On the occasion now referred to, a taper awkwardly carried set fire to the splendidly-embroidered silken *palio* of the Santissima Trinidad, rapidly consuming its globular dome, and blackening and singeing with its lambent tongues of flame the gilding and brilliant colours of the images which adorned it. The priest underneath the *palio* fled in terror with the sacred emblems. The crowd at first was struck with consternation, but soon indulged in the mocking and nonchalant spirit of Spaniards, and laughed at the occurrence as the best of all possible jokes. "*Fuego de Dios!*" said one; "*Llamas y brasas!*" exclaimed another; while a third declared that the Hermandad should itself be burnt for witchcraft, and that the padre had been frightened out of his senses through design with "*algun fuego subterraneo ó gurigüesco.*"

Considerable virtue is attached in popular estimation to these tapers, which, having been blest on the altar before use, are held to be as anti-demoniac as holy water. They are universally regarded as the only infallible specific against the visitation of thunderbolts, having been originally blest and employed by St. Barbara for that purpose.

Whenever the thunder rolls, or the lightning flashes throughout Spain, the name of this gentle saint is invoked, the taper lighted in her honour, and hence the popular proverb—"*quien habla en Santa Barbara tenga miedo de truenos*,"—"who speaks of Santa Barbara is afraid of thunder." I have seen Queen Cristina and her royal daughters very carefully deposit their extinguished tapers in a corner of their carriage, at the end of a procession in which they had taken part, and,

(not, I suppose, that they cared much for ordinary natural phenomena), I have seen the same thing done by Jews and infidels who happened to be ministers of Spain.

The poorer members of the Hermandads sell their tapers, for the most part to timid females, at about a shilling a-piece.

Undoubtedly true piety is not unfrequently the motive with Spaniards for entering these male religious confraternities; but it is as little to be questioned that social importance, parade, and a certain distinction, are for the most part the crowning objects aimed at. My observation leads me to believe, that not a tenth part of the male population, excepting the old men, care seriously for religious matters; but to the female community my testimony in this respect is much more favourable. I am of opinion, that a full third of the female population is sincerely devout in its church-going and other religious observances; and it is impossible to enter the churches in the morning, and witness the number and fervour of the female communicants, (rarely do the men join in this rite,) without forming a favourable conclusion as to the state of religious feeling amongst the fairer portion of the community.

The strait-laced may call these religious observances superstitious; but surely in a national point of view they are highly to be esteemed; in the formation of character by the mothers of Spain, the prevalence of sincere belief, and the absence of detestable hypocrisy, cannot be too much regarded; and even the most exclusive worshipper cannot be indifferent to the state

of religious feeling in so considerable a portion of the Church Universal.

Whatever may be said of these Hermandads, their practical utility cannot be doubted. Imperfectly provided as is the service of the Church by the State which has sequestered its revenues, and scandalously ill-paid as is the forced commutation which has been delusively established as a substitute, private liberality, and individual zeal, are the only sources now available for the due maintenance of the ecclesiastical ritual; and if there be rather too much of processional parade, and too much, perhaps, of personal vanity, we should reflect how much of mixture and alloy pervades all human good.

The annual subscription paid by each member of the ordinary class of religious confraternities is about four or five pounds sterling, a large sum for Spain; and strong as may be the worldly motives which induce men of limited means to enter them, it is impossible to doubt that a pious feeling, in a great number of instances, operates as an original incentive. It is only to be regretted that a more strict decorum does not pervade their public appearances, and that the very object for which so large an outlay is incurred is thus in a great degree defeated.

The embroidered silk alone in the *palio* of the Santissima Trinidad, carelessly burnt on the occasion to which I have alluded, cost the large sum of 400 dollars. Utilitarians will tell you that this money might have been better applied to charitable uses; but the advocates of a demonstrative religion will answer, that nothing should be grudged to the service of God.

All Souls' Day is made very interesting here by a thousand little human touches, in addition to the more solemn religious remembrance. The catafalques in the principal churches are upon a costly and enormous scale, and the altar, hung in black from the very roof to the floor, a height frequently of a hundred feet, is richly relieved with massive ornaments of gold or silver.

