committing the same offence in the town in that of 75 pesetas. This proclamation, issued by the Sub-Governor newly appointed under Marshal Serrano's Government, was considered severe; but as its provisions only extended from Holy Wednesday to the evening of Holy Saturday, it was obeyed in silence. It also, to insure the quiet of the town where it was promulgated, forbade, under a heavy fine, that any coach, mule-cart, or public conveyance should enter within the gates during the same period. This proclamation was, of course, a step in favour of the Established Church, whose ordinances, &c., have been set, as much as possible, at nought by the late Republican Governments.

I returned from a scorching, dusty walk in time to see the first procession of the Holy Week, which commenced at about half-past six on Wednesday evening. It was to start from the largest church in the town, and thither I wended my way. Outside the church was collected already, when I reached it at six o'clock, a crowd of 800 or 1,000 persons, chiefly men, the greater number of the mining or artisan class. They were standing in orderly and decent groups around the doors, and on the steps of the church, and far down into the streets, smoking, chatting, and discussing the all-important question, for the time, what sort of procession it would be this year. It should here be noted, that under the late Republican Governments, the shows and processions have deteriorated in character, and, owing to the law not holding its sheltering shield over them, much licence had become common; but now all has been altered.

The crowd had reached to some 2,000 ere the municipal guards, with their officer, came up, parting

the quiet but dense mass as they came, and forming in a semicircle in front of the church doors, their glistening swords and red facings contrasting strangely with the peaceable appearance of the crowd.

I asked leave of one of these men to enter the church, and, with true Spanish courtesy, he replied, "It is open to all, strangers included; the religious ceremonies of Spain will bear inspection: enter, señor." A crowd was surging in and out of the church doors. I pushed in, and the sight within was a striking one. The building was naturally very dark, and darker still from the time of evening; the black drapery and the wax candles lighting up one—only one—side altar. All over the rush matting of the church were men kneeling in prayer, or women sitting in the usual posture of Spanish women in church. Every seat was crowded, while up and down the aisles and nave passed a quiet, orderly crowd, not one member of which failed to sprinkle himself, on entering and leaving the church, with "agua bendita," the blessed or holy water. No service was going on, nor were priests or penitents to be seen as I passed up to the side altar, round which, in a semicircle, on frames, just like an English bier, ready to be borne forth, were grouped the images, each one larger than life, of our Saviour, St. John, the Magdalene, St. Luke, the Virgin, and other saints.

Suddenly the crowd rising, surged towards the doors, and as I passed out into the quadrangle, two gentlemen, in plain English frock-coats and high hats, in deep mourning, attended by a single guard in uniform, passed swiftly into the church. As they entered, the brass band, which stood just within the portals of the church, commenced a low, wailing,

melancholy air, and every voice was hushed. This announced the advent of the Governor and one of the alcaldes of the town, who, when the Government at Madrid is favourably disposed towards the Established Church, invariably follow, in their official capacity, the processions, and attend the chief misas of their Church.

"When will the procession move forth?" I asked of a Spanish miner, slightly known to me, who played the cornet-à-piston in the band. He waved his hand towards the sun, now (it was nearly seven) sinking to rest, like a small golden ball, and said, "At set of sun." As the sun sank below, or to the level of the horizon, shedding a ray of parting glory over the rocky, purple moorland, and making the distant Sierra look quite blue and sombre, the band struck up the Dead March in "Saul," and eight men, barefooted, in long robes of sackcloth, girdled around the waist with a knotted cord of esparto-grass, in which was stuck a small black cross, each one bearing a huge wax candle in his left hand, staggered down the church steps, bearing on their shoulders the image of the Saviour.

Each one of these men was masked, that is, his head was swathed in the same sackcloth, with two small slits, intended for eye-holes, but which seemed not always to be over the eyes. The image of Christ was slightly above the size of life. He was in a sitting posture, the tears flowing from His eyes. His dress was a simple dark-violet velvet cloak, with girdle. His legs were bare. His head was leaning on His left hand, His right pointing over the crowds. On His feet were sandals of esparto-grass, as they seemed to me. The men bearing their Lord moved forward

about fifty yards, and planted Him upon the ground; while a crowd of fifty men, also in sackcloth, walking, taper in hand, two and two, barefooted as the rest, formed behind the image, the band playing, in repetition, stave after stave of the Dead March.

