which signifies Christian exclusively of the Roman Catholic persuasion, is a survival of the thoughts bequeathed by the Saracenic occupation. He who was not a Christian was a "Moro," and to this day the Jew or the Protestant is a Moor, tarred with the same brush as the turbaned Islamite.

"The Church," concluded Mentor, "is not to blame if it burns incense and assaults Heaven with prayers for such a change of Government as will bring money to its coffers. If the Republic last, the Church will be separated from the State, and every congregation will have to pay its own minister. That would be frank, at all events; but so long as there is a State religion, the ministers of which are supposed to be paid, it is a scandal not to pay them, and their reverences are perfectly right to turn Carlist or Alfonsist."

After these discussions in the reading-room I sometimes felt as if I had been endeavouring to unravel the Schleswig-Holstein tangle. Was I not right in warning off the ladies? Truly, Spanish politics are confusing. My usual reflections upon them resolved themselves into the uneasy con-

viction that they were a Lincoln morass overlaid by a London fog, and that it would be a joy to have some thousands of Will-o'-the-Wisp guides prisoned to the chins in the quagmire, and replaced by one benevolent despot bearing the light with strong, sure grasp.

CHAPTER VII.

The Carnival — About Kissing Feet — Mummers and Masquers—The Paseo de Recoletos—The Writer is taken for Cluseret—Incongruity in Costume—Shrove Tuesday—Panic on the Prado—A Fancy Ball—The "Entierro de la Sardina"—Lenten Amusements—A Spanish Mystery—"Pasion y Muerte de Jesus"—Of the Stage Stagey—Critical Remarks.

SIMULTANEOUSLY with the Ministerial crisis we were tortured by the throes of the Carnival, which was a trial too great for a Republic so young. But the weather came to the aid of the powers that were, and prevented the festival from rising to a height of merriment when it might become tumultuous. The opening day was one of leaden skies and moist pavements in the forenoon, of little patches of ultramarine above and little eruptions of noise below in the afternoon. There is one consolation on a wet day—you can conveniently make inspection of the extremities of dear womankind.

I no longer elevate my eyebrows at the Spanish formula of compliment to the mistress of one's affections—"I kiss your feet." Anyone could kiss them with pleasure; they are so tiny, shapely, and sylph-like. There surely are the "little mice" of Suckling's ballad! Atalanta must have had ankles like those revealed under the lifted skirts of the doncella yonder, Cinderella such another pair of arched insteps. But one cannot contemplate them for ever, bitten by the statuary's mania for the symmetric though he be.

On the second morning, there was a light grey fog, like the smoke after gunpowder, on the square called "The Gate of the Sun." I have tasted the joys of Carnival elsewhere—at Rome in Papal times and at Paris in Imperial times—but never did the tomfoolery like me less. Muggy weather, miserable Carnival. No showers of *confetti*, no procession of the *bœuf gras* even. Here and there the orchestras of the theatres, clad in the cast-off finery of the supernumeraries thereof, parade the streets, and make dissonance with their instruments. Very German-bandish this dissonance sounds, with a

variety of horror thrown in liberally in the shape of tambourines and triangles. One corps of mumming musicians is dressed as Zouaves; another might be directors of a Funeral Company, so sad their garments; a third is got up in a costume semi-nightshirt, semi-dressing-gown; all send out agents to tout for *backsheesh*. That is their great point of resemblance. The masquers are few in the streets, and, such as they are, wear their motley as if for pay, not for pastime. They are of the usual order, Pierrots, Polichinelles, and cavaliers, with no wigs, with powdered wigs, and with curly wigs, and with vizors hideous or ghastly, or simply droll and grotesque. Among the latter are some which might have been designed by Dykwnkyn for a Drury Lane pantomime; but the individual who carried off the palm of burlesque was an equestrian I met in the Plaza Mayor, looking like one of the men in armour of a Lord Mayor's show with bonneted head-gear, astride of a pot-bellied Clydesdale. Perhaps he may have been caricaturing "the ingenious gentleman" of La Mancha. My most grateful anticipation of Spain was, that it was

behind the age, and was in no hurry to overtake it. But this did not hold good in Madrid, and dear womankind with the tiny feet was the culprit. She disfigured herself at that epoch with an enormous bustle on which a Barbary ape might conveniently rehearse a bolero. Well, we have had our Grecian bends, our crinolines and crinolettes, our pull-backs and Piccadilly limps. Fashion spells despot everywhere, and dear womankind will cheerfully obey its dictates, even though she have to blur her cheeks with patches, distort her spine, or tightlace herself into consumption.