The multitude of waxlights which blaze in all parts of the church is incredible, and flowers are strewn with prolific hands. But the tokens of private grief and piety are far more affecting. Rich lamps called *farols* are lit up at the tombs of departed relations, and sometimes in the front of houses. These are kept burning for two whole days, the eve and day of the Difuntos. This interesting custom is very generally diffused, and there are five different classes of lamps let out on hire. The more wealthy, of course, have their own; and even the poorest burn waxlights in these lamps, which, like the hearts of those who offer such graceful memorials to their dead relations, should breathe nothing but fragrance.

The monumental stones and niches inscribed with the deceased's epitaph, are carefully cleaned each year, the interior of the letters painted, or gilt afresh in numerous instances; and a pleasing medium is established between the coldness of the British Islands, and the fripperies of Père la Chaise.

The warmest friends of the Catholic religion, if they can contrive to divest themselves for a moment of their prejudices, must confess that the time is come when public processions of the Host, of relics, and of images,

should be discontinued. In ages of lively faith, these appeals to the sensibility of street-loungers, had probably their use, but their day is indubitably gone by, and it is impossible to dispute that by nine-tenths of the spectators, even in Spain, they are viewed in no other light than an idle ceremonial and display.

For some years past I have been accustomed constantly to witness these spectacles, and can positively assert that by the men they are regarded with indifference, and that, with by far the greater part of the women, they act as vicious stimulants, and incentives to sinful vanity, overdressing, and coquetry. At a Lenten procession of the image of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores, I lately saw a more than ordinary desecration in the midst of popular laughter. The Hermandads and Cofradías, or religious fraternities, who, for the most part, composed the procession, and carried the crosses, candlesticks, tapers, and emblems, smiled at each other with little intermission throughout the whole journey (indeed, I have found this to be the case universally,) not one out of a hundred wore looks of gravity or decent restraint, the young occasionally laughed outright, and the old joked in an undertone; those who carried the *palio*, or canopy, surmounting the image of the Virgin, joined with some priests and women, before and behind it, in chanting hymns, which were sputtered forth in such defiance of all the rules of melody and harmony, that a forward youngster planted himself right in front of the procession, twirled his hat on the point of his stick, and exclaimed amidst the laughter of assembled thousands,—"*Aquella grande musica!*"

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE BANDITS OF ANDALUCÍA.

THE robbers of Andalucía have the reputation of being the most gentlemanlike professors of their craft in Spain, and of being in some sort successors to the Caballeros Andantes of old. But my slight intercourse with them does not quite bear out this reputation; and though I have neither been knocked on the head nor stript (as all travellers here dramatically say they have been), it was probably owing, on one occasion, to the rare proximity of a military station. They are certainly not such brutes as those of La Mancha, who are truly stigmatised as the most cruel and savage bandits in Spain.

The cavalier-like reputation of the Andalucían ladrones probably arises from their constitutional gaiety of character, which they share with all the nations from Seville to Cartagena, and from the facility with which they cut a joke, ring a laugh, and light a cigarrillo, with a blunderbuss pointed at the breast of their prostrate victim.

The robbers of Catalonia and Navarre are said to be more brutal than in any other district; and those of Old Castile to have a smattering of the polish which the Hidalgo character of the locality is presumed to impart. But, romance aside, these worthies of Spain, wherever you may unluckily chance to meet them, will

be found for the most part to be as cruel as they are stupid, and as coarse as they are cowardly.

A double-barrelled gun is an excellent protection, if you are mounted on a strong and fleet horse, in making short journeys through the more civilised parts of Andalucía. Your horse is then as useful as your weapon, and you need not permit your assailants to close on you.

Few who value life or property ever go forth from Seville or Córdova, from Granada or Malaga, without this pretty play-thing slung from the saddle-bow. When first I saw these solitary horsemen wending towards the bridge of Seville, and inquired whether they were sportsmen, the answer I received from a Spaniard who *would* speak English was, "por el *teefy*," his attempt at "thief;" and I had subsequent occasion in abundance to perceive that the game which these fowlers had in their eye was the "*bipes implumis*."

But hampered in the lumbering diligenza, miserably caught in a trap, and begirt, perhaps, by two score ruffians, with no good steed to bound beneath the spur, it is bedlamite madness to fire your foolish popgun, which may hit nothing, but is sure to get you hit in return, without a shadow of mistake. It had long been the practice amongst adroit travellers to hide their money, jewellery, &c., in the interior of the coach when the alarm of robbers was first given.

