

men "half seas over"—in other words, men who had, as we should say by an euphemism unknown to the sober Spaniards, "had just one glass of wine." They met, and passed. "Vaya usted con Dios," said the one who first recognized his acquaintance. "Vaya usted con"—*Dios*, he was going to say, but a lurch toward the wall prevented the blasphemy.

Of course, it is nothing more for a tipsy Spaniard to use this salutation than for a tipsy Englishman to say to another, equally tipsy, "Good-bye," which means just the same thing but, by our corruption, the Divine name is lost; and the ludicrousity and blasphemy of two tipsy men saying to each other, in as many words, "God go with thee," did strike me at the time.

Little conversations with the suffering Spanish poor, who have deep feelings and great facility of expression, often form a close to my walks. Here is the sentiment of one who had suffered much and long. Is it not a strange mixture of trust with despair, of truth with absence of logic?—"God has tried hard to break my heart for these ten years past, but, thank God! He has not done it yet."

And now it is dinner-time.

Since writing the above, I have been to see a very fine "take" of fish, caught in the Straits of Gibraltar by hook and line, off the African coast deep-sea fisheries. They consisted chiefly of "pargos," weighing about 20 lb. each, all just come down from the boat, and of a bright lilac-pink. I find some of the fishers call them pardos, as written above. They are caught off the African coast, with a strong rope and iron hook. The others were corvinas, spoken of above. Those, however, that I have just seen from the Straits

were exactly, in appearance, like an English salmon; they weighed from 28 lb. to 35 lb., and were very plump and fat. Their length was from four to four-and-a-half feet; they were in colour a rich grey, showing brownish hue towards tail; fins, chocolate-brown. They are caught also with iron hook and strong cord in the deep-sea fisheries. Beside them lay a monster—I know not what to call it—a sea-reptile; a flat body, dirty-white colour; length, a little over five feet; breadth, a little over four feet at his broadest part; weight, 225 lb. His flappers are four in number, the largest covering nearly the whole of his sides; the two smaller, near the tail. His shape is a kind of half-way between a triangle and an oval—call it triangular without an angle. His mouth is enormous, like an oven, and with teeth; tail, shaped like that of a fish; belly and back, dirty-white. He was caught in the nets, eight miles off Cadiz. The poor fry and eat his flesh, but it is used chiefly for melting down for oil for street lamps. His skin, when dried, is used by carpenters to smooth mahogany. His name is “pardon,” and I must use his name in finishing this chapter, for I fear I shall have given you a nightmare. Pardon!

“Obispos” are a large flat reptile, like a toad. “Entones,” or entong, a small thick-built fish, like a carp. Let me add, that many of the names of fish above given are *not* dictionary words.

CHAPTER XVII.

SUNRISE ON A SPANISH WHARF—WINE-SHOPS—THE
NIGHT WATCHMAN'S REVERIE.

It is a trite, but how true a saying, "One-half the world does not know how the other half lives." And, when one comes face to face with the way in which the "other half" lives—when one sees the "other half,"—I mean that half which the world calls the less blessed half, as it is, in all its sufferings, all its struggles, all its pinches and privations, and sees it a labouring, enduring, contented, and often cheerful half,—how ashamed one is, or ought to be, of one's own thanklessness in the midst of unnumbered blessings!

Once, in an English curacy, I remember a striking instance of what I have just said. It was one of those "green Christmas times that make," as the old proverb says, "a full churchyard": there had been nothing but mild weather and rain. In my little parish, under the sweep of the Sussex Downs, I was walking swiftly home one night, buffeted about by the grey clouds of mild driving rain that the fierce but warm sou'-wester swept landwards from the sea, when a poor helpless aged woman asked me for a "trifle for a night's lodging." Curates are always supposed to be poor: it was Christmas-time, and I had just parted with my last sixpence at a lonely hamlet, where work was scarce; still, I could not leave my angel-stranger in the street, so I asked her to come with me to my lodgings. She

shambled along through the mud, with her streaming clothes and clouted boots, and we entered my little home. My gentle, thoughtful landlady had made my table ready; a plate of hot toast was standing in the fender; the kettle sang vociferously, as if impatient to be used; in front of the fire stood my slippers, backed by an easy chair.

