

places it is part of an old Spanish paved road with a stone ridge in the middle. The country is better peopled and better wooded than what we have past, and we frequently saw the Minho winding beautifully below us. At St. Juan de Corbo we stopped to eat. The church-yard wall is there covered with crosses, and there is the only house I have yet seen that reminded me of an English country seat. It belongs to Don Juan de Balcasas, an Hidalgo,* or son of Somebody, for a man of obscure family is thought to be son of Nobody at all! I was sitting very comfortably at my meal, on a sunny bank, when two pigs came up to me, shaking their tails like spaniels, and licked up the crumbs, and getting between my legs, put up their snouts for more; such familiarity have they learned from education. In about two hours afterwards we reached the mountains, from whence we looked back on Lugo, four leagues distant,

* In old books the un-compounded phrase frequently occurs. " Quelquier que dixere que soy villano y mal nacido, miente mil vezes; que yo soy muy buen cavallero y *bijo de algo*. *Historia de las Guerras Civiles de Granada*.

and the hills as far again beyond. It was noon, and the sun very hot; yet the beetles were flying about as in the evening in England. The country grew more beautiful, as we advanced; I have never seen scenes more lovely. We passed one of those mills, common in this country, with a horizontal wheel. I thought its effect finer than that of a perpendicular one, perhaps from not being accustomed to it, perhaps from the simplicity of the building, and its situation. It stood in a glen below the road, a low and little hut, upon a clear mountain stream; the hill rose steep and immediately behind.

We reached Marillas to dinner; a wretched venta, where they would light no fire to dress our fowls. The room we were in was at once a hay loft, a carpenter's shop, a tailor's shop, and a saw-pit, besides serving to accommodate travellers. We had been warned in the morning to take two days bread from Lugo, so that with our English beef and our English cheese, and procuring good

water and excellent wine, our fare was very good ; but, like true Trojans, we were obliged to eat our tables.

Immediately after dinner we entered upon the new road which wound upon the side of the mountains. As our day's journey was longer than usual, eight leagues and a half, owing to our halt of yesterday, we went the greater part of this stage by moonlight. A mountainous track is well adapted for moonlight by the boundedness of its scenery. We past the Puente del Corçul, a bridge over a glen connecting two mountains. It was now a scene of tranquil sublimity ; but in the wet season, or after the snows dissolve, the little stream of the glen must swell into a rough and rapid torrent. I do not know the height of the bridge, but it was very great. The road is continually on the edge of a precipitous descent, and yet no wall is erected. We were five hours going the three leagues to Lugares. There is a monumental cross by the door of the posada, and the women begged us

to take all the things out of the coach, lest they should be stolen.

Our room there was of a very ancient and buggy appearance, with true alehouse pictures of St. Michael and the Virgin. I like the familiarity of the people at these places. They address us with cheerfulness, and without any of that awkward silent submission which ought never to be paid by one human being to another. How often in England have I heard a tavern waiter cursed by some fellow who would never have dared to insult him, if his situation had permitted him to resent the insult. I have observed nothing of this in Spain. The people show civility, and expect to receive it. It has been said that no man was ever an *hero* to his Valet. Admitting for a moment that the word *hero* may convey a good meaning, I deny the assertion. Great minds are conspicuous in little actions, and these fall more under the inspection of domestics than of the world. Would you know the real character of a man, observe him when he speaks to a servant; mark his manners and the tone of his voice: watch

the countenance of the servant, and you can hardly be erroneous in your judgment.

The Spanish women are certainly great admirers of muslin. They were very earnest here with M. to sell them his neckcloth. Buy, however, they could not, to beg they were ashamed, and so the next morning they stole my uncle's. Josepha took hold of my hair, asked me how I wore it in England, and advised me never to tie it or wear powder. I tell you this for two reasons, as an example that such whose tastes are not vitiated, dislike the absurd custom of plastering the head with grease, and then covering it with dust; and to shew you the familiar manners of the people.

There is an entrenchment near Lugo, and another by St. Juan de Corbo. The fences in that part are walls of granite, and the stones so large that immense labour must have been necessary to pile them. The granite rocks, in the fields, were frequently surrounded by trees, and ornamental to the landscape. I saw some shrubs growing on one, where the soil must

probably have been placed by art, for I know not how it could have accumulated.

Manuel Ximenes, our Mayoral, awoke us at three this morning, to know what o'clock it was. We set off as usual soon after five. Not far from Lugares, half way down the mountain, opposite the road, is a natural bridge of rock. The rocks here are of schist. We were three hours ascending from Lugares, and that place lies high. You know I never ride when I can walk. The clouds wetted me as they passed along. I was fatigued, and when the body is wearied, the mind is seldom cheerful. In this mood I committed a sonnet :

Another mountain yet ! I thought this brow
 Had surely been the summit ; but they rise
 Hill above hill, amid the incumbent skies,
 And mock my labour. What a giddy height !
 The roar of yonder stream that foams below,
 Meets but at fits mine ear : ah me ! my sight
 Shrinks from this upward toil, and sore opprest,
 Sad I bethink me of my home of rest.
 Such is the lot of man. Up Life's steep road
 Painful he drags, beguiling the long way
 With many a vain thought on the future day,
 With PEACE to sojourn in her calm abode.
 Poor Fool of Hope ! that hour will never come
 Till TIME and CARE have led thee to the tomb.

