

A WINTER HOLIDAY IN PORTUGAL

By CAPTAIN GRANVILLE BAKER
Author of "The Walls of Constantinople," etc.

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Captain Granville Baker, who has served in several campaigns in the British as well as the German Army, is an experienced traveller. In this volume he describes with pen, pencil, and brush the scenic charm of Portugal, the old buildings, the manners and customs of the people, and gives a history of the rise and growth of the nation, bringing his survey up to the recent important changes in the government. The author sets forth, in fascinating pages, the claims of Portugal as a winter resort. Wealth of colouring and variety of form are the most delightful features of its landscapes. The river scenery of Portugal recalls the far-famed Rhine, its mountains have an Alpine grandeur, its harbours vie in richness of beauty with those of Naples and Constantinople, its valleys and moors sport with all the colours of the rainbow, its flora being the richest in all Europe. The towns and villages have an old-world picturesqueness; the costume of the peasantry is uniquely charming. Captain Granville Baker's volume gives a very adequate impression of these manifold attractions.

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SPAIN REVISITED

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THE AUTHOR

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VIGO: BAY AND TOWN.

Frontispiece.

SPAIN REVISITED

A SUMMER HOLIDAY IN GALICIA

BY

C. GASQUOINE HARTLEY

(MRS. WALTER M. GALLICHAN)

AUTHOR OF "LIFE THE MODELLER," "THE WEAVER'S SHUTTLE," "PICTURES IN THE TATE GALLERY," "STORIES FROM THE GREEK LEGENDS," ETC. ETC.

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Many of the photographs in this book have been taken by Señor Gill of Vigo. Other photographs have been obtained through the kindness of Señor Blanco of Vigo, Señor Ramón López of Santiago, Señor Martínez Moras of La Coruña, Mr. Albert F. Calvert of London, and The Booth Line S.S. Co., Liverpool and London. The remaining photographs were taken by the author.

SPAIN REVISITED

A SUMMER HOLIDAY IN GALICIA

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: FROM LONDON TO VIGO

Departure from London—Recollections of former visits to Spain—Reflections on the Spanish people—An incident that will explain the temperament of the writer—An English traveller—A necessary digression—Spain the home of Romance—The right spirit for the stranger to cultivate—Havre—The voyage—The Atlantic coast—Vigo's bay and hills.

IN returning to any place one has greatly loved the traveller is often conscious of a certain apprehension. It is the same feeling that comes to one when, after a parting of years, one meets a friend who has once made the gladness of one's life. So often it is a mistake to go back, to start afresh with new impressions in which one fails to recapture the glamour of the past. And perhaps there is no pain so great as this disappointment of new knowledge, which robs one of one's memories.

How much I have loved Spain! I had been so happy in the time that I had lived there, and, during the ten years that have passed since my last visit, so much of my time has been spent in writing of the country that Spain has become a part of my life. What a delight it has been to me to live over again the months that I spent there; to imagine myself in her cities, visiting

her cathedrals and churches, studying the art of her great painters and sculptors, taking my part in the life of her happy people, who understand so well the secret of beautiful living. How often have these memories freed me from the feverish, unslackening life of London, where so often one's energies are wasted in a multitude of trivialities, drawing one this way or that. For in Spain one finds a different life, a life more primitive, more satisfying, directed not chiefly towards gain, or even comfort, but towards the more eternal things of human existence.

When one has lived in Spain one is apt to find London a little ridiculous, with its ceaseless occupation with the really unimportant things of life. How often, when I have seen crowds of women and men rushing for some morning or evening train, or fighting to gain entrance to an already crowded tramcar or omnibus, and an impulse of imitation has urged me to be one of that absurd, hustling crowd, has the thought of Spain held me at rest with its recollections of a more gracious and beautiful life! Yes, Spain opens a new door of life for those who have eyes to see and hearts to understand. It convinces the tired modern that, after all, there are very few things that really matter.

In every country there exists a personality, a kind of soul—the real qualities of the country and its people, those things that belong to and are its own—which will reveal itself alone to the traveller who is in sympathy with its special character. [For we can receive from outside things only our own part of them; the qualities in them that live in us—the answering joy rising in our own hearts. And, if this is true of all other places, it is specially true of Spain. No other European country is so singularly individual in its character. Spain is not in the least like Italy, and the common comparison

of these two countries is entirely misleading. Perhaps, indeed, the best preparation for a visit to this still unknown land is to forget all that one has learnt about other countries. Facile conclusions and comparisons will certainly lead to confusion. It is necessary, as it were, to start afresh, with old prejudices removed ; to gain a clearer vision of the essential truths of life, before it is possible to comprehend an unfamiliar country of such marked and strong character as Spain.

Some countries leave one indifferent, but Spain one must either love or dislike. It is not, I think, a country easy to comprehend ; nor will its customs and its people be understood from a brief visit, spent tourist fashion in hurrying from one city to another. To gain knowledge it is necessary to live among the people, sharing their common life and entering into their spirit. It is so much easier to put oneself—one's own prejudices and one's own opinions—into one's estimate of a people and a country than to persuade them to give up the secrets of their character. This accounts for many books that are written in this country about Spain. It is not easy for the Anglo-Saxon to comprehend a people so different from himself. Much of what is subtlest in the Spanish character appeals to the soul, perhaps one should say, rather than to the mind. And for this reason Spain's fascination has a quality which every one will not feel. Especially is this true of the people who attach great importance to comfort and easy travel ; but for those whom the glamour of this land of romance once touches, the fascination is more permanent and irresistible than that of any country that I know. Yes—Spain seizes and possesses you as a strong man possesses a woman ; and only in this way can you invite her exquisite joy to refashion your life.

It was on July 21 that I left London for Havre, where I was to join the R.M.S. *Hilary*, one of the fine

vessels of the excellent Booth Line Co., which was to take me to Vigo, the chief portal of Galicia and the starting-place of my travel. An incident which happened at the commencement of the journey, or rather before it began, may be a source of amusement to the reader. With a carelessness that belongs to my character, I had made a mistake in the hour of the train's departure, and arrived at Waterloo Station at 9.45 a.m. instead of 9.45 p.m. This left me with a day unoccupied in which I was able to give myself up to my own leisure. And the incident was so characteristic of Spain, where one of the great lessons to be learnt is the real unimportance of time, that, in the hours of that peaceful day which held no occupation, I felt more vividly conscious of the beauty of life, freed, as I was, from the importunate thrusting into hurried action that forces itself upon one in London. I found myself really ready for my return to Spain.

I shall pass very rapidly over the first part of the journey, which offered nothing worthy of observation. A conversation with a fellow-traveller, who was visiting Spain for the first time, gave me amusement and some reflections. The self-satisfied globe-trotter is always instructive. He is moved by insular instinct, and visits a country in the spirit of a compatriot whom I met once when travelling from Barcelona to Valencia. This man read an English periodical during the entire journey, then, at the end, remarked to me that he did not think much of Spanish scenery!

Only those who understand that places have to be approached in the same spirit as one meets a friend—with sympathy, and love, and far-sighted emotion—can ever persuade a country to give up to them its own secrets, its beauty and its truths. The Anglo-Saxon so often puts himself into everything he goes out to see. I marvelled, as I listened to my companion's conversation,

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TWO LITTLE GALLEGAN PEASANTS.

why he was visiting Spain. He expected to be cheated, to be exposed to every manner of discomfort, while the most necessary part of his luggage apparently was a large tin of Keating's Insect Powder. However, he gave me the reason: Spain had an English Queen; it was now the right thing for Englishmen to *do* the country. I was amused; I thought, How will you speak of Spain when you have been there?

This Englishman's estimate of this beautiful land of romance was based on the *Hints to Travellers* given in Bædeker's *Handbook of Spain and Portugal*. His faith in that red-backed instructor really was touching. He was setting out on his journey, bent on noting all the defects of Spain, in much the same manner as a police-agent does those of a criminal. I failed utterly to convince him: he had no wish to learn.

Here I must make a digression to say that Bædeker, so admirable in its information, is entirely misleading in the Introduction, in which information is given to the intending traveller. Spain is the one country in Europe where the stranger will *not* be cheated. I have spent many months in Spain, traversing it in all directions, both alone and in the company of friends. I have stayed in the *posadas* in the smaller towns, in the *ventas* in the country districts, and I have lived with the peasants in their farms and homesteads: I have never once been over-charged as much as half a *peseta*. Even the drivers in Spain are honest, having in each place a fixed rate of charge that is rarely exceeded. I recall one occasion when, in the middle of the night—Spanish trains have the custom of starting at the most inconvenient hours—I was driven some two miles to the station of a wonderful ancient town. I was alone; I did not speak the language well. I asked the driver the fare. He was a tall man, dressed in the peasants' costume—peaked hat, embroidered

waistcoat, leathern gaiters, and red sash; he was like a stage brigand. He told me that the charge was three *reales* (about $7\frac{1}{2}d.$) for myself and my luggage. This sum was so ridiculously small that I gave him a *peseta* (four *reales*). He took the coin, thanked me, gravely commended me to God, wished me 'Good-night,' and left me. But in the space of a few minutes he returned with the one *real* change! Yes, this incident must be recorded as an answer to the Bædeker's statement: "In dealing with cabmen, and the like, it is advisable to come to a clear understanding beforehand, even where there is a fixed tariff.")

There is among the Spanish people a friendliness towards strangers which belongs to a past civilisation when fear was not necessary. The suspicion and terror of ridicule which is instinctive to the average Anglo-Saxon is unknown to the Spaniard. For his own felicity, he has retained the child's spirit. He accepts you as his friend; he does not even feel his way slowly. It is true that, when you enter a Spanish hotel, the landlord may appear to be indifferent to you; the waiters, perhaps, are too deeply absorbed in their game of cards to be conscious of your presence. After the arrangements for your stay are made, no one will take any further notice of you. It is not the custom of Spanish hosts to force their attentions upon their guests. They are constitutionally incapable of the obsequious alertness that belongs to commercial service. But a stay for some weeks in a genuine Spanish inn will cause the English stranger to find a new meaning in the word "hospitality." It is significant that the Spanish name for a House for Travellers is *casa de huéspedes* (house of hospitality). The stranger will be accepted as one of the family, and will receive friendly, willing service, restrained by the fine Spanish courtesy from offensive attentions.

It is one of my aims, in writing this new book upon Spain, to remove some at least of the misconceptions which hitherto have deterred English and American people from visiting this fascinating land. In these pages I shall record the sight of my own eyes and the judgment of my own mind. I have tried to learn the truth, to draw confidences out of the cities I have lived in, out of the faces I have seen in passing, as well as from the many friends whose kindness to me form the most agreeable recollections of my recent visit. Through their knowledge I have learnt something of the real spirit of the country ; something, at least, of the character of her people, which, like all strong characters, does not reveal itself to all with the insistent challenge of a more facile temperament. It is this essential spirit of Spain that I shall seek to reveal.

But I have wandered far from the *Hilary* and my companion during the first stage of my journey. It was early morning when we arrived at Havre. The *Hilary* had been delayed by a fog in the Channel, and we learnt that we were not to sail until the evening. Rain was falling drearily ; the prospect was not cheerful. Havre has a kind of second-hand French look, and possesses nothing of particular interest. The natives appeared to me excessively ugly, especially the women ; even those who were quite young were haggard and wrinkled. But it is not fair to abuse Havre, since any town, viewed under the disadvantage of rainy weather, is always wretched. And Havre gave me one impression of beauty. From the quay, which was crowded with vessels of all nations and every burden, my companions and myself had walked into the town. The rain had cleared for a short time ; the sky was palely tinged with blue, and in this light the appearance of the town was changed. A boat with a red sail stood out against a building whose beams and

doors were painted a deep red-brown colour; the tiles of the building were staring red. A tall row of elms skirting the promenade looked like green feathers stuck into the brown roadway. The notes of strong colour completed a perfect picture. It reminded me of a landscape by Bonnington. We waited a long time here, until the rain again began to fall. I regret that we left Havre without visiting the Musée, where I should have liked to see the pictures of Boudin.

Of the first day of the voyage, having spent it in the manner that is usual to a bad sailor, I can say nothing, except that it was a pleasant sea, which gave no excuse for my absurd illness. Thereafter I remember no incident but the wonder of the ocean, as I watched it from my chair on the upper deck where necessity held me a prisoner. The water was a bright blue, and again, in a moment, almost black and flecked with dazzling foam; it was green at the rim of the vessel. With the great sun burning over us, there was an increasing vividness in the colour; it seemed a new world from the pale, misty landscape we had left behind two short days ago.

Time passed unnoticed. Exactly where the Bay of Biscay ends or begins, we were unconscious; for me it ended when we sighted the coast of Spain. The land showed at first an almost invisible line of indigo, which grew clearer, changing to purple, and from that to a cold dull blue as we came nearer and saw the outline of the great ridges that rise from the mountains of Galicia as spurs towards the Atlantic. It was not long before Cape Villano, which is situated north of Finisterre, rose up before us almost in the form of some gigantic monster of the sea.

The coast of Galicia on the Atlantic seaboard has been compared to the teeth of a mighty saw, from the fangs of Finisterre to Cape Ortegal in the north, and to the greater fangs which lie southwards. The waters of the

Atlantic run inland between these last spurs of the Pyrenees, forming wide, land-locked inlets, which are known as *rias*. The four chief inlets are called *rias bajas*; they are the ria de Muros, the ria de Arosa, ria de Pontevedra, and the ria de Vigo. These sun-bathed bays, wherein the sea sleeps, are one of the great natural beauties that Galicia offers to the traveller. And for those who care greatly for delicate shadings of colour, changing as the weather and the hour changes, sensitively and swiftly, to live on this coast is to be from dawn to sunset in a jewelled wealth of delight.

Two or three hours later we had passed Finisterre. Every mile of the way now is linked with history. Finisterre was once the uttermost part of the Roman Empire; it was from the Romans that it received its name, the "End of the Earth." The coast of Galicia is historic ground for Englishmen. How many battles have been fought here! Its bays have been the resort of British ships in war and in peace from years that are forgotten. The soldier of British blood, who died for Spain, is buried on this coast. The Armada sailed from here; here Drake and Norris came to lay fruitless siege. Treasure from the galleons of Spain lie buried in these seas. From here Columbus sailed, in the ship *La Gallega*—built at Pontevedra—to discover the New World.

It was not, however, of these things that I thought as the *Hilary* steamed onwards; wars and such small happenings are not always interesting. A few more revolutions of the screw, and we should be back in Spain. How, then, could I remember history?

Does a woman who loves think of the history of the man she is meeting after years of absence? It is himself that holds her, and thrills her body and her mind; she cares nothing at all about what he has done.

It was a companion, possessed with a love of

acquiring and giving information, who forced these things upon my notice. "In this route of entrance into Spain," she remarked, "you have the advantage of seeing many places famous in history." She consulted her note-book, and told them to me. "That line of cliffs"—she pointed them out—"is the exact spot——" But I did not listen. You know how suddenly frigid and unhappy the unsympathy of a companion makes one feel. She turned her cold eyes upon me and left me, reading my thoughts; probably understanding that my stupidity and dislike of knowledge was too great to merit her attention. And how glad I was!

It is difficult to understand this interest in outside facts; they always tell so little. It is like learning past incidents in the lives of those whom one loves; so often one would rather not know them. I was so splendidly conscious of the beauty: the sea, the sun, the earth—of these it was that I thought. Truly it was a magnificent scene. Walking to the end of the deck, I looked back across the blue surface of the sea. In the clearness of the air every object stood mapped out sharply as on a geographical chart. White horses shook their manes on the deep indigo sea; at the base of the beetling cliffs, which now seemed quite near, were angry green waves, each with a ragged crest of foam, which the breeze seized and flung upon the rocks as spendrift; the white clouds looked like flights of sea-birds. The spray boiled and sprang upon the rocks. It was a furious contest, in which every upward heave of the waves seemed to conquer for a moment, only to be driven back by the strength of those terrific cliffs. It was the embodied force of that coast, which is so dangerous, that it has gained from sailors the name of "the coast of death."

The hours passed quickly; evening had come when

first we entered Vigo's beautiful bay. The sunset was stormy, and the sky, as we saw it from the watching-place upon the upper deck, was washed with colours that were at once fiery and watery : greens of luminous delicacy, tints of yellow and amethyst, and pinks like the inner petals of rose-leaves, deepening in the distance to golden reds, as they caught the sharp peaks of the Cies Islands, which close in the seaward side of Vigo's bay. And the colours of the sky fell upon the grey-blue of the calm sea like beautiful lights coming down through stained-glass windows. In Galicia dawn and twilight are briefer and more splendid than in England.

The night came rapidly, and, as we steamed up the placid inland sea, a luminous darkness closed about us. The great hills in the distance grew sombre, the golden lights dropped to indigo shadows, then quickly to fainter and fainter purple. From the houses of the coast-bound fishing-villages lights gleamed, splashing jets of flame upon the white edges of the waves.

We glided onwards swiftly, silently. The Cies Islands are some fifteen miles from Vigo, and we learnt that the *Hilary* would travel the distance in an hour. We passed the great headlands, the darkness deepened, and the distance seemed to lengthen into the night. The first stars came through the now violet sky. Then, as we sped forward, the disk of the moon rose suddenly, with the wonder of a scene arranged, above the Seven Sister Hills that stand with such an appearance of impressive composition as a setting to Vigo. The landscape took a new aspect, beautiful beyond description. The heaped-up, lavish loveliness was almost theatrical : and the moon absolutely seemed *to be performing*. It was the most sudden and wonderful effect of Nature that I have ever seen, that quick lifting of the night. It seemed an embodiment of all things beautiful, all things mys-

terious, and all things joyous. And in arrogance of soul I felt that the marvel of this spectacular effect had been arranged for me.

We looked out at a scene that seemed to have too full a beauty to be quite real. Vigo was illuminated for a *fiesta* night. In the white town set upon its hill, where the granite houses rise in sharp upward lines, that compose perfectly like natural encrustations upon the rock, row after row of lights sparkled and gleamed as in a fairy city, fantastic, improbable. From the ancient fortress of the Castillo del Castro, a dark mass between the town and the sky, which stood out in the changing flame of lights from the silver-green of the trees and the grass of the hill-side, reports of cannons rang and echoed. Ever and anon rockets shot up into the night and fell in showers of stars, and every colour was reflected in diminishing shades, above in the luminous, moonlit sky, and below in the pallid, silver sea. The scene was as beautiful as a romance. All the elements "composed" in a painter's sense; it was like a breathlessly daring piece of scene-painting; only there is no artist who could paint it.

Our cable rattled and our anchor dropped. We had reached Spain in an hour when she was making holiday, and I was conscious of that beauty of association which is part of the spirit of places.

There were an immense number of people crowded on the upper decks, and the whole crew of passengers seemed bitten with a craze for conversation. I believe we were all sensible of a curious excitement. Afterwards, while still it was early, we went below to our cabins. Why it was that we went away suddenly from so much loveliness I cannot explain; unless we all got upon one another's nerves, and wanted to be alone—or with the right person.

CHAPTER II

VIGO: FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Vigo by day—The activity of the town—The fish-and-fruit market—Gallegan women—Girls' dancing—The streets—Contrasts—Galicia of to-day—Progress in Galicia.

CHARMING from its beautiful strangeness, when seen at night and from the distance of the bay, Vigo had another charm when seen clearly and by day. More than any town in Spain it has the aspect of a place where the work of the people is carried on with happiness. It is quite different from many Spanish cities, and has the conscious brightness, blitheness, and animation of a town whose citizens have mastered and use to the full its own resources. Vigo has sunshine, flowers, a splendid harbour, vine-groves, beautiful tree-shaded walks; and her prosperity comes from the wealth of her fish-laden sea and her fertile land. She has everything that calls her workers out into the open air, and thus gives to men and women the main part of their chances of natural felicity.

I recall my first impression of the town when, on the morning of July 25, we left the *Hilary*, and were taken to the harbour in a small steam-tug.

The few people standing on the quay all had the appearance of workers who had paused only for a few moments in their work. This surprised me. In the towns of southern Spain the streets always seem to be filled with crowds of unoccupied persons. Seville, for instance, has the aspect of a city given up to a holiday humour, and the stranger seems to be watching a scene

in a stage-play ; or Madrid, which never stays its gossip and where no one appears to work. I have always thought that the Spaniards understood better than any other people the difficult art of loafing.

In Vigo there was apparently no idleness. Workmen were building houses and repaving the road, which runs by the side of the quay. They worked steadily ; one man only was sitting at rest. He was reading a newspaper ; as we passed near to him, I saw the name of the paper : it was the Socialist journal of Vigo. The man did not notice our presence ; he was too deeply absorbed. In the harbour men were wading bare-legged in the water, launching their boats ; other boats were coming in laden with sardines that had been caught during the night. In the roadways of the town there was a continual going and coming of peasants ; they were brighter than the figures in a comic opera, with the vivid colours of the handkerchiefs and aprons of the women and the blouses and body-sashes of men flaming in the sunlight.

Life was everywhere. And this impression of active occupation—an impression new to me in Spain—was increased when we made a brief visit to the fish-and-fruit market, which is held each morning along the quay, in the centre of the town. This market is the focus of the vivid life of the workers. It is the most animated scene I have ever witnessed. At first I was bewildered with the incessant movement and the noise. I tried to catch every detail as they passed before me ; to concentrate my attention, and to fix this new, astonishing picture in its right place in my memory.

The first impression was an almost bewildering sense of the opulent natural forces of Galicia. Heaped all over the ground, brimming over the sides of the low stalls, overflowing from great baskets, were fish of all



SAILORS IN THE BERBÉS (FISH-MARKET) VIGO.



AWAITING THE ARRIVAL OF THE FISHING-BOATS, VIGO.

kinds that had been brought from the bay and the Atlantic. There seemed to be every fish I had ever seen, as well as many other kinds that were unknown to me—the sword-fish, devil-fish and ink-fish, of strange shapes and monstrous size. In the upper-room, where the vegetable market is held, there were grapes, peaches, nectarines, melons, plums, and pears, with multitudes of vegetables, some fiery-coloured, which glowed in the sunlight. Among this prodigality of sea and land peasants—women and girls, dressed in many different costumes, and a few men—cried and shouted in a tangle of tongues. I have never heard so much noise. The air seemed jangled with harsh sounds, and to quiver with bright colours, as the women moved up and down carrying their great baskets and chaffering in the Gallegan tongue.

Outside the market, on the steep flight of steps and roadways which lead up into the town, wares were being sold: the fine native crockery—plates and bowls and cups of beautiful shapes and colours were laid out upon the ground; there were stalls decked with bright stuffs, and lace, and the beautiful Galician shawls and handkerchiefs; other stalls had necklaces of glass beads, and the small images of saints which every peasant wears. Men finely built, and dressed in brigand fashion, with *sombreros* and brightly coloured shawls thrown over their shoulders, stood at the outskirts of the market unloading their carts; but it was the women who carried the great baskets. Many of the women had brought their children with them, who played happily; and babies were suckled as their mothers sat by their stalls, chaffering eagerly over every purchase. What impressed me was that these women all looked happy. Some of the girls, and even the older women, had lovely and quite regular faces, and all of them carried their

bodies splendidly : they walked like queens. I saw one girl ; she was slender, with a perfectly shaped face, delicately cut mouth and nose, large, lustrous eyes and dark lashes, and with masses of black hair showing under her orange kerchief. She had laid down her basket at the corner of a little square, where a man at a little distance was playing a *gaita*. Three other girls came and joined her ; they, too, put down their baskets, and together they began to dance. It was a dance of quick movement and of great variety. It was not a dance of the feet only ; every part of the girls' bodies played its part in the performance ; the swaying figures, the beckoning hands, the glittering smiles, that came and went in their dark eyes—all contributed. There was something infectious in this spontaneous gaiety. These girls, I felt, understand happiness—the easy acceptance of life as it comes. And, as I watched them, the world seemed once more a place in which workers could have their share of the felicity of living.

A charm was in the air, and a scarcely definable sense of joyous activity, which made me glad to be there. Yet the impression was of something charmingly primitive ; of a people belonging to an older and happier civilisation. All that was active and modern appeared as an addition to what was old ; it did not seem to belong here. It surprised me, almost it pained me, like a beautiful old picture that has been repainted. A readjustment of my memories of Spain was taking place. In Vigo, already on this first morning, I was finding new tracts of discoveries, as it were, stirring into life fresh feelings and points of view that were unexpected to me in this land of romance. And, as if to emphasise the confusion of my ideas, outside the market a beggar solicited alms in the old Spanish formula : *Una limosna para ~~Te~~ amor de Dios*. He was wrapped in a tattered cloak of lovely

colour; he reminded me of the beggar in the picture by Velazquez. Then, just behind where he was standing was a great placard announcing a cinematographic show. In the populous streets I noticed fairly sleek horses of better condition than those of southern Spain. The carriages, with their sun-curtains flapping in the breeze, were like large white butterflies. I saw *señoras* and *señoritas* garbed in hideous Paris and English fashions, and men dressed in Harris tweeds, walking in the same streets with the fisherfolk in their ancient, picturesque costumes. Along the Alameda, the wide promenade, smoothly asphalted and of perfect surface, oxen with huge, branching horns were moving slowly. They carried the stones for the houses that were being built in long wooden carts of the most primitive pattern; the wheels were of one piece and turned with the axle, like the carts that children make for themselves. The oxen, in some places, stood and rested as if they were in their own village; one was lying down on a patch of grass asleep. And on the same promenade, where these bullock-carts were passing, the automobiles waited to take us to Mondariz. I heard the loud, long-drawn creaking of the unoiled cart-wheels—an old sound that recalled rushing memories—and at the same time the hoot of the motors, with their mocking suggestion of “progress.”

In these contrasts was summed up the changes that already were surprising me—changes that later I was to find everywhere in Galicia. The Gallegans of to-day, the citizens in whose hands is the power of wealth, are turning their attention to material progress. In Spain movement is never hurried. Yet the changes that have been effected in the last few years are certainly great.

The Gallegos, even among the peasants, are all eager for reform; there is little of the Spanish indifference in their character. They are passionately proud of their

country's ancient glory, of its history, its achievements in art and in literature, of its great traditions; but, at the same time, they feel that Spain has fallen behind in the race of civilisation, and they are determined to change. To this end they are working, and with splendid loyalty are sacrificing personal aims. They are almost too eager to learn from other countries; they are utterly without the self-satisfaction which is the mark of the born Britisher. They do not desire to cast aside what is old, as in a child's wanton love for the new—civilisation has sunk too deeply into them to fear the excessive exuberance of renovation which one finds, for instance, in modern Italy. Their desire is to add to their gracious and beautiful tradition all that is good in the life of younger nations. I recall a conversation with a young Gallegan, who is my friend. Together we had watched a *fiesta* in the village of Mondariz. I remarked that I wished I had been born in Spain, where life is so much more beautiful than it is in England. He answered me gravely: "Señora, you make a mistake. I believe no Spaniard, who thinks, can be born to-day without a pain in his heart. But—"—and here his sensitive dark face brightened, suddenly, wonderfully—"now that we know this, it is our work to change it."

Ugliness is not a necessary growth of progress; though to-day, what we call "progress" seems to be understood for uniformity—and uniformity always results in ugliness. Development on these lines can never coincide with the special genius of the Spanish race; we therefore can hope that development will come without fearing the result. But Galicia must remain true to herself—to her own character and her own needs. The followers of self-assertion and advertisement, of hurry and of shoddiness, are fast spreading over the so-called civilised world; but in Spain they have, as yet, found

no foot-hold, and those who love this land are glad to think that they never will. Should any of the impressions and statements, given here or elsewhere, appear to be contradictory, the explanation must rather be sought in inadequate expression than in any confusion of ideas. Those who love Spain love her because she is still the home of romance, the land where still it is possible to learn the art of living; but, because of that love, we desire that Spain shall arise from her sleep to take again in the world the position that is her due.

Of this new, vigorous movement of progress and reform, which is active in Galicia, I shall have much to say. This almost unknown province of Spain is nowadays full of life and animation; its towns are being transformed, and signs of industrial and commercial activity abound. It is this new movement of urban development, as one here sees it in direct descent from the old civilisation, that gives to Galicia its special interest, and also its special value, to the student of Spain.

But as yet I did not know these things. An excessive surprise was my first conscious impression. I was seeking the Spain I had known ten years ago in Andalucia. At the end of that first morning, in Vigo, I found myself bewildered, almost as if I had lost my way and was in a country I did not know. I seemed to have seen so much, and so many things that were unfamiliar, out of which, as yet, I could clutch at nothing tangible. I am in another Spain, I said to myself, and at first I disliked these evidences of more vivid and newer life.

I felt the necessity of knowing more of the history of Galicia, and of the race-stock of her people. A guide was needed, by which to focus these new impressions. Although I dislike history, when presented to me as tabloids of information, and in hours when the desire to learn is absent, yet I know well that the only way to

make the soul of a country and a people real to oneself is to know and to understand all the complexity of those past happenings—the beginnings, the life-history, the joy and the sadness, the greatness and the mistakes, that have built up its life as it presents itself in the present. It is the past that decides the to-day, as well as the to-morrow of a people and of a country. I had started on this journey without previous study or investigation—intelligent inquiry, where an object is wanting, invariably bores me. I had come back to Spain wholly captured by the glamour of memories. It was not until much later that the necessary opportunity of study offered itself, for one needs leisure to remove prejudices and gain even a vision of truth.

Galicia is less known than any province of Spain, and from its geographical position and history has a distinctly marked character, which separates its people in many ways from the rest of the Spanish race. It may help to make this clear to gain even in outline some idea of the country's by-gone greatness ; of the influences and the men and women by which, and by whom, this greatness grew. I do not pretend to enlighten the intelligent student ; it is possible only to give an inadequate record of facts, with a few added suggestions, which possibly may cast some light on the personal impressions that have been gathered. In the up-building of a great nation it is as necessary to know the causes as to realise their effects.

CHAPTER III

THE OLD KINGDOM OF GALICIA: "EL REINO DE GALICIA "

Galicia the land of glorious recollections—Geographical position—Earliest inhabitants—Iberians—Celts—Phœnicians—Greek settlements—The Roman attempt to conquer Galicia—The Suevi and Vandals—Galicia's first golden age—The Moors—Discovery of the tomb of the apostle St. James at Compostela—Invasion of Galicia by Almanzor—Galicia's second golden age—The Gallego language—Poets—A few remarks in conclusion.

GALICIA has been called by one of her sons "the land of glorious recollections." In her history, reaching back into the remotest antiquity, in her literature and her art, in the imperishable buildings of her ancient cities, where still, after so many centuries, every building has its associations, its legend, or record, the Gallegans have something from of old which the younger countries of the world, with all their headlong progress, have as yet only begun to gain. That something is tradition.

The most distant of the little kingdoms which go to the making up of Spain, Galicia, from her position on the sea-coast, as well as from the rich natural attractions of her land, has suffered invasion from many quarters, and from the earliest days of history; but she has been far enough removed from the rest of the Peninsula for independent development. Neither Romans nor Moors gained any permanent footing in the country; the Gallegans have always succeeded in throwing back the invader. This is a fact of the greatest importance, accounting, in the first place, for the persistence to an

unusual degree of the racial uniformity of the people ; and also for the difference—a difference which is noticeable even to the most unobservant—between the special qualities of the Gallegan character and the qualities of other Spaniards—as for instance, the Andalucians, the province in which Moorish influence is most living to-day. It follows too, with this history, and this outlook, how deep-rooted and remarkable is the love of liberty in the unconquered hearts of Galicia's sons. They have never hesitated to accept radical and progressive theories in the sphere of thought. They have never bowed willingly, and to-day less than ever, to the dictates of Madrid. Home Rule is the desire of almost all thinking Gallegans. Thus it is not without reason that progress to-day has its home in Galicia.

There seems some uncertainty as to who were the earliest inhabitants of Galicia. Iberians, Ligurians, Phœnicians, and, it would seem, the Greeks, all appear to have settled in, or at least visited, the country before, at the close of the fourth century B.C., the Asiatic and Mid-European Celts came to Spain to find a home in Galicia and in Portugal, and there to leave an ineffaceable mark on the populations and the customs of those countries.

It is now generally believed that the greater part of Spain was occupied by a primitive race of Iberians of Berber stock, who came by way of North Africa to Spain. Both in their physical traits and in their character the Spaniards show this relationship, having more points of contact with the North African type than with the European.

The Iberians are known to have visited Galicia at a very early period. This is proved by Iberian antiquities to be seen in Pontevedra, in Orense, and in other towns, as well as by the survival of place-names. In the vicinity

of the coast village of Noya and other places there are indications of old Iberian settlements. The hemispheric writings found among the Iberians bear a very distinct likeness to the markings that occur on the boulders in Galicia. Again, some at least of the *castros* that are common everywhere in the country are considered by Señor Macineira to be of ante-Roman origin. It is probable they were used as residences of tribal chiefs as well as for sepulchres. Galicia is rich in megalithic remains; the Druidical stones, cairns, and rocking boulders testify to the early and wide-spread existence of Celtic civilisation. These Celtic remains are much more frequent than the Iberian, which seems to point to the conclusion that the North African invaders did not make an extensive early settlement in Galicia.

When the Celts and Iberians had, in certain districts, amalgamated into one race, they were known as Celtiberians; but in Galicia and in Portugal, where among the mountains the nature-loving Celts found a congenial home, this amalgamation did not at first take place. The Celtic tribes would seem to have kept themselves distinct from their Iberian neighbours. It was the Celts who developed here, as elsewhere in other parts of Europe, their distinct civilisation, their humanity, their love of the arts of music and of poetry, as well as their deeply rooted spiritual instinct, their love of freedom and of their native lands.

The Celtic character appears to have strengthened the Spanish tenacity and domesticity. They were more apt for labour, and the Gallegans are known throughout Spain as good workers. They also would seem to have diminished the Spanish pugnacity, for even to-day crimes of bloodshed are infrequent in Celtic Spain.

Here, then, we find the reason of the differences in character which mark the Gallegans from the Spaniards;

the root-stock of the people is Celtic, and not the North African type, which predominates in Spain. From the Celts the Gallegans have inherited their poetic aptitude, their music and dances, their bagpipes, numerous place-names and stone crosses, as well as many other things Celtic which they share with the inhabitants of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and Brittany. In no other part of Spain will the British stranger find himself so much at home as in Galicia.

It is necessary to consider the ancient connection of the Phœnicians with Galicia. These merchant princes, the first people to hold empire over the seas, have been called the earliest civilisers of Galicia. Attracted to the country by the rich ores of her mountains, it seems certain that they made extensive settlements here as early as the twentieth century B.C. The original construction of the famous Tower of Hercules at La Coruña is attributed to them ; it was they who gave the tower its name. The town of Padron is believed to have been the site of one of the great emporiums of their trade, and traces of their settlements are met in many districts. Legend states that the famed Cassiterides are not, as is commonly supposed, the Scilly Islands, but are the small rocky group of the Cies Isles at the mouth of Vigo Bay. The difficulty of the exceeding smallness of these islands, which throws doubt upon the story, is explained by the local believers on the assumption that once the group contained larger islands that have been swallowed up by the ocean. It is the beauty of legends that difficulties can always be explained away ; this is one reason why they are so much more interesting than facts. But be this as it may, it is certain that the civilising influence of the Phœnicians was of long continuance in Galicia. Jubainville believes that it was they who told the Celts of the mines in the country and thus induced



PRE-HISTORIC TOMBS, NEAR LA CORUÑA.



TORRE DE HERCULES, LA CORUÑA.

their invasion. This would point to a continuance of their presence in Galicia after the Celtic habitation. It may well be suggested that the Phœnicians have left their permanent impression on the country, for the special character of these first traders—their energy, their aptitude for travel and for all enterprise—may account for yet another racial characteristic which belongs in a marked degree to the Gallegans among the races of Spain: they have, from the first records of history, been an active and enterprising, even a commercial people. The Gallegos have always been great travellers, and they still travel more than any other Spaniards. To-day this progressive energy is manifesting itself in many directions. The Gallegos who have returned rich from the Argentine are investing their capital in native enterprises, and the industries that are now flourishing around Vigo and elsewhere, as well as the magnificent new hotels, such as La Toja and Mondariz, are the result.

On the authority of Asclepeades Merleanus, the grammarian of Andalucia, it is believed that there were Greek settlements in Galicia, in particular in the district around Pontevedra and in Tuy. In the latter town the wrestling-matches, which still take place among the youths, are said by Morales to be of Greek origin. The information on this question is, however, so vague and so contradictory that one hesitates to suggest, as one might like to do, the persistence of the gracious Grecian culture in Galicia.

The earliest documentary information about Galicia comes to us from the Romans: from the writings of Strabo, of Julius Cæsar, and Pliny the Younger, and from other recorders. To Strabo's account of the ancient inhabitants especially we are indebted, and the tenacity of racial character becomes clear, when, in reading his far-sighted observations, we are able to

recognise in the Gallegans to-day the people whom he describes more than two thousand years ago.

The record of the Roman occupation of Galicia is one of continuous revolt. The numerous Roman remains in every district of the kingdom are witness to the repeated efforts of Rome to conquer the stubborn Celts. In the year 136 B.C. Decimus Brutus received the name of *Callaicus*, on entering Rome in triumph after his campaign in Northern Spain, in honour of his successes in Galicia. Yet he had not succeeded in penetrating the kingdom further than the river Miño. At a later date Julius Cæsar, arriving with a great fleet at La Coruña, terrified the inhabitants, who never before had set eyes on such an Armada. It was in Galicia that Cæsar first dreamed of becoming an Emperor. For a brief period under the Emperor Augustus, Galicia was made into a Roman province. The Emperor Theodosius was born here, and here he married Flaccilla, herself a native of the country, whose beauty and virtue are sung by the poet Claudia. Their son Arcadius is also said to have been born in Galicia.

Nevertheless, it is certain that the Romans never gained a permanent footing, nor did the conqueror ever enjoy a peaceful or undisputed possession. The mountains of the country and the energetic temper of the people held them back. Thus, when Quintus had subjected the greater part of Lusitania, it was the Gallegans who, issuing from their mountain strongholds, drove the Roman legions back. And here we have recorded one of those vivid happenings which illuminate the records of the past. In these wars the women of Galicia fought side by side with the men. We read that they used their weapons with the greatest courage and determination, that they received their wounds with silent fortitude, and that no cry of pain ever escaped their lips,

even when the wounds which laid them low were mortal. To women as well as men, liberty was a possession more valued than life; and, when taken prisoners, they fell upon their own sword, and dashed their little ones to death rather than suffer them to live to be slaves. Opportunities such as these have passed from the lives of women; yet, indeed, it is not without significance that women of such strong and splendid fibre are the ancestors of the race that in late years has given birth to Concepcion Arenal, and to Emila Pardo Bazan, the greatest living Spanish woman.

In the year 411 the Suevi and Vandals—Germanic tribes of Byzantine civilisation, and not altogether Teutonic—poured into Spain, making Galicia their centre. A quarrel arising between the two tribes, the Vandals, in the year 429, retreated southwards to Bætica, and thence passed over to Africa. The Suevi, who were one of the bravest of the Germanic tribes, then spread over the whole of North-West Spain. They established a kingdom, which extended into what is now the country of Portugal, and Braga, a Portuguese town, was the residential city of their kings. Again we find the Gallegans defending themselves in their mountain fastnesses with great bravery. Often they forced the Suevi to make treaties with them, and there is no record that the old inhabitants were ever subjugated. In the year 585 the Suevi were conquered by Leovigild, King of the Goths, and Galicia was incorporated under their rule.

The Spanish historian Florez impresses on his readers that the kingdom of Galicia is the oldest of all the kingdoms of Spain. So wide was its power under the Suevi that Archbishop Rodrigo writes, in his *History of the Barbarians*, of the king of the Suevi as being virtually the sole monarch in Spain. It must be remem-

bered that Leovigild did not destroy the Galician kingdom—he incorporated it in the kingdom of the Goths. “Therefore,” writes Florez, “the Spanish monarchy clearly dates back from the year 411, when the Suevi established the kingdom of Galicia, that being quite independent of the Roman Empire.”

There are no Gallegos who to-day are not proud of the antiquity of their land. And the tradition of so ancient and so glorious a past has penetrated to the very roots of their special character, expressing itself, as I have often thought, not only in the behaviour of the people, who are all gentlemen, but in the fine type of their faces, equally fine in the peasant and in the noble.

There is much uncertainty in the historical information that has come down to us of these years. We read of many treaties being made, and broken, between the Suevi and the Hispano-Gaelic races. We know, as an historical fact, that a king of the Suevi was converted to Christianity through the instrumentality of St. Martin Dumiensis. Spanish historians have in recent times filled in the gaps of history with legends, and of this conversion incident they have made as much as they could. Limits of space prevent the relation of these stories. All legends are interesting, for I have never yet found one that did not arise out of the truth—not, of course, the outside truth of facts, but the inner truth of the soul of a people, which is what really matters. Legends are a people’s heritage of poetry, and the nation that believes in them has always something of the mood—the mental attitude in which alone poetry can have life. It is not the stirring events; the conquests made, the catalogues of dynasties, the battles gained or lost, that count most in a nation; rather it is that inward growth of life, which is least reflected in the pages of history.

What matters now is that, in spite of all efforts at rejection, the new invaders of Galicia were to mingle with the old Celtic inhabitants to form one people. A new and brilliant page was written in Galicia's life. In the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries of the Christian era there was developed an enlightened civilisation, which, in culture and intellectual growth, far exceeded that of the whole of the rest of Spain. It was the period of Galicia's first Golden Age, when she was freely acknowledged to be the *Magistra Litterarum*. Even kings came to her shores to complete their education, and the fame of her learning spread throughout the world. How many figures famous in the world's history carried the torch of her learning! The great chronicler, Bishop Ildatus, the earliest of Spain's historians; the traveller and philosopher, Paul Orosius, whose fascinating writings are known to us through the translation of King Alfred of England, were both native Gallegans. In reading the description of Orosius given in a letter sent by St. Augustine to introduce him to St. Jerome: "A young man of active talents, of ready eloquence, and ardent application," I am reminded almost startlingly of the strong conservative element which is so marked a trait in the Gallegan character. I could choose no truer terms in which to describe many of the young Gallegos who to-day are my friends. Another prominent figure of this period was St. Fructuosus, a great initiator in the religious life, as well as a poet. Of him we read that "by the immaculate innocence of his life, by the spiritual fire of his contemplations, he made virtues shine into the hearts of his countrymen." Fructuosus possessed the aptitude for mystical passion that through the centuries has marked the Spanish soul. To-day he is still one of Galicia's favourite saints, and his memory is honoured by every peasant in the land.

As early as the fourth century the Gallegans were noted travellers, and it is interesting to learn that one of the most famous of these travellers was a woman. The story of the blessed Etheria and her perilous journey to Jerusalem reads more like a romance than a record of fact. The world itself, Valerius tells us, was the theatre of her undertakings. With a flaming energy for which obstacles did not count, she crossed the most dangerous deserts and travelled by the most perilous roads; seas, rivers, and mountains were the steps she trod, finding refreshment for her soul, in the midst of all dangers, by prayer and the teachings of the saints. Etheria was the first of the great Gallegan women, and her story of her travels, written by her own hand, may be said to be the starting-point of the women writers of Spain.

It may be worth while to pause a moment on the part played by the Celts and by the Goths in these three centuries of Galicia's first Golden Age. It is a question difficult to answer. The Germanic settlers do not seem to have given any new or very positive contribution to the Gallegan character, though by their energetic temper they made Galicia a power, not only in Spain but in Europe, developing, as we have seen, a remarkable civilisation; they also, through their Byzantine inheritance, influenced the art of the country. Yet, after dominating Spain for a period of nearly four centuries, they seem more or less to have been absorbed into the underlying mixed Celtic and Iberian stock. The event that brought this result was doubtless, to a great extent, the invasion of the Moors in the eighth century, resulting in the age-long warfare between the Christian Spaniards and the followers of Islam. The Goths, humbled by defeat in many battles in southern and central Spain, were, in Galicia and the north, brought into new relations with the native inhabitants, whom

at one time they had despised. Celt and Goth and Iberian henceforth were in Galicia merged into one people, to be known alone as the Gallegans. In Galicia and in Asturias was laid the foundation of the new Spanish nation, and hence arose a people who knew no difference of race, in which every man who was able to fight was accounted noble. (Galicia may be called the cradle of the Spanish nobility; almost all Spain's proudest families have their root in Gallegan soil, their titles having been given to their ancestors as a reward for their heroic resistance to the Moors.)

Spanish history for seven centuries—711-1492—records the Moorish domination. Like an overwhelming flood the Arabs swept across the land, except in the mountainous districts of the north, where the tenacity of the people flung back the tide of war. It was this race, whom the Romans had declared to be "indomitable by cold, by heat, by warfare, or by famine," who, entrenched within their rocky fastnesses, refused to bow their necks to the new and splendid conquerors. In Spain romance and history are closely connected. The ninth century—the year 812—witnessed the miraculous discovery of the tomb of the apostle James on the site of Compostela, where the great Cathedral of Santiago now stands. This event brought a new and crowning glory to Galicia, and led to the concentration of the devotion and thought of all Spain upon this distant corner of the Peninsula. The Spanish character has ever been moved to action by the things of the spirit. It was Santiago who gave the inspiration, during the centuries of broken peace, when Christian Spain made intermittent attempts, successful and the reverse, at a reconquest of the country from the Moors.

How strange a thing it is sometimes to look back across the sadness of the centuries, to see history as a

drama, and to watch the doings of the human puppets, knowing the result of their actions. The Spaniards fought to expel the Moors; yet they were powerless to hold back their exquisite civilisation—perhaps the most perfect the world has ever known—from sinking into their life. Galicia was never conquered by the Moors, yet, it would seem, that their far-reaching influence penetrated their character. Without the special virtues of the Moorish civilisation—its sharp contrasts, its romance, its fine and yet practical instinct for all that is beautiful in life—we can scarcely account for much in the genius of the Gallegans. If, for instance, we compare Galicia with Portugal in this respect, one is inclined to agree with an observation made to me by an educated Castilian who knew intimately both these countries. “The Gallegans,” he said, “have the virtues of the Portuguese with the charm of the Spaniards added to their character.”

At the close of the tenth century, in the year 997, Almanzor, the unconquerable minister of Cordova, waged war in the north of Spain, penetrating into Galicia to the holy town of Santiago. It is said that the city was deserted, so great was the terror that the victorious Moor had aroused in the hearts of the intrepid Gallegans. Almanzor entered the silent city, where no man of all its inhabitants remained but one aged monk, who still prayed before the shrine of the apostle.

“What doest thou here?” demanded the Moor. “I am at my prayers,” came the answer of the Christian. “No man shall molest you. Pray as much as you wish.” Almanzor thereupon set a guard around the tomb to protect it and the monk from the violence of his soldiers. How much more beautiful life must have been when such happenings were a part of conquest!

It was after this campaign that Almanzor gained the

title "Victorious." He had laid waste Compostela, he had penetrated the mountain passes of Galicia, carrying fire and sword and reducing cities, monasteries, and palaces. The Christian princes were paralysed so long as he made, twice in each year, his devastating expeditions. There is something almost miraculous in the career of Almanzor, who began his life as a professional letter-writer, and ended it as sole ruler of an empire. But, invincible by man, Almanzor was conquered by death. In 1002 he died; "and was burned in hell," is the comment of the Christian annalists.

The Moors did not again penetrate Galicia during the centuries that followed before the Reconquest, when the civilisation of the rest of Spain was strained by one long succession of wars. Then the Moorish dominion ended. The true, the beautiful in each race feeds the common life of all, and the fulfilling of the destiny of each enlarges the experience of the world.

Galicia, from her geographical position, was less influenced by these events, and, although she continued to send forth her sons to fight against the Moors, she yet, throughout this period, had a real and, more or less, independent life of her own. Her life was the growth of culture and not the waste of warfare. Thus, from the eleventh century and onwards to the sixteenth century—the period of her second Golden Age—Galicia, with a language of her own and an independent life, enjoyed a civilisation of more pronounced character and traditions, and one of higher culture, than any other part of Spain. She became a centre for learning, for poetry, for music and the arts. It was this period which witnessed the most glorious triumphs of lyric poetry in Spain.

From the earliest times the Gallegans have been genuine artists. They share in full measure the love of

music which distinguishes the Celt in all countries. They have always been poets in their own Romance language, which, though now degraded to a provincial dialect, was once the medium chosen by Spain's greatest troubadours in which to express their poetic thoughts. Like the Irish, the Gallegans have the Celtic aptitude for spontaneous wit. It is interesting to note that contests of wit are still part of the programme connected with a Gallegan peasant's wedding. Nor is the practice of singing couplets confined to the ceremony of the wedding; a festival takes place, known locally as *La Regueifa*, at the birth of the children. After the christening, the friends meet and start singing spontaneous verses, alluding to the parents and also to one another. The one who sings the most and the best songs is rewarded by the *regueifa*, or loaf, which is offered by the godmother, and is shared by the company. These festivals are very popular in all Galician villages. Boys and girls everywhere, even when quite young, are able to sing songs they have themselves invented. Verse comes as readily as prose to the lips of this poetic people. The famed poetical contests of the *trovadores* find an expression to-day in the *fiestas* of the *Juegos Florales*, in which the Gallegan poets compete with one another in much the same way as is the custom of the Welsh bards at the National Eisteddfod.

The language of Galicia, originally a Latin tongue, had developed under the Suevi into a distinct Romance language, which was already established in the twelfth century, much earlier than the Castilian—also a Romance language derived from the Latin—had developed into the Spanish language as it is spoken in Madrid to-day. It must be remembered that the Lusitanian, or Gallego language and the Castilian are both twin off-shoots from the same Latin root; but, while the latter has become the

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WET-WEATHER COSTUMES OF THE PEASANTS.



GALLEGAN MUSICIAN.

universal language of Spain, the other, losing its importance after the sixteenth century, split into two branches of which one became the national language of Portugal, while the other, although it is still the purest of all Latin dialects except the Italian, sank to the level of a provincial dialect, which is spoken by the Gallegan peasants. But in the centuries of Galicia's Golden Age it was the Gallego tongue—"O crown of fame!"—that was the language used by the cultured throughout Spain. It was the language of the learned—*el gallego erudito*, Valmar calls it; it was the medium chosen by all poets by reason of the ease of its expression, its animation, its beauty, and its lyrical power. It is significant that the poet-king, Alfonso—*el sabio*—chose the Galician language in which to write his *Castigas de Santa Maria*. He wrote his history, the *Crónica General*, in the Castilian language, but for his beautiful *Cantigas* he preferred the poetical *idioma gallega*, because of the finer power of its expression, so much more tender and beautiful than the Castilian. Alfonso left a command in his will that the poetry of Galicia should be sung over his tomb—a request that, seeing he was buried in Murcia, has caused surprise to many later writers, who have not understood the importance of the old Gallegan poetry.

The native poets of Galicia were among the most famous of their age. It is now known that the curious old book of poetry, preserved in Rome in the Library of the Vatican under the title *Cancion ero de la Vatican*, is the work almost entirely of the Gallegan poets. As early as the year 388 Galicia gave birth to the poet Prudentius, who is spoken of by Spanish writers as "the Horace of the fourth century." Prudentius is already a true Gallegan, expressing in his poetry the popular thoughts and feelings of the people; and herein lies the interest of the two volumes of his lyrics. Curiously both

books bear Greek titles : *Kathemerion* (Songs for Every Day) and *Peristephanon* (The Book of Garlands). It is to the poetic genius of Pedro de Mendoza that the world owes the *Salve Regina*, the most beautiful and poetic of all Catholic prayers. Mendoza belongs to the tenth century ; he was the bishop of Santiago at the time when Almanzor destroyed the city. Among the famous *trovadores* whose songs are still sung in Galicia are Ayras Nuñez, Juan Ayras, and Payo Gomez Chirino. Of greater fame is Macías, a *trovatore* of the fourteenth century. *O Namarado* (the infuriated lover) is a figure carrying all the romance that in Spain seems natural. Indeed his fame rests on the character he gained as " the perfect lover," rather than on the merit of his verse. His history fired the popular imagination, and he enters into Spanish literature in Lope de Vega's *Porfiar, hasta morir*, and in Larra's *El Doncel de Don Enrique el Doliente*. It is worth noting that Gallegan poetry has always belonged to the common people. There are couplets that can be traced back to the twelfth century : one instance being the couplets sung by the townfolk of Santiago in honour of Bishop Delmirez, on the occasion of his founding in that town a school for the cultivation of oratory and letters and the Latin tongue. The *trovadores* of Aquitaine, when they visited Galicia, found Santiago a centre of poetry.

It is tempting to write further of Galicia's early poets, of her learning and culture in this period of her Golden Age, and also to enlarge on the significance of it all in the Galicia of to-day. I am conscious of the inadequacy of this cursory survey. For we find in this glorious past an explanation of many things that persist in the Gallegan character—a character very positive, in which the old energy has not dwindled, but is finding new channels of expression, keeping the simplicity,

the charm, and the graceful naturalness, and also the power of finding beauty in the world—in what is most homely, obvious, and frequent in it, the beauty which is always there—qualities which can belong alone to a people into whose past life civilisation has sunk deeply.

The Gallegans have to-day, as they have always had, a fine sense of the continuity of their national life, of their active part in the inheritance of their ancestors. One sees it in the passionate loyalty of the young Gallegos, who speak of their country as “the beloved Galicia.” One sees it in the home-sickness of the emigrant Gallegos—a malady that is so real as to have gained a special name in the common language of the people: it is called *morriña*. One sees it, in more hopeful expression, in the prosperous energy which is manifesting itself in a determined effort for national restoration. When Borrow visited Galicia he found grass growing in the streets of such a now prosperous town as Ferrol. The country roads were infested with robbers, while Vigo had only a wretched *posada* to offer hospitality to travellers. There is ample accommodation in Galicia now; the stranger travels in automobiles on roads that, for Spain, are good. The larger towns are clean, well-kept, and, for the most part free from evil odours—a state of things not always to be found even in the most important cities in Southern Spain. The civic activity of Galicia is, indeed, very marked. Nowhere else have I met so many municipal reformers, and moreover such intelligent and distinguished men. Since my visit to Galicia I have realised many things about Spain which not all my former residence in the country had taught me. I have been able to see this Spain that I have loved, not only as a romantic land with a great history in the past, but as a land that is awakening to the needs of modern

life; its people, responsive, actively ready to learn—delightful. It is from this side that I wish to approach Galicia. Occasions as great as those that were of old may, indeed, have gone, but the possibilities, the power, remain in the hearts of Galicia's sons, awaiting only their opportunity.

CHAPTER IV

LA BELLISINIA MONDARIZ

The charm of the Galician climate—Motor travelling—Spanish chauffeurs—Perils of the drive—Galician landscape—The fertility of the soil—Vineyards—Maize-fields—Flowers—Market-day in a small town—Mountains—Arrival at Mondariz—Character of the place—*Fiesta* of Santa Maria del Carmen—The procession—Native dancing—Reflections on the Gallegan peasants—Bottle factory of Mondariz—Village of San Pedro—A drive to the castle of Sobroso and Stone of Arcos.

Now let me show you one of the most beautiful places in Galicia as it awaits the pleasure-seeker to-day—a place that is situated among nature's most gorgeous banquet of wild magnificence; a place, moreover, that is endowed with every comfort of travel, so that the Anglo-Saxon stranger, who so often attaches primary importance to these outside things of modern progress, will find all the facile attractions that are necessary to his material happiness.

The day had clouded when we took our places in the automobiles that were to drive us from Vigo to Mondariz. The charm of a landscape depends so much upon weather; it is almost like the different moods of a woman, and has special aspects, each one of which seems to reveal a different secret, according to the weather and the hour in which one sees it. And I have never known weather to change so rapidly anywhere as in Galicia: in this respect she is as variable and as attractive as a neurotic woman. The mists, drifting up the *rias* from the ocean, bring frequent showers; but the rains are

seldom of long continuance, and the sunshine follows quickly upon them, drying everything and leaving the country sparkling and more vividly green than before. The colours in the earlier hours of the day had been almost garish in their brilliancy; now there were exquisite shades of grey, pale blues, and lilacs; tints that were faint and yet bright, most luminous, and quite impossible to describe.