As the image was planted upon the stone-flags, about two hundred of the people—I need hardly add that I was amongst the number—fell down upon their knees in mute adoration. I only caught one whisper behind me, "The German cura (clergyman) goes on his knees too," from a knot of Spanish miners, who, according to their various temperaments, religious ideas, and education, stood, crouched, or knelt just behind me.

A man, barefooted, robed in black calico—such it seemed to me—of the coarsest kind, descended from the church door, and putting to his mouth a long trumpet—also covered with black of the same material—blew three or four steady, prolonged, discordant blasts upon the instrument.

In a moment, the front bearers shouldered the image of Christ, and the long line of "penitentes," or "humildes,"—for so the train of men in sackcloth are called,—marched forward with slow and solemn step. Every voice was hushed, every eye was fixed on the church doors whence the rest of the procession would come.

Although it was only set of sun, every one of the humildes, or penitentes, had lighted his wax or tallow candle, the length of these being, for the most part, about three feet, according to my measurement of one with which I was entrusted.

Then, from the church doors, the procession began to march forth. Next to the image of the Saviour,

"the Christ of us all" (for so we call Him here), came a banner of purple velvet, borne by two men (penitentes), with candles, in the midst of which banner hung a really beautifully painted picture of Christ, fainting beneath His Cross, and weeping, His tears bedewing the rough ground.

Then, walking two and two, as usual, barefooted, and masked as the others, came ten or twelve other penitentes, or humildes; then came the Magdalen—"the nearest to her suffering Lord who had done so great things for her," as an artisan remarked to me. The Magdalen also was in a sitting posture, robed in a long drab cloak, her head between her hands, evidently weeping.

I turned round to my left, away from the procession filing out of the church doors, and a more striking sight it has never been my lot to behold. Right down the slanting, unpaved, uneven street, now crammed with thousands, moved the forefront of the long procession, the candles showing quite sickly and wan against the glow of the even yet sinking sun, the dark images standing out in bold relief against the steely-blue sky—the long line of pale sackcloth dividing the orderly but eager crowd.

Then came the image of the Virgin, robed in black velvet, bordered with spangles of gold, the costly garment she wore being new, and valued at £130 of English money. At sight of the Virgin, the patroness of the town from which I write, every knee was upon the earth—every eye, to my view, was hidden between the hands.

Then came, walking two abreast, some ten or twelve more penitentes, in the same coarse attire, of drab colour; then came St. John, partly robed in scarlet—

I know not why; and then, St. Luke. A long train of penitentes followed, all carrying lighted candles; then came the brass band, playing a mournful and stately refrain; then the priests, robed in black and white, one only being robed in dark purple; more penitentes; and then, with uncovered and bended head, dressed in decent black, the four chief officers of the town, walking abreast, and one more smaller image.

So they moved on, in a long, winding procession, down the narrow street of the Carneceria (flesh market), and right across the market square, or plaza, from which every tent, every mark of those that bought and sold, had been removed, leaving a bare, dusty quadrangle.

Every shop was shut, every window was crowded with ladies and gentlemen viewing the procession, all of whom were bareheaded. I followed in the wake of the long, sickly train of torches amid hundreds of others. Up one rough street and down another, for two weary hours, we wended our way; everywhere the procession was received with respect; everywhere the way was cleared for its approach.

At nine the procession, still attended by hundreds, returned to the dark and silent church; the images were disposed around the one dimly-lit altar; the crowds dispersed, each one, reverently and orderly, going to his own home.

In Spain, I have ever been struck and deeply impressed with the orderly conduct, the courteous bearing, of all those who attend any religious ceremony. There is no pushing, no jostling, as in England—all is quiet, sober, decent.

So ended Wednesday in Holy Week—whether religiously observed or no, I am not to say. What I

may say is, that it was observed in an orderly, an uncommon, and a striking manner.

And nearly all those composing the crowd were miners, and persons of still lower, even of the lowest, rank.

Let me pause for a moment here, in my description of La Semana Santa in the Black Country of Spain. Not one ribald word, not one profound jest, met my ears; but a friend, who was present, told me that on his pointing to the image of St. John, and saying "Who is that?" a Spanish bystander said, with a ribald laugh, "Juan Ingles," *i. e.*, "John the Englishman"—in other words, "John Bull."

