boys of seven and eight years old will stand at the corner of a street, where some poor donkey is tethered, and beat it mercilessly with an ashen staff, wielded with both hands, the passers-by never dreaming of interfering the while! So with the dog: he is beaten, not to correct and amend his faults, but simply to avenge the fault he has been guilty of.

The one pleasure, amounting to a passion, of all classes in this country is *gambling* of every sort. In the street, the cottage, the casino, the fair, are lotteries, pitch-farthing, cards, roulette-tables, and every sort of gaming, to be found.

So let me end. Passionate, but rarely revengeful; careless of others' lives, yet equally so of his own; more enduring and contented than courageous as a soldier; very generous of what he has; sober, but not very chaste; polite and kind, but not very truthful; cruel, and yet withal warm-hearted; not patriotic, yet very fond of his country; proud, and yet ready to serve and help,—the Spaniard has many noble qualities. But he needs education of heart and mind, moral as well as mental culture. That given him in greater abundance, he would be a noble friend and a by no means contemptible foe.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOME SORROWS OF THE POOR.

I MUST endeavour to bring to a close my chapter on the general view of Spanish life and character in the interior. I have sought to bring out vividly and impartially a true picture of Spanish life and manners, and to describe the state of some of these townships of the interior as it really is. I have taken you from the poor to the well-to-do; from the town to the country; from troubles to peacefulness. Let me gather up some details that still remain to make my picture as clear as I can.

Let me premise that it is almost with a feeling of sadness—at any rate, of depression—that I begin these chapters; for in them, to be truthful, I must give rather a gloomy background to the many bright traits in the character of these people, the reproduction of which has given me sincere pleasure. It may be that, like the Spaniard himself, one is too prone, under these bright and cloudless skies—where day after day reproduces itself only more bright and yet more bright than the last—to dwell upon the bright side, and forget what is equally true, yet far from bright or encouraging.

But, as our home poet has said, with touching simplicity,—

> "Shadow and shine is life, little Annie, flower and thorn;"

and one must walk at times through the shadow, and be content to grasp the thorn.

I have not sufficiently dwelt upon the low, the very low, state of morals among the higher classes; and the ignorance, the rudeness, the semi-civilized state of the masses. Let me speak of the latter first, for with *them* I am most at home. Ill-fed, ill-housed, ill-clothed, ill-taught, or rather *untaught*, and uncared-for—a hopeless, objectless being, feeling no responsibility for the present or the future. Such is the peasant of the interior, be he farm labourer, blacksmith, fruit-seller, water-carrier, gipsy, horse-dealer, or what he may. He seems to be unable to read, or write, or think, or love, or hope, or pray, or plan. With him there is no light. Into darkness, social, moral, religious, and intellectual, he is born as his heritage; in that darkness he spends, and in that darkness he is content to end his days. Come with me for a stroll—although *unarmed* a stroll is by no means a secure pleasure—into the campo, or wild country, and visit the hut of a friend of mine, a poor fruit-seller, and we will pass a few hours of one day with him. His little shanty stands alone near his dry, half-tilled garden; and you look in vain for a smiling village or a substantial farm or country house. His hut—let us call it "shanty"—stands alone amid the thistles, its poverty its best protection. It is formed of three walls of rude, unfashioned, unhewn stone, bound together with no mortar. You must stoop low to enter it; it is roofed with reeds from the Guadalquivir, or with brushwood from the steepes of the sierra; its door is a hurdle, laced with green brushwood and rushes, from the neighbouring bosque (coppice). There is one rough settle in the dark room, and on it lie the two "mantas," the use of which I explained in a former chapter. The floor is the earth and dust. Here