The inhabitants of this peninsula are far advanced towards that period when all created beings shall fraternize. The muleteer sleeps by the side of his mule, the brotherly love of Sancho and Dapple may be seen in every hovel; and the horses, and the cows, and the cats, and the dogs, and the poultry, and the people, and the pigs, all inhabit the same apartment, not to mention three certain tribes of insects, for preserving of whom all travellers in Spain are but little obliged to Noah. The houses here are exactly like the representations I have seen of the huts in Kamschatka. The thatch reaches to the ground, and there is a hole left in it which serves for the inhabitants to go in and the smoke to go out. The thatch is blackened with smoke, and consequently no moss can grow there. We stopt at the village of Castro, our only halt for the day. There is only a venta there, while one of Florida Blanca's new posadas stands uninhabited the very next door. We were descending from half past nine to half past five in the evening. We left a ruined castle to our right, small indeed, but from its situation

very striking ; and soon after the iron works of Herrerias. The mountains are in parts cultivated, even to their summits ; at this season there is plenty of water, and there are trenches cut in the cultivated lands to preserve it. Oaks, alders, poplars, and chesnut trees, are numerous in the valleys ; and we saw the first vineyards. A lovely country, a paradise of nature : but the inhabitants are kept in ignorance and poverty, by the double despotism of their Church and State. I saw a woman carrying a heavy burthen of wood on her head, which she had cut herself, and spinning as she walked along ; a melancholy picture of industrious wretchedness.

The churches here have little balconies on the outside with skulls in them. It is well that we should be familiarized to the idea of death ; but instead of being presented to us ghastly and terrible, it should be rendered pleasant ; instead of dwelling on the decay of the body, we should be taught to contemplate the progression of the spirit.

Three people passed us with wens, and I puzzled myself in vainly attempting to account for the connection between wens and mountains. I saw a calf walk into one of the houses, pushing by a woman at the door with a coolness that marked him for one of the family. The bee-hives here are made of part of the trunk of a tree hollowed, about three feet high, and covered with a slate.

We are now at Villa Franca. Never did I see a town so beautiful as we approached; but when we entered,—Oh the elegant cleanliness of Drury Lane! There is an old palace opposite the posada, of the Duke of Alva, old and ruinous, and mean and melancholy as a parish workhouse in England. I stood for some time at the balcony, gazing at this place, where the most celebrated and most detestable of its possessors may perhaps have listened to the songs of Lope de Vega, perhaps have meditated massacres in Holland. The mournful degradation of the Dutch, as well as of the Spanish character, forcibly occurred to me, and I looked

on with, I trust, the prophetic eye of Hope, to the promised Brotherhood of Mankind, when Oppression and Commerce shall no longer render them miserable by making them vicious.

I have just heard from one of my fellow travellers, who has passed the road frequently, a melancholy tale of the daughter of the host here. She married a young man above her own rank ; he died, all that he possessed died with him, and the widow, left destitute with two very young children, is returned again to the miserable poverty and labour of a posada. Very soon after her husband's death an Irishman offered to take this woman into keeping. Her only reply was, " You say you love me, Sir, and yet you can insult me by this wicked offer !"

Tuesday, before day-light.
I have seen this widow. She cannot be more than two and twenty. Her two children were by her, the one an infant, the other about two

years old, deaf and dumb; they are beautiful children, though disfigured by dirt, and in rags. Her dress was black, and bad enough for her present situation; but the manners of one accustomed to better scenes were evident. She had white stockings, and shoes whose make discovered that shaping of the foot and ankle which peculiarly distinguishes the higher class from those who work for them. There is a liquid lustre in the full black eye of the Spanish women, of which you can have no idea; her face expressed a meek resignation to wretchedness. What must that man's heart have been made of, who could have insulted this woman? But man is a Beast, and an ugly Beast, and Monboddo libels the Ouran-outangs, by suspecting them to be of the same family.

Tuesday Evening.

We have advanced only four leagues to-day, for the old coach is laid up again. I have been thinking of the poor widow, perhaps I find it more easy to express my feelings in

poetry than in prose. Is it because my ideas adapt themselves to the dress they have usually worn ?