To my surprise, my poor, worn, haggard companion, raised her dripping hands, and burst into tears, with the three simple words, "Oh, what luxury!"

That was the best Christmas sermon I ever heard, and the only one I have never forgotten! My rector preached, as he always did, a capital Christmas sermon; so did my fellow-curate, a Christchurch student, three days afterwards; but I was thinking the whole time of the short sermon.

At that time I never thought that I should ever stand shivering and wet on a Spanish wharf, at five o'clock in the morning, and not know where on earth to get a breakfast, just at Christmas time. Yet so it was: we tried to leave Cadiz for the interior by the 5 A.M. train, the morning was pitch-dark, and—we missed it!

The morning was bitterly cold—it was but half-past five—and the dew, which falls heavy and chill in these semi-tropical climes, was still falling, making the rough stones black and damp, as though rain had fallen, when I left the tiny "braseró" at the station, to wander, or rather stumble, along the dark, dripping quay of Cadiz harbour, to the steps where the little fishing-boats, "parejas" and "palangeros," discharge, at daybreak, their fishy freight.

It was dark as night; but at the steps, and under the tin awning of the Fish-Market, already I could

hear the busy hum of voices. The cold, too, and the damp were intense: they made one shiver and shake like an aspen leaf. Certainly, if men had to be here morning after morning, as they certainly had, while their more favoured brothers and sisters were comfortably ensconced beneath the bed-clothes, then "one half the world did *not* know how the other half lived."

All that I heard was the splash of distant oars, the hum of a few voices, the slow wave washing against the stones of the quay. Suddenly, I heard a friendly voice and felt a kind hand laid on my shoulder, and some one asked, in broken English, "What I was doing there, and whether he could help me." It was quite a relief, as a kind voice, either Divine or human, always is in any sort of darkness. It turned out that I had stumbled on an old boatman, to whom I had shown kindness some time before. "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days."

We together joined the throng of fish-sellers, boatmen, wharfingers, &c., who were huddled together on the quay. Presently one little light, then another, then a third, blazed out in the harbour; the poor fellows, who had slept on board their little boats, were beginning to heat their cup of coffee or chocolate.

Just before sunrise, when a faint gleam of half-light looked over the dark harbour, one boatman began his Andalusian ditty, with its wild, plaintive refrain, which must be heard to be realized and understood. The words were simply these, repeated over and over again:—

"Here am I,
 Who is going on board?
 Who is going on board?
 La, la, la, la, la, la, la, la!
 La, la, la, la, la, le!"

Then another and another voice took up the song, until the whole dark plashing bay was alive with the lights and the wild monotonous ditty of the Andaluzes.

We strolled down to the Pilot-house, an unpretending little building of wood, upon the wharf, and sauntered in. Two fine, manly-looking pilots were discussing politics, a cigarillo, and a cup of coffee. One lay fast asleep upon the rude settle of the room. As in the Pilot-tower at Dover, there are always a certain number of pilots here, night and day, ready, in any weather, at the boom of a gun by night, or the hoisting of a signal by day, to put off in their lateen-sail boat, which lies moored close at hand, to the aid of any vessel in distress or in need of guidance.

At 6:45 the sun rose, and the Eastern sky was truly beautiful; first, a few fleecy purple clouds, driven by the light "Levanti" wind, sailed into sight; then clouds of a more crimson hue; at last, a fleet of red and golden clouds separated in fleecy masses over the harbour; and this was the every-day sight they looked upon—black, dripping stones, groups of men muffled up in every variety of costume, rugs, pilot-coats, jackets; many only with sandals or unbleached leather slippers tied with thongs round their feet; Municipal Guards, in yellow and purple-striped cap, huge capes, and clanking swords, keeping order, and about to weigh and levy tax upon the loads and amount of fish; carbineros, acting as Custom-House officials; large boats waiting to unload their freight of sweet batatas, fish, &c., into smaller ones, for the water was low; heaps of empty water-casks, ready to be filled with drinking-water for the town consumption, from the opposite port of Santa Maria.

