

The Pocket George Borrow eBook

The Pocket George Borrow by George Borrow

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Contents

The Pocket George Borrow eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	6
Page 1.....	7
Page 2.....	9
Page 3.....	11
Page 4.....	13
Page 5.....	15
Page 6.....	17
Page 7.....	19
Page 8.....	21
Page 9.....	22
Page 10.....	23
Page 11.....	24
Page 12.....	26
Page 13.....	28
Page 14.....	30
Page 15.....	31
Page 16.....	32
Page 17.....	33
Page 18.....	35
Page 19.....	36
Page 20.....	37
Page 21.....	39
Page 22.....	41



[Page 23.....43](#)

[Page 24.....45](#)

[Page 25.....46](#)

[Page 26.....47](#)

[Page 27.....48](#)

[Page 28.....50](#)

[Page 29.....52](#)

[Page 30.....53](#)

[Page 31.....54](#)

[Page 32.....55](#)

[Page 33.....56](#)

[Page 34.....57](#)

[Page 35.....58](#)

[Page 36.....60](#)

[Page 37.....61](#)

[Page 38.....62](#)

[Page 39.....64](#)

[Page 40.....65](#)

[Page 41.....67](#)

[Page 42.....69](#)

[Page 43.....70](#)

[Page 44.....71](#)

[Page 45.....73](#)

[Page 46.....74](#)

[Page 47.....75](#)

[Page 48.....76](#)



[Page 49..... 77](#)

[Page 50..... 78](#)

[Page 51..... 79](#)

[Page 52..... 80](#)

[Page 53..... 81](#)

[Page 54..... 82](#)

[Page 55..... 83](#)

[Page 56..... 85](#)

[Page 57..... 87](#)

[Page 58..... 89](#)

[Page 59..... 91](#)

[Page 60..... 92](#)

[Page 61..... 93](#)

[Page 62..... 94](#)

[Page 63..... 95](#)

[Page 64..... 97](#)

[Page 65..... 98](#)

[Page 66..... 100](#)

[Page 67..... 102](#)

[Page 68..... 104](#)

[Page 69..... 106](#)

[Page 70..... 108](#)

[Page 71..... 109](#)

[Page 72..... 110](#)

[Page 73..... 112](#)

[Page 74..... 113](#)



Page 75..... 115
Page 76..... 116
Page 77..... 118
Page 78..... 119
Page 79..... 121
Page 80..... 122
Page 81..... 123
Page 82..... 124
Page 83..... 125
Page 84..... 126
Page 85..... 128

Table of Contents

Section	Table of Contents	Page
Start of eBook		1
Footnotes:		1 78 78 79
Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg-tm		83 84



Page 1

GEORGE BORROW SELECTED PASSAGES

It is very possible that the reader during his country walks or rides has observed, on coming to four cross-roads, two or three handfuls of grass lying at a small distance from each other down one of these roads; perhaps he may have supposed that this grass was recently plucked from the roadside by frolicsome children, and flung upon the ground in sport, and this may possibly have been the case; it is ten chances to one, however, that no children's hands plucked them, but that they were strewed in this manner by Gypsies, for the purpose of informing any of their companions, who might be straggling behind, the route which they had taken; this is one form of the patteran or trail. It is likely, too, that the gorgio reader may have seen a cross drawn at the entrance of a road, the long part or stem of it pointing down that particular road, and he may have thought nothing of it, or have supposed that some sauntering individual like himself had made the mark with his stick: not so, courteous gorgio; *ley tiro solloholomus opre lesti*, *you may take your oath upon it* that it was drawn by a Gypsy finger, for that mark is another of the Rommany trails; there is no mistake in this. Once in the south of France, when I was weary, hungry, and penniless, I observed one of these last patterans, and following the direction pointed out, arrived at the resting-place of 'certain Bohemians,' by whom I was received with kindness and hospitality, on the faith of no other word of recommendation than patteran. There is also another kind of patteran, which is more particularly adapted for the night; it is a cleft stick stuck at the side of the road, close by the hedge, with a little arm in the cleft pointing down the road which the band have taken, in the manner of a signpost; any stragglers who may arrive at night where cross-roads occur search for this patteran on the left-hand side, and speedily rejoin their companions.

By following these patterans, or trails, the first Gypsies on their way to Europe never lost each other, though wandering amidst horrid wildernesses and dreary denies. Rommany matters have always had a peculiar interest for me; nothing, however, connected with Gypsy life ever more captivated my imagination than this patteran system: many thanks to the Gypsies for it; it has more than once been of service to me.

* * * * *

'Are you of the least use? Are you not spoken ill of by everybody? What's a gypsy?'

'What's the bird noising yonder, brother?'

'The bird! oh, that's the cuckoo tolling; but what has the cuckoo to do with the matter?'

'We'll see, brother; what's the cuckoo?'

'What is it? you know as much about it as myself, Jasper.'



'Isn't it a kind of roguish, chaffing bird, brother?'