In the afternoon a long procession of carriages (mostly hired) traverses the Calle de Alcalá and the promenade to the left of the fountain where Cybele is sculptured driving a pair of meekest ox-like lions; the folk in the carriages are not wildly joyous in their dissipation, nor are the horses that draw them restive with excitement. Everything is dull, consequently respectable; orderly, consequently dreary. The Foresters' *fête* at the Crystal Palace is more hilarious. No shafts of delicate raillery are shot by cherry lips; no peal of silvery

laughter rings out. The Carnival is "stale, flat, and unprofitable," except to those mumming musicians who have paid sixteen shillings for the license to beg during the three mock-mirthful days. I survey the scene from a window in the Paseo de Recoletos, and get all my enjoyment out of the cynical remarks of a monstrously fine Burgundian lady, who criticises the dresses of her Spanish sisters as they glide by. The dresses are very tasteless, but the Frenchwoman's remarks are very ill-natured, and ill-nature is gratifying when your neighbour is its object. A friend enters and claps me on the back.

"Do you know, old fellow, that that stormy petrel of the Revolution, Cluseret of the Commune, is said to be in Madrid?"

"Never! What brings him here?"

"*Said* to be, was my expression," he added. "As a fact, I don't believe he is here, but they take you for him. That is how the tale of his arrival has got into the papers."

The Burgundian lady turns. "Cluseret!" she ejaculates; "absurd! I have seen Cluseret; he is

much taller and much handsomer than this gentleman!"

I bowed to hide my face, which was what Mr. Whistler might have called a symphony in black and red, frown and blush. I have since thought what a caustic retort I might have made if I had said politely, "And, it is to be hoped, much more well-bred." But I said nothing, for the same reason that Dr. Johnson gave once to Boswell—"I had nothing ready, sir."

The panorama underneath is duller now; occasionally a foolish horseman canters by, covered as to his person and his charger's quarters with a flowing roquelaure of sheeny green satin; or a black-haired damsel trips it by, with features concealed by sky-blue mask, and proportions by an outer vesture of a painfully bright gamboge colour. I wonder is her hair her own, and are her eyes black. Most likely they are—night eyes are the rule here—the fair (that is the dark) sex are all going to purgatory if the French couplet be authority:—

"Les yeux noirs
Vont au purgatoire."

Again fanciful reflection is broken in upon by the thrumming of guitars, the shrill squeak of fifes, and the eternal whirr and jingle of the tambourines and triangles, and I descend and make my way through the fast-thickening crowds to my hotel. There, where the company, like the waiters, is polyglot; where a noble, white-bearded English gentleman is sandwiched between a little German professor and a Diputado to the Congress, where French journalists sit by young American exquisites, who are picking up notions in Europe, and mere tourists who have come to "do" Spain in thirteen days are listening to the experiences of a mining engineer from the West Riding of Yorkshire, who has been in the country for thirteen years; the gossip, unlike the fun without, is fast and furious. But as it is all of politics, and I gave the reader a dose of that in the last chapter and may have to repeat it anon, I turn to the windows and scan the ever-animated, always-varying picture on the Puerta del Sol. Ladies in veils white and black, as of Genoa and Milan respectively, pass and re-pass, gilt missals in their hands. They will be at the masked balls

to-night, for this, as I have said already, is the home of paradox, where the announcement of the church in which the Quarant'ore, or Forty-hours' Exposition of the Sacrament, is being held, is printed in the same column with the theatrical advertisements. Over the way stand a group in the national "capa." Why do they not wear slouched and plumed beavers? To me a chimney-pot hat surmounting a cloak is as dire an outrage on poetic association as a Venetian bravo with a quizzing-glass. It offends the sense of fitness. What if the Madrileños were to take to the Ulster-coat? It would make a capital Carnival disguise at all events. But the cloak, is it not mysterious, brigandish—tragic, if you will? Mark that loosely-built, tawny man of dare-devil aspect on the edge, bending intently towards the excited speaker in the middle. Something has discomposed him, for his cheeks purple. There is an agitated flutter under the cloak, and its folds are flung back. You expect to be startled by the blade of a stiletto, and out comes a soiled pocket-handkerchief! It is as if Jupiter Tonans were to threaten a thunderbolt and compromise with a sneeze.

