

pure, cold spring water. Now, owing to the intense heat, water kept in any glass or common crockery vessel grows tepid and unpalatable; and, therefore, the whole of the water for drinking purposes is kept in the light-coloured, porous Andujar jarras, or small pitchers. These being porous, a free evaporation is continually going on, and the dish in which they stand is filled with the water that filters through their porous sides. Just on the same principle, I suppose, that to perspire freely cools the blood, so the constant filtration through the sides of these vessels keeps the water within as cold as snow on the hottest day. The blessing of these jarras can only be known by experience, and I can only wonder that some enterprising spirit has not long since taken a cargo to England for use during the summer months.

These jarras are brought in huge cases, filled with straw, on the back of mule or donkey, some millions being annually sold at the fair. In shape, they are not only useful, but frequently most graceful, being made after the style of the old Roman and Etruscan pottery-ware. They vary in price, according to size, style, and workmanship, from one penny up to four or five shillings. Some are made to stand as ornaments upon the table of Dives; some can be slung behind the cart of the farmer; some can be carried, by a tiny handle, by the miner on his way to work. The sight, when all adown one whole long street the ground is covered with these jarras, in piles five feet high, of every size and shape, is a most striking one. All the housewives of the pueblo are here, wrangling about prices, and laying in their store of jarras for twelve months (for, remember, no jarras, no jewellery, no books, can be bought in this town until

the fairs come again). We will say it is night; tiny oil-lamps, stuck here and there among the jarras, yield their dim light. There is no footfall heard, although thousands are thronging the street, for it is covered deep with chaff and straw; every now and then you see a space cleared, and, by the lurid glare of a fire on the ground, you see a cauldron of hissing hot oil, and three women and a man are plunging snake-like forms of flour and oil into the oil. These are the makers of the famous oil-cakes, called "bunuelos," which are in great demand at early morn and late evening. They are eaten hot, and, although rich and oily, are far from being unpalatable. Only look at that eager crowd of poor men and women waiting until the last made hissing batch of bunuelos has sufficiently cooled to allow of its being handled!

But, hark! one would hardly believe, in this town, secluded as it is, that at this late hour (for it is already past ten o'clock) one hears the whistle of an engine, and its snort and scream. Yet so it is. It comes from yonder dark entrance, from which falls one lurid strip of light on some grimed and eager faces. You push your way in, and are in the presence of gambling by steam!

Gambling surely has never before been brought to such rude perfection. Here is the engine, snorting and panting; in front stands the table, duly numbered, and parted into little plots. The gambling is conducted on this wise. A man chooses his favourite number on the table, and deposits on it whatever stake he purposes to risk; four or five balls are thrown into a sort of funnel by the master of the ceremonies, and one is instantly shot out upon the table, with a

shrill scream, by the power of the engine. If it be our hero's number borne upon the ball, he stands to win, whatever it be, that number of the piece of money he staked. The table is only numbered up to seven, so that a man staking a real can never win more than seven like pieces.

It was, when I saw it, a striking sight, this old, barn-like room, its screaming engine, its crowd of eager gamblers, chiefly miners, peasants, olive-dressers, and artisans of the lowest class.

Gambling and cruelty to animals are two of the vices sucked in with mother's milk in this country. The little child of three years old is led by its mother to try its luck for a cake, chavo in hand (the chavo is half a farthing), on the street roulette-table!

Immediately that the "Jug-Fair," as the English will persist in calling it, instead of by its own graceful title, "Feria de Jarras," is concluded (it lasts about a week), commences the fair general. The streets are covered over with a rough awning, and the booths are making a gorgeous show. The wholesale saddler, the wholesale jeweller, the knife-seller, the gun-maker, all have set up their stores, under booths of wood-work and canvas, or in some room of a private house or shop rented for the fair time, and a large amount of money changes hands. The stalls really make a beautiful show, and articles (as jewellery) of the value of twenty and even twenty-five pounds are bought. In fact, the whole town takes holiday, has saved up its money, and lays up a store of goods for the year. And, *mirabile dictu!* books can actually be bought!