But this "dodge" having at length come to the knowledge of the errant craft, they adopted effectual means for eluding it, and the diligenza is now very frequently burnt, in the hope of finding in the ashes the passengers' concealed valuables. An Englishman

of my acquaintance, who held a high commission in the military service of Spain, travelling from Madrid to Badajos in the diligence, was placed upon the ground on his mouth and nose, with a man armed with a blunderbuss over him, and orders to be instantly shot if he stirred; but little money was found in his possession, and the robbers exasperated at the improbable penury of "*El General*," as they called him, burnt all his luggage, after ransacking its contents, and carefully and minutely inspected the embers in the expectation of meeting with concealed gold.

"*El General*" was let off with some heavy and stunning blows of the butt-end of a blunderbuss, and taught the lesson of wisdom which I would desire to impress on my readers, never to travel in Spain without a reasonable amount of money on your person, the pilfering of which will prevent cupidity from being driven to blood-thirsty despair.

The disbandment of various corps stationed in Andalucía, which took place subsequently to the embarkation of Espartero for England, the unprovided state in which the men were dismissed upon the concession of their *licencia absoluta*, in clear violation of the terms of their enlistment; the starving and penniless plight of some, and the shirtless and shoeless condition of others; the draughting off of masses of troops still retained in the service, to the northern provinces, where the Provisional Government had more pressing need of them; and the strong temptations of a disorganised state of society,—caused a considerable increase in the number and strength of the robber bands which, from time immemorial, have

prowled through these beautiful regions. These bands, for the most part, assumed a decided guerrilla character.

Incorporated robbers are called guerrilleros, when a considerable number of them are military deserters, or have formerly served in the army. They are more formidable than ordinary robbers, as possessing usually more courage, acting with more perfect combination and concert, and executing with vigour what they have planned in their rough councils. They likewise affect the style military, and may frequently be seen with greasy old fatigue-caps, shaped similarly to those worn in the French service, and very much resembling the mouth-piece of a clarionet, with a tassel in front. The light grey surtout, too, worn by the infantry—in a state of considerable dilapidation—may be often seen amongst these lawless men; as well as a stray cartouche-box which was once the Queen's, as was infallibly the musket, which is now turned against her subjects.

Like the Free Lances of the middle ages, with a much more outlawed and galley-slave character, these men are as ready for war as thieving—"tàm Marti quàm *Mercurio*"—and as keen to reap a profit from mountain hostilities as from still more naked depredation.

In a country where the rights of property are imperfectly developed, robbers are not wholly divested of some notions of rough honour; and however cruel, brutal and rapacious, many of them look upon themselves still as a sort of semi-soldiers. Should a fitting occasion arise, they are prepared to take the field under an appropriate leader; and Nogueras is said to

have been in treaty with some hundreds of them, when he planned at Gibraltar the revolt which failed at Algesiras. They were to have come up as a reserve force, but not to appear at the first blurt lest public feeling should be outraged; and the contrabandists leagued in defence of Centralism and Ayacuchism, of whom 400 were drawn up in the outskirts of the town, were to have been supported by 500 guerrilla freebooters, under the command of the Andalucían "Abd-el-Kader."

The entire south of the Peninsula is now overrun by these guerrilla bands. From Cartagena on the Mediterranean, to Cape St. Vincent and Carrapaterra on the Atlantic, they exist in a perpetual state of nomadic or irruptional depredation. Wild and almost inaccessible sierras abound throughout these regions; and making these the base of their operations, they descend from formidable *points d'appui* in relentless raids upon the country round, and defy pursuit in their mountain fastnesses. Their depredations are as formidable in Algarve as in Andalucía; since the termination of the Miguelite war, the disbanded troops —especially those of the usurper—have never ceased to infest this province and its confines; and one-sixth of the entire Portuguese army is constantly employed in this singular district against robbers and contrabandists.

When pronunciamiéntos against Espartero were the vogue in Spain, in two or three Andalucían *pueblos*, the revolutionary juntas, according to the invariable practice, assuming sovereign power, organised mounted free corps for the support of the movement, which

retained their incorporated character long after Espartero was expelled, and went about the country robbing and plundering all that they could lay hands on (more especially those who were politically obnoxious), and some of them merged into permanent guerrilleros. They "pronounced" for their own profit, in their own particular line, and beginning in some sort in joke, they ended as downright robbers—as amateurs will sometimes fiddle themselves into an orchestra for life.