This variety in the Galician climate, with its changing colours in a sensitive landscape, is a never-ending source of joy. In days of rain, when the mists roll in from the sea, the whole country seems to wither into grey-indigo shadows; on other days, under steady sunlight, it shimmers with gold and sparkles in gladness with brighter and brighter colours. At night, when perhaps you have climbed some hill or walk in the shaded *alameda* in one of the towns, you will see the landscape sometimes in clear moonlight, when every object takes a sharper outline than in the day as the colours of the night turn the scene to wonder; and sometimes, after rain has fallen, it is as if the land is sleeping under a wonderful silver net-work of silver mist. And always, from dawn to sunset, in days of rain and in days of sunshine, you will find something new, a wealth of colour and of beauty greater than is to be found in any other place.

It is one of the anomalies of Galicia that automobiles have in many districts preceded railways. The cars we travelled in were of great power, built by English, French, Spanish, and Bohemian makers. I was in a Hutchkiss car, which could, and did on a straight road, travel sixty miles an hour. There is no speed-limit in Galicia. The first mile or two of the road was level and we travelled at a great speed. How we escaped the slow, patient oxen, which now and again met us on the road, or the

dogs that continually rushed out from the houses upon the way, I do not know. I only know that we never stopped. As we rushed onwards, the vague outline of objects to our right and left flitted past us with phantasmagorical rapidity. At first we were frightened; but I noticed that our chauffeur never lost his splendid calm. He avoided all obstacles with a skill that really was extraordinary; he smiled, he talked to us, giving us much information and his views upon things, and confirming what he said with proverbs, which he communicated gravely as if they were sayings of his own; and he smoked cigarettes incessantly. Never in my life have I seen such perfect control. He was good-looking, of the dark southern Spanish type, and he began to seem to me almost like a god. My faith in his power to drive that car was child-like in its complete belief. I have forgotten to mention a small *chico*, who rode upon the step of the car. It was his duty to look out along the road, to sound the hooter, and also to right any small thing that from time to time went wrong. Despite the velocity at which we travelled, he climbed about the car with the agility of a young monkey, tightening a screw, wiping the glass before the driver whenever it became dimmed, altering one of the blinds—it was wonderful what that *chico* was able to do. He sang softly to himself. I felt utterly ashamed of my fear.

The landscape was charming and exceedingly varied, at times giving memories of the lower slopes of the Alps in Switzerland or in Tyrol, or perhaps more often of the mountainous districts in Wales or in Ireland, though all the colours were more varied. At first, at certain places in the road, we had glimpses of Vigo's beautiful *ria*, which recalled the coast scenery of Norway. Once, looking backwards, we saw the Cies Isles—sharp, naked peaks that rose out of the sea black and impressive, like

gigantic fingers; while the hills, with their austere outline against the sky, that now was a milk-blue, were tinged in the shade almost to black, but were a delicate blue, fading to the grey silver of olive-leaves, where the light touched them.

All this district is exceedingly fertile, owing its verdure to the rich soil and climate, which in this respect is the best in Spain. In every direction the landscape was streaked and dappled with trees and crops. Pines, Spanish chestnuts, walnut-trees, beautiful oaks, and the health-giving eucalyptus, of immense height and with cool grey-green leaves, were among the trees that we recognised. We saw box-trees grown to a great size, and the willow and the ash were shading the river-banks in some of the valleys. The fruit-trees were heavy with ripe fruit. There seemed to be every kind of fruit—apples, plums of many varieties, pears, and splendid trees of apricots and peaches. From time to time groups of little houses appeared; most of them were whitewashed, and this, in conjunction with the bright red colour of the tiles, and the fruit-trees and arcades of vines growing around them, gave them a beautiful and holiday aspect. Dark-eyed, sun-browned children ran out of these houses to stare at us, and the dogs rushed after our cars barking furiously. We met herds of oxen and heavily laden carts drawn by these patient animals and driven by a peasant girl or boy in picturesque dress. At intervals women appeared with one or two goats or a family of pigs, which they dragged in fear from our path. Once a diligence, drawn by a team of lean mules, and full of peasant travellers, passed us on its way to some outlying village in the mountains. Baggage was piled sky-high on its top, grotesque bales and bundles, such as Noah must have taken into the Ark.

It was a suggestive and rather painful sight to see the

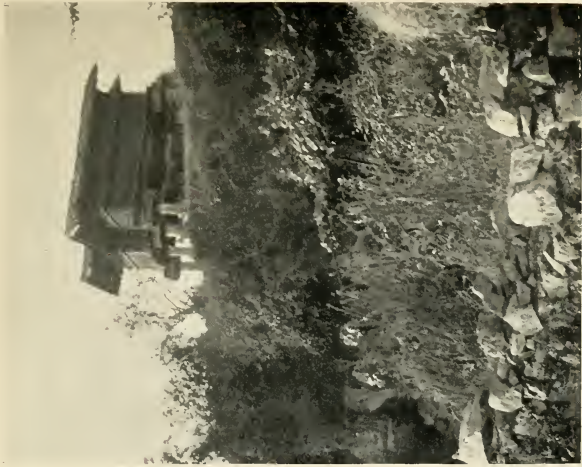
effect of our cars upon the natives. They stared curiously before they sprang back as the horns hooted and our beasts leapt forward; but it was worse still to see the expression of anger with which the native riders urged the horses at full speed, or the women dragged their oxen, goats, or pigs up the open slopes to get out of the way of the approaching monsters. It is surprising how these animals and primitive vehicles escaped us; all the skill for which Spanish drivers are famous was needed to prevent them, or us, being shivered to pieces. Once a pair of oxen planted themselves right across the road; there was a thunder of shouting and showers of blows and kicks before the beasts were dragged aside, and by a miracle we passed. I could not help feeling that our presence in those cars was an act of audacious sacrilege, which ought not to go unpunished. Yet—I must admit it—motor-travelling in Galicia is uncommonly useful and practical. But I was glad to remember that east, and north, and south stretched the mountains, leagues upon leagues of gorgeous and lovely splendour, where motors did not go.

As our journey advanced the landscape took greater beauty. I have never seen a more verdant country than that which encircles Vigo. The scenery is at once wild and yet gentle, with every delicate tint of green shading into the distant hills, where the mist turns the pine-woods purple. The maize-fields were already reddening, and above them, terraced on the lower slopes of the hills, were the vines, which, trained over tall, slender posts of grey granite, formed endless arcades, the nearer ones presenting an appearance of a great stone temple with a green roof. The vineyards of Galicia are far more beautiful than the vine-fields of southern Spain, where the plants are small and grow upon the ground. The long arcades were half in light and half in shadow, and

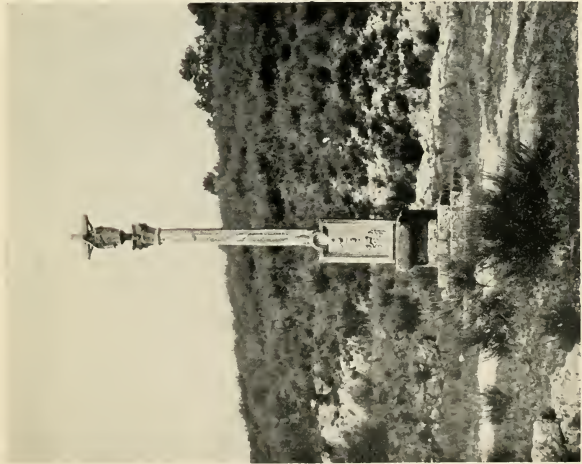
here and there among them were groups of vintagers: peasant labourers, who assumed to my fancy, as we saw them, the appearance of joyous votaries of Dionysus, at work in that green temple. A new variety of vine has been introduced into Galicia from America, which is grown on sticks in the same way as hops; and, although the plants are better able to withstand the disease which has done so much havoc of late years in the vineyards of Galicia, the new method of growing them is much less picturesque than the old. The maize-fields were new to me, and gave me great delight; the leaves are a bright emerald-green and the tall heads of gold quiver like tossing feathers in the breeze. I wonder why no artist has tried to paint them; they are more beautiful than the corn-fields that Léon l'Hermette and Gaston la Touche have painted so often and so successfully.

Maize is the most popular cereal in Galicia, and the picturesque maize-barns, with their thatched or tiled roofs and curious church-like spires, are a distinctive feature of the country-side. There is one in the garden of every peasant's cottage. Other crops are grown, such as barley and rye, haricot beans and onions, which are raised largely for export; but the Gallegans live chiefly on maize bread, potatoes, and cabbages. There were large fields of potatoes, and cabbages growing on long stalks at the height of about a foot and a half from the ground. I learnt that it is from this cabbage that the delicious Gallegan broth—*caldo Gallego*—is chiefly made.

But what specially delighted me were the flowers. There were flowers past numbering, in colours and shades past describing, in the gardens and by the roadways: the sweet-scented mimosa; glorious masses of mombretia; purple heather, growing much higher than the British plant; vetches in sulphur yellow, in pink, in red, and in violet; plumed saxifrages as showy



A GALLEGAN MAIZE BARN.



WAYSIDE CROSS, NEAR MONDARIZ.

as our hot-house plants; tufts of bright campion; and wild pinks, the ancestor of all the carnation tribes, in every shade of rose. In the larger gardens there were acacias, and camelias with white and red blossoms; glorious roses of riotous colours; and magnolias, both the small Japanese variety and the majestic *magnolia grandiflora*, which reaches a height of a hundred feet, heavily burdened with its exquisite scented flowers. The succession of delicate and sweet-scented flower perfumes is one of the great charms of Galicia. In the country districts it is never absent, but always changing—sometimes it is a hint of roses, then of the magnolia, or of mimosa, or carnation; but always there is some scent to charm—and what memories of joy scents can carry! In no country in Europe, except perhaps Bohemia, is there so rich a variety of flowers as in Galicia; this land would be a paradise to the botanist. I took advantage of a halt, necessitated by a puncture to one of our tyres, to examine the flowers more closely. I climbed the bank on one side of the road, and, in a few minutes, I had gathered more than a dozen varieties, of which some were known to me, but others I had never seen. Blue and white salvias were plentiful; there was one exquisite tiny flower, to which the peasants give the poetic name, “the little shoes of our Saviour.”

We soon restarted on our journey—for I must not forget to mention that the mending of the tyre occupied just six and a half minutes. Those accustomed to regard the Spaniards as lazy would have been astonished to see the way in which the repair was executed. For myself I should have thought it impossible for an accident to be rectified so rapidly; the wheel was off, the tyre mended, the wheel on again, and all was done in the most admirable and workman-like manner. The truth is the Spaniards can always work when they want to work.

They are, however, quite without the ridiculous English idea of work being in itself a good thing : a mistake which reduces men to the condition of speed-machines, and robs them of the two great joys of living—freedom and beauty.

We set forth again with a velocity which it would be difficult to have surpassed. Women were at work in the fields, turning the clods of earth with strange mat-tocks of most antiquated shape. I noticed several old Roman wooden ploughs, drawn by oxen and driven by women. The road was, however, soon lined by houses and gardens, in which women were sitting at work engaged in various domestic occupations, and children played garbed in rags of every different colour. Ox-carts, mules, and asses appeared in the road at shorter intervals, and the bustle which marks the neighbourhood of a large village became apparent.

We soon afterwards reached Puenteareas, a small town of most picturesque aspect. It was market-day, and the market-place was crowded with townsfolk and peasants who had come into the town from the villages. The wares were laid out on the rough stones in piles—dress goods, brightly coloured handkerchiefs, and hempen shoes, as well as household goods and the beautiful peasant pottery. The low stalls were piled with fruits and vegetables of all colours in confused abundance. Women and girls stood in groups of twos or threes, or sat beside their wares, in bright-coloured dresses, and all with kerchiefed heads. At one side of the market, where the fountain of the town was placed, a group of girls were chattering as they filled their jars with water. Many of the girls had beautiful faces, with magnetic eyes that reminded me of the women of Seville. I noticed several fair-haired and grey-eyed women. There was one girl with glorious red hair, plaited in two heavy

bands of gold, which fell below her waist. But it was not so much her looks, not even her wonderful hair or her eyes which were beautiful—it was the way she moved, the way she walked—lifted her arm to balance the pitcher she carried, the way she held her head ; it was this which delighted me. Never had I seen a woman in whose body there was the same freedom. Her movements were like the movements of a panther : a beautiful lithe animal whose body had a natural, untrammelled grace. There were some old women of frightful appearance ; they were just like the hags in the etchings of Goya. I noticed an old man, who sold some sweet-goods, seated by a small stall underneath an immense umbrella ; his face was so wrinkled that it seemed to have lost all trace of its original outline. He was hideous, yet it was a face with a curious fascination ; there was so much humour in his vivid eyes.

After leaving Puenteareas our way led into the mountainous district which surrounds Mondariz. The road became steeper ; we had to ascend and descend, and the farther we advanced the more precipitous became the way. I recollect, with a shudder, one hairpin corner when, after toiling up the first ridge of hills, we turned sharply and descended at frightful speed a road that now fell to the valley in great zigzags. Immense rocks that assumed strange architectural shapes towered up, seeming to bar our advance, and in the distance the hills stretched until they met another range of mountains. The scene gave an impression as if a race of Titans had been at work, building some city here. The bluish-grey tint of the rocks produced the coldest colours, and the effect was increased by the weather, which had grown dark and stormy. The summits of the higher mountains were cut off by great archipelagoes of mist that had drifted up from the sea, and soon rain fell like tears from the dark

heavens. This pass, which took us but a few minutes to traverse, seemed to me to be frightfully long. The hills continued to tower higher and higher, and when we had ascended one, another, which we had not seen, rose up before us.

Then the landscape changed. The mountain-steeps began to be less abrupt, and gradually subsided into plains that were connected with the ridges of the hills by gentle slopes. The wealth of trees and flowers again gave gladness. The fall of rain had cleared the air, and the mist now lifted, dispersing before the sun as if it had been smoke. A magnificent sight it was. The canopy of heaven resumed its smiling serenity, the clouds scudding away in fleecy mist, whose shadows scurried down the slopes of the hills and across the green of the valleys. And in the rays of illuminated light the mountains resumed their glorious tints of purple, of reddish-brown, shot-coloured, of amethyst, and of burnt-gold and greens, and the water of the streams in the valleys glistened in the intensity of the sunlight. Were a northern painter to try to transfix the scene to canvas, he would be accused of exaggeration. In our foggy climate we can form no conception of these vivid effects of changing colour.

It was late in the afternoon when we reached Mondariz, and the magic of that first view of the place is with me yet. Set among its crown of hills, with their blue-and-orange lights and purple shadows, sloping to the soft green of the vines, which here grow in luxuriant profusion, we came to the little town, then followed a thick belt of trees, and so through the gates we passed into the beautiful gardens, where the white building of the famous Peinador's Hotel stood out as if cut in marble above us. We had reached our destination.

So many things have been written on the discomfort of Spanish hotels that it may be well to pause a moment

on the progress that Galicia has made in this direction. It is true that the dreaded *posada* still exists; in the ancient town of Tuy I stayed at one of the worst inns I have found even in Spain. The traveller who leaves the beaten tracks must be content with the wayside *venta*, which is little more than a tavern, though the hospitality in these country houses is charming; but Mondariz and La Toja have hotels of which any country in Europe might be proud, while the hotels in the towns frequented by the tourist are, almost without exception, of fair size, comfortable enough to satisfy all ordinary requirements, and always clean. I know of nothing more misleading than the idea that Galicia is a dirty country. I would remark also that the Keating's recommended by Bædeker will not be needed; no, not even in the country districts. It is instructive to notice that the same admirable authority dismisses Mondariz without any notice of her hotels, while La Toja is not mentioned—a witness, indeed, that Galicia is going ahead rapidly, when the always-correct red guide of the traveller is left out of date.

The adjective “palatial” is used by most writers to describe the Peinador's Hydropathic Establishment. Now I dislike this word exceedingly; and, besides, it conveys a wholly wrong impression of the place. Rather would I choose the word “beautiful,” as I recall its palm-shaded gardens, its pump-room, where women work, bottling the waters and never cease in singing; its broad balcony, looking out towards the hills, and within the building; the salon of concert and dancing; the great dining-hall, with the finely carved ceiling; the bedrooms, which are models of brightness and cleanliness; and, last of all, the staircase, which is the most beautiful stairway I have seen. And there is another reason arising out of the special atmosphere of Mondariz, that causes the objectionable adjective to be yet more inappropriate. For what de-

lighted me was that, with all this modern comfort, the hotel is still a Spanish hotel, with that Spanish character that I know not how to describe, but which every one who has felt its charm will know. You will find here a gracious understanding of the stranger's needs which, at the same time, affords delightful freedom ; it is the courteous service that gives to a Spanish "house of hospitality" a joy in the day's living, so that the mere being there is gladness. La Toja, I think, has lost this ; it is the happy spirit of Mondariz.

It is difficult for any one with moderate powers of observation and imagination to spend even a week in this place of beauty and new impressions without wanting to write a whole book about it. Only at Mondariz one never wants to work. The way to enjoy her is to follow the example of the Spaniards who visit the place so often, and to make the most of simple pleasures. To walk in the gardens or the pine-woods, to drink the health-giving waters, to make purchases in the kiosks, with tempting wares from Madrid, to take picnic on donkeys to the farming estate of Pias ; to listen to music, to dance, to talk,—it is to these pastimes that the days at Mondariz are given, and the pleasure is in the emotions to which these enjoyments minister. These are of the finest, and the only way to care for Mondariz as she deserves to be cared for is to pass your days as in joyous courtship.

I can never forget the *fiesta* of Santa Maria del Carmen, which we were fortunate enough to witness. It was very long since anything had given me so inspiring a sense of the joy of life. To wear beautiful peasant clothes, to walk in procession, the rich and the poor together, to give honour to God and the local saints, to make holiday all the day and to dance all night, to chatter, to play music, and to sing, and to forget that one is

poor—this is happiness to a race who live by the aid of their imagination.

There is something traditional and sacred about these Spanish holy days, which are at once a religious ceremony and an outing of the people. This joining together of religion and pleasure is often a cause of surprise to the Anglo-Saxon stranger, who fails so hopelessly to penetrate Spanish spirit. In the simple, ardent, yet austere temperament of this people religion and happiness and love are forms of the same passion that merge naturally into one another. A holiday is still in Spain a "holy day," as once it was with us, now less happy, northerners.

From the surrounding villages the people flocked to Mondariz; all the morning they were arriving. It was astonishing how many people there were—more than a thousand. Almost all the women, and many of the men, wore the picturesque Gallegan costumes. It was like a great picnic. The peasants, with their families, had walked long distances, sometimes fifteen and twenty kilometres. Some of the women rode on mules and donkeys; they did not use a side-saddle or crupper, but balanced themselves on a thick saddle-bag as they jogged along at quick pace. The *caballeros* rode the native horses, which have a touch of Arab blood, and looked as if they had stepped from pictures by Velazquez, with sweeping tails and manes like dusty clouds. I saw more than one Gallego with his wife riding in front of him, not pillion fashion, as was the custom in England in Chaucer's days, but the man with his arms round the woman's waist, guiding the reins.

In his *fiestas* the Gallegan, like all Spaniards, will expend an immense amount of work—a quality which Salillas, the Spanish sociologist, notes in speaking of the *feria* at Seville. The example which we witnessed at Mondariz of this delight in what may be called "holi-

day-work" greatly impressed me. For days preparations were made, transforming the beautiful pleasure-gardens of the hotel into a fairy place, charming as a scene from *The Arabian Nights*. Hundreds of Chinese lanterns, in different but always harmonious arrangements of colour, were hung upon the trees, while festoons of flowers appeared in every direction. The broad roadway of the promenade was made to appear as if covered with a carpet. White sand was thickly laid, and bordered, with infinite patience and toil, with a well-designed pattern in red, green, and brown-coloured sand. I watched two workmen making this border; they were artists. On work that makes appeal to their imagination all Spaniards will expend a passion of energy; and it is this emotional quality brought into work which makes labour here so different a thing from what it is in commercial countries.

As the afternoon advanced an irrepressible animation seemed to be in the air. The gardens were packed with a close crowd of people; only the great carpeted promenade was kept empty. The procession was timed to start with the falling of evening. It was heralded with music and with the firing of bombs and rockets. Women, children, and men were ranged in order along the roads, winding through the pine-woods that surround the little church of Santa Maria del Carmen. They carried votive lighted candles over four feet in length; the slow march played by the band kept them in time. The men walked bare-headed, the women wore the beautiful *mantilla* of either white or black lace, and the children were white-garbed.

A significant quality of the Gallegans is their deep-rooted democracy. Every one, from the bishop and *alcalde* downwards, took their part in the procession; women of noble birth walked side by side with the humblest peasants. No one was excluded who desired to perform this act of happy worship to Santa Maria del

Carmen, the patron saint of Mondariz. Yet it seemed to me that lightness of heart, and not religion, had brought the people out for holiday. Life is short, and festivals are in Spain, as they were to the Greeks and Romans, a necessary part of life.

The *paso*, or image of Santa Maria, was carried on a flower-canopied litter, its platform thick-set with lighted candles. On either side was an escort of the Civil Guard, with arms on their shoulders, while a group of delightful tiny children walked in front, guided by silken streamers. It was an amazing sight, this crowd walking in the procession to an image. The stranger must of necessity marvel; I felt myself carried back for many centuries. But the people gave themselves up to the ceremony with a whole-hearted abandonment. Afterwards, I thought of nothing but the beauty of the spectacle. I had seen the Easter processions in Seville and in other towns; but the charm of such a pageant depends so much upon the place in which one sees it, and the soft beauty of Mondariz gave a perfect setting. The great procession slowly wound its way down the hill by the zig-zag road until it reached the gardens, the lighted candles of the walkers forming two long lines of flame amidst the green. It took its way to the extreme end of the illuminated pleasure-grounds, then turned to pass along the carpeted promenade in front of the entrance. The service was to take place there. The litter of Santa Maria was placed in a prepared flowered altar of blue hydrangeas. And now the beautiful *Salve Regina* was sung by unseen singers :

“*Salve Regina, Mater misericordiæ; vita dulcedo et spes nostra salve.*”

Nothing could exceed the overwhelming impression. The beautiful scene lent itself superbly to the music

and to the emotions of the service. When the short and impressive ceremony was over, the procession made its way slowly again up the hill-side to the church, and from one point to another music heralded the approach of Santa Maria, with an indescribable effect in the silence of the night. From time to time the fine baritone voice of the Master of Music broke out into the thunder of a refrain :

“ O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria.”

The appeal had the ring of a command.

In the dim light the pine-woods seemed larger and the great trees higher than before, while the lighted candles gave a romantic and mysterious charm. I held my breath, and my soul was moved. Then, in a moment, my emotion was turned to laughter, for I saw the six dwarfs, with their absurd, gigantic heads, come from the woods to take their part in the procession, dancing after Santa Maria del Carmen.

There is something specially characteristic of the Spaniard's attitude towards religion in the old custom, which thus introduces the comic element of the dance of the dwarfs and giants into the ritual of the Church. To the northern mind such a spectacle must appear an astonishing thing ; but to the Spaniard it is different ; in his religion he is so very much at home—it is part of his life's enjoyment. He has never felt the sting of Puritanism.

I was able to understand something of this joyous spirit when, the religious festival being ended, there followed the main business of the *fiesta*, and the peasantry broke into dancing, which was kept up with infinite zest until midnight. Dancing in Spain is far more than a pastime : it is one of the arts that belongs still to the people. The dances were the characteristic national

dances, the *jota gallega*, the *riveiraña*, and the *muiñera*, which every Gallegan dances. The dances are performed by boys and girls and men and women grouped in couples of four or six. There is a great deal of movement in the *jota*, and even more in the *riveiraña*, which is the *baile tipico* of the people; the hands keep time with the feet, alternately raised and lowered, and always there is the snapping of the fingers, which often takes the place of castanets. Most of the time the couples are facing one another, advancing and retreating with great rapidity, and with a muscular energy of body movement utterly unlike the Andalusian dancers. The *muiñera* is a monotonous dance, with few variations in its course, and it is danced to the tune of the Celtic bag-pipes, and often is accompanied by folk-songs.

The night-air echoed with glad sounds. There, as the hours declined, on the balcony of my bedroom, which overlooked the gardens, I sat and watched the people. There was something infectious in the gaiety—and what a lesson it was! In this scene of joyous enchantment it was impossible to detect the faintest impulse towards rowdiness; the mirth was never vulgar, there was no sign of drunkenness. That indeed is the final lesson of the *fiesta*, the abandonment to happiness, in which there is nothing of the northern brutality.

Towards midnight, when the lights began to fail, the peasants set out for home as joyously and as soberly as they came. Strains of music and song floated across the silence of the night, and I saw little family groups of Gallegans, carrying torches to guide them, scattered among the pine-woods or on the hills. I sat for a long time after the last peasant had gone. The village lay nakedly beneath the stars, beleaguered by the darkness of the pine-trees, guarded by the mountains, which took strange outlines in the wonderful southern

night. I could hear no sound now, only a soft hissing stir among the trees, where a few lights still flickered. I almost felt afraid to move, lest I should spoil the perfect sensations that the day had given to me.

This consciousness of happiness in the lives of the Gallegan workers never left me during the days we spent in Mondariz, nor indeed afterwards, in all the places we visited in Galicia, when we saw the people at work as now we had seen them at play. I am aware that this statement may easily produce a false impression. There is terrible poverty in Galicia. The peasants in the country and the labourers in the towns suffer much injustice in too heavy rents and an unfair burden of taxation. Emigration is the terrible wound whose bleeding is exhausting Galicia. The number of people who evidently are very poor is painfully large. But what the observant stranger will find out is that the rich Gallegan temperament blooms on a dog's allowance. Not their poverty, but their splendid capacity for eluding its misery, is what delighted me. These people are poets, and understand the few things in life that, after all, really matter. And if I distrust my own impressions, I may record a conversation with a cultured and thoughtful Gallego, who knows England well, and is keenly interested in the amelioration of the condition of the peasantry of his own land. "In your country want of money and unhappiness always go together," he said; "but here it is not the same! You see, our wants are so much simpler, and even the poorest among us have the sunshine."

I recall the many visits I made to the bottling-water factory, which was to me one of the most delightful spots in Mondariz. A famous architect of Madrid has designed the beautiful building, not yet completed. The work-rooms are open to the air, and the whole business of bottling is carried out at the springs. The ox-drawn



SCENES OF GALLEGAN PEASANTS : OX-CARTS.



SCENES OF GALLEGAN PEASANTS : LAVADORES (WASHER-WOMEN).

carts come down from the forests laden with wood ; this wood is quickly made into cases in the factory, and then taken on trolleys to the spring of Gandara, or to that of Troncoso. Here picturesque men and women work in batches day and night, filling, corking, and labelling over ten thousand bottles during the twenty-four hours. A more industrious and charming scene of labour, and one more typical of the country, it would not be possible to find. Whenever I came here I found the workers singing ; sometimes it was the beautiful folk-songs, the " Miña cariña meu lar," of Rosalia de Castro, or an older Gallegan song ; sometimes it was the chant, " O Santa Maria, Purissima." The singing was the chanting heard so often in Galicia, a kind of long dwelling on one or two passionate notes ; not always beautiful, perhaps, to unaccustomed ears, but disturbing in its appeal, which blends so strangely joy and sadness.

Much of what is most characteristic in the life of the peasantry may be studied at Mondariz. Wherever we walked, in every direction, we saw a charming scene of labour. On the banks of the river Tea girls washed the linen to snowy whiteness to an accompaniment of singing. Only fifteen minutes' walk from the hotel is the charming, ancient village of San Pedro, a centre of primitive life, where women still grind their maize by the stones. On the farming estate of Pias, which supplies the hotel with meat, milk, butter, and fruit, and where vines are grown and wine is made, we saw women and men using the flail as it was used in England two or three centuries back, but the end of the flail was different in that it was flat and not round. On more than one occasion we were invited to enter the gardens and houses of the people. I never saw poor people so comfortable in their poverty as are the very poorest here. In one place a Gallego, who had returned from the Argentine, took pride in showing us

his little farm. We sat with him under a natural bower of vines ; near by was a stream of delicious clear water. With the fine Gallegan hospitality he gave us peaches and ripe figs from his fruit-laden trees, and wonderful flowers. It was delightful in the heat of the summer day to rest in that cool place. Yes, it is pleasant to be a stranger in Mondariz ! It is as if a door had been opened—a new door in the experience of life—and one finds oneself with bright strangeness in a world in which the simple conditions of life make it possible for a people to live on maize and a little fruit—and yet be happy.

On the last day of our stay we visited the Castle of Sobroso and the Stone of Arcos, which are within the compass of a morning's drive from Mondariz. The day was gloriously fine. A short ride on a road that zig-zagged up the hill-side brought us to a picturesque hamlet, where we left our motor-cars to commence the ascent on foot. By the road-side were two beautiful Celtic crosses, bearing inscriptions and faintly outlined reliefs.

Mediæval castles are frequent in Galicia, and are a witness to the ancient history of the country ; some, such as the Castillo de Mos at Pontevedra and Monte Real at Bayona, are still the homes of the old nobility ; others, like Sobroso, are in ruins, while still others have been converted into hospitals and schools. These castles are all built upon hills, where once they were little cities of refuge from the perils of the plain. Sobroso, as one sees its fine twelfth-century tower, which is all that remains of the old fortress, has still a savage strength in its grey stones as it rises like a larger rock from its precipitous hill. And the wild growth of trees which surround it, their trunks heaving this way and that, seem to race up and down the hill-side, almost like armies meeting in battle. There is a fascination in all buildings that carry a history. Sobroso was the centre of a famous siege. There the

beautiful Queen Urrica was imprisoned ; legend says that she still haunts this romantic spot, which to-day is the home of hawks and owls and bats.

By dint of climbing we reached the summit. It was nearly noon and the heat was terrible. But in the interior of the tower the shade of the trees gave coolness ; it was calm and silent here. The view is certainly very fine. I sat within the archways of one of the windows and looked out upon the mountains, which seemed far off in the intense heat that burnt all the distant colours into a hard blue ; nearer were vineyards and olive-groves, greens and greys of inexpressible vividness, watered by the never-ceasing streams which flow down the hill-sides, and which now, in the strong sunlight, glittered like diamond chains on a green dress.

On our return journey we entered a small *venta* and were refreshed with native wine and cheese, and had a further opportunity of witnessing the courtesy of the Gallegans. We sat at a long table with several muleteers and natives. I felt as I have always done in the presence of the Gallegan peasants, that I was in the company of gentlemen.

A short drive brought us to the path that leads to the balanced Stone of Arcos. The sun was burning as, panting with heat, we followed a rough walk, which on either side was strewn with great rocks. I have not often seen a wilder road. The gigantic rock of Arcos is poised on the top of another enormous boulder in such a way that it seems as if a touch, or a strong wind, would send the mass headlong into the road below. Yet the stone has been in its position for ages. The shade of the rock was delightful ; one does not understand in England what joy shade can give. As we lay in happy idleness, I looked out on the landscape, which is one of the grandest in the neighbourhood of Mondariz. It is surprising the changes

of scenery that you find in Galicia ; really you seem to jump from one country into another. Here I was reminded of the wildest regions of Connemara, only the colours were much stronger. I tried to make mental notes of them, but the glitter of the sun was too intense. I began to dream. Then a peasant with a mule came along the road, and a woman followed, and a girl ; both were carrying heavy loads. The spell was broken : it tired me to remember that people were working in the dense windless heat of this burning day.

CHAPTER V

THE OLD TOWN OF PONTEVEDRA

Another motor drive—Incidents of the journey—Pontevedra—Magnificent situation—History of the town—The *mareantes*—Santa Maria el Grande—Santo Domingo—Aspects of the town—Marin and Combarro—Monte Perreiro, the estate where the Lerez waters are bottled—A charming scene of work.

WE were obliged to pass through the same mountain-road as before in order to reach Pontevedra. The automobile in which we travelled on this occasion merits a description. It was like the char-à-banc cars that are used in the rural districts of England—each of its seats, of which there were a great number, was able to accommodate four passengers. It was provided with an awning, which was suspended by the aid of iron bars, and bound together in several suspicious-looking places with cords made of spartium. This awning had an uncomfortable habit of collapsing on the top of some one's head, and, in time of rain, it sent a deluge of water pouring over one. But the distinction of the automobile was the speed at which it travelled. We ascended and descended, at a terrific pace, the steepest declivities, and turned the sharpest corners at a marvellous speed. We literally rattled over the mountain-roads, and at certain places where, as sometimes happened, the road stood in need of repair, we bounded from our seats, we tossed from this side to that, precipitated willy-nilly against our companions—it was like pitching in a small boat on a rough sea. Our safety owed its continuance alone to the assurance and dexterity of

our chauffeur. He seemed almost diabolical in his determination to make his great car keep pace with the private motors in which some of the party travelled. When one of these cars flew past us our speed increased. There seemed nothing to prevent our being shivered to pieces at the bottom of one of the various precipices, or when we turned those terrible corners. I almost grew to feel that the situation called for an accident. Nothing but the great beauty of the landscape prevented us from becoming melancholy, owing to the broken feeling in our bones; but the mountains, which seemed to stretch onwards in every direction for league upon league, green valleys, and ragged, towering heights, imparted such grandeur to the scene that complaints were silenced. We were held by this effect of strength and more than compensated for the jolting we endured. The day, which had been cloudy when we left Mondariz, had cleared, and the sky was lightening every moment, and the face of the landscape changed colour as the light changed. But at last what was to happen did happen. Our agreeable car waited for the adventure till we had traversed the mountain passes, and had reached a small hamlet a few kilometres from our destination. At this place it stopped, after much puffing and snorting, and refused to move further. Finding that, in spite of the efforts of our chauffeur, the damage was irreparable, we were glad to leave the car and finish our journey in fresh motors which had come to meet us from Pontevedra. In a few minutes, and without further incident, we reached the town.

The name of Pontevedra, with the Roman ring in the sound of it, had long been familiar to me. I knew that it was a town splendidly placed by the sea, and surrounded by hills. I had vague associations with its history. They began with the memory of our English

John of Gaunt, who had ruled here as so-called King of Castile. And after that there was the knowledge of Columbus, framed from childhood in my imagination, who sailed in his Pontevedrean ships to discover the New World. Thus I reached Pontevedra with many anticipations to be realised or destroyed. I recall our first sight of the town. The traveller who has learnt his trade can tell a "good" place at a glance. The moment Pontevedra became visible from the window of our motor-car, I perceived that Pontevedra was good. *Pontevedra, si o rey te vira non te dixá* (if the king sees thee, he will not leave thee). The old proverb sums up perfectly the charm with which Pontevedra even now holds the stranger.

The town bears a general resemblance to all Galicia's maritime cities; but it is the most splendidly placed of them all. Set at the head of its lovely *ria*, where the rivers Lerez, Alba, and Tomeya empty their waters into the sea, it is girdled by hills that are backed by the Sierra, high aloft; and it is surrounded by an ever-fresh expanse of verdure. I know no other town with the scenic features of Pontevedra.

Nor is it in natural beauties alone that Pontevedra delights. The town is famous alike for its history, its maritime record, and its antiquities. And now, after so many centuries, although partially changed for modern needs, it has not lost its old character. Its arcaded streets have hardly changed through the ages, and indeed the past so dwarfs the present that things which happened when the world was young seem just as near as the events of to-day. It may be said of Pontevedra, as of Santiago, that it is all made up of history. There is hardly a building without its memory; embedded in the stone work of its houses are inscriptions—escutcheons of ancient families that recall all kinds of vivid past

happenings. Truly the stones of Pontevedra are *set* in history.

The character of Pontevedra as an important maritime centre, made its reputation at the beginning of Galicia's history, and even before, for the town is said, on the authority of Asclepeades, to have been founded by the Greek Tenerco, who gave to it the name of *Los Helenos*. The Phœnician merchants had a settlement here. The Romans occupied the town, and showed their sense of its importance by making it a station on one of their military roads. It was the Romans who gave its name of *Pons vetus*, from which Pontevedra is derived. The Suevi inhabited the town for an unknown period; and the numerous Suevi, Iberian, and Celtic remains are witness of an extensive old civilisation.

The Pontevedrans were an adventurous and seafaring people; they compiled the first and most important code of maritime law in Northern Spain. In the Middle Ages we find the town a centre of the fishing trade in Galicia. Molina speaks of Pontevedra as the largest town in the kingdom; he mentions its trade with Valencia, Andalucia, Sicily, and places even more distant. All its wealth and activity were connected with the sea. In each year more than a hundred vessels laden with sardines left its port, while its fishing trade amounted to over eighty thousand ducats. Its citizens were merchant fishermen, called by themselves *mareantes*. They formed among their company a fisherman's league, the *Gremio de la Cofradia del Cuerpo Santo*. They were a wealthy and powerful body, with their own ordinances, laws, and regulations. It seems they were accustomed to fight as well as to fish, and on one occasion, when thirteen Pontevedrans had been carried off by Turkish pirates, the *mareantes* were granted by the bishop of

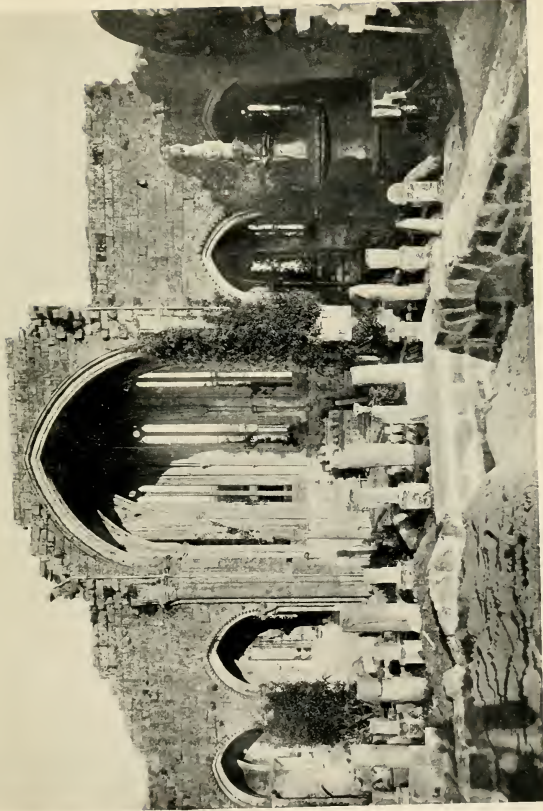
Santiago the privilege of fishing on Sunday, on the condition that they spent all money so earned in ransoming the captives. At this period Pontevedra was surrounded by a rampart, with bastions and castellated towers at regular intervals.

In England we are accustomed to regard commercial success as a reason for the death of the art-impulse. It is, therefore, of special interest to know that the *mareantes* used their wealth in urban improvements. To their enterprise Pontevedra owes her beautiful church of Santa Maria el Grande. It was erected as a thank-offering to Heaven for the prosperity of the town. Morales, who visited Pontevedra in the reign of Philip II., speaks of the church as "Santa Maria de los Pescadores" (the fishermen's church). "They have spent more than twenty thousand ducats upon it," he writes, "and intend to spend another twenty thousand, the sum needed to complete the work." A curious method was adopted in the building: the separate parts of the sacred edifice were erected at different times at the expense of various donors. Inscriptions setting forth the names of the givers are still to be seen on the walls and on the pillars; for instance, in the façade to the right of the main doorway is the inscription which gives the name of a *mareante* Bartolomé Trijo, and states the exact portion of the wall that he paid for. The marvel is that the church was not spoilt by this patch-work manner of erection. Yet it is a beautiful and harmonious building.

Santa Maria belongs to the peculiar movement in Spanish architecture—the Gothic merging into the Renaissance style; and is the finest example of *platersco* in Galicia, being without the florid excesses into which the style so readily fell at a later period. The great façade is known locally as the Jewel of Pontevedra: it is divided into five stories, separated by richly carved

columns, with statues between. Above the central doorway is a carved relief of the Assumption. If I record my own impression, the density of the sculptures at first, in a certain sense, detracted from the impressiveness of the whole effect; but little by little it grew upon the vision, and one saw that this richly figured and storied screen has a mass proportionate to its detail. It is the grandest part of a building which, as a whole, is one that can be praised. And some measure of the same commendation may be given to the richly decorated interior. Sculptured bas-reliefs of scenes from the Old and New Testaments cover the entire wall of the inner façade, forming what is known as a *contrafachada*. The chief interest in these carvings is in the treatment of details in the backgrounds of the scenes, in which local houses, bridges, mills, and other objects are shown. The Spanish artists are often local, and so literal. As I examined these sculptures carefully by the aid of a taper—for, like all Spanish churches, the light in Santa Maria is dim—they seemed to me to be excellent work, and very Spanish. I do not know the name of the artist who carved them.

There are older churches in Pontevedra than Santa Maria. There is the Romanesque church of the Franciscan monastery; and, though spoilt by restorations, it should be visited to see its sumptuous tombs of the old families of Pontevedra. The monuments to the famous Admiral Gomez Chariño and his wife are specially attractive. It was this admiral who, with his Gallegan fleet, burned the bridge of the Guadalquivir, and enabled Ferdinand III. to take Seville from the Moors. The convent of Santa Clara is surrounded by lofty and forbidding walls, and has the outside appearance of a fortress so common in Spain. One part of the building is very old, and tradition says that once this church was a centre



RUINS OF SANTO DOMINGO, PONTEVEDRA.

for the Knights Templars. The church of La Peregrina, with its slender towers, is modern, and dates from the eighteenth century.

Of greater interest is the ancient convent and church of Santo Domingo, now converted into an archæological museum. It was in this church that the French troops took quarters in 1809, and were stormed in desperate battle by the peasants of the district. To-day only part of the transept, of exquisite Gothic work and architecture, remains; it shows the curious polygonal apse—one large, two small ones, on either side. It is the finest example of pure Gothic work in Galicia.

This beautiful ivy-covered ruin, where flowers grow wildly as in a neglected garden, produces a very special impression. It is the storehouse for the antiquities of the province; and the old Roman milestones give an appearance, with the flowers, of a specially arranged rock garden. One half of the museum is reserved for Roman, and the other half for Suevi, Iberian, and Celtic antiquities. The inscriptions on the Roman milestones are dedicated to Trajan, to Hadrian, to Constantine the Great, and other emperors. There are Byzantine statues, sarcophagi, hand-mills, tombstones, inscriptions, and, indeed, more objects than I can remember. There are curious stones that are said to belong to the period of the Suevi, while the strange markings on some rough boulders are supposed to be Iberian writing. I saw old statues and many carvings, some of which are really beautiful, while almost all are interesting. The columns of the building itself are ornamented with iconographic carvings; on one of the capitals a fight is shown between warriors and a dog, on another monstrous birds are making furious attacks with their beaks. On the inner walls are faint traces of old frescoes. I saw, too, some curious markings, which, I was told, were the lapidary

signs of stonemasons. There is a fourteenth-century altar covered with really fine tessellated carvings, and on it a statue of John the Baptist, an early example of Spanish stone-work. An altar, taken from the church of La Virgen del Camino, and belonging to the next century, has a curious and very Spanish Pietà. The Christ has long, drooping moustaches, which reach almost to his waist. Spanish artists are always original. Near to a bed of beautiful purple and white iris is a stone fountain, which once stood in the centre of the town, and also a circular font covered with sculpture. The magic of Santo Domingo is very real and beyond description. Set in the midst of the modern town, you pass out of the gay Alameda, with its pleasant life of to-day, and at one step you seem to have spanned the great gulf of centuries. It is this sharp contrast that makes the appeal of the place so distinctive, at once so surprising and alluring.

Yet in my final impressions of Pontevedra there stand out not alone, or indeed even chiefly, this old past of the town that is kept living in San Domingo. I thought at least as much of the Pontevedra of to-day; of the imposing modern buildings, the Ayuntamiento and Palacio de la Deputation in the *paseo* of the Alameda; of the Public Gardens, where the azaleas were heavy with white and red flowers, and where the band on Sundays attracts the women of beauty and fashion in Pontevedra; of the harbour, in which always the fishing-craft find shelter; of the market, with its vivid, shifting colours; or the arcaded streets—the Plaza de la Teucer and the Calles Real—the centres of the town life, where all day long the busy citizens pass to and fro. Here there are shops filled with modern wares, and you may buy Kodak films, and chocolate sells itself in pink ribbons. Everywhere in the streets of Pontevedra you will find pictures. There is the old Jewish quarter, the Lampas de Judias,

which has remained almost unchanged. Strange figures pass on meek mules, or still meeker asses, and the variety of the people is exhilarating. Here and there within the town you gain glimpses of the sea and of the beautiful country around; there is a splendid outlook from the Puente del Burgos across the other side of the water. You walk down the Alameda, with its double road and stately trees, to the Plaza de Toros, set where Pontevedra melts into its bay. Galicia has only two bull-rings; one here, the other at La Coruña. The beauty of the situation is unrivalled, and from within the great building, looking through the open arcades of the windows, you gain a series of perfect visions of the sea and the environing mountains.

They are not rugged or of forbidding aspect, these softly undulating hills; their lower slopes are verdant with vineyards and fields of maize and flax; and they shelter, not far off, the Castillo de Mos, one of the chief of Galicia's ancient castles, which still retains its glory as when the Sotomayors ruled in the Middle Ages. The higher range of the Caudan Sierra, which guards the distance eastwards, are treeless, immense, rocky peaks. Sometimes, in the sun, the brilliance of the atmosphere causes them to draw close—awfully close; but on sunless days, when the glitter leaves them, they are a mass of dark shadow. Their great sweep carries with it the impression of cloud-scenery, and seems to belong more to the sky than to the earth. Here, on these desolate heights, wolves roam and the wild boar is hunted.

The scenic opportunities offered by Pontevedra are many. It is equally tempting to take one of the numerous drives in the vicinity of the town; on the south-east side, across the *ria* to the charming little port and fishing-village of Marin; or, crossing the bridge for about two kilometres in the other direction, to Combarro, a village dating back to most ancient days, and very picturesque,

with its steep-rising, stone-paved streets, and strong old granite houses, red-roofed and green-balconied, which have been there for more than five centuries. Here you will see, just outside the village, the house where Pedro Sarmiento was born. Two old maiden ladies, the last links in the family of the famous old navigator, still live there. The inhabitants call them *Las Sarmientas*. You climb the hill of the village, to reach in a few minutes the monastery of San Juan de Poyo Grande, where the monks sing the *Salve Regina* at the Saturday afternoon mass. Here, too, you will see the stone sarcophagus of Santa Tramunda, which was discovered in the neighbouring hermitage of San Martin. Its lid bears an ancient cross belonging to the sixth century, while above is a painting of the saint of much later date. Legend relates that Santa Tramunda, being captured by the Moors, was miraculously enabled to walk over the sea, and thus return to Combarro. You leave the monastery to pass to a shaded terrace in front of the church, commanding an exquisite view over the Ria de Pontevedra, with the island of Tumbo in the distance, and Marin on the other side of the water.

Once more you leave Pontevedra, this time by boat up the River Lerez, whose banks are thickly wooded, and are gay with glowing masses of flowers and green ferns. More beautiful scenes than those you will pass through cannot be pictured. At Lerez the river forms three large lakes which are called *salons*. Here you will see native fishermen, fishing with their quaint bamboo rods for the brown trout, which abound in the Lerez. Not only is the district a delightful haunt for the dreamer and lover of beauty, but for the sportsman and the archæologist. It is here that cuneiform inscriptions are found on the rocks. At Langada there are evidences of a Phœnician settlement.

Monte Perreiro is the estate where the Lerez waters



THE MARKET, PONTEVEDRA.



COMBARRO, NEAR PONTEVEDRA.

are bottled, and here the student of Galician life will have a further opportunity of witnessing one of the scenes of happy labour, which are, perhaps, the most delightful of all the charming experiences that travel in this land brings to the stranger. To me it seemed specially characteristic of the new Galicia of to-morrow; this prosperous modern manufactory placed in the midst of most exquisite gardens, where flowers grow in lavish wonder, and palm-trees and eucalyptus groves give shade from the sun. From one vantage-point you gain another view of the sea and of the town, and you will not easily part with the impression of those stretches of blue water, with the encircling hills beyond. Nothing is wanting to complete the picture—there lies Pontevedra, a mediæval jewel set between the beautiful sea and the beautiful land. In these delightful gardens you may wander, undisturbed by any sound save the singing of the women, which comes from the open doors of the work-rooms. And the soft notes are like a penetrating perfume, enticing, full of thoughts that are beauty. Now and then there may come a sound of laughter, as the women come out to work on the banks of the river; and the echoes of their voices, as they linger among the trees, will seem to make the gladness more insistent. And living, as one so readily does here, on one's impressions, one may well come to feel that what does anything else in the world matter when, at last, one has found a land whose people understand the difficult lesson of uniting work with beauty? This was, certainly, the final and most fruitful sensation that Pontevedra gave to me; yet, indeed, any one unnoticing or heedless of these things might well come to love this place for its own sake, for its natural beauty and the charm of its associations. When I left it, after a too brief stay, I felt that I was leaving what is to-day still one of the most delightful of Galicia's towns.

CHAPTER VI

THE ISLAND OF LA TOJA

From Pontevedra to La Toja—The Jewel Island of the sea—The Grand Hotel—La Toja Baths—A morning walk—Life on the island—A regatta—Gallegan music—Folk-songs—Dancing—The *muiñera* again—A conversation.

THE road from Pontevedra to La Toja, which skirts the north side of the Ria de Pontevedra, is exceedingly picturesque; and, although we traversed the greater part of the distance in wretched weather, with a beating rain, nothing could diminish the grandeur of the landscape. At certain places, where openings in the trees and the slope of the ground brought the sea and the soaring sierras into better view, the scenery was remarkably like Norway. I recall one place, where, on our right, opened a narrow side-valley which gave a magnificent view. The sea was calm like a lake, and the shoulders of yellow brown hills rose direct from the water's edge, hemming it in on every side. There was one cliff that had a beaked summit, forming a sort of cowl, as if it were drawn far over the face of the rock. Torrents, which were almost in flood owing to the recent rains, foamed in the valleys. The road passed over them by old and picturesque stone bridges such as are frequent in Galicia; many of these bridges are said to be of Roman building, or at least to be laid on the lines of older bridges built by the Romans, who have left many remains in roads and bridges in the district.

We passed no town ; but, from time to time, a group of little houses appeared, granite-built, and with balconies and roofs of red tiles ; and each house had its arbour formed of vines, which in this part are trained to grow over bamboo-stalks, and supported at each end with a great slab of grey granite. On one house, which was empty, some coloured papers were fastened to a stick, like the windmills sold for children at fairs. I was told that this was the custom of the Gallegan peasant builders, to show that a cottage was finished and ready for occupation.

It might perhaps be supposed, from my description, that Pontevedra is separated by a great distance from La Toja, and that our journey occupied many hours. The distance, however, is only twenty-three miles, and, in spite of the steep gradients and sharp turnings that are the common features of every Galician road, one of our motor-cars travelled the distance in two minutes over the half-hour. The car in which I rode was delayed a short way before reaching La Toja by the misadventure of a puncture. I took advantage of the temporary stoppage to gather a delicious white flower, which was quite new to me, and whose botanical name I do not know. It was carpeting the marshes on the banks of a stream, and close to the sea. I am not sure if it resembled more either a lily or an orchid, but it was the most exquisite wild flower I had found, with wonderfully shaped white petals, and in its centre a tint of delicate green, and with a scent pungent, and yet sweet, that I can still recall. It is strange how strong an appeal a small thing may make to one. My recollections of this journey—in my memory the most beautiful of all the many beautiful rides we had in Galicia—centre in those flowers, which I carried with me ; and of which one bloom, discoloured and shrivelled through careless pressing, I have now—only the faint still-sweet scent remains. . . . But bah ! I am growing

sentimental. Beauty, like love, is too deep a thing safely to write of in words.

Evening was beginning to set in when we reached the sandy promontory of Grove, which is separated from the island of La Toja only by the narrow isthmus of sea. Formerly the water used to be traversed in a ferry-boat, but the number of visitors who now come to La Toja rendered this passage inconvenient, and the boat has been replaced by a bridge of most daring and striking construction. I am no great admirer of modern innovations in Spain, but this bridge is really a work worthy of the country, for its great size—it takes about ten minutes to walk across it—and also for the beauty of its appearance.

The new bridge had been opened only the day before, and our arrival was heralded by the firing of cannons and rockets. The peasants from the surrounding villages had come out for the occasion. Profiting by a halt made at the entrance of the bridge, we had time to observe them. The extraordinary beauty and vivid colours of this group would have made a subject for the brush of Goya. Out of every four of the women there were three who had some claims to good looks; all of them had a striking appearance of strength. The custom of carrying heavy burdens on their heads causes the Gallegas to hold their bodies rather back, and this shows off the development of their fine figures to great advantage. I again noticed many fair-complexioned and light-haired women. There was one *niña* with blue eyes and flaxen hair, exactly like an English baby. Her mother appeared delighted when we told her this. It has always appeared strange to me, the attraction that everything English has for the Spaniards. I asked this little one's name. It was Concepción. Spanish names often sound strangely to us. "Ascensión" and "Con-

cepción ” will frequently designate the maids who wait on you in your hotels. I have never failed to be amused when asking “ Ascensión ” to bring one *agua caliente* (hot water). Yet some of the Spanish female names are the most beautiful in the world—as, for instance, Lola, Hilaria, Carmen, and Casilda.

Some dozens of *muchachos*, whose eyes glistened in the midst of their rags like so many black diamonds, took special interest in our appearance, which, without doubt, was as strange to them as theirs was to us. I cannot help smiling as I recall one boy of about two years old, who wore a fragment of a pair of drawers, and a blouse that was red in front and a wonderful yellow-green behind. The garment had, besides, two patches of bright blue cloth. Rags have a sort of picturesque splendour here, and they all, even quite young children, wear their clothes, however patched, with a beautiful and unconscious gravity. There is an entire absence of the absurd shame of the ill-dressed English person. This, perhaps, explains why the Spanish painters have always been noteworthy for their painting of drapery.

Soon afterwards we crossed the bridge. The storm of rain had ceased, passing suddenly as it had come ; the clouds which had obscured the sun had cleared, and, as we reached the island, sunset was beginning. We had an opportunity of looking at the landscape, while we waited for some of our party who had walked over the bridge. The sunset sky was a great wash of lemon colour, barred with crimson, purple and orange, and a colour that was almost brown, hard and clear as enamel. Amid this ardent scene La Toja stood out, a green jewel set in the sea ; and the water of the bay was palest blue, like a silvered mirror, while beyond stretched the sharp outline of the mountains, reflecting in diminishing shades the warm strong colours of the sky. Beyond the bridge

as you enter La Toja there is a grove of pine-woods, wherein are groups of cottages surrounded by hedges of trees and flowers, and a white, square church with a red dome. The Grand Hotel, built of stone, looked from this distance like a Moorish palace. Minute after minute the colours in the heavens burnt with unslackening ardency, and the extending glow set the sky ablaze : it stretched above La Toja like a vast awning of beaten copper ; and now the pale blue of the sea was turned to transparent purple, and the hills were outlined in glorious crimson. The rays of strong light made a wonderful play of colour upon the trees, they caught the great white bulk of the Grand Hotel, falling upon the outlines of its rising towers, touching its windows and its roofs with fire, until all the immense building seemed to flare in a wonderful illumination.

It was my first revelation of La Toja's beauty.

