

pended hours every day cheapening a treatise on the mystery of bull-fighting, with accompanying engravings, in vain—its price was above rubies. But my great distraction was a strange character I met at dinner at the house of the British Consul. I did not catch his name at our introduction, so I mentally named him Mr. Crabapple. He was short and stout, had a round wizened face freckled to the fuscous tint of a russeted apple, and was endowed with a voice which had all the husky sonority of a greengrocer's. He was beardless and sandy-haired, and one of those persons whose age is a puzzle to define; he might have been anything between fifteen and five-and-thirty. As he talked of Harrow as if he had left it but yesterday, I was disposed to set him down as a queer public-school boy on vacation, until I was astounded by some self-possessed remark on Jamaica dyewoods. We stopped in the same hotel. One morning he descended the stairs, a sort of dressing-case in hand, and yelled to an urchin at the door:

“Here, you son of a sea-calf, take this down to the waterside for me!”

"Will he understand you?" I said.

"Bound to," Mr. Crabapple replied; "never talk to them any other way, anyhow. 'Tis their business to understand. Ta, ta—deuce of a hurry."

"Where are you going, may I ask?"

"Read the Church Service—rather a bore—Sunday, you know."

The nondescript, then, was a chaplain.

The same evening he returned to the hotel, and on the following morning I saw him again descending the stairs, the same dressing-case in hand. He nodded salute, slung his luggage to the same urchin with the cry, "Hook it, you lubber!" and, turning to me, said, "Ta, ta, sheering off again."

"Where to now?"

"Mediterranean."

"There's no boat to-day."

"There is, though—there's mine;" and he was off.

The supposed chaplain was a stray-away from a novel by Marryat, commanded her Majesty's gunboat *Catapult*, and was at Cadiz on the duty of protecting British interests. At the moment his

mission was to carry important despatches to Gibraltar.

My mission to Cadiz was, partly, to ascertain the progress of the inquiry into the case of the *Murillo* steamer, more than suspected of having run down the *Northfleet*, a vessel laden with railway-iron and navvies, off Dungeness, on the night of the 22nd of January previous. Three hundred lives had been lost on the occasion. I knew something of that wreck, for I had seen and spoken with the survivors in the Sailors' Home at Dover on the following evening. A dazed, stupid lot they were, of an exceedingly low standard of intelligence. The sense of their own rescue had overcome the poignancy of grief. I envied them their stolidity, which I explained to my own mind by the rush of the engulfing waters still swirling and singing knell of sudden doom in their ears.

"Guv'nor," said one clown to me, "I seed my ole 'ooman go down afore my eyes, and I felt that grieved a'most as if I was agoin' down myself, and I chewed a bit o' baccar."

I saw the *Murillo* lying quietly a little distance

off the land—a handsome, shapely craft, fine in the lines, with a sharp stem fashioned like that of a ram. She was painted black, with the exception of a band of pink above the water-line, where she was coated with Peacock's mixture. The British Consul informed me that he understood the inquiry into the guilt of the master was to be carried on *secretly*. He would not be allowed to attend it. Copies of the depositions of the accused, and permission to see them, had also been denied to the agents of the British Government, who applied for them for the purposes of the Board of Trade inquiry. Though Spaniards, in private conversation, own that the *Murillo* is the criminal ship, they seem, for some unaccountable reason, to be anxious that she should escape the penalty of her wickedness, as if the national honour were concerned, and the national honour would be served by cloaking an offence cruel and mean in itself, and awful in its consequences.

There is a sentence in the Comminations which would keep running in my mind every time I thought of that emigrant ship sent to the bottom

off Dungeness—"Cursed is he who smiteth his enemy secretly." But if he who smites his enemy secretly is accursed, what is he who smites his neighbour and then flees away like a coward in the dark? Is he not twice and thrice wicked, and to be branded with malediction deeper still? Such a thing the *Murillo* steamer did—there could be no manner of doubt about it; every seafaring man and every Spaniard admits her blood-guiltiness; yet there she lies off Puntales, near the Trocadero, calmly expecting soon to be under weigh again with her criminal master and crew on board, with no punishment registered against her or them. The Consul-General of Spain in London wrote to the papers after the loss of the *Northfleet*, saying if this man was the wrongdoer he would be punished, and sent to Ceuta or Tetuan. But he is the wrongdoer, and he will never be sent to Ceuta or Tetuan. The master of the *Murillo* and the sailors of the watch on the fatal night are in prison, but they will never be brought to serious account. The figure of Justice in these latitudes is true to the sculptor's ideal in one sense: the eyes are bandaged, not that

Justice shall be impartial, but that she may not see.