'I believe it is, Jasper.'

'Nobody knows whence it comes, brother?'



Page 2

'I believe not, Jasper.'

'Very poor, brother, not a nest of its own?'

'So they say, Jasper.'

'With every person's bad word, brother?'

'Yes, Jasper; every person is mocking it.'

'Tolerably merry, brother?'

'Yes, tolerably merry, Jasper.'

'Of no use at all, brother?'

'None whatever, Jasper.'

'You would be glad to get rid of the cuckoos, brother?'

'Why, not exactly, Jasper; the cuckoo is a pleasant, funny bird, and its presence and voice give a great charm to the green trees and fields; no, I can't say I wish exactly to get rid of the cuckoo.'

'Well, brother, what's a Rommany chal?'

'You must answer that question yourself, Jasper.'

'A roguish, chaffing, fellow; ain't he, brother?'

'Ay, ay, Jasper.'

'Of no use at all, brother?'

'Just so, Jasper; I see—'

'Something very much like a cuckoo, brother?'

'I see what you are after, Jasper.'

'You would like to get rid of us, wouldn't you?'

'Why, no; not exactly.'



'We are no ornament to the green lanes in spring and summer time; are we, brother? and the voices of our chies, with their cukkerin and dukkerin, don't help to make them pleasant?'

'I see what you are at, Jasper.'

'You would wish to turn the cuckoos into barn-door fowls, wouldn't you?'

'Can't say I should, Jasper, whatever some people might wish.'

'And the chals and chies into radical weavers and factory wenches; hey, brother?'

'Can't say that I should, Jasper. You are certainly a picturesque people, and in many respects an ornament both to town and country; painting and lil writing too are under great obligations to you. What pretty pictures are made out of your campings and groupings, and what pretty books have been written in which gypsies, or at least creatures intended to represent gypsies, have been the principal figures. I think if we were without you, we should begin to miss you.'

'Just as you would the cuckoos, if they were all converted into barn-door fowls. I tell you what, brother; frequently, as I have sat under a hedge in spring or summer time, and heard the cuckoo, I have thought that we chals and cuckoos are alike in many respects, but especially in character. Everybody speaks ill of us both, and everybody is glad to see both of us again.'

* * * * *

'People are becoming vastly sharp,' said Mr. Petulengro; 'and I am told that all the old-fashioned good-tempered constables are going to be set aside, and a paid body of men to be established, who are not to permit a tramper or vagabond on the roads of England; and talking of roads, puts me in mind of a strange story I heard two nights ago, whilst drinking some beer at a public-house, in company with my cousin Sylvester. I had asked Tawno to go,



Page 3

but his wife would not let him. Just opposite me, smoking their pipes, were a couple of men, something like engineers, and they were talking of a wonderful invention which was to make a wonderful alteration in England; inasmuch as it would set aside all the old roads, which in a little time would be ploughed up, and sowed with corn, and cause all England to be laid down with iron roads, on which people would go thundering along in vehicles, pushed forward by fire and smoke. Now, brother, when I heard this, I did not feel very comfortable; for I thought to myself, what a queer place such a road would be to pitch one's tent upon, and how impossible it would be for one's cattle to find a bite of grass upon it; and I thought likewise of the danger to which one's family would be exposed of being run over and severely scorched by these same flying fiery vehicles; so I made bold to say, that I hoped such an invention would never be countenanced, because it was likely to do a great deal of harm. Whereupon, one of the men, giving me a glance, said, without taking the pipe out of his mouth, that for his part, he sincerely hoped that it would take effect; and if it did no other good than stopping the rambles of gypsies, and other like scamps, it ought to be encouraged. Well, brother, feeling myself insulted, I put my hand into my pocket, in order to pull out money, intending to challenge him to fight for a five-shilling stake, but merely found sixpence, having left all my other money at the tent; which sixpence was just sufficient to pay for the beer which Sylvester and myself were drinking, of whom I couldn't hope to borrow anything—"poor as Sylvester" being a by-word amongst us. So, not being able to back myself, I held my peace, and let the gorgio have it all his own way, who, after turning up his nose at me, went on discoursing about the said invention, saying what a fund of profit it would be to those who knew how to make use of it, and should have the laying down of the new roads, and the shoeing of England with iron. And after he had said this, and much more of the same kind, which I cannot remember, he and his companion got up and walked away; and presently I and Sylvester got up and walked to our camp; and there I lay down in my tent by the side of my wife, where I had an ugly dream of having camped upon an iron road; my tent being overturned by a flying vehicle; my wife's leg injured; and all my affairs put into great confusion.'

* * * * *

'Will you take a glass of wine?'

'Yes.'

'That's right; what shall it be?'

'Madeira!'



The magistrate gave a violent slap on his knee; 'I like your taste,' said he, 'I am fond of a glass of Madeira myself, and can give you such a one as you will not drink every day; sit down, young gentleman, you shall have a glass of Madeira, and the best I have.'

Thereupon he got up, and, followed by his two terriers, walked slowly out of the room.



