

reward thee," reminding one of the words, "The Lord reward him according to his works," or "God give you and your wife health for ever." If you do not intend to give, do not say no, that offends the Spanish temperament, but say, "Perdone usted por Dios, amigo," "Pardon me, for God's sake, friend," reminding one of the words of gentle remonstrance, "Friend, I do thee no wrong."

In this porch (I am now relating only what has befallen myself) you may see, as I myself saw but the other day, the counter-type of the "certain poor widow, who threw into the treasury two mites, which make a farthing." This was what I saw. It was at a church on the outskirts of the town of Jerez. There was a dark little vestibule to the church, only separated from the noisy street by a heavy curtain. Inside that vestibule were two or three alms-boxes; over one the inscription, "Para los niños espositos" (the foundlings); over another, "Divina pastora," which means, I presume, the Virgin; over a third, "Para el culto Divino" (for public worship in churches). Inside the church, exposed to the gaze of the worshippers, were alms-boxes for the same purpose. Thus, a giver obviously had his choice of "doing his alms before men," or "not letting his left hand know what his right hand did." As I stood for a moment in this little vestibule, only lit by one tiny wax taper burning before the altar of the Virgin in the wall, in came a sailor lad, about twenty years of age. He just peeped into the church, on whose "estera," or carpet of esparto-grass, many were kneeling; then drew back, as if shrinking from their gaze. He looked at the titles of the three alms-boxes; then selected that "For Divine Worship," and dropped

in some small copper coins, his "widow's mite"; knelt for one moment in the dark vestibule before the altar, and passed out into the street unobserved. I was told that his action was probably a thank-offering for preservation from shipwreck.

Inside the church, too, you will notice that only a few who attend the Misa will take a prominent place; the majority will be found in the side aisles, away from the chief altar, hardly seen in the "dim religious light" of the church, and the Spaniards have some saying about this, which is founded on Our Lord's words,—“When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and, when thou hast shut the door, pray.” As we pass outside the town walls we come to the several patches of ground, each with a boundary line of stones around it, and now deep in barley or wheat straw. Across and around lads are driving the “wooden instruments” (1 Chron. xxi. 23), drawn by donkeys, to thrash the corn, and huge oxen are treading it out; but you will see, in every case, that the ox is “sin bozal”—*i. e.*, the “unmuzzled ox” (Deut. xxv. 4). These oxen, in size, fat, and weight, are enormous. At night, when their work is done, they will be seen standing at the edge of the floors, and eating the rich provision littered around them, quite surprising you by their bulk and sleekness.

It was a right royal present that Ornan the Jebusite offered to David,—“The oxen for burnt-offerings, and the threshing instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat-offering; I give it all.”

These “threshing instruments” are, in appearance, like a wooden frame-work, with wooden spikes like those of an English harrow. I know not how to describe them better.

There is another Scriptural expression, "The King of Syria had destroyed them, and had made them like the dust by threshing" (2 Kings xiii. 7). Surely this word "dust" should be chaff. The Spanish straw is powdered by the threshing, and is like chaff, but even smaller. It is the only provender for the Andalucian horse, and, with a handful of barley (which takes the place of oats), is his "feed" for each day. The imagery here, then, if my theory is correct, is that of the chaff, which is not only broken up, but is so light as to be driven by the wind.

When once the crops are gathered in, the campo is left to itself, and nowhere will you see more plainly the fulfilment of the primæval curse than here in Spain. Field upon field is covered with a dense crop of thistles, looking quite spectral and skeleton-like. They are all withered, without one trace of green, and look almost like a crop of some sort, so thick do they stand, and so tall are they. Some are nine, ten, and even twelve feet high.

Other plants grace the campo, but all of the same hard, prickly sort. Such are the small-leaved holly, which grows in the interstices of rock and stone, with its tiny, half-brown, half-green, prickly leaf, called by the peasantry of La Mancha "chaparra," a word answering to our "bramble-bush"; the "abrojo," or small, prickly thistle; and the cardo. The thistle, however, alluded to above as covering wide tracts of country, is called "pincho" in the desolate steppes of La Mancha. It is of two kinds—"blanco" and "lanudo" (woolly).

These hard leaves, apparently without juice or sap, cover the campo, and I never ride across it without

thinking of the truth of the words, "Thorns also and thistles shall the earth bring forth" (Gen. iii. 18).