To the general fair succeeds the horse, mule, bullock, and donkey fair. It is held on a sandy common outside the town walls, man and beast alike

lying upon the ground, or under some rudely-constructed tent, for the night—no great hardship in this rainless clime.

Here you will see mules of enormous height; indeed, they make a far finer show than does the horse-flesh. Here, too, you will be assailed by the musical voice, deep-brown face, and outstretched hand of the wandering gitana (gipsy), come from the steppes of her barren La Mancha, eager to cull a few pesetas by telling you your *suerte*, or fortune. Marvellous is the accuracy with which these women will tell you, positively, facts with which human agency could hardly have supplied them. Indeed, how they find out what they say is, and ever will be, a marvel and a mystery to me.

But the feature that strikes me most in the fairs is the contentment, nay, the delight of the Spaniards, rich and poor, with a little. This contentedness of spirit is one of the brightest spots in their character. See the teeming crowds of rich, and poor, and middle-class, passing and re-passing each other in the gorgeous, sheltered street! All are sober, kindly, willing to be pleased, very courteous. The nobleman, from his "palacio," can stop and congratulate his grocer on having just secured his pretty bride, and married her civilly as well as ecclesiastically,—thus escaping, possibly, some conscription to come. There is no jostling, no rudeness, no pride of place!

By the way, my mention, just above, of a palacio may convey a very erroneous idea of the dwelling-houses so styled. The old-fashioned palacio is well worthy of description. It is still found in the old townships of the interior.

A long, low building, of one story; the walls made

of huge lumps of stone, and of enormous thickness; the floor of the rooms raised about two feet above the ground; five huge windows, with massive iron gratings, along either side. Such is the *palacio*, beheld from without. Enter it, and you will find that the house consists of very large rooms, opening, with folding-doors, one into the other,—the dining-room into the drawing-room, and the drawing-room into the bed-room, and so on. The rooms are high and airy, but always kept darkened. Above the ceiling is the *camera*, or granary, and (poor things!) one or two rooms for the female servants, the men-servants sleeping in the rooms above the olive-press! On one side, the windows open into the street, on the other, into a tiny garden, with luxuriant grape-vines and orange-trees. At the end of the little paved garden (for no grass grows in *Andalucia*) stand the olive-yard and olive-presses, the tanks of water, and the lofty stables. Such is the Spanish palace, of a type now fast going out! Perhaps mention should be made of the kitchen, where the ancient cook sits, in a room without ornament of any sort or kind, tending listlessly her charcoal fire on the hearth, and listening to the monotonous “Pip-pip-it, Pip-pip-it” of the quails, of which little cages hang all round the room; and also the “sunken room,” as it is called, a room without a window, its floor sunk some three feet below the rest of the flooring, devoted entirely to the use of the mistress of the house in the burning, scorching heat and glare of the summer.

And now, as we leave my lady’s dark and dismal, but, in summer, delightful bed-chamber, let us follow the crowd that is streaming on towards the *Plaza de Toros*, or bull-ring.

The bull-fight forms a prominent part in the programme of the fair's delights. Without it no fair were perfect. So often has this wretched sport been described (and so accurately, by an enthusiast of great experience, in these very volumes), that I shall say but little of it. But, to see all that was to be seen, I entered the bull-ring.

Unquestionably, the red, gold, blue, and green, gold-spangled dresses of the several orders of bull-fighters, trailing their graceful scarfs about the dusty arena,—the tiers of thousands of bright dresses and eager faces, one above the other,—the whirling of countless fans,—the enlivening strains of music,—the serried line of lancers, or cuirassiers, in front of the alcalde's stall, all seen beneath a glowing August sun,—have a most exhilarating, exciting effect.