You know how particular the Spaniard is about his water; here in Cadiz, the bringing of drinking-water seven and a half miles by sea, in huge water-boats, is a recognized trade of itself, the Cadiz water not being considered wholesome! These, and a whole string of dock labourers of all provinces, from the sturdy Guipuzcoan to the volatile Andaluz, streaming down to the wharf, were the sights the morning sun rose upon; it was so raw, so dark, so dreary!

The moment the first fleecy red cloud had risen over the sea, "day's harbinger," down came a busy eager, bargaining crowd, every two of whom carried between them a long pole; on this pole the basket, full of fish, was slung, and lifted from the tiny boat on to the wharf; it was then weighed and taxed by the cloaked and rapiered guards, cigar in mouth, and the pole, with the basket of fish slung on the middle, was carried off, with hasty, slipping steps on the shoulders of the two men, to the Fish-Market.

But what a noise, what a pushing, what a hurry there was to secure this little "job," as an English labourer would call it!

No one who has not witnessed it would believe how motley is the group on a Spanish wharf; truly it is more a scene for the pencil of Frith than for the pen of an unknown writer, be he ever so "ready a scribe."

Spanish infantry soldiers, with cotton comforters rolled round their necks, looking sad and dragged were stepping into the little wet boat that plied to the Malaga steamer, just getting her steam up a mile out to sea; Moorish and Jewish slipper-merchants, the former wearing the distinctive red, the latter the black, fez; Valencian peasants, in their canvas shirt,

and trousers to match, tied round the waist with common cord ; Portuguese fishers, whose *rasca* lay hard by, in bright yellow serge shirts, brown trousers, and knee-boots ; one or two English sailors and marines from the man-o'-war in the harbour ; peasants from La Mancha, in their usual fur cap, huge *faja*, and clumsy dark serge dress ; these, with hundred other nondescripts, made up the crowd who thus sought their bread upon the dripping wharf year after year.

I said to my kindly companion, as we wandered from group to group,—“What a time it is since you have been to see me at our lodgings.”

“Well,” said he with true Spanish tact and refinement, “you told me you had not been treated fairly by your landlord, and were going to complain about it ; as you were both of you my friends, I thought I had better keep away.”

“Ah, well,” said I, “after all I said nothing about it.”

“So best : you may both of you be in the *cemeterio* before a week is over, and it is better to enter the next world as friends.”

This was good morality for a Spanish wharf. It recalled to my mind a striking narrative that I had heard but a few months before. Two young men of great talent, were, some forty years ago, both elected to Fellowships in a well-known college at Cambridge ; in examination, they were well-nigh equal, but necessarily some little precedence was accorded to the one above the other ; a jealousy arose and for months existed between them, and to use a common phrase, they were not friends. Within twelve months from the date of their election both men had gone to their long home,—both spirits had

entered that realm where earth's best honours avail nothing,—both bodies slept calmly and close together beneath the same stone within the College walls. So true is it that “Man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain.”

After this reverie, inspired by the damp and cold, and the touching words of my unlettered and unpretending companion, we went into one of the many little wood-built wine-shops, which, prettily painted outside, and sparkling inside with bottles of many hues, shapes, and size, adorn the wharfs of many of the Spanish harbours.