A walk in the interior of Spain is one of the best commentaries conceivable in that marvellous chapter in the Bible, the eighth of Deuteronomy.

It would be, were there more of the "fountains and depths" therein spoken, a "good land," with its rich ferruginous red soil, and its heat that forces vegetation on with tropical power.

In the eighth verse it is said of the Promised Land that it is "a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil, olive, and honey"; or better, "a land of olive-tree of oil."

Early in January, every ruddy, dusty slope, that you have long trodden with weary feet, thinking it could never be productive, puts on its robe of rich, deep green—not the light, vernal green of English corn-fields, but a darker and richer green; and when you examine the crop, you will find that a part is wheat, but the greater part by far is barley and broad beans, the *sevada* and *habas* of the country, the two staple commodities for man and beast. Here, every poor man, every beggar, has his beast; if he can live, the beast can live, for both eat plenty of the barley and the beans. In every garden stand two or three old fig-trees, under whose leafy foliage is the old Moorish "noria," or well, being slowly turned by an aged mule to irrigate the garden; and in June every poor man will have his handful of *brevas*, large black figs, full of saccharine matter, and considered most nourishing. They are, in the interior of Spain, of very great size; but the finest are to be seen in the fruit market at Lisbon, one of the most picturesque and gaudy scenes in the world, and well worthy—I

know no sight more worthy—of the pencil of Frith or Phillip; the fruit in such profusion, and of such luscious hues, the costumes so varied, the races of those who come to sell, judging by their dress and features, so manifold.

Englishmen think oftentimes that there is no nourishment in fruit. If they could only come out here and see the thousands upon thousands who have nothing, day after day, but fruit and bread, they would say with the poor Spaniard, "Bread is good; but with fruit it is palatable and supporting."

When one wanders along the streets of the interior in October, one sees the *criadas*, or servants, of the great houses carrying, two and two, huge (to use an English phrase) clothes-baskets piled with enormous pomegranates. Over the walls, too, and in the gardens—aye, more, in groves exactly like our English orchards—the pomegranate-trees hang and flourish: their rich fruit, with its bright yellow rind, if not picked in time, bursts open, showing the rich deep crimson-lake colour of its flesh. Thousands of the poor live on pomegranates (we call them "*granadas*" here) and bread; and the juice, luscious, sweet, and yet leaving an appetizing bitter on the palate, is considered a valuable tonic by the Spanish "*medicos*," and also ranks high among the uncultured and uneducated, yet clever, old women of the *Campo*.

And as to the "*olive-tree of oil*" and the "*honey*" in the interior, your every-day walk is through groves of olive-trees. You walk from one township to another, you pass old Moorish wells, and grey crumbling walls, and gardens of melons, and gourds, and aromatic herbs; but these you soon pass from, and you find yourself, to use a Spanish expression, "among the

olives." The olive, the grey-leaved, the nutritious olive, is a short, stunted, glaucous-leaved tree, about fifteen or twenty feet high, with many stems. For miles and miles in the interior every slope of rich, red soil, covered with a loose coarse grass, is simply crowned with these dusky, stunted little trees. Most unobtrusive, they yet give life, and employment, and sustenance to thousands.

I had to walk one Sunday a journey of three miles, and my path was "through the olives." It was a lovely evening in January, the bright spring sun—for January in Spain is spring quite as much as our English March or April—was flooding with yellow light every hill-top and olive-crested slope. The olive-groves are called sometimes in Scripture "olive-yards," and the plantations of vines "vineyards"; and people narrow their ideas, and think of an English yard, and the dimensions of an English garden. But the "yard" is this—one or two square miles of hill and dale, covered with olive-trees, each planted about fourteen yards from the other, and enclosed in a high and solid, but crumbling and broken stone wall, with a door here and there. In the midst of these olives—you can hardly call them olive-groves, for that implies shelter and a forest-glade, and the stunted olives give absolutely no shade at all, or very little, to the passing traveller—stands the lonely, forlorn stone house of the olive-dresser. It is a small square house, built of massive stones, with a flat roof; two stone pillars stand in the front of the one door, with a trellice-work of rotten wood over them; leaning against the wall of the house, over this trellice-work, creeps and hangs the vine, all dead and sapless now, but, seen in summer, simply one mass

of green leaves and clusters of veritable grapes of Eshcol! In these homes of the olive-dresser are only two windows, both barred with iron, and without glass, as is the case in all the poorer houses of the interior.