But the first scene completely sickened me. The horses were posted,—weedy, wretched screws, valued at £3 a piece, and fit only for the knacker's-yard; each poor animal was blindfolded, the gates opened, the bull blundered into the arena. At last he fixed upon the weedy grey mare which stood just beneath me. The poor brute, blindfolded and tightly reined in, tried to move as the bull closed with it; in a moment his horns were deep in the cartilage of the front leg, and the animal was hoisted into the air. Then the bull was pulled off, and a crimson stream flowed down the poor brute's weedy, white, tottering legs. Two men thrashed it into the middle of the arena; the bull charged it again, tearing its bowels out to the length of two feet, throwing man and horse to the ground, and then, with crimsoned horns and forehead, rushing madly at another horse. A more disgusting exhibition I

never have witnessed than the first act in the bull-fight.

In the second act, when the horses have been killed and dragged out, and the sand sprinkled over their blood, there is a real trial of skill, and real feats of surprising courage and agility are performed by the bull-fighters. But the bull-fight has degenerated; and, whereas formerly the great aim was to bring powerful and valuable horses into the ring, and to save them, by skilful horsemanship, from hurt or harm, now the savage joy seems to centre in seeing the horse—man's truest and noblest friend in the dumb creation—tortured, beaten, and dying, before the eyes of those whom all his life he has served, a lingering and cruel death. Commend me to shooting, hunting, fishing, but never again will I see the bull-fight!*

From the glitter and noise of the bull-ring we may wend our way at eve to some of the back-streets of our town, and gain admittance to a little house, whence comes the tinkling of the light guitar. Ask some of the rough and humble, but joyous and kindly women, to show you three of the dances of the lowest orders in Andalusia, and, although convulsed with laughter, they will do so. Dances rougher or more curious were most surely never conceived! Here is one (wholly unknown, I believe), called "El pim-plon." It is danced (?) by two women. Each one squats upon the floor at one end of the room; then they commence jumping past one another, and back again, clapping their hands, and singing "Muncho trabajo, Muncho trabajo" (much labour), as fast as

* By far the best account of a bull-fight that I have seen, is that contained in the *Daily News* of September 11th or 12th, 1874, from the Madrid Correspondent of that journal.

they can, unassisted by the hands, and preserving their sitting posture. The exercise is fatiguing, especially when the bystanders are roaring with laughter at their frog-like movements; the perspiration pours down their bronzed faces, but it is a *point d'honneur* not to be the first to give in!

That dance finished, and a drop of common wine, strongly smelling of the pig-skin, handed round, they will commence a dance still more extraordinary and graceless. It is called "Los manjos de cinco gidos," in the rude *patois* of La Mancha. Each woman clasps her clothes firmly beneath her feet with her hands, which are thus fully occupied, and, for decency's sake, cannot be moved. She then sits like a sack on the floor, gives a kind of shuffling jump, and rolls over on her back. She cannot, for decency's sake, move her hands, and so has a hard task, wherein consists all the fun of this extraordinary dance, to recover (literally) her seat! The last dance is called "El negrito." It is very similar to the "Fandango," the man and woman standing opposite to one another, holding up the fists, and dancing back to back and face to face, singing some words of love.

Haply, if you go to these back-streets and bye-streets at fair-time, you will see a black-eyed damsel daintily present some adoring swain with a small *calavaso*, or pumpkin. This is a privilege of the fair sex, and is a polite way of telling some lover that his attentions are no longer acceptable!

But rough, rude, and primitive as are the fairs in the secluded townships of the interior, it must not be imagined that they are at all so in the large towns, as Sevilla or Cadiz. At Sevilla the fair is, I am told, simply beautiful; and at Cadiz the August fair is, as

I can testify from personal observation, well worth a visit to that cheerful, joyous, sea-girt town to see.

It is held on the long Alameda, called "Las Delicias," and is only in its beauty at night. On one side of the long and imposing array of stalls, &c., the waters of the blue Atlantic are for ever lapping the stones. On the other side rises an avenue of trees and the fine barracks of the garrison.