Night in Galicia has not the darkness of nights in misty northern lands ; you pass from the blue twilight of dusk to the twilight of dawn, and seem to have no night. I stood, some hours later, just before midnight, on the balcony of my bedroom window, which looked out over the sea. Under the high, clear sky, in the clean air, the lights, that were still burning in the open windows of the hotel, acquired a brilliance which, to my eyes, accustomed to the dullness of English lights, seemed unearthly. A vast round moon shone on the still pool of the bay, lending mystery to the masts of the yachts and blackening the shadows thrown upon the water by the sails of the many fishing boats. Near to the landing-stage I watched some boats that were preparing to start for the night's fishing. The men's lights twinkled in and out between the branches of the trees, and I could see an indistinct movement of figures coming and going ; once there was a burst of distant laughter, and I caught the

gleam of the fishing-nets as they were lifted into the boats. I could just distinguish the dark mass of Arosa Island that seems to close the entrance of the bay, and along the coast, at far intervals, a few lights still showed in the distant fishing-villages of Cambados and Efiñanes, making strange spots of fire which reached out like flaming tongues upon the water. Then farther, in the distance of the sea, there were splashes of brilliant light that lingered in the sky from warning beacons on the coast making the outlines of the hills as clear-cut as silhouettes; and farther still, above the yellow eyes of the hill-side lights, gleamed like diamonds the pale fire of a myriad stars. Just below me, on the promenade, two men still walked. I could see quite clearly the red glow of their cigarettes as they passed beneath my window. They stood to part for the night. I heard one say to the other, "Hasta mañana" ("Until tomorrow"). And the Spanish "good-night," that is so suggestive of happiness—for, after all, is not the sadness of everything in its ending?—seemed the final note in this perfect night. It was the Spanish spirit of content, lasting through the centuries, which understands that life is good, with all the beauty of the earth at its feet as a gift to use for contented living.

The first event in the morning was to try the famous La Toja baths. Much has been written of the therapeutic and tonic value of the thermal springs of this island, with their marvellous wealth of natural minerals, greater than that of any other hot springs in Europe, as well as of the La Toja Muds, which are specially rich in arsenic, and possess qualities of the highest radio-activity. I have before me, as I write, a little book setting forth the official medical report of the La Toja products, and the list of diseases they are able to cure recalls the advertisements of patent medicines. But in sober truth the effect

of the La Toja baths is wonderful. It is easy to understand how stories of miraculous healings arise. For myself, having no bodily illness to cure, I can only record my enjoyment. My bathe in the warm brown water—the colour is a thick yellow-ochre, almost the brown of dark clay—was so delightful that I was not content to quit it. After I had dressed, I undressed again, and had another bathe. I remember how my attendant, a beautiful Gallega with a body that was built like a Cybele, laughed at me. She tried to dissuade me, but I was not to be prevented. I was actually intoxicated with that warm, bracing water. I felt so light, so joyous, so full of enthusiasm, I experienced a desire to do something—that curse of unnecessary activity that the English find it so difficult to escape from even in Spain. None of my companions had as yet risen, so I took my cup of chocolate alone, and started out for a walk upon the island.

By dint of climbing I reached a point above the hotel with a wide and exquisite view of Arosa Bay and the mountains in the distance. The colour was wonderful. In our climate we can really form no conception of the variety of tints here and the sharpness of outlines. Any paintings that may ever be made of Spanish landscape will always look to us exaggerated. Imagine a turquoise sky above, and below a sea of sapphire so limpid that at that distance I could distinguish each shadow of the small craft which now were returning from the night's fishing. The mountains, with Arosa Isle in the distance, were clothed by the morning distance in lilac and shot-coloured tints, like a double-woofed silk. Everywhere around me was the same riot of colour. White paths wound upwards, between rustling walls of pines, which, in the sun, were almost purple, while moss and vivid grass, yellow vetches, blue salvias, and large pink heath

embroidered the earth into a carpet, which had in it the ardour of living things. The very stones shared in the intense coloration. Some of them almost startled me by their brilliancy. In one place they were of a fine green, streaked and mottled with a purple-red; elsewhere they were gold or a beautiful silver-grey. The only sombre tint that I saw around me in every direction was a long trail of thick black smoke from a steamer, which was coming in the distance of the bay. The steamer is so modern an invention that here it seemed like a blot; it reminded me of all those things I had come to Spain to forget.

This vigorous invasion of modern progress is never quite absent in La Toja, and the lover of Spain must always witness it with mixed emotions. It is an experience of almost too startling contrast to find a prosperous manufactory, with a daily output of 4,000 kilos of salts, and 20,000 cakes of La Toja soap, placed in this jewel island of the sea. It is only within recent years that the Gallegans have awoke to the treasure they possess in their natural waters; but they have adapted themselves to the new conditions with an outburst of energy which is singularly at variance with the common estimate of the unbusiness-like qualities of the Spanish character. The Grand Hotel at La Toja will be, when it is completed, one of the most magnificent hotels in Europe. In these courts and halls and splendid suites of rooms it is certainly most comfortable to live, but he who loves this gracious land will not find himself so much at home as in the Spanish hotel at Mondariz. It was difficult for me at least not to feel this great modern palace as a parasitic growth. La Toja Hotel is under the management of a British company. This explains the presence here of the English games of tennis and golf. Wherever the Anglo-Saxon resorts he wants to live precisely as he

does at home—he has so little imagination! He must have the same food—bacon and eggs for breakfast (you can have these at La Toja!), beefsteak for dinner; the same drinks—his whisky, his tea—and his games. I was very glad that I saw no one playing either tennis or golf. The mural decorations in the magnificent dining-saloon hurt me for the same reason: though by a Spanish painter, and depicting Spanish subjects, they are not Spanish, but a pseudo-imitation of modern French. Why will not Spanish painters be true to the great traditions of their native art?

A people that are alive must needs adapt themselves to the customs of other nations, and must borrow from them; but they must be true to their own traditions, and the borrowed things must be adapted to the national character. The most splendid quality of the Spaniards has always seemed to me their indifference to the material things of life and the small importance they attach to comfort. For this limiting of their wants enables them really to enjoy liberty. They have time enough to live, which we, struggling to satisfy the thousand ridiculous desires created by our so-called civilisation, cannot say we have. It is this understanding of the true proportions of life—of the few things that really matter—that causes those who love Spain to feel that, though this people belong to the world's great past, they belong also to the world's greater future.

But the British Company has not yet spoiled the Spanish spirit of La Toja. Every visitor here employs his or her time, most happily, in doing nothing. I was impressed with the happy calmness and tranquil dignity of the faces I saw around me, the result of a mode of life with so much happy leisure, filled up with conversation, baths, promenades, siestas, music, and dancing. No one had that busy look which you see on the faces of Anglo-

Saxons even in their pleasures. Once I was with a party of English fishermen in a beautiful old town. The fishing proved bad, and there was no train to take us away until the next day. I remember the remark of one of the men : " Whatever can we do if we cannot fish ? " How characteristic of the Britisher ! He has so many possessions that he never understands the tyranny they exercise over his life. To the philosophical Spaniard such a remark would be ridiculous ; he has the imagination to know how to be idle. But then, one needs to be happy to be successfully idle ; that is why northern people find it so difficult.

It was at La Toja that we had the opportunity of witnessing some of the most delightful scenes that we saw in Galicia, and the local colours gained an added vividness from the strange modern setting. The occasion was a regatta, the *fiesta* of the fisher-folk. All the afternoon they were arriving in boats ; the roads were black with people, an unending stream, which broadened and gathered in all directions, along the wide promenade by the sea, in the courtyards, and over the green spaces on the landward side. For several hours the peasants stood and watched the different events ; all well-behaved, quietly good-humoured, and affectionately friendly with one another. And what impressed me, as I moved up and down in the tightly packed crowd, was that not a single one of them all lost his temper, though each was doing his best to press forward to a position of better view ; they watched gravely, just as they gaze at the *pasos* in the religious festivals. I reflected how different would have been the behaviour of a London crowd. The absence of drunkenness renders the workers of Spain much superior to the corresponding class in our country, which we fancy to be civilised. Even at the day's most thrilling event, the race of the sardine boats, with twenty

rowers in each craft, there was no great shouting ; a few "Bravas !" and "Hurras !" but no loud noise. Yet the excitement among the supporters of the rival boats was intense—there was no mistaking that—the emotion was rather a waiting of expectation. The Gallegans, like all Spaniards, retain their dignity even in moments of excitement ; they understand that this is the way to gain the very utmost out of their sensations.

How well I recall the women of the crowd, for, as is usual in Galicia, there were more women than men. The Gallegas are singularly individual and fine types of women. They are usually tall, and have very distinct features, especially the nose. It is a face in which every line has character, much strength, and also humour, rising quickly to the beautiful eyes, but slowly to the mouth, lengthening it into a smile. The complexion is a warm olive, and in old age it becomes a yellowed mass of wrinkles. I do not know whether one must attribute it to their dress—the vivid coloured kerchiefs which set their faces, as it were, in an Oriental frame—but these women have a serious, passionate look, which is completely fascinating. They are different from the peasants of southern Spain, who are smaller, more graceful, perhaps, more piquant, and always appear to be thinking somewhat of the effect they produce. I saw many really beautiful faces that would furnish the artist with splendid and entirely new studies. The men appeared to me, on the whole, to be inferior to the women. Still they had most of them that air of nervous hardness which many Gallegans have, a kind of restrained bodily earnestness, in whatever mood, which always gives them so much interest in living, and such dignity. They all looked like men no one could venture to insult.

But my most agreeable recollection of the La Toja *fiesta* was the opportunity it gave me of hearing the



AIRES D'A TIERRA (MUSICIANS OF THE LAND), PONTEVEDRA.

native music and seeing the native dances. I have spoken of the natural aptitude of the Gallegans for song. Music is always to the Celt an instinctive means of expression; they do not learn it, it belongs to them. Every Galician peasant sings. Go to any roadside *venta*, and in the evening you will hear the *gaita* and the *tamboril* played, while dancing is sure to follow, with a delicious sense of gaiety. A special quality of the Gallegan songs is the way the people translate the music of other countries into their own language. I have heard popular English tunes, sung by the women as they work, which have ceased to be common in their sentiment, and become full of a tenderness into which passion has fallen; even slangy music-hall tunes take a new character, a lively brilliance that no longer is vulgar.

The true local colour in music is heard best at the *fiestas*, when the native musicians play the folk-songs of the people. At La Toja the players were the *Aires d'a terra* of Pontevedra (musicians of the land). Nothing could possibly be more democratic than the composition of their company; all are gentlemen of Pontevedra: professional men, shopkeepers, and one priest. They wore the beautiful old Gallegan costume; cherry-coloured breeches, adorned with gilt or silver filigrane buttons, high black gaiters, wide silk sashes of red or blue, and waistcoats of the same colours, embellished with buttons and stitching in gold and showing the white linen sleeves of the embroidered shirts; wonderful peaked caps, the tops of which are just like a cock's comb, adorned with projecting tufts, completed the costume. The fantastic style of dress, added to the fine appearance of these men, brought old Galicia before one's eyes. I had never heard such singing. Was it the perfect setting?—or was it, perhaps, the earnestness of purpose in these players, the self-absorption with which they gave them-

selves to the music with a more perfect naturalness than I have seen in any other race? Their songs I hear still, and well remember. There was a stirring old Celtic war-song, in which a native wildness spoke, a revolt which cried out in a storm, and then seemed to abandon itself in lament; another song, "The Emigrant's Farewell," sung in a minor key, had for its burden that the exile must long always for his home, and the vine would not grow, nor the sun shine until he returns: The song *Dos amores* (Two loves) was perhaps even more beautiful. I give a translation, but it must be remembered that in transposing into a foreign tongue the beauty is sacrificed.

The two loves keep my life:
 The fatherland, most adored,
 And my home;
 The family and the land
 Where I was born.
 Without these two loves
 I cannot live.

I feel that in my breast
 There is no love
 When over my country
 The sun does not shine.
 Oh death, come quickly,
 Put an end to my days,
 As without home and fatherland
 I cannot live.

This Gallegan music is full of surprises, always turning in unexpected ways. The tune varies, the rhythm disguised by a prolonged vibration, as it were, of notes turning round a central tune. And in these unique effects the native instruments the *gaita*, the *tamboril*, and the *coro* count for much: they seem to give an audible representation of natural sounds and natural things—of the life that belongs to the people. It is the music of a race whose roots do not belong to Europe;

of a people who have preserved an exquisite simplicity and wonder at the world.

It was something of this I felt when afterwards the peasants came into the great hall to dance the beautiful native dance, the *muiñera*, which now I was able to observe more clearly than in the open-air dancing I saw at Mondariz. It is a dance dating very far back into antiquity, and is one of the most important and typical dances of the North. Like all Spanish dances, it owes much of its character to African influences. The movements of the body, so much more important than the movements of the feet, and the actual play of the arms and hands, that are so special a part of Spanish dancing, are all movements that belong to the ancient dances of the East. The partners never touch one another; they move in quick step, swaying their arms and snapping their fingers, as they make first a half-turn and then a full turn. It is a monotonous dance, but with immense rapidity and vivacity in the rhythmic movements, in which every part of the body participates.

There were three couples, men and women. One of the women was quite old, and ugly. But the wrinkles on her face were but the work of time and the hardness of living, and went no deeper than the skin; they had not touched her soul. She was a little bowed, yet she held herself finely, as, indeed, do all Galician women. I shall never forget her perfect absence of self-consciousness; her abandonment as she quivered all over with the energy of the dance—and she used her castanets with the innocent coquetry of a young girl. The *muiñera* is different from the dances of southern Spain, and has no faintest suggestion of voluptuousness. It may rather be understood by its name “the mill dance”; and indeed it seems to give utterance to out-door things. Those rapid, sustained movements by which the true action of

the dance expresses itself, are a symbol of the popular life, of its action, its work, of its unconquered soul, and the way it has guarded the secret of the joy of life. The very continuance of the movements has a wild beauty, and, at the same time, conveys these emotions more clearly than variation could do.

And there was something specially suggestive in seeing the gracious old dance performed in the startlingly modern setting of the great saloon of the Grand Hotel, where the modern frescoes formed a comically incongruous background; a room, moreover, in which people of several nations were forgathering with one another—Spaniards, Portuguese, South Americans, and English promoters and travellers, and rich people. The very old and very new together. And to me, at least, it was the new modern things, and us—the travellers, the rich people—that seemed incongruous; out of the beautiful picture evoked by the old music and the dances.

The clash of tongues rose high: waiters brought whisky-and-soda for the English. I hastened to walk out into the wonderful southern night—lest I should lose the joy I had gained. The peasants had all set out for home again, as quietly as they came; there were only a few figures to be seen in any direction. The sea in the moonlight seemed a sheet of quicksilver, the little wavelets of the rising tide scarce breaking its calm surface. In the still night-air I heard fragmentary strains of music floating across from the bay.

I sat thinking in the quietude, then, afterwards, a companion joined me, taking up a conversation we had left unfinished earlier in the evening.

“How great you English are!” he said. “I think the one hope for the Latin people is in absorbing your methods, if they are to live, and not fall behind in the race of civilisation.”

I answered him almost with passion :

“Your excessive admiration for my nation is a mistake : you have the things that really matter—the things we have not got.”

He asked me to explain. A gramophone had been started somewhere in the hotel, and the harsh metallic notes smote the night-air hideously.

“Do you expect me to admire that more than the music you have given us to-night ?”

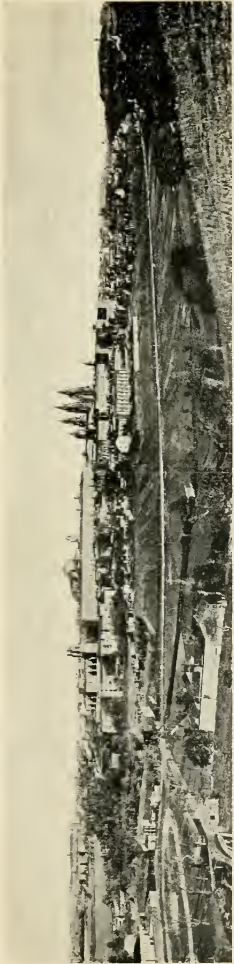
He laughed and understood, and soon afterwards we both went indoors.

CHAPTER VII

THE WAY TO SANTIAGO

The spell of Santiago—The legend of St. James—The prosperity of the city—Pilgrims—Intellectual brilliancy—Diego Delmirez—Jet-workers and money-changers—The scallop-shell—Illustrations from the *Codex* of Calistus—Music—The Slavs—The religious ceremony in the cathedral—Santiago of to-day—The city of the lover and the saint—Reflections and remarks on the Gallegan character.

IT sometimes happens to the traveller, through some accident in his way of approach, or through some fault in his own mood, that a place he has for years looked forward to visit fails entirely to fulfil the romantic conceptions that his imagination had wrought around it. It is the penalty paid by the imaginative person to life. And for this reason I came to Santiago with a certain apprehension; there is always an element of speculation in a new enterprise, and one's hope grows less with the years. Sometimes, indeed, imagination and reality run almost into one another. There are places with a spell to which one must be instantly subject, places which can lose nothing from the fear of which I have spoken. This was so at Santiago. No city has ever exercised in quite the same way such a spell upon me; and, now that I look back upon the days that I spent there, Santiago de Compostela seems to me the most fascinating, as well as the most typical old city of Spain, challenging even Toledo, Segovia, and Avila in my memory. Here is the perfect type of an old religious city, where the spell has not been



THE APOSTLE'S HOLY CITY, SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA.



AROSA BAY AND THE ISLAND OF LA TOJA.

broken either by an inrush of commercial activities nor by the desecrating presence of tourists. Vigo, Coruña, Orense—almost all Galicia's towns, have awakened; they are adopting the customs of modern life, and, at least, are beginning to live in the hurrying world of to-day; so that in them the stranger is forced to think of the new Galicia of to-morrow rather than to dream in the past. Santiago is still the goal for pilgrims, who come, indeed, to the city to-day, not, perhaps, for the same reasons that brought them there of yore, but still with that reverence which is the spirit of worship.

The mystical, and still living, legend of the apostle James, though perhaps of no greater significance than other Spanish religious legends, yet sufficed to give an incomparable spiritual crown to Compostela.

This is how the great happening came.

It is said that, after preaching the Gospel in Damascus, the apostle James journeyed to Galicia and instructed people in the Christian faith, making his centre at Iria-Flavia (Padron). While at this spot the apostle saw a vision of Our Lady, who bade him build a church there. This he did, and, having placed a bishop in charge, he continued his journey to the remotest parts of Galicia, and so journeyed through Aragon, Castile, and Andalucia. St. James, his wanderings over, returned to Jerusalem, and there, eleven years after the death of Christ, was beheaded by the order of King Herod for preaching the Gospel to the Jews. The disciples, accompanied by an angel of God, bore the holy body by night to Joppa, where they found prepared for them a miraculous ship, in which they set sail, with favourable breezes and a calm sea, till they came to the harbour of Iria, on the Galician coast. We read of a miracle being accorded to them. When nearing the end of their journey they beheld a man riding on the shore, whose horse, being

restive, plunged into the sea and then walked on the crests of the waves towards them. Suddenly, as they watched, both horse and rider sank beneath the water ; but, after a brief space, they again appeared covered over with shells. Since this event such shells have been the emblem of St. James and of all pilgrims, and this emblem has overshadowed the Keys of Rome and the Cross of Jerusalem.

The shrine of the apostle James was accounted sacred from the earliest days, and even at a period anterior to the legend. The disciples, according to the story, gained permission from a Roman lady governing the district of Iria-Flavia to bury the holy body, which was placed upon an ox-cart, and the beasts left free to take their course. They journeyed to the grounds of a villa, about eight miles from Iria, wherein was a stone image of the war-god Janus, that had been placed there by the inhabitants for their worship. No sooner was the holy body brought within the doors than the heathen god was dashed to the ground. The disciples then made with the dust a very strong cement, from which they fashioned a stone sepulchre and a little altar supported by arches. Afterwards, as happens in such cases, a church was built, and then, singing psalms of David, the disciples departed to instruct the Spanish people in the faith of the Christians ; SS. Athanasius and Theodosius staying to watch the holy sepulchre, which they did, until in due time they died, in peace and happiness, and entered heaven.

From that day, for eight hundred years, the holy shrine was forgotten. In the fourth century, and how much earlier it would be impossible to say, a small company of monks would seem to have settled here. Prayers were offered, and the ancient writers tell of many miracles being wrought by the apostle. But, persecutions arising,

the pious worshippers reverently heaped over the little chapel and its precious contents a mound of turf and tangled bushes, that the spot might be concealed.

Time passed until the dawning of the ninth century. In the year 812—when the history of Santiago really opens—the holy shrine was miraculously discovered by certain men of authority. A Galician anchorite, by name Pelagius, and other men, spoke of a wonder they had seen—a brilliant star that shone persistently over a thicket-covered hill called Lebredon. Before their wondering gaze strange lights had moved as in the processional, twinkling among the tangled trees, while mystic voices were heard in solemn chants. Night after night the star appeared in the same place, and finding, as men will, something miraculous in the affair, they went to Teodomirus, who was at that time bishop of Iria-Flavia. After consideration and due examination of the site, Teodomirus discovered, embedded in the thick groves of trees, the little shrine with its stone sarcophagus. At once the fame of the discovery filled men's minds, and in country and in towns the wondrous rumour grew. As happens in such cases, the news reached the palace gates. The King, Alfonso el Castro, fired with the story, either being filled with faith, or understanding the importance to Spain and to himself of such an impetus to the imaginations of his subjects, sought the shrine in person, accompanied by all his Court. Great were the changes made by this wise King in honour of the miraculous event. The episcopal see was transferred to the sacred spot, which henceforth bore the name Compostela, from *campos*, a field, and *stella*, a star. As was befitting, a church was built, which was endowed with land measuring fourteen miles in circumference. A solemn procession of bishops, priests, nobles, and citizens inaugurated the foundation of the new city, which grew rapidly in size

and importance, and was known to the world as the holy city of Santiago de Compostela.

The prosperity of Santiago seems almost as miraculous as the events which led to the founding of the city. From this time to the twelfth century, when Almanzor, the Unconquerable Minister, invaded Galicia, the life of the city reads more like a romance than the record of history.

Through all the years of the Reconquest the Holy City was the focus of Spanish patriotism. Santiago became the warrior-saint, who, riding on his white horse, fought the oppressor and was a shield unto the weak. Faith is the true royal road to fame. The way to Santiago became the road on which millions of pairs of shoes were worn out, on which infinities of feet were blistered. *Santiago y cierra España* was the national battle-cry in every desperate assault. Through every vicissitude the tomb of the holy apostle merged triumphant. It was spared by Almanzor when the city was laid in ruins, and the shrine, from being only an unpretentious church, was rebuilt a great cathedral. To the building of this edifice the whole world is said to have contributed; alms poured in from the faithful throughout Christendom. The pilgrims themselves took part with their own hands in the laying of its stones—young men and old, women of all ages, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, popes and prelates, emperors and kings, all lent their aid.

Miracles came, which the wise have always used to direct the faith of men, and the many thousands that were wrought daily drew a mighty army of pilgrims, who poured like the unceasing tides of the ocean into Santiago. From the most distant parts of the world men came to present their offerings and gain happiness from the troubles of life. Special roads were laid down in Spain, in France, in Italy, and even in lands more distant, to

facilitate these journeys. Bridges were built across ravines and rivers, and monasteries and inns sprang up at the chief halting-stations, and in dangerous places where they were most needed. Within the city the over-crowded houses—which all bore the sacred sign of the scallop-shells over the central portal—were never sufficient to accommodate the multitudes. Men and women slept in the precincts of the cathedral, on the stones of the cloisters, and even in the cathedral itself, using the galleries of the sacred edifice as if they were an inn. It was not until the thirteenth century that the making-up of beds in the cathedral was prohibited. We read of frightful crushes and stampedes taking place in the fourteen gateways that gave entrance to the city, which were of so dangerous a nature to the pilgrims' lives and limbs that complaints in reference to them were sent to Rome.

Kings and queens, princes and nobles, warriors and saints—all the great ones of the world joined in the processions. Once a queen, Matilda, the daughter of Henry I. of England, and wife of the Emperor Henry V. of Germany, journeyed here, and carried back with her, it is said, the bones of one of the hands of St. James. Isabella, Queen of Portugal, and Catherine of Aragon, from England, came to Santiago. Pope Calistus II. travelled from Rome in the year 1009, and afterwards wrote his *Codex*, one of the most treasured documents of the history of the city. In the thirteenth century Juan de Briena, King of Jerusalem and the Emperor of Constantinople, were among the pilgrims. Philip II. came here to invoke the aid of the apostle before embarking with the Armada for England. Louis IV. of France came with his French soldiers to leave their swords after the Second Crusade. Here, too, came the great conqueror, Don Juan of Austria, to place in the shrine of St. James the victorious flag of Lepanto. Most memorable visit

of all was that of the Cid, Spain's greatest romantic hero, who came to receive the honour of knighthood here. Saints came from every land, and among them the holy St. Francis, who journeyed from Italy; St. Bernard and St. Gregory; and St. Bridget, who came from Ireland.

Our forefathers in England, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, travelled in their thousands to Santiago. When, in 1254, Edward I. married Leonora, the sister of Alfonso el Sabio, a special bodyguard for English pilgrims was demanded; but they came in such multitudes that the French took alarm, and an edict was passed to prevent any Englishman entering Spain without the permission of the French King. Yet there are records that in the year 1395 six hundred pilgrims came to Spain from the city of Bristol alone, while almost every English port sent forth its bands of pilgrims. Thus, in the next century, we find a guide-book published for the special use of English pilgrims, entitled *The Way from the Lond of Engelond unto Sent Jamez in Galiz*.

And it was not alone in the spiritual sphere that Santiago de Compostela stood forth as a beacon light among the world around. Like every great religious centre, the town was a focus of work and enlightenment. Its archbishops were as remarkable for intellectual brilliancy as for spiritual enthusiasm; not only were they scholars, and sometimes fine architects, but they knew also where to find the best sculptors and craftsmen in Spain, or in other countries, to beautify the city and its splendid cathedral and churches. They founded a hospital of medicine and a school of music and poetry. They set up a famous printing-press when printing was still a novelty in the world. How remarkable a figure is Diego Delmirez, archbishop in the most glorious days of the city. He stands forth as a splendid pioneer and initiator in many fields. In the department of religion

he superintended the building of the cathedral, and erected the original cloisters, he also built many churches both within and without the city. To him Santiago owes her famous Colegita de Sar, and her churches of Conje and Santa Susauna. In art he was a connoisseur, and devoted his time to the development of architecture, of carving, and the handicrafts. He had also an excellent taste in music. In literature he was one of the great Spanish schoolmen. He founded a school for the cultivation of oratory, literature, and the Latin tongue; and as a philologist he must be accounted one of the preservers of the fine Gallegan language. So largely did literature flourish under his patronage that he has been called "the Mæcenas of Galicia." The famous *Historia Compostelana*, the original manuscript of which is preserved in the archives of the cathedral, was written at his bidding. But beyond and above these activities Delmirez was a man of practical affairs. He acted as mayor of the city, as well as archbishop. Agricultural improvements were introduced and encouraged by him. He also established a mint, that money might be forthcoming to meet the expenses of completing the cathedral.

Money-changers, silversmiths, and jet-workers represented the most important industries in Santiago; they all were established in quarters close to the cathedral. The jet-workers (*azabacheros*) gave their name to the street in which their trade was carried on. It led up to the principal entrance of the cathedral, and the north façade still is called la Azabacheria. It was their work to make the images of St. James, which were bought by the pilgrims. The apostle, with pilgrim's hat, robes, staff, and leather bag, is usually represented with two smaller figures, also in pilgrim's dress, kneeling on either side. The figure of St. James is never more than seven inches high. The more ancient specimens bear traces

of gilding ; they are of fine workmanship, and examples are rare. I have seen one in the British Museum and in the Cluny at Paris, and there are other examples in various places. More important emblems were the scallop-shells, which every pilgrim carried with him from Santiago as the authentic sign of his journey. The sacred shell was known as the *pecten Veneris* or *ostra Jacobea*, the first name arising from the resemblance of the shell to the comb of the ancients. It was with one of these shells that Aphrodite is said to have combed her hair when rising from the sea. In Galicia the shell was called *Ó Jacobea* (the shell of St. James). The sacred emblem was offered for sale to the pilgrims in all sizes, and wrought in many materials : there were shells in silver, in copper, in brass, in jet, in porcelain, and in tin and lead. The metal scallop-shells were the most favoured, and these the pilgrims attached to their robes and broad-brimmed pilgrims' hats. The traders were called *los conchiarii*, or *concheiros*, and so important was their manufacture considered that various edicts were passed in Rome to prohibit the shells being made in any other place except Compostela ; any one falsifying them, or wearing a shell other than the authorised emblem, was threatened with anathema and excommunication. Even as late as the year 1581 a fine was imposed, with confiscation of the shells, on any one who dared to imitate the holy insignia of the apostle, or to gild them with saffron that would not wear.

The confraternity of money-changers were established in Santiago at a very early period. They carried on their trade in the Azabacheria in company with the jet-workers. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, however, we find them no longer simple changers of money, seated on the ground with heaps of coin piled around them. Many of them were men

of standing and wealth, who had risen to the rank of bankers. Francesco Trevino, the secretary of Archbishop Fonosca, whose tomb and effigy may be seen in the capilla del Salvador of the cathedral, was one of the money-changers according to the authority of Villa-Amil.

In such ways as these Santiago grew and waxed strong in material, as also in spiritual, prosperity. If pilgrims came here in multitudes bringing precious gifts for love of St. James, the guardians of the city and his holy shrine were never unmindful of their great responsibilities. The gifts of natural site and scenery, of legend and miracle, the adoration of Christendom, and the learning and energy of its rulers—all combined to give to Santiago de Compostela a fame of almost unrivalled magnificence. But to realise the magnitude and extent of the influence exerted by Santiago we must turn to the vivid pictures given by the old writers, who kept the record of her fame. How many delightful things, for instance, we realise from reading the priceless *Codex* of Calistus! and whether or no the record is quite founded, in all its wealth of detail, on facts, it is none the less true in testifying how great was the spell which the holy city exercised over the imaginations of men. Listen, then, to what Calistus writes :

“ The doors of the sacred cathedral are never closed ; lamps and tapers fill it at midnight with the splendour of noon. Thither all wend their way, rich and poor, prince and peasant, governor and abbot. Some travel at their own expense, others depend on charity. Some come in chains, for the mortification of their flesh ; others, like the Greeks, with the sign of the cross in their hands. Some carry with them iron and lead for the building of the basilica of the apostle. Many whom the apostle has delivered from prison bring with them

their manacles and the bolts of their prison-doors, and do penance for their sins. The sick come and are cured, the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the dumb speak, the possessed are set free, the sad find consolation, and, what is more important, the prayers of the faithful reach to heaven, the heavy weight of sin is removed, the chains of sin are broken. Thither come all the nations of the earth. The pilgrims travel across Europe in mighty companies, and in companies they place themselves beside the sepulchre, the Italians on this side, the Germans on that, as the case may be, every one holding a wax taper in his hand. There they remain to worship the whole night long, and the light from the innumerable tapers makes the night like the day. Some sing to the accompaniment of the cithara, others to that of the lyre, some to the timbrel, others to the flute, others to the fife, others to the trumpet, others to the harp, others to the viola, others to the British and Welsh harp and the crouth, others to the psaltery, and others to many other musical instruments. Some weep for their sins, some read psalms, and some give alms to the priest. There does not exist a language or a dialect that is not heard in the cathedral. If any one enters sad, he goes out happy; there is celebrated one continuous festival; people come and go, but the service is not interrupted by day or by night."

For music Santiago has always been famed. Sanchez, who has written in an illuminative way upon the history of Compostela, remarks: "How the highways of Asia and Europe must have resounded in those days with hymns of praise sung by the pious pilgrims to St. James!" Each nation had its special hymns and chants, written in a mixture of Latin and the native idiom of the people by whom it was used. One of the most beautiful of all these sacred songs was that sung by the Flemings, of

which Fita, in *Recuerdos de un Viage à Santiago de Galicia* writes : “ Que es de lo mas selecto de la poesia del siglo XII.”

In a curious sixteenth-century book written in verse by one Francisco Molina, who was a canon of the cathedral of Mondoñedo, we have another illuminative picture of Santiago, at a date later than the writing of Pope Calistus :

“ The number of the pilgrims is a marvellous thing ! The only other cathedrals where there is a concourse of pilgrims anything like Santiago are St. Peter’s at Rome and St. John’s at Ephesus. More pilgrims come to Santiago than to these two, especially in Jubilee year—every seven years ; but since Luther arose with his dangerous views, the number of German, French, English, and Bohemian pilgrims has somewhat decreased.”

A point of special interest is this writer’s reference to the Slavs, pointing, as it does, to a real likeness which exists between this people and the Spaniards : “ Santiago is venerated by all nations, but especially by the Slavs. A Slav who makes a pilgrimage to Santiago is considered to be freed from all his sins, and escapes many troubles from which others suffer. Every year we see, on May 1, processions of Slavs with offerings, and with thick and long wax tapers. Having shown themselves to their friends at home, they return the next year, in May, until they have been three times to the holy city ; and on the occasion of the third pilgrimage they wear three crowns. They then return to Esclavonia, where they henceforth enjoy great liberty.”

There is preserved among the ancient documents of the cathedral a description of the ceremony ordered for the pilgrims, as it was carried out in the thirteenth century by Archbishop Juan Arias : “ The custodian of the

altar and the priest, each standing erect with a rod in his hand, marshalled the bands of pilgrims in turn according to their nationality, and in their own language. The pilgrims now grouped themselves around the priest, whose duty it was to deliver to them the indulgences they had gained by their pilgrimages. Then, the divine service having been participated in by them, they therewith proceeded to lay their gifts before the altar; after which it was their privilege to venerate the relics of the holy apostle: first came the chain, and, after the chain, the crown, the hat, the staff, the knife, and the stone." (The staff is the only one of these sacred relics which is treasured to-day in the cathedral.)

Pilgrims continued to flock to Compostela up to and throughout the seventeenth century. As late as the year 1794 D. Miguel Ferro, the architect of the cathedral, wrote: "The crowd of people on feast-days is so great that only two-thirds of them can get into the cathedral"; and we read of altars being temporarily erected in the cloisters at which the priests said mass.

At last—for even in Santiago all things change—and in the dawning of the nineteenth century came the War of Independence, which, in the words of Sanchez, "inaugurated the present epoch and the spirit of religious indifference, which has unfortunately affected modern minds, and has influenced the decadence of pilgrimages to Santiago. They are now only the shadow of what they were." In another passage, however, the same writer declares: "To-day, nevertheless, we feel the fervour and enthusiasm of bygone days is once more growing. . . . With the discovery of the sacred relics of the apostle, Santiago appears at certain epochs to recover her former splendour."

There is an indestructible vitality in Santiago, and to-day, though some of its ancient glory has departed,

the city is still alive. In an English guide-book to Spain is the statement : " Santiago has dwindled into a third-rate provincial city." To all who know Santiago this will be absurd. Even now the shrine of the apostle is one of the most frequented pilgrim resorts in Christendom, and the year 1909 witnessed the great English Catholic pilgrimage. Though retaining its ancient character more than any city in Spain, Santiago is not a dead city, as, for instance, Segovia is. The custodians of the city are not less mindful than of old of their responsibilities. Its hospital, its school of medicine, its ancient university, and its library are famed throughout Spain. Nowhere have I met men who have more fully joined with the religious life the life of action. Let us not be deceived. " To love is to beautify, to beautify is to love."

Such is the story, briefly and inadequately told, of the great history of Santiago de Compostela. Reading the record to-day, when belief in actual miracles is dead, the wonder is not less great. It is the miracles of the spirit that remain. It is a great error to believe that superstition and legends are exclusively religious. They rest on something deeper within the souls of men. And, indeed, if science should one day become sole ruler, credulous men will then make for themselves scientific credulities. The difference between us and our forefathers is really very slight ; there is nothing new, and oftenest we only rediscover the truth which we believe we have found. There is, after all, an invariability of beliefs, of needs, of habits and customs, throughout the centuries. Let us make no mistake : imagination is a part of life, and must be a part until, indeed, we are too old, and then will follow death. We can none of us live and lose the illusion which envelops us ; and

there is no happiness without faith and hope, both of which are elements of illusion.

Christian Spanish mysticism, which, though common to all Spain, found its most fruitful centre of inspiration in Santiago, was the most influential movement in religious passion that the world of Europe has known. Nor is this difficult to understand. Religious passion does not merely gain its share of living; it robs life with a fury of desire. The spiritual sense which this people have always had in so actual a degree quickened their power to appropriate to themselves all legends and miracles and holy places, and to make them a source of joy to men who know how bitter taste sometimes the dregs of the cup of life. The whole immense effort of Santiago had for its lasting crown the beautifying of life. The guardians of the apostle's holy shrine had the true wisdom, and made the joyous spirit a living part of their religion. Calistus states, in his *Codex*, that "he who enters Santiago sad will go out happy." Here, then, is the reason why men sought and loved and venerated her. And if in the ages a new faith shall arise, and a fresh ideal embody the human dream, we may still be sure that so sublime a witness will always live in the shrine of the human imagination. For, opening as it did the gates of heaven to its pilgrims, it also opened to them the gate of heaven on earth—which is beauty in art. The art of Compestela is divine; its Gate of Glory is still a wonder of the world.

Yet, if the mighty cathedral of Santiago is the most potent outward witness of Compestela's glory, there are other witnesses in the distinctive character of her customs, in her life, as you may see it to-day lived in her streets, which to me, at least, seemed to indicate what is, after all, deeper in the heart of the city. I can never forget the impression made upon me when, for the first time,

I saw in one of the old streets of the town a lover standing, in dramatic self-forgetfulness, beneath a balcony whereon a woman waited. Neither spoke, and yet the tryst lasted for several hours, and I learnt that such service would continue to be paid for the space of a year, or even longer, before the reward of an entrance into the house was granted. At first I was amused; it is so difficult to free one's mind from the vulgarity of modern thinking. I had forgotten that passion is quite a natural thing.

The Gallegans are, on one side of their nature, men of emotions and passions, and here we touch the true source of their genius. Religion and love are two forms of passion that merge into one another. When we realise what this really means, it is no longer surprising that these people, inspired by the illusion of religious passion and by miracle, should have raised in a few short years, in this far-off corner of Spain, the mightiest city in Christendom.

Make no mistake as to what is meant by the word "passion." It is the generous force of life. The Gallegans have always known that the great business of men is love. They are right. Love is one of the axes of the world, hunger is the other. All life turns on love and hunger. What we Anglo-Saxons have seen above all in life is hunger; that is to say, the desire for preservation of ourselves, for aggrandisement, material accumulation, the glory of the body, all the functions of the claw, the jaw, and the stomach—the habits of men of prey. The Gallegans are not less great from having lived as lovers.

It is this aptitude for passion, finding an expression in every department of life, in religion, in love, in art, and in some forms of work, that explains the Gallegans' accomplishment in all enterprises which appeal to their imagination, as well as their failures the things that they have never cared to do. I am convinced if commerce

can lose its ugliness and be made romantic, that the Gallegans will succeed splendidly in commerce. Why?—because passion knows no impossibility but its own desire.

And there is another truth.

It is this possession of passion—the character of the saint and the lover—equally visible, it has often seemed to me, in the lowliest as in the greatest of Galicia's citizens, which has made it so easy for them not to have weighted their lives with the burden of dull material things, which hang as so heavy a yoke upon the necks of northern people.

In Santiago I talked to a very poor man. He was playing on his *gaita*. I asked him why he did not sell it to buy bread. His answer to me was, "I can live without bread; I cannot live without music."

There you have the philosophy of the man who knows how to live.

Santiago to-day remains the city of the saint and the lover; thus it is the place where the stranger will learn best one of the secrets of Spain.

CHAPTER VIII

SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA; THE CATHEDRAL

St. James's Way—The journey from La Toja to Santiago—Arosa Bay—Arrival at Santiago—A first view of the cathedral—*Puerta de los Platerias*—A walk around the cathedral—History of the building—Comparison with St. Sernin of Toulouse—Interior of the cathedral—The crypt—Sculpture and statuary—The Gallegans' aptitude for carving—The Portico de Gloria.

THE pilgrims who made the journey to Santiago called the star-paved milky way in the heavens *El Camino de Santiago* (The Road of St. James). We read in the poetic writings of Daudet that a young shepherd, asked by his mistress whether he knew the names of the stars, began his answer as follows: "Why, yes, mistress. Look straight above our heads. That is St. James's Road. It runs from France straight over Spain. It was St. James of Galicia who traced it there, to show the brave Charlemagne his way when he was making war upon the Saracens." To-day the path of the pilgrim is by means of the West Galician Railway, which belongs to an English company; and, perhaps, nothing brings home to the mind more strongly the movement of change than this modern approach.

We left La Toja shortly after noon in the steam-yacht *La Dolorosa*. It was a memorable sail. After so much rushing travel in motor-cars, the steamer, as we sat on the small deck and looked out on the exquisite views of the *ria*, seemed an ideal manner of journeying. For the first time, perhaps, I felt that the ways of modern

travelling have attractive points, I do not say beautiful ones, for all that commercial progress produces is disfigured with ugliness. Compared to a sailing-boat a steamer, whatever its convenience, is always hideous; it is like a manufactory chimney running away, as with its trail of black smoke it makes pitiful efforts to defile the sea as it has defiled the land.

The journey from La Toja to Villagarcia occupies an hour—and what an unrivalled hour it was! The way lies across the land-locked bay, between the mainland and the island of Arosa, and here has more the appearance of a great lake than of the sea. Even on this afternoon, when the dull grey of a heavy sky robbed the water and the land of colour, it is impossible with the pen to convey an idea of the beauty. Mountains formed a background in every direction, enclosing the calm sea as in a magic circle; the nearer hills were a soft line of many delicate shades of green, fading into greys and purple, and, in the distance, the sharper summits of the higher mountains were lying caressingly against the clouds. The water, to-day a grey-green colour, was so pellucid that we could see the whole hull of our steamer, as well as the keels of the smaller fishing-craft, which passed continually up and down. Behind us, rising from among the dark pines, the great hotel of La Toja stood out, a huge mass of dead white, against the grey sky; on our left, just beyond the Umia, the fishing villages of the coast were clearly visible; almost on the beach stood the curious three-cornered Castle of Cambados, firmly stationed upon its hill; to the right the lofty Arosa loomed, a mountain island, with the bold indentations of its coast darkly silhouetted before us. The grass-clad rocks reached to the sea, and along the coast in every direction little inlets offered glimpses of idyllic beauty.

We had travelled half the distance, and had just

passed Villaneuva, when the threatening sky spoke, and a soft misty rain veiled the landscape. The effect was one of great beauty, that quick-falling mist, which, for a space, laid land and sea in sleep. Then, about fifteen minutes later, as we neared Villagarcia, though rain was still falling, seawards the sky had lightened, and in the distance was a faint line of pale salmon colour, which advanced in the immeasurable grey, forming a crown of light upon the summits of the hills. We saw Cortegada, Galicia's gift to King Alfonso XIII. and his English queen, and the green island, with its pine-woods reaching to the sea, now, with the mist lifting from it, looked like a beautiful woman, who has been sleeping, casting aside a soft covering of white gauze.

I shall not attempt a description of Villagarcia and its sister towns of Villajuan and Carril. They are, as the guide-books state, splendidly situated, renowned for their bathing, their good hotels, and Roman antiquities, and gain besides importance from the presence of the British warships, which anchor, close to them, in the fine stretch of the bay. The truth is, I was very hungry, and my one recollection of our stay is the excellent tea which was given to my companions and myself, in one of the public buildings of Villagarcia, by the municipalities of the Three Towns. The meal was called tea, but it included all the choice wines that our hospitable hosts could think of—rare sherry and muscatel, and forty-years'-old port, as well as a bewildering variety of the delicious cakes for which Galicia is famed.

The Gallegans are the best hosts that I know. Their general reserve quickly gives way to a cordial and delightful familiarity as soon as they enter into personal relations. They comprehend friendship in an admirable way. We attended many banquets and public functions in Galicia, and all of them I enjoyed, while in my own country

similar ceremonies are what I detest, and always avoid. I have never seen a Gallego appear to be bored. There is the same earnestness in whatever mood, and their power of simple, whole-hearted enjoyment is prodigious, and can only be compared with children's. Then their conversation is at once forcible and poetic. It abounds in picturesque images and vivid expressions, which are applied so naturally that they elevate speech and give to ordinary conversation an unexpected force. Yet, talkative as they naturally are, these people can also sit with you silent, with more naturalness than any people that I have met.

Evening was beginning to set in when we took our places in the train that was to carry us to Santiago. Our route lay along the same road that the pilgrims travelled. All the way is associated with history. The river Ulla is mentioned by Ptolemy and Pomponius Mela, and it was on its waters that both Northern and Moorish invaders entered Galicia. I looked from the train and saw fishing-boats and great barges on the water, whose white sails, as we flew past, seemed to heighten into the night. Before we reached Cesures, the Roman Pons Cæsario, where the Ulla is crossed by Cæsar's Bridge, darkness had closed upon us. As there was no moon, there is naturally a gap in my account. We passed through the holy town of Padron, the name of which conjures up the most romantic associations, but I could distinguish only the outlines of huddled buildings, which seemed to be rising from a great black abyss. The two old fortress towers, the Torres de Oeste, set on their hills, looked like gigantic black rocks; but on the other side of the gulf, in the distance, lights glimmered in the Convento de San Antonio de Hebron. I learnt that it was here Juan Rodriquez lived and wrote his troubadore song *El Siervo Libre de Amor* (The Free Slave of Love).

We traversed Esclavitud without stopping. I saw the pyramidal towers of Santa Maria de Iria, rising up white and gigantic looking in the darkness; and I knew that farther off, though unseen, on the Monte San Gregorio, was the little chapel which marks the spot where legend believes that St. James dwelt during his sojourn in Iria, with, yet farther, the still-venerated rocks that were his altar and his couch. Two more stations were passed, and at length we reached Santiago.

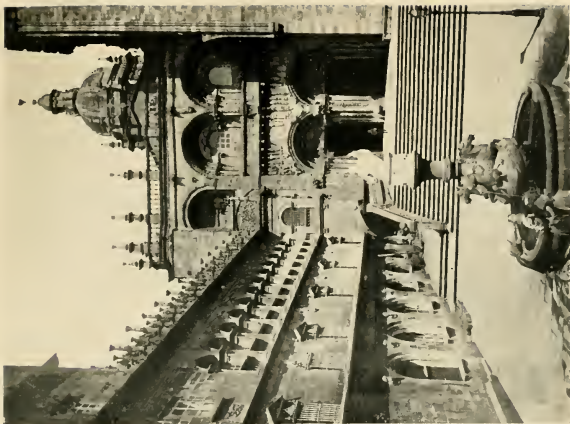
There is always an attraction in entering a town in darkness; it has the same effect as waiting in a theatre for a curtain to be raised: one knows that what one desires to see is there, but hidden, and curiosity, which is so great a part of pleasure, is excited. Never shall I forget our arrival at Santiago. The oil-lamps cast pale lights on the platform, where we mixed confusedly with a deputation of the chief citizens of the church and town who, late as the hour was, had come to give us welcome. There was something romantic and unexpected in this reception in the gloomily illuminated bare room of the station, where, in the background, two statuesque civil guards leaned upon their rifles, and custom officers waited.

We were in Santiago. And the wonder deepened as we pitched and tossed—this is no exaggeration—through a coil of twisting streets, so narrow that foot-passengers scattered as sheep before our passing vehicles; streets which ascended and descended, which turned now to right, now left, and then broadened suddenly into a small square. Yet the mediæval streets were well lit by electricity, and—more ferocious anachronism—we made the journey in motor-cars, whose hooters shrieked their hideous cry in the night. A night watchman, cloaked and leaning on his gleaming pike, watched as we alighted at the Hotel Suizo. Just afterwards he called out the hour, and the chant of his *Ave Maria pur-*

issima was the final reminder that indeed we were in Santiago. It is these sharp contrasts which give the stranger so poignant an impression. Yes, it is almost as if one had lost one's way in Time. I found myself bewildered; I felt an actor in a mediæval drama, only I had no stage dress and I did not know my part.

The *fonda* Suizo was the most Spanish we had as yet stayed at in Galicia. On being shown my room, I was charmed, as I have so often been in Spain, with the whiteness of the bed, of the walls, and of the sand-scrubbed floor, and the scrupulous care shown in every particular. Our supper was excellent; the dazzling white coarse table linen, the pile of white plates before each guest, the great decanter of red wine, as well as the food—*caldo Gallego*, *garbanzos*, and the well-made *puchero*, which I had not on this visit as yet tasted—were all delightful; each was an old friend that strengthened the remembrance that again I was in mediæval Spain.

Late as the hour was, it was impossible to go to bed—there are times in which one's mind recoils from sensible action. With my companions I set out to see the cathedral. The distance is short, and yet we seemed to walk for a long time, plunging deeper and deeper into the labyrinth of streets, which appeared narrower now that we were walking in them, between the tall houses, with carved balconies, wherein lights glimmered fitfully. Every house looked as if it had a history. There were churches at almost every corner, and we passed a fifteenth-century palace in a small grey square. At intervals, at the street corners, we saw the *serenos*. They were all smoking cigarettes; several of them spoke to us. At last we turned into a still narrower alley, and then we came out into an open space, seeing for the first time a clear breadth of the night-sky; and there against the sky was the great cathedral.



SOUTH FAÇADE OF THE PLATERIAS,
SANTIAGO CATHEDRAL.



EL OBRADOIRO : WEST FAÇADE, SANTIAGO CATHEDRAL.
p. 1271

I was glad to see Santiago for the first time by night, and to come to it in just this way. First impressions count for so much in one's loves; a mistaken approach, in the wrong mood, may so easily produce an impression difficult to efface. In this hour of romance, the embattled magnificence of the building gained a heightened significance. In the silent night it seemed to watch over the sleeping town, like the embodied forces of the powers of the Church.

We were standing in the Plazuela de los Platerías on the first round of the great flight of steps which faces the south front of the transept. Dating from the twelfth century, this façade is, as I learnt afterwards, the oldest part of the building, and the only one of the original façades that has been preserved. I knew now that it is the most beautiful. In the exquisite pale light, I could faintly discern the carvings in the spandrels of the two doorways, and the larger figures of the apostles above stood out with wonderful clearness. The windows, with their Byzantine horse-shoe arches, were also perfectly distinct. To the right rose the tall Torre de la Trinidad hiding the stars, and to the left was the long wall of the cloisters, with the turrets at its angles delicately showing. About the Treasury buildings rose the great Shell of St. James; and here, too, was the old tower with the oriental touch freeing it from the heavy solemnity of the modern steeples.

Imperceptibly the magic of the building began to work upon my mind. Little by little I became aware of the colossal forces sleeping in these stones. It was no longer to me just a building, beautifully constructed, and laboriously joined together, but an organic, almost animated thing, that had lived, and would yet live, its own great and commanding life. All that the men who had raised it had put into it, this building contained, and

nothing was lost ; the architects' dream and desire, the artists' joy in labour, the shaping and hewing by hands that had been dust for centuries, the countless strokes and hammerings, the spending of lives—all these were living now in the church of St. James of Compostela. Yes, and more than this work of dead men's hands was the effort of their spirits : the ceaseless prayers that had been raised, the songs that had been sung, offerings given and vows made—all the stir of men's hearts as they had sought the answer to the question of life, which yet we have not found. The twelve strokes of midnight, sounding from the tower, rang out deeply, sonorously, as if they did but reckon the time of centuries, not of hours.

The streets were silent as we walked back to the hotel, except that the *serenos* were crying the hour. One of them called out something after us as we passed. I asked my friend what he said. "He is telling us that there are lovers on a balcony close by." The answer was given gravely. Then, for a space, we walked on in silence. I felt glad that I had come to Santiago, where life is still simple, and something traditional and sacred is living in men's hearts.

Thanks to the charming courtesy of our clerical hosts, we were enabled on the following day to visit the cathedral most minutely. Yet I despair of being able to describe the wonderful things that we saw; I cannot profess even to have fully apprehended them. The appeal of so much is apt to leave one bedazed, a little wearied with all the information crowded upon one's sight and memory. And although it is certainly the most fruitful way of visiting a great building, with guides whose knowledge of its history and its treasures of art are inexhaustible, it was not in this way that I received my lasting impressions of Santiago. Buildings are like

persons, and will not reveal their secrets in a crowd, or by a too direct interrogation. I have spent weeks in gaining information about the cathedral, in learning its history, in studying its architecture and its carvings; yet, it is what I found out for myself, in hours alone, when, with no guide-book in my hand, I waited and gazed, unmindful of history, and indeed hardly thinking, and caring nothing for the names of the artists who had wrought this wonder in stone, knowing that it matters so little that they are forgotten, so much that their work is beautiful,—it was in this manner that, more or less unconsciously, the wonder of Santiago came to me. After all, what count are the things that one sees for oneself—the adventures of one's own soul among the places that one visits; only these can one really pass on to others.

To see everything is often to see nothing. The duty of the writer is to note what counts to him, to light up what is suited to his own temperament. If there are many omissions and instances of seeming negligence in my sight, it is because these things made no appeal to me. I would politely suggest to the student, with the praise-worthy Anglo-Saxon thirst for information, that the excellent Bædeker can complete this record. The guide-book information is always correct, though at Santiago it seems a little out of proportion—like the bones of a Christmas turkey after the flesh has been eaten.

Your first overwhelming impression, when you walk around the outside of the building, leaving you no power to note the varied moods of its architecture, the beautiful wealth of its carvings—its impressive doorways, its windows, its towers, or any other of its superb details—is of a great stone vision that closes up the streets. Like most Spanish cathedrals, Santiago rises straight from amongst the encircling buildings. The Plaza de los

Literarios, the square lying between the Claustro and the Plaza de la Inmaculada, does not afford an appearance of space, closed up, as it is, with the fortress-like wall of the Convent de San Payo ; and there is the same effect in the Plaza de Alfonso Doce, which fronts the west façade. It is the largest square of the town, but the space here is blocked with the imposing Renaissance building of the Hospital Real, with the Ayuntamiento and the Arzobispal Palacio of Delmirez. The north façade of the Azabacheria fronts the narrow street of the same name. And yet, as you stand back from first one point and then another in an attempt to view the cathedral, this very nearness of so many fine buildings gives a great impression of its height. Standing on its imposing flights of steps, the church seems to arise above the clustering masonry and to make the grey-toned masses a mere pedestal for its magnificence. In the sunlight the whole building glows, the granite stones, mellowed by the work of centuries, take bright shades of warm colour that I know not how to describe. I have seen them glisten like silver, I have seen them gleam like burnished copper.

I spent a long time looking at the outside of Santiago ; I revolved around the great building like a moth around a candle. I went away and I came back, until I gained a familiarity with it from many standpoints ; and yet I am unable to give a coherent account of it. The impressions produced by architecture do not lend themselves readily to interpretation. I am driven back to guide-book facts.

The exact year of starting the building of the cathedral is a question of great importance. The many points of resemblance that it bears to the French cathedral of St. Sernin of Toulouse has led to the opinion that it is a copy of that building. Street states in his *Gothic Architecture in Spain* : " This cathedral is of singular

interest, not only on account of its unusual completeness and the general unity of the style which marks it, but still more because it is both in plan and design a very curiously exact repetition of the church of St. Sernin at Toulouse. But St. Sernin is earlier in date by several years, having been commenced by St. Raymond in A.D. 1060 and consecrated by Pope Urban II. in 1096." Now is this true? Until recently it was supposed that the first stone of the Spanish church was laid by Alfonso VI., King of Castile and Leon, on July 11, 1078, because of an inscription on the jamb of the Puerta de los Platerias. But there is nothing to prove whether this date refers to the beginning or to the finishing of the façade. The *Codex* of Calistus II., Bk. V., gives the date as that of the commencement; but it also states that the length of time elapsing between the beginning of the work and the death of Alfonso I. of Aragon was fifty-nine years; which would make the work to have been started in 1074. Another indication of this earlier date is that St. Fagildo, writing in 1077, speaks of the work as already begun. It would seem, therefore, that the French cathedral and the Spanish are too closely contemporaneous for one to be a copy of the other.

