

a word, but running to the helm, took it in hand, and turned the ship right round, presenting her stern to the wind, and to the approaching vessel,—which we now soon lost sight of, as we were not a slow sailing craft in a fair wind. Having performed this masterly feat, and given orders that no change should be made in any respect, he went to bed ; muttering as he left the deck various indistinct sounds between his teeth. The next morning we had undone nearly all our six day's work, and before evening of the following day, had returned to within sight of Cape St. Martin near Valencia.

It was now a fortnight since we had quitted Marseille, and we were nearly half-way to our place of destination ; but Neptune took pity on us, and having given the usual scolding to Eolus, we were allowed to resume our course, although not at as good a rate as we could have wished. The tempest had ceased, and by means of a feeble but fair wind which succeeded, we regained in three days and nights almost all our lost way, and were on the point of doubling the Cape Gata. Here we remained stationary in a dead calm during another three days, after which an almost imperceptible movement in the air in the wished-for direction bore us to within sight of Gibraltar.

This progress along the southern coast lasted three

days more, and introduced me to the climate of Andalusia. At the end of November it was still a splendid summer—but with just sufficient air to prevent our suffering from the heat. The blue Mediterranean at length vindicated her fair fame, and proved that one of her smiles had the power of throwing oblivion over all the harm of which she was capable during her moments of fretfulness. As you will easily imagine, I passed these delicious days, and nearly the entire nights on deck. Our view consisted of the magnificent precipices which terminate, at the shore, the Alpuxarras chain of mountains. These are coloured with the various tints peculiar to the ores and marbles of which they are formed; and now showed us all their details, although we never approached within twenty-five miles of shore. The purity of the atmosphere added to their great elevation, gave them the appearance of being only four or five miles distant. The only means of proving the illusion consisted in directing the telescope along the line of apparent demarcation between the sea and the rock, when the positions of the different towns situated on the shore were indicated only by the tops of their towers. Among others, the tower of Malaga Cathedral appeared to rise solitarily from the water, the church and town being hidden by the convexity of the sea's surface.

With the bright blue sea for a foreground, varied by continually passing sails, these superb cliffs formed the second plan of the picture; while over them towered the Granada mountains of the Sierra Nevada, cutting their gigantic outlines of glittering snow out of the dark blue of the sky, at a distance of twenty leagues. The evenings more particularly possessed a charm, difficult to be understood by the thousands of our fellow creatures, unable to kill that fragment of time without the aid of constellations of wax-lights, and sparkling toilettes,—not to mention the bright sparks which conversation sometimes, but not always, sprinkles o'er the scene. Now I do not pretend to speak with disrespect of *soirées*, nor even of balls or ra-outes, as our neighbours say; Polka forbend I should blaspheme her deity, depreciate her loudly laudable energies, or apostrophize her strangely muscular hamstrings! I only maintain that a night passed at sea, off the southern Spanish coast in fine weather, does not yield to the best of nights.

The observation of the land, of the passing sails, and the management of our own, and the various phenomena of sea and sky, having gradually yielded to sunset and twilight—and these in their turn leaving the vessel to its solitude, conversation became amusing between people of such different origin,

habits, and ideas, brought together by chance, drawn nearer to each other by the force of circumstances, and by having partaken of the same buffetings. The Moor would then offer a cup of his coffee, or rather, according to the Oriental custom, a thimbleful of his quintessence of that exquisite berry. Our French ensign was a tolerable musician, and was easily prevailed on to unpack his cornet-à-piston, and to astonish the solitude of the night, and the denizens of the deep, by the execution of the favourite airs of Auber and Halevy. Sometimes a bark too distant to be visible would hail us on hearing these unusual strains; and faint sounds of applause would arrive as if from wandering naiads.

At length one afternoon brought us in sight of Gibraltar. And now, lest we should arrive without further mishap, our precious Provençal took care to give us a parting proof of his incapacity,—which however, thanks to our good fortune, did not bring upon us the annoyance it threatened. The rock of Gibraltar was before us the whole of the following day; but there appeared also in sight, somewhat to its left, and at a much greater distance, a sort of double mountain, apparently divided from the middle upwards by a wedge-formed cleft. The captain replied to all questions by describing this object as consisting of two distinct mountains, which he

pronounced to be no others than the two Pillars of Hercules,—promising us that the next morning we should see them separated by the entire width of the Straits.