This is the olive-dresser's home; and constantly you will see the master of the estate riding round "his olives," on his mettled Andalucian steed, and then, after marking one or two worthless trees, he will ride up to the door, and say, "Such and such an olive has no berries, 'Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?'" These words, once in the mouth of our Divine Master, are common in the mouth of the Spaniard of the present day. He has no mercy. Looking down from his horse, at the end of his rare visit, he will say to the olive-dresser, "Cut it down"; and the poor dresser will say,—because, surely, he has watched and tended the tree, and feels an interest in it, and hopes for it, and believes in it,—“Master, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it, and if it bear fruit, well, and if not, after that”—but not till after that—“thou shalt cut it down.”

It takes twenty years to make an olive-tree fully fruitful; it takes more than twenty years, surely, to make a man fully fruitful! The fig-tree, like the olive, is not fruitful for many years.

Is not the parallel complete, beautiful, and striking?

In the 9th verse of the 8th chapter of Deuteronomy it is written: "A land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass" (*i. e.* copper).

Lift up your eyes, and look at the prospect before and behind you! In the background, looking like fleecy, but well-defined snowy clouds, are the mountains of the Sierra that overlooks Granada; their white, snow-covered sides and peaks absolutely run and melt

into the deep-blue evening sky! Beautiful they are!—no sight more beautiful than a range of distant snow-capped hills (a real Sierra Nevada) seen under the sun of a winter day in Spain. But we, you and I, are in a working world; and in front of us rise some fifteen or twenty high brick or stone chimneys: these are the chimneys of the mines, of the mineral mines, lying right under and along the Sierra Morena!

Lead and silver, in small quantities with the lead, are found in profuse abundance in the Sierra Morena and also copper and iron—not in the valleys, but in the hills; indeed, in some places, as at Belmès, a township of this Sierra, the copper and iron and coal mines, although little worked, are, perhaps, some of the richest in the world.

The quicksilver-mines of Almaden, a town on the boundary-line between Andalusia and Estremadura, giving employment throughout the winter to some three or four thousand men; the copper-mines* of

* The following graphic description of the copper-mines of Rio Tinto is from the pen of a modern writer:—"The village is about a mile from the mines; the immediate approach is like a minor infernal region, the road being made of burnt ashes and escoriæ, and the walls of the houses being composed of lava-like dross. The inhabitants, haggard miners, creep about, fit denizens of such a place. . . . The view is striking from the hill; below lies the village, with its tinged river (Rio Tinto), a green coppery stream, which winds under a bank of firs, *la mesa de los pinos*, and through a cistus-clad valley. To the left rises the ragged copper-hill, wrapt in sulphureous wreaths of smoke, from the bowels of which the river flows out. . . . The stout miners who drive the iron wedges into the rock before blasting, work almost naked in a temperature of 80° Fahrenheit, their few clothes drenched with perspiration. The scene is gloomy, the air close and poisonous. Here and there figures, with lamps on their breasts, flit about, and disappear. . . . The copper is found in an iron pyrite, and yields about 5 per cent."

Rio Tinto, in Andalucia; the coal-mines of Arnao, a village in Leon; the iron-mines of Abando, near Bilbao,—these, with their teeming, well-paid populations and wealthy owners, if once visited, will give some idea of the truth of the Scriptural expression, “A land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig copper,” as denoting a people wealthy, well employed, and powerful.

In the barren, brown, dreary steppes of the province of La Mancha (probably so called from the Arabic *Manxa*, dry land), may be seen the plague of locusts. “When it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt . . . very grievous were they. . . . For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field.” Exod. x. 13, 14, 15.

To this day that scene is acted out in La Mancha and Estremadura. The east wind (called “*levante*” in parts of Spain, and dreaded for its unhealthiness) brings the locusts; like a dark cloud they sweep over the land, sparing no herb save the tomato. The poor Manchegan peasant will feed his pigs with them, but I believe will not eat them himself. Sometimes the soldiers are called in to wage war against and burn the swept-up heaps of the locusts.