It is not known who the architects of the two churches were. The French writers claim the honour of both; the Spaniards, on the other hand, maintain that their cathedral owes less to foreign influences than has hitherto been allowed. It is a question, possibly, that can never be decided. Criticism has always tried to rob Spain of her art. If in some respects Santiago may well be compared with St. Sernin, there are, as well as the points of resemblance, many points of equally striking contrast. Even in the plan of their construction the two buildings are far from being identical. Both are in the form of a Latin cross, but this is a feature common to all Roman-

esque churches; and St. Sernin has five naves, Santiago only three. The proportions of the Spanish church are finer, the naves of St. Sernin being too long in proportion to the length of the transept. Numerous minor differences have been pointed out by Fernandez Casanova in his learned monograph on Santiago; as, for instance, the different position of the naves, the construction of the galleries, and the placing and number of the towers. We find another Spanish writer, Lopez Ferreiro, asserting that, "after comparing the two cathedrals with the minutest care, he has found sufficient divergence in their details to indicate a different style, a different school, and a different inspiration."

Yet, after all, does it matter? Spain always, perhaps, more assimilative than creative in her art, has stamped with the seal of her own character all she has borrowed from other nations. Nowhere, perhaps, has the Spanish soul revealed itself more variously and more strongly than at Santiago. What matters to us to-day is that though French and Spanish elements may be found here blended, the building in its final effect has become superbly Spanish. The wealth of its exquisite carving, too, is wholly Spanish, for in this respect St. Sernin can offer no comparison. Thus we are brought back to the one point of interest—the magnificent building itself; and standing face to face with it we realise anew the emptiness of criticism.

The walk around Santiago occupies a long time, and it offers the most varied entertainment. You pass northwards to examine the façade of the Azabacheria—said by Sanchez to be the best of the modern works which surround the cathedral. It consists of two stories, of which the lower is of the Ionic and the upper of the Doric order. In the centre, between the middle windows of the upper story, is the

allegorical statue of Faith, and above, over the attic, a group representing the Kings Ordoño II. and Alfonso III., kneeling to St. James, who is in pilgrim garb. Although the work of the Spanish architect Ventura Rodríguez, this façade is not Spanish. It recalled to me many Italian churches belonging to the insipid archaistic tendency of the second half of the eighteenth century.

Afterwards you will come to the famous west façade, known as El Obradoiro. It, too, is modern, the work of a Gallegan architect, Fernando de Casas y Novoa, and is in the most extravagant baroque style. It is considered "the most beautiful, the most sumptuous, the most truly magnificent example of Churrigueresque in Spain" —a perfect example of monumental exuberance. You stand on the wide flight of steps, arranged in four sections, and so admirably adapted for professional purposes, which lead from the Plaza de Alfonso Doce; you see the tall twin-steeple, resting on Romanesque foundations, which form a part of the façade; you see, too, the great statue of St. James above the gable. On the façade itself there is an opulence of carving; every surface covered with ornament. Yes, certainly, it is fine! but it is monotonous in its exuberance. Its appeal is so emphatic, it is apt to leave one bedazed, a little wearied with the too insistent architectural rhetoric.

You will be glad to pass on once more to the Plaza de las Platerias to find there the rest which perfect beauty gives in this one part of the exterior building, which lives still as its creators planned it.

Charming when I had seen it by night, the south façade of the Platerias was even more delightful by day, when the sunlight gave wonderful colour to the marble statues, standing in their granite niches. There are more than a hundred of these closely packed figures, which, dating from the eleventh century, are examples

of the finest work of the period. The two statue-guarded doorways have a wealth of admirable Romanesque ornaments; in the spandrels are bas-reliefs—the Temptation over the east doorway and the Passion over the west. On the wall above are more sculptured figures: a Christ, life-size, is in the centre, surrounded by apostles and prophets. Higher still are the beautiful round-arched windows, giving the finest effect. The statues of the apostles and prophets had for me a peculiar charm. I was never tired of looking at them. There were also some heads of monsters, which support the tympana of the façade, that were sculptured with delightful energy. When the great façade begins to glow in the late afternoon light you see it at its finest. Its tower, springing upwards, a pinnacle of sculptured stone, and all its wealth of figures, stand out with an appeal which seems to make the act of vision the whole of life.

The cathedral as it now stands—there was an extemporaneous edifice erected in the place of the church of Alfonso el Castro, which was destroyed by Almanzor—was begun before the third quarter of the eleventh century. The building was carried on without interruption, and the cathedral was finished by the close of the next century and was consecrated in the year 1211. The exterior has suffered many later-date additions and sweeping alterations. This accounts for the variety in its architectural styles. Pure Romanesque in its original plan, its general exterior aspect is now that of a picturesque baroque structure. A great gulf lies between the early south Platerias' façade and the west façade in its extravagant Churrigueresque style.

And for this reason the exterior is often said to lack harmony. Yet recording, as I naturally must do, my own impressions, this is not so. If Santiago is not, and now never could be, with its variety of styles, a model

where the architect may not easily find cause for offence, it may yet be said to gain impressiveness from this very change in its architectural styles, which in their elaborate mingling do attain, almost in perfection, a wonderfully expressive whole. The elements that go to make up its charm are highly complex and difficult to analyse; the simplicity of the building in the original construction and the bold rhetoric of the later decorations lend themselves admirably to the romantic quality of exuberant life—even the Churrigueresque façade takes its part as an element of the whole effect. Santiago has not the appearance of so many old Spanish churches of being primarily a show-place.

It is well to compare the late sculpture with the early Byzantine work. Santiago, indeed, offers a unique opportunity to the student of an almost complete survey of the Spanish styles in architecture and in sculpture. Renaissance towers stand on Romanesque bases; there are fine blinded-windows with horse-shoe arches, and scattered pieces of sculpture, belonging to the original building, are embedded in the sixteenth and eighteenth century façades. The crypt is pure Romanesque, the Claustro, built at a later date than the cathedral, is Gothic with Renaissance additions.

The cloister is always one of the most delightful spots in Spanish churches; that of Santiago is a perfect example of the Plateresque style. A detailed description of it would need a chapter to itself; I shall not attempt to give it. Its memory to me is a place of delightful rest, where you enjoy the uncostly pleasures of colour and sunlight.

The interior of the cathedral corresponds in impressive grandeur with the outside, and, more than this, it greatly exceeds it in symmetry. Unlike the exterior, it remains as the genius of its builders planned it. It

is the perfection of the Romanesque style in Spain. If, indeed, Santiago owes its inspiration to French influence, there is no attempt to express the gaiety of mood that belongs to all French churches. The architect has deliberately chosen the massive and sombre Romanesque, the style in architecture which most truly expresses the temper of this race. Even in the exterior no original elements drifted into the construction until long after the completion of the building.

The general plan of the building is the simplest Roman cruciform—nave and side-aisles, and very deep transepts. Indeed, the special feature of the interior is the unusual width and size of the transepts. I recall how, on entering for the first time by the Puerta de Platerias, I mistook the wide and imposing transept for the nave. The principal nave is high, and is rendered more impressive by the addition of the fine Romanesque triforium of round-headed arches. The triforium galleries are continued round the transepts and the apse. There is a well-proportioned apsidal Capilla Mayor, with an ambulatory walk, from which the side-aisles are produced. These gloom-filled aisles are much lower than the nave, and are narrower in proportion to their length. There is no clerestory; the plain barrel-vault of the nave and the transepts spring from the cornice, running immediately above the semicircular arches, which enclose the twin lights of the triforium. The columns consist of piers, with engaged shafts to carry the arches, the transverse vaulting ribs of the nave, and the quadripartite vaults of the side-aisles. These elegant and light piers are praised by Street, who notes the contrast they give with the enormous thickness of the walls. There are fewer side-chapels than is common in Spanish churches; they are placed in the Romanesque manner, between the buttresses which are within the church.

Such, badly stated, are the main characters of this noble church. Of no imposing vastness, it is yet great from the perfection of proportion, and the well-judged distribution of lights and shadows. At Santiago you have the characteristic gloom of all Spanish churches. Even at this early period the builders have already grasped the difficult problem of light, so as to regulate and modify its effects, producing that atmosphere of luminous darkness so necessary in a southern land, and also so helpful to the emotional spirit. The final charm of the interior is that of light and shade and colour, which impart mystery to its sombre and massive solidity. Severe and bold in outline, it is yet sufficiently relieved by the most exquisite ornamentations, in which there is never extravagance. There is design which is always simple, broad, and harmonious. To truly understand you need to feel only the general form, and then the elements which constitute it escape in a great love. All guide-book details, all the revelations of a microscopic examination, can add nothing to it, or rather they will only be a hindrance. There is an inner truth, as well as an outside truth, in art. That is why it needs no microscope. You must lose yourself in wonder. You must wander about for a long time; you must stand in one place, then in another. The best position of all, perhaps, is the middle of the church, beneath the *croisée*, surmounted by the Gothic cupola, which, although it replaces one of the old Romanesque towers, is certainly an effective addition; here you will see best the imposing grandeur of the transept, crossed by the long nave, with the choir rising in the centre as in all Spanish cathedrals. Be content to let the building itself speak to you.

And there is another charm that cannot fail to impress the stranger at Santiago. It is, of all the great

Spanish churches, that which most livingly preserves its character as a great focus of popular worship. It is so, not alone by reason of its own restrained beauty and strength, but through the perfect ordering of its many services, the happy, and yet rigid, observance of all the church ceremonies, the reverent attitude of those who are responsible for them, and the faithful worship of the people themselves. It is a quality you may feel, not only upon high-days and the great Catholic festivals, but every day and at all hours. This church is a place of real and constant use; all classes of people frequent it, and the sounds of worship seem seldom to cease within its walls. The apostle's holy church is alive, and remains what it was built from the first to be—the goal of a people's devotion.

At the side of the Capilla Mayor a flight of steps leads to the entrance of the crypt—a spot of special importance in Santiago, because here is the shrine of St. James and his two faithful disciples, S.S. Athanasius and Theodosius; but, apart from this, the Iglesia Baja has an interest of its own, arising from the high merit of its architecture. The treatment of this diminutive chapel is beyond praise. It is a perfect Romanesque structure, and a miniature of the cathedral above, with nave, aisles, and apsidal chapels. We owe it to the genius of Mateo, and the object of the building would seem to have been to afford a lasting and strong foundation for his Portico de Gloria to rest upon; hence the great clustering piers, with the springing arches that form a vaulting to the aisles like the branches from a mighty tree. What is astonishing is the way in which a building, of necessity almost filled with the foundations of the upper church, has been made fit for use as a separate chapel. The almost insurmountable difficulties have been grappled with so successfully that this main object is rendered

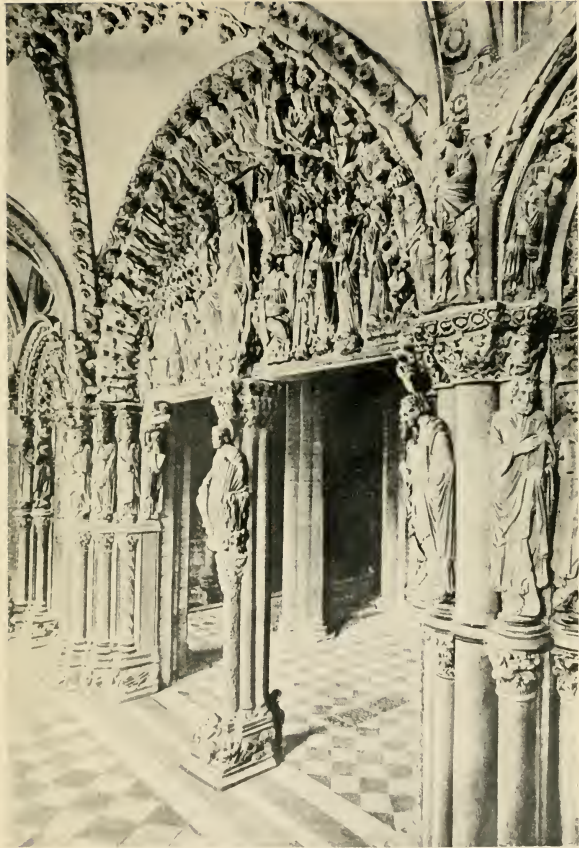
subservient to the gaining of an illusion of space and to the employment of the most delicate and beautiful Romanesque ornament. The sculpture in this little church is surprising. Not often, even in Spanish churches, does one meet such a wealth of work in stone. And I find, in this almost hidden decoration, something truly characteristic of Spain, where the greatest beauty is lavished within, and not, as in France and many other countries, outside the building. Even the subterranean gallery, which leads down from the portico to the crypt, is as rich in sculpture as the building itself. Especially delightful are the Byzantine carvings on the marble shafts to the old altar of the apostle. They belong to the tenth century, and are among the earliest examples of stone-work in Galicia. They are beautiful; once they were coloured red and gold—faint traces of the old colours are still visible. The carvings of some of the capitals, and also those on the inner sides of the arches, we owe to the hand of Mateo.

I would state here emphatically my disbelief in the claim made by French writers of the authorship for France of Mateo's portico as well as of the carved capitals in the crypt and cathedral. These works reveal so insistently the Spanish spirit that no one who has a real acquaintance with the art of Spain can hesitate as to their authorship. Mateo's figures are as *local* in their character as the paintings of Goya. The startlingly life-like figures of the evangelists and prophets in the Gloria are all Gallegan types. Then look, for instance, at the delicious capital of two maidens dancing, in the crypt, where you see the very kind of dancing that takes place to-day on the village greens of Galicia; or another capital in the same building which shows a man cutting down a vine, the leaves of which are the actual vine-leaves of the country;

or, again, it is the foliage of the tall Gallegan cabbage that is represented in so many of the capitals in the cathedral.

There has always been an aptitude for sculpture among the Gallegans—for the moulding of wood and stone, and iron and silver—and the high level of accomplishment here reached is founded on qualities deeply rooted in the national character. The innately dramatic temperament of this people has revealed itself in sculpture and in architecture with more complete and overwhelming force than in any other branch of art. Galicia and Aragon are chief centres of Spanish sculpture. Santiago had already, in the eleventh century, a flourishing school for artists, for instruction in all branches of the arts. In those days art was the heritage of the people; it was practised in the workshops of the artisans, the father taught his sons, and the master explained his methods to his disciples and apprentices. And because art was a common part of the national life, it lived and flourished everywhere. Thus it need be a cause of no surprise that Galicia produced perfect sculpture, contemporaneously, if indeed not earlier, than the best French work.

In every direction in Santiago Cathedral there are carvings; it would need a volume merely to record them. From its earliest to its latest period, inside and outside, the building is a museum of sculpture; carvings that are beautiful or solemn, fantastic or grotesque, always vigorous and interesting; the outcome of the boldly dramatic and realistic Gallegan character. To any one who is fond of beautiful sculpture a walk around the gallery which encircles the cathedral will be a passage of delight. The arches of the windows through which you look down into the aisles are supported by carved capitals of the most perfect workmanship; there are many hundreds of them, they are all carved, and there are not



PORTICO DE GLORIA, SANTIAGO CATHEDRAL.

two alike. The variety of the scenes and subjects depicted seems endless; sometimes the carvings are exquisite with delicate foliage, visibly copied from the luxuriant Galician vegetation, among which appear the heads and arms of human beings; sometimes the capitals conform to the old Byzantine designs of plaits and bands and dots, as in those of the gallery above the apse; sometimes the carvings are more trivial, showing butterflies, birds, and delightful groups of animals; sometimes, again, they are broadly humorous, as in one scene where a monster is engaged in pulling out with a pair of tongs the tongue of a man. All the carvings are vigorous and have the originality that belongs to Spanish work. This accounts for the fact that, while the sculpture bears the closest inspection, it also stands out equally well from the distance, which is not the case with many carved capitals.

It is a splendid testimony to the Portico de Gloria that, amid so much admirable carving, it holds its place as "the real wonder of Santiago." And the emotion of first seeing this masterpiece in stone, created by Maestro Mateo—a work which even the sober-minded Street pronounces "one of the greatest glories of Christian art—cannot fail to fill the lover of beautiful things with a delightful awe. Other carvings here are beautiful, exquisite, humorous, but Mateo's work seems to gather together all beautiful, exquisite, and humorous things, and to overpass them. And when you have spent many hours, in the morning, afternoon, and night, examining every feature, studying each carving, in the end the work will still seem illusively delightful, and as full of wonder as at first. That is the prerogative of all perfect things—you feel them; you cannot analyse the elements that make up their beauty.

One's first impression is to ask how was it possible for

the carver to get all this wealth of sculpture into so small a space without giving the faintest impression of overcrowding, or in any way disturbing the architectural plan of the design? The whole effect is astonishingly dramatic. The great central figure of Christ, in which detail is rightly sacrificed to size, is the only statue of hieratic form. The other figures are human in an almost startling degree. The four-and-twenty elders, placed two and two, as they sit around the inner side of the circle all appear to be engaged in conversation, so that instinctively you wonder what they are saying. The crowd of exquisite little figures that fill the space around the Christ actively take their part in the scene; they are the ten thousand times ten thousand who sing songs of praise. Joyous beings are the angels caring for the souls of men; there are two placed on either side of the tympanum, who tenderly hold a little naked figure, representing a human soul. Not less life-like, though quite different, are the demons, personating the passions which tyrannise over men. The figures of the evangelists, prophets, and saints are placed on the sculptured columns with their backs to the great piers, which support the arches of the narthex. They can be recognised by the writing on the scrolls they carry, or by some unmistakable token. But it is not of their names that you will think; it is of their extraordinary life. You have here the types unchanged in Galicia to-day. I recall the figure of Daniel, a young, handsome man, who smiles as he listens to a communication made to him by Jeremiah. Legend states that he is laughing at the stoutness of a female figure opposite, said to be that of Judith, and so common was this belief that a certain archbishop had the lady's figure scraped to reduce her corpulence; but, be this as it may, no one who has seen it can ever forget that smile of Daniel.

In every section of the Portico you seem to be looking at a series of events, and each figure is a participator whose entire mind is concentrated upon what is happening. On the faces there is a wonderful look of attention. Some are joyous, others are meditative, with an expression of rapt contentment; and not only the faces, but the limbs—the feet so splendidly placed and the expressive hands and fingers—seem to be alive.

In the creation of this overwhelming impression of life, which speaks in every figure, which shows in every delicate ornament, you seem to find, for the first time in sculptured stone, the creative joy of the artist, unimpaired, unchecked, flawless, fulfilling his desire as in no other sculpture that I know. Yes, more even than the Greeks have done, for in them the artist's desire was restrained within certain limits of expression, to which it was the splendid self-sacrifice of their art to confirm. Here, in Mateo's work, is no such limit to expression; but the unfettered spirit of the artist revels in the delight of its freedom. Here is all of life that can possibly be expressed in sculpture, and it is a life of such vivid and direct appeal that at first it startles. The Christ—beside the great central statue there are two small figures on the south side-arch, one presenting Christ the man, the other the God-Christ—the apostle James, prophets, saints, evangelists, the men of the Old and New Testaments, angels and demons, Jews and Gentiles, the souls of the new-born, the risen dead—all these tremendous symbols to whom the creator has given life, crowd upon one with an appeal as direct and intimate in its irresistible seeming nearness as the people who throng one in one's passage through the actual world. And so vivid is the impression that, as you gaze, these stone figures do really seem to be alive—to move, to sit, to talk; you seem to hear the murmur of their speech.

It seemed to me then, it seems to me still strange, that I should have felt this. I can only record that it was so. Never before have I found this same suggestion of conscious life in any work of stone.

The Portico de Gloria was once not hidden, as now it is, by the brickwork of the modern Churrigueresque façade, but was itself the entrance to the building, where the pilgrims came straight upon its glory before they went into the church to worship, and at that time the colours of its figures were not destroyed and faded as to-day they are, but gleamed and glowed in the sunlight.

The figure of Maestro Mateo is placed behind the centre pillar of the portico, his knees bowed, his hands crossed in prayer, in humbleness before the triumphant perfection those hands had wrought. Tradition says that the portrait is a true one of the artist. It is a strong face, with a high and broad forehead, clustered with crisp curls. The mothers of Galicia have, from time immemorial, brought their babies to place their heads against that stone head, because "Mateo was a clever man, and their baby must be clever too."

On the inner side of the lintel of the central arch is the inscription, placed there by Mateo, architect and sculptor :

Anno ab Incarnatione Domini MCLXXXVIII, Era MCCXXVI, die kalendarum Apriles, super liminaria principalium portaliū Ecclesiæ Beati Jacobi sunt collocata ser Magistrum Mathæum, qui a fundamentis ipsorum portaliū gessit magisterium.

(The year of the Incarnation of our Lord 1188, era 1226, on the calends of April, the lintels of the principal portico of the Cathedral of the Blessed St. James were put up by Maestro Mateo, who superintended the said work from its foundation).

This date is apt to fill the mind with a sensation of

melancholy; perhaps it is the most wonderful thing in all this wonderful work. Mateo wrought his masterpiece more than seven centuries ago. What man to-day is capable of producing a work that can equal it? Has "progress" then, indeed, killed art? Have we moderns a faith strong enough to-day to cause a man to labour for twenty years to create one perfect work? Have the dull material things of life choked our souls to the larger spiritual claims of art, of beauty and joy? These questions rush upon one—and it is not easy to find the answer.

CHAPTER IX

SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA—THE TOWN

Aspects of the town—Modern institutions—The Royal Hospital—Open-air school—The University—The Asylum of Conje—Numerous churches—Choir-stalls of San Martin—Altar of San Lorenzo—Convent of San Payo—The Colegiata de Sar—The streets—Their contrasts—*Fiesta* in the Alameda.

IN a shop in the rua Nueva there was in one window a life-sized lay figure, dressed in a white, much-frilled lace petticoat, modern corsets, and a pair of blue silk suspenders. The shop is placed at a corner, with another street running down from it at right angles, so that the figure caught the attention, as you approached, in each direction. Probably there were other goods of feminine attire displayed; I do not remember them, but at the figure I always waited, indeed it grew to have a kind of symbolical fascination for me. Then, on the opposite side of the same street, farther down and nearer to the cathedral, there is another shop, where the window was entirely filled with small and great candles. They were church candles, and many of them had been fashioned into waxen flowers, some white, some coloured red and blue; others were formed into waxen images of all sizes, that afterwards towered into candles; there never was anything more ingenious of their kind. At this window, too, I always waited. It seemed to me that in these two shops I saw the Santiago of the past—the pilgrim's holy city—and also the modern Santiago, as her citizens would

like to make it, as they have made it in some directions when they have had the opportunity. On my first approach, I had thought alone of the mediæval aspect of this town, which had seemed the perfect type of an old city. It is so easy to fall into error, when judging by outside appearance.

That Santiago should be a living city as well as a museum of antiquities is one of its special charms. It was here, where the past ages seem still to find a home, that I met many instances of the movement of progress, which is developing so rapidly in Galicia. But Santiago adapts itself less than other towns to all the unsightly improvements and cheap facilities of modern civilisation. Then fortunately the Santiagoans of to-day, the citizens in whose hands is the civic power, have resolved that their town, which they know to be the most historically interesting religious centre in Spain, shall retain its old character, not competing at all with commercial towns, which fortunately it can never do. It is true that electric lights have been set in the old streets, and even in some of the churches. The railway now comes here, while an excellent motor service has been established to La Coruña. Motors are frequently to be seen in the narrow, twisted streets, when their presence is an absolute danger. But beyond this little has been done. There is not even a town water-supply, and the water is still carried in pitchers to the houses by women and girls, from the numerous fountains, which are some of the most beautiful old features of the town. The important and much-needed improvement of the town drainage, which at present is occupying the attention of the authorities, is to be carried out without changing the old paving of the streets. Santiago has few amusements. There is one theatre, and, I believe, there is a cinematographic show. There is no bull-ring in the town, as the old one

did not gain sufficient support for its maintenance. I saw no large cafés, such as are common in almost all Spanish towns, though we visited an excellent club, whose fine object is explained by its name, "The League of Friends." Then Santiago has an enlightened local press—a feature which it shares with all the towns in Galicia. The members of its staff, many of whom we met, were men of intelligence, many of them speaking English and French; they were eager for knowledge, and interested in all questions of reform. I may mention, as an instance, Señor L——, who had an intelligent knowledge of the war of the women of England to obtain their rights as citizens. I record these facts, not because they are peculiar to Santiago, more than to the other towns of Galicia; but certainly it gave me a curious impression to hear the familiar cry "Votes for Women" in this mediæval town, which outwardly appears as the very embodiment of that conservatism and traditionalism that one is accustomed to associate with the Spanish character. It had something of the sensation that one would have, if one whom one had believed to be dead, spoke.

But Santiago is a city of contrasts, so sharp in the opposite appeal that they make that often I found my impressions contradicted, and still find it difficult to present the changing aspects of its life. It is not to be understood until you have visited its excellent and beautiful Royal Hospital, with its installation of röntgen rays, and other up-to-date medical apparatus; the fine Lunatic Asylum established in the old monastery of Conje, which will compare favourably with similar institutions in other countries, as well as its cathedral and its churches. You must visit its Library, its Reading-Room, its splendid City Hall, and its civic institutions. You must become acquainted with its excellent colleges

and schools. I was delighted with an open-air school, recently started in connection with the town orphanage, for delicate and defective children. It is held in a large and beautiful *patio*, where flowers grow, and here little children play into health and knowledge. It chanced that my visit to this delightful scene followed upon a tour of inspection of the city's churches. At first the contrast smote me—these great buildings of past generations of men, with their crowded treasures of art a witness of man's relation with Heaven, and this modern school, arising from men's new understanding of their duty on earth. But, afterwards, I realised that all these contrasts are so many parts of the same spiritual life; that they are, after all, only the visible half of that continuous festival of Santiago, which her citizens see not alone with their eyes, but with their memories and their souls.

To walk through the streets of Santiago is to understand how truly the city has grown up out of the religious passion of the people. You can scarcely go for five minutes in any direction without coming upon some church; they stand at the corner of almost every square, many are embedded between the walls of the houses, while yet others are attached to secular institutions, such as the Royal Hospital and the University. These churches are the museums of Santiago; each one has its special appeal, its cloisters, its tombs, or its beautiful carvings. I was never tired of visiting San Martin Pinaro, where the carved walnut-wood stalls are a treasury of delight. Here is the joyous skill of the artist, which makes you conscious anew of the dramatic expressiveness that has ensured the success of the Gallegan carvers; and especially her carvers in wood, a medium whose facility and freedom lent itself to their talent. Each stall is different, and I know not which one delighted

me most. Not even the famed choir-stalls of Toledo Cathedral are finer than these unknown carvings of San Martin. There are the old Romanesque churches, San Benito, the most ancient church in the city, and Santa Maria Salomé, and San Felix de Solvio—very picturesque, though not quite architecturally satisfying, the original Romanesque structures showing many alterations and later-date additions. Santa Maria is the last of the city's churches of refuge; and the inscription may still be seen on the triangle of one of its arches, *Iglesia reservada para refugio*. Other churches are mixed Renaissance and baroque work, belonging to later styles of architecture, which seem to be related so much less in their spirit to Compostela than the sombre Romanesque. And yet, from a different point of thought, what gives to these old buildings precisely their interest in this variety of styles? It is the witness of the many centuries, during which the religious spirit was the passion of the people. Santiago is different in this respect from Segovia, which is all made up of churches of one type, or even from Toledo with its wonderful past. It never gives one the sensation that these cities do, of a history that has over-weighted their present life.

The most perfect Renaissance building is the Royal Hospital, which stands on the north side of the Plaza Alfonso Doce, and in the shadow of the cathedral. It was founded by the Catholic Kings in the year 1492, as a home for the poor and the sick. There are many things to admire in this building, which is the work of Enrique de Egas, the architect of Toledo Cathedral, to whom Spain owes many of her great buildings. The principal entrance, with its fine Renaissance work—held by many to be the finest in Spain—is one of the prides of Santiago; but what pleased me more, on the outside of the building were the fascinating stone gar-

goyles on the cornice, and also the thirty-eight corbels, all curiously carved, which support the balcony. In the interior are the beautiful wrought-iron railings before the altars of the Hospital Church. They are the work of Mæstro Guillen, and are examples of the skill which the Gallegan artists have always attained in the use of iron. Everywhere within the interior is a display of ornament—much of it unfortunately white-washed. I found more pleasure in the exquisite cloister, than which there is no spot more lovely even in Santiago. In another part of the great building I visited the twenty-six wards of the hospital, where the sick are happily tended by the Sisters. Here, too, I saw the foundlings—fatherless little ones, who are received without questions in the cradle-cage in the outer wall of the hospital. It pleased me to think on these children, as I stood by the beautiful fountain in the cloisters and watched the sunlight ruddle the white stones of the arched columns with moving patterns. To no woman in Santiago need unfortunate motherhood bring despair—and some of us in England call the Spaniards cruel!

On one afternoon we visited the University, a really satisfying modern building, supported by Ionic columns and entered by a triple flight of steps. Here we saw and handled a priceless illuminated *Diurno* that belonged to Ferdinand I., and bore the date 1055, as well as other illuminated books, writings, documents, and early printed works. We saw, too, the flag which was carried by the students of Santiago when defending Galicia from the troops of Napoleon in 1808.

It does not matter which building you choose to visit, from each you will carry away some remembered impression. In the midst of an oak-grove, outside the town, is San Lorenzo. Its Renaissance

altar and monumental tombs of the Ayala family are the work of an unknown artist; they are admirable in their purity and gracious severity. Near to the Plaza de Cervantes is the Capilla de las Animas, a church dedicated to prayer for the souls passing through purgatory, and where more masses are said than in any church in the town, except the cathedral. Inside the church is lined with alto-relief, life-sized figures, representing scenes from the Passion. They are brightly coloured, and the work of Prado, a Gallegan sculptor, and, though curious rather than beautiful, they are very Spanish in their dramatic realisation of the scenes. You may visit the Asylum de Conje, two kilometres from the city, where, in the beautiful old twelfth-century building, now adapted to the needs of a modern hospital for the insane, you will find a sense of peace and of sorrow in so singular a union. Near to the cathedral, again, is the old Convent of San Jeronimo, now a normal school for boys. And there is the famous Medical College, built by Archbishop Fonseca in 1544, with its Renaissance façade and wonders of chiselled stone. Within is the great staircase and *mudejar* ceiling, the one example of its kind in Santiago; and the old *patio*, wherein beautiful things lie about in neglect, and all the magnificence seems sad with memories.

Some churches, like Santa Susana, in the town's Alameda, are interesting, not because they have any treasures of art, but for their suggestion of delicate memories. The fine little church, now unused, still remains as it was in the days when the great Delmirez built it. There is a small court beside it, where you gain one of the finest views of Santiago. And there are the women's fortress-like convents—that of San Payo, near to the cathedral, and of Santa Clara and the convent of the barefooted Carmelite nuns, both on the Coruña

road ; not beautiful in their architecture, and with few treasures, except the Gothic pulpit in Santa Clara, but where one gains yet another suggestion of the religious atmosphere of Santiago. There is a legend of a nun of San Payo who, wearying of her way of life, sought to escape from her window, by a rope of twisted sheets, to join her lover ; but, hanging herself by misadventure, she was found suspended, a corpse. I do not know if the story be true, but it haunted me whenever I passed the prison-like building in the Plaza de Literarios that seems to close off life from life. A tablet in the convent wall marks the spot where the students of the city died at the time of the Napoleonic invasion. This, too, brought reflections ; how sharp are the contrasts that have separated the lives of women from the lives of men ! In Santiago you cannot walk in any direction without encountering something that causes you to think.

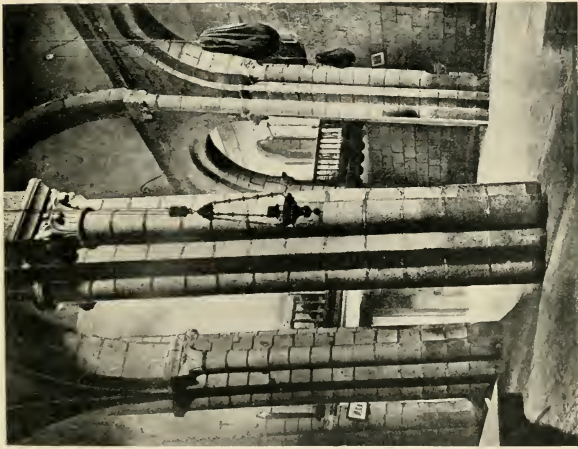
The secret of much that is most impressive in Santiago is the choice (miraculous as legend tells us, and as we can well believe) of its site. A town built upon a hill, where the buildings have the beautiful appearance—common to Spanish towns—of themselves being a part of the landscape, makes at once an appeal from whatever point you view it. Drive out of the town in any direction, and you will see some new view of Santiago, with its cathedral set in its midst, where the heart of the town beats. Then Santiago is placed in a setting of most beautiful landscapes. It is one of the delicate surprises of the place to come suddenly at the end of a street, which had seemed lost in the entanglement of the town, upon a delightful glimpse of the sweeping hills. In fact, Santiago melts into its landscape, like a diamond set in a circle of emeralds.

Outside Santiago, below the hill of the town and

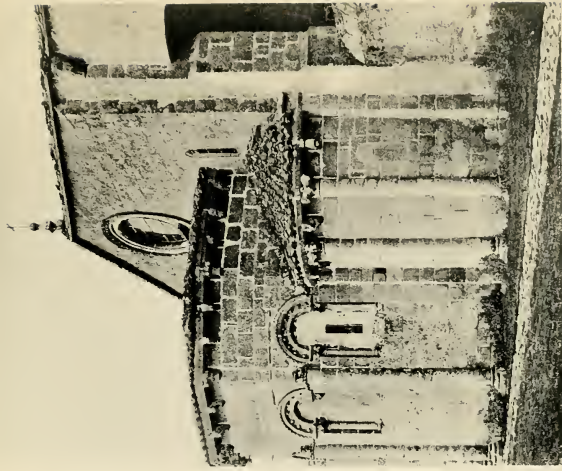
near to the old bridge which crosses the Sar, is the famous Colegiata de Sar. The monastery has been entirely rebuilt, and the beauty of its old architecture has been destroyed. Yet what memories remain around this twelfth-century shrine of faith, where, enclosed beneath the splendid wrecks of their tombs, are some of the chief of Santiago's sons! You will see the sarcophagus, with the recumbent stone figure of Archbishop Bernard, who sought this spot when, in 1295, he renounced his mitre. Here, too, is the tomb of Don Gomez Gonzalez, and that of his cousin and successor Jacome Alvarez of Muñero, Bishop of Mondoñedo, the founder of the monastery; and everywhere upon the old stones there are inscriptions with memories of men who, after living the life of action, quietly came at last to seek repose in the sunny silence and peace of this home of prayer and meditation.

Beside the monastery the small, and now little-used, church of Santa Maria de Sar stands in a green field formed by a bend in the river. The old Romanesque building has not suffered restoration; very curious, as we saw it, in the late afternoon, its naves in shadow, but with a broad shaft of sunlight at the entrance, illuminating distinctly the startling illusion of its strange architecture. At a first sight it seemed as if the sloping columns and slanting walls were about to fall. The effect is extraordinary. The accepted theory is that this outward bend of the piers and walls was intentional on the part of the builders, a feat of architectural skill; some believe, however, that it is due to a sinking of the ground, caused by water beneath the foundations. I know not which is true.

On the north of the church part of the old cloister is still standing—nine sculptured Romanesque arches and two keystones of vaulting remain in their place.



COLEGIATA DE SAR, SANTIAGO. INTERIOR, SHOWING
THE INCLINED COLUMNS.



COLEGIATA DE SAR, SANTIAGO. EXTERIOR.

The arches rest upon piers, and the capitals of the slender columns are decorated with the most delicate sculptured foliage. It is, I think, the most perfect piece of mediæval architecture that I saw in Galicia. And from here you gain a perfect view across the sweep of fields to the town above. The quiet river flows in its green plain, where you may wander and dream at will, undisturbed by the women who are washing their linen by the stream. As we climbed the steep road, which leads back to the town, we saw no one but a group of women bearing pitchers of water upon their heads. It was the same scenes, the same primitive work that had lived on through the centuries.

There are many streets in Santiago, and there is hardly one which does not hold memories and offer pictures. I never wearied of walking in these streets, in which I always lost my way; but, as all ways led to the Cathedral—to Mateo's Gate of Glory—it did not matter. Santiago is as tortuous as a rabbit-warren. The main thoroughfares, the streets which lead from the south quarter of the town to the cathedral, the Rúa del Villa and the Rúa Nueva, are not more than a few yards across. The roadways are paved with great slabs of granite; often there are large holes between them, so that the slow Spanish walking here is always necessary. The shops stand back under arcades, and the vivid wares—the red-and-gold handkerchiefs and shawls which all the shops seem to sell—have an appearance of tropical birds in great cages as they flutter in the breeze. Sometimes the sunlight lights up the old granite arches and throws bands of deep shadow upon the dazzling surface of the newly whitened buildings. One spot that I liked in particular was by the church of San Benito, where one looks out over the oddly shaped triangular Plaza de Cervantes. The arcades here are formed of fine Early

Pointed arches, with really well-sculptured capitals. In the morning a market is held, and all the pavement is occupied with charming groups of peasantry. But at night they are sombre streets, menacing almost, when the arcades are in deep shadow, and everywhere one gets fantastic glimpses. The houses are tall, and the lower ones have barred windows on the ground-floor, and many show the scallop-shell somewhere upon their stones. Mere existence in these streets becomes at once romantic. A realist painter in Santiago would become a romantic by just faithfully copying what he saw.

It seems perfectly natural to see lovers standing with upturned faces, tense and white, eating the iron of guarded balconies ; the night-cries of the *serenos* never sound out of place. Even the pilgrims, whom you will chance to meet, dressed in the curious pilgrim's garb, their broad hats and cloaks covered with the holy shells, will appear as fitting persons in the picture. No, the incongruity comes as you pass, at a turn of a street, from this old-world life into a company of students, noisily laughing as a motor-car rushes by scattering them in all directions. Again, with a contrast that is almost painful, you meet English and American tourists, or groups of modernly dressed citizens, promenading in and out of the ancient colonnades. The city looks like an old-world picture. Which, then, is the real Santiago ? I hardly know. All that is most essential in Santiago's life must appeal to the soul : the new things here—the changes of progress—must seem out of place. And yet sleep brings death—and Santiago is a living city. Her citizens are filled with the desire for the improvement of their town ; and I use the word *improvement* in its best sense.

But sometimes this spirit reveals itself in a curious, even in a painful way. On one occasion, when I had entered a shop to make some purchase to bring home

with me as a fitting souvenir, I was offered by the *señor* who served me a hideous china ornament, with upon it a picture of Mateo's Gate of Glory! On another day, having complimented a *señor* in a shop where photographs were sold on the charms of Santiago, he answered me, "Yes, our town is now one of the best-lighted towns in Galicia. Have you noticed the number and brilliancy of our lamps?"

There is a tendency, on which I have remarked before in the Gallegans, to depreciate the gold of their own country for the base coin of other lands. To this we must ascribe the neglect of many beautiful old buildings, and their disfigurement by modern "improvements," as well as many other things; for instance—and, perhaps, most deplorable of all—the decay of the gracious native dances in all classes except the peasants. And although Santiago, more than any town in Galicia, has kept apart from this baneful thirst for new things, yet even here are signs that must fill the stranger with sadness. It was at Santiago that I was first shocked with the adoption by the women of all classes, except the peasants, of the worst styles of French and English fashions—dresses with hobble skirts and other abominations. When a Spanish woman wears the gracious mantilla she must be ugly indeed not to appear beautiful; but only in the cathedral did I see any, except a few quite old women, wearing mantillas, and even in the churches the hideous hat had penetrated. Black, a colour so suited to emphasise the beauty and grace of Spanish women, has been discarded; and the mixture of colours, always harmonious in the picturesque peasant costumes, is frightful when one sees them reproduced in ugly modern dress. I have never seen more horrible hats than the *señoras* and *señoritas* of Santiago wore during their evening promenade in the beautiful Alameda.

The Alameda is the meeting-place of the town; here only the costumes have changed century after century, not the faces, many of which are beautiful, nor the slow, perfect, Spanish walk, as the long line passes ever up and down. On the evening of our last day in town a *fiesta* was arranged in the Alameda. The Gallegans understand living so perfectly that the least excuse offers opportunity for a holiday. The tree-shaded gardens were transformed, glittering with Chinese lanterns, and the transformation seemed to have been done in a minute; there had been no sign of it in the afternoon when we had passed by that way. It was another instance of the energy of the Gallegans in work that they want to do. From seven o'clock onwards the promenade afforded the most picturesque appearance. The leisurely crowd never ceased moving along the broad roadway; the order was rarely broken, and the slowness of the step was never quickened. There was an unceasing sound of talking and laughter. Under the trees people were seated in long lines, and in groups of families and friends together. A yet denser crowd gathered around the band-stand in the middle of the promenade, standing listening attentively while the band played the beautiful Gallegan melodies. For hours, and far into the night, the happy promenade went on, under the soft light of the lanterns, and the clear, deep blue of a moon-bright sky.

At length, as the night grew old, the winding line thinned, became less and less, and the people returned to their homes, soberly as Spanish holiday-makers always do. Still I waited, until there were only a few groups of people clustered under the trees. I walked to the farthest end of the Alameda, near to the church of Santa Susana. The trees stand thickest here, the lights had all burned out, and beneath the interlacing branches it was quite dark; but above the night-sky was almost as bright

as day. I saw the city stand out clearly against the sapphire vault. In the centre towered the cathedral, a great bulk, with the outline of its rising towers palely visible, and around it the town was grouped. The moon had silvered the white buildings, causing a wonderful glitter; and the city shone as if cut in pearl above me. The deepest tint that I saw was an opal grey. It was a scene of perfect beauty. Presently the full chant of the cathedral bells broke on the silence, and the notes of midnight, slowly recurring, lingered on the still air. The music played an exquisite rhythm, and the true emotion of Santiago seemed to steal upon my spirit.

CHAPTER X

ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE IN GALICIA

The aptitude of the Gallegans for architecture and sculpture—A comparison between the Gallegans and the Aragonese—Characteristics of Spanish architecture—The construction of a great Spanish church—The architecture of Galicia—The origin of Romanesque—The horse-shoe arch—Santa Comba de Banda—Importance of Romanesque in Galicia—The church-building period—The cathedrals of Lugo, Mondoñedo, Tuy, and Orense—Gothic in Galicia—Later developments of architecture—Sculpture—Gregorio Hernandez—Handicrafts—Carved wooden choir-stalls.

THE vigour and versatile aptitude of the Gallegans have been displayed in the arts and in literature from the earliest times. As far back as the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries she enjoyed an enlightened and liberal civilisation. We have seen the number of intellectual pioneers who may be counted as Gallegans, as may many of Spain's greatest thinkers of later times. Her holy city of Compostela was in early ages a focus of light, where all the artistic crafts were fostered. In sculpture the Gallegans were pioneers, and in architecture their genius expressed itself at a very early date. They have always treasured their poetic gifts, and publicly rewarded their poets; they are among the most musical people in Spain. And still to-day Galicia produces the greatest number of Spanish sculptors, writers, and poets.

But while the Gallegans have thus proved their energy and inventive ability in so many fields, a curious fact at once faces the student in connection with the

history of her art. While architecture and sculpture flourished, showing a continuous development through several centuries—an unusual thing in Spain—the sister art of painting was practically neglected. One of my first surprises, in visiting the churches and museums in Galicia, was the entire absence of pictures, which offers so striking a contrast with Seville, Toledo, and Valencia, or indeed with almost all Spanish towns. I know of only one other instance of what seems to be so curiously a one-sided development of the art-impulse. It also occurs in Spain, in the kingdom of Aragon, whose school of sculpture is, with that of Galicia, the finest in the Peninsula, but where also painting remained almost undeveloped until a very late period.

For a long time I sought to explain this peculiarity to myself. I am not sure that the reason I found is the right one. A Gallego to whom I have written on the subject suggests that the reason is to be found in the humidity of the climate, which turned the fashion of religious art to sculptured altars, that would not be so easily destroyed as would paintings; but to me it has seemed that the explanation rests in something deeper, in the distinctive character of the people. I find many points of contact between the Gallegans and the Aragonese. Both are a sturdy and vigorous stock, who alike have never willingly bowed to any conqueror; both, again, are a distinctly active, and, it may be said, a practical people, and, though never careless of beauty, they have always been willing to sacrifice somewhat of picturesqueness and charm to usefulness and convenience. A special originality seems to mark both the Gallegans and the Aragonese. You find it in their spirit of independence, in their aptitude for reform, as also in their moral and spiritual devotion—qualities without which we can scarcely account for much in the history and in the

genius of both these races. The habits and customs of the people are in many cases alike. The ecclesiastical activity of both is very marked ; and in no part of Spain have there been larger or more important religious communities. Even to-day it is in these two countries that you will find the most distinguished and intelligent priests. I have noticed the same dramatic qualities in the Gallegans and the Aragonese ; in their native dances, for instance, the Galician and the Aragonese *jota* and the *muiñero*, dances that show many common qualities in their dramatic action, and are so utterly unlike the Andalusian dances. And again, I find the same quality in the women of both these provinces, who exhibit a dramatic self-forgetfulness in prayer, as you may see them on any day in their churches, that I have not noticed elsewhere in Spain.

It would be possible to account for this likeness by points of analogy in the history of the two countries, by their geographical position, by the Iberian affinities of their blood, and their resistance to, and, in the end, driving back of, all outside invaders. But what concerns us now is that this heightening of one side of the Spanish character, its seriousness, with the impulse for strong expression, and an added grasp of material things—a quality not common to the Spanish character—explains the predilection of the Gallegans for architecture and sculpture, and of the Aragonese for sculpture, as well as their long disregard of painting : an art of less practical use, and also one of more restricted dramatic expression. Architecture and sculpture are, thus, the natural arts by which the predominance of character in the people found their utterance.

Architecture in Spain offers certain particular characters that it may be well to pause briefly to consider. It is often said that there is no native school of architec-

ture, while some deny the existence of a genuine Spanish style. Here Roman, Byzantine, and Arab art have passed, and also the Mudejar, Gothic, and Renaissance—in fact, all the styles of Europe. Spain possesses few pure Romanesque, Gothic, or Renaissance buildings. There are Renaissance jewels in Gothic temples, or ogival additions in Romanesque buildings. Even Moorish art exhibits the same features. It now seems certain that the Mezquita of Cordova was largely a Christian church transformed. The western wall and façade, with the horse-shoe arches, are pure Byzantine, while the capitals of the pillars are Latin or Romanesque. The Alhambra, likewise, shows animal arabesques, which are Byzantine and not Moorish.

The question arises—how is this to be reconciled with the fact that it is on architecture that the special Spanish temperament has impressed itself with more completeness than it has manifested in any other art? We must go back to Rome for another country that has spoken in its buildings with the same overwhelming force. This is true, although it may be granted that many of the fundamental ideas of Spanish architecture have been borrowed from other nations. It is, in fact, just this complexity which gives to the Spanish buildings their special character. The Spanish artists, though maybe they lacked creative genius, were no base imitators. They sought to combine, and, by a transformation of styles, they gave to the temples they had to construct that massive, strong, and exuberant spirit that was in harmony with their own temperament. For them all styles were but elements of which they made use. With the aid of what they garnered from without they built architectural wonders—natural hybrids, we may call them—complex and luxurious, beautiful, and always harmonious with

the special Spanish character. In such a cathedral, for instance, as that of Seville, which, it must be acknowledged, lacks pure architectural beauty, we have what is certainly the most living Gothic church in the world; while other cathedrals, such as Burgos and Toledo, though fundamentally French, are superbly Spanish in their final results. Leon Cathedral, alone of all the great Spanish churches, belongs not to Spain, but to France.

The cathedrals which arose in the period of Spain's greatest prosperity were the chief point of attraction—the theatres, the centres of all life. They were built for the honour of God, but also for the enjoyment of the people themselves; religion was joyful, popular—democratic, one might say. For this reason the construction and also the arrangement of a Spanish church is unlike that with which we are familiar in England and in France. The exterior, with the exception of the portals, which give entrance to the building, is always less sumptuous than the interior, an arrangement of decoration exactly opposite to the French Gothic churches. Not infrequently a Spanish church resembles a castle or a fortress, rather than a temple. The church, to the Spaniard, was his home of worship, and the efforts of the builders were focused on its practical use. They were concerned with the needs of the worshippers, and the whole object of the very construction of the church was to fill the edifice with the maximum of active worship. Never in Spanish churches do we find the ceremonial of service concentrated in the eastern end, nor is this part of the building more sacred or more richly decorated. The Coro, or Choir, is placed in the centre of the church, separated by a space only from the Capilla Mayor, which contains the high altar; both alike are enclosed, and thus constitute what may be said to be a church within

a church. The choral part of the service in this way is united with the ceremonial functions, while the space between the Coro and the Capilla Mayor, which can be enclosed when needed, is used for many of the most sacred and characteristic ceremonies of the church. In Santiago, for instance, it is here that the swinging of the Great Censor (*el botafumeiro*) takes place; while in Seville it is used for the Easter ceremony of the Washing of Feet. It is, indeed, an arrangement most perfectly adapted to the great religious festivals, permitting, as it does, the sight of the functions to all worshippers. It was a long time before I discovered why the witnessing of the church pageants in Spain produced such a different emotion in me from what they did in any other Catholic country. It was not until I began to understand the special architectural arrangement of the churches that I realised why—although a foreigner and an unbeliever—I always felt at home when attending a Spanish service, as if I were really taking my part as a spectator.

Stand in the centre of any great Spanish church, beneath the *croisée*, where you will see the Coro and the Capilla Mayor; a glittering brilliancy—a dazzling of gold and silver, of polished marble, of agate and jasper—and a luxuriance of carving will meet your view. It is here, where his worship centres, that the Spaniard has lavished his wealth and the artists their skill. To produce this magnificence in Choir and High Altar, the decorative and industrial arts were fostered. Sculptors in stone and wood, painters and *estafadores*, goldsmiths and silversmiths, masters of iron craft—artists of all classes and of many nationalities worked together and wrought these wonders which are still to-day unsurpassed in the world. In the industrial arts Spain was first among all nations.

When we come to the special characters of Galician

architecture we find a more continuous and uniform development than can be met with in the buildings of any other part of Spain, except in Catalonia. The influence of foreign styles is less marked, while the outside elements used have been developed, rigorously and practically, with a fine, and often original, sense of architectural beauty, both in ecclesiastical and in municipal and domestic buildings. Galicia was at the height of her prosperity before the ideals of Gothic, coming, it is held by many, from France, had conquered Spain. The great monument of her art, the cathedral of Santiago at Compostela was completed in the twelfth century, earlier than any of the great Spanish churches. It was, in its original form, a pure Romanesque building. It served as a pattern or model to be adopted by all the churches that followed. In this way Galicia had created a local and vital feeling for architecture, which, by saving her from the error of fruitless experiment in styles, ensured her achievement.

The origin of the Romanesque building is a debated question. Some attribute the style to France or to Italy; others, again, apply the term to all Christian architecture prior to the birth of Gothic. What seems most likely is that the Romanesque was a natural evolution from the early Latin-Christian (basilique) style, and at the same time adding many decorative details from the Byzantine-Christian style. In Spain the Visigothic, or pre-Romanesque-Christian, architecture shows strongly Byzantine influence; more so, indeed, than in any European country; and these Byzantine elements were retained in the Romanesque buildings, both early and late. This is explained when we remember that an important colony of Byzantine Christians were established in eastern Andalusia during the Visigothic period. Long before the Moors set foot in Spain, and prior by

many centuries to the birth of Mudejar architecture, Spanish Christian art owed more to the East than to the West; it was, at least, as much Byzantine as Roman. "There are many indications," writes M. Gomez Morreno, "that between the decadence of Roman architecture and the invasion of the Moors, Spain produced a phase of architecture, quite her own, of which the most characteristic feature was the horse-shoe arch." Until quite recently it was believed that the horse-shoe arch was introduced into Spain by the Moors, but it is now known, without any doubt, that Spain had it long before, that she had it already in the second century. When Christian architecture arose, with it reappeared the horse-shoe arch, whose origin is as yet unsolved. It is interesting to note that in Galicia, which the Moors never penetrated, and where there is no Mudejar architecture, the horse-shoe arch is frequent. There are also many instances of pure Byzantine ornament.

Was, then, Romanesque in Spain a foreign style, or was it a natural growth from the early Christian architecture? The answer is not easy to give. There is a small, almost unknown church, Santa Comba, near to Banda, now a village, but once a halting-town on the Roman road between Braga and Astorga; and from this church, for too long neglected, we may gain some evidence. The church is Christian; it is built in the form of the Greek cross. The four ends are equal, though the east end is lengthened by a small chapel-apse; thus it is, strictly speaking, of a broad oblong shape. Its most marked characteristics are its extreme simplicity and its horse-shoe arches. Its windows—five in number and all small—are Romanesque. A cupola rises above the arches in the centre of the building, and all the arches show the horse-shoe form. Indeed the arch of the apse, which holds the chief altar, is strikingly like the

arches of the Mezquita at Cordova. The columns on either side of this arch, but quite distinct from it, are Roman and their capitals Corinthian; they are supposed to have been brought from the Roman baths at Banda.

The antiquity of Santa Comba has been established by Spanish archæologists, who have discovered a reference to the church in a charter given by Adozno to San Rosendo, wherein—in the year 910—he speaks of it as being already established for two hundred years. It belongs, by this date, to the Visigothic period, and must be regarded as a unique monument of Christian mediæval architecture.

The existence of Santa Comba provides proof for the same authorship for the better-known church of San Juan de Banos, whose date, 661, and Visigothic origin have been doubted by French writers, always over-eager to claim for their country the impulse for all Spain's architecture. Both Santa Comba and San Juan de Banos have the same features, and both the horse-shoe arch. The two churches are situated not far from one another, and their similarity must be apparent to any one who has seen them. What is of importance to us now is that in these churches of Santa Comba and San Juan de Banos we are in the presence of what may well be essential monuments of the art of Spain, examples of the style which will, when more knowledge has been gained, prove to be the origin of Spanish architecture—the Spanish Romanesque developing on a still strongly marked Byzantine basis. Lopez Ferreiro, the greatest Gallegan archæologist, writes of Santa Comba: "It is one of the very rare examples which represent, in the history of art, the continuation of the Byzantine style in its last period, that of transition to the Romanesque style." I would suggest that here, in Santa Comba, we see the beginning



EARLY ROMANESQUE CHURCHES : SAN JUAN DE BANOS.



EARLY ROMANESQUE CHURCHES : SAN MIGUEL DE LINIO, OVIEDO.

of the vigorous and ingenious Gallegan mind as applied to architecture; we certainly find, in these ancient buildings, for the first time, the characteristics which mark so many of the great Spanish churches.

To understand the splendid efflorescence of Romanesque architecture in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries it must be borne in mind that its birth coincided with the popular religious movement of the expulsion of the Moors; it coincided also with the great church-building period in the north. It was a time when numerous bishoprics were created by the Alfonsos of Castile as an aid to their political ambitions. The cathedrals were to play a civil as well as a religious part. Moreover Romanesque art, with its dignified and strong, but always dramatic spirit, was peculiarly adapted to express the genius of the people in this warlike period of their history. All these reasons contributed to the rapid growth of Romanesque ecclesiastical buildings, and though many of the old churches were destroyed at a later date and replaced by Gothic structures, or, at least, mutilated by additions, northern Spain is still the chief home of the Romanesque church.

In Galicia the Romanesque style lasted for five centuries, and was employed by the Gallegan architects right up to the fifteenth century, long after it had been discarded by the rest of Spain. Thus the fifteenth-century cloisters of San Francisco at Lugo, which are unique even in Spain, are mainly Romanesque, while the pillars of Santa Maria of Pontevedra and the entrance of the interesting church of Santa Maria del Azogue at Betanzos are examples of the Romanesque persisting as late as the sixteenth century. For this reason there are few examples of Gothic architecture in Galicia; even more here than in the rest of Spain Gothic was an exotic, which sought for, but never found, life.