This instance of the *Murillo* is but one of many, and as it illustrates an artifice of tricky ship-owning, it will be well to state why the *Murillo* will go scot-free, and may audaciously turn up again in British waters disguised by a few coats of paint, exhibiting a fresh figure-head, and bearing a new name in gilt lettering on her stern.

In the first place, the *Murillo* belonged not to Spanish so much as English owners. The line of steamers of which she was one was the property of a company of shareholders. The company was anxious that their vessels should fly the Spanish flag, so they made one Don Miguel Styles the nominal head of the firm. This individual was a mere clerk in their office, a man of straw, and at the date of the catastrophe Don Miguel Styles had no more substantial existence than our old friend John Styles : he was dead, and in his grave.

Nextly, Mr. Daniel Macpherson, one of the most eminent merchants in the port of Cadiz and Lloyd's agent, had been served with an instrument claiming

damages to the amount of 50,000 pesetas (£2,000), because that he had calumniated the good ship *Murillo*, and caused her prejudice and injury by detaining her a couple of months in the waters of Cadiz. The persons who instituted this action forget that the Spanish courts have no jurisdiction in the matter of libels published in England. And as for the prejudice caused to the vessel, it is incredible that the British Government should be so weak as to wait for letters from Lloyd's agent before opening an inquiry into the deaths of some three hundred of its subjects and the identity of the dastardly scoundrel who was the cause of their deaths, who disabled the ship that held them, and then slunk off, leaving them to the mercy of the midnight sea. That the *Murillo* was that vessel, even those who maintain that she cannot be proved legally guilty do not attempt to deny. It is true, as they say, that moral certainty is one thing, legal certainty another. But there was seldom a clearer chain of circumstantial evidence pointing to the perpetrator of any crime than that which convicted the *Murillo* of being the misdemeanant. She was off Dungeness

at the hour of the disaster, and she was in contact with a ship; this the imprisoned master admitted in his log. But he alleged that the ship could not have been the *Northfleet*. He said he came into collision with a vessel; that he stood by her for half an hour; that one of her boats put off with some persons on board carrying a lantern; that they went round her examining whether there was anything wrong; and that no call having been made to him for assistance he steamed away. But there was a discrepancy between the entry in his log and that in the log of the engineer. The latter, an Englishman, stated that the engines of the *Murillo* were backed before the collision, that she went astern afterwards, and then went on ahead. The delay altogether was only for a few minutes. No mention of the half-hour. The engineer had no object in telling a lie. The master of the *Murillo* had. No other ship was in collision off Dungeness that night. Besides, what meant the order to the *Murillo* to come on at once to Cadiz if she had been in collision, and not stop at Lisbon, whither she was bound as port of call, if not to get her into limits where justice

is notoriously blind and halt? Argument is unnecessary and childish; it was the *Murillo* which cut down the *Northfleet*. But Spain will never exact retribution for the destruction of the property and the sacrifice of the lives of aliens. Cosas de España.

CHAPTER III.

Expansion of Carlism—A Pseudo-Democracy—Historic Land and Water Marks—An Impudent Stowaway—Spanish Respect for Providence—A Fatal Signal—Playing with Fire—Across the Bay—Farewell to Andalusia—British Spain.

TOWARDS the close of February, a grave official report was published in the *Gaceta* of Madrid, announcing that an engagement had been fought with the Carlists and a victory scored, *one* of the enemy having been killed. We were now in April, some six weeks later, and Carlism still showed lively signs of existence, notwithstanding the death of that solitary combatant. The statement of the troops employed against it will be the best measure of its importance. These consisted of a battalion and two companies of Engineers, four companies of Foot Artillery, a battery of Horse and five batteries of Mountain Artillery; eight squadrons of Cuirassiers,

seven of Lancers, four of Hussars, a section of Mounted Chasseurs (Tiradores), and eighteen battalions of Infantry of the line, with five of Cazadores, or light infantry. Behind this force of regulars were the Francos or Free-shooters of Navarre (who were about as good as their prototypes, the *francs-tireurs* of France—no better), some mobilized Volunteers, and the Carabineros, or revenue police. There were some who imagined that the hosts of Don Carlos might crown the hills of Vallecas, and present themselves before the gate of Atocha to the consternation of Madrid, as did those of his predecessor in the September of 1837. But the Federals of the south did not mind. What did not touch them, they cared not a jot for. They were of the pseudo-democracy which wants to live without working, consume without producing, obtain posts without being trained for them, and arrive at honours without desert—the selfish and purblind pseudo-democracy of incapacity and cheek.

