time is marked and the steps accompanied by a loud and strongly aspirated "*Hal-lal-la-lal!*" as if the design were to encourage the *figurantes* to greater exertions, and the effect where a numerous audience joins in the cry is most remarkable. Of all these dances, the Fandango is perhaps the most characteristic. It has often been described.

There is of late a great rage throughout Andalucía for the dancing of young girls; and in the smaller pueblos some juvenile dancers from Seville, called "Las Mollares Sevillanos," or "The tender little Sevillian Danseuses," have won such torrents of applause, as only burst from southern bosoms. This troop is to be seen at nearly every considerable festival, and the rigid sobriety of the people makes this pleasing art more passionately enjoyed.

The black-eyed sylphs (whom in England you would call children, but who here, at the age of their sovereign, are almost women), nearly always wear Gitana costume, though but few are real Gitanas. The true Gitana, however active and graceful, is rather despised, and, to win unbounded admiration, the artist must have neither Jewish, gipsy, nor known Moorish blood, but be a true-born Spaniard. Then may the national pride stoop to universal applause.

The first Bolera (*première danseuse*) in one of these troops, is Manuela Peroz, known as "La Nenila" or the little child—the smallest yet most accomplished dancer amongst them. This charming creature—a perfect divinity on the most reduced scale—accompanies and regulates every dance with guitar or castanets, and ends with the enchanting Olé.

A favourite dance all through Spain is La Jota Aragonesa, a peculiar movement of the maids of Zaragoza. The air by which it is accompanied is very spirited, and produces as great an effect upon the patriotic Aragonese as the Ranz des Vaches on the Swiss. The sounds are jumping, brisk, and electric, and even the adored Boleras of Andalucía are sometimes intermixed with this gay and animated dance. Next to Riego's Hymn the Jota Aragonesa is the most popular and stirring political tune in Spain, and has frequently produced effects little short of those to which the *Marseillaise* has given birth in France. The regular Jota is composed of eight dancers, four male and four female—the same number as in a full quadrille—but the contrast of style is most remarkable. The quadrille, as danced by us, is moping and gingerly, as if we were treading amongst eggs; while the Jota is, in the highest degree, lively, animated, and bounding.

Follow me over the bridge of boats at Seville, glancing as you pass at that heap of four thousand melons,—the finest in the world,—till we reach the suburb Triana. We enter that mean-looking house, which is crowded and lit up for festivity. What a scene! yet how truly national. Some three hundred of the mechanical classes are assembled in a rugged patio open to the air, the men and youths all dressed in the Majo jacket and sombrero; the girls, for the most part, in gipsy or half-fancy costume. There is a *maestro de ceremonias* who will make room for you as a stranger; and the music consists of one fiddle, two guitars, and castanets on the fingers of some twenty

crack dancers. In the centre of the floor near the *maestro* stands a bald-headed, tall, and lanky man of rank, noted at Seville for being so *fanatico por la dansa*, that he is a constant attendant at all those gatherings. The lively and sarcastic wit of the Andalucians makes itself heard from all parts of the room in perpetual sallies, the principal interlocutors being a youthful and precocious Majo and a Titiritero or mountebank-showman. The Olé, the most charming of dances, is announced, and by a genuine Gitana. All is hushed.

When Rubí glided to the middle of the floor, there was a buzz of approbation, a murmur of delight, that plainly spoke her admitted superiority—that she indeed was the *bailadora* of the night. "*Incedit regina;*" in that assembly she was acknowledged mistress. Rubí was in the very flower and bloom of youth—as yet rather opening than expanded. Of stature tall, but full and rounded to the limit consistent with grace, she was distinguished by remarkable smallness of the retreating parts of the figure, neck, waist, and ankles. The beautiful wave of her bust and shoulders was matched and balanced by the fulness beneath, where the development of her form was aided by the perfect freedom of her movements, as well as by habits of constant exercise. Rubí was the type of youthful womanhood.

Her *trage* * was quaint and bizarre enough to arrest the most careless passer's glance, yet graceful, if not elegant, and put on with singular taste. It was worn too with ease, and with a consciousness that it became

* Costume.

her—excellent qualities both. Rubí was a perfect artist, for she knew the value of effect. Her robe was a Gitana dress of yellow, blue, and white, with a zig-zag scroll-work in black running across the bosom and along the bottom of the skirt in numerous tucks.

This singular adornment was evidently a reminiscence of the Arabesque scroll-work in the neighbouring Alcazar; and as her skirt waved and bounded, the figures looked like Arabic characters, making her movements cabalistic and mysterious. From the apex of each lower angle of the scroll hung a small ball, likewise black, which whirled fantastically with the motions of its mistress; and every portion of her dress, as well as figure, seemed endued with a strange and mystic life.