is the mistress, a knife stuck in her girdle. You must not look for beauty or tidiness in her wooden, mahogany-coloured face; and you wonder at her stride, like a man's, and her muscled arms, and rough voice. Yet, remember, she has to work very hard; and the Spanish old woman (madre) of the lower class is always a masculine-looking hag. She has no chair, but courteously apologizes for its absence, and throws down a "manta" on the floor for you to sit on. Suddenly, you hear at your ear the cackling of hens, the crowing of a cock; she sees, with ready Spanish perception, that you are puzzled, and pushes aside, not the bed linen, but the brushwood, and there, under the settle, is the "roost" full of poultry! There, too, is her little jarra of water, "agua clara," and the provisions for the scanty "comìa" (we drop the *d* in "comida" in the interior), the flat cake of coarse bread, and the melon, or the white grapes. She will tell you, with a woman's tact (though it is not, perhaps, strictly true), "We are all in the rough, for the winter rains are coming, and then we go to take a house" (*she means a quarter of a room*) "in the town." The little vineyard, or melon, or vegetable ground of this man is close to his house, and daily he takes his produce to the Plaza (market-square) of the adjoining towns. Just now he is taking his siesta, rolled in his manta in this room, too indolent to move. At sundown he trots behind his donkey, with its panniered sides well galled with "melones" or grapes; and we will follow him along the dusty track—we boast no roads—with his baggy canvas trousers, esparto-grass sandals, and huge knife stuck in his faja. About ten o'clock he arrives in the street, which, running out of the market, serves for stables for the beasts and

bed-room for the owners of these panniers of fruit. He loosens his pannier from his donkey's back, and lets the air get to the inside of the packet of fruit; then tethers his donkey to the side of the street, rolls himself up in his manta, lights his cigarillo, and falls fast asleep by his fruit. It is a strange sight to pass about midnight along these streets adjoining the fruit-market, —the rows of donkeys, the hundreds of sleeping forms, undistinguishable from the fruit and sacking, the fresh sickly damp smell of fruit hanging heavy on the air; and just beyond the Plaza, with its every tent now lying on the ground covering the fruit, and a tiny oil lamp burning faintly to show where the stall and the stall-keeper and the fruit are, all lying under the rough tent like a lot of half-empty sacks.

At 3·30 the market opens, and at four to five it is, in truth, a lively sight. From every house in the town comes a representative; and from every rich house a criada, her basket on her arm, to buy fruit, bread, and game (for there is little beef or mutton killed in the summer months) for the day's consumption. The little tents of the fruit vendors are of the most primitive and varied shapes, dirty canvas stuck in fantastic shapes upon one or more sticks; underneath their shade lie the heaps of glowing fruit, the red flame-coloured tomato, the red and yellow pomegranate, the purple fig, the yellow, or dark-green melon, the plum, the apple, and the grape, all in profuse abundance, all sold at the uniform rate of five farthings the pound!

The rich colours of the fruit, the chattering of those that buy and sell, the gaudy colours of dress of the people, with the tinkling of hundreds of mule and donkey bells, and the shouts of the muleteers, who can hardly pick their way through the eager throng,

—all these together make up a scene for an artist's pencil. I strolled down one day at five o'clock, when a column, 2,000 strong, of General Pavia's army had entered the town on the night preceding, and the Plaza was thronged, and stripped of all its luscious stores; but I shall never forget the sight: the uniforms of the soldiery, their shoeless sandalled feet, the bright fruit, and the fierce competition for it, in the early morning sunlight, formed a scene at once busy and beautiful.

Sunday, alas! though the "Domingo" (Lord's day), is the busiest day of all. Sunday, which brings rest to the tired millions in our own land, brings none to these. True, the bells are clashing and clanging all the day, but, save a few pious or frightened women, in many of these towns there is no congregation at all. On Sunday, bricklayers build, carpenters rend, and shops drive a roaring trade. To a certain, but *very small* extent, the "feast days" make up for the Sunday's rest. Thus, a devout man will say to his employers, "To-day is the festival of the saint after whom I was christened," and his holiday will at once be granted to him, and to some of his chief friends. Then, he can pray or confess in the morning, and have a feast in the afternoon.

Now for the closing scene in the life of the Spanish poor. Ill health and old age must come at last, and bread cannot be won any longer. He has no work-house or "parish pay" to look to, and so he must either beg his bread from door to door, as do many, or live on the grudging charity of relatives; or, as is often the case, he must be content, for the term that remains to him, to be a "dependent" of the master for whom he once worked, or of some charitable rich man. These masters, in the larger houses and "palacios" of the towns, are very kind to their old servants. At eight

or nine o'clock you will be surprised by observing crowds of these poor, worn, ragged creatures sitting inside the courtyard, and round the outer doors of some of the great ones, waiting for alms and food. Often I have been thus most forcibly reminded of the Parable of the Great Teacher, framed on this spectacle. Like the certain poor man, of whom He spoke, they are laid at the rich man's gate; like him, too, they desire only to eat of the crumbs which fall from his abundant table. There, too, you may often see the dogs—great, rough hounds kept for guards—passing up and down the string of sitting suppliants, and greeting with a lick or a kiss some old acquaintance!

