

CHAPTER XXI.

RETURN TO MADRID.—RETURN TO IRUN AND LONDON.

THE French had crossed the Bidassoa on the 7th of April, but no official intelligence of that event had reached the government at Seville on the 17th. Reports, however, told the fact, with such confirmatory circumstances, that it was no longer doubted. The Cortes had not yet resumed their sittings, though the greater number of the members were in Seville; but private discussions were immediately entered into as to the propriety of a new removal of the government.

Amongst the exaltados there was an eager desire to get rid of the king and his brothers altogether, to call the infant son of Don Carlos to the throne, and in his name rule by a Regency. But those who delivered these sentiments were at the same time preparing for their own emigration to England, in case the French should advance too quickly upon them. Should the Constitutional arms experience any singular good fortune, these plans, and many others, would probably be urged to some sort of maturity; but in the then existing circumstances of the Constitutional force they were idle reveries. The prevailing spirit of the people of Seville was not in favour of *exaltation*. They were very much under the influence of the church, which did not invite their attention to public affairs either for one side or the other, but very much engaged their minds in the duties of their religion. Their fine cathedral was seldom unattended during the earlier part of the day, and the remainder was devoted to business, and to the enjoyments of their beautiful climate.

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There is a custom in Seville, which is characteristic of the ancient piety of the place. At sunrise a large soft-toned bell is tolled from the tower of the cathedral three times, summoning all the inhabitants wherever they are, or however occupied, to devote a few moments to the performance of a short prayer in honour of the Virgin, called the "Angelus Domini." At the close of evening the bell tolls again, and to a foreigner it is curious and not uninteresting to observe the sudden and fervent attention which is paid in the streets, within and without doors, in the Alameda, on the river, by every body high and low, the idler and the labourer, the horseman and the pedestrian, infancy and age, to this solemn sound. The crowds in the promenade all suddenly stop, and each group repeats within its own circle the consoling prayer. The lover suspends his compliments, the mistress changes her laughing eyes to a demure look, and closes up her fan, the politician breaks off in his argument, the young men are abashed in their gay discourse, and take off their hats, the carriages are drawn up, and all worldly business and amusement are forgotten for about three minutes, till the cheerful tinkling of lighter bells announce that the orison is over.

The Sevillians are not yet initiated into the interests of politics; they seem to have little taste for them, a barbarism of which the Madrid emigrants complained. The church in which the Cortes were to meet belongs to one of the suppressed convents. The want of money was complained of in every department; and so augmented were the difficulties in procuring supplies by the removal of the government, and by the expenses which that event occasioned, that it would seem the whole system would dissolve of itself, if the French should make a near approach to Seville. The idea of a further removal to Cadiz, even if it were to be accomplished, appeared to afford little consolation to any party.

I set out alone in the diligence from Seville on the 17th of April, and on the following morning I heard that a king's messenger had passed by during the night, with despatches for Sir William A'Court. He was the first to bring the certain intelligence of the entry of the French on the 7th, along the whole line of the road. I took some pains to learn the sentiments of such persons as I encountered on the road, and in the villages where they had heard of the entry of the French, and I nowhere could discover the least approach to a feeling of resistance against their aggressors. What they generally said was this—"For our parts, we were persuaded that the French never would enter Spain; but here they are; the government might have prevented it, if they had entered into negotiations; but they are gone down to Seville; they have compromised us; and all we have to do is to make the best of the matter. One thing we are resolved upon—peace, peace." Those who were designated by the name of Serviles, of course, brightened up on the intelligence of the invasion; but the people generally along this line of road belonged to no extreme of party. They were perfectly indifferent as to what might become of the Constitution, the King, and the whole system, provided they were left in their houses, and permitted to live on in tranquillity.

At Baylen I was joined by a gentleman who had been acting for some time as secretary to the Political Government of the province of Jaen, an important district in this part of the country. He was a high Constitutionalist, and was going up to Madrid, to act as secretary to Count Abisbal. He told me that, in the province of Jaen, there was no exaltation or enthusiasm for the Constitution; that the Political Government proceeded quietly in the exercise of its authority, without taking notice of any opinions—without seeking for errors to punish, by permitting every man to think just as he chose; that the province was peaceable,

April. and it was the object of the authorities to let it remain so. When my companion heard of the entry of the French, and of their arrival at Vittoria, he seemed to take it with sufficient indifference; but when, on our approaching the capital, he learned that the invaders had proceeded already as far as Burgos, he became, at first, so afflicted, that he could neither eat, drink, or sleep. All his prospects of life, which had hitherto appeared to flatter him, were thus vanished at once; and he made repeated inquiries, as we proceeded, in order to learn if the intelligence were authentic, deploring that he could not fly at once to Madrid to know the whole sum of his fate. To my great surprise, the following morning his countenance was placid, and his manner cheerful. I was at a loss to account for this variation of temper, until he told me that if the news were true, he made up his mind to go to England and teach Spanish. This resolution dissipated from his mind all the clouds that were brooding over it.