It needed no warmth of imagination or fancy to rivet the eye upon Rubí. A coronet of flowers and ribbons, intertwined with a wild negligence, caught up and confined the masses of her profuse black hair, two bracelets sparkled upon each arm, two necklaces upon her throat and bosom, large crescents of gold were tremulously pendent from each ear, and a locket, likewise of gold, rested coquettishly over the left breast. As she reached the centre of the floor, she gave a slight turn, and turned again in the contrary direction—her arms gracefully rounded, and her fingers playing the enticing castanets. The cross twist caught up her short, full skirt, and exposed the *pantorrilla* * to the top of the gold-wrought clasp of her lilac silk stocking.

* Calf of the leg.

"*O lé!*" exclaimed the quick Andalucían crowd.

A purer outline than Rubí's limbs, sculptor has seldom modelled. Sinewy and muscular, yet delicately fine, rounded, and tapering to small extremities, the *garganta*, or bosom of her foot (for by this elegant metaphoric language is the instep of beauty described in Spain), was a jewel to the eye, so exquisitely was it arched; and the foot itself was pressed, without being tortured, into a shoe of singular smallness. The sleeve of the parti-coloured robe descended only a few inches down the arm, unfolding to view the rosy elbow and the dazzling shapeliness of limb. All was firm, if not so white, as alabaster. Her dress, without being indelicately low, displayed her magnificent shoulders, kissed by her soft and floating tresses, of the glossiest black and the thickest exuberance.

Rubí's features were worthy of such a form. Her aspect was decidedly oriental; her air of singular command was due in part to a lofty and expansive forehead, completing the perfect oval of her face. Her colour was a rich and sunny brown, and the warm blood coursed almost visibly beneath the transparent skin, tinging her cheek with the glow of health and joyousness, and reddening her ripe and humid lips, which looked like coral lifted from the sea. Her chin was somewhat prominent and exquisitely rounded, her nose slightly aquiline and modelled with the utmost delicacy, the fine nostril and the short upper lip in constant play and motion (true index of acute feeling), and a small and rosy mouth enshrining a row of pearls.

But what gave to her face its indelible character,

and made it such a face as once seen is never forgotten, was the large, lustrous, and magnificent eyes—black, not in the conventional sense of our northern beauties, but blacker than night, or jet, or coal. An intense depth of dazzling, soul-piercing blackness—eyes of immense volume and roll, now soft as dews, now keen as lightning, fringed with long silken lashes of raven hue. What human power is comparable to the influence of such eyes! *Ojos bellidos, ojos de buey!** Homer understood their effect when he made heaven and earth bow to ox-eyed Juno. To add to the singular expression of this feature in Rubí, besides being itself of an almost inordinate size, the pupil occupied so large a space with its black brilliance in the midst, that the bluish-tinged white of the eyeballs was scarcely seen except when in the frequent play of the feature the iris was turned aside. Rubí was the true-born child of a southern clime, and her glance had a magnet's power.

"*Buena va la danza! Buena va la danza!*"† exclaimed the precocious Majo, clapping his hands, with sparkling eyes and nostrils dilated with delight. "The Gitanilla opens it *à las mil maravillas.*"‡

"She has a trick of the heel," said the Titiritero, "worth my sombrero-full of dollars. The rest are but wooden pegs to her, for I love to clear my throat, and to crow my mind aloud. *Caramba*, I never would bite my tongue!"

"You had better hold it."

"At this blessed hour of God, she's one of the best

* Beautiful eyes, eyes like the ox's!

† Well goes on the dance. ‡ To the thousand wonders.

dancers in Andalucía." This utterance of the sacred name was meant in no irreverence, but is here habitual.

"An old one shaking his bones," proceeded El Titiritero, amidst roars of laughter, "is more pleasant than proper; but fresh (as we Andaluzes say) neither smells nor stinks. Palafox would mar a fandango now, though he got up a stirring dance at Zaragoza."

The last hit told singularly well, the old Vestris on the floor having been a captain under Palafox, now Duke of Saragossa, at the famous siege.

