already exhibited within its fortnight's existence what may be literally called two dictatures (those of Señores Rivero and Martos), the abdication of power by a majority, two provisional and two "permanent" Governments, a cabinet of conciliation, and a cabinet of homogeneity, not to mention a round of permutations in the civil governorships of Madrid, and the captain-generalcy of New Castile, and in the commands of the armies of the North and Catalonia.

From the country poured in felicitations to the Republic from hamlet and city, tumid with a rampant joy. These documents emphatically protested that the majority of the population was Republican. Yet talk confidentially to any Spaniard, not actually a Republican propagandist, and not one of the ignorant lower classes of the towns—an average, intelligent, middle-class Spaniard—and he would tell you there were no Republicans in Spain. The thorough frankness with which Spaniards speak of their own country, its divisions and its national faults, is phenomenal. "We are very foolish," they own with a charming candour, but

the foreigner had better not chime in with them. They will fire up in an instant. If they are foolish, it is no business of his; Spanish quarrels are conducted precisely on the principles of those between man and wife. The outsider who interposes in them must be prepared to wipe a bloody nose.

But the doctrines of Republicanism were producing their effects in the army nevertheless, and the first of these was a tendency to demoralization. The troops at Barcelona fraternized with the working men, and raised cries for the Republic and for their own liberation from service. They desired individual as well as national independence. In that they were but logical. The Republicans out of power inveighed against standing armies as a monstrosity, a relic of effete Monarchical tyranny. The argument was now used against the Republic; the bird of freedom was menaced by a shaft plumed from her own wing. If discipline were once generally relaxed in the army, which is the salt of Spain, then farewell security and come chaos. That was the chief peril in the way. A

man, in the highest meaning of the word, one born to command, was wanted to save the country. He was looked for in vain. Prim had left no successor.

In forming my opinions on Spain and the Spaniards, I was aided not a little by the good offices of a shrewd but eccentric American dentist, named Maceehan, who had left Pennsylvania at so remote a date that nobody could recollect it. Long as he had been absent from his native country, he retained its accent, its peculiarities, and evergreen patriotism, and on each recurring 4th of July gave a lavish banquet in honour of American Independence in a restaurant decked with star-spangled banners, and had the privilege of making all the magnates of the capital, soldiers, ministers, courtiers, nobles, poets, and painters, clink their glasses as he sang "Yankee Doodle." Long as he had been in Madrid, he could not speak Spanish correctly, and his mistakes fed the clubs with side-splitting anecdotes. He was the soul of hospitality, and garrulous as a jay. He was in the secrets of the wire-workers, and had a novel process of extracting

information as he extracted teeth. As his patient sat in the chair of torture he plied him slyly with interrogatories, and learned what he wanted, but he never betrayed confidences. In his way he was as proud as the proudest Spaniard of them all. Emilio Castelar came to him once with an agonizing tooth-ache. Maceehan laid hold of the offending fang with his forceps. Castelar shrieked and clutched at his hand.

"You have got the wrong tooth!"

"Caramba!" said the Pennsylvanian, lowering his instrument. "So you have come here to teach me my business. I will thank you to leave the room, señor."

"I beg a thousand pardons, but consider the pain. Do with me as you like, dear doctor."

"The dear doctor in that case will adjourn the operation till to-morrow. By that time the señor may have discovered that though the dear doctor may not be an adept at literature or administration, he has some skill at pulling teeth."

And Castelar, in spite of his apologies and entreaties and plaints, had to accept the penance of

four-and-twenty hours. He could not think of going anywhere else, for Maceehan was master of his profession. There was not a set of artificial grinders in Madrid with which the American was not familiar. He had looked into the mouths of every Infante and Infanta, had lanced the gums of awful Captains-General, and inserted gold wires in the ivory treasures of most of the reigning beauties. He had been dentist by appointment to Isabella, and had care of the *mâchoire* of the lovely Eugenia de Montijo in her maidenhood. The very thought of sipping a cup of tea in the intimacy of a man who had fingered the palate of a Cardinal, plugged the hollow in a Queen's molar, and arrested the manifestation of caries in the central incisor of an Empress, was too much. It was oppressive.

