fourth wife for Ferdinand VII., officially asked the hand of the King of Sardinia's daughter, already married several years before; or of Cafranga, whom Metternich rendered so celebrated by preserving and showing everywhere a visiting card, bearing under Cafranga's name, and in his own handwriting, the inscription of "chef de bourreau (hangman, instead of *bureau*) du ministère de grâce et justice." These fearful times are gone, and let us hope for ever. The improvement of the Spanish State machinery may be slow, but it has at all events *some* chance of success now, provided foreigners do not interfere once more, and home Statesmen do not too much insist upon ruling by means of some mixed system, of a kind of *juste milieu*, which is sure never to take in a country where "hatred and sympathies are alike strong, acute, and unalterable, and submit to no conciliation for reasons of interest."

But I must decidedly close. The patience of my readers is probably exhausted, and so are the time and space which were allowed to me. The National steam-ship 'Egypt,' lying in all her Transatlantic grandeur in the river Mersey is

getting up steam, and will in a few hours take me on board, and carry me away to another and quite different land. I shall certainly have much to learn in the new and marvellous world created by the efforts of Anglo-Saxon genius. But amid all the splendours and miracles of industry, the reminiscences of semi-savage Spain will, I am sure, frequently return to my mind as so many delightful dreams of the past.

Adieu, charmante et noble Espagne,
Adieu, peut-être pour toujours.
Mais je garderai pour tes vieux bourgs,
Ton ciel ardent, tes belles montagnes,
Ta race altière, ta riante campagne,
Tes femmes, surtout, ma chère Espagne,
Un éternel, profond amour.

THE END.

London: Printed by A. Schulze, 13, Poland Street.

ERRATA.

VOL. I.

Page 126 *line* 26 *for* "not Scotch, and therefore *extranjero*, the plaid was" *read* "Scotch, and therefore *extrangero*, the plaid was not"

Page 141 *line* 18 *for* "charges" *read* "chargers"

Page 160 *line* 24 *for* "taenk" *read* "taken"

Page 199 *line* 18 *for* "votes" *read* "deputies"

VOL. II.

Page 45 *line* 15 *for* "hatty" *read* "chatty."

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