But admiration of Rubí's movements soon absorbed all other feelings; and as she warmed in her joyous and flinging evolutions, the *O lé*, an ejaculation of delight, from which the dance derives its name, burst rapidly from every lip. Round and round she bounded, her arms elegantly arched, her figure magnificently sustained, the *agaçante* castanet answering sharply to every movement of her twinkling feet. Now she proudly bore herself back, now bent eagerly forward, now turned within narrow compass on the floor, waving her haunches like a true gitana, and flinging out her feet alternately to a stupendous height —for the dance, a compound of the fandango and cachucha, is more absorbing than either. At its characteristic close some twenty sombreros from the heads of admiring Majos flew round her on the floor, and were bent and trodden by her triumphant feet— this part is indispensable—while "*O lé!*" was shouted by a hundred voices, and all were in a whirl and furor of delight.

Old Palafox seemed more enchanted than any in the assembly, though he was obliged to procure from an aguadero a glass of cold water to allay a swelling on his chin, where Rubí, in one of her majestic flings, had kicked him; and the mountebank, filching and munching from a Turronero's basket a small cake made of almonds and honey, with a sarcastic leer at the maliciously-treated veteran, hummed the words:—

"Corazon es una cosa,
Ay Dios, que no se come!"
"Heart is a thing folks cannot eat;
Heart is not food, although 'tis meat!"

A fair here is a serious thing—lasting generally for a month. It is so likewise throughout Spain, from the feast of the Pillar at Zaragoza, to that of Santiago, in Galicia. Religion, dancing and marketing, go hand in hand at these long gatherings—three graces linked, as it were, material and spiritual. It is impossible not to perceive here again an oriental phase of society—a primitive and patriarchal state, where well supplied towns are rare, and communication slow and unfrequent. The annual fair becomes thus indispensable, and the scattered population meet to barter, make love, acquaintanceship, and money. Dancing is a perennial plant at the feasts and fairs of Andalucía, and the stimulating castanet rattles to the treble of the mule's bell.

The wonderful grace of the fan is nowhere understood but in Spain. Armed with it the coquette is arrayed in panoply of proof. Cupid should be painted with a fan-like quiver. The *abanico* is so essential a

part of the Spanish fair, that an English beauty without her bustle would be more at home. It is her kill-time, her kill-pain, her kill-pretty-fellow. Its crescent, growing and waning all within a second, has more enchantment than the moon's, and has quite as important a position in astronomy. For it is at once the coquette's observatory, quadrant for taking a lover's longitude, kometensücher or searcher for brilliant eccentrics, eclipser of her own radiant countenance, and admirable telescopic assistant. There is a magic in it and an influence little short of the diabolical.

As the hands of the Andaluzas are invariably pretty, and their arms, for the most part, finely proportioned, and always—even in the streets—naked to the elbows, it displays these graces to perfection. It assists the artillery of the eyes, by first hiding and then unveiling their full overpowering flash. It is eloquent to express what lips may not reveal.

There is nothing in fact which a well-educated fan cannot say—and, unlike its mistress, who can talk but one language, it can readily converse in twenty. At church it is a great assistant to devotion, for its evolutions as regularly accompany every *padre nuestro* as the twisting of the beads in the Rosario. Out of church it is the grand exponent in the absorbing art of love. The delicate hands of the Gaditanas, the most beautiful women of Spain, on the Alameda of Cadiz, open and shut this enchanting toy with a coquetry quite seductive.

The use of the fan is an art which, like pianoforte playing or dancing, can never be learned unless you

begin in early youth, when the hands are flexible as wax, and the imitative and perceptive faculties perfect. I have tried it for hours under a fair preceptress—for the fans of Spain are peculiarly difficult—and never could either open or shut it without the aid of both hands. It is done by an effort so easy as to be invisible. Strange that so much grace should be displayed in so slight a toy—that it should concentrate such electric force in a touch — the familiar *abanicazo*.

As umbrella-making is ever a thriving business in our lugubrious climate, fan-making is carried on with equal and indispensable activity in these sunny regions. Every town contains at least one abaniqueria, or extensive fan-factory; and it is a sufficient index of the excessive sultriness of summer, and the extensive calls for this article of manufacture, that the men fan themselves in the cafés.

It is a curious fact that the Spanish language contains no word corresponding to the term coquette; and if you remark this circumstance to a well-informed Spaniard, he will generally answer, that formerly in Spain there were no women of this odious character, and that now that they are to be found in Spanish society they have no name assigned to them. There is some truth in this, though with the accustomed exaggeration. Sincerity and artlessness are undoubtedly, for the most part, characteristic of the daughters of Spain, though the now universal practice of resorting to public walks in the evening has done much to destroy this beautiful candour. There is more coquetry, I believe, on the Alameda of Cadiz, than at any other

public resort in Europe, beyond the limits of Paris The nearest approach to the term "coquette" in the Spanish language is *galanceta*, which rather signifies "pretty miss." The word *coqueta* is indeed to be found, but belongs exclusively to the Aragonese dialect, and signifies (oddly enough) a slap on the palm of the hand.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE BATTLE OF THE PETTICOATS.