The same observer told me—and he is a man of the highest honour and veracity—that when he remarked to one of the crowd, "This is a beautiful procession," the answer was, "Buena, pero no vale la pene"; *i. e.*, "Good, but not worth the trouble!"

To me, however, the attitude of the crowd seemed the attitude of reverent and attentive worshippers. They surprised me by their orderly demeanour and reverence, rough miners as they were.

The next remark I would make is this. The humildes, or penitentes, as they are called, are of the people—miners, artisans, peasants, and a few gentlemen. They wear this rough sackcloth, they walk barefooted, they buy this dress out of their own earnings, and they pay six reals (1*s.* 6*d.* English money) to be allowed to walk in the processions. Is not this a great mark of faith—of a simple and childish faith, if you like, but still of faith?

We are now at the morning of Holy Thursday; the same fierce sun is smiting down, the same rainless wind is blowing. At 6·30, nominally, the pro-

cession was to start from the same church, and I went to attend it. The images, the crowds, the dresses of the priests, were the same; but this time all the penitentes were robed in black gaberdines, tied round the waist with coarse knotted ropes of esparto-grass instead of sackcloth. They wore, each one, a high peaked cap, called "caperuza," a word denoting the cowl of a monk with a peak. These caps, the peak of which was in many cases two feet high above the head, were of a coarse black calico, similar to the lining used for coats, &c., in England. Most of these men, who were the same with the sackcloth-clad men of the previous night, were also barefooted; but this night—and to the end of the Semana Santa—no more masks to the faces were worn by them. In much the same order as before the procession moved forth; but the effect of all these penitentes, in their black gaberdines, and lighted candles and bare feet, was most striking. But, above all this, every one of these men, or nearly every one, wore, lightly thrown upon his caperuza, a crown of thorns (on Good Friday no one of these penitentes was without it)—a crown about three inches broad, of what seemed to me wreathed and entwined twigs of the thorny barberry tree. And not only were all these men, who had sinned and come thus to make atonement, clad in this costume, but hundreds upon hundreds of the children of the lower, middle, and upper classes were clad in the same costume, and followed the procession, taper in hand.

One little boy thus clad, the son of a Spanish doctor well known to me, came to me, and said, "My taper is very heavy. Hold it for me, señor."

Clad in black, then, and crowned with thorns, the

procession walked round the town on Thursday night; but, as they started, a novel feature presented itself. I heard the blare of a strange trumpet, the rattle of a muffled kettle-drum; and twelve men, in buskins, short leather tunics of buff colour, and with steel helmets, quietly joined the procession as it started, falling in just behind the image of the Saviour. Each one carried a dagger in his belt, a huge battle-axe he swayed high above his head. "Who are these?" said I to a Spanish pitman, who stood beside me. "The Jewish soldiers, who destroyed our Christ," was his answer, promptly and readily given. He meant the Roman soldiers.

To the rattle of the soldier's kettle-drum, and the same grand music of the Dead March, once more we went around the town,—down steep hill, threading low alleys, up principal streets, returning at nine to the church from which we had started.

One custom of the Holy Week should be here noticed. These humildes, or penitentes, are men who have openly sinned, and desire to join in this procession barefoot as an act of humiliation. As soon as the procession has dispersed, they take handfuls of flowers, and, going to the windows of the houses around, they knock for an audience, of course pulling the black cowl over their faces before so doing. They proffer the flowers to some girl they care for, and, as she cannot see them, Spanish etiquette votes it quite allowable for her to converse with them at the barred window. Then they return, next day, to another procession or no, just as they will. The reason of this proceeding is as follows. Each penitente has been a peccador, a sinner, and, as such, is unworthy of the society of women who are pure and good; but,

having walked once barefoot and in sackcloth, and once in mourning gaberdine, he considers that he has, as it were, paid his dues to God and his Church, and is free to love and be loved again.