Page 4

I looked round the room, and, seeing nothing which promised me much amusement, I sat down, and fell again into my former train of thought.

'What is truth?' said I.

'Here it is,' said the magistrate, returning at the end of a quarter of an hour, followed by the servant with a tray; 'here's the true thing, or I am no judge, far less a justice. It has been thirty years in my cellar last Christmas. There,' said he to the servant, 'put it down, and leave my young friend and me to ourselves. Now, what do you think of it?'

'It is very good,' said I.

'Did you ever taste better Madeira?'

'I never before tasted Madeira.'

'Then you ask for a wine without knowing what it is?'

'I ask for it, sir, that I may know what it is.'

'Well, there is logic in that, as Parr would say; you have heard of Parr?'

'Old Parr?'

'Yes, old Parr, but not that Parr; you mean the English, I the Greek Parr, as people call him.'

'I don't know him.'

'Perhaps not—rather too young for that, but were you of my age, you might have cause to know him, coming from where you do. He kept school there, I was his first scholar; he flogged Greek into me till I loved him—and he loved me. He came to see me last year, and sat in that chair; I honour Parr—he knows much, and is a sound man.'

'Does he know the truth?'

'Know the truth! he knows what's good, from an oyster to an ostrich—he's not only sound but round.'

'Suppose we drink his health?'

'Thank you, boy: here's Parr's health, and Whiter's.'

'Who is Whiter?'



'Don't you know Whiter? I thought everybody knew Reverend Whiter, the philologist, though I suppose you scarcely know what that means. A man fond of tongues and languages, quite out of your way—he understands some twenty; what do you say to that?'

'Is he a sound man?'

'Why, as to that, I scarcely know what to say; he has got queer notions in his head—wrote a book to prove that all words came originally from the earth—who knows? Words have roots, and roots live in the earth; but, upon the whole, I should not call him altogether a sound man, though he can talk Greek nearly as fast as Parr.'

'Is he a round man?'

'Ay, boy, rounder than Parr; I'll sing you a song, if you like, which will let you into his character:—

"Give me the haunch of a buck to eat, and to drink Madeira old,
And a gentle wife to rest with, and in my arms to fold,
An Arabic book to study, a Norfolk cob to ride,
And a house to live in shaded with trees, and near to a river side;
With such good things around me, and blessed with good health withal,
Though I should live for a hundred years, for death I would not call."

Here's to Whiter's health—so you know nothing about the fight?'



Page 5

'No, sir; the truth is, that of late I have been very much occupied with various matters, otherwise I should, perhaps, have been able to afford you some information. Boxing is a noble art.'

'Can you box?'

'A little.'

'I tell you what, my boy; I honour you, and, provided your education had been a little less limited, I should have been glad to see you here in company with Parr and Whiter; both can box. Boxing is, as you say, a noble art—a truly English art; may I never see the day when Englishmen shall feel ashamed of it, or blacklegs and blackguards bring it into disgrace! I am a magistrate, and, of course, cannot patronize the thing very openly, yet I sometimes see a prize-fight. I saw the Game Chicken beat Gulley.'

* * * * *

One day it happened that, being on my rambles, I entered a green lane which I had never seen before; at first it was rather narrow, but as I advanced it became considerably wider; in the middle was a driftway with deep ruts, but right and left was a space carpeted with a sward of trefoil and clover; there was no lack of trees, chiefly ancient oaks, which, flinging out their arms from either side, nearly formed a canopy, and afforded a pleasing shelter from the rays of the sun, which was burning fiercely above. Suddenly a group of objects attracted my attention. Beneath one of the largest of the trees, upon the grass, was a kind of low tent or booth, from the top of which a thin smoke was curling; beside it stood a couple of light carts, whilst two or three lean horses or ponies were cropping the herbage which was growing nigh. Wondering to whom this odd tent could belong, I advanced till I was close before it, when I found that it consisted of two tilts, like those of waggons, placed upon the ground and fronting each other, connected behind by a sail or large piece of canvas, which was but partially drawn across the top; upon the ground, in the intervening space, was a fire, over which, supported by a kind of iron crowbar, hung a cauldron. My advance had been so noiseless as not to alarm the inmates, who consisted of a man and woman, who sat apart, one on each side of the fire; they were both busily employed—the man was carding plaited straw, whilst the woman seemed to be rubbing something with a white powder, some of which lay on a plate beside her. Suddenly the man looked up, and, perceiving me, uttered a strange kind of cry, and the next moment both the woman and himself were on their feet and rushing upon me.