The number of these predatory bands considerably increasing, through the various circumstances above stated, conferences were held and mutual understandings arrived at, and the country equitably partitioned amongst them to be conveniently robbed in detail.

The Ostrogoths and the Visigoths, the Huns and the Vandals, had each their fertile district to ravage. One troop took the Sierra de Ronda, a second infested the road between Ronda and Malaga, a third superintended the distance between the Sierra and Granada, a fourth took note of the rich fields which compose the Vega of Córdova, and a fifth, commanded by the most active and powerful of his class, disdained to be fettered by localities, and flew about like the contents of a bomb in all directions.

Established thus upon various strong points, these levellers of social inequalities, and rough-and-ready equalizers, carried terror and dismay to every hearth in Andalucía. In numerous instances they were well mounted, pillaged the richest dwellings and most comfortable farm-houses, kidnapped capitalists upon the high road, and held them in duress till they were paid an assigned ransom. When occasion required

it, the several bands gave each other mutual support, and it may well be supposed that they assumed a most formidable character.

Their ordinary retreat was the heart of the sierras, over which they reigned paramount, and when they descended to the fertile plains, where their prey was to be seized, and had to await a favourable moment, they lay in ambush in the olive groves on the skirts of Córdova, or in the orange *huertas*, from Seville to Granada. Meanwhile the Provisional Government was provisioning its own arsenal at Madrid, in profound indifference as to the doings in the south.

The bandits enjoyed a pleasurable immunity, and, when tired of moralizing, plundered towns and villages at noon day, with an impartial diffusion of dismay, including cities in their ravages, and with no inconsiderable impudence making war upon crowned heads, by plundering in one day the consulates both of Naples and Piedmont at Malaga.

They evinced in some instances great magnanimity of character, as became their conquering omnipotence, generously taking only from the rich, and letting light purses go their way. But those detachments which were found to have practised these grave irregularities, were generally cut by the rest of the corps, and one man was shot through the head for his criminal liberality.

It was an Andalucían guerrillero, Juan Vidal, who, passing into Catalonia, was so near reviving upon a permanent footing the pretensions of Don Carlos in 1839. This intrepid marauder used to bid the mountain villagers good morning and good night with ball

cartridge; and, being short of provisions, would not allow a single load of olive-oil during the autumn to pass from the cantons without a certificate of a load of corn, peas, or rice, entering for every one of oil that went out. Having mustered an irregular force of about eight hundred men, he thought fit to invest the town of San Juan de las Abadesas, to the Governor of which he addressed the following striking specimen of a guerrillero's epistle:—

"*Royal army* of Catalonia.—I have just arrived at this point, fully resolved to attack the town with the artillery and forces at my command, and, if it should resist, to take it by assault, reduce it to ashes, and put all within it to the sword. But I trust as a good Spaniard you will avoid effusion of blood. I await your answer within the impassable limit of a quarter of an hour! God save your worship! Dated from the field of honour, this 27th November, 1839.

"(Signed) JUAN VIDAL."

The environs of Olvera were long haunted by a very determined robber, a *ladron afamado*, who levied contributions from all comers indiscriminately from the period of Espartero's and Concha's hurried visit to Andalucía, and, when purses were scarce upon the highway, resorted to the adventitious aid of smuggling. The alcalde of the town, a determined fellow, at last resolved to abate the nuisance, and having received private information of the robber's whereabouts, placed himself at the head of the Ronda municipal, and proceeded to take him prisoner. He found the robber in bed with his enamorada, but nevertheless prepared.

He was asleep upon the woman's arm when the alcalde in person seized him. In the wild districts hereabouts the alcaldes are often rude men, contrabandists, and perhaps with a touch of the robber in their composition—strange qualifications for a mayor! The alcalde had a huge horse-pistol in his hand, but the robber did not mind this. Rapid as thought, he drew two pistols from beneath his pillow, and discharged them both at the alcalde in quick succession. The magistrate, strange to say, was not hit by either, but, discharging his own pistol, wounded (without intending it) the prostrate and defenceless woman. The exchange of shots was sufficient to rouse all the savage nature of the municipal picquet, who, with one common accord, poured their fire upon the bed, and shot both robber and female. Neither of them ever stirred after. To render this transaction entirely characteristic, it was made a political handle of, and the alcalde was charged with persecuting Ayacuchos.