I was amply provided with letters of introduction at starting, but I was in no hurry to present them. It was fortunate for me. Those who were in power to-day were in disgrace to-morrow, and *vice versâ*, and most of those to whom I had credentials were leaders of parties. One non-politician, a scion of my own sept, but no relative, I did call upon, as

funds were to be forwarded to me through his agency. A pleasant old man, he had a brogue as Irish as the *canavaun* of the Bog of Allen, although he had quitted Ireland in early childhood—a mellow, musical, unctuous brogue. What a sovereign contempt he had for fomenters of revolution, intriguers, and the drones who buzzed while others worked, and wanted to be rewarded for buzzing!

"Namesake," he said, "if you knew the mean secret motives of half these wretched politicians by trade, you would spit upon them. There was but one man fit to govern this nation."

I forget whom he mentioned, but it was a Marshal (Narváez, I fancy), who, when asked on his death-bed by his father-confessor, Did he forgive his enemies? answered that he had none—he had shot them all.

"There may be nothing serious here for the present," he continued, "and yet one can't tell; but I think they will go on shilly-shallying and tinkering up constitutions for months to come."

"Then I should have a better field for my labours in the Carlist country."

"Undoubtedly; but if you think of going there, you must cut off that yellowish-red beard or they will call you Judas Iscariot. Do you speak Basque?"

"No; but as to the beard, I am equal to the sacrifice of shaving it and dying my moustache."

"Ah, yes; you may do that sure enough, but it is not so easy to learn Basque!"

If I could not learn Basque I could learn of the Basques, and what I did learn was so much to their credit that it is only fair to write it down. They were not Thugs, they were neither sanguinary nor thievish. The peasantry of the Basque provinces are the finest in Spain—intelligent, hospitable, brave, gentle, but fiercely fanatical where religion is concerned. Instances were narrated to me of travellers who had been arrested by them, being liberated without damage to person or detriment to purse. In one case a Frenchman was robbed by a small party, but his money and papers were restored to him a few days after by one of the chiefs, with an apology. The correspondent of the *Temps*, who accompanied the army in a previous Carlist campaign, informed me that after a skirmish

in which forty Carlists were captured, he was anxious to send an account of the affair to Paris, but he did not know how.

"Hold!" said a colonel, "I'll find you the means."

He called over a prisoner, and asked him if he were let off on parole, would he take a letter through the disturbed district, and post it on the other side for a French gentleman? The man pleaded fatigue.

"You'll be well paid."

At last he consented; my informant gave him the letter and a five-franc piece. While monsieur was searching his pockets for more money to give him, the prisoner said:

"I have no change, caballero; how shall we manage?"

The prisoner duly set off; the letter was duly posted and duly arrived, and the prisoner faithfully returned and delivered himself up. Honour is not yet extinct in the Basque provinces, nor is magnanimity in the Spanish army. The commandant dismissed the peasant with a look of admiration and a push on the back. But some fireside philosopher will argue:

"Why, these honourable fellows cut telegraph wires and fire on railway trains."

The Carlists explain: "The telegraph and the railway are our greatest enemies; the one sends for reinforcements, the other brings them."

The unfortunate station-masters are to be pitied. Lizarraga sends one word that he will incur the penalty of death if he makes up a train for troops. The troops arrive, their commander demands to be furnished with a train to take him to a certain point; if the station-master refuses he is not merely threatened with the death-penalty, but incurs it on the spot. But the fireside philosophers, assuming the cocked-hat of the general, will continue:

"Why not protect the telegraphs and the railways?" The query may be met, *more Hibernico*, by another:

Do the philosophers know how enormous and difficult an extent of country has to be protected?

It would take more men than there are in the Spanish army altogether, including the regiment of dismissed generals in Madrid, to act as military milesmen in the perturbed territory. The Army of

the North did what it could—that is to say, it fortified the railway stations, converting them into veritable block-houses, and supplied escorts to the trains; but the Carlists had an unpurchasable ally in the darkness. They could come down in the night and play old Harry with metals and wires. The insurgents were ill-armed and undisciplined, but they were on their own ground, every square inch of which they knew; they were leal to each other, and they had acquired the secret of guerrilla campaigning—that is, they harassed the regulars by fighting and running away, so that they might live to fight another day. They avoided concentration in mass, knowing how dangerous it is to pack all one's eggs in a single basket.