I must repeat that every where along the road, such persons as came under my observation, who had heard of the entry of the French, showed no signs of anger or of irritation. The expression of their manner, which is often a surer index to the mind than language, generally showed indifference, sometimes betrayed a secret gladness. Particularly in the faces of the monks and priests I observed a veiled brightness, a bursting, but yet suppressed cheerfulness, quite new to them.

21st. On our arrival at Madrid, I learned from bulletins, which were affixed in print in the most conspicuous places of the capital, that the French had entered Burgos on the 18th, preceded by a party of the Royalists under the command of the famous curate Merino. These affiches were put up by order of Count Abisbal. As soon as he received a despatch containing any intelligence of the movements of the French,

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he lost no time in communicating it in this manner to the public. From these sources I also learned that Carlos Espinosa was retreating from Burgos on Madrid with all his troops and ten pieces of artillery. The whole of the establishment of the post-office of Madrid was preparing to go to Seville. A few officers were to remain until the arrival of the French, to superintend the business of the office. Count Abisbal had issued orders, enjoining all militiamen to retire from such parts of the province as might be occupied by the French, under pain of their being considered as accomplices of the enemy, and traitors to the country, and to be dealt with accordingly. It was reported that anonymous threatening letters had been sent to several individuals and families in Madrid, who had been eminently constitutional, assuring them that as soon as the factious should enter they should be assassinated. These letters were, however, said to have originated with the Political Government, in order to excite irritation against the French, and to induce families to quit Madrid. Great numbers were accordingly preparing to take their departure, some for Seville, some for different provinces in the south of Spain. From Biscay and that quarter, families were every day arriving in Madrid, who, from having been compromised in the cause of the Constitution, fled through fear of retaliation. I observed, that in an allocution issued by the Ayuntamiento, it was stated that the French were every where committing depredations and massacres, similar to those which marked the former invasion. They called on the inhabitants to afford them the pecuniary means necessary for their removal, but I believe without any effect.

Count Abisbal was mostly at the Pardo, a royal country-seat, two leagues from Madrid, where he had an army of from four to five thousand infantry, and eight hundred cavalry. They were mostly young conscripts, badly equip-

April. ped, but severely exercised every day in order to fit them with the greatest expedition for active service. Abisbal ordered all the tobacco and salt, which were stored in the custom-house of Madrid, to be sold at one-third under their usual price. The people bought the salt rapidly. The tobacco was going off slowly. This resource, however, did not appear to be sufficient, for Abisbal ordered an extraordinary contribution of eight millions of reals to be levied on the most opulent persons in Madrid. This also failed; and it was reported that the Count had those individuals arrested who refused to comply with this order. The province of Madrid was entirely under military law; the Constitution no longer existed there.

23d. It was fully believed at Madrid on the 23d, that the French were in the mountains of Somosierra, little better than two day's march from the capital; and the belief became more prevalent towards noon on that day, when the inhabitants saw the army of Espinosa, consisting of about one thousand men, retreating through Madrid, followed by ten pieces of artillery. I was witness to the passage of this army and artillery through the principal streets of Madrid, and I did not hear a single viva raised to cheer the men as they passed. The artillery was well equipped—the horses in excellent condition. On this day (23d), the news of the taking of Logrono, and the retreat of Ballasteros, reached Madrid. It was as usual announced by affiches, which crowd after crowd hastened to read. The predominant feature in most of these crowds was intense curiosity. I never heard from any of them that natural burst of indignation against the invaders of their country, which one would have expected to witness under such circumstances. Upon the whole, I thought that the constitutional spirit, which had characterized Madrid, had very much declined during the short interval of my absence. This may have been

caused, in a great measure, by the removal of the govern- April.
ment and the emigration of a great number of families; but certainly no trifling motive for indifference, and even for aversion, was found in the arbitrary and unlawful exactions of the Count Abisbal. The Proclamation of the Provisional Junta, annulling every thing the Cortes had done, and restoring things to the state in which they were previous to the Revolution, had already reached the capital, and excited feelings bordering on despair.