In common with the many on the wharf, we went in thither for a cup of hot coffee; and a first-rate cup of coffee it was, with a good dash of *aguardiente* in it. I never had anything in the shape of drink that warmed me more; and the price of each cup, sugar and *aguardiente* included, was only half a real, *i. e.*, five farthings. This is the breakfast of the Spanish labourer; at eleven o'clock he will have a good hunk of bread and some fruit or lard; but until eleven or twelve he takes nothing but this! A stream of dock-labourers, *guardias*, boatmen, &c., were drinking off voraciously these little cups of smoking coffee! It is perfectly marvellous on how little support a Spanish labourer will work, and, what is more, work well; he scarcely ever tastes meat. Fried fish, when he can get it; *garbanzos* (a sort of pea), melons, bread, coffee, *gazpacho* (a kind of bread and salad, with vinegar), sweet *batatas*, tomatoes fried in oil, *berengenas* (a kind of egg plant) boiled in oil,—on such sustenance as this the dock labourer will lift heavy weights, week after week the soldier will march!

In severe walking in Spain I have noticed this, that the air, from its crisp, exhilarating nature, and freedom from damp, makes the step light and springy, and that until you sit down to rest you feel no fatigue; also, I have noticed, that shortness of breath is not at all common in Spain, probably from the same reason—the peculiar dryness of the air. Even in walking up-hill one seldom needs to stop to recover breath; and perhaps it may be owing to his climate that the Spaniard can work so well upon so little sustenance.

At about seven the sun and sky were lovely; the Fish-Market thronged with a noisy, quarrelling, bargaining crowd. First among those to come to buy was a priest in full canonicals: he looked poor and careworn, offered money for several different kinds of fish, and, at last, poor fellow, contented himself with carrying off, in the ample folds of his flowing sable dress, a handful or two of “almejas” (mussels)!

The two fish that struck me most—they were but just carried in—were the “atung,” a huge fish, something like a large salmon in shape, but more clumsy, and of a dull red colour outside; when cut in slices for sale, the flesh looks like a raw beefsteak, and is sold at about one real and a half per pound. I measured one monster of this order, and found the weight was 300 lb.; length, five feet eight inches; girth, something enormous. These are caught in nets off the coast of Rota.

The other that caught my eye was the “safio,” a kind of conger-eel.—I believe it is sometimes called “congrío”: this was a fish about five feet long; they are caught in great plenty off the Lighthouse, and, being very cheap, are much eaten by the poor.

The atun, throughout the winter, is packed up and sent in large quantities to the towns of the interior, where, especially among the miners of the wild lead district lying under the Sierra de Jaën, its solid flesh is a great favourite. It is said to be a coarse fish; but no one could tell the difference between a slice of sturgeon and one of the much-despised atun. I have lived upon it for days in the interior, and found it more nourishing and lighter of digestion than meat.

Looking at the wealth of fish, the wealth of rich fruit and vegetables, including the piles of olives and oranges, and the wealth of native wine, I could not refrain from saying to my companion, "Spain ought to be a rich country."

"Yes," said he, "our country is the finest in the world, Señor; but our governors are not good or wise. Caballeros (gentlemen) broke my boat, and I cannot recover any money for the loss, because I am poor. Let me go to England for justice, to Spain for beauty of climate; but I would not, all the same, leave Spain for your country: a wet Sunday in Liverpool is a desperate day to get through" (I quote his very words). "We all might be well off; the Spanish gentlemen have muchos dineros, pero poco inteligencia," *i. e.*, plenty of money, but little intelligence. I cannot endorse the last part of his speech: looking at the manly forms and intelligent faces of the Spaniards at any *table-d'hôte*, one only wonders why, as a nation, they do so little.

I said to him, "You talk pretty freely about men and things."

"Not often, Señor; no flies enter the shut mouth."

These last words are a very old Spanish "refran,"

or proverb—a good proverb to be remembered and acted upon, not only in Spain!

“And now,” said my good-natured companion, “I shall give you a breakfast, as, at this early hour, you cannot get one for yourself.”

He took us to a Spanish wine-shop of the better sort: and as Spanish *ventas*, like English beer-shops, are a national institution, it may interest some who read these pages to hear a little about them.