As I had no pecuniary interest in salt, wine, phosphate of soda, hides, or cork—the chief exports of Cadiz—I left the much-bombarded port on the

Vinuesa, one of the boats of the Alcoy line plying to Malaga. My immediate destination was the Rock, but we went no nearer than Algeciras, the town on the opposite side of the bay, off which Saumarez gave such a stern account of the Spanish and French combined on the 12th of July, 1801. The sea was without a ripple. The bright coasts of two Continents were in view. On such a day as this the first adventurers must have crossed from Africa to Europe. Hero might almost have swum across. Even Mr. Brownsmith of Eastchepe might rig a craft out of an empty sugar hogshead, set up his walking-stick for mast, tie his pocket-handkerchief to it for sail, and trust to the waves in safety—that is, if Mr. Brownsmith of Eastchepe had in him the heart of Raleigh, not of Bumble. Some men are born to be drivers of tram-cars, some to be captains of corsairs. The pioneer of navigation must have been cut out by nature to be a High-Admiral of bold buccaneers.

We were only five passengers on the steamer, and we amused ourselves comparing notes. One told of a voyage from Barcelona to Alicante which he had

once undertaken. The first night out they lost a sailor ; he was seized with a fit and died ; and then came the poser. When they would arrive at Alicante and muster the crew for the inspection of the health officers one would be wanting ; suspicions would be aroused that he had fallen a victim to contagious disease, and they ran the hazard of being stuck into quarantine unless they could succeed in buying themselves off with an exorbitant bribe. While they were in a quandary, a white head popped above a gangway forward and a voice sang out :

“I’ll get you out of the hole for a consideration.”

“Who the deuce are you ? Where did you spring from ?” cried the skipper.

“A stowaway,—a flour-barrel. I’ll parade as the dead man’s substitute for ten dollars and a square meal.”

In the end they were glad to accept the impudent proposal ; the corpse was flung overboard, and the stowaway entered the port of Alicante an honest British tar, looking the whole world in the face like Longfellow’s village blacksmith, and jingling ten dollars in his pocket.

We passed by Barrosa, where Graham gave the French such a thrashing in 1811, and the 87th Irish Fusiliers earned their glorious surname of the "Eagle-takers;" and over the waves of Trafalgar where Nelson did his duty, and was smitten with a bullet in the spine; and passing into the Straits and rounding the point by Tarifa, stood in for the Bay of Gibraltar. A spacious swelling spread of live water it is, and safe, except, as one of my fellow-passengers informed me, for a rock off the Punta del Carnero, or Mutton Point. The rock is covered when the tide is high (for there is a tide here), but rears its tortoise-like back over the surface for some hours at the ebb. The Channel squadron was coming out of Gib some years before when an ironclad grounded on this rock, but was got off without more damage than a scraping. As the danger to the navigation was outside the limits of the fortress, the British authorities applied to the Spanish for permission to clear away the obstruction. It was easily to be accomplished. A party of sappers could set a caisson round it, bore a gallery, insert a charge, and blast the rock into

smithereens with safety and despatch. But the Spaniards would not consent to such an interference with the designs of Providence; the poor fishermen on the coast were often dependent for their livelihood on what they could pick up from wrecks, and if this rock were removed Nature would be sacrilegiously altered, and the interesting wreckers deprived of many an honest coin. I tell the tale as it was told to me. I wonder should it be dedicated to the amphibious corps.

Another story bearing on the successful revolution inaugurated by Prim is worth relating, as it deals with an episode of Spanish politics which is repeated almost every other year with slender variations. The play is the same; the scene and the *dramatis personæ* are merely shifted. One of the stereotyped military risings was to be initiated at Algeciras on the arrival of Prim from England. The intimation that he was at hand was to be made by the firing of two rockets from the ship which carried him. On a certain night at the close of August, 1868, two rockets blazed in the sky, and were noticed by the impatient conspirators at

Algeciras, who flew to arms to cries of "Down with the Queen," and "Live Prim and Liberty." But no Prim landed. The alarm was premature, the rising a flash in the pan. What they had taken for the bright herald of the advent of "El Paladino" was the signal of a Peninsular and Oriental steamer which had arrived on her passage to Port Said. For the sake of appearances, a number of unfortunate fools were set up against a wall and had their brains blown out in tribute to law and order. But the fruit was ripening. Within little more than a fortnight came the insurrection of the fleet at Cadiz, upon the appearance in that port of the popular hero, and before the end of the month Queen Isabella had fled over the French frontier, never to return to Spain as a sovereign. Prim's plot was attended with a fortune in excess of his most sanguine hopes; he entered Madrid in triumph in October, and was created a Marshal in November. All was joy and enthusiasm, but the hapless tools of ambition who had helped to prepare the way for him below in Algeciras were not of the jubilee.