Having been charged with despatches from the minister for the Low Countries, for Baron Fagel, the Dutch minister at Paris; and from Sir Philip Roche, the only member of the British legation remaining in Madrid, for Mr. Canning, I set out from Madrid alone in a light travelling carriage, in the afternoon of the 24th. Soon after passing the gates, I overtook a regiment of infantry proceeding towards Alcobendas. I understood that they had been preceded by a squadron of artillery, and two or three other divisions of infantry and cavalry, who were destined to form guerillas in the Somosierra mountains. The road from Burgos to Madrid lies through these mountains, and the entrance of them, on the Burgos side, which is called the gate of the Somosierra, is a road perfectly commanded for a considerable distance from the higher pinnacles of the Sierra, as well as from a kind of natural rampart that runs along its whole extent. Beyond Alcobendas I encountered the squadron of light artillery already mentioned; their commandant examined my passport. 24th.

As I proceeded, the night began to draw in, and it was quite dark when I ascended the Somosierra mountains. It was midnight when I got half-way through them; and while the postillions were lazily changing the horses, I walked on towards a large fire which I saw at a little distance, surrounded by men whose arms glanced back the fitful blaze

April. of the green wood that was burning. They told me they were a guerilla party stationed there for the night; that in the morning they were to advance to the gate of the Somosierra, and to defend it against the entrance of the French. The poor fellows were shivering with cold, and they told me of their destination without any marked feeling of anger or of courage. One of them said, in the simplest manner, that if the French were superior in numbers, they had orders to make a false retreat, and draw the enemy after them into ambushes, where other guerillas were secretly situated. Upon returning to look after my cabriolet, I found it surrounded by a party of light horse, and concluded at once that they had orders to prevent travellers from crossing the mountain. Upon a little further examination, however, I found that they were waiting for their companions, who were sleeping in the inn, and that they so stationed themselves for mere convenience, on account of the narrowness of the road. I asked them where they were going; and the answer was, "We do not know." The answer was given in a desponding tone.

25th. I arrived at Aranda de Duero at noon on the 25th, and as I entered the town several persons came up to ask me whether I had met the prisoners who had been carried away from this place towards Madrid. I answered that I had met no prisoners of any description; and upon inquiry, I learned that the persons to whom they alluded were six elderly men of the town, who had been arrested in consequence of their sons, and fifteen or twenty other young conscripts, having deserted, to join the party of the curate Merino. When I asked what was generally thought about the arrival of the French, I was told that the inhabitants were all for peace and quietness. Forage in abundance was coming into the town, for which the carriers believed they should be well paid by the French, for whom it was destined.

At Lerma, where I arrived at four in the afternoon, I

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found myself, without being aware of it, under the dominion of the restored despotism. The town had been for eight days in possession of a party of Merino's troops, amounting to no more than eighteen or twenty men. The Alcalde, and all the Constitutional Authorities of the place, had ceased to be, and the municipal jurisdiction was entirely in the hands of the officer commanding the company. The men were mostly young, dressed in long blue jackets, turned up with red, with plain white buttons, their caps, clothes, and swords all of French manufacture. On their caps they wore a ribbon, which was inscribed with the words—*Patria, Religion y Rey, es mi ley*. "My country, Religion and King, are my law." I asked them to what party they belonged, and they answered—"We are *factious*, belonging to the curate Merino." I observed that they were all on familiar terms with the people of the village. The commanding officer examined my passport, and did every thing in his power to facilitate my progress.

It was nightfall when I approached Sarracin, where I encountered an advanced post of the French army, consisting of about four hundred men. The entrance was guarded by sentinels, one of whom looked into my cabriolet, and asked me if I were alone? Upon my answering in the affirmative, they allowed me to pass on. While the horses were changing, the Colonel commanding the post presented himself to me, and politely requested to see my passport. Upon finding that I had just come from Madrid, he told me that I was the first who attempted to penetrate through the French lines, but that I might be assured of meeting with no sort of impediment to my journey. He asked me—"Whether the Somosierra was fortified?" I answered, "I believed it was not; but that I had passed it during the night, and of course could not answer him with exactness." "Did you meet any guerillas?"—"A few." "Would you have

April. the goodness to tell me whether a report is given in any of the Madrid Journals, that the French army is about to return again to France?"—"I never read any such report—never heard of it." "Is Madrid for the king?" "It is impossible for me to say—it is certainly less Constitutional than it was." I began to find myself in rather an unpleasant situation, for if I were to be catechised in this manner by every French commandant, I should experience great delay; besides, I felt strongly the injustice of this French invasion, and, as an Englishman, experienced a rising pride which forbade me to answer any more questions. I begged, therefore, that he would excuse me; that I was greatly hurried, and requested my passport. He gave it me, and at the same time added—"The duke of Reggio is at Burgos—he would be delighted to have some conversation with you. Might I request that you would be good enough to present yourself to him on your arrival at Burgos, and mention that you have been questioned by me?"—This was going too far. I told him "that I had answered his questions through mere politeness; but that as my government had declared itself neutral in this contest, I could not think of complying with his request. I was passing through the country, and would have nothing to do with either party." He admitted the propriety of this observation, and I drove off.