AMONGST the most remarkable incidents of the siege of Barcelona in September and October last, was an assault upon the gates by an army of 6000 women! At the commencement of the siege the female population and children retired from the city, unwilling to expose themselves unnecessarily to the tremendous operations which were about to ensue, and retired, as usual with the sex, with no small noise, confusion, and disorder.

Anticipating a speedy termination of the siege, and in no degree prepared for that unparalleled resistance of the ragged Patulea which has made this event for ever memorable, they withdrew from the walls in their summer clothes, which the intense heat that prevailed in the early part of September caused to be of the thinnest description. But before the end of October a premature winter set in, the weather became wet and bitterly cold, and the matrons and daughters of Barcelona, shivering in the blast, and suffering from the frequent rains, against which their gossamer garments were a miserably poor preparation, hourly besieged the quarters of the Captain-General, Don Lorenzo Sanz, and implored permission to enter the city and carry away from their houses those articles of

clothing and other necessaries, for themselves and children, which the occasion made indispensable.

This permission was at first refused on grounds of policy, but fresh petitions being subsequently poured in, and the utmost earnestness of entreaty employed to bend the commander's determination, Sanz yielded at last, and published a general *bando*, by which females were permitted to enter Barcelona upon that day only, and three points of approach were assigned—the Puerta del Angel, or principal gate, San André, and the Cruz Cubierta, or Covered Cross.

A great fault committed by Sanz, and one which led to subsequent disasters, was his remissness in not consulting the Junta of Defence within the walls of Barcelona in the first instance, and making sure of their permission to enter. It was lazily assumed that the Junta could offer no opposition to the design, as the parties who sought to be admitted consisted exclusively of the wives, sisters, and daughters of the belligerent inmates of the city. But the Barcelonese warriors regarded the intrusion as not only suspicious but a positive snare, and were clearly of opinion that it was connected with a plan of the besiegers to surprise the city—a result rendered by no means improbable by the familiar treachery of partisan warfare; and upon this surmise the defenders of the Catalan capital acted rather vigorously, as the result will show.

The time assigned for entering the city was between the hours of seven and eight in the morning, and all were to have left the gates on their return by five o'clock on the same evening, after which hour it was announced that stragglers would be fired on. Parti-

cular limitations were stated, and stringently enforced. No letters or newspapers were allowed to be carried for the insurgents' perusal, and no provisions were permitted to enter. The women were searched beforehand to make sure of their compliance with these orders, and in all other respects the severities of a strict blockade were rigorously enforced.

But while these preparations for a peaceful inroad were going on without the walls, the Barcelonese within were sternly resolved to allow not even their household gods to enter; their women were regarded, as would that Adam had looked on his in Paradise, in the light of a satanic snare; they dreaded lest their valour should ooze from their lips in tender salutes, and their heroism melt like snow in the warm embrace of their too long separated beauties, whose southern ardour would be more than a match for the firmness of Coriolanus; they thought—that is, the few classics amongst them thought—of the Trojan horse and his bellyful of warriors, they twitted their mischievous Helens on the wall, and dreaded Narvaez's forces, "*et dona ferentes.*"

Their scouts had made them aware of the enterprise; and whether it be true or not, as alleged by the partisans of Sanz, that that general had forwarded to the Junta, on the evening previous, a copy of his order for permitting the women to advance—a fact which is generally denied, and which places Sanz's conduct in rather an odious light—they had come to the firm resolve that the d—l a petticoat should enter!

On the morning fixed for the movement, this singu-

lar array of full 6000 women, all huddled and blended together in most unmilitary confusion, was seen to proceed from Gracia and the surrounding villages, with hearts not a little tremulous, yet apparently undaunted, in the direction of the hostile wall.

Some had come, through a stormy night, a distance of twenty miles. The pinching cold gave them impulse, if not courage, and the thought of enwrapping their limbs in the comfortable mantas within, and binding round their waists their warm Zagalejos, sustained the sinking hearts of the weak, and gave tenfold boldness to the viragos of the party.

Courage is no rare quality amongst the female Barcelonese, any more than amongst their fair neighbours of Zaragoza; and few were the bristling lines of bayonets which the majority were not prepared to face in that cutting October weather, for the spectre of a shawl or the shred of a petticoat! They passed the advanced posts of the army, they encountered the grinning muzzles of the great guns on the wall, they marched undaunted to the gates.