Here, at night, for fourteen or fifteen days, is seen a truly delightful sight. Festoons of lamps of every size, shape, and colour, extending, perhaps, for nearly a quarter of a mile, meet the eye,—there were eleven thousand at the fair I witnessed; open-air theatres, bands of military music, stalls of all that is gay and sparkling, extended along the sea-wall; thousands of people wandered up and down, forgetting troubles, enjoying the cool sea-breeze from nine to twelve o'clock P.M., listening to sweet music discoursed by the three military bands, while their children danced to the strains upon platforms raised here and there. The lord met the peasant and the peasant the lord on equal terms here. There were no wine-shops, and no drunkenness was seen, the potatoes being chiefly ices and light "refrescos"!

And now I will conclude, with a few characteristic anecdotes of the autumn of 1874, what, I trust, has been a bright and joyous chapter for my readers. Although little felt at such large towns as Cadiz or Sevilla, yet the severe conscription, or "quinta," as it is called, put a damper on our last autumn fair in the interior.

Just before the fair, in August, 1874, the conscription was proclaimed. Men married by the Church only, and not by the civil authorities (the only excep-

tions being those who supported an aged parent), up to the age of thirty-four years, were liable to be drawn, the price of exemption being fixed at £50.

To my town, resistance to this severe, but, possibly, needful decree, being anticipated, came the Carbineros, to keep order. Their dark, serried line was drawn up daily outside the room where the lots were being drawn. One man, under the influence of liquor, said, while the lots were being drawn, "What babies you are to stand this!" and endeavoured to create a disturbance. The Carbineros were almost about to fire; but suddenly one of their officers appeared on the scene, a stout cudgel in his hand. He administered a sound thrashing, there and then, to the culprit, and sent him off to prison—so roughly are the lower classes threaped down and ill used at will by the Government officials in Spain at the present day!

This last quinta was badly arranged. Consumptive men, unfit for service, were drawn, and had to pay the £50. Men long since dead were drawn, and actually called for. In one case, the officers went to a house, and said, "Who is the master of this house?" On which the man's wife, a regular virago, said (and very truly), "I am." So she, too, was drawn!

Great dissatisfaction prevailed at this severe conscription. Many fled to the Sierra, saying, "If shoot we must, let us shoot boars, and not brothers." Others said, "If we are sent to the North, leaving our families, we will fire in the air!"

But, as a general rule, the poor Spaniards take all these things with singular complacency, and only a

short time since I sat until twelve o'clock at night beside a young, cheerful-looking miner, who was composedly smoking his cigarette with me in a neighbour's house, and listening to a blind man's guitar. As we parted he said, "For the last time, señor, we meet; at daybreak to-morrow I join the Madrid garrison. I am a conscript."

"And your four babes, and your wife?" said I.

"I leave them to God's care; it is His will, señor. Adios!"

CHAPTER VII.

ROBBERS OF THE SIERRA.

ONE morning my duties led me up to a mine some three miles distant from home. The September sun was then shedding down its fierce, leave-taking rays, literally scorching man, and beast, and tree, and parching the dusty, rock-strewn roads. Travelling, especially on foot, at mid-day was impossible, so I resolved to start at daybreak, and take breakfast at the mine.

While sitting in the darkened room of one of the mining captains, we were surprised by a grey beard suddenly appearing through the window, almost encircled, Bacchus-like, by the tendrils of the vine that trailed in profusion over it, and by an excited and quavering voice announcing that "Four men were lying in wait in the olives, and intended relieving some Englishman of his impedimenta on his way home."

The excellent doctor had just, on his Andalucian steed, passed by on his morning rounds, distributing his aid and skill or word of kindly sympathy at every lonely mine. For a wonder, his servant was not with him. I, too, had come up without Juan, my faithful little armed guard.

Unto which of us two did this startling message apply? I was safe, for I had, fortunately, not left the

mine; but the doctor—alas! the kind, good, excellent doctor—had gone.