The ayuntamiénto of Ximena received intelligence that a famous leader of guerrillas in the Sierra of Ronda, called from the quickness of his movements *El Ciervo*, or "the Stag," who had been closely hunted by a detachment of troops for some time past, was hiding in the house of his uncle, the mayoral of Montenagrau.

The person in whose house the robber was secreted was himself an officer of justice—a sort of small corregidor, or alguacil. But as robbing is by no means a discreditable business here, to harbour a robber in his distress was considered so little disreputable, that in a relation it was deemed rather a matter of right than

of favour. No such questions of delicate honour affected the municipal chamber of Ximena, or restrained its alcalde from pursuing the robber to the death, as he might any other wolf molesting his district.

The alferez commanding the small detachment at Ximena, was informedby the alcalde of the design on foot, and the municipal and military authorities proceeded conjointly with their little force, in perfect silence and quietude, towards the hill, on the top of which was situated the house of the mayoral, by name Joaquin Jangra. In their noiseless advance, they had nearly reached the top of the mountain before they were perceived. The bandit, on finding himself discovered, and seeing the utter inutility of contending against such superiority of numbers, trusted to the proverbial fleetness from whence his name, El Ciervo; but this movement had been anticipated, an ambush had been posted at the other side of the hill, and the guerrillero was shot dead, as was likewise a young boy, a son of the mayoral, who was innocently running over the hill! The bandit had been a guerrillero for nine years on the Sierra, and was a deserter from the regiment del Rey.

The exploits of the guerrilleros of Andalucía arose to such a pitch towards the close of the winter, that it was found requisite to organise at Seville a flying column to scour the province, and rid it of its bandits —a duty more easily undertaken than achieved. This flying column, composed of light infantry and cavalry, was placed under the command of Count Don Moreno de Mouray, and was strengthened by the accession

of a number of volunteers. Troops were marched simultaneously, and with a similar purpose, from Córdova and Caceres, and a temporary pacification was effected.

A ludicrous, yet somewhat lamentable scene, occurred at Cadiz in October. Two Frenchmen entered the town in miserable plight, clad in their shirts, and plainly without a maravedi in their pockets—since pockets they had none left. They were a sort of *commis-voyageurs*, and had ventured on mules across the country from Malaga to Cadiz. The still unsubsided effects of the disturbances connected with the siege of Seville caused every road in Andalucía to be infested with robbers, and the result was precisely what all but the foolhardy Frenchmen themselves anticipated. They were beaten, robbed, and stripped on the mountains of Ronda; their mules were carried off with all their little baggage: and the uncourteous Salteadores having thus unmercifully left them *en cueros*, as a great favour permitted them to retain their shirts. The unfortunate men had to perform a distance of eighty miles on foot, rather coolly attired even for the Andalucían heats, and with no more solid subsistence than weeds and water. The intellects of both were much shaken, chiefly by exposure to the intense rays of the sun, without any covering for their heads: and they had the extreme folly to advertise on their arrival in Cadiz for an organ, violin, and magic lantern, which one of them had left in a house there twelve years before (in 1831), but of which, the robbers having rifled him of everything, he had lost both the street and the number!

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE SPANISH ABD-EL-KADER.

THE most noted robber that has arisen in Andalucía, since the days of José Maria, is a man named Navarro, whose extraordinary activity has gained for him the name of the Andalucían Abd-el-Kader. This hero, however, is no Moor, but a consummate Spanish robber with a dash of Moorish character. He is even more of a politician than a warrior; and money or other valuables being the sole object of his pursuit, his plan is to carry off the rich farmers and landed proprietors, and detain them till he is supplied with a proportionate ransom, or apply the bastinado, with a view to increase the amount, should his victims prove refractory.

It is positively said, that this man was lurking in the mountains near Aroche and San Aleixo, on the Portuguese frontier, last October, seeking for an opportunity to carry off the Queen of Portugal on her journey from Beja northward, within a few leagues of the Spanish territory; that his scouts were out in every direction, and that nothing deterred him from carrying his plan into operation, but the fact of Doña Maria's military escort having been doubled at Beja.