The third day of the Carnival, Shrove Tuesday, was all that could be desired, sunny, sprightly, bustling. The streets palpitated with merry-makers walking, riding, or driving, most of them handsomely dressed; the music—good, bad, and indifferent—was unceasing; the legions of roysterers attired themselves in every conceivable vagary of costume, even to the cheap resource of a chintz dressing-gown. They were cheerful, but in a business-like matter-of-fact way, and as they promenaded twirled corncrakes, jingled tin cans, and tootled horns. Few women disgraced themselves by appearing in men's clothes. Madrid is more continent than Paris; and, to its credit be it recorded, there was neither drunkenness nor horse-play. In the afternoon the scene in the Prado was kaleidoscopic in variety and beauty and motion; it had in it the gay element of the true Carnival, and those who had held aloof before or had been deterred from sharing in the *fête* by the inauspicious natural weather or by nervousness owing to the unsettled condition of the political weather, came out fresh, frolicsome, and bent on making up for

lost time. Some of the dresses were luxurious, and triumphantly bore the test of sunshine, which is inexorable for what is worn or seedy or imitation. And yet there seldom was a time to which the stereotyped figure of speech about dancing on a volcano more strikingly applied. Electricity was in the air; the troops were under arms; the Deputies were consulting under the protection or the threat (as the balance of feeling might incline) of canister-stuffed cannon, and it was quite within the range of the possible that before nightfall the cavalry might be fetlock deep in blood, and the carnage of the Dos de Mayo be repeated—a worse carnage, for the Spaniards who fell then were patriots slain gloriously fighting against the foreigner, and now they would be Spaniards killed by brothers.

The stream of pleasure was in its full force and flow when a strange murmur followed by a succession of slight screams arrested the attention of the merrymakers. Faces were turned inquiringly towards the point whence the sounds came; the faces grew serious as a carriage was noticed breaking

from the ranks and driving smartly down a side-street, they were overspread with alarm as other carriages filed off, and then, quick as a cloud overcasts the sun, a curtain of gloom fell upon the moving multitude. There was a halt as if by general consent, a dead silence, a thrill of trepidation, and a rapid rush and scurry hither and thither to shelter. Trailing skirts were caught up, vizors were thrown aside, grey-bearded patriarchs tore off their wigs and spectacles, the fiddling and singing came to an abrupt ending, and were replaced by curses and shrieks; all order and courtesy were cast to the four winds of heaven. It was a perfect tragi-comedy; a mixture of the terrible, the risible, the ominous, the rococo. I never saw transformation so sharp. It was as if there was no room for any less ignoble feeling in the lately jocose, bantering throngs than self-preservation. Drivers lashed their horses and mules and galloped off furiously; equestrians careered towards all points of the compass; those on foot bolted into every hall-way that stood ajar, or disappeared down the nearest openings; shrubs and flowers were trampled upon, and in a span

shorter than it takes to recount it, the avenue of the Prado was a desert. It was fierce wholesale scamper and stampede. The roadway and parks were strewn with fans, masks, pocket-handkerchiefs, gloves and slippers; the entire company of masquerading Arabs, Prussian officers, Morris dancers, Inquisitors, and troubadours had taken incontinent flight, most of them breathless and white; the ladies in their varied characters of gipsies, grisettes, Galician nurses, and Court coquettes had all scudded off in such a dismayed flutter that they had forgotten to swoon, and forfeited the finest of opportunities of breaking into hysterics. They were really frightened. I sought refuge (from what I knew not, whether earthquake, hurricane or revolution) in a thick clump of bushes at the side of the Paseo, where I stumbled over a panting make-believe toreador, and a curious wire-woven article of ladies' dress, which latter I appropriated as trophy. By-and-by, as no fresh cry of alarm was raised, the bull-fighter crawled out, and I took heart of grace to return to the centre of the town, where I learned that the scare was groundless.

It had its origin in the glitter of the bayonets of some soldiers returning from their duties at the Palace of the Congress. Madrid was timid as a sick girl. It struck me that if there had been genuine cause for the panic, and that a charge had been made or a volley with lead fired, there would have been unequalled scope for a picture of the type of Gérôme's "Duel after the Bal Masqué," but on a more liberal scale—Polichinelle pierced by a bayonet-thrust, the floured face of Pierrot streaked with blood, and poor Jack Pudding sprawling in the death-agonies in the gutter.

The festivities were prolonged to the small hours of the night, or rather of the morning, none the less vigorously for the passing fear-spasm in the Prado; the masked balls at the theatres were packed with guests who enjoyed themselves, or fancied they did, which is as much as one can reasonably expect in this mundane sphere sometimes.

The "Marseillaise" from a vibrating brass band might be heard, nay almost felt, crashing through the glass-doors and bursting in a cataract of sound through the drapery at the entrances of the

café on the ground-floor of the Fonda de Paris at the hour when honest burgesses should be *tête-à-tête* with the pillow.