On Thursday night a Spanish gentleman came in to chat for an hour with me. Our talk was all of "La Semana Santa" and its processions, and I said to him, "Will you not come with me to-morrow to the early service?"—"No, señor," was his answer; "the service is at 5·30, with its sermon, and, as all the penitentes have been sitting up all night, the church will be thronged, and the people, some of them, tipsy, and excited, and noisy." I said no more, but, at five on the morning of Good Friday, I rose, dressed, and, with my trusty Manchegan miner (my servant, who carried a huge iron bar for protection), I hastened to the Church of San Francisco. The morning was bitterly cold, but the clear, steely-blue of the heavens gave no sign of rain; outside the church was a crowd of some two thousand people of the lower class. The most noticeable feature in this crowd was the troops of penitentes, dressed in their high-peaked black caps, gaberdines, and sandaled feet. To-day, each one carried on his shoulder a black-stained cross of wood, about four feet long.

The crowd was surging in and out of the church doors. I pushed my way in. The sermon was being preached, in short but emphatic sentences, to the crowd that came and went up the narrow aisle. No one sat, no one stayed long, for were there not thousands waiting outside? I passed up to the pulpit with the crowd, and what I heard of the sermon was eminently good. It was delivered in short, jerky, emphatic sentences, like proverbs, so that each person might

carry away something to profit him. "Your sins have condemned you, have they not? Lay them, with the heavy cross, upon the back of your Jesus."—"Are you so happy that you need no more happiness? Come to Him who takes away the load and gives peace to all." And then, carried by the crowd, I passed out.

At 6·30 the crowd had become dense, the sermon was over. The procession came forth, in the chill early morn, in much the same order as on the preceding days. Just as it started, I heard once more the "rub-a-dub, rub-a-dub," of kettle-drums, and the Roman soldiers hurried up a bye-street and silently joined in the procession.

Too weary to follow the procession in its long and winding march, I went home to breakfast. My servant put on the table a scanty meal, and said,—"Muy mal dia hoy" (a bad day this). I said,—"Yes, a bad day for food, but a good day for us all."—"Si, señor," said she; "Jesus muy hermoso" (Yes, sir; Jesus was very beautiful). She too, then, had seen the procession! A hasty breakfast and I hurried out, for was not the "Crucifixion en el Campo" (Crucifixion in the country) to take place, some half a mile off, at 7·30? To the usual spot I went, a little plain of rocky, dusty, treeless ground, half a mile outside the town. On the ground where, in former years, the Christ had been crucified, stood a crowd of about six to eight hundred persons, of the mining class. All were waiting, like myself, to see, as had been the custom, the Crucifixion acted out. We waited for half-an-hour; at last the cry was raised, "No Crucifixion this year." In a moment the crowd had dispersed, and we were all hurrying to the

church of San Francisco, to which the procession would return. I stood, with the alcalde of the town and the governor (thanks to their courtesy to "the stranger"), in a little balcony above the church doors reserved for "officiales," and, headed by the image of the Christ, crowned with thorns and bleeding great drops of blood, the procession came to the doors of the church. I looked down and around, and the sea of eager, anxious, upturned faces, as the Christ was put upon a raised platform just beneath me, was indeed striking. There and then the ceremony of "selling the Lord" was gone through. (Be it remarked, on each day is acted out some one act in the last days of the Saviour.) The money was paid from one hand into another. All eyes—and there were at least four thousand pairs, I shall never forget that sea of faces—were fixed upon Him who was sold. As the last piece was paid, the Saviour's right hand went up slowly above the assembled crowd, as though in mute appeal against the treachery, and then, from the lips of four thousand of that assembled multitude, went up to Heaven and to God the fierce, earnest, faithful cry, "Agua, agua!" (water, water!) This was the miners' united prayer for rain! Once more, the Saviour raised His hand—once more went up to the steely sky, now growing blue and hot, the impassioned cry, "Agua, agua!"

All was over for the present. The man-servant (a miner) of an Englishman resident here said,—"I saw the clouds begin to gather the moment Jesus put up His hand." And so it was! Ere five o'clock on Friday night a slight shower had fallen, with the wind; the clouds had gathered, and hung, as a cloud of mist, upon the clear horizon.

One more procession moved out ere the rain commenced that evening, and from one and all there went up to heaven, as they threaded the thronging streets, the "saeta" (Latin, *sagitta*), or ejaculatory prayer, like an arrow—shorter even than the ejaculatory prayer of the Gospel, "Agua, agua!"