Such, to its end, is the Spanish peasant's life. And is not the picture all too dull? No joys of education while away his time. I have never yet seen above three books read in the market, and they were hardly decent! No cottage home or peaceful village is his, where his weakening eyes may see his sons and daughters growing up around him. Hard, coarse fare, with hard lodging—this, without one ray of religious hope and light to lighten his darkness—is his hard and bitter lot.

Would you follow him one step further? There is a little, walled-in spot of sandy, rocky ground, some two miles outside the town from which I write—it is the cimenterio, where at last his bones are laid in peace, waiting for the touch of that Magic Wand which one day is to make all things new. I entered that sacred ground, a few nights since, for the first time. Much as I had heard of the beauty of burial yards abroad, I looked at least for decency and cleanliness. The first thing that struck me, as I opened the gate and took off my hat, was the sickly, putrid smell, that well-nigh

caused me to vomit. Close before me, on a rough-hewn and unlettered stone, stood two tiny coffins; the lids (always of glass) were not screwed down. I pushed one aside, and there, beautiful even in death, were the rich tresses and pink cheeks of a child of some eight summers. The other was the coffin of an infant. Both bodies were wrapped, as is customary here, in coloured silver-paper—for the clothes are *burnt* invariably, as they might be a temptation to some dishonest person to exhume the coffin from its shallow grave. Just then I looked down, and lo! the whole place was covered with human bones, lying on the surface. The evening breeze rose and fell, coming from the distant Sierra Morena, and wafted to my feet—it *clung around* my feet—a light, loose mass of long and tangled hair. Stooping down to look, I saw that there was plenty of it about; on the gravestones, and around the dry thistles, which grew in abundance, it twined and clung. There was no grass, no turf—only sand, and rocks peeping out. This, then, was the end of life's brief drama here: the rude end of a still ruder life! I saw no tombstones worthy of the name. I asked the old gravedigger, when he would bury the two little coffins? "Mañana" (to-morrow), he answered; "but the place is so full, I hardly know where to scrape a hole."

Just then I heard the strains of martial music coming near. A civil funeral came, heralded by its band; and as the shades of evening fell, one more coffin was deposited on the rude blocks of stone, to wait until the morrow's dawn.

CHAPTER IX.

MORE SORROWS OF THE POOR.

THE lot of the Spanish poor is not an enviable one. Nor will Spain be happy, or her masses religious, or ripe for that liberty for which, while as yet immature for it, they yearn so ardently, until education is made a compulsory matter throughout the length and breadth of the land. In Germany every parent is bound to send his child to school, for so many years, from the age of seven, unless he hand in a medical certificate to the effect that the child's health will not allow of his so doing. In England, the very land of National Schools, the same restriction, I believe, has lately been deemed advisable. Here, of all lands, it is absolutely indispensable. But, first, good schools must be formed. "Why," asked I of a parent, some few days since, "do not you send your three niños (young ones) to school?" —"So I did, for a time," was the answer, "until I discovered that they learned everything that they should not, and nothing that they should learn."

Another sad feature in Spanish life in the interior is the utter *absence of patriotism.* There seems to be spread abroad a general feeling of distrust and of questioning—"For what are we to fight?" "Why should we die?" There is no patriotic feeling among the lower, very little, properly so called, among the higher classes. With the lower classes, their whole object now seems to be to escape the "Quinta," or

conscription, held annually in every town. Let me give you a telling instance, which came to my own notice. A large town near to my present residence was required, at its country's urgent need, to furnish at once a levy of 150 men out of a population numbering more than 30,000—no very great tax, one would think, when a country is in the very throes of dissolution and dismemberment. Of those who were drawn, not more than fifty were found ready and willing to answer to the final call. Some escaped to the sierra; some, who had it in their power, escaped service by bribery, securing to themselves from the officials immunity from this threatened hardship on the ground of bad health and unfitness for military service.