On Ash Wednesday, which rose rainily, there was an augmentation in the average of headaches, and a rise in the rates for apothecary's stuff. The pious revellers went (with an interval for washing and change of clothes) from the ball-room to the churches to receive the ashes. "Remember, man, thou art but dust, and unto dust thou shalt return," says the priest, and smears their foreheads with the cinders of last year's palm-branches. Another custom, peculiar to the date, the "entierro de la sardina," was duly observed by those wicked rogues, the non-pious revellers. The sardina is not the fish, but a portion of the intestines of a pig, which is laid to earth with pseudo-lamentation in token of *carne vale,* farewell to flesh-meat for forty days. With a lugubrious affectation of grief the funeral pageant passed. It was very profane—an undissembled mockery of a religious procession. A banner striped pink and yellow and inscribed "á los Cubanos" was carried in front by a fellow in

West Indian negro dress with blackened face. Next came a troop of blackened acolytes, two by two, and then a canopy such as is borne over the Host, which canopy was held in travesty of homage over a beer-keg. A sacrilegious choir, chanting a parody of a Gregorian hymn, paced behind, and a gigantic blackguard, the *serpent du village*, supplied a droning accompaniment from a bassoon. A blackened high-priest, with a conical black hat and a cope bee-barred black and yellow, closed the burlesque train and made believe to read a mass-book through his pantomimic goggles. There was an attendant who rang a funeral bell, another who tapped a muffled drum, and a third who swung right under the nostrils of the onlookers a censer containing ground resin made vile to the smell by some fetid compound. Occasionally the profane rascals halted for a pull at a goat-skin of wine.

There are some queer customs, the undeniable relics of paganism, in Spain. On Christmas-eve the streets are paraded by men rattling pots, just as the Romans used to celebrate the row that was made in Olympus to hide the birth of Jupiter from

Saturn. In the Basque provinces they honour the Virgin Mary under the name of Astarte, a clear loan from the worship of Venus. As I am treating of queer customs, it is worth chronicling that the Republicans entered the churches as soon as their favourite Government was proclaimed and frantically rang the bells. A Bishop took care to exorcise the Republican demon next day by carefully sprinkling the bells with holy-water.

For all the Lent, the treacherous and trying weather, the wars and rumours of wars, Madrid enjoyed herself, ate, drank and made merry, flirted and gambled. The Opera, a cosy well-frequented resort of the fashionable set, was open, and gave the *Creation* and *L'Africaine*, and the usual repertory of musical masterpieces of which I plead profound technical ignorance redeemed by passionate fondness. The soprano was that plump goddess with the dimpled double chin, fair-haired Marie Sass. The orchestra was one of the finest I had ever heard, and the chorus in personal appearance one of the ugliest I had ever seen, and that, I can assure the reader, is saying much. The Zarzuela,

a play-house devoted to opera-bouffe—the sacred lamp of burlesque was not trimmed—presented "Golden Dreams," a beautiful piece with plot and fun not cumbered with that scenic sumptuousness which is trying to edge acting ability off the boards elsewhere.

The respectable theatres in Madrid shut their doors on the Fridays in Lent, and respectable theatre-goers remain at home. It is not the correct thing to be seen pleasure-hunting on a day of mortification and white meats. But actors must live, as well as in London. Those who are connected with high-priced houses and are decently paid can afford to lose one night in the week. But there are poorer followers of the Thespian art who are in very bad case indeed, owing to this tribute to religious scruple. If we are to be virtuous, well and good: but let us be virtuous in earnest. We have bull-fights on the Sundays in Lent. Why may we not enjoy the singing of Marie Sass in *Norma* on a Lenten Friday? This thin distinction between what is right and what is not—so thin that men of the cold north cannot make it out—

comes under the category of those indigenous peculiarities which surpass all understanding. Anyhow, it presses rather heavily on the humble votaries of the sock and buskin who are attached to the middle-class houses, and who are docked of one night's salary in every week of the seven in the penitential season, in order that the proprieties of a public which is not particular to a shade as to how it observes the Sabbath may be respected. The low theatres—the Romea, where the Republic is glorified; the Alhambra, where heels are kicked up and lewd songs are rolled forth; the Capellanes, where monks and nuns are caricatured, have reason on their side, at all events. They dare to be logical in their contempt for the Church, and keep open all the year round, on Friday as on Sunday, in the time of fasting as of feasting.