I retreated a few steps, yet without turning to flee. I was not, however, without apprehension, which, indeed, the appearance of these two people was well calculated to inspire. The woman was a stout figure, seemingly between thirty and forty; she wore no cap, and her long hair fell on either side of her head, like horse-tails, half-way down

her waist; her skin was dark and swarthy, like that of a toad, and the expression of her countenance was particularly



Page 6

evil; her arms were bare, and her bosom was but half-concealed by a slight bodice, below which she wore a coarse petticoat, her only other article of dress. The man was somewhat younger, but of a figure equally wild; his frame was long and lathy, but his arms were remarkably short, his neck was rather bent, he squinted slightly, and his mouth was much awry; his complexion was dark, but, unlike that of the woman, was more ruddy than livid; there was a deep scar on his cheek, something like the impression of a halfpenny. The dress was quite in keeping with the figure: in his hat, which was slightly peaked, was stuck a peacock's feather; over a waistcoat of hide, untanned and with the hair upon it, he wore a rough jerkin of russet hue; small clothes of leather, which had probably once belonged to a soldier, but with which pipe-clay did not seem to have come in contact for many a year, protected his lower man as far as the knee; his legs were cased in long stockings of blue worsted, and on his shoes he wore immense old-fashioned buckles.

* * * * *

Because they have been known to beg the carcass of a hog which they themselves have poisoned, it has been asserted that they prefer carrion which has perished of sickness to the meat of the shambles; and because they have been seen to make a ragout of boror (snails), and to roast a hotchivitchu or hedgehog, it has been supposed that reptiles of every description form a part of their cuisine. It is high time to undeceive the Gentiles on these points. Know, then, O Gentile, whether thou be from the land of the Gorgios or the Busne, that the very Gypsies who consider a ragout of snails a delicious dish will not touch an eel, because it bears resemblance to a snake; and that those who will feast on a roasted hedgehog could be induced by no money to taste a squirrel, a delicious and wholesome species of game, living on the purest and most nutritious food which the fields and forests can supply. I myself, while living among the Roms of England, have been regarded almost in the light of a cannibal for cooking the latter animal and preferring it to hotchivitchu barbecued, or ragout of boror. 'You are but half Rommany, brother,' they would say, 'and you feed gorgiko-nes (like a Gentile), even as you talk. Tchachipen (in truth), if we did not know you to be of the Mecralliskoe rat (royal blood) of Pharaoh, we should be justified in driving you forth as a juggel-mush (dog man), one more fitted to keep company with wild beasts and Gorgios than gentle Rommanys.'

* * * * *

One fact has always struck us with particular force in the history of these people, namely, that Gitanismo—which means Gypsy villainy of every description—flourished and knew nothing of decay so long as the laws recommended and enjoined measures the most harsh and severe for the suppression of the Gypsy sect; the palmy days of

Gitanismo were those in which the caste was proscribed, and its members, in the event of renouncing their



Page 7

Gypsy habits, had nothing farther to expect than the occupation of tilling the earth, a dull hopeless toil; then it was that the Gitanos paid tribute to the inferior ministers of justice, and were engaged in illicit connection with those of higher station and by such means baffled the law, whose vengeance rarely fell upon their heads; and then it was that they bid it open defiance, retiring to the deserts and mountains, and living in wild independence by rapine and shedding of blood; for as the law then stood they would lose all by resigning their Gitanismo, whereas by clinging to it they lived either in the independence so dear to them, or beneath the protection of their confederates. It would appear that in proportion as the law was harsh and severe, so was the Gitano bold and secure.

* * * * *

Many of them reside in caves scooped in the sides of the ravines which lead to the higher regions of the Alpujarras, on a skirt of which stands Granada. A common occupation of the Gitanos of Granada is working in iron, and it is not unfrequent to find these caves tenanted by Gypsy smiths and their families, who ply the hammer and forge in the bowels of the earth. To one standing at the mouth of the cave, especially at night, they afford a picturesque spectacle. Gathered round the forge, their bronzed and naked bodies, illuminated by the flame, appear like figures of demons, while the cave, with its flinty sides and uneven roof, blackened by the charcoal vapours which hover about it in festoons, seems to offer no inadequate representation of fabled purgatory.

* * * * *

It has always struck me that there is something highly poetical about a forge I am not singular in this opinion: various individuals have assured me that they can never pass by one, even in the midst of a crowded town, without experiencing sensations which they can scarcely define, but which are highly pleasurable. I have a decided penchant for forges, especially rural ones, placed in some quaint, quiet spot—a dingle for example, which is a poetical place, or at a meeting of four roads, which is still more so, for how many a superstition—and superstition is the soul of poetry—is connected with these cross roads! I love to light upon such a one, especially after nightfall, as everything about a forge tells to most advantage at night, the hammer sounds more solemnly in the stillness, the glowing particles scattered by the strokes sparkle with more effect in the darkness, whilst the sooty visage of the sastramescro, half in shadow, and half illumined by the red and partial blaze of the forge, looks more mysterious and strange. On such occasions I draw in my horse's rein, and seated in the saddle endeavour to associate with the picture before me—in itself a picture of romance—whatever of the wild and wonderful I have read of in books, or have seen with my own eyes in connection with forges.