I arrived at Burgos at half-past nine at night, and after delivering my passport to the proprietor of the hotel, who told me it must be visé by the restored government, I had scarcely taken off my cloak, when a Spanish adjutant presented himself to me all breathless and said, "His Excellency the governor-general of Old Castile has seen your passport, and would feel great pleasure in forming your acquaintance." Without bestowing any reflection on the matter, it remained on my mind that the duke of Reggio

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was the personage who sent this invitation, and I declined it on the ground that I was sitting down to supper and was very much hurried. The adjutant, however, returned to the point, and spoke in a strain approaching to command. Upon this I positively refused to go, and observed that I was an Englishman, and acknowledged no authority in the duke of Reggio to compel me to attend his presence. Here the adjutant interposed, and said it was not the Duke of Reggio who wished to see me, but Don Carlos O'Donnel, the governor-general of Old Castile, just nominated to that office by the *true government*. I observed that there would be no use in my waiting on the governor he mentioned. The object of sending this invitation to me was that I might answer questions, and I was resolved to answer none, from whatever quarter they might proceed. Upon this the adjutant went away; and soon after returned with my passport, and requested, in a subdued, imploring tone, dyed to the heart with servile hypocrisy, that I would tell him something about the king. I said that I really knew nothing about the king; but that when I was in Seville, I saw him in excellent health. He then added, that the house of the governor was just by, and that if I would permit him, he would conduct me to it. A certain curiosity to see Carlos O'Donnel, who has been so famous as a factious chieftain, together with the altered tone of the adjutant, induced me to comply so far as to present myself. I accordingly proceeded a few doors from my hotel, preceded by the adjutant and a little boy, with a lantern in his hand. We entered a gloomy antiquated house, and, in a large apartment on the first floor, I found Carlos O'Donnel. An officer and two or three other persons were sitting by the fire; the governor was standing near the table—an elderly man, with a small sharp countenance, dressed in a brown

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I understood that there were ten thousand men in Burgos, and its neighbourhood, and that the duke of Angouleme was expected to make his entrance in the course of four or five days. I passed under the frame of a triumphal arch, which was preparing for his reception. It was so late at night, I had no opportunity of observing the spirit that prevailed amongst the inhabitants. But it is well known that Burgos at no period was very Constitutional.

From Burgos to Vittoria all the villages of any importance were garrisoned by French soldiers. At Ponte Corvo I met a large convoy of artillery and ammunition, and found sentinels stationed in different parts of the roads between the

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villages. Their conduct was uniformly decorous and respectful. In the villages where I had occasion to stop, I encountered no person who did not, at least, say that he was glad that the French had entered Spain. The poor people I heard it more than once observed, never liked the Constitution, because they never gained any thing by it. Since it was established, they had known no peace, and they liked the French, because they paid them well for every thing they consumed. It was also observed, that since the establishment of the Constitution, this part of the country was overrun with robbers; but that all that was now over, as the robbers had disappeared since the French came. It is very certain that the weakness of government, and the want of a regular police, afforded such impunity to malefactors of every sort, since the despotism was overthrown, that this observation is correct as to date, though he must surely be a blind reasoner who would impute the augmentation of crime to the Constitution.

After leaving La Puebla, I passed through the whole regiment of Royal Foot Guards, whom I met on the road between that village and Vittoria. They appeared a fine set of young men, and were followed by a large drove of French bullocks destined for the provision of the army.

At Vittoria I found the old government completely reorganised and in operation. Several persons wore white favours, as a proof of their adhesion to the Royalist cause. The town was crowded with troops, amounting in all to ten or twelve thousand men, who were on the move for Madrid. The duke of Angouleme was still here, as was also Quesada. Merino was upon an expedition, some eight or ten leagues distant.

Between Vittoria and the Pyrenees I met a troop of light cavalry, a squadron of lancers, a large convoy of

April. forage for horses, two regiments of infantry, a troop of heavy cavalry, a troop of cuirassiers, all splendidly equipped. Irun was so choked up with troops and artillery, that I found great difficulty in passing through.