The Teatro Martin is not a low theatre nor yet is it a high-priced one. The actors there are not rich, but the audience has some pretensions to delicacy of taste. What is the lessee of the Martin to do during the Lent? To rob his treasury of one night's receipts and cheat his patrons of one night's

enjoyment? That would be the last crime any spirited and enterprising lessee would dream of committing—if he could avoid it. From this dilemma the gentleman of the Teatro Martin has discovered an escape. He opens his house on Fridays, but he converts it into a temple; he reconciles amusement with religion; he produces a Passion Play! I went to see it for the special reason that it was my privilege once to describe the Passion Play in the Bavarian Highlands, and I was anxious to compare one representation with the other, and, if possible, to renew my emotions of the past.

The house was tolerably full, except the boxes, which were unoccupied, save one by a sedate family party. Devout folk of the Latin race are famous for the interest they take in the spectacular. They admire the pomps of religion; and this Passion Play, which was almost a function, had evidently brought many to the theatre who are seldom seen there on ordinary occasions. I thought I could detect a pious bearing in the pittites. The well-to-do persons—male and female—who sat patiently

on the mouldy benches looked serious, as if they had come to assist at a sacrifice. There were old ladies there, I could almost take my word, who are more often to be encountered, with morocco-bound prayer-books in their shrivelled hands, creeping to early service. The gallery was packed, and the gods, for gods, were gentlemanlike. There was nothing in the aspect of the house meriting description—it was roomy, ill-lit, full of draughts and dust—one of those houses we know so well. The scene-painter, if the act-drop was a fair sample of his powers, was a victim to colour-blindness; the orchestra showed a Republican freedom in its scorn for the trammels of time and tune; but the prompter in his hooded box, full in the middle of the range of footlights, was the feature of the show. He had a very distinct voice—so distinct was it that every sentence he directed to the actors rebounded from the flats, came back in sibilant echo, and ascended to the gods. I have no intention of giving an analysis of the piece; to speak the sad truth, it did not come up to my expectations. Ober-Ammergau spoiled me for exhibitions of the

kind. I could not screw up my enthusiasm, tried I ever so hard. That which charmed in Bavaria had no charm in Spain. The stately panorama which was put before the awe-struck spectator in that valley of the Ammer was not visible here. The blue sky overhead and the eternal hills in sight above the walls of the simple wooden structure; the music so tender and solemn; the clear-browed peasants losing their identity in the fervid rendering of their parts; the enraptured attention of the auditory, whose lips moved in prayer sometimes, and whose eyes sometimes brimmed with tears, as if the scenes they watched were real—those were things to be remembered. They were the points that helped to make an impression in Bavaria, that dispelled prejudice and replaced it with a pleased satisfaction which insensibly swelled to admiration; but they were wanting in this stuffy play-house. No illusion was possible. One never lost the consciousness that he was looking on at a stage-play acted for money by indifferent stage-players. There was a smell of paint and tobacco-smoke about. Then there was the voice of that irrepressible

prompter, the shaven faces of the hungry supernumeraries who played the Roman soldiers, the gas-rakes, the shaky wings, the mark of the trap-doors from which devils with a family likeness to the imps of pantomime spring up to-night, and the statue of the Commander may emerge to-morrow night, the scenes that would not run smoothly in the grooves, and the stiff stereotyped exits and entrances. Everything was of the stage, stagey. One could not get rid of the notion that Caiaphas had dined on puchero with its flavour heightened by garlic. It was very palpable that the Apostle Peter wore a wig and a beard of tow. Mary Magdalen had an air of operatic resignation, and was troubled with the arrangement of her drapery. There was a layer of pearl-powder on the Virgin's cheeks.

I shall not bore the reader with an essay on mysteries and miracle-plays; neither, as I have said, shall I attempt to analyse this sacred drama, in seven acts, of "The Passion and Death of Jesus;" but I shall take the liberty of giving an epitome of some notes, pencilled on the spot, in the intervals of

interruption by that loud prompter. The *Pasion y Muerte de Jesus* (that is the Spanish title) is written by Don Enrique Zumel, who appears to have fathered as many pieces as Lope de Vega, but whose pieces are not quite so well known. It was brought out for the first time in this self-same Teatro Martin on the 3rd of March, 1871. It is in verse, and has some literary merit. In the main incidents it resembles the Bavarian play, which does not deviate noticeably from the Bible narrative. It is unnecessary, therefore, to go over the incidents of its various acts. The Greek chorus to be remarked at Ober-Ammergau is absent. The tableaux from the Old Testament prefiguring events in the New are absent also. The first Act opens with a dialogue between Magdalen and some women of Jerusalem. The Saviour, with the Apostles, enters on the scene almost immediately after. Magdalen's garments are rich with spangles; her mantle is scarlet; she has flowers in her luxuriant tresses, and looks a vain creature. The Saviour is personified by an actor with a singular likeness to Joseph Mayer, the Bavarian Christus. Pale, clean-