Page 8

A sound was heard like the rapid galloping of a horse, not loud and distinct as on a road, but dull and heavy as if upon a grass sward, nearer and nearer it came, and the man, starting up, rushed out of the tent, and looked around anxiously. I arose from the stool upon which I had been seated, and just at that moment, amidst a crashing of boughs and sticks, a man on horseback bounded over the hedge into the lane at a few yards' distance from where we were; from the impetus of the leap the horse was nearly down on his knees; the rider, however, by dint of vigorous handling of the reins, prevented him from falling, and then rode up to the tent. "Tis Nat," said the man; 'what brings him here?' The new comer was a stout, burly fellow, about the middle age; he had a savage, determined look, and his face was nearly covered over with carbuncles; he wore a broad slouching hat, and was dressed in a grey coat, cut in a fashion which I afterwards learnt to be the genuine Newmarket cut, the skirts being exceedingly short; his waistcoat was of red plush, and he wore broad corduroy breeches and white top-boots. The steed which carried him was of iron grey, spirited and powerful, but covered with sweat and foam. The fellow glanced fiercely and suspiciously around, and said something to the man of the tent in a harsh and rapid voice. A short and hurried conversation ensued in the strange tongue. I could not take my eyes off this new comer. Oh, that half-jockey half-bruiser countenance, I never forgot it! More than fifteen years afterwards I found myself amidst a crowd before Newgate; a gallows was erected, and beneath it stood a criminal, a notorious malefactor. I recognised him at once; the horseman of the lane is now beneath the fatal tree, but nothing altered; still the same man; jerking his head to the right and left with the same fierce under-glance, just as if the affairs of this world had the same kind of interest to the last; grey coat of Newmarket cut, plush waistcoat, corduroys, and boots, nothing altered; but the head, alas! is bare and so is the neck. Oh, crime and virtue, virtue and crime!—it was old John Newton I think, who, when he saw a man going to be hanged, said: 'There goes John Newton, but for the grace of God!'

* * * * *

After much feasting, drinking, and yelling, in the Gypsy house, the bridal train sallied forth—a frantic spectacle. First of all marched a villainous jockey-looking fellow, holding in his hands, uplifted, a long pole, at the top of which fluttered in the morning air a snow-white cambric handkerchief, emblem of the bride's purity. Then came the betrothed pair, followed by their nearest friends; then a rabble rout of Gypsies, screaming and shouting, and discharging guns and pistols, till all around rang with the din, and the village dogs barked. On arriving at the church gate, the fellow who bore the pole stuck it into the ground with a loud huzza, and the train, forming two ranks, defiled into the church on either side of the pole and its strange ornaments. On the conclusion of the ceremony, they returned in the same manner in which they had come.



Page 9

Throughout the day there was nothing going on but singing, drinking, feasting, and dancing; but the most singular part of the festival was reserved for the dark night. Nearly a ton weight of sweetmeats had been prepared, at an enormous expense, not for the gratification of the palate, but for a purpose purely Gypsy. These sweetmeats of all kinds, and of all forms, but principally yemas, or yolks of eggs prepared with a crust of sugar (a delicious *bonne-bouche*), were strewn on the floor of a large room, at least to the depth of three inches. Into this room, at a given signal, tripped the bride and bridegroom, dancing *romalis*, followed amain by all the Gitanos and Gitanas, dancing *romalis*. To convey a slight idea of the scene is almost beyond the power of words. In a few minutes the sweetmeats were reduced to a powder, or rather to a mud, the dancers were soiled to the knees with sugar, fruits, and yolks of eggs. Still more terrific became the lunatic merriment. The men sprang high into the air, neighed, brayed, and crowed; whilst the Gitanas snapped their fingers in their own fashion, louder than castanets, distorting their forms into all kinds of obscene attitudes, and uttering words to repeat which were an abomination. In a corner of the apartment capered the white Sebastianillo, a convict Gypsy from Melilla, strumming the guitar most furiously, and producing demoniacal sounds which had some resemblance to Malbrun (Malbrouk), and, as he strummed, repeating at intervals the Gypsy modification of the song.

* * * * *

The English Gypsies are constant attendants at the racecourse; what jockey is not? Perhaps jockeyism originated with them, and even racing, at least in England. Jockeyism properly implies *the management of a whip*, and the word jockey is neither more nor less than the term slightly modified, by which they designate the formidable whips which they usually carry, and which are at present in general use amongst horse-traffickers, under the title of jockey whips. They are likewise fond of resorting to the prize-ring, and have occasionally even attained some eminence, as principals, in those disgraceful and brutalizing exhibitions called pugilistic combats. I believe a great deal has been written on the subject of the English Gypsies, but the writers have dwelt too much in generalities; they have been afraid to take the Gypsy by the hand, lead him forth from the crowd, and exhibit him, in the area; he is well worth observing. When a boy of fourteen, I was present at a prize-fight; why should I hide the truth? It took place on a green meadow, beside a running stream, close by the old church of E—, and within a league of the ancient town of N—, the capital of one of the eastern counties. The terrible Thurtell was present, lord of the concourse; for wherever he moved he was master, and whenever he spoke, even when in chains, every other voice was silent. He stood on the mead, grim and pale as