And does there then, TERESA, live a man
 Whose tongue unfaltering could to such foul thoughts
 Yield utterance ? Tempt thee to the hireling bed !
 Buy thee, TERESA, to another's arms !
 Thee, sufferer ! thee, forlorn and wretched one !
 Ere yet upon thy husband's grave the grass
 Was green ! oh ! is there one whose monstrous heart
 Could with insulted modesty's hot blush
 Make crimson the poor widow's woe-pale cheek !
 Was this thing of my species ? shaped in the mould
 Of man ? and fashioned to the outward show
 All human ? Did he move aloft and lift
 On high his lordly face ? and formed of flesh
 And blood like mine, meandering thro' his veins ?
 I blush for human nature ! and would fain
 Prove kindred with the brutes. She raised to Heaven
 Her dark eyes with a meek upbraiding look,
 And felt more keen her loss, and dropt a tear
 Of aggravated anguish. I almost
 Could murmur at my lot assigned by fate,
 And covet wealth, that from the bitter ills
 Of want I might secure thee, and provide
 Some safe asylum for thy little ones,
 And from the blasting wind of Poverty
 Shield their young opening reason. I would be
 Even as a brother to thee, sit by thee,
 And hear thee talk of days of happiness,
 How fast they fled, and of the joys of Youth

And Hope, now buried in the grave of Love!
 Oh I would listen to thy tale, and weep,
 And pour upon Affliction's bleeding wounds
 The balm of Pity. Sufferer, fare thee well!
 GOD be thy comforter, and from a world
 Of woe, release thee soon! I on my way
 Journeying remember thee, and think of *her*
 In distant England, grateful to that Power
 Who from the dark and tempest-roaring deep
 Preserved a life she renders doubly dear.

LETTER VI.

Wednesday, Dec. 23.

A young barber of Oviedo, travelling to Madrid to seek his fortune, has joined our party, and a very valuable acquisition he is. He waits on us, markets for us, assists us in cooking, shaves, bleeds, draws teeth, understands my Spanish, and has moreover one of the best physiognomies in Spain.

We found English plates every where till we reached Villa Franca. Our chocolate cups there were brought on a pewter plate, with a pewter cup fixed in the middle, to hold the earthen one. In this country we can get only white wine. The poor wear wooden shoes turned up at the toe like skaites, and with soles raised like the Devonshire clogs.

We left the new road at Carcabalos, a league from Villa Franca. Here, for the first time, I saw the mark of manorial boundaries, which would be no unmeaning emblem in France, it is a gibbet. We now entered upon a sandy, stoney plain; a little herbage grew on it, but M. tells me it is bare in summer, and swarming with immense grasshoppers. The plain is about three leagues in diameter, surrounded by high mountains, at the foot of which, over a grove of evergreen oaks, we saw the town of Ponferrada. Had I only seen Villa Franca and Ponferrada as we approached, without seeing or smelling either the streets or the inhabitants, I should have thought Spain a Paradise.

We found the posada pre-occupied by a Marquis and his retinue. A pleasant incident, for the axle-tree was damaged, and to proceed of course impossible. Luckily the Marquis departed, and here we are still detained. Opposite to our balcony is the house of some Hidalgo, with whom five ladies are just arrived

to dine in an open cart, drawn by oxen.* They wear their hair combed straight, parted on the forehead, and tied loosely in the middle behind. The simplicity of their dress and their equipage pleased me, and we looked at each other with mutual curiosity. Opposite our other balcony is a convent, and curiosity has crowded all its windows.

Day and night are we annoyed by the incessant noise of the mules; by night they are under us; we are only separated from the stable by planks laid across the beams,

“And sounds and stinks come mingled from below.”

* “I observed in this town (Piacenza) a notable piece of thriftiness used by the Gentlewomen, who make no scruple to be carried to their country-houses near the town, in coaches drawn by two cows yoked together; these will carry the Signora a pretty round trot unto her villa, they afford her also a dish of their milk, and after collation bring her home again at night without spending a penny.”

The Voyage of Italy by Richard Lassels, Gent. who travelled through Italy five times, as tutor to several of the English Nobility and Gentry. Paris, 1670.

By day the Mayoral is continually calling out to his mules: he gallops over the two first syllables of their name, and dwells upon the two last with a sound as slow and as wearying as the motion of his own carriage. “*Aquileia, Capitana, Gallega, malditas mulas!*” Then he consigns them to three hundred devils, the exact number they always swear by; calls them thieves, pickpockets, and concludes the climax of vituperation by “*alma de muerda,*” which is, being interpreted, the Soul of what the Laputan philosopher could never transmute again into bread and cheese. Sometimes he beats them furiously, and frequently flings a great stone at their heads.

They make the most beautiful counterpanes at Ponferrada that I ever saw, the threads are so disposed that the whole seems covered with fringe, or rather resembles the fleece of a Spanish sheep. The people appear very averse to a war with England. We had a good deal of conversation with a tradesman here, an intelligent man, who felt how the internal state of the country injured commerce.

There are many specimens of Moorish architecture on the houses here. Many of the spouts that project below the roof to throw off the water, are shaped like cannon. The Castle is a fine object; it is great and grotesque, and gives me a good idea of the Giants' Castles of Romance. A very remarkable pillar stands without the town, it is the place of execution.

Beef is ten quartos (about three pence) the pound. Bread five quartos. Brown bread, made of Indian corn, three quartos. The price of labour from four to six reales.

Thursday, Dec. 24.

We left Ponferrada this morning, and our newly-mended axle-tree lasted us almost three miles. The descent was steep, the road bad, and the coach crazy. Luckily we were all walking when it broke down. The Mayoral invoked the Virgin Mary to help him, and three hundred devils to carry off the coach; he however soon found it more useful to go for