So daring had these Carlists become that bands had made demonstrations in perilous nearness to the capital, or rather they had been organized in the capital itself and had taken to the field in the neighbourhood. From a rising ground hard by the palace could be distinguished with the naked eye a thicket on the desolate plain in the distance, where the remnants of one band were known to be

hiding. The fates were against the insurgents, as they were met at Buendia and badly beaten two days after they had unfurled the banner of revolt. Eleven of them were slain, including a priest, twenty wounded and one hundred and seventeen taken prisoners, including their two chiefs. The elder of these, Alonso, a man of three-score and ten, died in the military hospital of Madrid on the 19th of March. He was a venerable fanatic of asinine stupidity to have risked a fight with regular troops in the open. Fortune, in my experience, favours not so much the brave as the wary. Had this particular Alonso the brave, really an Alonso the reckless, availed himself of a few picks and spades—the first farmhouse will seldom fail to supply entrenching tools—he might have lived to die in his own bed of a natural disease.

CHAPTER V.

A Late Capital—The Gambling Mania—A French Rendezvous—The Duke de Fitzpepper—The Morality of Passing Bad Money—Spanish Compliments—Men in Pickle—A Licentious Ballet—Federal Manners—Prim's Artifice—Nouvilas Goes North—A Carlist Proclamation—Don Alfonso—Midnight Oil—Castelar's Circular.

MADRID is not an early capital—natural effect of the climate. In the middle of the day the blinds are let down, the shops are shut, the streets are empty—everybody who can at all manage it is taking the siesta. The business of sunlight is at a standstill. The few hours thus stolen from the day are religiously made restitution of to the night, which is undoubtedly the most agreeable period for a stroll. Pleasure is in full swing, the promenades are alive, flirtation is methodically practised in the Spanish way—that is, through an intervening lattice—theatres and ball-rooms contribute to the programme of diversion, the coffee-houses (where

chocolate is mostly consumed) are packed to the door-posts, and the business of gaslight is prosecuted with a desperate concentration of energy and a brooding perseverance.

The business of gaslight, unfortunately, is high play. That is one of the social curses of Spain. Everybody gambles, to the sentries in the guard-house, the patients in the hospitals, the felons in the gaols. Such is the overwhelming dominion of this national passion that I should not be surprised at reading of a condemned man on his way to the garrote craving a hand of cards with the executioner to distract him from his sorrows. Strained the situation was at this crisis, and in all the clubs the cards were thrown on the tables with a fever as of men seeking some relaxation from the fierce game of politics; but, as I had opportunity to assure myself afterwards, this was nothing exceptional. The fever for play as high as the pocket can allow, often higher, is normal. The foreigner—and all foreigners provided with the slightest credentials are most graciously made free of the clubs—soon takes note of that.

The Fornos, the Suizo, and other coffee-houses were transformed into debating-forums, and sometimes I frequented them to catch what was going on; but my haunt of predilection was a restaurant patronized by French refugees. They had brought with them the Gaulish gaiety, and it was instructive to see Communists, fugitive aristocrats, bagmen with the asphalte of the boulevards still clinging to the soles of their boots, and steady old settlers in Madrid foregathering in friendly forgetfulness of differing shades of political coats. One of the three Marquesses de Fonvielle and de Coutuly, of the *Temps*, amongst other journalists, used to drop in regularly. De Coutuly has since strayed into diplomacy. Touching journalists who wander into that luxurious labyrinth, the representative of the *New York Herald* at Madrid, a painstaking gentleman with a certain cleverness, Russell Young, subsequently became United States' Minister to China. Prizes of this class, which rain upon Continental and American publicists, seldom fall to the lot of their brethren of the British press, unless they get into Parliament or boldly single themselves out

from the anonymous herd. Then they are sometimes promoted to a Consulship in an insalubrious region, where they have every facility for studying the manners of the buck-nigger, and the customs of the lively sand-fly. Far and away the most interesting customer of this restaurant was the Duke de Fitzpepper, a tall, dark, strong man with curly black hair, a boisterous voice, and a bold laugh. He had to quit France on account of an affair of honour. He had been in the Imperial Navy, had a squabble with his captain, and resigned his commission that he might send him a challenge. They met with the customary duelling swords, but de Fitzpepper made a mistake. He ran his antagonist through. I know naught of the merits of the quarrel, but to my insularly uneducated mind it appeared that the gallant nobleman experienced inadequate remorse at having the blood of a fellow-creature on his soul. Perhaps I am hyper-sensitive, but when de Fitzpepper used to boast "*Je me connais dans le flingot*," it sent a thread of cold water creeping down my spine, not from fear but from aversion. Yet it was impossible to keep aloof

from him for long, he was such a joyous, dashing, carry-your-outworks pattern of a musketeer.