Page 10

usual, with his bruisers around. He it was, indeed, who *got up* the fight, as he had previously done twenty others; it being his frequent boast that he had first introduced bruising and bloodshed amidst rural scenes, and transformed a quiet slumbering town into a den of Jews and metropolitan thieves. Some time before the commencement of the combat, three men, mounted on wild-looking horses, came dashing down the road in the direction of the meadow, in the midst of which they presently showed themselves, their horses clearing the deep ditches with wonderful alacrity. 'That's Gypsy Will and his gang,' lisped a Hebrew pickpocket; 'we shall have another fight.' The word Gypsy was always sufficient to excite my curiosity, and I looked attentively at the new-comers.

I have seen Gypsies of various lands, Russian, Hungarian, and Turkish; and I have also seen the legitimate children of most countries of the world; but I never saw, upon the whole, three more remarkable individuals, as far as personal appearance was concerned, than the three English Gypsies who now presented themselves to my eyes on that spot. Two of them had dismounted, and were holding their horses by the reins. The tallest, and, at the first glance, the most interesting of the two, was almost a giant, for his height could not have been less than six feet three. It is impossible for the imagination to conceive anything more perfectly beautiful than were the features of this man, and the most skilful sculptor of Greece might have taken them as his model for a hero and a god. The forehead was exceedingly lofty,—a rare thing in a Gypsy; the nose less Roman than Grecian,—fine yet delicate; the eye large, overhung with long drooping lashes, giving them almost a melancholy expression; it was only when the lashes were elevated that the Gypsy glance was seen, if that can be called a glance which is a strange stare, like nothing else in this world. His complexion was a beautiful olive; and his teeth were of a brilliancy uncommon even amongst these people, who have all fine teeth. He was dressed in a coarse waggoner's slop, which, however, was unable to conceal altogether the proportions of his noble and Herculean figure. He might be about twenty-eight. His companion and his captain, Gypsy Will, was, I think, fifty when he was hanged, ten years subsequently (for I never afterwards lost sight of him), in the front of the jail of Bury St. Edmunds. I have still present before me his bushy black hair, his black face, and his big black eyes fixed and staring. His dress consisted of a loose blue jockey coat, jockey boots and breeches; in his hand was a huge jockey whip, and on his head (it struck me at the time for its singularity) a broad-brimmed high-peaked Andalusian hat, or at least one very much resembling those generally worn in that province. In stature he was shorter than his more youthful companion, yet he must have measured six feet at least, and was stronger built, if possible. What brawn!—what



Page 11

bone!—what legs!—what thighs! The third Gypsy, who remained on horseback, looked more like a phantom than anything human. His complexion was the colour of pale dust, and of that same colour was all that pertained to him, hat and clothes. His boots were dusty of course, for it was midsummer, and his very horse was of a dusty dun. His features were whimsically ugly, most of his teeth were gone, and as to his age, he might be thirty or sixty. He was somewhat lame and halt, but an unequalled rider when once upon his steed, which he was naturally not very solicitous to quit. I subsequently discovered that he was considered the wizard of the gang.

I have been already prolix with respect to these Gypsies, but I will not leave them quite yet. The intended combatants at length arrived; it was necessary to clear the ring,—always a troublesome and difficult task. Thurtell went up to the two Gypsies, with whom he seemed to be acquainted, and with his surly smile, said two or three words, which I, who was standing by, did not understand. The Gypsies smiled in return, and giving the reins of their animals to their mounted companion, immediately set about the task which the king of the flash-men had, as I conjecture, imposed upon them; this they soon accomplished. Who could stand against such fellows and such whips? The fight was soon over—then there was a pause. Once more Thurtell came up to the Gypsies and said something—the Gypsies looked at each other and conversed; but their words then had no meaning for my ears. The tall Gypsy shook his head—'Very well,' said the other, in English, 'I will—that's all.'

Then pushing the people aside, he strode to the ropes, over which he bounded into the ring, flinging his Spanish hat high into the air.

Gypsy Will.—'The best man in England for twenty pounds!'

Thurtell.—'I am backer!'

Twenty pounds is a tempting sum, and there were men that day upon the green meadow who would have shed the blood of their own fathers for the fifth of the price. But the Gypsy was not an unknown man, his prowess and strength were notorious, and no one cared to encounter him. Some of the Jews looked eager for a moment; but their sharp eyes quailed quickly before his savage glances, as he towered in the ring his huge form dilating, and his black features convulsed with excitement. The Westminster bravo eyed the Gypsy askance; but the comparison, if they made any, seemed by no means favourable to themselves. 'Gypsy! rum chap.—Ugly customer,—always in training.' Such were the exclamations which I heard, some of which at that period of my life I did not understand.



No man would fight the Gypsy.—Yes! a strong country fellow wished to win the stakes, and was about to fling up his hat in defiance, but he was prevented by his friends, with —'Fool! he'll kill you!'