Sometimes one of these swarms of locusts will settle on the plains of Andalucia that border on La Mancha, and eat all the herbs of the field, leaving a desolate wilderness in their train, as another wind sweeps them away.

Sometimes, too, they will come after the hail, the fall of which is sometimes a really serious matter: it sounds like the pattering of a shower of bullets upon the earth.

If you should enter some lowly house and ask for food, the patriarchal scene of Genesis xviii. 7. will be acted over again. No beef is killed, and no mutton can be hung for a single night during the greater part of the year; kids and fowls, however, are at hand, and a Spanish servant will go to the little flock of goats browsing hard by on the prickly aromatic herbs, and bring two kids under his arms, or a live fowl. In your presence he will feel whether it be tender or no, and then slay and cook it without more ado. "Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hastened to dress it." Here, too, is the flock, not driven, as in England, before the herdsman, but led by him. The several sheep or goats (for sheep and goats are here) know their master, and are known of him. And see two flocks of goats meet, and, lo! each flock follows its own herdsman, and "a stranger will they not follow." Here, too, comes a string of mules and horses, and round the neck of each leader is hung a bell (Zech. xiv. 20), and often an inscription on the collar by which it hangs. Here, too, is the maiden, her pitcher poised upon her head, going to fetch water from the purest spring. See how gracefully she carries it, her silver earrings tinkling as she goes. The constant form of address heard among the middle and lower classes, again, is "hombre" (man), "mujer" (woman), implying no disrespect, reminding one forcibly of our blessed Lord's words, — "Woman, what have I to do with thee?"

Or St. Peter's, — "Man, I know not what thou sayest."

Riding across the Campo, you will come to many gulleys, some dry, some with a little water trickling from stone to stone; and wherever these gulleys are, their course is marked by a fringe of trees and a carpet of rich green, looking like a little Paradise amid the desert of sand and thistles. Looking on such a scene, I have often felt the full beauty and graphic truth of that simile in the Bible,—“He shall be like a tree planted by the water-side”; and one understands the full force of the imagery of the inspired but unhappy seer in the Book of Numbers,—“How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side . . . and as cedar-trees beside the waters!”

The eagles flocking to the carcase; the hunted stag panting for the water-brooks; the young child and his mother riding on the ass, and father, staff in hand, following hard behind, journeying by night for some distant town; the heavens at mid-day “as brass”; the long lines of oxen drawing the plough; the oft-heard request, “Give me, I pray thee, a drop of water to drink, for I am thirsty”; the rose-pink oleanders (those lilies of the field) sleeping along the marshy brink of every stream; the wine-carrier with his huge leathern pigskin of wine; the gitano with his small bottle of pigskin for his journey; the treasure hid in the garden; the kiss (St. Luke vii. 45) so constantly given to your hand by any poor man whom you have served or helped; the seed falling on the rock or among the thorns,—all these sights and sounds the wanderer in Spain will daily see and hear.

But we must hurry home, every single stranger, rich or poor, saluting us with "Vaya usted con Dios" as we pass along. The sun, like a golden ball, is just sinking beneath the horizon, and in one quarter of an hour the pall of the evening will have fallen upon us. Truly "the night cometh," cometh in a moment, making walking or working impossible; the night "when no man can work."

CHAPTER XXIX.

A STRING OF SPANISH ANECDOTES.

My English friends have a somewhat exaggerated notion of the wit and the clever proverbs of Spain. They have often asked me to send them home a "string of anecdotes, and of proverbs common among us out here."

This is always a hard task, because "a string of anecdotes and proverbs" is a something that has no bottom to it unless the anecdotes partake of the marvellous and the proverbs be singularly clever.

However, I will brave criticism, and jot down a few particulars from my journal, which may, at least, serve to give English friends some idea of Spanish life and character. And I will do so the more readily, because more serious themes are so shortly to be entered upon in this work.

As to proverbs, I have not only heard but experienced some very true and shrewd ones. A few days since I was supping in the house of a friend. My chair was against the wall, and our kind host, hostess, and party were sitting in front of me, round the table. Contrary to my wont, I had (unhappily) told to one of the party what was voted a clever story some days before. Asked to repeat it, I refused; pressed still more, I refused again. My host rose, with carving-knife brandished. Instantly his daughter understood him, and readily quoted a well-known

Spanish proverb, "Entre la espada y la pared" (*Anglicè*, "For a man between the sword and the wall there is no refusal"). Of course I had to repeat in bad Spanish my bad story.