Many changes were introduced into the old style. The builders of Romanesque churches had to grapple with the double problem of how to support wide vaultings and how to let light in upon dark naves ; a new system of vaulting was employed, an increasing emphasis was laid on height and on openings for light, the form of the apse was changed by the introduction of an ambulatory, while flying buttresses, timidly pointed arches, and solid towers were used, as well as Byzantine cupolas and domes. But the French style of Gothic, which we see first in the cathedral of Burgos and later in Toledo and Leon, never found a home in Galicia, nor is there any example of Spanish Gothic, such for instance, as the cathedral of Alcalá de Henares. It would seem that the term "transitional style," applied by many writers to Galicia's churches, is an error ; here there was no "passing" from the Romanesque to Gothic. The tenacious temper of the people, added to the poetry of their Celtic inheritance, found fuller expression in the Romanesque than in the Gothic : and with the glorious example of Santiago de Compostela, her artists felt less desire for "improvement"—that changing, seeking for the new, which results so often in decay. The introduction of Gothic elements in connection with the Romanesque was not, as some have held, the result of a changing fashion in art, but a deliberately adopted method, in which the native qualities of Galician architecture found their expression.

As we should expect, Romanesque art in Galicia became localised, acquiring certain characteristics arising from special local conditions that were restricted to a determined region. Thus Galician Romanesque and that of western Castile, for instance, are of strikingly different aspect ; the buildings of the one district are exceedingly poetical, possessing carved exterior wall

decorations—an unusual feature in Spanish buildings, that are both rich and excellent, for the Celt expressed poetry in his stone ; while those of Castile are strong and warlike, and the decorations employed are Byzantine, or, at least, Oriental. Then the former buildings are constructed of granite, while those of the latter are of sandstone strengthened with brick.

Santiago de Compostela is the great essential monument of art in Galicia ; in its sculpture it stands unrivalled, while from an architectural point of view it is all Galicia. The fine cathedral of Lugo and the church of Santa Maria at Coruña are directly modelled on Santiago, while in the other cathedrals of the kingdom—at Mondoñedo, at Orense, and at Tuy—as well as in almost all her old churches, this influence is evident. Indeed, the glorious church of St. James had an influence reaching far wider than Galicia : San Isidore at Leon, San Pedro at Huesco, and San Vicente and San Pedro at Avila may be mentioned as examples of Romanesque churches which owe their inspiration to Santiago.

The earliest fine church of Galician Romanesque, modelled on Santiago, is the cathedral of Lugo. It was begun in 1129, and shows the intrusion of Gothic elements on a still strongly marked Romanesque basis. Villa Amil has called this church “ a compendium of the history of architecture.” The aisles of the transept are Romanesque, so are the interesting portals, the varied and elaborate capitals, and the closed windows and vaulting of the lateral naves. But on this basis we find added the ogival arches of the naves ; while in the apse, with the curious octagonal addition, we have an example of the Gothic style as it was interpreted in Galicia—Gallegan Gothic. The outside effect of Lugo is unsatisfactory—apart from the beautiful portal of the north façade—being spoiled by numerous tasteless addi-

tions, causing the Romanesque origin to be hardly recognisable. Inside, the transept, with its finely constructed aisles and wealth of sculpture—all pure Romanesque—is finer and more impressive than the nave.

A building of two such marked styles suggests the moulding force of different minds. We find that the original plan of construction made by Raimundo de Montiforte, was, on his death, entrusted to his son, who, a generation younger and imbued with newer architectural ideas, changed his father's plan, adding to the height of the nave, and introducing the pointed arch, as also in the triforium, which had been planned as a copy of that of Santiago. We are thus, at Lugo, in the presence of a very Spanish building, with a curious mingling of styles, which nevertheless has attained satisfying beauty and solemnity. In the apse especially, apart from its octagonal addition, we see Gothic elements introduced, not to disturb, but, by the added power given to the builder, heightening the effect and imparting mystery and beauty to the sombre and massive Romanesque. There is in Galicia no finer example than this old apse of the perfect blending of the Gothic and Romanesque styles.

Lugo Cathedral is rich in its possession of sculpture; its choir-stalls, carved by Francisco Moure, a Gallegan artist of Orense, are among the most beautiful in the kingdom. The carving of the capitals in the transept is rich and varied, as indeed, is all the Romanesque carving. The sculptures of a later date, though florid, are in a bold and happily decorative style. The triumph of the sculptor's work is seen in the ornament and figures of the northern portal; they are equal in merit to those of the Puerta de las Platerias of Santiago, which this portico resembles. In the statue of Christ, over the archway, we have a fine example of early native sculpture,

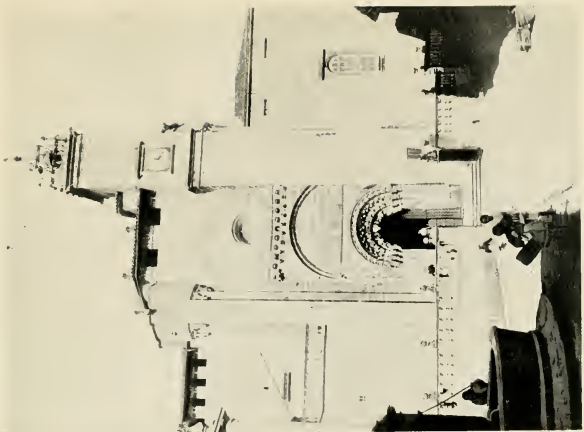
showing the Byzantine influence as interpreted by the Gallegan mind. The statue of the *Virgen de los Ojos Grandes*, which legend says St. James brought to Lugo when he founded the first cathedral here, is one of the oldest images in Spain; but this statue is curious, rather than beautiful. Placed on an elaborate Churrigueresque throne, and wearing a modern gold and jewelled crown, it affords an example of the incongruities that so often surprise the stranger in Spanish churches.

Near to Lugo, in a little-visited but picturesque valley, is the old village-city of Mondoñedo, with its interesting cathedral, which represents the next step in the development of Galicia's church. With many Romanesque details, and to some extent a Romanesque form, though altered by additions, and with many Gothic elements belonging to a later date, it is an example, perhaps the most perfect in Spain, of the so-called Transitional style. I say "so-called" because we realise that here, as in all the churches of Galicia, the retention of the older Romanesque was a deliberate intention, resisting the Gothic, while making use of certain of its elements for definite architectural and artistic effects.

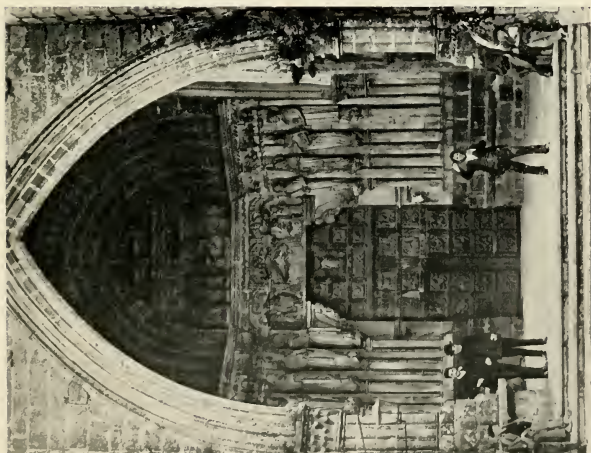
This cathedral of San Martin is said to date from the year 1114. Originally—as can be readily seen from an examination of the old part of the building—it was a pure Romanesque basilica. The exterior is massive, almost without decoration; the buttresses are strongly developed, and are the most striking feature. Over the principal façade rise two fine bell-towers. In the interior the old form has been changed by additions to the arms of the transept. The fine ambulatory walk added to the apse dates at least from the fifteenth century, as is shown by the presence of late Gothic and Renaissance elements. The vaulting of the nave is Gothic, that of the aisles

which are lower than the nave, is Romanesque, and rests on capitals and shafts of the finest twelfth-century work. The best carvings are in this part of the church. There are some interesting frescoes in the sacristy.

The similarity of Tuy Cathedral, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, to that of Lugo suggests that it is the work of the same accomplished Gallegan, the elder Mæstro Raimundo. It is, perhaps, an even finer example of his genius. As you enter the building you are impressed by its beautiful proportions and its extreme simplicity. It is the spirit which seems to rule the building. Tuy is less exuberant than Lugo. It would seem that the builder, conscious of the needs of a frontier town that, like Tuy, was sacked and pillaged by Arabs and Vikings alike, adapted the church to the perils of its situation. Many previous basilicas had been destroyed; therefore, the great requirement was strength. The outside appearance of Tuy is that of a fortress rather than a temple. The crenellated square tower on the western front is heavy, and hardly higher than the simple crowning of the Romanesque window above the narthex. The overwhelming impression is that of resistance; this building is a monument of war as well as of religion. Thus it is one of the surprises of this fortress-like building to find on its western façade an exterior portico that is a masterpiece of Romanesque carving. The portico is castellated and supported on pillars, and between each pillar is a statue that stands upon some animal, though one rests on the shoulders of a man. The reliefs above the door, and in the tympanum of the richly carved arcade, are admirable; the first represent scenes in the life of the Virgin, while that of the tympanum shows the Adoration of the Magi. It is interesting to note that this narthex is of a much later date than the church; but, though executed in the fifteenth century, a time



ORENSE CATHEDRAL.



PORTICO OF TUY CATHEDRAL.

when florid ideals had taken possession of Spain, the artist who executed it had the understanding to make it harmonise with the old building. It is a noble example of Galician Romanesque. There is a second fine portal of an earlier date on the north of the cathedral. The interior of Tuy is the usual Roman cruciform, consisting of a nave and two aisles. The transept is like that of Santiago; the four arms of the cross are all of them short, and are almost of the same length. The great height of the nave, crowned by a Romanesque triforium of blinded arches, gives dignity to an effect that otherwise might be disappointing. The walls are devoid of all decoration. Both the exterior and the interior appearance of Tuy is noble rather than beautiful.

Tuy is a town that deserves to be more widely known. Its cathedral is one of the most interesting I visited in Galicia. In one of the other churches in the town, San Bartolomé, older in date than the cathedral, there are some interesting carved capitals. They are sculptured with classic leaves, among which are living forms, human and grotesque, birds and animals, singly or in groups. One capital represents a dinner-party. Three of the figures, one of whom is a woman, are standing, with their hands resting on the table, on which dishes and knives are placed. A soldier at the right of the table is threatening a monk with a sword, who seems to have just arrived. The figures are vigorously alive; the work is very Spanish, very dramatic. Then the later-date Gothic church of Santo Domingo has a Romanesque doorway in the south arm of its transept with interesting carvings. The capitals are curious, showing sculptured figures and animals, some serious, some comic—on one are angels and long-necked swans, on another a monkey. The old group in the tympanum, though much mutilated,

is interesting, as are also the symbolical figures placed in the arch that encloses it.

Passing by the two Romanesque churches of La Coruña, the colegiata of Santa Maria and the church of Santiago—of which I shall speak in another chapter—we come to the little-known, but worthy, cathedral of Orense, which represents the final development in the introduction of Gothic elements into Romanesque structures. Orense, like Tuy, suffered greatly from Moorish invasions; twice rased to the ground, the town was rebuilt by the energetic Gallegans. The present cathedral, which is dedicated to St. Martin of Tours, stands on the site where Carriarico, King of the Suevi, erected a church in the ninth century—legend relates as a thankoffering for the restoration of his dying son, after bathing in Las Burgas, the famed hot-springs of the town. The date of the present edifice is a point of discussion; the year 1220 is given by many authorities; but the general appearance seems to prove that it was planned, and at least begun, at an earlier date. The building is less pure in its style than the cathedral of Lugo or Tuy; the Romanesque origin is less manifest, which has caused many to class this cathedral as Gothic. But, in spite of many Gothic elements, and the more frequent use of the pointed arch, the spirit of Orense is nowhere truly Gothic. We feel here, as at Lugo and Mondoñedo, that Gothic features are used as decorative rather than as essentially constructive elements. This is well seen in the windows, in some of which the ogival pattern is used so timidly as to suggest an endeavour on the artist's part to subdue the Gothic to the Romanesque tradition of the country. The small and beautiful cloisters are the finest part in Gothic. They are entered by a Romanesque portal.

The general view of the outside is pleasing, but the

edifice is so hemmed in by buildings that it is difficult to see it well. In this church the influence of Santiago de Compostela is evident, though the original form of the building has been changed by many late additions. This influence, is seen, above all, in the Portico del Paraiso, an interior narthex leading from the western front to the body of the church, which is an imitation of the Gate of Glory. Like all copies, it suffers from comparison with the master-work ; but if one forgets Mateo's inspired Gateway one can find pleasure in this portal, which would be a good example of Romanesque sculpture were it not disfigured by later additions. It suffers, in particular, from the insertion of altars and badly restored paintings. The carvings of the three portals of Orense claim some attention, as do also the long row of monumental tombs and sepulchral reliefs in the northern aisle. Some of these are simple and beautiful in style. The cathedral possesses, besides, finely carved choir-stalls, and the Gothic *retablo* of the chief altar is the only one of its kind in Spain ; both are the work of foreign artists. It was in Orense that I saw some beautiful examples of *plateria*, or silver work, for which Galicia is famous. The three thirteenth-century silver reliefs on the altar facing the sacristy, which depict scenes in the life of Orense's first martyr, Santa Eufemia, are charming. The silver filigree cross in the sacristy is supposed to be the work of the silversmiths of Santiago ; it is beautiful, but unfortunately it has been quite recently defaced, by the mistaken enthusiasm of a wealthy citizen, who, at an immense cost, has had the fine old treasure modernised and decked out with stones. (We have here an instance of that terrible zeal for "improvement" which sometimes brings fear to those of us who love Spain.)

We have now studied the chief of Galicia's great churches, and certain facts have become clear to us. As

we have stood in any of these churches, in Santiago de Compostela, where we saw the Galician church in its first and most accomplished effort, in Lugo, in Mondoñeda, in Tuy, in Orense—churches that are later in date and smaller, and also more developed—we have come to understand something of the architectural impulse that moved Galicia through five centuries of her growth. Placed, as we have seen, between the great waves of architectural inspiration, the Roman-Byzantine and the Gothic of northern France, but with instincts which attracted her artist to the first of these impulses, she was never overcome by the Gothic current to which she was exposed. The Gallegan artists gradually asserted within the Gothic field their imperative native character, by which they succeeded in moulding out of unlike elements a school of their own, possessing a finely and deliberately blended style—the Galician Romanesque, noteworthy for its strength and simplicity, especially for its fine economy in the adaptation of means to practical ends, through which they were saved from the extravagance of statement that sometimes destroys the sobriety of Spanish art.

Of the later developments of architecture in Galicia I shall say little, for it does not seem necessary to trace the borrowing of styles that do not belong to her art. The Renaissance style of Italy never found a true home in Spain, though in its Spanish form, known as *plateresco*, it flourished in the sixteenth century. The name, from *plata* (silver) is derived from the silver filigree, which the stone lace-work ornament of this style resembles. The most widely known example is Burgos Cathedral, while in Galicia the façade of Santa Maria of Pontevedra is the jewel of the Renaissance style; but the temper of Spain could not for long be reconciled with that of Italy, and reaction came quickly. In the severe and sombre

art of Juan de Herrera, the architect of the Escorial, we have a genuine, if not quite satisfying, expression of the Spanish spirit in architecture, marking a return to the traditions of Græco-Roman art. A new disturbance arose in the seventeenth century with the grotesque and fantastic productions of Churriguera, a native of Salamanca. We see this style in its most fully developed expression in the western façade of Santiago Cathedral. But again a return to sobriety followed. And if, finally, we desire to see Galician architecture in its last and accomplished stage, though not its most beautiful or stateliest form, we must go back to Santiago, to the eighteenth-century University, designed by José Machado. In the restrained art of this building the Gallegan spirit again speaks. Elsewhere the same spirit is revealing its energy in domestic architecture, where in the new towns that are springing up, side by side with the old towns, we see the force of the collective community creating for itself visibly beautiful and imposing homes.

Such, in briefest outline, is the development of Galician architecture. We have seen, too, something of the genius of the Gallegan artists for sculpture: her wealth of carvings in stone and in wood, her iron craft, and her gold and silver work; but on these branches of her art it has been only possible to touch. It would need a volume to record all the abundance of her accomplishment in carving and in the industrial arts.

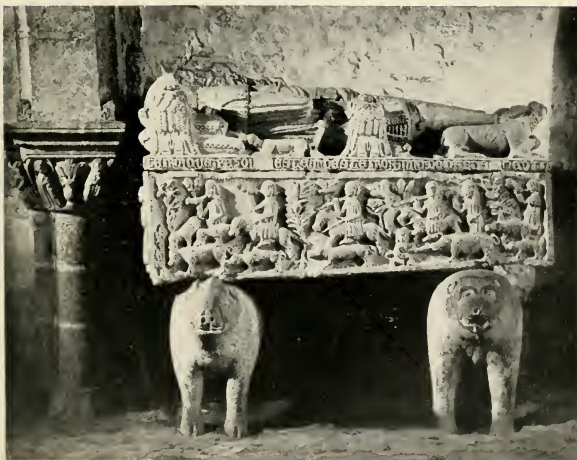
Galicia has the honour of having given birth to Gregorio Hernandez, one of Spain's great sculptors. He was born at Pontevedra in the sixteenth century. I visited the old city of Valladolid that I might have an opportunity of seeing his work. It gained my admiration for its simplicity and strength, and for the depth of feeling which it showed. I have never seen a Christ that impressed me more than one by Hernandez. Galician sculp-

ture deserves a more careful study, and a wider knowledge, than has yet been given to it. The best of her carvings are absolutely distinguished and original. The triple doors of the west portal in Santiago are among the finest work of the eleventh century; her Gate of Glory is one of the supreme works of Christian sculpture; her carved capitals are full of curious interest to the student of Christian iconography. The monuments in her churches are not the least part of their interest. No country is, perhaps, more fortunate in her church furniture. The great glory of the churches are the *retablos*; rich in sculpture, covered in gold and colour, they are imposing beyond anything of the kind to be seen outside of Spain. The choir-stalls, again, are often magnificent; while, if we turn to the other fittings of the choir, rarely elsewhere shall we see finer choir-lecterns; and nowhere else so many or such magnificent *rejas*, or metal-screens, as in this country. Even to-day the iron-workers are unable to make a bad *reja*. In every one of these works the Gallegan artists excelled. Her church treasures in beaten gold and silver, her cloths, woven in silk and gold and embroidered with precious stones, are all worthy of admiration. The workmanship of the *sagrarios*, or miniature temples, that are the triumph of her silver-smiths, is exquisite.

Thus, from the artist's point of view, the churches and monasteries are museums of delight, and in each the lover of beautiful things will find something that will make special appeal to him. For my own part, I delighted most of all in the carved choir-stalls, and especially those of San Martin at Santiago. Carving in wood is more distinctly Spanish than any art, which is true although its introduction into Spain is believed to have come from Flanders or Holland. The aim of the Spanish carvers has always been expression, and the freedom and facility of



SCULPTURED TOMBS IN GALICIA : PAYO GOMEZ CHARRINO, IN
SAN FRANCISCO, PONTEVEDRA.



SCULPTURED TOMBS IN GALICIA : ANDRADE, IN SAN FRANCISCO,
BETANZOS.

wood lent itself specially to the attainment of dramatic representation. These choir-stalls represent for the most part Biblical themes, though some scenes are historical and allegorical, while the introduction of humorous and grotesque incidents is common. The variety is surprising, and the small carved figures are executed in the most delicious manner and are conceived with great boldness. I spent an unforgettable morning in examining these stalls in San Martin which are an inexhaustible mine, with a never-ending novelty both of idea and forms. When I left I was conscious of the bewilderment which comes upon me so often in the presence of beautiful work. I felt that, were I to gaze for a year, I should still not be able to know everything in them. I feel still that no words can describe these delightful carvings, nor have I been able to obtain any photograph that does justice to them.

CHAPTER XI

LA CORUÑA

England's connection with Galicia—A digression on patriotism—Quotation from Major Martin Hume—Maria Pita—Journey from Santiago to Coruña—A village fair—Situation of La Coruña—Arrival in the town—A *fiesta* week—The old town and the new town—A visit to the theatre—Moore's grave in the garden of San Carlos—Further reflections on patriotism—Goya's etchings, "Los Desastres de la Guerra"—The house where Moore died—The Torre de Hercules—A visit to the military barracks—Military sports—The ladies of Coruña—A walk in the town—The churches of Santiago and Santa Maria.

ONE of the interests of Galicia to the English visitor is the past connection of the country with England. I did not visit Galicia with a very certain knowledge, nor had I any historical text-books for reference, but vague recollections supplied my visit with harmonious memories. The question of what appeals to a traveller is decided by temperament. But there is, I suppose, a certain satisfaction in finding in the place you are visiting evidences of the past, and still active, importance of the country to which a discriminating Providence has assigned you. This is at least the case, unless you happen to be afflicted with the spirit of the cosmopolite—that uncomfortable result of knowing many countries and feeling that you belong to none. To be a cosmopolite is not an ideal; the ideal should rather be that of the determined patriot. Yes, being a cosmopolite is an evil, it causes one to think and to make unprofitable comparisons between one's own race and others; however, one must

make the best of it. If you have lost the sense of the absoluteness and sanctity of your race—that splendid pride of country which the cosmopolite spirit kills—you will miss many emotions that your stay in Galicia, and in particular a visit to La Coruña, would otherwise bring you—but then fortunately few English people ever do this. Thus these remarks of mine are probably unnecessary. I give them as an explanation in recording, as an honest traveller must, my own impressions.

Distrusting my own bias in writing of these things, I quote what Major Martin Hume says in his able Introduction to a recent book on Galicia, *A Corner of Spain*, by Walter Wood.

“Columbus sailed in his Pontevedra ship to discover the New World. Whether the great ‘admiral of the ocean sea’ was, as some have not hesitated to assert, of Pontevedran origin it is difficult now to decide; but certain it is that many of the Spanish sea-dogs who guided the *conquistadores* into the unknown were men from Pontevedra and the adjoining port of Marino.

“All Galicia is historic ground for Englishmen. Its bays and harbours have been the resort of our ships in peace and war from time immemorial, and here in Pontevedra the English John of Gaunt reigned for years as so-called King of Castile in right of his wife, the daughter of Pedro the Cruel. Here in the country round the Sotomayors, the Sarmientos, the Fonsecas, and Montenegros fought out their endless feuds in which the warlike archbishops of Santiago took a frequent part, until the great Isabella, with an iron hand and virile energy, crushed them all with her *hermandad*. Here in the neighbourhood was born that Sarmiento whom we in England know best, him of Gondomar, who ruled our crowned poltroon, James I., by bluff and mother-wit. To the Sarmientos too belonged that Maria de Salinas, as she

is incorrectly called in our annals, the devoted friend of Catherine of Aragon and the ancestress of the house of Willoughby d'Eresby.

“ From Coruña, the Groyne, as our forbears translated it, sailed those numerous futile fleets that Philip destined to bring stubborn England to her knees. From the great Armada down to the poor squadron that sailed for Ireland when Elizabeth lay dying, Coruña was the trysting-place for England's foes. Here came the Desmonds, O'Donnells and O'Sullivans, who hoped to set a Catholic Ireland under the seal of Spain. Here landed the Irish bishops and priests, who went backwards and forwards from Killibegs to Spain, plotting and planning for Ireland's emancipation; here Drake and Norris in 1589 avenged the Armada by a bloody but fruitless siege, greatly to Elizabeth's indignation. I have told elsewhere (*The Year after the Armada*) the not-too-credible story of this unauthorised siege, in which the strong wine of Galicia proved a worse enemy to the English than the pikes and partisans of the brave Gallegan peasants and their womankind, led by the redoubtable heroine Maria Pita herself.

“ But all the blood feud has been forgotten long ago. The splendid soldier of British blood, whose body lies buried upon the ramparts of Coruña, died for Spain, as did thousands of our countrymen in that Titanic war to free the Peninsula from the grip of Napoleon.”

In this account the British patriot will find much of interest, with many points for satisfaction. For my own part, I frankly confess that my interest centres in Maria Pita. So much of the Gallegan spirit is in this peasant woman, who, seizing the sword of a dead soldier, gathered the people of Coruña together and herself led the attack that forced Drake and the troops under General Henry Norris to abandon their position and quit the town.

The Gallegas, who are workers, were in the past, and are still to-day, more on a level with men than the women of any country that I know. I have found in them the qualities of energy, independence, and courage; and an intelligence that has often astonished me, added to a high standard of physical beauty and a gracious tenderness, expressed in their passionate devotion to their children—but of all this I shall write in the chapter on the Gallegan women. I was glad to find that Maria Pita's name is not forgotten in Coruña. In her honour the chief square in the town is called the *Palaza de Maria Pita*. I learnt that once a year a great preacher is invited to deliver a carefully prepared sermon in the church of St. George—the largest church in Coruña, on the subject of her heroism and victory. I was glad to be in a city where deeds like hers are thus graciously remembered.

But now, having tried to give information to the patriotic, and incidentally expressed, to some extent, my own views, I must go back to the day in August on which we first came to La Coruña.

On leaving Santiago we repaired to the historic city, chiefly with the view of accomplishing, as British citizens, a sentimental pilgrimage, which we, in fact, achieved under most agreeable conditions. The journey between the two towns has been altered both for the better and for the worse by the changing of the old diligence, drawn by a team of mules, into a regular service of motor-cars. For the better, for the foolish travellers to whom time is an object, in that the distance—more than forty-two miles—is shortened by three hours; for the worse, inasmuch as this gain in speed made it exceedingly difficult, owing to the clouds of dust raised by the heavy car, to view the country. However, by way of compensation, two stoppages were

made at villages, whose names I do not remember, to cool the cylinder of the motor with a supply of fresh water, and in the second of these halting-places we chanced on a delightful scene of local colour. A stock-fair was being held, and fifteen hundred or more cattle were crowded together along the road and upon the village green. They were roped in pairs from the horns, and women and girls, with a cord in front, were struggling to prevent them from stampeding. The men stood watching them; only one gave assistance to the sturdy Gallegas, whose difficulties, it is needless to say, were increased by the arrival of our motors. The cattle were almost all of one colour—fawn—and were the powerful, short-legged animals that are used for draught purposes; there were also some donkeys of large size, like the Egyptian asses, and mules, and a few horses. The men and women in their peasant clothes gave a charming appearance to the scene; the colours of their shirts and petticoats and handkerchiefs flamed against the sunlight.

The position of La Coruña is very fine, placed on a headland, forming a horse-shoe, between the bays of El Orzán on the west, and La Bahía on the east. You see the town below you long before you reach it, and from this distance it gave an impression, with its glass-fronted buildings glittering in the sun, of a great flight of white sea-birds that had settled upon some rock between the stretching expanse of blue sea. We halted at the bridge, which crosses the river about a mile from Coruña, and changed from the large public motor into private cars that had come to meet us, and then in a few minutes we entered the town. I shall never forget that entrance. Coruña was celebrating its annual *Grandes Fiestas*, organised by *De Amigos de La Coruña* (Friends of La Coruña). I give the title because it really helps to explain the

fiesta, which in Galicia has always the delightful atmosphere of a holiday of friends, so entirely different from a festival in England. The town was all a-flower with decorations, and the streets and squares were filled with crowds of people coming and going—a coloured whirl, in which the town seemed to become a kaleidoscope. There was a gaiety abroad, which in Galicia is a tradition. It is an infectious atmosphere, which seems at once to shut one off from the work-a-day world and the worries of one's own mind—all the absurd hindrances to the enjoyment of living. As we drove through the town to our quarters at the Hotel Francia, children, women, and men seized the opportunity of cheering us. After the close, pent streets of Santiago, La Coruña gave the impression of a large city. The wide Paseo de Méndez Nuñez was magnificent—like a park; the Calle Real and the Riego de Agua were impressive by their width in their bustle and hum of life, with their cafés filled and spreading over the pavements.

La Coruña, like most of Galicia's seaports, has a new quarter added to its old town, which is one of the oldest in the kingdom and of Iberian origin. Julius Cæsar landed here, and Orosius wrote of the town in the fifth century, calling it Briganta. He mentions its very high tower, built for looking over the sea as far as Brilian. The *ciudad vieja* bears a general resemblance to all old Spanish towns, its buildings closely huddled, its narrow, stone-paved streets rising steeply, and twisting in unexpected directions. It is still in part enclosed by its old line of walls. The new town, which has grown, and is still growing, up, with wide streets, gardens, new buildings, tall houses and shops, offers a sharp contrast to the picturesque old quarter. But the contrast can be enjoyed without any disagreeable sense of incongruity. Modern Coruña has an atmosphere of its own, gained from

its houses, all with *miradores*, or glazed frontages, giving them always a glittering appearance in the sunlight. The touch of the East, which you can never miss in Spain, wherever you may be, is unmistakable in Coruña. In the streets are mule-drawn trams, and donkeys, with gay trappings, are common as beasts of burden; and this exotic appearance is heightened by the workers of the town, passing to and fro, men and women in the bright native costumes. These touches are delightful in an atmosphere of life and bustle, in a town where you are always conscious of the work of to-day.

On the evening of our arrival we attended a gala performance given in the theatre, which is situated in the Calle Riego de Agua, one of the chief thoroughfares in the new town. Like most Spanish theatres, the building is unpretentious, the entrance especially showing none of the display that we are accustomed to in our halls of pleasure; but the inside arrangements are comfortable, and the simple decorations, which are carried out in white and grey, give a pretty effect. Although the street was crowded with people, no one, with the exception of half a dozen *muchachos*, seemed in the least interested in our arrival at the theatre. All were occupied in their own pleasure, the courteous behaviour of a people who mind their own business and credit others with the same preoccupation.

The performance consisted of a comic piece by the younger Echegaray, a brother to the great dramatist, who is so rightly esteemed in Spain. It was a short play, but with many scenes, and it set forth the troubles of two Bohemian artists and two women; the scene was laid in Paris. Notwithstanding the author's skill, which was often very successful, in varying a situation that was always the same, the piece would appear too simple to an English audience.

The parts were taken by a travelling company, of no special fame, for the summer is not the theatre season. But, although I have seen much better acting in other Spanish towns, and, of course, in Madrid, I was charmed, as I have always been in Spanish theatres, with the vivacity and naturalness of the acting, depending, as it does, wholly on the skill of the performers, and gaining no help from the scenery or dresses, which are always of the simplest character. There is only one fault, which strikes me as belonging to all Spanish actors and actresses, which is the rapidity of their utterance; but, then, this is no fault in Spain, where every one speaks quickly. But, as the comicality of the piece depended chiefly on the dialogue, and the introduction and perfect imitation of Gallegan humour, it was a kind of merit not easily followed by foreigners. However, I found much to occupy my attention in watching the audience, who, in their turn, took at least an equal interest in our party. At one interval in the performance, when, in honour to us, the orchestra played the English National Anthem, the whole audience rose, and "Vivas!" and "Hurrahs!" rang in the air. It is wonderful how quickly a Spanish crowd springs into life, and how equally quickly it returns to repose. There were a great number of women present, and I saw many very pretty ones among them; without the hideous hat, Spanish ladies regain the grace which is naturally theirs. I noticed that most of the men had straw sailor-hats, with their regulation evening clothes. All the women, and even the children, carried fans, and there was a fascination in watching the way in which they used them. A fan, to an English woman, is an awkward accessory with which she is never quite comfortable; but to a Spanish woman the fan is a part of herself—another hand, of which she makes exquisite use.

The performance terminated with a concert of Galician folk-songs, given by a native choir. It was this singing that I most enjoyed. There is a charm in folk-music which wins its way to the heart of the hearer. But when I try to analyse the charm, as is usual with what brings me delightful pleasure, I am conscious of the inaptness—nay, more, of the absurdity of description. Perhaps it is that in listening to these old songs, well rendered, one feels oneself in the presence of a great tradition. They are still beautiful, for were they not once the perfection of existent music?—the true singing of the people. And, if you would feel all their beauty, you must be in touch with the spirit that cries in them—with love, and passion, and life.

The following is one of the songs written by Manuel Curros Enríquez, a famous living poet of Galicia, a translation of which was given to us by a gentleman of Coruña :

THINE EYES

The syren has its song,
The snake its breath,
The lake has its waves,
And God subdues hell.
Thou hast as well
Hidden power that lies
In thine eyes.

The birds seek,
For making their nests,
The holy grass grows
By the river-side ;
I only seek
One tender glance
Of thine eyes.

The throne of the monarchs,
The triumphs of the sages,
The glory of the poet,
The treasures of the world—
All these would I give
For one glance
Of thine eyes.

When the moon is setting
Behind the hills,
All the stars cry
In the heavens.
I also cry
When on me fail to shine
Thine eyes.



CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA, LA CORUÑA.



CHURCH OF SANTIAGO, LA CORUÑA.



The next morning was devoted to the accomplishment of our sentimental pilgrimage. I need hardly say that this was to visit the tomb of the British hero, Sir John Moore. The weather was gloriously fine as we drove through twisting streets, made gay with vivid traffic, to the garden in the old town where the body of Moore now rests. This Garden of San Carlos is charming; palms and ilex-trees close in the fine monument made of Galician granite. It bears the simple inscription, written in Latin, in Spanish, and in English :

IN MEMORY OF

GENERAL SIR JOHN MOORE,

WHO FELL AT THE BATTLE OF ELVINA, WHILE COVERING THE
EMBARKMENT OF THE BRITISH TROOPS,

16TH JANUARY, 1809.

Cannons, planted muzzle downwards, stand in each corner of the enclosure; on the wall near the entrance is a memorial tablet to the hundred and seventy-two officers and seamen of the British man-of-war *Serpent*, wrecked on the Boi rock, about thirty miles from Coruña, on November 10, 1809.

It is a spot where English-speaking travellers may very honestly be sentimental, and feel themselves moved by the national pride that is not difficult to our race. I really feel ashamed to own that my emotion was barren. I had observed the glaring British Lion and Unicorn that decorate the stone gateway that gives entrance to this peaceful garden, and I remembered it was the Spaniards who had collected the money for Moore's monument. Certain of my companions, more patriotic than myself, were gathering ivy sprigs to carry as a token from the grave. I am aware of the deficiency of my own emotion. Yet, one can but record the truth of the moods of one's own soul. Yes, and if I failed then, I fail equally now. This is the

place in which should be written an account of Moore's memorable retreat and heroic death (I trust the adjectives are fitting). I might even quote the poem, which an eminent English authority on Galicia writes of as "those wonderful lines on his burial, every one of which throbs with personal feeling, reality, and detail." But then, unfortunately, I dislike the poem, perhaps from having been compelled to learn it in my childhood, with "The Stately Homes of England," "Cassabianca," and other classics of the Victorian schools. I find myself incapable of the historical record; it has been done already by every British writer who has visited Coruña, from George Borrow onwards. I understand that my own inarticulate wonder and dreamy reverence are poor things compared with this amazing flow of rhetoric, but a writer cannot honestly escape the limits of his temperament. For myself the Spanish War of Liberation recalls to me always Goya's etchings. *Los Desastres de la Guerra*. To the patriotic of my countrymen who do not know them, I would recommend these plates; copies may be seen in the Print-room of the British Museum. The tragic truth is here, the iniquity of warfare. Women wronged, men made bestial through terror and want, stark corpses stripped and rifled, fire, famine, and desolation—such are the scenes which Goya shows you with his lion's needle. There is a plate which follows these presentments of horror: a skeleton corpse, half buried in the earth, raises himself to write upon a slab the word *Nada* (nothingness). In the dark air monstrous spectres flit above and around; a hand holds a pair of scales turned upside down. Can you understand? Can you conceive anything more able to spread the cult of patriotism?

It was of Goya's etchings that I thought as I stood that morning beside Moore's grave. I recalled, too, his pictures in the Museo del Prado at Madrid, the "Dos de

Mayo" and the "Episodio de la Invasión Francesa," in which you see depicted, with a horror that the veritable scenes could hardly surpass, the incidents which preceded Moore's retreat. It was all this that I remembered—how, then, could I pick ivy from the grave? I heard the soft hiss of the wind in the trees, and it seemed to me to echo the question which cries in the *Desastres de la Guerra*—"To what end?" And the answer? Can you give one that is better than Goya's?—*Nada!*

It was some time before I recovered the unruffled geniality of mood necessary for happy sight-seeing. I gained it, however, during the visit we afterwards paid to the house in Coruña to which Sir John Moore was brought after being mortally wounded on the heights of Elvina. The room in which he died has been preserved as nearly as possible as it was almost a hundred years ago. The picture, "The Scourging of Christ," on which he gazed, hangs upon the wall, and the peg in the adjoining room, on which his military cloak was placed, has remained untouched. Now I do not wish to give a false impression; it was not these things in themselves that pleased me. I own frankly that relics make little appeal to me. Had this house of Moore's death been a show-place I should have left it wholly unmoved. But it is not; fortunately unmentioned by Bædeker, it is not a goal for tourists. Coruña is too finely Spanish to make profit from her hero. Thus I found here, where Moore's memory is preserved with such gracious simplicity in the home of a Spanish gentleman, the charm I had missed at his grave. I reflected on what would have happened if Fate had placed Moore's shrine in his own country. Yes, it was a little thing to have seen this room, but it was a great thing to have been in an atmosphere of hero-worship untouched with vulgarity.

The old town of Coruña is spread on a steep hill-side,

that is crowned by the Torre de Hercules. Tradition says that Hercules on this spot slew the giant Gerion ; and the arms of La Coruña are a tower with a skull and cross-bones below—the skull is the skull of Gerion. The square tower of the Phœnicians, or, as others say, of the Romans, has stood here for so many centuries that the exact truth of its origin is uncertain. Whitely its mighty height rises in the glare of the sun ; its stones, small in size, like Roman tiles, are soft in colour against the deep azure of the sky. We climbed the three stories of the building by the inside wooden staircase to inspect the fine modern lighthouse, which has been added to the building. These stairs replace the old curious winding stone-way, once on the outside of the tower, which is said to have been so wide that a cart drawn by a pair of oxen could mount to the top. We seemed to be going up and up for an unending time. Afterwards, when we had descended, I sat for a long time on the stone wall which surrounds the tower. Up here, on the hill-top, the wind is always fresh, as it blows straight from the Atlantic. The tower, on its rocky headland, is like a colossal statue on a pedestal, and commands the whole of Coruña, the old town and the new town, the white lines the harbour draws across the bay, and in the distance the outline of the hills. How many years, how many cycles of years, had it stood thus protecting the town ? Since it was built how long ? At the foot of one of the rocks which form its foundation a Latin inscription has been found :

MARTI
 AUG. SACR
 G. SEVIVS
 LUPUS
 ARCHITECTVS
 AF SIS
 LVSITANVS. EX. V .

On the stones of the building is another inscription :

LVPVS CONSTRVXIT' EMV
 LASVS MIRACVLA MEMPHIS
 GRADIBVS STRAVIT' YLAM
 LVSTRAMS CACVMENE NAVEA
 S XDDVO.

Like a shuttle my mind shot to and fro—the past and the present ; and, full to the brim of the wondrous past, I felt the wondrous present. In every direction stretched the immense plain of the sea, the palest green under the fierce sun, as though the heat had evaporated the colour from it ; but at the foot of the precipice were angry waves of deeper colour, each with a white crest of foam. I saw a flight of terns skimming the water like swallows, and other birds, whose names I do not know, were pruning their handsome grey and white plumages as they sat on the rocks in talkative company. Again my thoughts swung to the past. There are other Roman remains here. The most interesting is an old statue of Mars. I know nothing of its origin, but its presence here is suggestive of the spirit of La Coruña, which has been always a city belonging to the God of War.

And it seemed a fitting thing to go, as we did, to the military barracks, where we were graciously entertained by the 54th Regiment of Infantry—the regiment of Isabella la Catolica. I shall make no attempt to give a description of this fine military establishment, as I believe it is stupid to write about matters of which one knows nothing, and matters, moreover, which make no appeal to one's interest. However, I did notice, and took delight in—from a pictorial point of view—the really beautiful uniforms. The staff regiment was distinguished from that of the regiment by having Saxe blue facings on grey cloth, whilst the regiment wore a dark blue tunic,

scarlet and gold facings, and scarlet trousers with a blue seam.

After our *siesta*, the delightful Spanish institution which enables you to come freshly to the second half of the day, we attended the military sports. It is the most fashionable event of the *fiesta*—the Ascot of Coruña. When we arrived and took our seats in the stand that had been erected on one side of the course, the promenade below was already thronged with people, who walked up and down, or stood in groups, talking gaily together. The greatest animation prevailed. What specially delighted me were the children, who always seem to share the pleasures which belong to their elders. Spanish children are already grown up when quite young, but they are the most fascinating little people, at the same time natural and self-conscious, with a sort of precocious winsomeness. Their bodies are so full of energy that they give an impression of more vivid life than the children of northern countries.

All the citizens of Coruña were present. The men, faultlessly dressed in hideous, fashionable males' attire, cast glances of desire upon the *señoritas* as they walked to and fro, and compliments were given. There is something different in Spanish women from the women of other countries. As they passed up and down, these girls met all glances, fairly unashamed and unconcerned. The men but rarely joined them, for Spanish etiquette is strict. The girls listened, as they talked and laughed with each other, to compliments that would cause the women of any other race to blush. This play of love is part of the accustomed homage which is their due. Their eyes asked nothing from the men, their smiles never wooed them. There was none of the invitation, often unconscious, that women extend elsewhere. Far otherwise: it was the men who craved, the women who

dispensed ; and when they gave—a look, a smile—it was like an alms. These women interested me deeply.

The ladies of the wealthy families occupied the seats in the stand. I had been told that the ladies of Coruña were known for their taste in dress ; but I am bound to record once more my own impression that, in fashionable attire, Spanish women always look badly dressed—their clothes, and especially their hats, do not appear to belong to them. Few of the Coruña ladies that I saw upon this occasion appeared to me to be beautiful. But they all had the fascination that belongs to Spanish women : a charm not easy to define—a suggested motion, an impression of life, passionate and yet, at the same time, quiet ; an outlook of the woman soul. It is a quality and certain fineness which is unique. I have tried to explain this before. I believe it is that all these *señoras* and *señoritas* understand that they are women, and instead of this bringing them unhappiness and causing, as it so often does, the indefinite unquietness that characterises so many English and American women, you feel that they are glad that this is so. This is why they are so attractive. Spanish women are in harmony with themselves, which gives them something of that exquisite appeal which belongs to all natural things. This is the reason, too, why the older women are so good-humoured, smiling, and gay ; they have none of them missed their womanhood. These women, for their happiness, have kept the woman's content.

The sports resembled an Irish leaping competition. The horses were ridden by officers, whose blue-and-grey uniforms looked very effective. The horses were splendid animals, and one, white in colour, reminded me of the horse in the Velazquez' picture of the Duke of Olivarez in the Schleissheim, at Munich. I was told, however, that the horses were nearly all Irish hunters. The

usual obstacles had to be overcome, which, in almost every case, was easily done by the skilful riders. But, in addition, there was a high sandstone bank, that looked much more formidable than any obstacle I have seen in an Irish or English race. This bank, which was so steep that it appeared almost perpendicular, had to be charged with sufficient force to enable the horse to scramble to the top, after which it slid half-way down the other side, leaping the remaining distance. The horses were very clever at the game, and only one rider failed to accomplish the difficult feat, though several had to make one or two attempts. At each success the applause from the spectators made the air ring. One rider—he was young and rode a powerful chestnut mare—took the obstacle splendidly at the first try. It was done with surprising skill, and with no apparent effort; and now the applause swelled to a great roar. It is in moments such as these that you realise the fire which sleeps beneath the Gallegans' quietness of manner.

As we walked back to the Hotel Francia late in the afternoon I felt we had passed a kaleidoscopic day. To rest after my confused impressions, I left my companions, returning by myself to that quarter of the old town in which the two churches of Santiago and Santa Maria are situated close together. Both churches are examples of the Galician Romanesque style, and both belong to the twelfth or thirteenth centuries. This is the opinion of Street, though other authorities would give the edifices a later date, owing to the use of many ogival features, and in Santa Maria to an inscription, giving 1307 as the year of completing the building.

It was not, however, of the architecture, or of the history of the buildings, that I thought on that afternoon. I had noticed the churches in the morning as we drove to the Jardin de San Carlos; now as I walked



MILITARY SPORTS, LA CORUÑA.



MILITARY SPORTS, LA CORUÑA.

round them, not once, but many times, I gained a very favourable impression of their outside appearance. But I was not bent upon examination, and I have no clear recollections of the details of what I saw. I remember chiefly the fineness of the portal of Santiago, which reminded me, in some of its decorative features, of the Portico de la Gloria at Santiago.

Afterwards I entered Santa Maria, a church beautiful but small, which one may well believe, as Street suggests, owes its building to the same architect as Santiago de Compostela. The general plan is the simplest form of Latin cross; nave and aisles, with short arms, and the apse consists of but one chapel—the Lady Chapel. The church is dark, even for a Spanish church, for the west windows have been blinded; at first I could see nothing, but the dim light was very restful to my mood.

It is as a church of worship that Santa Maria gains its chief charm. Standing apart from the modern centre of commercial Coruña, but, as of old, in the midst of the life of the people, near to the sea, it is in this church that the devotion of the fisher-folk is centred. “One of the three Virgins,” as they call her to whom Santa Maria is dedicated, to them this particular Mary is the *estrella del mar* (sea-star). You will find this introduction of stars frequent in Galicia’s legends—superstitions, if you like to call them so; but is it not rather the charming, unconscious poetry of the Celt? And how perfectly this name completes one’s sense of the charm that belongs to Santa Maria! It is the church to see most easily, most significantly, the worship of the peasants. You should visit it in the morning, when the people come in from the out-door market where the fish is sold. Even at this late hour of the afternoon, there were scattered groups of women praying, while little children were running to and fro, happily playing together: the

women and children of the people who look upon this church as their own home. As I watched them, certainly with no religious thoughts of my own, I yet felt the descent around me of an atmosphere of joyous repose. Yes, Santa Maria of the *estrella del mar* is a place where one lingers, and still desires to linger.

CHAPTER XII

A VISIT TO FERROL, SPAIN'S GREAT ARSENAL

The road to Ferrol—Betanzos—The Arsenal—Four British companies—Certain reflections—A comparison of the English and the Spaniards—The town of Ferrol—Return to Coruña—Ferrol Harbour—A morning's walk in Coruña—Incidents of the streets—Jardin de Méndez Nuñez—A beautiful *cigarrera*.

ON the next day we visited Ferrol, the town that for centuries has been the great Arsenal of Spain. The knowledge that we were to see the new fleet of war-ships being built under the direction of four British firms (I give this information for the benefit of the patriots) brought me no enthusiasm ; but I knew that to reach Ferrol we had to travel by the charming coast scenery of Galicia, and, moreover, we should pass through Betanzos, a town that for long I had wished to see. The morning was perfect ; in the night there had been rain, and everywhere was a crystal riot of colour ; besides the rain had laid the pestilence of dust. The landscape was one of marvellous magnificence. A deep blue sky was over the scene ; to the left was the sea, of which the continuous ascents and descents and windings of the road afforded us the most delightful panorama that was incessantly changing. To the right, on the landward side, sloped high hills, green on the lower slopes, with woods and pasture-lands, and crossed in their valleys with rivers that looked like great lizards scurrying to and fro as they reflected the same colour of vivid green. All nature was gay. The only drawback to the pleasure

of it all was the cursory view permitted by the swift passage of our motor. In Spain this modern hurrying journeying annoys me. We were in paradise, and here we were rushing through it as if we were escaping through purgatory! Progress exacts a heavy penalty. Here and there, among the fields, were groups of peasants at work; and, at intervals, other peasants met us on the road, driving their ox-carts, or riding upon mules, and women, walking splendidly as they carried water-jugs and other great burdens on their heads; all of whom, though they were in reality, doubtless, prosaic and ordinary workers, yet assumed to a fancy that glanced at them as we flew onwards the appearance of joyous citizens of a more beautiful world. The blouses of the men and the bright shawls of the women gleamed in the sunshine, and the charms of an older civilisation sang in the colours. I thought them full of a delightful suggestiveness.

Then we came to Betanzos, which is a very old town, with an aspect of its own as fascinating as its history. I would urge all visitors to Galicia to stay at Betanzos. I believe there is only an indifferent *fonda*—but, after all, does that matter? Here you have a town unchanged, unspoilt, which the antiquarian and the artist will find a treasure-house of interest, while to all lovers of beautiful places Betanzos must be dear. You have old churches and cloisters with exquisite examples of Galician carving; you will find a wealth of history and legend, and, if you are fortunate enough to come at the right time, you will witness the old-world customs, such as the *Fiestas de Caneiros* (The Battle of Flowers), which is celebrated on August 10. These are in themselves a delight. As we drove through arcaded streets, which wind and twist more even than is usual in Spanish towns, I was captured with the glamour of Betanzos. In every



A STREET IN BETANZOS.

direction there were pictures. I caught the name of a street—for the steepness compelled a slow passage—*Calle de los Cien Doncellas*, and forcing memories came to me. I longed to wait in this town, where there were so many things I wanted to dream of and to see. But progress and patriotism—motor-cars and war-ships—compelled my rushing onwards.

Perhaps this explains my mood in the hours we spent at Ferrol, inspecting the efforts of civilisation! Efforts by which “Spain is making her entry into the Dreadnought era, which finds Great Britain, France, and Russia tabulated in their naval strength against Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy.” (I quote from an article in *The Standard*, written by one of my patriotic companions more competent on these matters than I am.) From the same source I learn that three Dreadnoughts are being built: the *España*, whose keel was laid at the end of 1909, and whose frame, when we saw her in August, was up to the protective dock; the *Alfonso XIII.*, though not laid down until February 1910, was not far behind her sister, while the third vessel, the *Jaime I.*, was to be started as soon as the *España* made room for her. These three vessels are each to have a displacement of 15,450 tons, and a speed of 19 knots, and they will, when delivered, compare favourably with any foreign ships of their class in matters of armour, armament, speed, and radius. To enable this work to be carried on the Arsenal has been entirely remodelled and equipped, and a machine-shop, turbine-shop, drawing-loft, foundry, and platers' shed are among the buildings put up in the year since the work was started. In addition a dry dock is being constructed over 600 feet long by 100 feet wide, which will be capable of accommodating a 20,000-ton battle-ship for repair.

Now, I believe that all these things I saw. I know that we walked about for a long time, while much in-

formation was admirably given by the English engineers who accompanied us. However, I did not listen. Again I was haunted by the memory of Goya's pictures, and I was filled with a sense of the pervading vanity of things. The motive of this monumental labour—what, after all, was it? And for me the desolate answer, *Nada!* rang out from the unceasing beating of the hammers.

It will be remembered that I began my memories of Coruña by stating that the ideal to be aimed at was that of the concentrated patriot. It is such a happy state. I find my companion, from whose essay of excellent information I have drawn to supply my own impotence, owing to "the pleasant feeling of surprise experienced by all travelled Englishmen when they find themselves proud of their nationality." For the mighty scheme of naval reconstruction now being carried out at Ferrol has been entrusted to four English firms. This has brought a large colony of British men and their families to Ferrol. I was glad, however, to know that of the 20,000 workmen employed it is not permitted for more than 10 per cent. to be British. I have remarked before that Englishmen, wherever they travel, live precisely as they would do at home. I cannot express the strange sensations it brought me to be transplanted suddenly into the atmosphere of London. After living away from one's own country one observes the individual with quickened attention; and I think it must be said that the local idiosyncrasies of the English are rather provincial. The average Englishman is so different from the average Spaniard that I marvel at the admiration I find everywhere in Spain for all that belongs to my country. These differences impressed themselves on my notice now that I had the opportunity of observing both nations together. Almost unconsciously I began comparing them, for I have formed the habit, when out

of humour, of seeking for some interest to distract my thought. The following remarks are the result of the mental notes that I made. The Spaniards have all, figuratively speaking, faces that are as a cup, waiting to be filled with passion, laughter, or with any emotion that belongs to the soul. The Anglo-Saxon faces are, on the other hand, curiously sane and self-concerned; the expression, as well as the body movements, have been toned down to the neutral conformity of that breeding to which in England we give the title of "good." One feels that these men have their wits about them, and their mental pockets are full of small change. The Anglo-Saxons possess the practical common sense, born of grey skies and the greyer civilisation; whereas the Spaniards might be poets or children—probably both. The Spanish face is so expressive. It may be said, in a certain sense, that to express anything is to compromise with one's dignity. The English expect to be understood without taking trouble; it is part of their right as Englishmen. The Spaniard takes life both fanatically and easily. At his best he is full of a restrained vivacity, of perception, of something that one can appeal to—a fine seriousness that belongs to the soul, rather than to the head; even at his worst he looks refined. Yes, in Ferrol, the Gallegans struck me afresh as the cleverest, the most perceptive, and, intellectually speaking, the most human people that I know.

These are impressions, certainly, that imperil one's patriotism. George Borrow writes of Ferrol: "Sadness came upon me as soon as I entered this place"; and, for quite different reasons, this experience was mine. Borrow found the town in ruin, grass growing in the streets, which were empty of movement—this was the after-result of war. I found it a town of rapid life, where one feels in the midst of hurrying labour—this, too, was the

result of preparation for war. He speaks of seeing only a few ill-paid, half-starved work-people ; I saw hundreds of labourers in active employment. But the faces which I noticed among them were a type new to me in Spain ; they had lost something I have always found in Spanish peasants. To my fancy there was active dislike in the glances they cast at our party. I think these men must be republicans. I would have liked to talk to them, but there was no opportunity. I questioned our English hosts, but could gain no information that interested me. Ferrol is the one town in Galicia in which I suffered, merely because I was there ; and how clearly I recall the hours still, with the sharp memory of disillusionment ! I had been brought again face to face with the spectre of civilisation ; and the warning struck me that soon this dream-holiday of mine would end. I should be forced back into the absurd, hurrying pressure of complex, practical life in England, governed by the hideous spirit of competition.

We returned to La Coruña by sea, which is much shorter than the land-route, occupying only an hour. Ferrol has a magnificent harbour, placed at the end of a deep bay, a kind of funnel of rocks, where ships find perfect shelter from the winds and waves of the Atlantic. I recall reading somewhere that Pitt is reported to have said that if England possessed a harbour on her coast equal to this the British Government would cover it with walls of silver. It is a characteristic remark of a minister of an imperial nation.

It was a lovely evening as we steered off from the wharf at La Granga, but over the sea the sky had an angry appearance, and we knew rain was to follow. About fifteen minutes brought us to the narrow opening which forms the entrance to the harbour. I had not seen it until we were but a few hundred yards distant

from the opening ; we seemed to be locked in the inland bay. I had supposed Arosa Bay the finest possible inlet of this coast, but the harbour of Ferrol is more striking, and the scenery has a grander character. The cliffs rise in curious forms, and my attention was claimed by one in which there was a great chasm, which looked as if it had been cut out by some giant hand. The sea was the deepest blue, and in some places almost black. Showers of foam came every now and then, breaking on our decks, to remind us we were nearing the Atlantic. The sun set stormily. I remarked a curious effect. The rays of light illuminated one side of the now distant cliffs, all the details of which stood out with the greatest clearness, but the parts that were plunged in shadow were almost invisible, and the sky had a still more angry appearance. A short time afterwards we neared Coruña ; and now the dark line of the crescent bay and the gloom of the sea made a Whistler picture. A few lamps like great fireflies shone out among the trees, the points of which stood out jet black against a dim sky that was still faintly red. Farther off, upon the headland, was the great revolving light of the Tower of Hercules, the sentinel of La Coruña, watching upon its hill. Below it the town lay a-glimmer with a thousand lights.