The body of Christ—the dead Christ—under a glass case, was carried then. It was taken to the church, and reared up aloft, guarded by two angels. No man, even a dying man, I was told, could receive the Holy Sacrament from that hour until the Resurrection morn.

On Friday night late, I strolled down with a friend to the church to see the Roman soldiers keeping vigil and guard over the body of their Lord. We were a few minutes too late. The doors were closed; but, within the church, shrilly as the wind whistled around its antique buttresses, we could hear the measured tramp of the Roman soldiers keeping watch over the body of their Lord. To my mind recurred, as I stood at the chill corner of the street, the words, "Ye have a watch; make it as sure as ye can." So ended the "Watch-night" in my mining town.

Saturday morning dawned. Thank God it dawned as a day of clouds and of thick darkness! The rain poured down in tropical torrents, and each uneducated Spaniard said, "The Lord brought it when He moved His hand."

A few guns were fired off, a few explosions of dynamite took place in the public streets,—evidences of a ceremony which is called here "shooting Judas," akin to that of the Mexicans and other nations, who, even from their ships in the docks of the Thames, flog and drown the traitor Judas. Hundreds of

lambs, to be killed for the Easter feast, passed my door, the rain the while falling fast. One and all, we thanked God for that rain.

One word, and I have done. It is often objected to these processions that they give rise to a scene of lawlessness and disorder. True, they have done so in past years, of late time especially. Until a few years since, in this very town, each one of the penitentes used to carry a skull. Many used to join the procession tipsy, and, at the end, they would fight with the very skulls they carried. This, to my knowledge, has been. But it need not be. And, with a population so ignorant, so wholly uneducated as that of the Spanish interior, is not the procession and the acting a good way—nay, under present circumstances, is it not the only way—of bringing before vine-dresser, and water-carrier, and miner the great truths of Jesus Christ and Him crucified? At any rate, I saw many eyes, and those not women's eyes, wet with tears.

CHAPTER XI.

GOOD FRIDAY AT BAEZA.

Baeza is a cathedral town of the Spanish interior, with a population of some fifteen thousand souls. It is situated just outside the confines of the great lead mining district which has Linares for its centre, and untouched by the wave of commerce and busy modern life which breaks upon the latter. It keeps up its old traditions, its strict Catholic observances, its isolation, and tranquillity, and preserves still its ancient jealousy of the bustling town of Linares.

Linares is the seat of commerce for this part of the Spanish interior, Baeza of tranquillity and refined Spanish ease.

"Baeza quiere pares,
Y no quiere Linares."

So runs the ancient refrain.

Above all things, in its services, and other religious rites and ceremonies, Baeza maintains a proud superiority over other towns of its size. So magnificent are its processions, that they take rank in Spain well-nigh beside those of Seville.

Perhaps the jealousy above referred to should hardly have been mentioned, so slight is it, more especially in the presence of the great doings of La Semana Santa—Holy Week: a kindly and unobtrusive jealousy, which time and increased inter-

course between the two towns are yearly softening,—a jealousy now no greater than that existing between "county families" and "business men" in England, of which populations these two towns, Baeza and Linares, are respectively the types.

Good Friday dawned upon the barren Campo with a chill east wind and a cloudless sky. Early in the morning, we, who were bent upon seeing the processions of Good Friday in Baeza, were in the saddle, for the ride from our humble cottage to that town was thirteen miles at least.

At 8·30, as we toiled up hill along the white, dusty road, the sun was beating down with almost tropical force. With head down and dripping flanks, our mules ambled along through a dry, scorching heat, with blinding clouds of granite dust, quite unknown at this season in the moist climate of England. But little did the two horsemen, who looked around from time to time upon the truly magnificent prospect, think of or care for dust and heat.

Below us, its naked banks showing all jagged and irregular against the morning sky, flowed the rapid, winding, yellow Guadalquivir, the tender green foliage of the oleanders which clothe its banks being hardly visible. Beyond it, across its winding valley, like wave upon wave, rose countless hills clothed with the stunted vine and the dusky olive, carrying one's gaze up to the sharp, blue, jagged outline of the Sierra Morena.

To our left, a dim yielding line, on the clear horizon, rose the snow-clad mountains of the Sierra Nevada. To our right, rose one huge pile of mountains, streaked with silver lines of snow, and apparently, seen through the clear atmosphere of this part of the Peninsula, so