What was their surprise and dismay to perceive that these were inexorably closed against them, and to hear from the sentinels that they could on no account be admitted. Had the harrowing act of cruelty been sworn to them beforehand, they could not have believed it. Their blankets, their shawls, and their petticoats! Their petticoats, their shawls, and their blankets! Were they to be left to shiver and to starve in the outer world, and their ever-loving lords to be the heartless dragons, by whom permission for one single hour, to seek these needful articles of

clothing, was to be sternly refused? It could not be. The ghosts of their emaciated limbs would cry to La Mancha's sheep for vengeance! Well might it be said that their husbands wore the petticoats, if they kept them to themselves inside the city, and would not even give a skirt to their dames.

Their eloquence, alas! was wretchedly unsuccessful, and like true Barcelonesas, they proceeded at once to more energetic demonstrations, but were rudely repulsed by the guard. Their rage now became ungovernable, and their feelings were raised to the highest pitch of resentment. They resorted, without delay, to vigorous *vias de facto*,* and determined to effect an entry by force. The sentries held their bayonets in charge, and placed the savage points in unpleasant proximity with their assailants' persons. But this was no new sight for Barcelonesas, and only served to exasperate them afresh.

The more fish-fag and determined of the invading army despised the little weapons of the defenders of the city, dashed aside their bayonets, and leapt upon the astounded sentries. Not mad Bacchantes played such pranks; not Lupercalian roysterers kept themselves warm in the still colder month of February by such furious antics in honour of uncouth Pan.

They mangled the citizen-soldiers' faces, tore their hair, damaged their eyes, and covered their cheeks with scratches; threw them on the ground, disarmed them, rushed over their panting bodies, and flung their muskets in the ditch! The Junta of Defence, and improvised authorities of the city, became seriously

* Overt acts of violence.

alarmed, two battalions of Patulea were called out to reinforce the ordinary guards and pickets, and the gunners were sent to the ramparts. The women showed fight with a determined valour which deserves to be immortalized, and proves that those who performed such exploits for no loftier prize than a petticoat, would have probably outmatched both Greeks and Crusaders in a nobler cause. And yet what nobler than that peculiar garment which the French call *vertu-gardin*, "The Shield of Virtue!"

"*Furor arma ministrat.*" The ladies took off their stockings and filled them with stones. They brandished these formidable weapons round their heads, and wielded them like life-protectors. At every blow a bearded soldier fell. Others, who preferred a serviceable shawl to the flimsy mantilla, tied a ponderous stone in one end, and from the other plied it as a flail. Others, again, made sacks perform the functions of mallets, and baskets of basket-hilted swords, sacking the town with the former weapon, and carrying it by storm with the latter. Nay, it was said that one Amazon with a basket made a rival soldier "hop the twig." Some with their nails did terrible execution, and all performed prodigies of valour with their tongues. Veterans fled from the aspect of their enraged dames, and the voices of the assailants were more potent to scare the defenders than a battery of field-artillery. For half an hour these new and unheard-of hostilities raged with unremitting violence, and Barcelona trembled to its foundations.

The Patulea dreaded an advance of the Captain-General, who was doubtless, they thought, prepared

to take advantage of the prevalent confusion; so they resolved to "*acabar la guerra.*" Three pieces of artillery were accordingly fired at the hostile army of Amazons, and the two battalions of Patulea followed up this decisive demonstration by the discharge of several volleys of musketry in quick succession.

No flock of wild geese, alarmed by the fowler, ever fled in greater precipitation; away they scampered, matron and maid, in the confusion of a general panic, and never halted till they reached the main street of Gracia, more than half a league distant, the head-quarters of the Captain-General. Loud and bitter were the execrations poured upon this functionary's head for not making sure of their favourable reception before he issued his general order. Happily, though many were scratched, and some slightly wounded, not one amongst the whole army of 6000 met with a serious mishap.

The *patulea* are not ceremonious, but none were brutes enough for that. The cannon were loaded, and so was the musketry, but both were fired over the assailants' heads; so that the angels were merely fluttered and frightened, draggled a good deal in the mud through which they plunged topsy-turvy in their precipitate flight, and scratched a little in the face by the onslaught of their inordinate valour.

The only serious part which remains to be told is, that these unhappy women were left for a month longer shivering and starving in the cold and wet, with no protection either of clothing or bed-furniture to preserve them from the inclemencies of a rigorous winter. Subscriptions were opened for their assistance,

and some useful aid was afforded by a Junta of Relief. But all might have been avoided had Sanz acted with the commonest discretion; and some English were hotly persecuted for unburthening their minds on the subject.

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