The next day we were to leave La Coruña. It had been arranged that we should visit the battle-field of Elvina, and start at an early hour ; but, for some reason, the excursion was abandoned. This gave me an opportunity for a morning of the aimless wandering which, for me, is the only way whereby I can learn to know a town. In the Calle Real, which forms the continuation of the Alameda, where the Hotel Francia is situated, the shops were not yet open. The people astir were all workers, and I found them most interesting to watch. Men were watering and cleaning the streets, proving

that a Spanish provincial town may be a really sanitary and clean place. The hose and hose-pipes, newly at work, made the roadways gleam in the yet mild sunshine, and the Alameda exhaled a freshness like that of dewy lawns. In a side-street I saw a woman cooking, with a stove and all her utensils around her. I asked her what she was doing, and learnt she was preparing cakes to sell during the *fiestas*. From here I turned back, and plunged into the labyrinth of the old town. The houses are four or five stories high, and some that climb the hill seem to be piled over on the top of the others. Under the arcades that line a square in what appeared to be the poorest part of the town I saw a group of men in brigand hats; two of them were carrying skins of water, just like those used in the East, and there were women with glossy coils of hair dressed high on the head and bestuck with tortoise-shell combs. I was impressed with the charming appearance of these people.

In whichever direction I turned the variety of the scenes exhilarated me. Figures moved up and down the streets, some walking, others riding on mules or asses. I noticed that they used the beautiful Moorish saddle. Lithe women passed me bearing immense burdens on their heads. One woman with a great filled basket was carrying a baby in her arms. *Muchachos* played in the corners of the roadways, each face was merry and cheeky, yet in the agate eyes, covered with long lashes, the mysticism of the South was implicit—something that one sees in a dog's eyes. The shops here were open, quaint little warehouses, in which half-seen goods hung upon carved door-posts and from old discoloured beams. In some shops men were at work, each at his own craft: tailors with their scissors in their hands, saddlers cutting pungent smelling leather, basket-weavers, and shoemakers, fashioning the native hempen, *alpargatas*. In one square a

market was being prepared, and women and men were arriving with their goods; the street glowed in its movement and the flower-bright colours. It reminded me of a picture by Brangwyn. I stood for some time here to gain the opportunity to mark individuals. Most of the faces were interesting and natural in expression; the Gallegans do not veil their feelings by assuming a blank expression. I thought the women were finer in stature, as women, than the men. The crowd was intent on bargains; everywhere people were buying and selling. Women passed with handfuls of live fowls held upside down by their legs. Strange to say, these fowls were quite passive and appeared not to mind being carried like that. One tall woman looked enviously at some silk handkerchiefs she could not afford to buy; perhaps she was a peasant from the country, visiting the town for the *fiesta*. A Gallegan shepherd passed, with wonderful eyes that held the romance and sunshine of the hills; like a man who dreams he went down the sun-flecked square. There was an incessant sound of talking, which increased as the chaffering became sharper; but all these people appeared dignified, and all were well-behaved.

Afterwards I returned to the new town. At the end of the Alameda is the Jardin de Méndez Nuñez, which lies by the sea. You would imagine it to be on a tropical shore, for its palms and its brightly coloured flowers run right to the waves; you hear the stirring of the leaves and the wash of the water together. Like all Spanish gardens, it is not over-designed; a collection of rare and beautiful trees and flowers, which seem not so much to have been planted as to grow. What would a Japanese landscape-gardener think of this garden? It suggested to me a work of an impressionist painter. Truly its riot of flowers spring up anyhow, yet its beauty is surprising. After the heavy rain that had fallen in the night the

garden was at its finest ; roses, carnations, tiger-lilies, and flowers unnumbered that were unknown to me—great masses of blues, of scarlet and golden flames—disputed together for the sun. In the centre of the garden there is water that sleeps in a pond ; here a magnolia, weighted with flowers, makes a natural summer-house, and a tall Cuban palm uprears its slender silver stem. It does not matter what spot you choose, the whole garden is charming. Spanish gardens have an appeal and a passionate charm that northern gardens lack ; they are always joyous with colour ; and yet they have a note of delightful melancholy that is born of their abundant shade ; it is as if they retain the traditions of older and fuller life.

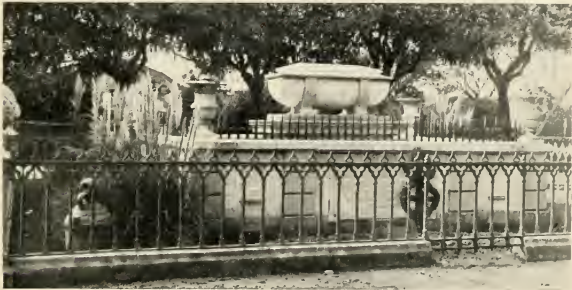
Here and there a few people strolled about ; and, as if to emphasise the scenic atmosphere of the garden, a woman came down the path towards me bearing a bronze water-jar on her head—a jar that glimmered like a monstrous helmet in the sunlight. She might have stepped out of an opera ; like an operatic performer, too, she was singing as she came. She was beautiful. I said to myself that in Spain accident is always picturesque, and that such a figure was exactly what was wanted to make perfect the garden. I watched her, gaining delicious pleasure from her body's movements, and when she came nearer I spoke to her. This led to her sitting down on the seat beside me and to my having some conversation with her. She was a *cigarrera*, and worked in the tobacco factory of La Palloza, but on that day she was taking holiday for the *fiesta*. She answered freely all my questions as to the manner of working in the factory and its customs. I learnt that about 3,000 women are employed ; that they are paid once a fortnight, according to the quantity and quality of the work done—a clever worker can prepare nine bundles of forty cigars each in a day, while the slowest accomplish about



LA CORUÑA : THE BAY.



LA CORUÑA : SAN AMACO.



LA CORUÑA : GRAVE OF SIR JOHN MOORE.

five bundles. No, the work was not unhealthy ; all of it being done by hand, there was none of the powdery dust common in machine factories. I learnt, too, that the Coruña factory, like the one I had visited many years before in Seville, belonged to the Government, but was managed by a private company, who appropriated 10 per cent. of the net profits. And here I reach the real point of my story, for it was when speaking of the Government that my young *cigarrera* presently proved to be a republican and a socialist, with a knowledge and ideal of government which astonished and delighted me. She told me she had become a partisan of republican opinions through reading the papers, and added that many of the *cigarreras* hold strong political views. She was an intelligent, capable, and beautiful woman, filled with hatred of the class who lives by draining the blood of the people. Her appearance was operatic, but quite in spite of herself. This made me understand how absurd it was of me to have regarded her only as a graceful ornament to this garden ; but for the accident of my having talked to her, she would have occupied a place in my memory that was purely pictorial. As it was, she had made me to pause.

Beyond the wall of the garden, at a little distance, on the road by the sea, I saw women working ; they were carrying great baskets of onions upon their heads. As I watched them lift the baskets they gave me that impression of strength and perfect bodily equipoise, which I always notice in the Gallegan women-workers. Not far off a group of men, who were executing some repairs to a building, were seated eating their breakfast. One of them was reading aloud from a newspaper to the others. I looked at them with an interest that went deeper than the picturesque appearance they gave in the strong noon-sunlight.

I began to understand, what afterwards I knew more certainly, that side by side with the new growth of material prosperity in Galicia, which I had seen, and sometimes regretted, there is also a corresponding inward movement of national self-questioning and re-birth. In Coruña, as I was to know later, a Popular University has been founded by a band of patriotic citizens, who devote their time in the evening in giving free lectures and instruction to the workmen. There is a promising agricultural school outside the town, where young farmers are taught the science of agriculture, where many interesting experiments are carried out; as, for instance, native cattle are being crossed with the Hereford breed and the native pigs with Middle Yorkshires. I learnt, too, that the Town Council has a large majority of Progressive members; and that the workmen have their labour organisations and their mutual aid societies to help each other in sickness, in death, or want of employment. Upon this hopeful aspect of Galicia's life to-day I shall speak at fuller length in my closing chapters; but that I should first find these things in La Coruña, the city whose appeal to me had been so different, and, in some ways, so disquieting, was one of those delightful surprises which are the milestones of one's soul's travels. This I owe to the beautiful *cigarrera*. I thank her now.

CHAPTER XIII

COUNTRY LIFE IN GALICIA

Rural Galicia—A village *posada*—Third-class travelling—A fishing holiday—The Miño and Sil—Tuy the starting-point of our travels—Some remarks for the angler—My first journey in a *mixto* train—The village of Arbo—Gallegan peasants—Down the Miño—Shad fishing—A day at Ribadavia—We plan an adventure.

It will, I think, be evident that the Spain I love and of which I write is not the Spain of the tourist and the globe-trotter. Had my own knowledge of the country been limited to my last visit, where all the comforts of travel made our journey easy, my understanding of the people would have been very different. I shall write now of my experiences in the Galicia that begins where the towns end; for although these experiences belong to another and a much earlier visit, they are part, and in some ways the most living part, of my memories of this delightful land.

I find, in speaking with my countrymen who have visited Spain, that often my impressions of the country and her people are in exact contradiction to theirs. Now, as I do not pretend to any special power of understanding, I believe the explanation lies in the fact that I know the real Spain, while they have visited only what I may call, "the tourist's Spain." I cannot impress too strongly on the Anglo-Saxon globe-trotter that to know the country it is not enough to visit the show towns. It is when the stranger leaves the beaten tracks of travel and

goes to the country districts, where the outcome of modern progress is still unknown, that he sees the life of old Spain almost unchanged. I know of no experience more necessary to the understanding of the country and its people than a lengthened stay in a village *posada*. The life, indeed, will be hard in many ways, and it will be well for the stranger to cultivate the stoicism and indifference to personal comfort that characterise the Spaniards themselves; but the people you meet are charming in their kindness and perfect courtesy. I would advise, too, travelling in the third-class *mixto* trains. True the carriages are uncomfortable, always crowded and not always clean, and the speed is very slow; but the company is excellent, and a charming series of novel pictures is presented, which the stranger may quietly study at leisure. In the country districts where there are no railways, avoiding motor-cars, you must use the old native diligences, which on certain days in the week run from the nearest town to the outlying villages. The diligence is a kind of covered cart, without springs, and I know of no other conveyance so uncomfortable, except the long-cars of Ireland; but again, you will have delightful opportunities of intercourse with the people, and, for the sake of experience, the traveller can endure discomfort with fortitude.

Nearly ten years ago I spent several months in Spain fishing with my husband in various parts of the country. Among the districts that we visited that afforded the most delightful experiences and recollections was the Miño and the Sil, of which the first river in the whole of its course, and the other in part, are in Galicia. The noble Rio Miño rises in the north of the kingdom, in the province of Lugo; its source is among the mountains of Meira, to the south-east of the village-town of Mondoñedo. Flowing southwards, and receiving numerous

tributaries, the Miño passes the town of Lugo, and, watering some lovely valleys, enters the province of Orense. At the hamlet of Los Peares the Sil, flowing from the Cantarabian mountains, joins it, and the united streams form a wide, swirling, unnavigable river down to Tuy and the tidal water of the sea. This river forms the southern border of Galicia, separating it from Portugal. Foaming and tearing its way through stern and rocky gorges, then opening into valleys, where the hills are terraced to their summits with green vines, it affords the most varied and fascinating series of river-scenes. Many rivers have I visited, in many countries, but I cannot recall one that ever made to me as strong an appeal as the Miño. To-day I am haunted still by the dreams that were born in its lovely glens; in its wild gorges where great grey boulders rise in chaos from its roaring water; places that are without token of life save the hovering kite or roaming stone-chats.

The towns, and even the villages, are few and far between; and the traveller here must be prepared to meet many bodily discomforts. Hunger will be one of them. The peasants are the most frugal people, who subsist on a diet that would be refused by the poorest workers in England. For the stranger they do their utmost, but the food is limited to eggs, leathery and often quite tasteless meat, fowls that are even worse, hard white bread, and thin wine. The cooking is usually indifferent, and the food, even when good in quality, is ruined by the cheap *aciente*, or oil in which it is cooked, the never-to-be-forgotten taste and smell of which causes me, even now, in memory, to feel ill. Another, and even worse evil is the want of sanitation in the houses; and this, in the heat of the southern summer, is a thing not easy to bear. All remote places seem romantic in retrospect, but how often the glamour is lost at the time when our ego and

its needs are the centre and focus of our thoughts, when the immediate care is a dinner, or the discomfort of some trivial happening! Yet, afterwards, we can well smile, knowing that the glow of memory illumines most warmly the places won with the greatest toil, like the sun illuminating the highest peaks of a mountain-chain. Our journey was rough, and sometimes hard; but now, looking back over it, the whole takes a perfectly smooth and delightful perspective. The actual incidents of discomfort are mere interludes; the experience remains. And though ten years have passed, the images I took away with me have not been dimmed in the interval; and these months, of all the time I have lived in Spain, are those on which my memory dwells most joyously.

Tuy was the starting-point of our journey. The small border town is splendidly placed on the Spanish bank of the Miño, about fifteen miles from the sea, and opposite to Valença, its sister town on the Portuguese side of the river. Here is the real type of a dead city. Founded more than two thousand years back, it is said by Greek colonists, this out-of-the-world town has the appearance of having dropped out of history. There were stirring times here while, for near a thousand years, the town was swept and ravaged by successive waves of foreign invasion. In the Middle Ages Tuy, claimed by Portugal, was held for Galicia, by the redoubtable Queen, Doña Urraca. Then, after a period of peace, the town found at its gates another foe—this time the French. The fortress was occupied, but the invaders were driven back, April 1809; and since then the town has lived on its dreamy, unrecorded life.

And Tuy reflects these vicissitudes of its past. We entered it, coming from Portugal, by the new fine iron bridge that spans the Miño—the one modern thing here—uniting Galicia with Portugal, and the seal of the



THE MOUTH OF THE MIÑO.



THE OLD TOWN OF TUY.

ceasing of warfare. I know of no view finer than that which you gain from this bridge; you see the great river flowing in a fertile valley, where the young maize and terraced vines give a beautiful softness, which fades to the rugged grandeur of the double line of mountains beyond, the hills of Portugal on the south of the river and those of Pontevedra on the north. And who can help being haunted by the first sight that you gain of Tuy, superb and aloof, placed upon its hill, with the embattled towers of its fortress-cathedral rising in protection over its houses that cluster as closely around it as a swarm of bees around their queen? The brooding silence in the intense heat of noon seemed to be the silence of desolation. And this impression was increased as we walked from the station through the tortuous, narrow streets of the town, where we seemed to have passed into silence, and an almost painful emptiness of life. The few people that we met moved slowly; they passed us without a look of recognition, as though we were persons outside their contemplation. We noticed some dark-eyed children playing upon a ruined embattlement—they were using a rusty cannon as a horse. In a sculptured *patio* we saw oxen and mules stabled. At the *posada* we met the same complete indifference; our requests were received by the *señora* and her daughter as if they could not possibly concern them. It was the most uncomfortable inn at which we had stayed in Spain. And in our first visit, which was paid to the post-office, it was curious to find that the few letters awaiting us were a cause of astonishment to the courteous official. "You have much correspondence," he said as, with a bow, he handed to us three or four letters.

In the late afternoon, having left my husband to inspect the river, I ascended the belfry of the cathedral, where, from the castellated parapet, I saw all the strength

of the embattled building. I measured the immense thickness of the wall beside me ; it was more than a yard wide. It was with an effort I remembered that this was a church ; it seemed a survival of great energies that have vanished from the earth. Then, looking outwards again, I saw the old church of San Bartolomé in the plain below, and, nearer, the church of Santo Domingo, and around these fortress-like buildings the white, closely packed, houses were like toys. I looked down into the narrow streets that wound as dark threads between, wherein the few people appeared like flies caught in a net ; and then across to the wide, beautiful valley beyond, altogether surrounded by hills. There were sunset lights in the sky above and in the water of the river below. A company of brown hawks came flitting, with tremulous wings, hither and thither ; soon they settled upon their nests in the niches of the open parapets below. Then, as the twilight fell, innumerable bats swept around the towers with a rushing sound like a great wind. The smell of them was like some fœtid incense in decay. Now and again I heard owls wail hideously. My mind became full of the fancies of the hour, and I felt that this town, so peaceful and remote, was haunted more than any town that we had seen with memories of dead strife. As I left, at last, the silent cathedral, I seemed to hear some faint labouring of the stones—the gripping of the Titans ; work to no lasting purpose, it seemed, save decay.

And we had come to Tuy to fish ! It seemed fitting that this modern expression of the old fighting instinct should meet with disappointment. The Miño here is well supplied with netsmen, but it does not invite the rod of the fisherman.

It may be well to pause for a moment on the possibilities of the angler in Galicia. There are numerous

sport-giving rivers in all parts of the kingdom, and especially in the provinces of Lugo and Coruña, which possess all the qualities for the production of fish-life. At Mondariz, at La Toja, at Lerez, near Pontevedra, and at Ferrol I had conversations with fishermen, who all spoke highly of the fishing in these districts. A Scotsman at Ferrol told me that he spent all his spare hours in fishing, and had splendid sport with the sea-trout in the rivers of the neighbourhood. The Miño and the Sil contain trout as big as any river in Europe. The fishing is free, except for a licence costing about three shillings. There can be no doubt that, with proper cultivation, Galicia might become a fisherman's paradise in the course of a few years. But a revision of the *ley de pesca* (fishing law) is necessary. Rivers are not stocked, and trout hatcheries are unknown. The poacher is everywhere, using snares, spears, and in some districts the deadly dynamite. The leaves of a plant known in Galicia as *torvisco* (the flax-leaved daphne) are also used for obtaining trout. Numbers of trout are caught by peasants by throwing these leaves into the shallow pools of the rivers; their effect is poisonous to the fish, which rise to the surface of the water, and are easily captured.

Thousands of small fish are scooped out of the small pools of the tributaries with pole-nets during the dry seasons. At Mondariz I had the opportunity of witnessing a native fishing-party, when in less than an hour, sufficient fish were taken from the river Tea to produce a meal for about thirty people. A stretch of the river was closed in with long nets held by two rows of men, who slowly drew nearer to one another, dragging the fish with them. Then sling-nets were flung into this artificially made fish-pool and the fish were scooped out in shoals. Afterwards they were cooked by the women on fires, lighted on the banks of the stream. It was a

picturesque scene of vivid local colour, but for the fisherman a sad one. There is, however, another and a brighter side to the picture. Galicia is happily almost free from poisoned and contaminated rivers. There are hundreds of miles of beautiful rivers with no factories, works, or big cities within many leagues of their waters. Then, the fish are splendidly prolific. Trout teem in almost all the large rivers, when the deep pools baffle the poachers, who devote their attention to the shallows and tributaries. The Ulla, the Tambre, the Jallas, and the Eume are all sport-giving rivers that are equal to the best English, Scotch, and Irish rivers. In the provinces of Orense there is a large lake, the Laguna Antela, in which trout abound. Salmon are found in several rivers; shad or *sábalos*, *lampres*, *escalos*—a kind of cross between a chub and a dace—barbel, *bogas* and other coarse fish, and eels are plentiful in some rivers, though the best trout-streams are fortunately free from them. The barbel is different from the barbel of England, being a handsomer fish and not so coarse; it is more golden in colour, and the scales are less thick. The beautiful silvery *sábalos* are caught in sunk nets, whose opening is concealed by a green bough which looks like water-weed, and so deceives the travelling fish. The *sábalos* will not rise to any bait. They vary from four pounds to twelve pounds in weight, and are an excellent fish to eat, resembling the salmon.

By the majority of the Gallegos fishing is practised only as a means of obtaining food. There are, however, in all parts native anglers. The tackle they use is of the rudest description—a rod made of maize-stalks, with a hazel switch for the top, coarse casts, and flies clumsy and big. But they are all keen, and many of them are clever, fishermen. Thus it will be seen that, although the fishing in Galicia



PEASANTS NETTING A RIVER.



TRIBUTARY OF THE MIÑO.

cannot, perhaps, as yet be comparable with the countries that have cultivated and protected the natural resources of their rivers for the use of the angler, it is even now a country whose many rivers offer ample opportunities to anglers. And those who prefer untried streams, glorified by beautiful scenery and a wealth of interesting experience, will turn their steps gladly to this most beautiful, most wild, and certainly least known of all fishing centres in Europe.

I should explain, too, that my own journey was an adventure of one who knows almost nothing about angling, and who does not like the sport. I was captured by the glamour of an out-of-the-ordinary holiday, and the opportunity it afforded me of delightful experience. Notes and investigations! I took none, made none, never thought of making any! The arduous zeal of the born angler, I confess, would have bored me. No, I just lived joyously, fishing sometimes, but much oftener dreaming. Thus if I caught fish—which I did—it was by chance and not by skill. There is no angler, however bad, who would not be able to catch more fish than I did.

On the day following our arrival at Tuy we started early for the Ouro, a tributary of the Miño, which it joins not far from the town. This river is said to contain gold, and we had been informed by a courteous Civil Guard that it was the best stream for *las truchas*. Although the hour was only eight, the heat was great and the walk along the glittering road without shade, carrying our fishing paraphernalia, was exhausting. We were glad soon to find ourselves in a bosky glade by the green banks of a singularly limpid stream. To a keen angler, I suppose, there is always zest in seeking adventures on a new river. I do not understand this. What delighted me was the beauty of the place. I did not

fish. There was no track by the river, and the banks were thickly grown with trees and plants, and I quickly lose my temper under these circumstances. I sat down, choosing a spot where chestnut and aspen-trees formed a delightful forest of shade. The stream was the clearest I have ever seen, and the sunshine, piercing through the trees, revealed every stone upon the bed. A kingfisher shot, like a flash of blue upon the water, and emerald dragon-flies danced to and fro. Golden oreoles were singing, and the wood-doves cooed softly in the tall trees. Even in the shade it was warm, and I believe I fell asleep.

Later my husband joined me. Fishing was futile. There might be trout in the river, but he had seen none; only a few *bogas* had risen lazily to his flies. As we talked there was a sudden swelling in a clear shallow pool at our feet; the wave spread across the river and lapped the bank. "What is it?" My husband put up his hand to silence my question. Then up came the head and shoulders of a large otter, which looked straight at us for a moment, then plunged back into the water. My husband told me that his presence there proved that the river held fair-sized fish, though probably the creature's chief prey would be eels and frogs.

Tuy is no place for anglers; we decided to leave by the afternoon *mercado* (market) train for Arbo, a village situated on the Miño at a distance of about thirty-five kilometres.

This was my first experience of third-class travelling in Galicia, and how well I recall still the incidents of the journey! At the station there were a crowd of waiting women and men; I had not seen so many people before in Tuy. There was a kind of happy, fatalistic patience in their appearance; they seemed not so much to be waiting for a particular train as hoping

that presently a train would come that would take them to their destination. Even when the train arrived there was no hurrying; the *mercado* waits for at least ten minutes at the station. The occupants of the train got out of the carriages and joined the people who were waiting to get in. They all seemed to know each other; the long drawn cry of "A-a-gua fresca!" rose above the talking, and much time was occupied, as every one wanted to drink.

The carriage we entered was already well filled, as were all the compartments of the open corridor. I have never seen people packed so tightly together or so laden with packages; among the latter we noticed bunches of flowers carefully tied to the racks—they belonged to the women, and Spanish women always treat flowers tenderly. What struck us most was the good temper and fine courtesy of these peasants. They seemed to be without thought of themselves and incapable of considering personal comfort. They crowded still more upon one seat of the carriage to give "the strangers" more room. One jolly, middle-aged peasant offered his folded cloak to make me a more comfortable seat. They questioned us: Were we Francésas or Inglésas? Where were we going to? Why had we come to visit their country? How heartily they laughed at our answer—that we had come to fish. Did we sell the fish? No, we fished for amusement—and their astonishment increased.

At Guillarey, where we had to change trains, which necessitated a wait of nearly an hour, a most delightful and animated scene occupied our attention. The travellers, who, like us, were waiting for the train from Vigo, passed the time in dancing to the music of the *gaita*, which one of the peasants played. I did not, at this time, know the Gallegan people, and I marvelled at

this delightful abandonment to the opportunity of the moment's happiness. The whole-hearted merriment was infectious; I felt that I wanted to dance too. The hour passed with surprising rapidity.

The train we afterwards entered was, if possible, more crowded than the one we had left. The company talked together with excessive volubility, and had the appearance of being members of one family. A new set of interrogations were addressed to us, but without a hint of familiarity; they were the outcome of a friendliness that wished to make the strangers at home. The heat in the carriage was stifling, and the air was odorous with garlic. Perspiration ran like a cascade down our noses and foreheads. And yet these people, so uncomfortably seated, and with nothing to drink but the heated water in their leather bottles or stone *jarras*, did nothing but laugh, talk, and sing the whole way. It was impossible not to admire the philosophy and happy carelessness of their mood. Comfort is not for the poor, they say, and then, with a shrug, they laugh. They talked to us incessantly, and when we did not understand them, as indeed often happened, succeeded in keeping up the conversation by expressive gestures, inviting our attention to the scenery and the various places by which the train passed, with delightful childish enthusiasm.

The line skirts the banks of the Miño, following it in all its sinuosities so closely that at times there seems almost a prospect of the train going into the water. It would be impossible to imagine finer scenery than this iron roadway affords. The valley becomes narrower and deeper, and the river rushes rapidly along between stones and boulders, which torment it and change its course at every few hundred yards. At one point the rocks separate and open into valleys fertile with vineyards, and at the next they bar the way and compel the

train to wind slowly round them. At Salvatierra a picturesque ivy-clad ruin of an ancient fortress rises right above the station ; and at a little distance, across the river on the Portugal side, we saw the old walled town of Monago. An iron bridge crosses the Tea, which at this point joins the Miño. The scenery is gentler here, as we entered the fertile vine-growing valley, and at Las Nieves, the next station, we were in pine-woods. Then between here and Arbo the scene returns to a savage severity that is magnificent. The Miño bed is narrow and very stony, and the waters foam as they force their way between the boulders. We noticed some admirable effects of sunset. The mountains in the distance assumed a variety of colours of the most extraordinary warmth and vividness. It was now nearly nine o'clock, and the journey of only 35 kilometres had occupied more than three hours. But speed in travelling is not always gain. One can do a thing for the first time but once ; it is but once for all that one can have a pleasure in its freshness. I have many happy memories of third-class travelling in Spain ; but it is this journey that I remember best.

Arbo is placed like an eagle's nest in a wild gorge of the Miño. The *venta*,* which was close to the station, was of a very primitive description ; our bedroom contained nothing beyond a small bed and one chair ; the room, however, was fairly clean, and these discomforts produced little effect upon us, for the window of the room commanded a magnificent view of the river. In the living-room below, which was less clean than the bedroom, supper was being served, and the air reeked with garlic and the fumes of strong *aceite*, the smell

* Since writing the above, I have learnt from a Gallegan friend that Arbo now has a really good *posada*, and the little town has fashionable shops. It is difficult to believe. Progress is indeed changing Galicia.

which belongs to all small *posadas*. We were too hungry to be fastidious, and made a good meal of a tomato omelet, which, considering it was a Spanish one, did not contain too many tastes: ham, goats'-milk cheese, and really good white table-wine.

At first I was alarmed at the appearance of the guests of the *posada*, who were seated at a table taking wine from the *bota*, the long-spouted leather bottle from which only the Spaniard has the skill to drink. Thoughts of brigands crowded my mind, and I shuddered at the recollection of their probably hidden *navajas*, which, I had been told, all Spaniards carried. But the absurdity of my fear was soon made evident. These were simple townsmen, who came to the inn each evening to sit for hours talking politics and to give their theories at length on agriculture or government, and also on poetry—for all Gallegans are poets—with much gesticulation and voices raised to the highest pitch. The Gallegan workers are the friendliest possible people. By their invitation my husband and I joined them, and we found at once that we were in the presence of gentlemen. We were accepted as members of the party, and the friendly trustfulness that is one characteristic of the fine Gallegan courtesy soon caused us to feel at home. The men held republican views, and I gained much information from their talk. It was a delightful hour, and we went to bed with the friendly shouts of their “*Buenas noches!*” ringing in our ears.

Spain is still the most democratic of countries. Every Spaniard expects, as a matter of right, to be treated as an equal. They are a people immemorially old, splendidly frank, proud, and without personal shame. Your host at the *posada* will sit down with you to meals, and his son, who waits on you, will slap you on the back with easy friendliness as he makes plans for your enjoyment.

These familiar and intimate relationships, which once were common in every country, are found to-day nowhere so universally practised as in Spain. Each Spaniard that you meet gives you the greeting which commends you to God; and no native ever eats in company without first uttering the customary *gusta*, an invitation to share in his repast. They are a people still thousands of miles away in taste, in manners, in sentiment, and in their view of life from people of commercial countries. Thus courtesy and friendliness are the passports that the stranger needs—and not money. Again and again, before we knew the country, we fell into the error of offering gratuities for help rendered to us. I may give one instance. A *chico*, who had spent a day in intelligent guiding me around a town in which I was a stranger, refused the *peseta* I offered him. “Señora,” he said, “I have loved you much; it has been a pleasure to me to be in your company; it would hurt me to receive payment from you.” I have not often felt more deeply rebuked. The snobbery that has arisen out of modern progress is unknown to the Spanish man, woman, or child. Business here is not the highest aim in life. The Spaniard still feels true what Ganivet made Hernan Cortes say: “The grandest enterprises are those in which money has no part, and the cost falls entirely on the brain and heart.”

We spent a happy week at Arbo. It was not fishing weather; a radiant sun, with no rain, made the condition of the water worse each day. The heat was at times insupportable. A tributary in a charmingly shaded glen, which joins the Miño about a mile from the town, afforded us the best sport. The trout were small, but plentiful and nimble; a quarter-of-a-pound fish fought in the rushing water like an English half-pounder. The river reminded us of the Dove in Derbyshire, only the stream was larger and the scenery much grander. We

passed delightful hours by this stream. Sometimes I fished, at others I rested in the long grass, where myriads of insects, seen and unseen, raised a shrill melody in the hot air. One spot that I recall as liking best was near to a quaint old mill, where I watched women washing linen in a tributary brook. It was a picture that always gave me pleasure. Girls came here with their pitchers to fill with water, and, as I watched them cross the stream, with their beautiful gliding walk, it often seemed as if the marble breed of women on a Grecian urn had taken life. The women never failed to greet me, and, when I heard their salutation "May God be with you," I had the feeling of having stepped back into a time not very far from the beginning of our era.

We had many opportunities of intercourse with the natives, for our doings created the utmost interest among them. We were often followed along the river-side by groups of spectators, and the local fishermen, who coveted our English-made tackle, were gained as our friends by presents of *moscas* (flies). The interest centred in me. I was the first *mujer pesca* (woman fisher) who had been seen in Galicia. My fishing clothes greatly interested the women. They were amazed to see me standing in the water, and were never tired of fingering and asking questions about my mackintosh dress. My hat, too, was a source of unceasing interest. They would ask me to put it off and on again and again; I am certain they believed I passed the hat-pin with which I secured it through my head. In spite of denials, the largest takings of fish were always laid to my account; and of an evening, when our day's catch was displayed in the inn, many compliments were paid to me by our friends which I did not deserve; for truth to say, I fished very little, leaving this to my husband, while I found my enjoyment in other ways.

In the country one can learn so many things more truly than in the towns, which we call civilised, where small happenings distract us so often from universal truths. The Gallegan peasant, as we saw him here, was a type quite new to me, and a type singularly individual. He is generally of medium height, and has very distinct features, somewhat large, especially the nose; though usually shaven, there is always a growth of stubble on the upper lip and cheeks. The complexion is a warm olive, and in old age the face becomes a mass of wrinkles. There is much strength in the Gallegan face, and a certain inflexibility, which yet leaves room for humour, and for great intelligence, expressing itself by a surprising interest in all things, which was, indeed, the quality which most impressed me in these men. They all had the picturesque expression, the birthright, it seems, of every Gallegan, even the dullest of the race. Their speech was harsh, but yet not vulgar, and in their voices you heard that cadence, as of a song, that is natural to the Celt. As I look back through the vista of the years, recalling the conversations we had with these men, it does not strike me that they were religious to a great extent, though such constant worshippers in the church. It may be that in this I am wrong, for in things spiritual they did not often venture an opinion. On politics they spoke more openly, and the most of them confessed to being republican; that is, with reservation, as are most of us. The impression I gathered was that in their opinion almost all governments, whatever they called themselves, were equally bad. And if they did not complain, it was not because they were contented, but because experience had taught them the danger and uselessness of protest. The inexorable law of the land held them to their own detriment. *Ló que ha de ser no puede faltar.* Yet they were industrious workers, whose chief

desire was to be left to go about their business, and make a living for themselves and families, and have education for their children. But of all this I gained hints only, by many questions to which the answers were given often with great caution; and it may be that I am wrong. It may be, too, that my own opinions directed my conclusions. No observer will ever see in others what is not in himself to see. Perhaps, therefore, it were wiser to confine my observations to outside things.

It was our last day in beautiful Arbo. We had been invited by the village *padre* to inspect the shad-fishing, which is an important industry in the place. A colony of local fishermen have erected solid stone piers, about a yard apart, across the Miño, with channels between them for the passage of the fish. In each of these artificial channels, or guts, a trap-net, with a large aperture and tapering almost to a point at the end, is set and secured by chairs. Lowering and raising these great trap-nets are operations attended with peril; the current between the piers flows deep and swift, and a false step or a stumble would send the luckless fisherman into a fierce rush of water that would buffet and toss the most powerful swimmer, and probably suck him down. It made me giddy to stand on one of these piers, watching the hurrying torrent that broke against them and flowed through the channels in a green shoot of water.

Our friend the priest was one of the most successful fishermen, and held the opinion that the mouth of the net should be concealed partially by a green bough. He told us that the green branch looked like water-weed to a travelling shad, and that the fish swam without suspicion through the twigs and into the net. On that afternoon two large shad were caught in one net; one weighed between eight and nine pounds, and the other about ten pounds. It was charming to see the delight of the simple

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A GROUP OF PEASANTS.



GALLEGAN BEGGARS.

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padre. We watched him lift the great silvery fishes on to the pier, and then saw him skip nimbly with the fish over the stones and lay his capture in the shade of the trees. He was amused when I asked him to allow me to photograph the fish to show to our friends in England.

Afterwards he returned to his stone watching-tower, where he would wait for hours, smoking scores of cigarettes. To-day he was accompanied by a *carabinero*, who was on the watch for *contrabandistas* from Portugal. We joined them, and my husband questioned the *padre* on the habits of the *sábalos* (shad). May and June are the best months for catching the fish. They can be lured to the surface by bright lights used at night, but no bait has yet been discovered which will tempt them. My husband asked whether any native had ever caught a shad with any sort of natural or artificial bait. "No, *nada, nada!*" Yet in the Guadalquivir, at Cordova and Seville, these fish will take various baits.

My husband made a futile attempt with lob-worms on a ledger, which resulted in a catch of eels. He believes, however, that the Miño shad might be tempted to the hook by some dainty bait. For my own part, who know nothing of these matters, I like much better to think of these fish being attracted to death by bright lights and green boughs, while refusing the coarser temptations of food. Were I a poet, I would write an ode to the beautiful silvery *sábalos* of the Miño; as it was I ate them, served up cold with sliced onions and spices. It was a delicious dish, whose taste I can still recall with pleasure.

The heat that afternoon was the greatest we had experienced. The rocks by the Miño were so scorching that I believe we could have grilled our fish upon them. There was not a breath of wind stirring. We were glad to escape for a time from the sun's scorching rays, and to rest in the *venta* until the shadow of the mountains

fell across the Miño. Then we went out down the river, below where the tributary joins the whirling rapids of the main stream. The evening was perfect, and a lingering golden light rested upon the water. We came to a shallow glide, broad and fairly swift, with trailing weed growing from the gravel. My husband said it was a likely haunt for trout. I waded in a sharp scour, and almost at once hooked a heavy fish. My light greenheart rod bent till I thought it must snap, as the fish rushed into mid-stream at a tremendous pace. As I have stated before, I am no sportswoman, but I can recall still the thrill of that moment. I called to my husband wildly. "Let him run!" he answered. "He's a grand fish, whatever he is!" My rod bent still further, though the line was flying from the winch. A splash broke the water twenty yards away, for a second a great flash of silver showed above the water—was it a salmon, a shad, or one of the mighty Miño trout? We shall never know; my rod flew back to the straight, and my line came limp to the bank. Was I sorry or glad? I do not know. I believe I felt disgusted at my excitement—at least I like to imagine that I did, for one wants to think well of oneself, and I have always held that in sport the hurt done is not to the thing killed, but to oneself in the enjoyment such killing brings.

My husband caught many trout that night, but I did not fish again. Darkness was creeping over the hills as we walked back along the river. We found it difficult to find a crossing-place in the gathering gloom, and made our way to the railway bridge which spans the Miño; crossing it, we found a path through the trellises of vines that led to the high road. In the light air the leaves just stirred, making a creaking sound, unlike the whispering of trees I have heard in England. Owls hooted from the distance, and dusky moths flitted past.

We could still see the mountains of Portugal, whose peaks formed an outline of orange fading into pink. The cry of the river was the deepest sound that we heard, and in the distance we saw the dim glimmer of Arbo's lights. A shepherd met us who had driven his flocks down the hill to be folded for the night. "Vaya usted, con Dios!" came his greeting. Presently the sound of a Gallegan peasant's singing rose in the still night, and the notes, now joyous, now sad, swiftly recurring, lingered in the air.

Our next halting-place was Ribadavia, a small town, noted for its wines, and situated thirty kilometres from Arbo, at the confluence of the Avia with the Miño. We stayed only for one day, as the fishing prospect was hopeless. The lovely river Avia has been poached to the decimation of trout; my husband saw not a single rise during five hours steady fishing up stream. My own patience was exhausted in a much shorter time, and, returning, I passed some delightful hours wandering about the quaint old town. An incident of the morning is, however, worth recording. As we skirted a cultivated field to gain a higher reach of the river, two peasant girls, who were at work with hoes, suddenly caught sight of us. With a piercing shriek, they flung down their tools, and ran as if for their lives. We believed it was our fishing costumes that caused their terror; they had never imagined human forms in such hideous attire. I am almost certain they mistook us for demons. The *chico* from the *fonda*, who had accompanied us to show us the way, was greatly concerned. Fire flashed from his dark eyes, he flung out his hands in a wonderfully expressive manner; nor could our laughter ease the hurt that his fine native courtesy had received. Many were the apologies he made to us. "Ignorancia!" "Faula de la educacion!" he kept muttering to himself, and it was

long before he recovered his happiness. Too much stress cannot be laid on the kindness of the Gallegan people to strangers; they are the most hospitable and courteous people. On one occasion, when staying in a village *posada*, we had asked for a certain food not to be obtained in the neighbourhood; a messenger was sent on horseback twenty miles over the mountains to the nearest town to procure it. Nor was any payment allowed for the service. No, the English *señora* was the guest of the house; she had asked for something, it was their duty to provide it. The trouble, the expense! they did not understand. In old Spain service is not rendered for payment.

Ribadavia, like so many Spanish towns, lives on its past, and the atmosphere that belongs to all places that have a history gives it a sadness that the stranger will readily feel. The town is almost unchanged from the days when Garcia, the son of Ferdinand the Great, and King of Galicia, held his court here. Its appearance is most picturesque, and gives the impression that so many old Spanish towns do, of having been built with the wise instinctive art that belongs to primitive people; it has the natural grace of a bird's-nest or a beaver's hut. The granite houses are roofed with dull red tiles or with slabs of black wood. The walls are faded to a beautiful age. The streets are narrow, tortuous, and rough as the bed of a mountain torrent, and steep as the hill-side on which they are built. The old palace, now a Dominican convent, still crowns the town. There are two old churches: Santo Domingo, which is a good example of Galician architecture, and Santiago, whose Romanesque windows are beautiful. The town reminded me of Tuy. A café in one of the old streets, where a number of men were seated, dressed in the garb of townfolk, seemed curiously out of place, as also did the electric lights,

placed at odd corners of the dark buildings, which at evening started into brilliancy. At that hour groups of people, full of movement and colour, were gathered in the streets. The town has a population of 5,000, and all of them, I think, must have come out to enjoy the cool of the evening.

The great charm of Ribadavia is in its position ; I remember it best as we saw it from the river, a dark silhouette lifted high against a burning sky. It is in the centre of one of the most famous of Galicia's vine-growing valleys. Every house in the district has its own vine-grove. I had an opportunity, as I returned to the town, of learning the method by which the peasants make wine for their own use. I entered a small cottage, and the owner showed me the vat in which he made his wine. He told me that when the grapes were placed in the vat he would wash himself thoroughly, and would then get into it and stamp upon the ripe fruit to extract the juice. For three, or sometimes more days, the operation is repeated, then the vat is closed and left for several months, when the wine flows clear and is ready for use. It is interesting to note that, although wine is so plentiful and cheap, water is the beverage most consumed in Galicia. The Spanish hatred against drunkenness takes date from the highest antiquity. Strabo writes of a man who threw himself into the fire, because some one had called him a drunkard : *Quidam ad ebrios vocatus in rogam se iniecit*. I have only once seen a man drunk in Spain, and he was an Englishman.

That night we held council as to our next stopping-place. My husband was disheartened by the day's experience, and was inclined to abandon the Miño.

"Let us look at the map," I suggested—how many adventures owe their origin to such hazard toying with

maps!—"Look, what is this place? there appear to be three rivers here."

We made out the name, Los Peares.

"Let us go there," I cried impulsively.

I liked the name, and, for some reason that I do not know, I already felt attracted to the place.

"But we do not know if there is a *fonda*, or anywhere for us to stay," my more cautious husband questioned.

I silenced him.

"What matter? I want an adventure."

"Well, we will start by the morning train; then, if there is no *casa de huespedes*, we can move on!"

"No," I cried, "I must wait at Orense to see the cathedral."

My husband argued. He has no great love for towns. My plan was for us to go to Orense by the morning train, which would give me time to visit the cathedral, and to go on to Los Peares by the night-train. I should, perhaps, explain for those who are not acquainted with Spanish travelling, that there were only these two trains.

"But we shall arrive at Los Peares in the middle of the night; and if——"

Again I silenced him.

"I want an adventure; this holiday is proving too easy and comfortable."

"Very well, but it will be your fault if——"

I laughed and went to bed, joyously anticipating the morrow.

CHAPTER XIV

LOS PEARES: OUR HOME IN THE GORGE

Orense—The springs of Las Burgas—Arrival at Los Peares—A walk of terror—The end of our adventure—Life in a Gallegan peasant home—The wild Sil—The festival at San Esteban.

I SHALL pass rapidly over the day we spent at Orense. I have described the cathedral in another chapter. The town left me indifferent, perhaps through fatigue or excitement at the night's adventure, to which still I was looking forward; at any rate, it had little to say to me. I recall, indeed, our visit to Las Burgas, the hot springs, famous from the time of the Romans. In one of the springs we found pleasure; it flowed through a granite wall beneath an arch decorated with sculpture, and in tanks, which caught the overflow of the water, women were washing linen. But in the neighbourhood of the two other springs, in one tank fowls were being skinned and scalded, while in another meat was cooked in the seething water. There are butchers' shops close by, and everywhere were carcasses, which women were skinning and cleaning—all the smells and colours of the refuse of a slaughter-house. And all this malodorous medley was a-swarm; people were in continual movement, women standing ankle-deep in bloody water, harsh voices crying, the splash of emptied vessels; and there was laughter and the notes of a song rising out of the midst of the women, like bubbles of steam escaping from a boiling pot. The brightness and un-considering gaiety of our

days at Arbo seemed to go out like a candle in the wind. Never have I witnessed a scene more compelling to the adoption of a vegetarian diet.

The rain that had seemed impossible during the glowing weather of the last ten days now came. In the afternoon clouds began to climb over the tops of the hills, catching stormy colours and turning leaden, and presently the rain poured with straight, steady violence, scattering the people hither and thither, into the cafés, behind the flapping curtains of cabs and trams, beneath dripping trees, where they stood casting glances upward at the grey sky, which might be blue again at any moment, or perhaps not for an hour's time. We sat in one of the cafés, watching some youths playing at billiards. As the rain continued, I took the opportunity to write letters. The *señorita*, who waited in the café—a beautiful girl with Arab eyes and glittering teeth—supplied me with note-paper and ink. She waited, regarding me curiously. “Santa Maria! with what speed you write!” She called the attention of the billiard-players, and then went to fetch the other inhabitants of the café. “Maravillosa!” and they stood around me in absurd astonishment. Never before had they seen any one write so rapidly. I be-thought myself of offering them specimens of my handwriting. They accepted the worthless souvenirs with a gratitude that put me to shame. If you want to experience politeness—in return, of course, for politeness; if you want courtesy and kindness, and invigorating, novel experiences, go to the towns off the beaten routes of travel.

This incident restored my good-humour, and, as the rain had now ceased, I walked with my husband to the river. The Miño is wide at Orense and flows sedately over a gravel bed, but in flood-time the water rises rapidly and to a great height. We met a man carrying a fishing-rod, and my husband greeted him as a brother *pescador*.



MONUMENT OF CONCEPCION ARENAL, ORENSE.

He showed us his flies, which were home-made, and smaller and neater-tied than any native flies we had seen. Men were baiting lines, which they cast into the stream. We asked them what they caught; they told us, "Chiefly eels."

The evening was stormy, and the sunset sky was an orange copper colour, as we saw it from the fine old thirteenth-century stone bridge, with its mighty arches spanning the swirling water. The town stretched above the river looked white and peaceful, like a woman asleep, and the mist-topped mountains in the distance were as a blue couch against which she rested. The minutes fell slowly. Later, we walked back to the Calle del Progreso in the town, where we were to dine at the Fonda Europa. We noticed that the trees were swaying and rustling as we had not seen them do before, and though rain was not falling, we felt sure that a gale would rage during the night. "And we have no lodging and may not get one," was the thought which neither of us spoke. Melancholy reflections are apt to intrude when one is hungry. However a well-cooked Spanish dinner—and, when well cooked, no dinner is better than a Spanish one—banished our forebodings. We had still an hour to await the train. We walked to the Plaza del Obispo Cesário, near by, to see again the monument of Doña Concepcion Arenal, which we had already visited in the afternoon. This monument, consecrated to the great Gallegan woman, was a very holy place to me. We waited so long that there was only just time to drive to the station, which lies at some distance from the town, to catch our train.

I can recall nothing of that journey, but I remember as if it were yesterday, our arrival at Los Peares. The hour was nearing midnight. It was the blackest night we had seen in Galicia. Do you know the kind of dark-

ness that blots out all the landscape, but leaves here and there lighter patches of grey that take ghostly shapes? In the station shed there were no lights, save a petroleum lamp carried by the *Jefe de la estación*. The man stared at us as we alighted with our bags and rods on the wet earth—there was no platform. My husband questioned him as to the whereabouts of a *casa de buespedes*. There was one about two miles distant. He added the information, “Malo, para la señora” (bad for the lady). Was there nowhere else? Yes, there was a good house much nearer, but he did not know whether they would receive us. They sometimes did receive visitors, but the hour was late. He shrugged his shoulders. With this he prepared to leave us. My belief is he thought we were mad to have come there at all. Doubtless he was anxious to return to his home. We clung to his presence in a kind of despair. Could he send some one to carry our luggage and to guide us? Yes, he would send a man. He went, carrying the lantern with him.

The situation was not pleasant. The glamour of adventure, divested of the tinsel of imagination, took at this moment a very uncomfortable reality. I had thirsted for romance; but this?—well, one needs all one’s philosophy to cover bodily discomforts with the gold-dust of romance. What a night it was! Rain was falling, and the wild seething of the wind mingled with the louder noise of foaming water. The station is placed just above the river, and it is at this place that the Miño is joined by the majestic Sil, and also by the smaller river Cabe. The sound of the water was so near that it gave an impression of the inrushing of the tide. I felt that the water must come over us. It was many days before I lost my dread of the flood of this fear-inspiring river.

The minutes dragged as we waited. A quarter of an hour passed; then, just as we were considering what we

must do, the promised porter arrived. The way led first along the line. We floundered on, looking always on the ground to avoid the metals, which we could just see. The wind continued its perpetual monsoon, blowing straight across our path, and causing the candle-lantern, which our guide carried, to flicker and jump ; soon it went out. It was useless, in that wind, to relight it. The darkness seemed thicker now as we passed through a grove of trees. We came to the stream of the Cabe, which we crossed by a decaying wooden bridge, high-pitched and shaky. Our porter called back a caution ; the bridge was being repaired, and at one place the hand-rail was missing. I could just see the white foam of the water ; the rain in the mountains had been heavy, and the powerful rush of the flood sounded terrific. I was very glad when the bridge was crossed. The road led on, winding in and out between hillocks, crossed here and there by bands of rock ; the distance seemed interminable, but it was really less than a mile. Yes, I confess it, that walk was a terror to me. Had I known, as we learnt afterwards, that our guide was suspected of being one of a band of highway robbers, who had recently caused terror in the district, and was being watched by the Civil Guards, I doubt that I should have found any romance in the circumstance. This adventure I had looked forward to so fondly had turned into the grimmest of pilgrimages. We were wet, and shivering miserably. There is really something very humiliating in the tyranny one's body exercises over the mind.

At last, just as I thought I could go no farther, we saw a light glimmering in the distance. We lost it as we entered a grove of vines, then quite suddenly we came to a stone house, planted upon a rocky shelf, as if it might have been the nest of some hawk. On one side was a

garden, thickly roofed with vines. The strong door, to which a Spanish knocker, formed like a hand of brass, was roughly nailed, appeared to me as heaven. But the door did not open. I stood holding to a trail of vines to prevent myself from slipping down the muddy foot-path, my eyes not moving from the door. We heard voices parleying in the Gallegan tongue.

“They cannot take you in,” our guide told us.

“How far is the other house for strangers?”

“Three kilometres, and a bad road.”

In despair I turned to my husband. “I cannot walk there to-night.” I believe that I cried. Women find relief in this way, as men do by swearing.

“Try again!” my husband urged the man.

Again there was a long parleying. We heard our man say, “Las compatriotas de Don Carlos.”

“What does he mean?” I questioned, speaking in a louder voice than before to my husband, who had already begun to walk down the path.

I did not have an answer, for at the moment I spoke the door opened, and we heard a man’s voice. To our surprise he spoke in perfect English.

“Come in,” he said. “They will put you up. I had no idea you were English until I heard you speak just now. Whatever brings you here?”

That was the end to our night’s adventure. It has taken a long time to tell, and, looking back on it now, I can smile cynically at our discomforts and my fears. But when we entered that room, with its quaint aspect, half kitchen and half village-shop, and its air of comfort and home contrasting with the wild night, I felt that our journey, which had been born in dreams, was in the end reverting to them. This little outpost of civilisation was a paradise. And soon we were drinking cups of English made tea—the first we had tasted for many

weeks. I believe I felt more patriotic and more loyal to England than I have ever done upon any occasion.

It was morning before we retired to bed. The Englishman, known locally as Don Carlos, was a boarder in the house, a sportsman and a keen angler. He spent the greater part of the year in this mountain retreat. My husband was delighted with this chance meeting with an English sportsman. Don Carlos had fished the Sil during several seasons, and he knew every pool for a dozen miles up the river. He held out no brilliant promise of sport with the fly, but he spoke of twenty-pound baskets of trout made by spinning the natural bait. When at length we went to bed it was in a queer little room, clean but not sumptuous; but to us it appeared delightful. We went to sleep, lulled by the cry of the wild, foaming river.

We breakfasted on a big vine-covered balcony, overhanging the river. It was a delightful spot, from which the view was magnificent. Just below us, to the right, was the junction of the Cabe with the main river, the waters of the streams forming a figure like a Y; in the other direction, to our left, stretched the rocky ravine in which the Sil joins the Miño. The morning, though chilly, was gloriously bright, and everywhere was the gladness of colour that follows a storm. Martins were hawking by the windows of the house. It was a perfectly satisfying morning. The breakfast, too, was delicious: coffee, bread, eggs, and good butter—an unusual luxury in Spain.

My husband started with Don Carlos to try the fly upon the Sil. I felt no inclination to fish. I was in the mood when the desired occupation is to look around one, as the Creator did in Eden, and to find all things good. This was the first opportunity we had enjoyed of staying in a Gallegan homestead. The *señor*, our

host, was an important man. He kept the only *tienda* in the district—a general store where one might buy anything, from a dozen eggs to a pair of boots. In his younger days he had been to South America, and naturally all who knew him looked up to him as a man of property.

Flies buzzed in myriads about the shop, between the links of long chains of onions which dangled from the roof. Piles of rough plates and bowls made in the district, and beautiful in shape and pattern, stood in corners of the shop upon the red-brick floor, with cases of eggs, wine-skins, and other objects; and upon the rows of ill-planed shelves were ranged, among *alpargatas*, hats, bacon, cheese, and all manner of goods, earthenware water-jars, which looked as if they might have been dug up from a Roman tomb; there were some jars to hold oil that were glazed a beautiful metallic green. More order was visible in the other half of the shop, which was used as the living-room of the family; an air of cleanliness and comfort was everywhere. The bright crockery shone as if it had been fresh varnished in the rough wooden rack behind the dresser, and the chairs and tables had been polished over till they appeared to glow.

Señor S—— was a very distinct personality of a man. I can still see him seated on a large wooden chair, his feet resting on an *esparto* mat, and with a cigarette, usually smoked down to the stump, between his lips. When a fresh one was needed it was lighted from a small brass brazier in which charcoal was always burning, ready to be blown into heat.

Certainly few were the sacrifices he made to outward appearances. A large man, with a face always showing a stubble crop of grey hair, and scant grey locks, that fringed it like lichen does a rock, he was dressed in clothes seemingly too small for his frame, and in which the

buttons, when fastened, were continually parting company. His only sacrifice upon the altar of beauty was his shirt, which was embroidered and beautifully tucked. I think he looked upon this garment as foolishness, for when I remarked upon its fine needle-work, he muttered something of its being a present from his young wife. His grey eyes looked out suspiciously, and yet with humour, upon the world. Sometimes, but not often, he jangled with customers ; he gossiped with his friends ; and occasionally he cast his accounts in a great, square, much-worn ledger. When doing this he would hum in a low voice one of the Gallegan folk-songs, but if observed he would stop suddenly ; and I could not get him to talk about poetry. Somehow, although he did not know it, and would have disliked the idea, he had preserved a flavour of an older world. Deep in his mind seethed a mixture of hard commercial ideas and a half-Celtic spirit. To talk to him you would think he was a man of business and affairs ; but that was but one side of him, the side that he turned outward to the world. It seemed to me on that first day, as afterwards when we came to know him better, that either he was a poet without the gift of words, or that the spirit of the wild district where he lived had spoken in his soul, whilst the affairs of life, compelling and sordid, occupied his mind. His habits never varied, and much time was occupied in doing nothing ; and it appeared to us that his business could not have gone on without his ruin, had not his wife looked after it, seeing to everything, whilst she consulted him—as a wife should—on every detail of the shop. She was much younger than he was, amiable and capable, with a beautiful and sensitive face. She reminded us of the Madonnas that the Spanish artists paint.

The kindly customs of democratic Spain enabled us to gain a real friendship with our hosts. We lived with

them in equal comradeship. We partook of all meals together on the big balcony, with the cool air blowing upon us from the mountains. The *señor* and his son sat with us; the younger children—three delightful little girls, like their mother with olive skins and dark eyes—played around us, picking up scraps in a way that reminded us of the dogs at home. The *señora* waited upon us all with a delightful, untiring service. She was a perfect hostess. We fared excellently. Good roast joints—she had learnt to cook these from Don Carlos—decked the table; the fowls were tender, the vegetables and fruit abundant, and the wine of the house was bright and quite free from logwood. An incident that occurred at our first dinner is worth recording. My husband asked the *señor* how many children they had. He answered, “Five,” pointing to his son and the romping *niñas*, “and the fifth is here.” Whereupon, with a beautifully gentle gesture, he touched the womb of his wife, who was standing beside him. They were silent for a moment, and then he kissed her. Neither of them laughed, the woman did not draw back—there was no hint of idiotic simper. I thought of Van Eyck’s great picture, “The Burgomaster’s Wife,” and I was very glad to be in the company of people to whom birth was a perfectly natural and a beautiful thing.