At first sight the rock looms up large like a frowning inhospitable islet, the stretch of the Neutral Ground being so low that one cannot detect it above the sea-level until almost right upon it. We left the *Vinuesa* and entered a boat with a couple of sturdy rowers, who offered to pull us across the Bay for five dollars. As I dipped a hand in the brine one of them raised a cry of "Take care!" there were "*mala pesca*" there. Mr. Shark, who is an ugly customer, had been cruising in the neighbourhood, and had taken a morsel out of an American swimmer a little time before. There were three masts protruding over the water at one spot, the relics of some gallant ship, and index to one of those godsendings which the Spanish Government is solicitous to guarantee to the distressed and deserving local fishermen. What a pity it was not the *Murillo*! That would have been poetic retribution.

No matter: with all thy faults I like thee, Spain, and especially that brown dusty province of Andalusia, with its oranges and pomegranates; its dancing fountains splashed with sunshine; its win-

some damozels with such lispings languors of voice ; its philosophic waiters upon the morrow, happy in a cigarette, a melon and a guitar ; its muleteers crooning snatches of lazy song ; its peasants with hair tied in beribboned pigtail ; its tawny boys in Manola colours ; aye, and its artistic beggars.

“Ah ! now you see the Neutral Ground ; that village to the left is Lineas, where you can get a glass of Manzanilla cheap,” exclaimed a companion.

I do not set exceeding store by your pale thin Manzanilla, nor do I care to load my mouth with the flavour of a drug store.

“There are the sheds we put up the time Prim was expected ; they are on the Neutral Ground, ha, ha ! where the soil is supposed to be inviolate ; but we have forgotten to take them down since. We were too many for them.”

And now we are by the landing-stairs, and the Customs' officer demands our passport in English. We answer him cheerily that we need none, and to his smiling welcome we step on the soil of British Spain ; but it would be unpardonable to begin describing it at the tail of a chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

Gabriel Tar—A Hard Nut to Crack—In the Cemetery—An Old Tipperary Soldier—Marks of the Broad Arrow—The “Scorpions”—The Jaunting-Cars—Amusements on the Rock—Mrs. Damages’ Complaint—The Bay, the Alameda, and Tarifa—How to Learn Spanish—Types of the British Officer—The Wily Ben Solomon—A Word for the Subaltern—Sunset Gun—The Sameness of Sutlersville.

WHERE I went to school, we had a droll lad, whose humour developed itself in mispronunciation. In my nonage I considered that unique. Now I know it is a rather common order of quaintness. Hugh used to call Sierra Leone, “Sarah Alone;” Cambodia, “Gamboge;” Stromboli, “Storm-boiler;” and Gibraltar, “Gabriel Tar.” How we used to wrinkle with laughter at his sallies, launched with an artistically unconscious air, until the swooping cane came swishing down on our backs! And here I was in Gabriel Tar. I vow the first inclination I

felt was to write to Hugh with the date engraved on the note-paper, and indeed so I should have done, but that I had not seen him for nigh twenty years, and when last I heard of him he was married, and had learned to be serious and to speak with precision. The fun had been driven out of him by responsibility. Propriety had come with prosperity.

Call it by what name you will, Gabriel Tar, or Gibraltar, that infinitesimal scrap of territory over which the Union Jack floats, is supremely unpalatable and insolently insulting to the Spaniard. It is a bitter pill to swallow, an adamant nut to crack. I suppose he is welcome to take it—when he can; but he knows better than to try. It is the gate of the Mediterranean. Logically, it is an injustice that a stranger should sit in the porter's lodge and swing the key at his girdle; but it is as well that the porter is one who is too surly to barter his trust for gold. So Gabriel Tar will remain intact, until the porter grows feeble or falls asleep.

British Spain, or "the Rock," or Gib, as it is

indifferently termed, or Sutlersville, as I prefer to name it, can be converted into an island at the will of its defenders. The sandy spit of Neutral Ground at one side of which Tommy Atkins, fresh-faced, does his sentry-go in brick-red tunic and white pith-helmet, and at the other side of which swarthy Sancho Panza y Toro, in projecting cap and long blue coat, fondles a rifle in the bend of his arm, can readily be flooded; and the bare, sheer, lofty north front, with scores of cannon of the deadliest modern pattern lying in wait behind the irregular embrasures that grimly pit its surface, hardly invites attack. It frowns a calm but determined defiance; and even the Cid himself might be excused if he turned on his heel and puffed a meditative cigarette after he had surveyed it.