There are two prominent houses for travellers in Spain, the “*fonda*,” or hotel, and the “*venta*,” or wine-shop, although there are others, as the “*posada*” and the “*parador*.” The *fonda* is like an English hotel in so far as the host provides meat, drink, and lodging for his guests; but the brick floors, white-washed walls, and, in the towns of the interior, utter absence of chests of drawers, arm-chairs, baths, and the like necessaries, give one no idea of repose or comfort.

The “*venta*” originally meant a small wine-shop, often with a stable attached, on lonely roads or in out-of-the-way villages; but the term now applies, so far as the writer of these pages can understand, to any wine-shop of the lower class in town or country. The ordinary road-side *venta* is a square, flat-roofed cottage, built of loose stones, standing on a bit of waste land; it is littered round with straw (the remnants of the beasts’ provender), and has a well and drinking-trough in front. The dreariness, the loneliness, and the general air of dirt, laziness and discomfort about these places chiefly strike one. Some are half in ruins! Over the door of each hangs the usual little “bush,” or bunch of dried brushwood, the only sign of a Spanish wine-shop, from which comes the proverb—“Good wine needs no bush.”

A curtain, heavy, dark-coloured, and dirty, hangs over the entrance; you push it aside, and find yourself in a small, low room, almost dark, with a man or woman standing behind a common deal counter; there may be a settle or one or two stools in the little shop. The faint, sickly smell of the Val-de-Peñas, or black Catalan wine, and the fragrance of the aniseed and mint (used for the aguardiente), enter into your nostrils. Two or three huge barrels of wine are in tap, and of these common wines of the country you can buy one quart for fourpence-halfpenny; but the wines taste strongly of the pig-skins in which they have been preserved, and are often drugged. Before mine host stands a tray full of tiny glasses, the "cañas" of the lower orders in Spain, and two huge coloured basins, of massive delf, in which to wash the glasses. There is, as a rule, no accommodation for travellers, save the floor or the stable, at these places.

"Bal-de-Peñas, blanco y tinto; y otros vinos y licores; aguardiente blanco," &c.—so runs the inscription over the town ventas; the bush alone is seen on the outside of those in the country. Those in the town often consist of only one small room on the ground-floor, the rest of the house being let to other lodgers.

The chief trade of these places is in the rough red heavy wines that the Spanish labourer rejoices in—the aguardiente that warms his heart, and sometimes fried-fish, cold, and "buñuelos," a kind of cake, fried in oil, and sold constantly in the streets of the interior.

It was a good and large venta that to which my humble friend conducted us; consisting of a counter, behind which stood some dozen large barrels of vino

Catalan, and a very large, square, stone-flagged room, open to the skylight at the top of the house. All round the room were little square "stalls," dark—and cold, too, at that hour of the morning—each one forming a small private room for dinners, something like the little retreats around the walls of a City chop-house, but more private, each having high wooden walls, and a door, fastening inside.

He ran down to the wharf, and brought up a glorious plate of fried whiting, smoking hot, and a bunch of leeks, which mine host of the *venta* washed, and brought in with three smoking cups of coffee and *aguardiente*. The place was somewhat dirty, and sundry cigar ashes, and a general smell of stale tobacco, told a tale of last night's festivity, but we were hungry, and enjoyed our breakfast.

And certainly I never knew any English gentleman play his part as the master of an entertainment better than did our rude and simple friend. A poor, unlettered, ignorant Spanish boatman, he yet had the manners of a thorough gentleman, and did with grace the honours of the homely table. He and I repaired to the public-room, to smoke a cigarette and drink a *caña* of *vino de Jerez*. I wanted to pay for our humble repast, but my poor but warmhearted friend could not hear of it. "No, señor; you are my guest, and I am your host."

How often, among the very poorest, does one meet with a refinement of manners, of speech, and of conduct, to which what are called the higher classes are strangers; How often does one meet with unseen, unknown, unrewarded acts of Christian love among those who make no profession of religion, and whom this false world brands as therefore irre-

ligious! How often? Why, surely, constantly, constantly.