Evil associations corrupt good manners, I suppose, which must be the excuse for a Frenchman with whom I entered into conversation in this mirthful caravanserai. I happened to show him a coin which had been passed upon me, an escudo, which would be worth a sovereign if it were not counterfeit.

"What a shame!" he exclaimed as he fingered it. "What are you going to do with it?"

"Nothing," I said. "It's useless to me."

"Lend it to me, pray."

I gave it to him, and the following night he asked me what commission I would allow him. He had passed the bad escudo in his turn. I was indignant, and accused him of having been guilty of a dishonest act. I would touch none of the proceeds of his crookedness.

"Nonsense!" he said, astonished. "I got rid of it in a hell. They're all rogues there when they have a chance."

I submit to the casuists that this was a very

nice case of conscience. Winning money at cards is not earning it. He who seeks to win it is demoralized, and it is to his advantage and the advantage of society that he should be discouraged in his pernicious foolishness. Therefore, *q.e.d.*, it was commendable to palm that base coin upon him. I was unequal to deciding the question off-hand, so I elected to take not a real of the Frenchman's equivocal profit. But if the Frenchman was to blame, was I not responsible in the first instance, as having afforded him the means of cheating his neighbour? When the casuists shall have elucidated this riddle to their satisfaction, perhaps they will oblige by telling me how many thousand angels could alight on the point of a needle.

Morality is at a low ebb in Madrid, or rather the moral code is regulated by notions peculiar to the latitude. So with habits. A man must be "native and to the manner born," before he can affect competency to interpret them. For example, when a Madrileño asseverates that his house is yours, or that his equipage which you so much admire is at your disposal, he does not intend that

you should take up your residence with him there and then, or hold his coachman at your beck. It is simply a form of etiquette, a mode of speech, as of the Englishman of past generations who challenged you to mortal combat and subscribed himself "your obedient humble servant." You will be guilty of a grave solecism if you imitate that American to whom the grandee remarked with effusion that the stud which captivated his taste was his own, his very own.

"Thanks," said Brother Jonathan; "I'll take the roan and the chestnut to-day and call for the others to-morrow!"

Although a man may tender you fraudulent coinage with a brazen front, he may be keen in honour, and resent an insult to his sister with a knife-stab; although he may intrigue for a Government place with a slimy self-abasement, under circumstances the same being may go forth unflinchingly and sacrifice himself on the altar of his country. Spain is the home of paradox. The beggar is addressed as "your worship," mutiny is a venial offence, bribery of officials is a recognised prescription. At the very epoch of which I write,

the murderers of Prim were stalking about the capital; it was a town-crier's secret who they were and who was the personage who was their employer, yet none had the temerity to denounce them. And in the saladero, or the "salting-tub," as the prison was called, it was notorious that there were malefactors who gave lessons in forgery, and who positively utilized their cells as convenient head-quarters from which to prey on the unwary public. Their plan was to write to somebody of position, whose name they had lighted on in a directory, and inform him that they had often heard speak of him as a citizen of integrity, and felt that they might trust him; they were singularly situated, immured for a debt of a few duros, and yet in the vicinity of his residence they were cognizant of an immense buried treasure; if he would only send them the trifle needful to pay off that debt and cover their fare to his town, they would take him with them to the site of the secret hoard, and repay him with interest for his kindness. This transparent ruse actually told with hundreds of dupes. How the *auri sacra fames* will deprive sane men of

sense! He would be a spendthrift of sympathy who would waste his sympathy upon them.