As the Gypsies were mounting their horses, I heard the dusty phantom exclaim—



Page 12

'Brother, you are an arrant ring-maker and a horse-breaker; you'll make a hempen ring to break your own neck of a horse one of these days.'

They pressed their horses' flanks, again leaped over the ditches, and speedily vanished, amidst the whirlwinds of dust which they raised upon the road.

The words of the phantom Gypsy were ominous. Gypsy Will was eventually executed for a murder committed in his early youth in company with two English labourers, one of whom confessed the fact on his death-bed. He was the head of the clan Young, which, with the clan Smith, still haunts two of the eastern counties.

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'I say, Jasper, what remarkable names your people have!'

'And what pretty names, brother; there's my own for example, Jasper; then there's Ambrose and Sylvester; then there's Culvato, which signifies Claude; then there's Pirus—that's a nice name, brother.'

'Then there's your wife's name, Pakomovna; then there's Ursula and Morella.'

'Then, brother, there's Ercilla.'

'Ercilla! the name of the great poet of Spain, how wonderful; then Leviathan.'

'The name of a ship, brother; Leviathan was named after a ship, so don't make a wonder out of her. But there's Sanpriel and Synfye.'

'Ay, and Clementina and Lavinia, Camillia and Lydia, Curlanda and Orlanda; wherever did they get those names?'

'Where did my wife get her necklace, brother?'

'She knows best, Jasper. I hope—'

'Come, no hoping! She got it from her grandmother, who died at the age of 103, and sleeps in Coggeshall churchyard. She got it from her mother, who also died very old, and who could give no other account of it than that it had been in the family time out of mind.'

'Whence could they have got it?'

'Why, perhaps where they got their names, brother. A gentleman, who had travelled much, once told me that he had seen the sister of it about the neck of an Indian queen.'



'Some of your names, Jasper, appear to be church names; your own, for example, and Ambrose, and Sylvester; perhaps you got them from the Papists, in the times of Popery; but where did you get such a name as Pirus, a name of Grecian romance? Then some of them appear to be Slavonian; for example, Mikailia and Pakomovna. I don't know much of Slavonian; but—'

'What is Slavonian, brother?'

'The family name of certain nations, the principal of which is the Russian, and from which the word slave is originally derived. You have heard of the Russians, Jasper?'

'Yes, brother, and seen some. I saw their crallis at the time of the peace; he was not a bad-looking man for a Russian.'

'By-the-bye, Jasper, I'm half-inclined to think that crallis is a Slavish word. I saw something like it in a lil called Voltaire's Life of Charles. How you should have come by such names and words is to me incomprehensible.'



Page 13

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'What is your opinion of death, Mr. Petulengro?' said I, as I sat down beside him.

'My opinion of death, brother, is much the same as that in the old song of Pharaoh, which I have heard my grandam sing:—

"Cana marel o manus chivios ande puv,
Ta rovel pa leste o chavo ta romi."

When a man dies, he is cast into the earth, and his wife and child sorrow over him. If he has neither wife nor child, then his father and mother, I suppose; and if he is quite alone in the world, why, then, he is cast into the earth, and there is an end of the matter.'

'And do you think that is the end of a man?'

'There's an end of him, brother, more's the pity.'

'Why do you say so?'

'Life is sweet, brother.'

'Do you think so?'

'Think so! There's night and day, brother, both sweet things; sun, moon, and stars, brother, all sweet things; there's likewise the wind on the heath. Life is very sweet, brother; who would wish to die?'

'I would wish to die—'

'You talk like a gorgio—which is the same as talking like a fool—were you a Rommany Chal you would talk wiser. Wish to die, indeed! A Rommany Chal would wish to live for ever!'

'In sickness, Jasper?'

'There's the sun and stars, brother.'

'In blindness, Jasper?'

'There's the wind on the heath, brother; if I could only feel that, I would gladly live for ever. Dosta, we'll now go to the tents and put on the gloves; and I'll try to make you feel what a sweet thing it is to be alive, brother!'

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Beating of women by the lords of the creation has become very prevalent in England since pugilism has been discountenanced. Now the writer strongly advises any woman who is struck by a ruffian to strike him again; or if she cannot clench her fists, and he advises all women in these singular times to learn to clench their fists, to go at him with tooth and nail, and not to be afraid of the result, for any fellow who is dastard enough to strike a woman, would allow himself to be beaten by a woman, were she to make at him in self-defence, even if, instead of possessing the stately height and athletic proportions of the aforesaid Isopel, she were as diminutive in stature, and had a hand as delicate, and foot as small, as a certain royal lady, who was some time ago assaulted by a fellow upwards of six feet high, whom the writer has no doubt she could have beaten had she thought proper to go at him. Such is the deliberate advice of the author to his countrymen and women—advice in which he believes there is nothing unscriptural or repugnant to common sense.