At this moment, the black, bead-like eyes and sturdy little figure of Juan appeared at the door. He had heard of my starting alone, and had (with that real willingness to serve and help which forms the brightest spot in the kindly Spanish character) ridden up, with his trusty escopeta, to guard me home. We instantly despatched Juan to stop the doctor, if possible, and bid him wait for a guard. As ill luck would have it, Juan, though mounted, and with his Moorish gun slung at his saddle-bow, had forgotten, in his hurry, his badge, the brass-plate carried on the breast, bearing the name of the mine of which he is the guardian. Now, with his badge, any one would have trusted Juan, but, without that official badge, it must be owned that Juan looked rather a suspicious character.

No wonder, then, that when Juan rode up neck-and-neck with the doctor, and bade him "halt," the latter thought he had evil intentions. But when, further, Juan imperatively demanded that he should follow him, for safety's sake, the doctor absolutely believed he was going to be led into an ambuscade, and, with a loud "Caramba, hombre," rode straight away from his would-be guardian.

A Spaniard loves nothing so well as a joke, and when Juan appeared among us at our breakfast-table, and related how he had been taken for the robber, he could scarcely tell his tale for laughing. Indeed, this recklessness of human life, this indifference to the danger of a brother-man, when once the danger really presents itself, seems to be part and parcel of the character of the Spaniard of to-day.

Here were four violent men lying in wait,—men who, probably, had often committed deeds of violence before this,—men, probably, driven out from the haunts of their fellows either for their crimes, or who, perhaps, had left their several pueblos, or townships, in order to evade the quinta, or conscription, lying in wait in order to rob, and possibly ill treat, some hapless man walking home alone,—and yet the little Spanish guard could actually roar with laughter while his friend went on into danger!

Two guards, armed to the teeth, accompanied me home on that day. One was Juan, who observed, with a sardonic smile, that “his escopeta alone was sufficient for any four olive-lurkers”; the other, a man noted for his fearlessness in disarming fighting-men of their naked knives.

As we walked, we scanned the glades of dusky olives far and wide. Not one soul did we see or meet, save one poor man and woman, sweltering along behind their laden donkey, returning, with the provisions for a week, from the nearest town. The woman, looking at our arms, turned pale, put up her brown withered hands, and, pointing to her tiny lodge on the slope of the olive-clad hill, said, “Turn in, caballero, turn in hither, I pray thee, and take a draught of Val-de-Peñas for your journey.” I thanked her, and declined, and she dismissed us with the usual benison, “Vaya usted con Dios, y con la Virgen.”

The olive-groves, as they are, have no claim at all to be called groves. They offer no shelter from the sun, no concealment at all. They are simply slopes, planted with regular rows, about ten or more yards apart, of small, stunted trees, and, with a good glass,

a figure lying in the olives, unless beneath the shelter of the stone-walls which intersect them, would be seen at a considerable distance.

These four men, who would have robbed any hapless solitary stranger, were simple thieves, homeless fellows, living an out-of-door life, rifling hen-roosts, or robbing road-side ventas. They are not considered caballeros, or gentlemen, while the real bandits or robbers of the Sierra are admired, rather than disliked, by the Spanish peasantry, and considered rather in the light of heroes than otherwise.

Of such was composed the band of men who took captive an Englishman, very lately, in the neighbourhood of the mining town of La Carolina, in some of the wild and wooded passes that abut upon the Sierra Morena, where the stag and wild boar, and flashing trout-stream, overhung by ilex and chaparro, offer plenty of sport but little safety for the sportsman.

A minute account of this gentleman's capture appeared, from his own pen, in the *Times*, shortly after his release, on July 13th, 1874. It shall be here, in part, reprinted, together with the letters of the brigands demanding ransom for him, which are herewith appended, literally translated.

Here is Mr. Haselden's account of his capture:—

“ On the 3rd inst. I started on horseback from these mines to proceed to Carolina, accompanied by my foreman. After a ride of two miles along a narrow path, surrounded by thick bushes and brushwood, two men, armed with Remington carbines, suddenly stepped out into the path four yards in front of me, and ordered me to dismount. My attendant, who carried a gun, found himself attacked in the same way by three others. Seeing resistance was useless,