The Gefe's band, including all its ramifications at that time, numbered four hundred men, which would have been undoubtedly sufficient for the purpose; and what chiefly prevented the daring intention from being

realised, was the dread that war would have been immediately levied against Andalucía, and the robbers smoked out of all their caves and dens. Those to whose ears the singular project came, amused themselves with conjecturing what would have been the amount of ransom demanded for two crowned heads, the Queen and King of Portugal, and how far the application of the bastinado would have been probably carried in respect of Her Faithful Majesty, who is said to be as fat as an elephant. Rough treatment Doña Maria would have unquestionably experienced, had she met with this mishap, and it is fortunate that her delicate frame was not subjected to the pressure of a ransom-auction, in which every blow would perforce have enhanced the bidding.

Though the Abd-el-Kader of southern Spain for the most part contents himself with plundering and mauling his victims, he does not stop at murdering them when they have the insolence to defend their property, or when the robber chief himself happens to suffer from indigestion; and to the fame of his filchings, captivities, and bastinadoings, is added the reputation of an occasional assassin. I present him to my readers *in puris naturalibus*, having no taste for washing a blackamoor white, nor genius for painting a Bluebeard *couleur de rose*. I leave that to the Marquis de Custine and the race of imaginative travellers. I will be bound that the robber in question is an excellent gentleman and a man of considerable delicacy and refinement, but he has never as yet thought proper to show it; and his mask is so long worn, that I doubt not it has accidentally grown to his face. I know he has

been often seen at church—it may have been for purposes connected with his craft; and it cannot be denied that he is continually at prayer—entreating gentlemen whose ears are close to his pistol-mouth to give him more money.

For seven years past our Spanish Abd-el-Kader has roved with impunity through the provinces of Malaga, Córdova, and Seville, robbing all comers and knocking not a few on the head. He has organised a regular host of foragidos, or mountain-robbers, who hold in a state of constant trepidation the entire Comarca from the outskirts of Loja to Osuna, and frighten from their propriety all the fertile fields of the Campiña around Córdova. The *diligencia* which plies between Seville and Granada, was attacked last autumn near Alameda, and the value of the effects plundered amounted to 5000 dollars. Even this splendid prize did not suffice for our Abd-el-Kader's covetousness; the vehicle contained a rich physician of Granada, too choice and plump a fish to let slip from the net; and the robbers carried him off to one of their most inaccessible retreats near Algarinefo on the Sierra. This gentleman, having discharged a pistol at the Gefe, was treated with great cruelty; and his life would have been undoubtedly sacrificed, but that from his wealth it was expected that he would yield an enormous ransom. 20,000 dollars, more than 4000*l*., at first was asked.

The Gefe came down at last to 5000 dollars, but below that sum no power could induce him to descend. Don Ramon Moreno (the Granada gentleman's name) was obstinate in his refusal to write an order for any such

amount, and the Gefe was equally determined in the opposite direction. He ordered half a dozen moderate-sized canes to be cut down—the cane grows here as commonly as furze in England, and forms, with aloes, the only hedges—tied him to the rugged trunk of an olive-tree, placed pen, ink, and paper within reach, and had a rapid shower of blows administered upon every part of the unfortunate capitalist's body. Don Ramon displayed wonderful resolution; he neither signed nor writhed, nor uttered the slightest exclamation.

The dose was repeated that night—it was the poor man's supper. Still the torture proved unavailing. It was again applied next day, and it was Don Ramon's only meal. Hunger and physical exhaustion subdued that otherwise indomitable spirit, and the order for 5000 dollars was signed, dispatched, and paid with little delay. Don Ramon was then released, burning with secret thoughts of vengeance; and his persecutors shifted their quarters, "Abd-el-Kader" not doubting what he might expect.

The cruel and intense brutality of which Don Ramon was the victim, roused, with his own, the public spirit of the province, and for some time large portions of it were rather too hot to hold the robbers.

But "Abd-el-Kader" shone by his policy as well as by his warlike exploits. He now retired for a time, and suffered the storm to blow by. His band of malefactors, under his judicious management, was elastic, and became contracted or enlarged at pleasure. This is a characteristic peculiarity of the robber-system in Andalucía. Great numbers of the agricultural