In Spain, as Spain now is, the proverb is one of frequent application. It is also a very old and trite one, used specially among the lower classes in cases of pecuniary need. I am not aware of any proverb in England so refined. We say, "The man was hard-up," or "up a tree"; the lowest Spaniard, when his friend has to sell off, will say, "Pobre, entre la espada y la pared, qué?"

A short time since, at the call of duty, I had to journey six miles by night, revolver in breast, ready cocked, in one of the most unsafe and badly-made roads of the interior. The journey was made in a springless mule-cart, with a kicking and obstinate mule. Several times we were shaken out of our seats; but in the journeys of the interior that is nothing at all. At last, however, down we went, and up again, like a tiny boat crossing one of the long swells of a south coast bar. I was thrown from my seat so roughly, that the finger I had twined in one of the iron rings of the cart was badly sprained (to this day I cannot make much use of it), and I was on my back in the cart. I said to the driver, "Señor, how long is this surf to continue?"—"Muy bien," was his quiet answer, as he smoked his shattered cigarillo (for he too had suffered), "a mule-cart journey is like life, all ups and downs; and, like life, we must bear it, and laugh it out." The proverb, "A mule-journey is like life," was, I found, one common among the muleteers of the interior. I give one more Spanish saying, for I cannot call it proverb. A friend

of mine fell in the road—fell heavily. Since he was not stabbed or shot, and no one could be blamed, several came to his assistance. One, in lifting him up, said,—“Si no lo cojo, se cae;” *i. e.*, “If he had not been lame, he would have fallen”—an equivalent to our English saying, that “Drunken men are never run over,” I suppose. The proverbs and sayings in the interior are so rough, and oftentimes so indecent, that I dismiss them for the present.

The Spaniards are much more unprincipled, but much more full of heart, than Englishmen. Hear two or three instances.

The other day I was staying in a seaport and barrack town. I was smoking my cigarillo up and down the sea-front, where the barracks are situated, and leaning over the sea-wall, listening to the mew of the sea-gulls, and the monotonous, but ever wild and beautiful, washing of the sea-waves against the bastions. The night was dark, the walk unlighted. Suddenly I heard the loud, almost hysterical weeping of some unhappy woman, and turning round, I saw a black figure flit across the road, and throw herself down against the sea-wall. “She could not have seen me,” thought I, “so it is no *ruse* to get money; besides, it is very late; she must be in trouble.” I went up to her, and asked her to stay her weeping for a moment, and let me try and help her.

Her story was very simple. Her husband was a private soldier, married before he was twenty-five, (which is against the Spanish law, as every man till twenty-five is supposed to be at the disposal of his country, his first wife!) and was ill in “El Hospital del Rey” (the Royal Hospital). She had nothing for herself, or for the babe in her arms, a tiny child, not

two months old. I pressed a few coppers into her hand; they were instantly restored to me. I asked why? She said, "Your coppers won't make my husband well." At last the poor, homeless, suffering creature took the money at my entreaty, and I got her up from her cold bed, and forced her to go and seek a lodging for herself and her babe.

Alas! this sound of woman's weeping is very common in Spain! A woman here shows her feelings, whether poor or rich, just as in England a woman, whether poor or rich, stifles her feelings. Constantly, when their begging has failed, or they have been robbed, or turned out upon the streets, one hears at night the suppressed sobs, or the loud, hysterical weeping of some unhappy sister. I must say here that, not once or twice, but constantly, when I have offered these poor suffering mothers money, they have absolutely refused to touch it, and let it fall upon the pavement.

One more instance of Spanish heart. I spoke to a Spanish boatman once about a suffering fellow-creature whom he knew, a woman, who was what we should call in England "taking on" about the loss of her mother. I asked him to calm her and help her. "Ah, Señor," said he, "what's the good? her grief is very natural (*muy natural*), and what is according to Nature must be right."

Yet one more instance of Spanish heart. I speak only of what I have seen. An English sailor came on shore; he had plenty of cash, he met with Spaniards, treated them all round, and was lying in the street dead-drunk himself. The Spaniards came back, took his purse out of his pocket, carried him to his home or bed, and in the morning restored him his