I had been under the impression that Spain was a deeply religious country. The impression was illusive. It may be fanatically religious in parts, but too often the educated classes rail at religion. As comes to pass when inordinate demand has been made on credulity, a reaction arises, and those whose faith was implicit yesterday become the scoffing heretics of to-day. The tide has turned, and it is no unfrequent occurrence to hear a Spaniard declare he is not a Christian, whose fathers would have perhaps burned at a stake the wretch who would have dared to utter such a profanity. This is very bad. One extreme is as wicked as another. If the Scylla of stupid superstition was dangerous, the Charybdis of arrogant scepticism is destructive. This is essentially a Roman Catholic country, yet never have I seen anywhere, in the lands where Roman Catholicism is disliked and contemned even, the ceremonies and institutions of the Church treated with more undisguised ribaldry. I went to the Novedades, a popular theatre in a

humble quarter of the town in the vicinity of the Calle de Toledo, to see what the piece on the occasion, "El Triunfo de la República," was like. I got in as a "Carlist ballet" was being danced; two men were dressed to represent two famous cabecillas, Saballs and a colleague, two others to represent the Carlist priest, Santa Cruz, and a monk of the party. Santa Cruz was bulky as Friar Tuck, leered from under his scoop hat, drank wine, reeled, toddled, fell, and kicked up his heels as the wild Mabille quadrille music was played; and high was the content and noisily expressed the delight of the audience. The four women who took part in the Terpsichorean orgie wore the robes of nuns, and must have belonged to the order of Sisters of Shame, if to any. They had blue hoods, white bands across their foreheads and bosoms, red crosses wrought on their habits, and trailing skirts of white. Their dancing was not voluptuous; it would be a misnomer to let it down with so mild an epithet; it was grossly indecent. They exposed their limbs, and the audience was ecstatic at the sight. Not a murmur of censure was to be heard. And this

bacchanalian riot, too obscene for any self-respecting house of ill-fame, was supposed to be held in a church. The scenery showed a mockery of ecclesiastical architecture and pious pictures. As a dramatic effort, "El Triunfo de la República" was very poor. Zorilla was caricatured as a fox (a play upon his name), and Sagasta as a devil-fish, and the apotheosis revealed the Genius of Spain waving a flag lettered with the words, "Viva la República Federal!" The flag was welcomed with vehement cheers, in affirmation that those who looked on and admired the burlesque of ministers of the national faith were all stout Federal Republicans, corresponding somewhat to the Communists of the Paris of two years before.

These Federals, I own, I do not like. A deputation of them from the provinces arrived one of these evenings, and put up at the Fonda de Paris. They were scrubby louts, smoked between the courses although ladies were at table, which, however, could be condoned, as it was Spanish. But they also wore their hats. That irritated one guest, and he called to a waiter to bring him a hat which he would find

on a peg outside. Having been handed his head-gear, he clapped it on, and said that was all he wanted. The hint was not lost. The boors dined in a room by themselves during the rest of their stay. And yet these Federal Republicans profess to respect public opinion; but by the phrase must be understood the opinion of those who agree with them. The Intransigentes, on whose support they depend, have arms in their hands, and will try to keep them. Only one man was ever able to disarm them, and he was assassinated. If Prim did not know the Spanish mind intuitively, and as no other man ever knew it, even he would not have succeeded. After the promiscuous distribution of arms to the multitude had been made from the windows of the storehouses in Madrid at the close of 1868, he tried every means to get them back, but to no purpose. Promises of rewards to those who would give up the guns were useless; threats and coaxings were in vain. At last Prim hit on a notable scheme. At a review he publicly insulted the corps he was so long trying to disembody; he either rode past them without noticing them, or made remarks on

their appearance the reverse of complimentary. The officers threw up their commissions in dudgeon; they had served the cause of the people faithfully, and were not to be treated with contempt; they would no longer carry arms for such ungrateful friends. It was just what Prim wanted.

While Madrid was thus seething and bubbling as if it were on the verge of boiling over, and the great question of elections for the new Cortes to determine the future "permanent" style of administration was being mooted, the Carlists were plucking up heart and maturing their designs. They fancied they would soon have the nation before them the *nudum et cœcum corpus* of Sylla's description—defenceless and blind. Nouvilas, one of the numberless generals of Spain, was ordered to the north. At a Republican meeting before his departure, he promised that he would take his five sons with him to fight against the Carlists. At the same meeting he declared himself the uncompromising enemy of all dictatorships, and warned those who expected that he would use his power in that sense not to make a mistake. He was a soldier, not a politician, and the