British Spain is small, being but one and seven-eighth square miles English in area; but it is mighty strong. The population, comprising the garrison, is less than fifteen thousand; but behind that slender cipher of souls are the millions of the broadest and biggest of empires. I do not know what the population of the cemetery is, but it

receives rapid and numerous accessions at each periodical outbreak of cholera. I paid a visit to it—I have a fondness for sauntering in God's acre—and arrived in time to witness a funeral. When the coffin was laid in the grave, a young man, probably the husband of the deceased, threw himself prone on the turf beside the open burial-trench, and burst into such a passionate tempest of heart-rending sobs and moans and wailings, that I had to move away. These Southerners are more demonstrative in their grief than the men of the North. I question if their sorrows spring from deeper depths, or are so lasting. The caretaker of the cemetery, an elderly Tipperary soldier, with a short *dudheen* in his mouth, was seated smoking on a head-stone by a goat-willow. We got into conversation.

“There were worse places than Gib—singing-birds were raysonable here, and some of them had rayl beautiful plumage.”

My countryman, like the Duke of Argyll, had a weakness for ornithology.

“That spread of land beyant was where the races were held, and small-arm parties from the fleet

sometimes kem ashore and practised there. They used to play cricket there, too. The symmetry wasn't a gay place, but there were worse. There were some beautiful tombs—now *there* was a parable ov wan; 'twas put up by their frinds to some officers who were dhrownded while they were crossing a flooded sthrame on their way back from a shooting excursion. The car-drivers, who were dhrownded wid them, had no monument. 'Twas a quare world; a poor man had the chance of dying wid a rich man, but was not to be berrid in his company. Well, he supposed it was for the best," and here he hammered the heel-tap out of his pipe on the side of his shoe; "when the last bugle sounded a field-officer would feel uncomfortable like if he had to be looking for his bones in the same plot wid a lance-corporal."

Truly, a queer world. Death with impartial summons knocks at the cabin of the poor and the palace of the wealthy; but in the undertaker's interest the equality of the grave must not be conceded. The plebeian who commits *felo de se* is served properly if he is hidden at the cross-roads by

night and a stake driven through his body. The lunatic King who drowns himself, and drags his doctor to the same fate—who is a suicide duplicated with the suspicion of murder—is embalmed and laid to rest in consecrated ground amid incense and music, lights and flowers, the tolling of bells, and the chanting of dirges.

The funeral was over; they were just finishing the *De Profundis*. My countryman had to quit me. “*Oych!* that fellow who was making such a lamentation might be married agin in a twelve-month. The army plan was the best; after the ‘Dead March’ in *Saul* came ‘*Tow-row-row*’—another so’jer was to be had for a shilling. He did not drink; he thanked me all the same—had taken the pledge from Father Mathew whin he was a boy, and meant to stick by it; but he would accept the price of a singing-bird he had set his mind upon, since it was pressed upon him.”

Gibraltar is but a huge garrison. In the moat by the gate, as I re-entered, a big drummer and a tiny mannikin-soldier with cymbals were practising how to lead off a marching-past tune. The

“Fortune of War” tavern elbows “Horse-Barrack Lane;” a print of “The Siege of Kars” is side by side in a shop-window with Dr. Bennett’s “Songs for Soldiers.” The Plazas and Calles of the mainland of Spain have been parted with. The names of streets, hostelries, and stores are English. Instead of tiendas and almacenes and fondas, you have fancy repositories, regimental shoe-shops, and porter-houses. There, for example, is the celebrated “Cock and Bottle,” and farther on “The Calf’s Head Hotel.” If you traverse Cathedral Square, no larger than an ordinary-sized skittle-alley, you arrive by Sunnyside Steps to the Europa Pass. Notices are posted by the roadside cautioning against plucking flowers or treading on the beds under pain of prosecution. But the bazaar bewilders you with its alien figures, its confusion of tongues, and its eccentric contrasts of dress. In five minutes you meet Spanish officers; nuns in broad-leaved white bonnets; a bearded sergeant nursing a baby; bare-legged, sun-burnished Moors; pink-and-white cheeked ladies’-maids from Kent; local mashers in such outrageously garish tweeds;