The reason of all this dereliction of duty is possibly to be traced to the following facts;—First, that the people absolutely do not know whether the cause for which they are to fight is a righteous one; next, they do not know for what they are to fight, for to-morrow—so rapid are the "crises" here—may witness a complete change of policy, or a new Government; and again, the country is in so wretched a state, that the majority of those who think at all decide that their present position is one barely worth the sacrifice of taking up alms in its behalf; and, lastly, the Spanish soldier has "a hard time of it." Badly fed, badly clothed, badly paid, he yet endures much with cheerfulness and patience, often marching, with his sandalled or bare feet, twenty-five miles under the tropical sun; yet when brought up to the scratch he fights well. Of what avail, however, is his valour or his endurance? If the sun of the morrow should bring defeat or change of government, all his chance of pro-

motion or reward falls to the ground, and some beardless puppy may take the reward which a veteran has gained by many noble deeds, and fought for, or at least deserved, on many fields.

Some such causes as these, it seems to me, must be held to account for the present absence of patriotic feeling, for, in minor cases, the spirit of patriotism is seen to be present and alive. Some weeks since, in the fiery heat of summer, when the sierras offered a cool retreat for hundreds of the Intransigentes of the interior, a body of the more violent of the latter threatened to strike a blow at the existence—by sacking the strong-box—of a large English firm. No sooner did the unlettered Spanish *employés* of that company hear of the situation than a guard of some hundreds of them volunteered, without reward, to patrol night and day around the offices of the company. In this case, they had high wages and generous employers to fight for!

Then, as to the patriotic feeling of the higher classes in the interior, it is certainly at a very low ebb indeed. Bribes go about very freely; and, a few weeks since, were as freely received, to evade service!

As to *religion*, again, it is at a fearfully low ebb in the interior; and one naturally asks the question,—Why so? Is the fault to be found in the especial phase of Christianity grafted upon this people? Certainly no religious faith has ever been nursed more, and brought up, as it were, by hand, than that branch of the Catholic Church established in Spain. Up to a few short years ago, the clergy, as self-ordained teachers of this vast nation, had it (to use a trite saying) "all their own way." They were protected, during the sovereignty of Queen Isabella, more strictly

than any of her subjects; their rights, revenues, doctrines, were guarded with a jealousy that knew not where to stop.

An Englishman who, ignorantly, merely took off his hat, and did not dismount also from his horse, as the "Host" passed him in the street, was in this town dragged from his horse by order of the priests, and fined or imprisoned for the offence. And what work have the clergy done? What revolution have they brought about, fighting, as it were, under cover? What blessing have they brought about for their country? Simply nothing. True, the material they have had to work upon has been of the rudest kind, but *something* might have been done, if but little. Had the clergy merely exerted themselves to get a law passed making education compulsory, the good springing from such an act would have been boundless. But it was not so. Feeling all in their own hands, they were well content to rest on their oars, and think, fondly enough, that "to-morrow would be as this day, and still more abundant." The clergy of the State Church in England certainly, in their zeal for education, present a marked contrast to their brethren here, for they did buckle to work and educate their flocks by means of National and Sunday Schools. The clergy of the State Church in England, again, especially in our large towns, are now, in this their day, endeavouring to meet and satisfy, and not stifle, the inquiring spirit of the age in which their lot is cast. The clergy of the interior of Spain, though kind and good to their poor, have been content to stifle, or not acknowledge the existence of, such a spirit in their land. They, in the zenith of their power, simply sat still. And what has been the

result? Simple irreligion, or blank superstition. The "civil funeral" and the "civil christening," the empty churches, the covered heads of the men as the religious processions pass by, the cynical profession of many of the educated men, "I am a Protestant," which means, "*I belong to no Church at all*; I am a Doubter, or a Materialista,"—all these little things are evidences that the clergy knew not the days of their visitation, or that the faith they had to preach had not within it salt enough. Now, the position of the clergy in the interior is cruel indeed; their influence is on the wane, their incomes are cut down to nominal sums; many have been driven to lay aside their robes and seek their bread by other means; the poor—whom once they were glad generously to feed—are suffering from hunger, cold, and wretchedness.

A few nights since I stood with raised hat as the "Host" passed by, heralded by its many lamps of many colours; the viaticum was being carried to some dying Christian. Suddenly a drove of pigs came squeaking down a street close by; women in mute adoration were on their knees on the pavement, sightly and devoutly enough; men were divided into hats-on and hats-off, but the majority was of the latter class. The pigs charged the procession, and, to my horror, a loud and audible titter ran through the lantern-bearers, which became a horse-laugh in the mouths of the pig-drivers.