I crossed the Bidassoa at noon on the 27th of April, by a temporary bridge of boats which the French had built for their passage; and, after a favourable journey through France, I arrived in London on the 3d of May.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SPANISH SCHOOL OF PAINTING.—SPANISH MUSIC.—
PRODUCTS OF THE CLIMATE AND INDUSTRY.—POSTSCRIPT.

BEING in a great measure obliged to follow the order of dates and events in the preceding chapters, I thought it convenient to reserve for the concluding pages such observations as I made during my residence in Spain, upon the state of the arts, and other subjects of a general nature. It would not be doing justice to that interesting and very original country, to omit in a work of this kind all notice of her painting and music, and the products of her climate and industry.

The Spanish school of painting is formed entirely on that of Italy, and may be said to date its origin from the re-union of the two crowns of Aragon and Castile. The monarchy soon after that event assumed a higher station in Europe than in its divided state it had ever before known. Her commerce with Italy, and with the other shores of the Mediterranean, was increased to a very considerable extent; Granada, decorated with Arabian splendour, was conquered, and the new world was discovered. The riches acquired from these sources, particularly the latter, naturally led to the erection of extensive and superb buildings, and the necessity of embellishing them gave a new stimulus to genius to exercise all its faculties of imitation and invention. The neighbourhood of Italy, together with the pre-eminence of her literature and her arts, invited Spaniards to frequent her schools, and they returned imbued with her taste. The

mind of the country was roused to activity by the wars in which she was engaged ; and there is little doubt that if at that period Spain had obtained liberal political institutions, she would have been at this day mistress of the continent.

In their early visits to Italy the Spanish students found newly-established the immortal schools of Leonardo Vinci, Michael Angelo, Raphael, Titian, and Corregio. Among those students were Luis de Velasco, of Castile ; Luis Vargas, of Seville ; Vicente Joannes, and Francisco Ribalta, of Valencia ; and the three brothers, Juan, Francisco, and Estefano Perola, of La Mancha ; who, though they left after them works which have been eclipsed by those of their successors, have, however, the merit of having exploded the Gothic style, and introduced the models of Italy. In addition to their exertions, numberless Italian artists, both in sculpture and painting, were invited and resorted to Spain, who were employed in decorating the cathedrals and other public buildings. The Escorial, raised by Philip II. is almost exclusively of Italian workmanship, in every department of architecture, painting, and sculpture. With such a number of able professors, Spain arrived in the reign of this monarch to a degree of perfection in the fine arts which was unrivalled by any other country in Europe, except that from which she derived them.

In architecture and sculpture, indeed, a great portion of the Gothic style still presided ; but in painting, there was correctness of design, nobleness of character, propriety of form and attitude, a good distribution of groups, and an eloquent truth of expression. The colouring might not have been altogether so fine as that of the Florentine school ; but the boldness, brilliancy, and force, of the chiaroscuro were introduced from the schools of Venice and Rome, and the artists generally adopted a free and masterly style.— There was scarcely a royal palace, or a mansion of a

grandee within or without the capital, which was not adorned with fanciful grotesques, magnificent frescoes, pictures, busts, and stuccoes. The cathedrals and other churches were decorated, the windows in some of them painted—the vestments of the altar richly embroidered, the sanctuaries, choirs, and chapels railed in with bronze; the custodias, crosses, chalices, and other ornaments, executed in gold and silver in a manner that did honour to the arts.

It is remarkable that in the seventeenth century, when a vicious style of painting prevailed in different parts of Europe, in consequence of a rage for imitating, without genius to equal, the Bolognese school, the best masters of Spain appeared. Such were Francisco de Herrera, the elder, who handled the pencil with great boldness; Francisco Zurbaran, who followed the taste of Caravaggio; and, above all his age, Don Diego Velazquez, a master perfectly original, and inimitable in his tints, in his transcripts of nature, and particularly in his singular faculty of making distance and airy space appear in his pictures. Next to Velazquez, stands the graceful Murillo, who in his early productions imitated him; but who had the courage to depend ultimately upon his own genius, and formed a new style remarkable for sentiment and elegance. Besides these distinguished masters, the Zarinenas, and Jacinto Geronimo de Espinola, Pedro Orrente, and Luis Tristan, produced several works which have brought down their names to our time.

There is a good collection of the productions of these and other Spanish masters in the museum of Madrid, an extensive building in the vicinity of the Prado, which owes its origin to the present king. It is not yet finished, and never will be a handsome edifice, although it was designed upon rather a graceful plan. But that plan was departed from by raising the wings too high; and it has more the appearance of an hospital or a barrack than of a temple of the fine arts. It is divided into different saloons, which are appro-