Far from suspecting the authenticity of this explanation, I innocently inquired what was the large rock (Gibraltar itself) apparently much nearer to us. “Oh!” he replied, “it was some promontory on the coast of Andalusia, the name of which had escaped his memory;” adding that we steered very slightly to the left of the said rock, because the wind having increased, and blowing off shore, we could not make Gibraltar otherwise than by keeping well into the shore, to prevent our being driven towards Africa. All this about the wind was so true, that had we preserved to the last the direction we were then following, we must inevitably have gone to Africa, and added a day and a night to our voyage.

The Marseille merchant, who had made the voyage twenty times, listened to all this; but although very intelligent on most subjects, and more particularly with regard to the qualities and value of silks and quincaillerie, his notions of practical geography had not probably attained any great development, as he appeared perfectly satisfied. I therefore passed the day and retired that night filled with curiosity respecting this remarkable promontory, that had

escaped the notice of Arrowsmith and the continental geographers. The following morning, to my extreme astonishment, the double mountain was still as undivided as ever, notwithstanding our having approached so near to the great rock as to distinguish its colour, and the details of its surface. We were still steering so as to leave it behind us.

I now began to suspect something was wrong; and getting hold of the merchant, proceeded to question him closely, recalling to his recollection the captain's explanation of the previous day, and the consequent miraculous union of Gibraltar with the mountain of the monkies, to accomplish which the former must have quitted Europe subsequently to the publication of the last newspapers we had seen at Marseille. His replying that he certainly thought the great rock put him in mind of Gibraltar confirmed my suppositions; and I prevailed upon him to repeat his opinion to the ignoramus, who was peaceably eating his breakfast on the bulwarks of the quarter-deck. We went to him instantly, and on hearing the remark, he merely observed that it was very possible; and leaving his sausage, quietly proceeded to the helm, which he no more quitted until we were in the bay at four in the afternoon. We had only lost about five or six hours by the blunder; but had we

continued the same course another half-hour, we could not possibly have made Gibraltar that day.

It was with more than the ordinary excitement of the organ of travelling,—for if phrenology deserves to be called a science, such an organ must exist,—that I approached this great Leviathan of the seas; perhaps, all causes considered, the most remarkable object in Europe. During the approach the interest is absorbing; and the two or three hours employed in passing round the extremity of the rock, and stretching sufficiently far into the Straits, to gain wind and channel for entering the bay, slipped away more rapidly than many a ten minutes I could have called to my recollection. The simultaneous view of Europe and Africa; the eventful positions with which you are surrounded,—Tarifa, Algeciras, and further on Trafalgar; the very depths beneath you too shallow for the recollections which crowd into this limited space; commencing with history so ancient as to have attained the rank of fable,—and heroes long since promoted to demi-gods; and reaching to the passage of the injured Florinda, so quickly responded to by that of Tharig, followed by a hundred Arab fleets. The shipping of all nations continually diverting the attention from these *souvenirs*; and, crowning all, the stupendous mass of the now impregnable rock.

Amidst all this, I could not drive from my thoughts the simple and patriotic old Spanish historian de Pisa, and the operation to which he attributes the origin of this mountain. From him may be learned all the details respecting this work of Hercules; as to which, as well as to the motives of its fabricator, the poets of antiquity were in the dark. Hercules had been induced, by the high reputation of Spain, of her population, and her various natural advantages, to conduct thither an army for the purpose of taking possession of the country. After having put his project in execution, he remained in Spain, and enjoyed a long and prosperous reign. The victory, which gave him possession of the country, took place at Tarifa; and it was in its commemoration and honour that before he established the seat of government at Toledo, he assembled the conquered population, and compelled them to throw stones into the sea, by which means, in a short time, this monument was completed.

Before we set foot on this imperceptible trophy of a league in length by two thousand feet high the French ensign and myself hailed a steamer as we passed by her in the offing, and found she was bound for Cadiz, and we must go on board the following afternoon. On landing, however, my projects underwent a change, as I told you at the

commencement of my letter. There is not much to be seen at Gibraltar that would interest you, except indeed the unique aspect and situation of the place. To military men its details offer much interest. There is a large public garden on the side of the mountain, between the town, which occupies the inmost extremity, and the Governor's house near the entrance of the bay. The batteries constructed in the rock are extremely curious, and calculated to embarrass an enemy whose object should be to dismount them. I thought, however, with deference to those conversant with these subjects, that they were likely to possess an inconvenience—that of exposing to suffocation the gunners employed in the caverns, out of which there does not appear to exist sufficient means of escape for the smoke.