The picture, slight as it is, here drawn of religion is depressing indeed, you will say. But with the virtuous and the educated, the oft-repeated dictum of Señor Castelar has increasing force—"I turn from the uncertainty, the vanity of what is of human

invention in religion, to the example of Him who suffered to set me an example: that, I know, is true: it is abnegation of self: I strive, I pray, and, looking at Him, feel that grace will be given to follow His example."

As regards the *Laws and the Administration of Justice*, let me say a word. No laws are better adapted for her people in her present state than the laws of Spain, were they well administered. But, from judge down to constable, bribery and corruption prevail. "Why," said a friend of mine to a Spaniard who had been greatly wronged, "why do you not seek redress?"—"Because I have not got £40 to give to the judge."

There is this excuse, however, for the poor Spanish official. His Government gives him no remuneration, and expects everything of him; and so, the temptation being strong, and public feeling not at all sensitive, the official pockets his bribe and then administers "justice." Where bribery, absence of definite faith, and absence of education and patriotism, are found, one is not surprised to find a very lax state of domestic morals. All or most of these seem to me to proceed from the same cause, viz., that the doctrine of personal responsibility for words and actions—a doctrine so needful to insure a right line of conduct—has not been sufficiently inculcated.

After an expression of dissatisfaction at the state of religious and political feeling around, I heard with profound interest the following remark, lately made:—"From this chaos of doubt and haziness, and pulling down of religious faith, will come a Reformation for our country; a wave of simpler faith will break upon this land, and spread over its length and breadth."

This would not be contrary to historical precedent. And it would be a joyful sound—a Renaissance, a Reformation for the land! For now, men are going about seeking rest and light, and there is none; looking for a master spirit, and none appears to guide.

To finish with the topic from which I digressed—the laxity of domestic morals. The subject is painful, and one hard to speak upon. But it would seem that, as is the case too, I fear, in England, taken *en masse*, the standard of morality among the highest and wealthiest classes in the interior may be set down as very low; among the middle classes, respectable; among the lowest, low again. In the highest classes, their wealth and ease are their temptations; in the lowest, their want of education, bad accommodation, and poverty, lead them to sin. True was the saying of the wise—"Give me neither poverty nor riches." Among the two extremes alluded to, the marriage tie is too often but little thought of, and society does not bring its influence generally—as in England still is the case—to bear *against* the offender. There is no definite line drawn here.

Up to marriage, chastity is strictly observed; but afterwards, licence of conversation and deed reign and prevail very widely. Domestic life as in England is unknown; the husband seeks his own, the wife her own pleasure.

This state of society is doubtless very corrupt. But why dwell further on the dark side of the picture—a picture we shall find repeated in other lands than Spain? Rather let me speak of the cordiality, the kindness, the courtesy of the Spanish lady and gentleman to the stranger; of their generosity to their

dependents; of the thousands upon thousands of women, high and low, whose sweetness of disposition, nobleness of tone, purity and devotion to duty can only spring from their true, simple, unpretending faith in their Maker and His love.

What will be the future of this country—a country whose climate is enjoyable beyond measure, whose artificers yield in skill to those of few foreign countries, whose mineral wealth is undreamed of, whose people, uneducated as they are, are full of noble qualities—it is impossible to say.

But "Resurgam" is the motto hidden in every heart; and with the spread of religion and education, and with that alone, under God's blessing, Spain will cease to be the anomaly she is, and once more resume her place among the nations.

CHAPTER X.

SPANISH RECKLESSNESS.

BEFORE leaving the subject of the character of the Spaniard of the interior, it may be interesting to string together, without any attempt at *lucidus ordo*, a few incidents which either happened to myself, or to which I was a witness—I say interesting, because facts simply told cannot be gainsaid, and those who read can draw their own inferences as to the state of the country and people where those facts are acted out.

The carelessness of the Spaniard of the interior about human life and property is well-nigh incredible, and shows a state of civilization terribly low indeed. As regards human life, I was unhappily close to the spot where two of the most barbarous murders that can be conceived took place in the summer of this fiery year. In the first case, a poor itinerant tailor was returning from his rounds in the cool of the evening, with his two asses laden with his whole earthly wealth of cloth and handkerchiefs, and with him, as servants, two men, with one of whom he had previously been on ill terms. What occurred between the three will never be known, but at twelve o'clock at night the younger of his two companions, a lad of three-and-twenty, came in haste to the barracks of the Civil Guards in the nearest town, and said to the sentry, "I have come in great trepidation to inform you that my master has just been shot, and I have run