The days at Los Peares were full of delightful experience. We had many hours of fishing on the Sil and the Cabe; but the incessantly burning sun was against our sport. I recall one delightful day on the Cabe. The stream flows through a deep and lovely glen, cut in wild hills almost devoid of foliage, though on the lower slopes the vines gave colour and shade. We followed a track through them, where the grapes were in green clusters on the riotous branches. The *chico* of the house

accompanied us. Don Carlos was entertaining some Spanish visitors, including two of the *Guardia Civil* who had come to make search for certain highway robbers who were causing terror among the natives of the hamlet in the gorges. It was upon this occasion we learnt that our guide of the night of our arrival was suspected of being one of the band; but events were so differently coloured in my mind that a knowledge which then would have filled me with terror now appeared a delightful added romance. (I should, perhaps, remind the reader that the time of which I am writing dates back for ten years. Galicia has no highway robbers now.)

The glen of the Cabe became wilder as we advanced. No trace of a path was to be seen; we did not encounter a single *choza* (peasant's house), nor meet man or woman. We scrambled over rocks and through undergrowth. The beauty of the ravine cannot be described. Masses of blue-grey boulders rose from the verge of the stream, whose water rushed sometimes in a white torrent, then settled in a deep pool; the wooded slopes were impenetrable, and there was a long strip of azure sky above the high cliffs that seemed to bar the passage of the river. The sound of the rushing water was unceasing, for, besides the main stream, at every few steps of the way little rivulets gushed forth, trickling down the rocks like tears of crystal. We reached a scour that looked tempting for a trial of the fly. But fishing among those rocks, trying to avoid the overhanging boughs, was too difficult for me, and I soon gave up the attempt. I reclined upon the grass and smoked, the while I talked to the *chico*, who was my firm friend. I have always been impressed with the intelligence of the Spanish *chicos* of the rural working class. These boys have a rare native wit, without any of the stupidity and apathy often associated with rustic adolescents. Here was a

boy of the poorest peasant class—he did odd jobs for the *señor*, our host—who could converse in a really entertaining way with a foreigner who possessed but a limited acquaintance with his language. What is more, Pepillo often read my thoughts before I spoke them. He was always careful for my comfort. I recall how he collected a bundle of dried moss to make a pillow for me, and then picked a bunch of wild harebells, presenting them to me with charming grace. I had occasion to look in my dictionary for a Spanish word. When I had found it, Pepillo asked if he might look at the book. I gave it to him, and for a long time he turned over the pages in absorbed interest. Presently he lighted on a word which aroused his orthodox indignation. “Cismático” was the word of terror. “Cismático, malo, malo!” he murmured. It was some time before he again became happy.

I relate the incident because, in the years which elapsed between my first and my last visit to Galicia, I noticed a certainly marked difference in the attitude of the people to religion. I shall speak on this subject in another chapter; but, in contrast to Pepillo, I may relate now an incident with a *chico*, also curiously called Pepillo, who, ten years later, went with me to visit a church in a small town not far from the Miño. I observed that he made no use of the holy-water, and failed to make the required genuflection on leaving the sacred building. When I questioned him he answered, “I am a man”—he was about twelve—“we leave these things to women.”

In about an hour my husband returned to join me.

“What sport?” I asked.

“Very poor!” He showed me one good-sized trout and a few small ones. “The sun is too bright for fishing; besides, the river must have been badly poached.”

The *chico* confirmed his opinion. He showed us a



LOS PEARES, SHOWING THE RAILWAY BRIDGE ACROSS THE MIÑO.



A RURAL SCENE.

plant resembling our wild hemlock, with yellow leaves and flowers. A few handfuls of this poisonous herb, bruised and thrown into the water, will bring all the trout to the top, gasping for breath. The effect upon the fish is the same as that of lime. Pepillo wished to make a trial with the plant in a deep pool, and could not understand why we refused. It is difficult to make any Spaniard appreciate sport. Fish is food to them, and the method of its capture an insignificant detail. The wholesale destruction of fish-life is largely the result of the quality that is so marked in their character—the present counts for them as so much larger in importance than the future. This, which is the reason of their delightful happiness, carries with it, as do all good things, certain penalties. The Spaniard, in the very best sense of the word, is a child.

Luck was against our fishing during our stay at Los Peares. The weather was unchangingly, dazzlingly bright. Yet what glorious days we passed! I have seen no grander scenery than the lovely, rugged gorge of the Sil, which continues for many leagues beyond Los Peares. And if, as I believe, places, like people, have visible characters—yes, souls of their own—the river-soul of the Sil is one of almost startling power. No wild place ever exercised the same attraction over me—an attraction that was half terror, half fascination, like that of some people whom you do not know whether you love or hate. I never quite lost my first dread of this river, cruel in its might, fierce and remorseless in its wild flow. To my fancy it had something of the character of cruelty, a character which, left naked, is more often a strong than a pretty thing. I learnt of many victims its waters had claimed. There was one story which haunted me. A peasant girl, attending a *fiesta*, broke faith with her lover, and promised to walk home with another man.

The way led above the river. There was some mistake, and the two men met the girl at the same place. Love in Spain is no play ; it is a terrible thing, often a matter of life and death. Few words were said, but afterwards the girl's body was found in the river. Yes, those black deeps of the Sil were often horrible for me to look upon as they swirled and eddied between the crags and banks of scree ; and yet their beauty was impelling.

Some of the pools are forty feet deep. Very little of the water can be waded. Spinning from the rocks, with natural bait, is the most successful mode of fishing. Our friend, Don Carlos, whose skill in spinning from the Nottingham reel and knowledge of the river ensured him excellent sport, told us that he often caught three or four trout in a day, occasionally weighing together about twenty pounds. He has caught fish in the Sil weighing up to ten pounds, and he has seen a trout weighing as much as thirty pounds. This fish was killed by a peasant with a pitch-fork in the shallow water of a tributary. There is no doubt that these pools of the Sil contain trout as large as any in Europe. The few local anglers, who have learnt to work a spinning *boga*, occasionally catch very large fish. Shad ascend the Sil in large numbers, to spawn in the higher reaches of the river. They are netted in some of the pools, and are even taken in the local long-handled nets. We were told that a few salmon come up as high as this reach at Los Peares ; but the over-netting in the estuary, and, in fact, all the way along the Miño and Sil has ruined the salmon fishing for anglers.

The most delightful day we spent at Los Peares was the one on which we attended a *fiesta* that was celebrated in the small church attached to the old monastery of San Esteban. This district is rich in monasteries ; situated within a circle of about twenty miles from the town of

Orense are the historic monastery of Osera, that of Celanova, with its famed Ermita San Miguel, and now used as a branch of the Orense Grammar School for boys, that of San Esteban de Rivas de Sil, and the church and ancient monastery of San Pedro de Rocas. I wished that opportunity had made it possible for us to visit these places, especially I desired to see San Pedro de Rocas, with its old church chiselled out of the rock. It is one of the oldest monuments of Christian art in Galicia. We were told that the journey was too long and too difficult to be accomplished from Los Peares. I was glad that the *fiesta* afforded us the chance of visiting San Esteban.

We started at an early hour, on a morning gloriously fine. For an hour we climbed up by a woodland path, with trees, undergrowth and grasses high on either side of the way, and with here and there between them a cascade, which we crossed by means of granite slabs and moss-covered rocks. The sun had not yet risen, and when the fiery globe appeared on the horizon, all the hill-tops were covered with rosy tints, so that the grey rocks took an appearance of great shells with delicate linings of pink. Up and up we climbed, the way becoming steeper as we swung out on to a white sinuous path that clung to the edge of a profound valley. The sun was now up in an azure sky, but the mountain air blew freshly, and a sense of coolness was imparted by the streams, which still, at intervals, gushed from between the rocks. A wayside cross met our view. We learnt that it was one left of many, which had been placed once by the monks along the way to cheer the hearts of pious climbers. The mountain of San Esteban was a sacred spot in the early Middle Ages, and the paths that wind around it towards the summit reveal here and there a neglected oratory, or cave which was once inhabited by a pious hermit. Those who are sensitive to places will

find a special atmosphere about these haunts which time cannot destroy. It is easy to believe that the men who left the world to seek this serene and exquisite home were not, indeed, moved, as is ignorantly thought by some, alone with the saving of their souls or the expiation of sin, but were artists, poets, and lovers of nature—of pure water, of birds and trees, and flowers. I understood how it was that San Esteban had at one time within its precincts a thriving school of art, where many men were trained as painters and sculptors.

On a ledge of rock, beside a spring with water as clear as a diamond, we stopped to rest and eat. We noticed a viper glide to cover at our approach into the long emerald grass that edged the spring. The *chico* who accompanied us, with remarkable dexterity, improvised a fire with a handful of brushwood and dried sticks, and prepared some chocolate, which, with slices of Gallegan ham, hard-boiled eggs, and bread, made a delicious breakfast. The view from this point was very fine. Below and around us the rocks formed fantastic shapes, as if a race of giants had built some city and then in sport abandoned it. Across the ravine opposite to us were two great pinnacled boulders that had exactly the appearance of cathedral towers. In the valley we could still see the Sill, like a blue ribbon winding between the rocks. Then above us was the white ruin of San Esteban, which, with the blue of the sky showing through its many windows, and from that distance, looked like a great enamelled jewel, set in grey stone, and fringed with the green of trees.

We waited, resting, impressed with the absolute peace of this shrine, that seemed so far from life, so inaccessible.

“Will there be many people attending the *fiesta*?”
I asked the *chico*.

“Look!” he cried.

Down the path by which we had come, and by other tracks winding among the hills, I noticed dark groups, which I had taken to be rocks, but which I now saw were moving; they were people all converging upon San Esteban. I had not thought that the district contained so many inhabitants. It was not, however, until we reached the cultivated land which lies around the monastery that the full extent of the pilgrimage became apparent. A striking and delightful spectacle it afforded. From every direction, on paths which led under arches of the vines, people were advancing in long lines; some walked, some rode on mules and asses; many women were riding *a ancas* (pillion-fashion). On one of the roads there was a stone cross, showing on one side a carving of the Virgin and wounded Christ, and on the other a crucifix; all who passed by waited to cross themselves and make the required genuflection. We noticed that one or two of the skilful riders even made their mules bend in submission before the Mother and Son.

Through a grand old stone gateway we entered a square, formed on one side by the ruined monastery and on the other by the church. Here were more people; inside the open monastery walls, in the beautiful cloisters, and along all the pathways people stood or sat upon the grass-covered stones. Around the stone cross in the centre of the patio groups of children were playing gravely. There were more women than men; all were dressed in a patchwork of vivid colours. They were clean and sturdy, and face after face made appeal to us for its beauty; now it was a Murillo Madonna that we saw, now a laughing face that reminded us of Goya's peasants.

As the day went on more people arrived. They began to form into long lines, waiting two and two to

enter the church and kiss the relics. They waited with perfect patience, each couple for their turn to come; there was talking and laughter, yet the very visible excitement was a perfectly contained emotion. These peasants had come from all the villages and hamlets in the district, most of them walking many miles, because it was their duty. All of them were good-humoured and contented; they accepted the discomfort of the heat and the long waiting as they accepted poverty and work. Contentment in them was strength, but it had in it also something lamentable.

The afternoon was occupied with a religious ceremony in the church. We waited in the cloister, but once I went to a side-door and looked in. The nave was filled with kneeling women and children, the men were standing in a group near to the altar. The fine building lent itself perfectly to the scene. Mass appeared to be over, and some kind of litany was being sung. From time to time the voices broke out into the refrain:

O mi, O mi amada
Immaculada.

Every time that I thought the chant was drawing to an end the chorus burst forth again with an indescribable effect. As I listened, watching the absorbed attitudes of devotion, in particular among the women, I realised something of how truly the Catholic Church has known how to minister to the needs of the people.

And the evening, which was given up to dancing, to song, and to music, when these same people were all united in good fellowship and unflagging rejoicing, seemed but another aspect of that perfect understanding of the needs of humanity, which makes religion in Spain so different a thing from what it is in Protestant countries.

CHAPTER XV

THE WILD SIL AND THE HAMLET OF MATEROSA

we leave Los Peares—Impressions of Monforte—Arrival at Ponferrada—Magnificent situation of the town—A good place for anglers—Gallegan harvesters—Our friends at the *posada*—A visit to a club—We plan an excursion to Materosa—Angel Gancedo—A journey in a native diligence—Life at Materosa—Native fishermen—The end of our holiday.

WE left Los Peares some few days later, with many regrets. My husband wished to fish the upper waters of the Sil, and we heard that Ponferrada, the first town from Galicia in the kingdom of Leon, would be a good centre as in this place there is a fishing association of local anglers ; for myself, my desire was to see new places and to gain fresh adventures.

The journey was long, though the distance traversed was less than 150 kilometres. We travelled in the second-class carriage of the *correo* train, and we found our companions less interesting than the third-class peasant passengers of our former journeys. There was, however, much to occupy us in the scenery which affords ever-changing and unsurpassed views of the wild Sil. The train penetrates the Garganta del Cabe by means of a score of tunnels and then enters the valley of Lemos until the town of Monforte is reached. Here we had to change trains and to wait for some hours, which gave me an opportunity of a hurried visit to the Jesuit College. I saw the finely carved reredos, the work of the Gallegan wood-carver, Francesco Moure, and a very beautiful St. Francis

by El Greco, which is, in my opinion, finer than the similar picture in the Museo del Prado at Madrid. I should like to have had more time to spend in this interesting college.

Monforte, if I may give impressions that were gathered during a rapid walk through the town, has an aspect different from any other town in Galicia; it is more like the cities of Castile. The streets are wide and lined with poplars—trees that are not common in Galicia—and the houses are not of granite, but are clay-built. In the centre of the town the Torrón rises upon the hill; it is all that is left of the mediæval castle of the lords of Lemos. We had no opportunity of conversation with the inhabitants of Monforte, but, from the appearance of the people, in the streets and at the café to which we went for refreshments, we gathered the impression that the town has a very active life. We noticed that in the restaurant the men who came in for lunch ate their meal more rapidly than is usual in Spain, and then went out again, as men do in a city. I recall, too, the faces of the workers whom we saw—I should think that these men were republicans and socialists.

Of our journey from Monforte to Ponferrada I remember nothing; it is probable that I was asleep, as we reached the town at two in the morning. The *fonda* omnibus was outside the station; with two or three passengers we entered the vehicle, which rattled and bumped us through the sleeping streets. At a kind of sentry-box the omnibus drew up, and a man in uniform holding a lantern peered into the coach.

“Turistas Ingléses,” my husband said to the officer. The man parleyed with the driver for some minutes, then there was a cracking of the whip and the scraggy horses started at a gallop up the street and over the bridge spanning the Sil. A steep serpentine road

brought us to the plaza and the *fonda*. The *señora* was up to receive guests; she led us to a room at the back of the house.

We stepped on to the balcony. Dawn was beginning, and the snowy crests of the mountains were touched with colours of wonderful delicacy—greens, and pinks, and pale gold. The full moon was still shining and sending its silver shafts upon the grand escarpment of rock, and daylight had not yet paled the brilliant stars. How well I see it still! Whatever may fade from my memory, ousted by the ever-growing competition of new experiences, that view will never go. It was a long time before fatigue drove us to sleep.

Ponferrada is situated on a lofty plateau, and is encircled by the impressive chain of the Montanus de Leon, a spur of the Cantabrian range; the town commands, besides, a splendid view of the Sil, which issues from a gorge at the distance of about a mile, and flows through the town. Every day during our stay in Ponferrada I found a new aspect in these mountains, whose delicate blue colours—they are as blue as the mountains in the background of pictures by Velazquez—were always changing according to the weather and the hour. But, apart from its situation Ponferrada has little to offer to the sight-seeker. It has the usual features of an old Spanish town: the streets are narrow, and many are arcaded, and above the town rises the ruins of a twelfth-century castle of the Knights Templars. The Gothic church of Santa Maria de la Encina contains a carved figure of the Magdalen, by Gregorio Hernandez, which I was glad to see as I did not at this time know the work of the great Gallegan sculptor. I am always impressed by the splendid life of the Spanish carved figures; to me they convey something which I miss in other sculptured works. The striking attitudes have such truth

and the details are all so minutely given. I find, too, such novelty in the treatment of old and so often-depicted subjects. There is something of the child's simplicity in the direct rendering of the sacred themes; so that I experience the delight which one always finds in a new work of art. It is a pity that these characteristic works of the Spanish carvers are so little known outside of Spain.

Ponferrada offers many attractions to the angler. The local association of fishermen use only the rod and make every effort to suppress poaching. It is even possible to buy artificial flies in the town, which are tied by a professional fisherman and tackle-maker, Señor Gancedo. In suitable weather and the right season there can be little doubt that the Sil, in this part of its course, would be a good river for anglers. Even in June—too late in the year for fishing in Galicia—and under an ardent sun, causing a glitter on the water so intense that it was difficult to cast without putting the fish down, we enjoyed fair sport.

One day we went to Toral de los Vados (The chief of the Fords), a village on the right bank of the Sil, where it is joined by a tributary, a few miles below Ponferrada. The truth is not interesting, and in this place, with so delightful a name for the angler, we caught nothing but a few troutlet. The heat was so intense that most of the hours were spent in the shade of a grove beside the river. We were obliged to leave at about four o'clock, before the evening rise, to catch the train back to Ponferrada. The journey was memorable. We travelled with a company of harvesters, who were returning to their homes after a period of work in the harvest-fields of Leon—hundreds of Gallegos in the picturesque native costume. Every seat, every passage, and every window in the train was crowded. What astonished us in this tightly packed crowd, where every

THE
MOUNTAIN
COUNTRY



RIVERS WHERE TROUT ABOUND : THE LEREZ.



RIVERS WHERE TROUT ABOUND : THE TEA.

man was talking, some singing in the strange, loud, drawn-out voices that go so well with the Gallegan music, that not a single one of them appeared to be anything but good-humoured. These men were fine to look at; they had such colour in their ruddy faces, and in the infinite variety of their shirts, blue trousers, and sashes. I felt that if we could really know them they would be charming people, and, in spite of the terrible atmosphere on that burning afternoon, I was glad of this chance of seeing them as they are among themselves. Yet, I must confess, I was not sorry that the journey was a very short one.

We found kind friends at the *posada*. The registrar of the town, an educated man, with a refined face and pleasant manners, showed us great politeness. We also made friends with the *alcalde* of a *pueblo* among the mountains, about twenty-five miles from Ponferrada. He told us that if we would go up into his country we should "catch trout enough." The Sil was full of trout, and the natives lived by catching the fish which they sold in the towns.

"Do they use nets?" my husband asked.

"Not much," the *alcalde* answered. "They have *cañas* (rods) like yours."

This was the suggestion which brought us to the hamlet of Materosa. Lured by this promise, my husband made inquiries. He returned discouraged. It was a wild district; we ought not to go unaccompanied by a guide. He was for abandoning the enterprise; probably we should find the account of the *alcalde* had been rose-coloured, the river was sure to be poached, and, in any case, fishing was almost useless in this burning weather. But I, a fanatic of experience, felt there was no turning back; I wanted to leave the commonplace of towns for that unknown, and now desired, hamlet.

Our friend the registrar came to our assistance. He returned to the *posada* that evening, saying : “ *Señor*, I have to-day seen a young man who speaks English, and knows much about fishing. His name is Angel Gancedo, the son of Gancedo, the fisherman ; he is a waiter at the *casino* of which I am a member. I have spoken with him. He will accompany you to Materosa. He is thoroughly acquainted with the mountains, a good fisherman, and possesses every qualification to act as your guide.”

These delightful Spanish people were as eager as we were about our journey. That evening, after dinner, the registrar, the *alcalde*, and another *señor* escorted us to the club. We were introduced to Angel Gancedo, and his intelligent and bright face at once prepossessed us in his favour. He wore a black velvet jacket, white tucked shirt, a red woollen sash and gaiters, and had no appearance of a waiter.

“ You speak English ? ” my husband asked him.

“ Oh yes,” he replied. “ I was servant to an English family at Ribadavia. The *señora* taught me, and I have travelled with an English merchant, who came to our mountains to get the roots of the naracissus.” He mentioned a name well known in Covent Garden.

“ You are also a fisherman ? ”

“ I have fished all my life, and my father before me, *señor* ; there is much fish at Materosa.”

Our Spanish friends listened to the English tongue with smiling interest. We noticed that they tried to catch at the words, repeating one or another of them over to themselves. The Spaniards are always so eager to learn.

“ Is it good English that Angel speaks ? ” asked one of the *señores*.

“ Very good,” my husband answered.

Angel rose at once to a position of importance. Ten years ago there were few people, even in towns much larger than Ponferrada, who had an acquaintance with the English tongue.

Before we left the *casino* all arrangements were made. On the next day we were to travel in the diligence for Materosa with Angel Gancedo. Our last injunction to him was to be punctual.

“*Señor*, a Spaniard is never late for any enterprise,” was the answer he gave.

And on the next morning Angel arrived at the *posada* at about nine, although the diligence was not timed to leave until one o'clock. He brought no luggage except his rod—an immense bamboo about twenty feet long, with a hazel switch at the top—and a small tin box which he showed us with pride. It contained live stoneflies that he declared to be an infallible bait. Angel was now our servant, and we realised at once how different that position is regarded in democratic Spain from what it is in England. Having the morning to pass, he invited us to visit his home in the town. The little house had been purchased with the proceeds of transactions in the way of exports of flowers to Covent Garden. We were introduced to his wife and child, and I spent a charming hour in talk with the *señora*. When we left, Angel proposed that we should drink a glass of white wine. We entered a wine *tienda*, sat down, and my husband and Angel exchanged cigarettes. The *señora* of the *tienda* questioned Angel about us. Who were we? English or French? We were fishing for pleasure! *Caramba!* How strange! Well, no doubt the English are a curious people!

At noon we returned to the *posada* for *almuzo*, a meal that is marked in my memory because on this occasion I ate frogs'-legs. Let me make a confession—I enjoyed

them exceedingly, but I had no idea what they were ; as soon as I knew I could not touch them, so absurd is the tyranny that imagination will exercise.

The diligence was supposed to leave at one o'clock ; it was about two before we started. This conveyance, whose name was, I believe, *El Corco Real*, had a curious appearance. Just picture something resembling a carrier's-cart, an antediluvian bus, and a gipsy caravan, and drawn by a mixed team of gaunt, shaved mules and bony horses—eight in number, each with jangling bells around his neck. The *cochero*, who drove this respectable conveyance, was dressed in the most picturesque costume, of which unfortunately the only article I can recall in detail was a maroon coat with an ornamented collar of red and blue. Angel, the *alcalde*, and two other passengers occupied the interior ; my husband and I sat by the *cochero*. When all the preparations were completed, we set off with a whirlwind of cries and shouts, accompanied by a due proportion of whipping. The stud broke into a lolloping canter along a straight, dusty road, and the coach swayed from side to side. There was something terrific in the speed at which these half-starved beasts travelled, probably it was fear which filled them with this fiend-like impetuosity : they were belaboured with showers of blows which must have been seen to be believed.

It is not my intention to comment on this cruelty in the treatment of animals that so often hurts one in Spain. It is a question almost always misunderstood by the English stranger. I shall only remark that this unnecessary and unmerciful beating is but one expression of that hardness of fibre which makes the Spaniards indifferent to pain—their own or another's. The excuse may seem a poor one to those who have no understanding of the Spanish character ; but no one who has lived in

Spain can lightly accuse this people of cruelty. Here no child is ever treated badly. Almost alone in Europe stands Spain, the country of things as they are. The Spaniard weaves no glamour about facts, apologises for nothing, extenuates nothing. He accepts. *Lo que de ser no puede faltar!* If you need an explanation, here it is. The reason brought forward by many English writers, that Spain, being a Roman Catholic country, animals are regarded as not Christians and having no souls, I do not believe has anything to do with it. The reason lies deeper. You cannot have qualities without their defects. The splendid endurance of the Spaniards and their little care of personal comfort is the other side of their misunderstood cruelty. It is the poet and the ascetic who, in some directions, are always cruel.

Whack! whack! whack! We could not bear it, and my husband remonstrated with the man.

“Oh, please don't beat them,” I begged. “We are going quite fast enough.” The *cochero* looked quite astonished; a frown crossed his face.

□ We feared a quarrel; but the man put down his whip and laughed good-humouredly. I am sure he pitied our foolishness. However, we had gained some respite for the beasts; for the rest of the stage he used the lash less freely, and never the handle of the whip. We reached the half-way house, and the horses and mules were led away to the stable. The roadside *venta* stood at the foot of a pass which reminded us of Llanberis; the mountains are near to one another, and great rocks as steep as cliffs rise up by the road-side. It was a lonely hovel; one bare room, with earth for the floor. Angel told us that robbers had broken into the house one night, bound the proprietor to a chair, and stripped him of his belongings. In truth it was the kind of den where one might expect to meet with adventures.

The fresh team of mules were better fed, more fiery, and more wild, and started at a gallop up the steep ascent. A new *cochero* held the reins, and cracked his long whip over the ears of the leaders. He was younger than his predecessor, and seemed anxious to impress us with his skill in driving. He stamped his feet, shouted, raved, swore, and brandished his whip; never in my whole life did I hear so horrible a disturbance, and he behaved in this fashion, at intervals, during the whole journey. The team broke into a canter along one of the few level stretches of the road. Grey-blue mountains bounded the valley; and, as we advanced, the stones with which these slopes were strewn became larger, forming a thousand strange shapes upon the outline of the hills. The country was sterile and desolate, and the grass parched to a dull brown. Thick dust lay upon the highway, and trailed a dense cloud like smoke behind the rumbling diligence. The district is sparsely populated. We passed only one village: a primitive place on the rocky bank of the Sil, with squat mud-built houses, picturesque peasants, and an aspect of great poverty. We stayed here for a few minutes, and I took advantage of the halt to enter one of these huts. It was without windows and gained its light from the open door. It had a fireplace of unhewn stones at the side, with a hole in the roof for the smoke to escape. The walls were of the red-brown colour that you see in the pictures of the Spanish painters. There were two women in the room: one was cooking, the other sat and sewed; both had powerful frames and strong, intelligent faces. The time was too short for me to talk to them.

Between this village and Materosa the character of the landscape changes. We soon entered a lovely vale, with wooded slopes below rocky peaks, and the river foaming deep down in its rugged channel.

"Materosa," shouted the *cochero*, pulling up with an admirably stage-arranged flourish—at the door of a small stone-built *venta*. Really the Spanish drivers are artists!

We all alighted. I think that never before have I felt such stiffness, and so bruised a feeling in my joints. The *alcalde*, before continuing his journey, introduced us to the host and hostess of this very humble tavern. Señor Perez, in a blue blouse and *boina*, worsted stockings, and yellow *alpargatas* (hempen shoes), was a big, swarthy man with a humorous face that recalled one's picture of Sancho Panza. His wife was the characteristic type of the Spanish woman—*jamona*, or stout in body, but of surprising agility, and almost as tall as her husband. She carried a baby bound to her body with a shawl, and wore a green skirt of many pleats, a bright bodice, and a pink handkerchief upon her head. Señor Perez led us to his wine-shed, where we quenched our thirst with white wine from a huge cask. Angel made arrangements for us to pay four *pesetas* each by the day for board. He had suffered some misgivings as to our reception at this hamlet, which had never before been visited by English foreigners. He was now reassured, and his sensitive face reminded me of a happy child, as he called us aside to tell us, "It is all right: these are good people." He added: "I have talked with a fisherman; he says we shall catch trout to-night. There are still two hours of daylight. *Señor*, are you ready?"

He was holding his rod in one hand, and in the other was his treasured tin box of bait. He opened it. "*Diablo*, they are dead!" His grief was very comical; certainly Angel Ganceda was a delightful child. To my inquiries about food—the hunger of the lost was upon me—I found that so unimportant a detail, in comparison with the prospect of fishing, had escaped his

attention. I began to recall with regret my uneaten frogs' legs at Ponferrada.

I left Angel with my husband, who, I knew, desired an instant trial of the river, and went to interview the *señora*. I found her killing a fowl, which was hopeful; but former experience of Spanish inns made me know that dinner would be in the future. However, one learns patience in Spain, and there was much to occupy my attention. The *venta* was the most primitive we had yet seen. It was a long, low building, resembling a barn, but with a small dilapidated balcony of wood at the upper storey; on this gay coloured clothes were hanging. The chief part of the lower storey was used as a stable, where the mules, cows, and pigs had their home. It was not at all clean. A wooden partition separated the living-room from this stable. It was a narrow room, with an earth floor. There were no windows; only wooden hatches, which were closed so that light and air were both excluded. I opened one, and at once a gaunt hen flew into the room: it was searching for food. The furniture consisted of a table of rough wood, wine-stained to wonderful colour, and two wooden benches; there were no chairs. At the far end of the room was a small counter, where were placed a few big sausages, a tub of pickled trout, and great jars of wine. It was with fear that I went to inspect the bedroom. It was, however, clean, and, in comparison with the room downstairs, comfortable. I may say here that the dirt we had been led to expect in the village *ventas* we never found. The beds were placed in alcoves in the wall, like the beds one finds in a Welsh cottage. There were two, one large and one small; as both were prepared with fresh, snowy-white linen, I surmised that Angel was to share the room with myself and my husband. It is surprising how strongly one's prejudices cling. Here I

was, ready, as I had believed, to meet all discomfort, really upset by this simple detail. I sought the *señora*, who I found shouting orders to her daughter Felicia, a veritable giantess, who, though only fourteen years of age, was taller than her mother. With much difficulty—for these good people spoke a dialect quite different from the Castilian I knew—I explained that this arrangement was not agreeable to me. I can recall now her surprise when at length she understood me. Was not Angel our servant? Did we not want him to be near to serve us? However, her only wish was to please the strangers who had come from a foreign land to stay at her *posada*, and Angel's bed was removed to a dark closet beneath the stairs.

I sat down in the living-room to await the dinner. How long that fowl took to cook! I had not yet acquired the abstemiousness that seems natural to the Spaniards; on the contrary, I had kept what, in this country, seemed an unnatural English appetite. In order to distract my attention, I went out to survey the landscape. Evening was falling, and a grand sunset effect was visible upon the mountains, whose rocks showed every colour, from orange to palest pinks and greens, with deep purple and brown in the shadow. The nearer fir-trees burned on their tops to bright emerald, and even the brown cluster of mud huts by the road-side were caught into gold. I walked to the deep pool of the Sil, which was just opposite the *venta*, and stood upon the wooden bridge that spans the water. For a time I forgot that I was hungry; forgot everything except the beauty that I saw.

When at length I returned to the road, I found about twenty peasants—women, men, and children had collected to watch me. I spoke to them, but they did not understand me. Yet they smiled and laughed; I

was the first English-woman they had seen. I wondered if they were as interested in me as I was in them. I noticed especially a small *chico* in a sheep-skin coat, with a great bamboo rod. Was he too a fisherman?

Before I reached the *venta* my husband and Angel joined me. He was radiant. "The river is full of trout," he told me, and he showed me his catch. Angel was sad, he had caught nothing; it was due to the death of his stone-flies. I may say here that Angel's faith in his bait was marvellous; it was the true faith that nothing shakes. He would use no other bait, though, certainly, judging by results, the Sil trout had no fancy for the stone-fly. Angel spent more time in collecting his bait than he did in fishing. Had he stone-flies he was happy; without them he was miserable. He was a delightful child-man.

"Is dinner ready?" my husband asked. "I am ravenously hungry."

"I don't know—a fowl has been killed!"

He laughed. "That means waiting. Well, we had better smoke." It was the hunger that we so often suffered during this holiday that first drove me to the habit of cigarette-smoking.

When we had just about given up hoping for dinner, it came. It was the usual Spanish meal; soup, which I believe, is called *gaspado*, consisting of water flavoured by garlic and *pimiento*, with pieces of bread floating in it; eggs fried in oil, *garbanzos*, which, if not very nice, are certainly nourishing, and a comfortable *puchero* in which the fowl, though tough, was at least fowl, and the flavour of garlic and oil was not too strong to make it uneatable. To these dishes were added sour goat's-milk cheese, hard bread, and wine, which, though thick and dark in colour, causing us to suspect the presence of log-wood, tasted good; and I must not forget the

pickled trout, which were delicious in spite of the garlic flavour. The dishes were placed upon the table without any cloth, in the iron or stone vessels in which they were cooked, and each guest took his portion by sticking his fork or spoon into the food. I was glad that, as the only woman present, it was my privilege to help myself first.

Our companions at this dinner were the *señor* of the house, two peasant way-farers, of whom one, judging by his dress, was a shepherd, and a company of muleteers who were travelling to the mountains, and would spend the night with their animals in the stable. They were rough-looking men, but all of them picturesque, and none of them uncivil. I was sorry that our Spanish was unequal to talking to them, beyond the exchange of the charming courtesies that are never forgotten at a Spanish meal; nor were we able to understand the dialect in which they talked to one another. What a fund of information we might have gained! but even the townsman Angel was baffled and unable to interpret for us.

During the meal a peasant entered, a tall man, with a withered face, to which grey locks clung as fungus clings to a dead tree. I liked his face. I think it was the simplicity of his eyes—for simplicity is the one thing in the world that remains impressive.

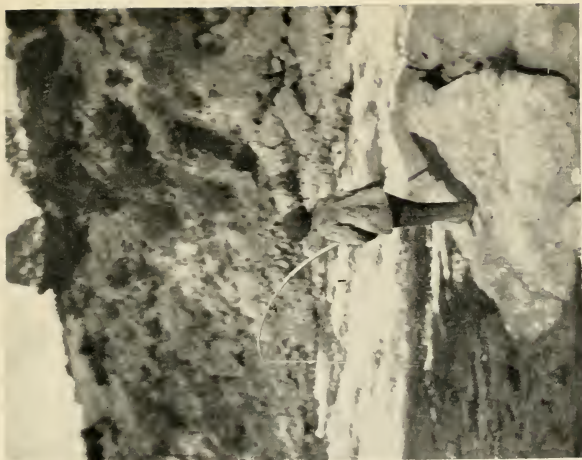
“Good appetite attend you, *Señores*,” he said as he came through the open doorway.

He sat down beside us, and began to question Angel. The old peasant was the chief of the local fishermen, and a maker of flies. After dinner, he showed us his big hackles, with bodies of string on great hooks. He looked at our flies. *Santa Maria!* they were pretty enough. But how could we catch big trout with those little hooks? And our rods, they were too short, too slender—were toys fit only for children. But, then, did we not fish for pleasure? He had heard that the English were strange

people. He jerked his great hand towards the door, where his twenty feet of bamboo rested against the balcony. That was the kind of *caña* for the trout of the Sil.

Other fishermen came in and joined our party. They gave us information with charming intelligence and courtesy, but our fishing-tackle caused amusement to them all. We experienced the sensation of children who find their prized toys despised by other older children. They told us the best reaches of the river. We found that these native fishermen leave the pools alone, except when coloured with flood water, and fish only in the broken streams. They spoke of large catches of trout—of pounders, and heavier fish.

Later there was music and dancing. The benches were taken outside and we sat and smoked. They had never before seen a woman smoke; but there was no hint of rudeness, only interest, as they watched me. They were delighted when I accepted one of their cigarettes and was able to smoke it. Felicia was the best dancer and singer. She was fair, with a skin of gold-brown, blue eyes, and delicately cut features, forming a striking contrast to her stalwart figure; admirably dressed in peasant clothes, a wealth of colour from her head-kerchief to her green stockings. She was taller than the shepherd-lad who was her partner; yet with what grace she leapt and bounded as the climax of the dance approached! and her steps, though always well-ordered and in time to the music, were so fast that we failed to follow their movements. There was something intoxicating in the strength of this young giantess, who, as soon as she had finished dancing, began to sing. Angel told us that she improvised the words, and that they were sung in honour of us. The chorus was taken up by the men; and in no words can I describe the effect of the music, in that setting, and in the silent night.



ESTANISLAO, THE NATIVE FISHER-BOY, MATEROSA.



FELICIA PEREZ, MATEROSA.

It was late when we went to bed ; feeling happy and perfectly secure among these peasants, to whom politeness and sympathy are the only requirements to secure the stranger their friendship—and their protection, if required.

“ Another burning, cloudless day ! ” my husband said, as we stepped on to the balcony next morning. It was half-past seven and already the sun was high over the mountains. It was a bad day for fishing. But, after taking our chocolate, we started out, following a path on the right bank of the river. On the bridge which crosses the Sil we encountered two Civil Guards, their rifles under their arms, who had been scouring the mountains during the night. Were they in search of brigands or of contrabandistas ? They evidently knew all about us—strangers in these mountains were rare. They saluted us as we passed.

“ *Buenas dias, señor* ; we hope you and the *señora* are well rested.”

“ Yes, many thanks,” my husband answered. “ It is very hot ! ”

“ *Si, señor* ! God be with you.” And the men passed along the road, the sun gleaming on their black, three-cornered hats and the barrels of their rifles.

We began to fish. I hooked a trout just off a wild rush of water. Two peasants watched me as I netted it.

“ Bravo, bravo, *señora* ! ” exclaimed one, a handsome young man of the not uncommon fair type.

They both applauded me with their hands, and raised their hats, making me a most graceful bow. It was charming ; I have never before been so glad at the catching of a trout.

Meanwhile my husband had caught several small trout, and one of three quarters of a pound, while a good fish had broken the gut of a dropper-fly. The

fish were rising well, but the sun's glare upon the clear water was so powerful that it was very difficult to cast without putting them down. The heat was terrible, and, after my husband had taken three or four more trout, we decided to return to the *venta* and take a *siesta* until later in the day, when the sun would be hidden by the higher peaks of the mountains. When we entered the living-room, a company of peasants were eating their midday meal. Felicia had come in from the fields, where she tended the goats and cows; beside her was her shepherd's staff. She was eating a yard of bread and a great lump of uncooked bacon fat, which she cut in hunks with a clasp-knife. We watched her eat with fascination. We could scarcely touch our soup and stewed fowl: it was too hot. It is at such moments that one realises the superiority of the peasant. A team of mules pulled up at the door and the *cochero* entered.

"*Buenas dias, señores*; a good appetite attend you." We were impressed by the good manners of these peasants, who seemed never to forget the courtesies, which make living in the country districts of Spain so gracious an experience. Señor Perez fished up a couple of trout from the pickle-tub, cut off a hunk of bread, and poured out a glass of red wine for the hungry muleteer. The newcomer asked who we were, and what had brought us to Materosa. When the information was given to him by Angel, he made the remark to which we had become accustomed. "Fishermen for pleasure! *Caramba*, how queer!" Then, as we left the room, I caught something about "los Ingleses," which I would have liked to hear, but Angel would not translate to me what was said.

It was cloudy towards the late afternoon; rain was actually threatening; but the air was like a hot

blast as it swept down the valley, and whirled the dust on the road. My husband tried the minnow and caught several good trout and pricked many more. I felt no inclination to fish. I sat down to watch Estanislao, the *chico* in the sheep-skin coat, who had accompanied us to the river. He was the grandson of the old fisherman with whom we had talked on the previous evening, and belonged to a family of fishermen. He attended, or had attended, I am not certain which, a school in a neighbouring *pueblo*, and I was able to understand and to talk to him; but on this afternoon he wished to fish. The *chico* was a good angler. Standing on a boulder, with his immense bamboo, which he looked too small to handle, he cast with a loud swishing noise across the stream, letting his half-dozen flies swim on the rough water. At each cast I thought the weight of his rod would throw him into the whirling current. But he caught more fish than we did. As I saw him pulling them out, I was not astonished; I was stunned. I asked him to allow me to take his photograph, which I did as he stood casting over the pool near to the bridge.

Afterwards I offered him a present of two or three orange duns, telling him it was with one of these flies I had caught a good trout that morning. Like his grandfather, he looked at my flies and smiled.

“*Muchas gracias!* they are very pretty. But how can I catch trout with these little hooks?”

He laughed till the tears ran down his face; but, in a minute, he remembered the good manners in which every Spanish child is trained. He added:

“*Mil gracias, señora! Es favor que usted me hace* [A thousand thanks, *señora*. It is a favour you make me]. *I will keep them as toys.*”

It was somewhat humiliating; and the experience

was repeated many times during the days that we stayed at Materosa. Here, for the first time in Spain, we had to confess ourselves beaten by the native anglers. They brought back fine baskets of fish almost every night, ranging from half-pounders to pounders, and sometimes heavier fish. It was seldom that the old fisherman and his son returned with less than seven pounds of trout on the brightest days, and their catch was much larger in more favourable weather. It is true that they had the good sense to begin fishing at about three in the morning, when we were soundly asleep. They also had the advantage of knowing all the best runs up and down the rivers for several miles; but my husband came to the conclusion, after a personal trial, that their great flies were the right pattern for the trout of this productive river. After the rain came there was a tinge of colour in the Sil, and, on a second trial of the minnow, my husband had many runs, and took trout up to a pound apiece. As the water was fining, we had some good sport with the fly; but, just as the river was in good condition, and we were beginning to know where best to fish, we had to go, for the time of our holiday was almost over.

We left Materosa with many regrets, yet it was pleasant to know we had gained the good-will of the people. A group of peasants assembled to bid us "adios" when the diligence drew up at the door. All our friends were there—the old fisherman and his son, Antonio, the shepherd lad, the *señora* and her children. Felicia and Estanislao were delighted with a present of a few *centimos*. My husband asked Señor Perez to show hospitality to any Englishman who might come to Materosa to fish. He promised to do so; but he shook his head. "I do not think any English again will come." He called us back to drink a last glass of wine.

“Adios, adios!” We waved our hands to the smiling group. Our *cochero* began to rave at his team and to thump the foot-board with his feet. We started down the noble valley of the Sil back to Ponferrada, to what now seemed to us the gilded luxury of town-life.

“They are good people,” Angel said to me. I noticed that his sensitive face was sad.

Do you know the regret that seizes one when a holiday is closing that has brought one new and delightful experiences? And so often one is haunted with a sense of opportunities that have been lost; one has failed in so much that might have been seen and learnt. I wished that we had learnt to know these peasants better; I shall never cease to regret the bar of language which prevented free conversation with them. And yet how much there is that one can learn of men and women without speech! sympathy may carry one further than words. The main impression we had gathered from our holiday was the independence and manhood of these peasants, both the men and the women. We found among them, both here at Materosa, at Los Peares, and elsewhere, a splendid honesty—what the Romans called *virtus*. During months of travel in the wilder districts of all parts of the country never once was an extra *peseta*, upon any pretext, added to the stipulated charge at the *fondas*, *ventas*, or *casa de buespedes*. Be assured you will never be cheated in rural Spain. Yes, they are good people! What I felt then, and have felt since, is that here, in these unspoilt workers, is the material for the rebuilding of Spain’s greatness. The ripe seed is there, ready to spring into life as soon as the soil of Spain has been cleared of her weeds. And signs are not wanting that the harvest will not long be delayed.

CHAPTER XVI

THE PEOPLE OF GALICIA TO-DAY

The Gallegan character—The absurd opinion of Gallegan stupidity—Education—Vigo's School of Arts and Industries—Some facts of progress—A comparison between the Gallegan and the Spanish character—Their Celtic inheritance—"The inimitable Gallegans"—Famous Gallegans of the past and of the present—The effects of the late war—The real spirit of the Gallegans—The spiritual instinct of the race.

THE character of the Gallegans, as I gradually learnt to know it—both from my last visit, spent chiefly in the towns, where my intercourse was with writers, artists, and the men and women whom we should call "the upper class," and also from my earlier visit, ten years before, when I lived among the peasants, sharing their common life—has seemed to me a very positive character. And this character, though at first seemingly full of contradictions, is, I believe, one of almost curious uniformity, strongly individual, and not easy to comprehend.

Perhaps this accounts for the wide-spread and absurd opinion that the Gallegans are a stupid people, dull of wit, stubborn, and known, like the Auvergnats in France, all over Spain as labourers and servants. It is hard to say exactly what is the profit of comparing one people with another; there is an element of stupidity in most current estimates of national qualities. But I know of none except this one that is not founded on some truth, however coloured and distorted. One would, indeed,

be inclined to suspect a joke, as for instance, when I find in an old book on the Spanish people the suggestion that "sweeping chimneys and cleaning shoes are the occupations suited to the Gallegans." But even so intelligent a writer as Lope de Vega repeats the error; in fact this lie is a classic, and, like most lies that are shouted aloud, it has come to be believed.

On what, then, is the opinion founded? I have been unable to discover. Angiar, in his *Historia de Galicia*, while indignantly refuting the opinion common in Spain as to the Gallegan character, relates the following story, which he says was current everywhere in 1836, as an instance of Galician stupidity.

A sick man was pronounced to be dead by his doctor, and accordingly was placed in an open coffin, and was then carried by his comrades to the grave.

On the journey the supposed corpse moved, and afterwards, to the astonishment of the bearers, sat up.

"Where are you taking me?" the man cried.

"To the cemetery," answered his friends.

"But I am not dead!"

"You must be dead; the doctor pronounced that you were dead." And the procession went on to the grave.

Now a story told to us ten years ago at Los Peares, may be worth relating as an instance of Gallegan wit—against this one of Gallegan dullness.

A man died, and the corpse was carried for burial along the mountain-path that follows the rocky valley of the Sil. One of the bearers slipped, with the result that the coffin tumbled into the wild water of the river. For a moment there was consternation, then the officiating priest cried in a loud voice, "Forward with the candles; the Devil has claimed the defunct." And the procession continued its journey to the cemetery.

But I am treating a serious subject in too light a way. Listen, then, to these facts. Galicia has the best educated working class in Spain. At a recent levy for the Spanish Army it was found that 90 per cent. of the Gallegans could read and write, that 5 per cent. could read but not write, and only 5 per cent. could do neither. Compare these figures with Castile, where 50 per cent. were able to read and write, and 50 could do neither, or with Andalucia, where the percentage of those able to read and write sank to 10, leaving 90 per cent. unable to do either. Comment here is superfluous.

It is a common belief that in Spain education is everywhere defective. I confess I do not share in the worship for modern teaching which I find animates most thinking Englishmen. Men lived for long ages without reading anything, and that was the very time when they did the greatest and most useful things. Still the error of opinion in this country is so great with regard to Spanish schools, that it may be well to wait to examine briefly a Galician educational college.

At Vigo we visited the municipal School of Arts and Industries. I must own to astonishment and delight at what we saw; for the excellence of this school I was scarcely prepared. The school has 420 male students and 240 female students, a percentage from a town whose population is only 23,000, which proves how highly the school is esteemed. The students enter the college as soon as they leave the elementary schools, and the age ranges from twelve years upwards. To the working classes the instructions are free, while to those who are able to afford payment a nominal fee amounting to about eight shillings per annum is charged. The school has two divisions—preparatory and advanced.

and in each department the courses of instruction are of wide range, and, what is of real importance, are of practical use to the workers in their various arts and trades. The instruction is more practical than our English system. The art department, for instance, is a school of the arts, and not a conventional South Kensington drawing establishment. In this section of the college we saw numerous beautifully made building-construction models, as well as architectural drawings, executed by young workmen, who afterwards have carried out these same plans in the buildings which are now being extensively erected in Vigo. The modelling work is excellent. I was specially delighted with a statue group in plaster, designed and modelled by the senior students as a monumental tomb to Doña Concepcion Arenal. This practical application of the work done by the students to their different trades is a measure of educational progress we have yet to attain in England. The work done in the machinery department was equally good. We saw the model of a completed steam-engine; and at the time of our visit the senior students were engaged in making a motor-car. In the junior school we were shown a T square, the work of a boy of twelve, of which an English engineer in our party pronounced that the slotting and riveting were perfect.

The laboratories and workshops of the school are fitted with the latest appliances. Besides the departments mentioned, the women and girls learn dress-cutting, dress-making, and the scientific preparation of food. Analyses are made of wines and food, while practical instruction is given on the growing of fruits and crops, and all matters pertaining to agriculture. The free library in connection with the school contains books in all languages on every technical subject; and the well-worn appearance of the volumes speaks of the

use the students have made of these works. The teachers in the school are men and women of true culture. I was glad to find that they are paid the same salary. In a conversation with the director of the school, I learnt that he was a reader of Bernard Shaw and a believer in co-education. Let it not be thought that these last facts are trivial. Think; is it likely that an English teacher in a town the size of Vigo would be acquainted with the works of the great Spanish dramatists? I never failed in astonishment at the wide culture of the Gallegos.

These, then, are the opportunities of education which Vigo offers to the new generation. Vigo is a progressive and flourishing town, but the school is not a solitary exception of excellence, but is typical of some fifty technical schools which have now been established. Students who pass through the elementary and advanced courses of one of these schools receive a diploma of efficiency, which is given for the actual making of some work connected with their craft. We learnt that there is competition on the part of private owners and public companies to secure these workers as engineers, draughtsmen, builders, cabinet-makers, painters, decorators, and in many other industries. The diploma the students receive is recognised throughout Spain; and to those who attain the required standard a Government grant is allowed of 1,000 *pesetas* (about £50) for six years, which enables them to continue their studies at a still higher grade Technical College in Barcelona or Madrid.

Galicia has awakened to the understanding that the true wealth of a state rests in the people. And the thoughtful British observer who visits her towns and, without prejudice, sets himself to find out the truth on these questions will find many things that will



GALLEGAN PEASANT WOMAN, WITH THE FIESTA DRESS.



GALLEGAN PEASANT WOMAN, WITH THE ORDINARY DRESS.

give pause to a censorious attitude. One's observations on a foreign land are apt to be exceedingly superficial. The Gallegans, and especially the increasing group of her younger and most earnest sons, passionately concerned, as they are, with the economic and political future of their country, must be heartily tired of, and even amused at, being admired for their picturesque costumes, and ancient customs, and old buildings, with a sort of insuperable æsthetic patronage. It is certain that the traveller who has worked off his first enthusiasm for this inexhaustibly interesting land has by no means entirely drained the cup. After thinking of Galicia as historical and artistic, it will be well for him to remember the other and modern side of her life to-day. That is, indeed, the special interest of this corner of Spain—it is a museum of the past preserved and perpetuated in the midst of the new progress of the present. It was startling to me to learn that the eight-hours' movement for all workers was in general operation in Vigo; to see the excellent crèche established for the children of mothers who work in the sardine factories; to find that Santiago has an open-air school for the education of defective children, and that in Coruña a band of patriotic young men have started a Popular University.

I found an enlightened and progressive understanding of education among the men, with whom I had conversation, and a determination to increase the opportunities of learning and practical training for the people. What is needed in Galicia is the power to concentrate all her forces on her own development. I may mention my surprise at the number and excellence of the book-shops in the towns, where English and French books, periodicals, and papers are sold. In the free library we visited I noticed a much larger pro-

portion of the works of foreign writers than is usual in English institutions.

I was scarcely prepared for these things. I had shared in the common belief that Spain is a radically conservative country, unchanging and unchangeable. I had returned to this land, which for so long has seemed to me more fascinating than any country that I know, with the impression that it is the home of the romance that belongs to an age that has passed. I had not been many days in Galicia before I was conscious that the original romanticism I had found in my former visits was gone. Yet I must hasten to add that the beauty and fascination have not been less great, while the interest has struck deeper. When I compare the Galicia I have just seen with the Galicia that I left nearly ten years ago, the magnitude of the changes that have been effected in so brief a space seem to me to be very remarkable. They dispel at once the too wide-spread opinion that Spain has been left behind in the progress of civilisation.

If we compare Galicia in this respect with the rest of Spain, some important facts in the Gallegan character become very evident. The strong Spanish individualism has in this people a broader basis. The Gallegans, from the earliest times, have been alive to all foreign currents of influences, as is manifested in their history, in their literature, and in their art. They have always sought, and are still seeking, to multiply their points of contact with the world. We are accustomed to regard travelling as of comparatively recent growth. From Galicia in the fourth century men, and even women, set forth to visit far-distant lands for the purpose of education and adventure. To-day it is mainly from Galicia that emigration takes place, although the climate and soil of the country are the best in Spain. I am well aware of the serious nature to Galicia of this terrible evil,

and I know that the reason is due largely to the burden of unfair taxation and too heavy rents. Yet it is certain that the spirit of adventure in their Celtic blood is also a reason.

It has been said by Angel Ganivet in the *Idearium Español*, one of the most brilliant and penetrating books that I know on Spain, that the disease from which the Spaniards are suffering is *aboulia*, or loss of will-power. No one with truth could say this of the Gallegans. Were I asked to sum up the main impression made upon me by the average Gallego—the gentleman, the priest, the writer, the soldier, the peasant—and in this last class I include the women of the race—I should say it was the possession in a surprising degree of moral and spiritual energy, with an added practical direction of energy towards action, which I have not met elsewhere in Spain. It seems to me that this attitude explains Galicia's greatness in the past, and also her position to-day.

The Gallegan qualities are accounted for by the poetic temperament of their Celtic inheritance. The poetic spirit is the most practical of all. I am aware that this statement will not be accepted by those who themselves have not poetic souls. Yet I maintain its truth: without poetry the practical things of modern life—railways, harbours, manufactories—are impossible. For without imagination, giving an insight into the art of living, these material needs will kill the larger claims of beauty and of joy, and the result that follows to a people must be decay. It is an absurd error that the gods' gift of imagination retards practical life.

It was to the martial prowess of the Gallegans, remember, that, more than two thousand years ago, the Roman generals bore witness. Both men and women chose death to loss of liberty, and, when taken

prisoners, fell with their children upon their own swords that they might not fall into slavery. The Gallegans were the only Spaniards whom the Moors could not conquer. And in this connection one may quote the proclamation issued by Wellington in honour of the fourth Spanish army—an army composed of Gallegans and Asturians. “Warriors of the civilised world! Learn heroism from the individuals of the fourth army, which it has been my good fortune to lead into the field. Every one of its soldiers has merited more justly than myself the command that I hold. . . . Strive, all of you, to imitate the inimitable Gallegans. Let their intrepidity be remembered to the end of the world, for it has never been surpassed. . . .”

Occasions such as these were may have passed, energy to-day is driven into fresh, and more fruitful, fields of action; but what matters to us now is that a people with such traditions and achievements cannot long be held back outside the trend of liberal expansion. The same spirit is there. Among the many Gallegans with whom I have had opportunity of conversation and friendship I found a quality of self-questioning and a wise spirit of national analysis and national criticism. What are the real needs of our country? these men are asking. How can we best be true to the great traditions of our past, and at the same time adapt those traditions to modern needs? This is the problem that is now occupying their attention. They realise that Galicia is at the beginning of an economic rebirth, and they are turning their energies into the paths of industrial progress in order to face the problems of the present. It may be noted, in passing, that the republican spirit is strong among the Gallegans. I have met nowhere a people with less love of kings. But then, they are a nation who think. Galicia suffers from her

geographical position, by which she is removed to such a distance from the centre of government. What is needed is the power to control her own affairs. Home Rule is the desire of many Gallegans. It is enterprise, the passion of life, the stimulating appeal of energy in harmony with life itself, that has ever moved the soul of the race.

Galicia has, from the days of her first Golden Age, produced more great intellects, more literary men, more poets, and more sculptors than any other province in Spain. I have before me, as I write, a long record of famous Gallegans, sent to me by the kindness of Señor Don Manuel Murguía, the historian of Galicia; they date from the fourth century to the present day. Camoens and Cervantes were born from Galician families, and it seems probable that Christopher Columbus was a native of Pontevedra. As I read the achievements of these numerous men and women, whose names even I have not space to give, I feel that we English, who are always boasting of our high state of civilisation, are but children in comparison.