The most amusing sight in Gibraltar is the principal street, filled, as it is, with an infinitely varied population. Here you see, crowded together as in a fair, and distinguished by their various costumes,—the representatives of Europe, Asia, and Africa,—Arabs, Moors, Italians, Turks, Greeks, Russians, English, and Spaniards, Jews, and, occasionally, a holy friar conversing with some Don Basilio, appearing, in his long cylindrical hat, as if blessed with a skull sufficiently hard to have entered the side

of a tin chimney-top, precipitated upon it by a gust of wind.

Among all these a successful guess may here and there be risked at the identity of the Andalusian leader of banditti, lounging about in search of useful information. The contrabandistas are likewise in great plenty.

LETTER XVII.

CADIZ. ARRIVAL AT SEVILLE.

Seville.

CADIZ is the last town in Europe I should select for a residence, had I the misfortune to become blind. One ought to be all eyes there. It is the prettiest of towns. After this there is no more to be said, with regard, at least, to its external peculiarities. It possesses no prominent objects of curiosity. There is, it is true, a tradition stating it to have possessed a temple dedicated to Hercules; but this has been washed away by the waves of the ocean, as its rites have been by the influx of succeeding populations. Nothing can be more remote from the ideas of the visitor to Cadiz, than the existence of anything antique; unless it be the inclination to prosecute such researches: the whole place is so bright and modern looking, and pretty in a manner peculiar to itself, and unlike any other town,—since, like everything else in Spain, beauty also

has its originality. Nothing can be gayer than the perspective of one of the straight, narrow streets. On either side of the blue ribbon of sky, which separates the summits of its lofty houses, is seen a confusion of balconies, and projecting box-windows,—all placed irregularly—each house possessing only one or two, so as not to interfere with each other's view, and some placed on a lower story, others on a higher; their yellow or green hues relieving the glittering white of the façades. Nor could anything improve the elegant effect of the architectural ornaments, consisting of pilasters, vases, and sculpture beneath the balconies, still less, the animated faces—the prettiest of all Spain, after those of Malaga—whose owners shew a preference to the projecting windows, wherever a drawing-room or boudoir possesses one.

The pavement of these elegant little streets, is not out of keeping with the rest. It would be a sacrilege to introduce a cart or carriage into them. A lady may, and often does, traverse the whole town on foot, on her way to a ball. It is a town built as if for the celebration of a continual carnival. Nor does the charge brought against the Gaditanas, of devotion to pleasure, cause any surprise: were they not, they would be misplaced in Cadiz. Hither should the victim of spleen and melancholy direct

his steps. Let him choose the season of the carnival. There is reason to suspect that the advertiser in the Herald had this remedy in view, when he promised a certain cure to "clergymen and noblemen, who suffer from blushing and despondency, delusion, thoughts of self-injury, and groundless fear:" these symptoms being indications of an attack of that northern epidemic, which takes its name from a class of fallen angels of a particular hue.

In Cadiz, in fact, does Carnival—that modern Bacchus of fun, give a loose to his wildest eccentricities—nor may those who are least disposed to do homage to the god escape his all-pervading influence. All laws yield to his, during his three days of Saturnalia. Not the least eccentric of his code is that one, which authorizes the baptism of every passenger in a street with the contents of jugs, bestowed from the fair hands of vigilant angels who soar on the second-floor balconies. The statute enjoins also the expression of gratitude for these favours, conveyed with more or less precision of aim, in the form of hen's eggs—of which there is consequently a scarcity on breakfast-tables on the mornings of these festive days. At eleven o'clock each night, four spacious buildings scarcely suffice for the masquerading population.

But the paddles have been battering for some

hours the waters of the Guadalquivir, and we are approaching Seville, a city given to less turbulent propensities—where Pleasure assumes a more timid gait, nor cares to alarm Devotion—a partner with whom she delights, hand in hand, to tread this marble-paved Paradise. The passage between Cadiz and Seville, is composed of two hours of sea, and eight or nine of river. The beautiful bay, and its white towns, with Cadiz itself, looking in the sunshine like a palace of snow rising out of the sea—have no power now to rivet the attention, nor to occupy feelings already glowing with the anticipation of a sail between the banks of the Guadalquivir. A ridge of hidden rocks lengthens the approach, compelling the pilot to describe a large semicircle, before he can make the mouth of the river. This delay is a violent stimulant to one's impatience. At length we have entered the ancient Betis; and leaving behind the active little town of St. Lucar, celebrated for its wines, and for those of the neighbouring Xeres, of which it embarks large quantities—we are gliding between these famous shores.

Great, indeed, is the debt they owe to the stirring events that have immortalized these regions, for they are anything but romantic. Nothing can be less picturesque;—all the flatness of Holland, without the cultivation, and the numerous well-peopled villages,