Not without reason, did our Divine Master say, "There are last that shall be first."

No man more delicate about the little social refinements above mentioned than the Spaniard; offer to pay him for some little service which he had proffered freely, and he will draw back with hauteur. No man, again, better fitted to play the part of an entertainer than the Spanish poor man. If he has only a scrap of bread, painted lard, and an onion (a common meal among the very poor), he will say, if you pass him as he commences his humble meal, "Guste usted comer?" (*i.e.*, "Will you not dine with me?") and he will mean it, and entertain you right gracefully.

The courtesy of all classes in Spain is quite refreshing to one newly come from England, and it is a courtesy that springs, and can only spring from real and natural refinement of feeling.

No man, again, so exceedingly jealous of his dignity, so much attached to his office, and so proud of it, as the poor Spaniard when put into any official position; he lives for and in his official capacity alone.

He is Municipal Guard! see with what dignity he trails his sword after him in the crowded streets, with what authority he quells a disturbance, or how full of importance he is, and how pleased to aid, if you apply to him, in a difficulty; with what gusto does he march his prisoner through the streets!

He is guard of some public gardens: only attempt to pluck a flower without his leave, and he will not let you off very easily; but appeal to him as the official, and he will immediately grant you the favour you require.

Flatter a Spaniard about his official dignity, recognize his authority, and he will be your friend for ever.

A striking and very characteristic instance of this jealousy of office came, a few weeks since, under my notice. Owing to a night alarm, I had found it needful one night to fire a shot in the air from my bed-room window over the heads of some miscreants. The next night my door was fiercely assailed by the "sereno," or night-watchman, who came to demand an explanation of my firing a shot on his beat—an act which he evidently seemed to consider a personal affront. I suppose he thought that such an action on my part was a tacit impeachment of his capacity for preserving order.

There is a little country village in the heart of one of the Midland Counties in England: it is a land of stiff clay soil, where are grown the finest, richest crops of golden corn and large mangold wurzel,—where nothing is spoken of so much as the weather and the crops, alike in the comfortable farm-house or the modest cottage,—a land where the old brown smock-frock of the peasantry still lingers on, and men work on one farm, and make it their boast that they have worked, for well-nigh a lifetime, and take almost as much pride in the produce of the farm on which they work as though it were their own,—a land, too, it is where Wesleyan Methodism has one of its firmest strongholds, and where the Prayer-meeting and the Camp-meeting still form the poor labourers' Sunday's dissipation.

In Sussex the average number of agricultural labourers attending any place of worship would not be, I fancy, more than two out of every six; in the

county of which I now speak the majority of the peasantry, of more fervent spirit than their stolid Sussex Saxon brethren, find that the religious exercise of going twice to church, and then to meeting in the evening, edifies them, and they go.

One evening I was summoned from my little cottage, in the village above described, to the bed-side of an aged agricultural labourer in a hamlet a mile or so away. It was a chilly, but refreshing and beautiful evening in late autumn: the sober hues of the autumnal evening were gathering slowly over the peaceful landscape; the peasants, in their allotment grounds over which I passed, were slowly (their farm-work done) digging up with fork and prong their winter's store of potatoes, and housing them safely in the field; the grass was already wet with dew, as the October sun sank to rest; the partridge scared by my footfall, whirred away on rapid wing from his seat in the stubbles; ever and anon about the fields rose up the slow smoke of the fires of burning weeds, the aromatic scent hanging heavily upon the damp evening air.

It was a scene—how different from those from among which I now write!—that told of peace, contentment, and security. There might be, and doubtless was, a black side to even this peaceful scene, as Mr. Arch could tell us, but on the surface all seemed contentment and security. When does it ever do to look too far below the surface?

I entered the little cottage of the suffering man. His hands were clasped in prayer, his open Bible lay upon his lowly bed; by his side stood a bottle of eau-de-Cologne and one of red port wine, the gift of the generous shepherdess (the Rector's wife) of the