In England, and even more in America—the newest, as Galicia is one of the oldest of Western civilisations—business is the only respectable pursuit, including under business politics, literature and the arts, which in these countries are departments of business. In Galicia this is not so, there are other aims and other fashions, havens of refuge from the prevalent commercialism. Literature and art rest on a long tradition, which has not only produced splendid buildings, carvings, and books, but has left its mark on the language, the manners, the ideas, and the habits of the people. Civilisation has sunk deeply into the Gallegan character. I have found among them a fine sense of the continuity of their national life, of their literal part in the inheritance

of their ancestors. To-day her tradition in literature and in art has not been broken. Galicia still takes her place worthily. The two most eminent modern Spanish women, who are also among the foremost women of letters in Europe, Emilia Pardo Bazan and Concepcion Arenal, belong to Galicia, as also does Rosalia de Castro, Spain's sweetest modern lyrical poet. Among the famous male writers it is difficult to make selection. Pastor Díaz, a great poet and politician of the nineteenth century, was a Gallegan. Two of Spain's greatest living archæologists, Villa Amil y Castro and Lopez Ferreiro, are sons of Galicia; so also is Ramón del Valle Inclán, one of the first contemporary novelists. Luis Taboada is an unsurpassed comic writer; Manuel Murguía and Celso García de la Riega are historians, and Manuel Curros Enriquez is a poet worthy of the Gallegan tradition.

We see the same thing, too, in the more active expression of political life. The actual Prime Minister of Spain, Don José Calalejas, is a native of Ferrol. Pablo Ingleses, the socialist leader, is also a Gallegan. In the department of finance it is to the practical genius of four Gallegans, Señores Villavide, Vrzaiz, Gonzalez Besade, and Cobian that Spain owes her splendid, and remarkable, recovery after the disasters of the late war.

We see it, again, in the present day in architecture and in crafts work. Santiago possesses in its University one of the noteworthy modern buildings in Spain, while the domestic architecture, which you will see to-day in Vigo and elsewhere, is excellent in its sobriety and strength. Galicia gave birth to Fernando Casas and to Domingo Loys Monteagudo, two of the most capable of Spain's later architects. Felipe Castro and José Ferreiro are worthy sculptors. The Gallegan craftsmen are still famous throughout Spain for their work as

silversmiths, iron-workers, and wood-carvers. Ferro, the Director of the Academy of St. Ferdinand in the last years of the eighteenth century, was a Gallegan; and in the next century we find a painter, Genaro Viaamil, so that it may be that in the future Galicia will have a school of painting, and will gain in this branch of the arts the fame she has gained in sculpture.

The Gallegans have always been, and still are, a people who stand definitely for art and the beauty of life. It is instructive to note that Spanish paper-money bears the portraits of men of letters and great painters. Goya's etchings are reproduced on the pictures used as coverings in the boxes of matches. And it is this ever-present consciousness of a great tradition which I would like to call an understanding of the things that matter; meaning by this the art of beautiful living, finding its expression, as it does, in the work and in the play of the people, which makes it true that, though the Gallegans belong by their history to the Past, they belong by their character to the Future. They have the qualities which younger nations are now striving to gain.

The spirit of national self-questioning, of which I have spoken, has been specially active since the later Cuban and Philippine campaigns and war with America. For this war was in the highest degree beneficial to Spain, inasmuch as it removed a useless possession and left the country free for national activities. In Galicia it has been a period of astonishing awakening, which, without exaggeration, may be expressed in the words of the Gallegans themselves: "We are witnessing a renaissance of our national and economic life." No one who knows thoroughly, and who has followed step by step the trend of Galicia's trade, the growth of her towns, the increase and improvement of her educational

system, and the changes that have been made so rapidly and in so many directions, can question the soundness of her potentialities for development, and the expression of the vigour and strength of her people.

This new growth of material prosperity in Galicia has received attention from many writers; but the deeper inward awakening of which I have tried to show something has, so far as I am aware, attracted little notice outside of the country. It may be worth while to try and express what I have felt to be its most striking result to-day. The strong Gallegan poetry is turning, it has appeared to me, to a new kind of spiritual instinct, for which the genius of the people is as yet seeking an appropriate form. It is with the greatest hesitation that I speak on this difficult question of religion; it is so easy to allow one's impressions to be coloured by one's own inclinations. But, outside of Santiago, it certainly appeared to me that the outward observances of the Catholic Church exercised a less vital hold on the people, the ceremonies remaining but as a tradition. It was women who, for the most part, filled the churches, and this in a far greater proportion than in the southern Spanish towns. At the religious processions, which we witnessed, I was less impressed with the devotion of the crowd than I have been on the occasion of similar ceremonies at Seville, or on my first visit to Galicia ten years earlier. I met many fervently devout free-thinkers, who spoke quite openly to me. Modern Galician feeling, which, since the events of the war, has been so strongly patriotic, has certainly little sympathy for the Church. There is a widespread and growing desire to restrict the power of the clergy, and to secure the national control of religious associations. In one of the comic papers issued in Madrid at the time of the war a Spaniard is represented, saying, "If only



RELIGIOUS PROCESSION : THE PASO, OR IMAGE OF THE VIRGIN.



RELIGIOUS PROCESSION : THE START HEADED BY THE CIVIL GUARD.

we could get rid of our monks as easily as of our colonies." This is an aspiration breathed by many Gallegans of all classes.

There is an out-spokenness on religious questions which frequently surprised me. As an instance, I may refer to an article in the *Voz de Galicia*, an enlightened local paper of Coruña, which was written on the occasion of the opening of the Agricultural College. After praising the new enterprise, which, by teaching the peasants how to make more profit out of the land, would stay the bleeding of the terrible wound that is exhausting Galicia—emigration, the writer gives voice to the opinion that the priests only do harm by going round to the villages and telling the people to work harder; what was needed was education and practical training, and an intelligent development of the wonderfully fertile Gallegan soil.

I recall a conversation on the subject of religion with a gentleman of high position.

"There is much less religion here than in England," he said.

I was astonished, for I knew that my friend had recently taken part in a procession in honour of the patron saint of his town. I questioned him on this.

"Oh, that is nothing," was his answer. "It is one of the customs of our country, like your Lord Mayor's Show!"

And if I doubt my own impressions on this question, I find that Galicia's greatest daughter, Emilia Pardo Bazan, although herself, I believe, sympathetic to Catholicism, writes: "Our religiosity is part of our legend. We are no longer a religious people even in observance."

It is certain, however, that upon this question a too absolute statement may easily produce a false im-

pression. At all events, the Church is able very impressively to disregard what may be only a temporary alienation. On the one hand, there is clearly a large amount of faith, while religious observances are supported by a history of splendid tradition and by magnificent architecture, unsurpassed in any part of Spain, while on the other side are the powerful influences of Republicanism, and of knowledge, and the revolt against the forces which are believed to be impeding the advance of the national life. Few Gallegans are, however, it seems to me, opposed to an enlightened Catholicism; they fight only a Church which refuses to keep in touch with social progress, and calls political weapons to its aid instead of relying on spiritual force. Perhaps no period of Galicia's history—no, not even the days of her great pilgrimages—has been more truly Christian than the present. I have met with no religious indifference in Galicia, nor do I believe that any philosophy which is not based on spiritual needs will ever find a favourable acceptance with her people. So certain is Galicia of the truth—a truth that all people find sooner or later—that a power founded on Faith is the master of material things.

Religion, in some form, is of all countries and of all ages. Her presence is necessary everywhere; and it is true to say that the religious spirit has been the motor power of Galicia from the dawn of her history. I know of no other people among whom the things of the soul have shown so much vigour joined to so much charm. The religious spirit, with its flaming energy, gave Galicia her past greatness; it will remain, even perchance, against her will, her master to-day. The old wine is being poured into new bottles, and the spirit of the fathers is being renewed in the sons under other forms.

CHAPTER XVII

LAS GALLEGAS: THE WOMEN OF GALICIA

Racial type best studied in the women of the race—Traces of gynecocracy in northern Spain—*Mujeres varoniles*—Galicia the country that produces fine women—Reasons for this—Physical traits—Spanish women's way of walking—The burden-bearers of Galicia—Does this heavy labour injure women?—Women full of energy—Vigour of the women to an advanced age—Spanish women in literature—Special qualities of the Spanish feminine character—Women self-contained, strong, and independent, but also gracious and gentle—The *señora* and the *señorita*—An attempt to analyse their charm—Three great Gallegan women: Concepcion Arenal, Emilia Pardo Bazan, Rosalia de Castro—Remarks and reflections.

RACIAL types may always be best studied in the women of a nation; and it is well worth while to turn our attention to the women of Galicia. Representing as they do both on the physical and psychic side a conservative tendency, and with a lower variational aptitude than men, women preserve most markedly primitive racial elements of character. In no country is this seen with greater truth than in Galicia.

From the earliest notices we have of the Gallegan women we find them possessed of a definite character of remarkable strength. We often say: This or that is a sign of the present era; and, nine times out of ten, the thing that we believe to be new is in reality as old as the world itself. It was these women who played their part in driving back the Roman legions; and we have read of their fighting side by side with men, where

they used their weapons with courage and determination. They received wounds with silent fortitude, and no cry of pain ever escaped their lips, even when the wounds which laid them low were mortal. Justin speaks of the women of ancient Galicia as not only having the care of all domestic matters, but also cultivating the fields. Strabo, though perhaps with some exaggeration, speaks of *gynecocracy*, or rule of women among the ancient Celtiberians. Writing of these Amazons, he tells us that they would often step aside out of the furrows "to be brought to bed," and then, having borne a child, would return to their work "just as if they had only laid an egg." He notes, too, as being practised among them the curious custom whereby the husband, in proof of his fatherhood, retired to bed when the child was born.

Courage and warlike qualities were common among Gallegan women. The intrepid traveller, Etheria, made her remarkable journey in the fourth century. In the Middle Ages Queen Doña Urrica led her army in person during numerous campaigns with her sister Doña Teresa of Portugal. A typical Gallega is Maria Fernandez de Pita, the heroine of La Coruña. She was the type of the *mujeres varoniles* of Galicia, whose history would fill a volume—women who would take the field and fight with a sagacity and ferocity equal to, and often surpassing, that of men.

We may associate the position of women in Galicia with some of the old matriarchal conditions. Women are held in honour. Aguiar refers to a proverb common over all Spain to the effect that he who is unfortunate and needs assistance should "seek his Gallegan mother." Many primitive customs survive, and one of the most interesting is that by which the eldest daughter in some districts takes precedence over the sons in inherit-

ance. In no country does less stigma fall on a child born out of wedlock. As far back as the fourth century Spanish women insisted on retaining their own names after marriage, for we find the Synod of Elvira trying to limit this freedom. The practice is still common for sons to use the name of the mother coupled with that of the father, and even, in some cases, alone, showing the absence of preference for the modern parental descent. I questioned a cultured Gallego on the position of the prostitute, and his answer is worth recording. "Our women give themselves for love more often than for money." This statement may have some extravagance, but I believe it corresponds to a real fact in the position of the women, which persists from a time when their importance was greater than it is to-day. The introduction of modern institutions, and especially the empty forms of chivalry, has lowered the position of women. Emilia Pardo Bazan has said, "All the rights belong to the men, and the women have nothing but duties." Yet there can be no question that some features of mediæval practice have left their imprint on the domestic life of Galicia, and that the women have, in certain directions, preserved a freedom and privilege, which even in England has never been established, and only of late claimed.

The industrial side of primitive culture has always belonged to women, and in Galicia the old custom is in active practice, owing to the wide-spread emigration of the men. The farms are worked by women, the ox-carts driven by women, the seed is sown and reaped by women—indeed, all work is done by women. While realising fully the evil of this draining of the men of the race, I would yet suggest that the special character of the Gallegas peasants has benefited by this enforced engaging in activities which in most countries have been

absorbed by men. The fine physical qualities of these workers can scarcely be questioned. I have taken pains to gain all possible information on this subject, and I find it is the opinion of the most thoughtful Gallegans that this labour does not damage the beauty of the women, but the contrary, nor does it prejudice the life and health of their children.

As workers they are most conscientious and intelligent, apt to learn, and ready to adopt improvements. From my personal observations I can bear witness that their children are universally well cared for, and their cottages are almost always clean. What impressed me was that these women looked happy. They are full of energy and vigour, even to an advanced age. They are certainly healthy; and the standard of beauty among them will compare favourably with the women of any other nation. I once witnessed an interesting episode during one of our motor-rides in the country. A robust and comely Gallega was riding *a ancas* (pillion fashion) with a young caballero, probably her son. The passing of our motor frightened the steed, with the result that both riders were unhorsed. Neither was hurt, but it was the woman who pursued the runaway horse: she caught it without assistance and with surprising skill. What happened to the man I cannot say; when I saw him he was standing in the road, brushing the dust from his clothes. I presume the woman returned with the horse to fetch him.

Women were the world's universal primitive carriers. In Galicia I have seen women bearing immense burdens, unloading boats, acting as porters and as firemen, and removing household furniture. I saw one woman with a chest of drawers easily poised upon her head, another woman bore a coffin, while another, who was old, carried a small bedstead. A beautiful woman-porter

in one village carried our heavy luggage, running with it on bare feet, without sign of effort. She was the mother of four children, and her husband was at the war. She was upright as a young pine, with the shapeliness that comes from perfect bodily equipoise. I do not wish to judge from trivial indications, but I saw in the Gallegas a strength and an intrepidity that has become rare among women to-day. When a fire breaks out in a small town or village it is the women water-carriers who act as firemen. They fetch the water from the fountains and pour it upon the flames. Just recently I have read of three of these women who lost their lives in an attempt to rescue a crippled girl from a burning house.

I was never tired of looking at the Gallegan water-carriers; the fountains that you will find in every town are the most delightful watching-places. The grace with which the women walk on the uneven roads and their perfect skill in balancing their beautiful *jarros*, or great pails, called forth my unceasing admiration. I had always a feeling that I was looking at a perfectly satisfying picture. One result of this universal burden-carrying on the head is the perfect and dignified character of the women's manner of walking. I have seen the same queenly gait in the Roman women of the Alban hills, and in some parts of Ireland, where also women bear burdens on the head. A beautiful walk is a rare accomplishment among English women, whose corsetted figures and absurd shoes necessitate a walk resembling a duck's waddle. These Gallegan carriers walk like priestesses who are bearing sacred vessels. They move erectly, but without stiffness, with a secure and even stride, planting the foot and heel together, light and firmly. There is something of the grace of an animal in their movements—the alertness, the perfect

balance, the suggestion of hidden strength. I recall a conversation during a walk with an English companion, of the not uncommon, strongly patriotic and censorious type. He pointed to a group of Gallegan burden-bearers, remarking in his indiscriminate British gallantry :

“ I can't bear to see women doing work that ought to be done by men.”

“ Look at the women ! ” was the answer I made him.

“ What do you mean ? ”

It was quite useless to tell him.

It is, of course, easy to find women of all degrees of ugliness in Galicia, but the proportion of those who are strong and beautiful seems to me to be very large. There is greater variety of types than in southern Spain. While there are many women who are dark, with golden complexions, and quite Arabian eyes, nowhere else have I seen so many fair women, with bright brown, auburn, and some, even golden hair. One sees rosy complexions and blue eyes that remind one of England ; though mixed grey eyes are more frequent. Many faces are beautiful, with finely modelled features, quite classic in outline. I wonder that the Spanish painters have not made greater use of these perfect models. Certainly the most beautiful and distinguished faces that I saw were not among the women of the so-called upper classes, but belonged to the fish-girls and market-women of the towns and the peasants of the rural districts. This presence of a really fine type among the workers of a people is a certain indication of an old civilisation. And if any one disputes this statement, and doubts the beauty of the Gallegan women, he should go to the fish and fruit market at Vigo. If the splendid types of women that he will see there do not convince him, then I can only say that he has been more fortunate

than I have been in the beauty and strength he has found in women elsewhere.

If I have emphasised the physical qualities of the women workers of Galicia, it is because I regard these qualities as the outward expression of intelligence and will. The typical Gallega is for me the beautiful *cigarrera*, with republican ideals, whom by happy chance I met and talked with at La Coruña. Since my return I have read the novel of Doña Pardo Bazan, *La Tribuna*, in which a *cigarrera* is the heroine. Amparo might be my *cigarrera*. The writer describes her as a woman "whose heart was softer than silk, who could not hurt a fly, and yet was capable of demanding the one hundred thousand heads of those who live by sucking the blood of the poor." She was a republican and a kind of tribune of the people, taking a leading part in Coruña in the movements of 1868. To those who seek knowledge of *las gallegas* I would recommend this truthful book.

It is interesting to contrast the robust heroines of Spanish writers with the feminine feebleness and inanity which so often are the ideal of English novelists. In Spanish literature vigour and virility are qualities apart from sex and are bestowed on women equally with men.

Again and again the thoughtful reader will be struck with this in the works of Spanish writers. It is a point of such interest that one would like to linger upon it. I may mention, as one instance, Cervantes' heroines: the *illustre Fregona*, "beautiful, with cheeks of roses and jessamine, and as hard as marble"; and Sancho's daughter, who was "tall as a lance, as fresh as an April morning, and as strong as a porter." Of Têrso de Molina, the great Spanish dramatist, it has been said that he gives all vigour to his women and all weakness to his men. Nor has this robust ideal of womanhood

changed. We meet the same qualities among the women depicted by the Spanish writers to-day. Blanco Ibañez, in his *Flor de Mayo*, describes a young woman who could meet "a stolen embrace with a superb kick, which more than once had felled to the ground a big youth as strong and firm as the mast of his boat." Among the heroines of Juan Valera we find *Juanita*, who, "as a girl could throw stones with such precision that she could kill sparrows, and leap on the back of the wildest colt or mule," while *Doña Luz* "could dance like a sylph, ride like an Amazon, and in her walk resembled the divine huntress of Delos."

It may, of course, be argued that these are chosen types that cannot fairly be said to represent Spanish women. Yet the Spanish writers are realists in a much truer sense than is understood among English novelists; and it must be admitted that the persistence of the same qualities in so many heroines proves a fundamental veracity in the type presented. Emilia Pardo Bazan, in criticising Valera's women, asserts that she herself has known women who are like them in Santiago and in other towns of Galicia, and from my own experience I may say that the Gallegan workers I have known, in their vigour and independence, show the qualities of these portrait women.

The fact can scarcely be passed over that these heroines almost all belong to the country, sometimes even to the poorest people, and if, as in the case of *Doña Luz*, they spring from a different class, they are, as a rule, illegitimate, combining aristocratic distinction with plebeian vigour. This corresponds with my own observations. I have found the working Gallegas more robust and more intelligent than the women of the middle and upper classes. I had a conversation with a thoughtful Gallego on this subject, in the course of



A GALLEGAN SEÑORITA.



which I mentioned the opinion given by Havelock Ellis, in his delightful book *The Soul of Spain*, that the women of the country are, on the average, superior to the men in physical and mental development. The answer of my friend is well worth recording.

“That *señor*,” he said, “does not know our women well, or he is much in love with some *señorita*. It would be nearer the truth to say that our women have no intelligence—they are big children.”

I questioned him about the peasantry.

“Ah, that is different ; they work like men.”

During my recent visit I had many opportunities of intercourse, especially at Mondariz and La Toja, with the *señoras* and *señoritas*, and I am bound to say that the impression I gathered was that of my friend—these women are delightful children. I know that it is not in weeks that a stranger can penetrate the character of a people, or the habits of any one class, yet one receives certain impressions which may suggest truths that must always perhaps reveal themselves best to strangers. I found it impossible to talk with these Spanish ladies upon the topics on which I universally conversed with the men : what interested me made no appeal to them. I met, for instance, no woman who professed an interest in the splendid painters of Spain, while, on the other hand, I met no man who had not some knowledge of the art of the country. It is enough, I think, to see the tasteless adoption by these women of modern fashions to suggest a retarded artistic development.

Nor is the explanation far to seek.

The preparation that women in the upper and middle classes receive for life is far inferior to that of the workers, who co-operate with men, whose work is identical with theirs, and as capably performed. The

women of the richer classes lead a life of marked inferiority; without opportunity for work, and compelled to an existence of restricted activity, it is impossible to develop their physical and intellectual qualities.

I hasten to add, however, that there is a quality which has impressed me as belonging to all Spanish ladies, both the young and the old—yes, and also the children. It is a quality which is unique in them, and one that is very difficult to describe; but it is this, I am certain, that explains the admiration which these women so universally arouse. I have spoken on the point before; let me try to make it clearer now.

All these Gallegan *señoras* and *señoritas* understand, as no Englishwoman ever does, and with a much finer simplicity than a Frenchwoman, the art of being women. Is it the expression of their eyes? Is it the restfulness suggested in their faces and figures, which are entirely without the nervous quality of useless energy that tires one so often in English and American women? I do not know. I only know that I should like to have had a Gallegan woman for my mother. Were I a man, I am certain that I would marry one.

In case I am misunderstood in a quality so difficult to explain, though so easy to see, I must state my opinion that these delightful women are far less conscious of their sex than English women are. It is, I believe, because sex is a possession of which no one of them has ever had to be ashamed. Perhaps here is the real reason why, as women, they are so perfect. And, after all is said, is it not this that really matters? In the composed presence of these Spanish ladies I have felt that it is little profit to a woman if, in gaining the world, she should lose herself.

One of my most interesting conversations was with a Gallegan lady who had been educated in England.

I found in her an attitude of unconscious, though not less real, pity for the women of my country, which certainly gave me sharp surprise.

"I was pained," she told me, "with the unhappy faces of almost all Englishwomen. None of them seemed to know what they wanted to do." Afterwards she said, "We marry young, and our husband's will grows to be ours; we find our duty and our love in him and in our children."

This lady was a woman of wealth and position. I noticed that her children, though they had, of course, nurses, were tended by herself and were her constant companions. Spain is a happy land for all children; and I doubt if it would be easy to persuade any Spanish woman that she is not happy.

I am aware that what I am now saying appears to be in contradiction with my first statements. I cannot help it. The fact is that truth is always more diverse than we suspect. This is a question that reaches so deeply that apparent contradiction is sometimes inevitable. What I wish to make clear is that the modern English ideal for women leaves a large margin open to desire, while the women of Spain know what it is that, after all, really matters for women and for men. Which is the wiser knowledge? The one is eternal, the other a passing phase arising out of the present. There does not appear to be any vagueness in the souls of these women. Our women have so often too much.

The restrictions for women will pass with the expansion of modern life, and then the strong personality of the Gallegan women, their energy and good sense, will inevitably find expression when opportunity is given them. But never can they fall, in pursuit of outside things, into the error of forgetfulness of their womanhood.

That this is true is proved by the three great Galle-

gan women of whom I have had occasion so frequently to speak—Doña Emilia Pardo Bazan, Concepcion Arenal, and Rosalia de Castro. To-day it calls for great courage and character for a Spanish woman to strike out a path of her own. Concepcion Arenal was forced to adopt men's garments to gain entrance to the universities, which at that time were not open to women. When appointed Inspector of Prisons by Queen Isabella, she was deprived of the post merely on the ground of her sex. Concepcion Arenal was born at Ferrol in the year 1820; she died at Vigo, and is buried in the old cemetery of the town. At first a poet and novelist, she afterwards collaborated with her husband, an eminent jurist, and became a leader of social and moral reforms. She was the most distinguished Spanish woman of the nineteenth century; her numerous works on criminality, prison reform, and other subjects have done splendid service for Spain, and have been translated into all European languages.

Emilia Pardo Bazan is a native of La Coruña, and of aristocratic origin. Like Concepcion Arenal, she is profoundly interested in the destinies of her country, and in all the questions that affect its progress. Yet there is no line of demarcation between the reformer and the artist, and it is above all as a novelist that this great woman takes her place among the world's foremost modern writers. Emilia Pardo Bazan has followed the realistic traditions of Spain, and in the make-believe world of fiction, with its stereotyped tricks and conventions, which is so largely the ideal of English writers, one cannot be too grateful for the truthful pictures of her country which her genius throws into clear perspective. The Spanish writers are under the permission to write truthfully—a concession which does not appeal to Anglo-Saxon hypocrisy.

To Rosalia de Castro belongs the honour of giving rebirth to the great tradition of Gallegan poetry. A native of the old town of Padron, she felt all the association of the memories of the past, and the dreams of her girlhood penetrated into song.

She wrote in the sweet Gallegan dialect so perfectly suited to the expression of lyrical song; in Spain her name stands as the symbol for the renaissance of Galician poetry. The soul of this admirable woman is poured forth in her books spontaneously. She translated in her *Cantaras Gallegos* the confused joys and obscure sorrows of the Gallegan workers; and the pity of her womanhood for the sadness of the emigrants, and the poverty and hardships of the people, steals its way through all the sweetness of her verses with an insistent appeal. Her other book, *Follas Novas*, is a collection of lyrics of incomparable delicacy and sympathy. Rosalia de Castro saw life well, for she saw it beautiful. She was in perpetual communion with nature. The most charming feature of her work is the great and artless love of one whose soul was in harmony with the flowers and the fields.

Looking at the work done by these great Gallegan women we realise that what gives it its greatest value—what places it among the best—is that their genius was distinct from sex. These women stand as leaders in the civilising influences of their country. Concepcion Arenal and Emilia Pardo Bazan have concerned themselves with criticism, criminology, sociology, and many other subjects, always with brilliance, insight, and sound knowledge. The songs of Rosalia de Castro belong to the people, and are known by heart and sung by every Gallegan.

The absurd lie has been repeated so commonly that the possession of intellect in women is abnormal,

and involves a cost that their womanhood will not bear without injury more or less profound. How often have we women listened and smiled! But facts, and not words, count as proof. Here, then, we have women whose lives give a direct denial. Each of these women was a perfectly successful wife and mother. It is for this reason that they are so important. Galicia has here, as I have found so often in other ways, solved a question, without talking, which we have shouted aloud, and yet left unsolved. Have I not said that it is the poet who is the practical actor?

We have seen the ideal of woman in Spanish literature revealing astonishing vigour and independence, and we have found that this ideal corresponds with the facts of actual life. Yet none can deny the gracious womanhood of the women of this race. How strange we English are! If we allow that among Anglo-Saxon women intellect has, in certain cases, been developed at a physiological cost, this has not been so in the case of these Galician women writers. And here, at last, we find the reason why the contribution of women to the intellectual development of Galicia stands equal with that of the men of the race. Unfettered in sex, completely developed as women, they were fitted for literary achievement, which more than all other work demands a wide and full experience of life.



VIGO : GALICIA'S GOLDEN GATEWAY.

CHAPTER XVIII

VIGO, GALICIA'S GOLDEN GATEWAY

Return to Vigo—My window at the hotel—The fish and fruit market—The church of Santa Maria—A *fiesta* night—A city of contrasts—The old town—The harbour—A day of rain—A charming experience—The new town—Urban development—The old and the new in Vigo—A visit to a sardine factory—The workers of Vigo—An open-air concert—More comments on the Gallegan character—Borrow's Vigo—Sunday in the Alameda—A walk to La Guia—San Simon's Island—Bayona—The lighthouse, the Virgin of Bayona—Sunset from the Castillo del Castro.

Vigo again! Vigo, Galicia's Golden Gateway! It is a great pleasure to me to write the word; but I am not sure that there is not a certain imprudence in trying to add anything to it. The places one has most cared for are like the people one has loved; they are the most difficult to write about. And it is painful as well to attempt it—painful because in the memory of vanished days so filled with beauty the sense of present loss is overwhelming.

I had come back to Vigo to pass some time of leisure before returning to England. Perhaps this accounts for the place that Vigo holds in my affection. It is one of the mistakes of travelling that so rarely you stay long enough; and in Galicia in particular, this is true. I have found a reluctant touch of shyness about her towns, provocative as a difficult woman. The conscientious British traveller passes days of magnificent treadmill in which he sees everything and does everything;

but this does not teach one to know a place. In fact, it is just when you have done all this, when there is nothing left to go and see, that you begin to enjoy any town. The only way really to care for a place is to give it a chance to touch you often—to linger, and remain, and return. Places are like peoples, they will not yield their secrets to those who approach them in a hurry. You must forget yourself ; give yourself to them. Then, indeed, you will feel a contentment come over you, which will take away your restless Anglo-Saxon desire for action, and still more the need for excitement. You will be happy without seeking to be so, and only when you have learnt this will you have learnt the secret of Spain. Only in this way can you invite her exquisite joy to refashion your life.

I found my hotel, in the first place, extremely entertaining—the Grand Hotel Continental, which is established in a fine modern building of granite in the centre of the shaded Alameda that skirts the harbour, like a green hem to the blue garment of the sea. From my window I looked over the bay, the most beautiful possession of Vigo. It reminded me of Naples, but it is more perfect. For the changing Gallegan weather changes the colour of the sea and the hills as the wind scatters or heaps the clouds : at noon, under sunlight, in time of rain, when the mist drives in from the ocean, in the flush of morning or the silver shadow of night, it has different aspects each of which seems to reveal a different beauty. Often there would be great vessels upon the water, whose lights at night-time gave an appearance of fairy palaces, and always there were fishing-boats, their white and red sails flashing against the pearl-blue of the water like the painted wings of great butterflies spread for flight. And the Seven Sister hills, rising up from the sea to the sky, hold the water

between them, sleeping the quietest sleep of any sea I have ever seen, in the most charming arms of land.

Often I would sit for hours, thinking of nothing as I watched the quietude of the sea, only singularly content to be there. It is a landscape that lends itself to many moods ; by whatever side human things and the history of places interests you, on that side you may feel its attraction. Sometimes I would remember the treasures from the galleons of the Spanish Silver Fleet that are said to be buried at the end of the bay, towards San Simon, where the Lazaretto shows like a white bird upon its green island. Here, farther in the distance, is the group of the Cies Isles, which, one likes to believe, are the fabulous Cassiterides. There, opposite, is Cangas, its scattered houses looking as a line of rocks thrown up by the sea. Cangas suggests new thoughts. Less than half a century back Vigo was known as Vigo de Cangas ; a fishing hamlet, it was dependent upon this tiny, sleeping place. It seems incredible ! one does not look for the rapid growth of towns in Spain.

But in the mornings I was able to understand this ; for then a new distraction claimed my thoughts. A second window in my room looked out upon a steep side-street, which separated the hotel from the fish and fruit market only by a wedge of space, out of which the Gallegan populace sent up a perpetual, clattering, shuffling, chaffering sound. The attraction was impelling. Issuing forth, on my first morning, I found an abundance of that local colour for the love of which one visits Spain. I know no richer and more varied picture of Gallegan working-life. For a long time, in fact not since the start of my travels when first I saw this market, had I received so strong an impression of human activity. I had not seen people elbowing each other so closely, swarming so thickly ; all calling,

chaffering, laughing—carrying on their work in the conversational Spanish fashion.

I was never tired of visiting this market, with its ceaseless and varying life. How often I have stood in the doorway on the flight of steps which leads from the lower to the upper market, watching the vivid kaleidoscopic picture as it moved before me; or I have walked up and down the narrow pathways, between the low stalls with their heaped-up riot of fish and fruit, talking to the women and the men. I learnt that the value of the fresh fish coming into Vigo daily is estimated at £4,500, and that there is a large export trade. I asked many questions of these workers and made many friends among them. Here for the first time I found keen commercial activity united with a picturesque beauty, unspoilt by the usual ugliness of business. I reflected how different an aspect such a market would have presented in England. These workers have colour, not only in their dresses, but in their souls. As I came to know them I realised that the sum of Gallegan misery—its poverty, its political hardships, its burden of heavy work, is, on the whole, so much less than the sum of the Gallegan knowledge of the art of living.

There is a church (Santa Maria) at the top of the market hill, in the Calle Real of the old town, where the women come in each morning as naturally as they walk into the market. You see the same vivid crowd, face for face, coloured handkerchief for handkerchief; they kneel and pray, form in groups; afterwards they talk together, then, lifting their baskets, which have been placed by the door, they go out just as they came. I do not know if it is the instinct for devotion—it is habit, perhaps; but the attraction to me of seeing the women here was very great. In truth worship is a part of the day's work.

It is evening, and again I am at my window. It is a calm and lovely night. A new moon—a mere yellow thread in the sky—has risen. There are sunset lights still above me and on the silver water below. Vigo is a-glitter with a thousand illuminations; for the town lights up for a *fiesta* night as a face lights up with a smile. I look out upon a scene that seems to be composed almost too full of romantic elements. Beneath my window the Alameda and the long promenade are brilliantly a-light with paper lanterns, swaying like gigantic flowers in the soft breeze; fireworks are set off, rockets go up; Bengal lights burn steadily, and flash-lights dart across the sky with a sudden illumination. Then on the silver-green water lighted boats glide to and fro; they look like fairy palaces as they drift past to a sound of music, dissolving into a night brilliant with strange fires. As the hours advance the promenades are full of joyous noise; the out-door parade is in gay career until midnight. There are open-air concerts, and dancing takes place upon the grass. Fans are fluttering everywhere, the sound of the *gaita* is heard in all directions, and there is the hard twang of castanets. The soft warm air is fragrant with the scent of the sea and of flowers. As I looked at the vivid, many-coloured scene I seemed to be back in London, to be at the Alhambra watching a marvellous pageant. Yes, it is difficult sometimes to believe in Spain, even when one is in Spain.

Vigo is a city of contrasts, and is not to be known until one has seen the thriving new town, which has sprung up of late years, as well as the market, the old town, and the harbour. Old Vigo is the crookedest and most incoherent of towns—though “town” is too hard a word to apply to this picturesque quarter, which is tossed about on the side of the hill. Twisting

passages, or steps cut into the rock, join narrow streets, rising steeply, which seem to lead anywhere, then end suddenly, or turn aside in another direction, into some picturesque square. All are paved so roughly that a passage over them is like rocking in a boat on an uneasy sea. In these streets you see the admirable peasant wares, the local pottery, baskets, brightly coloured shoes with hempen soles, shawls, handkerchiefs, and saddlebags displayed in the windows and doorways of the workshops in which they are made.

A part of Vigo that I like best, because it has kept, more than any other, its old aspect, is the harbour, with its smells of fish and the sea which runs from the Alameda to the end of the bay. Sailors are always passing, and fishermen; on the beach and afloat are the fine open craft, the sardine-boats, which are rowed by sixteen, eighteen, or even twenty oars, and are propelled with astonishing rapidity. Each afternoon, at about five of the clock, the great catches of fish are landed and placed in glittering heaps in the roadway, before they are washed and packed in boxes by the women and sold in the public auction. The scene is like a stage-prepared Billingsgate. It was delightful to me to be among it—the one figure without a stage-dress. The small steamer that plies at intervals to Cangas, on the other shore of the bay, starts from here. It is well worth while to take the half-hour's sail upon the blue water, not only for the beauty of the landscape and the picturesque aspect of the small fishing-town, but to realise what Vigo was like not many years back.

The houses of the harbour are old, crowded, and pressed together where they best fit; they are mostly white-washed, with wooden balconies and shutters that have faded to wonderful colours. And everywhere one passes one gets glimpses of women, men, and children,

on the balconies of the houses, in doorways, and under arches, all of them admirably dressed in the vivid peasant colours, which, perhaps, would be gaudy away from Spain, but which here, in the heat and glitter of the sunshine, and in this perfect setting, are always in place, always beautiful. They are part of the picture; the great *genre* picture which is Old Vigo.

We love places for their gracious weather, as we love people for their smiles, and the climate of Vigo is the finest in Galicia. Yet happiness here does not seem to come and go with the wind and the sunshine, as it does in Seville, for instance, where rain makes the joyous southern town like a face from which a smile has faded. Even on days of rain Vigo keeps its appearance of active work carried on with enjoyment. On one afternoon when rain had fallen steadily, drearily for hours with an English persistence, I visited the harbour. It was late; the fishing-boats had come in—the hurry of the day's work paused. There were few people about; and I thought to return, for the rain was beating in heavily from the sea. My mood was in a correspondence with the greyness, and I began to criticise and analyse—I saw dirt, where before I had found picturesqueness, poverty where I had visioned beauty. I noticed a woman crouching under an archway; she was as hideous as one of Goya's witches. A small child was struggling to carry a still smaller child across the puddle-gutted road. Outside a house, which looked like a café, under a dripping awning, half a dozen men were sitting in talk together. I thought of the heavy taxes of these workers, their light pockets, and few opportunities—certainly my mood was not happy. Then I chanced upon a charming scene. A company of girls and women had gathered in two empty railway vans, and were dancing together, in the most delightful way, watched

and applauded by a group of youths. I stood for a long time looking at them; the grey of the rain turned for me to sunshine. Then one of the girls recognised me, and at once I was invited to join them. I spent an unforgettable hour. The pleasure of such a scene is in the emotions to which it ministers. My mood had been sad in thinking of the hardships and poverty of these people. I learnt that life presented itself to them with attractions not accounted for in my meagre list of advantages, and that really they were on better terms with life than I, who had been thinking I had made a better bargain. It takes so much to make me happy, but to make the Gallegans happy it takes only the joyous sensibility of their temperament. I understood, better than before, why I love them. Gaining information is good, talking to the people as opportunity brings one in contact with them is better, but the best thing of all is simply to watch them.

But this old quarter of the workers is not all Vigo; there is the new town, with its aspect of a place still in the making, so that one thinks not so much of what it is as of what it will become. The future of this new quarter is assured. The aspiration for urban development, which has been active in recent years, is united with the executive ability so marked in the Gallegans, and so often lacking in other parts of Spain. The collective community of Vigo's citizens are determined on creating a beautiful and imposing town. A magnificent site is being wisely planned; there are wide streets with finely built granite houses—private residences, clubs, well-appointed hotels, restaurants, and cafés, and modish shops filled with modern goods. There are really excellent book-shops where English and French books and periodicals are sold. There is a new theatre now being built, a Free Library, and the

splendid Technical School. Vast improvements are contemplated: a boulevard is to be made all the way to Bouzas—one of those *paseos* of trees and sunlight which are the delight of Spanish towns—and this, besides providing a felicitous walk to the town, will give greater scope for the local industries, especially for the sardine factories. The Castillo del Castro, the old fortress, set upon its rocky hill above the town, is to become municipal property, and is to be surrounded by a public park, which must be admirable from its situation, looking out over the expanse of the bay, with the delicate hills in the distance. All Spaniards seem to understand that the charm of a town can be measured by its gardens—the free spaces wherein its citizens, after work, can be happily unoccupied in the open air. In this way the monuments of antiquity in Vigo are being, as far as possible, harmoniously preserved and brought to the use of the demands of a modern community's life. The old town, with its memories and picturesque beauty, is not to be destroyed. The Vigo of to-day is an epitome of the reawakening of Galicia. It is this that gives to the place its special interest, and also its special value to the student of Galicia. Nowhere else do you see quite so vividly a new, enterprising town, with its active life of to-day, in such direct descent from the primitive life of an older civilisation.

These contrasts between what is very old and what is new meet one everywhere. In the fields, just outside Vigo, ploughs may be seen in use as crude as those used by the Romans; but in the town grain thus grown is ground in a mill worked by electric power. You will hear the loud creaking of the unoiled wheels of the ancient bullock-carts, drawn by oxen with huge branching horns, as well as the hoot from motor-cars of the most improved pattern. Women still wash the linen

in the streams, yet there is an excellent water-supply, which is now brought into all the houses even in the old town. The fishing-boats in the harbour, with their curious one sail, seem to take one far back into the past, but the sardine factories to which the fish are brought are so complete and perfect in their equipment that only a few hours elapse between the catching of the fish and the exportation of the finished product.

Among my memories of Vigo my visit to some of these sardine factories stands out clearly; to me it seemed a charming scene of labour, one of the pleasantest places in this delightful town, and certainly one of the most interesting. The work-rooms open directly on to the bay; here the boats come, the fish are landed, and the silver heaps are washed. The airy rooms were scarcely redolent even of fish; and the most scrupulous cleanliness was evident. They were filled with girls, women, and men, and children, who were so intently and actively at work that but few looked up as we strangers passed. I was glad to learn that both the women and the men are well paid, and that there is no separation between the tasks allotted to the two sexes. Women and men labour together side by side, capacity alone deciding the kind of work done. The day's work is the eight hours established in Vigo; but when a catch of sardines comes in it must be dealt with at once, and the workers are then paid overtime on a higher scale than their weekly wages. I saw many ingenious and labour-saving machines; one, which was worked by a boy, made the keys for the opening of the tins at the rate of 140 a minute. I learnt that most of the machinery is supplied by Germany. I was interested to hear that the waste pieces of tin, left from the cutting of the boxes, were shipped to that country to be used for making toys. A laden boat was in the

bay, and the gleaming tin gave an effect which blazed in the strong sunlight.

It was not, however, in these things that I found my chief interest. While my companions were seeing the various and complicated processes whereby the sardines are prepared, I took the opportunity of a closer watching of the workers. What I chiefly remember was the fine appearance of the women. Many of them are mothers, and, as I have elsewhere noticed, there is an admirable crèche in connection with the sardine factories where their children are cared for. I was impressed with the smiling and contented faces of both the men and the women. I know that possibly this may be great nonsense, that it is fatally easy for the stranger to fall into error, and that, while one is remarking on the brightness of the Gallegan smiles and the delightful appearance that these people offer, they may in reality be in a condition of misery and impatience; yet I believe there is truth in my fancy's picture of the Vigo sardine workers. I lost no opportunity of inquiry into local industrial conditions. The workers are in the most favourable position of any town in Galicia; and in many respects Vigo has attained to a degree of human development under industrial life which other countries are still toiling to achieve.

A few days after my visit to the sardine factory I had an opportunity of further knowledge of these workers, this time seeing them at play, as before I had seen them at work. The occasion was a concert given by the *Banda Municipal* of Madrid, which took place in the beautiful *campo*, situated by the bay on the west of the town. All Vigo had taken holiday, for life is short, and to hear good music is more important than to gain money. A continuous stream of carriages drove to the entrance, from which the ladies and the

wealthier citizens came and took their places on the stands that had been built up around the great field. The workers of the town were there already when we came. The seats were thronged, the wide expanse of grass was blocked with people, except the enclosed space around the band-stand, which set the players in a green frame. The sun poured down upon the rich and poor, the masters and the toilers, making all feel alike the equalising gladness of its rays. In the glittering sunlight, and with the wonderful background of the blue water and covering of still bluer sky, the scene was one of the most perfect that we had witnessed in Galicia.

There was a long waiting, but the Gallegan patience showed no sign of annoyance. All the people were quiet, with something truly impressive in their restrained movements and their low tone of speech; for beneath all their quietness there was an impression of intense life, of emotion, which you will never witness except in a Spanish crowd.

The musicians came to their places on the stand, their uniforms a blaze of gold and blue in the white light. There was a moment of pause, a silent waiting for the emotion of the music; the Gallegans know so well how to gain the very utmost out of their sensations. Nothing could possibly have been more perfect than the effect of the fine playing.

I give the programme of the concert :

PROGRAMA

PRIMERA PARTE

Sacuntala (<i>overtura</i>)	Goldmark.
En las Estepas del Asia Central (<i>fragmento sinfónico</i>)	Borodine.
La Boda de Luis Alonso (<i>preludio</i>)	Giménez.
Los Maestros Cantores (<i>seleccion acto 1º.</i>)	Wagner.



GALLEGAN WORKERS : THE SOAP FACTORY AT LA TOJA.



GALLEGAN LADIES AT THE BULL-FIGHT IN A SMALL TOWN.

SEGUNDA PARTE

1812 (<i>overtura</i>)	<i>Tschikovsky.</i>
En la Alhambra (<i>serenata</i>)	<i>Breton.</i>
Marcha fúnebre de "El Ocaso de los Dioses"	<i>Wagner.</i>
Rapsodia húngara núm. 2	<i>Liszt.</i>

Yet, for my own part, I frankly confess, my thought was not given to the music. My attention was held by the crowd. Never had I seen people listen to music as these people listened. Even the applause was restrained—it was rather an immense sigh from hundreds of breasts; until the close of the first part of the programme, when, the emotion relieved, the people's admiration broke forth in applause of which it is impossible to give any idea. To me, remembering holiday-crowds in England, the intense appreciation of these people seemed wonderful. Just beneath our seat a group of workers were standing, women and men in peasant gala-dress. I watched them closely. During the music I never saw them speak. They seemed oblivious of the fierce sun, from which we were shaded, but which beat down upon them. Their faces bore witness to their answer to the emotion of the music. They had brought their children, and the little ones played gravely on the grass, making no noise. Once a baby cried, but the sound was hushed instantly, and the father carried the *niña* out of the field.

And my admiration was strengthened by an incident which shortly took place. A breeze had sprung up from the sea which carried the music from the listeners. We were sitting in the stand occupied by the members of the *Ayuntamiento*. A message came to the Alcalde asking permission for the people to enter the enclosed ring around the musicians. It was given. The serried ranks of people pressed forward on the band; but

gravely, quietly, without attempt of any one to gain a more favourable place. The thing was done with incredible quickness; a few moments of movement, a swaying of the people, then the master of the band stood up, and in silence, as before, the concert went on; only now the green circle was beyond the crowd.

The brief incident left an impression stamped for ever on my mind. I felt how old is the Gallegan race; that it has a vein of rich civilisation in its blood, and that if it has not been blessed by wealth, it has been polished by time. I was conscious of the dignity of these people, in a land where all are lovers of music and at heart artists, and, therefore, equal in the things that really matter. I could say more, much more; but words—what are they in the face of life? One dares not generalise too largely about a people; one may see much, but one cannot assume all. I can only give the individual impressions that I gathered myself. I have heard people who know the Gallegans say that at the bottom of their hearts they despise other nations, and regard them as barbarians. I doubt it, for the Gallegans strike me as having less personal pride than any people that I know, yet if the charge had its truth there would be justification for the feeling in the lessons they give to the stranger in the art of living.

Vigo is so much a modern town that at first the stranger hardly realises how pleasantly its citizens live. The impressions are so novel, picturesque, and varied, that it is well to settle down, to wait, study and absorb. Towns affect and modify the personality just as people do—you are not the same person in Vigo, for instance, that you are in Santiago de Compostela. A side that the remote suggestions of Santiago wins uppermost retires half ashamed before the active life of Vigo. The charm of the town glows in its movement and its shifting

bright colours of action. Mediæval Santiago is a city of dreaming, wide-awake Vigo is a brilliant mosaic between the twin sapphires of sea and sky.

George Borrow was fascinated with this town, whose streets, he said, always appeared to be crowded and to resound with noise and merriment. And still to-day the stranger may feel the same enthusiasm about Vigo. In a beautiful climate that is seldom too hot and seldom too cold, the vigorous Gallegans have mastered the difficult lesson of expending their lives in work and in play. "A man without amusements soon grows vicious" is a Spanish saying, and this truth Vigo's citizens have realised more completely and more admirably than any other equally progressive town that I know. You forget the ugliness of "progress," its stupid little limitations, in this brilliant-coloured atmosphere, and you gain the illusion of living still in a time when the world was young. There are moments, of course, when you are forced to forget this new-found freedom ; but little things are not noticed when your heart is touched.

Sunday, the *fiesta* day, is the brightest day in the week, for then the band plays at noon and evening in the Alameda. So excellent is the climate that the band performance takes place in the open air in the winter months. The broad walk affords the most pleasing sight as the people promenade to and fro in a crowd that never ends, for the line returns upon itself, up and down.

Vigo is fortunately rich in the possession of unstained roads, leading straight into the country. On one afternoon I went to La Guia with the friend whose companionship counts for so much in my memories of Vigo. Our way led first through a winding maze of streets which showed sudden visions of archways and

alleys three feet wide. As we went higher eucalyptus woods encroached upon the town, and through a screen of waving branches we saw the beautiful bay, flanked by its long line of mountains, which in the white air of that brilliant day seemed to draw close to the water. The scene was like a Chinese picture, almost without shadows. When the crest of the hill was reached the view was seen on both sides: to the west the blue loveliness of the bay and the outspread panorama of Vigo, its granite houses a brilliant glitter in the sun; to the north-east a wider stretch of sea, the long range of the Jaján mountains, the green curve of the hills with their velvet verdure, and the clustering white villages of Canjas and Moaña. The colours of sky and land and sea were all greens and blues, violets and whites. A few seagulls were slowly flying over the blue-green water. From La Guia we walked down an enchanting road, and took another way into the town, having completed a circle of beauty.

All along the shores of the *ria*, among the vine-dressed hills, and farther south again in the *campo*, there lie places of beauty and interest, almost unseen and hardly visited by the stranger. You may sail by way of Castle Rande, where the Spanish treasure galleons were sunk, to San Simon's Island, and the white building of the Lazaretto, standing in a setting of box-wood trees. This quarantine island, which for fifteen years has not been used, is a place of real enchantment. One could think it was such islets as this one that the old Spanish navigators marked in their charts as *Vigias*—places to be looked for. Green grass and flowers, golden-coloured sands and limpid blue seas are here, and dark pine hills sloping upwards to purple shadows. And if you have never seen the sun sink in scarlet flame behind the Cies Islands you have yet to live.

You may drive to the old town of Bayona, where legend and poetry go with you. The road by which you travel will take you through scenery that offers views of sea and mountains so perfect that description turns dumb. It winds in and out, rises and falls, as it skirts the bay; grass-clad rocks reach to the sea, whose soft blue waters caress the sands, while on land in every direction the mountains form an ever-changing background. There is no road more beautiful than this one to Bayona, even in Galicia. You pass through little villages whose white houses are like sea-gulls settled upon the sands, while other villages are perched like eagles' nests upon the hills. At Ramallosa you will notice the old Roman bridge, with its shrine in the centre; and if you see, as I saw there on one *fiesta* afternoon, a group of peasants drinking from a wineskin, and girls dancing to the accompaniment of Pan's-pipes, you will know that you are back in a world from which the glad old pagan gods have never yet been hunted out.

Bayona stands upon a mound which looks out over the *ria*, its granite houses rising from the living rock which springs up here and there forming a reef in the middle of the roads. Firm sand and far-reaching, limpid sea, grey cliffs and a wealth of verdure, with the air of peace, unite to make the place dream-like, sweet, and satisfying. Nor is it in natural beauties alone that Bayona delights. There is the Romanesque church of Santa Maria, with its curious carved altar, and the old Franciscan convent, dating from the eleventh century. You will have delightful opportunity of intercourse with the people, who are all friendly and hospitable to strangers. You will see women making the native lace, which you may purchase for a few *reales*, if a present is not made to you, as it was to me. It was at Bayona that I saw the most beautiful girl I had found

in Galicia; and there were delightful children. The *chicos* played at leap-frog in much the same way as English boys, though there were several new and artistic variations in the leap. Then, if you are fortunate, you may visit the noble old Castle of Monte Real, placed on the very summit of the wooded hill, jutting out over the Atlantic shore. It is a situation of incomparable beauty, where from the terrace of the gardens, in which a tropical vegetation grows right out into the water, you see to the west the Atlantic rolling its waves up a beach that suggests a reef of white coral, while to the east the hills rise and undulate away into the hazy distance where the higher mountains of Portugal dimly show. To have seen this view once is to have seen it to the last day of one's life.

One of the most beautiful modern lighthouses is being erected near to Bayona. A colossal statue of the Virgin holds in her left hand a lantern, which will be lighted by electricity; in the right hand is the model of a ship sheltered against her breast. The lighthouse will be known as the Virgin of Bayona. In this trinity of art, religion, and commerce there is something specially suggestive of the Gallegan character, with its practical application of the things of the spirit to the usefulness of life. It is this quality which will enable them, while gaining the outside things of the world, to save their souls.

On my last evening in Vigo, when the lengthening shadows told that the sun was sinking to its western setting, I mounted to the summit of the hill of the Castillo del Castro to see the end of the day—the end of my most joyous holiday. Vigo is most wonderful at sunset, for colour is the strongest appeal of joy. Immediately below me was the town, set by the sea on its rocky, tree-girt height—a white mass crowned with

green, and now lighted with hot colour. At my feet the rays of the sun rosied the grass, and the light laid a gold upon the leaves of the trees. Like a lake the ocean spread before me, green at the rim of the earth, and blue shading to purple in the deeper water. Beyond were the hills—the Seven Sisters, and the great chain of Jaján—dark in their shadows as lapis lazuli; but glimmering to gold in the west where the light touched them. A diffused saffron spread like a blush over the luminous azure sky, wherein a few gauze clouds floated, lined with a pink more delicate than apple-blossom. The disk of the sun was still visible over the miles of sleeping sea, beyond the rugged ridge of the mountains, westward, where the Isles of Cies stand, now fluctuating with throbs of light—the rays seemed to heave in a fervour of brilliance. I watched the sun drop lower and lower, change from gold to bronze, and thence to a fiery red. I saw the fire catch the farthest hills, seeming to sear their peaks and edges like a flame coming down from heaven; and then floating away into paler gold, which deepened overhead to crimson in the outstretched dome of the sky. One moment at least I had in which I was conscious of the sun, the sea, the earth—the immense forces working on while the town hummed by its bay.

But who can describe a sunset? The painter's brush? The pen of the writer—mightier than the sword? Ah, but no one believes that! It is a saying made for fools, who have yet to learn to live. Yet I understood how I had come to love so passionately the active, beautiful, living town. Vigo justifies its name, "The Golden Gate of Galicia." And on the morrow I was to return to the grey, sad, money-rich land of my birth.

Darkness came quickly; that night there was no

moon ; sky and sea grew sombre, falling into drabs and dull violets, and from that to deeper gloom. The air grew chill ; around me the trees murmured with innumerable hushed voices, as the wind came through them ; the bitter wind that rises sometimes with sunset. My mood shivered under that loneliness which marks the end of all beautiful things.

Afterwards I went down into the town and witnessed a performance at the cinematograph theatre. I felt that I required a tonic to prepare me for England.

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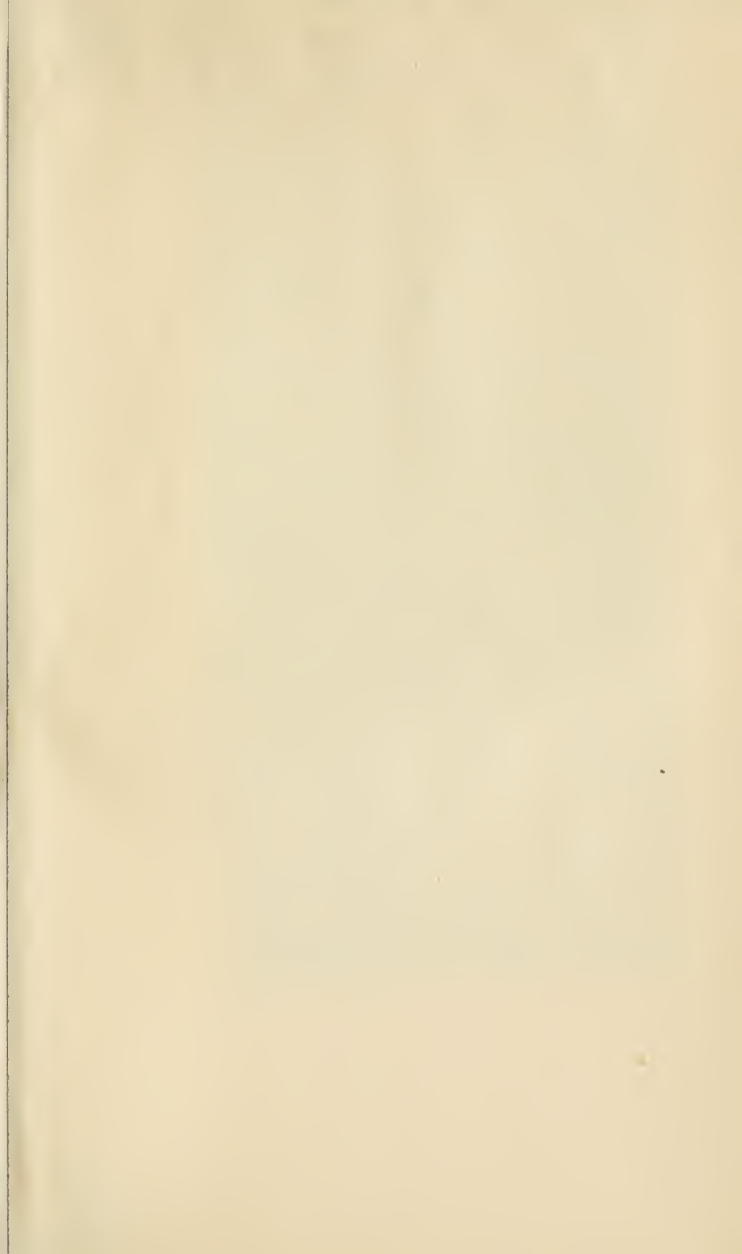
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