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Of my wife I will merely say that she is a perfect paragon of wives—can make puddings and sweets and treacle posset, and is the best woman of business in Eastern Anglia—of my step-daughter—for such she is, though I generally call her daughter, and with good reason, seeing that she has always shown herself a daughter to me—that she has all kinds of good qualities, and several accomplishments, knowing something of conchology, more of botany, drawing capitally in the Dutch style, and playing remarkably well on the guitar—not the trumpery German thing so-called—but the real Spanish guitar.



Page 14

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In the summer of the year 1854 myself, wife, and daughter determined upon going into Wales, to pass a few months there. We are country people of a corner of East Anglia, and, at the time of which I am speaking, had been residing so long on our own little estate, that we had become tired of the objects around us, and conceived that we should be all the better for changing the scene for a short period. We were undetermined for some time with respect to where we should go. I proposed Wales from the first, but my wife and daughter, who have always had rather a hankering after what is fashionable, said they thought it would be more advisable to go to Harrowgate, or Leamington. On my observing that those were terrible places for expense, they replied that, though the price of corn had of late been shamefully low, we had a spare hundred pounds or two in our pockets, and could afford to pay for a little insight into fashionable life. I told them that there was nothing I so much hated as fashionable life, but that, as I was anything but a selfish person, I would endeavour to stifle my abhorrence of it for a time, and attend them either to Leamington or Harrowgate. By this speech I obtained my wish, even as I knew I should, for my wife and daughter instantly observed, that, after all, they thought we had better go into Wales, which, though not so fashionable as either Leamington or Harrowgate, was a very nice picturesque country, where, they had no doubt, they should get on very well, more especially as I was acquainted with the Welsh language.

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'Fear God, and take your own part. There's Bible in that, young man; see how Moses feared God, and how he took his own part against everybody who meddled with him. And see how David feared God, and took his own part against all the bloody enemies which surrounded him—so fear God, young man, and never give in! The world can bully, and is fond, provided it sees a man in a kind of difficulty, of getting about him, calling him coarse names, and even going so far as to hustle him: but the world, like all bullies, carries a white feather in its tail, and no sooner sees the man taking off his coat, and offering to fight its best, than it scatters here and there, and is always civil to him afterwards. So when folks are disposed to ill-treat you, young man, say, "Lord have mercy upon me!" and then tip them Long Melford, to which, as the saying goes, there is nothing comparable for shortness all the world over; and these last words, young man, are the last you will ever have from her who is nevertheless,

'Your affectionate female servant,
'Isopel Berners.'

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Page 15

Soldiers and sailors promoted to command are said to be in general tyrants; in nine cases out of ten, when they are tyrants, they have been obliged to have recourse to extreme severity in order to protect themselves from the insolence and mutinous spirit of the men,—'He is no better than ourselves: shoot him, bayonet him, or fling him overboard!' they say of some obnoxious individual raised above them by his merit. Soldiers and sailors in general, will bear any amount of tyranny from a lordly sot, or the son of a man who has 'plenty of brass'—their own term—but will mutiny against the just orders of a skilful and brave officer who 'is no better than themselves.' There was the affair of the *Bounty*, for example: Bligh was one of the best seamen that ever trod deck, and one of the bravest of men; proofs of his seamanship he gave by steering, amidst dreadful weather, a deeply laden boat for nearly four thousand miles over an almost unknown ocean—of his bravery, at the fight of Copenhagen, one of the most desperate ever fought, of which after Nelson he was the hero: he was, moreover, not an unkind man; but the crew of the *Bounty* mutinied against him, and set him half naked in an open boat, with certain of his men who remained faithful to him, and ran away with the ship. Their principal motive for doing so was an idea, whether true or groundless the writer cannot say, that Bligh was 'no better than themselves'; he was certainly neither a lord's illegitimate, nor possessed of twenty thousand pounds.

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There they come, the bruisers, from far London, or from wherever else they might chance to be at that time, to the great rendezvous in the old city; some came one way, some another: some of tip-top reputation came with peers in their chariots, for glory and fame are such fair things that even peers are proud to have those invested therewith by their sides; others came in their own gigs, driving their own bits of blood, and I heard one say: 'I have driven through at a heat the whole one hundred and eleven miles, and only stopped to bait twice.' Oh, the blood-horses of old England! but they too have had their day—for everything beneath the sun there is a season and a time. But the greater number come just as they can contrive; on the tops of coaches, for example; and amongst these there are fellows with dark sallow faces and sharp shining eyes; and it is these that have planted rottenness in the core of pugilism, for they are Jews, and, true to their kind, have only base lucre in view.

It was fierce old Cobbett, I think, who first said that the Jews first introduced bad faith amongst pugilists. He did not always speak the truth, but at any rate he spoke it when he made that observation. Strange people the Jews—endowed with every gift but one, and that the highest, genius divine,—genius which can alone make of men demigods, and elevate them above earth and what is earthy and what is grovelling; without which a clever nation—and who more clever than the Jews?—may have Rambams in plenty, but never a Fielding nor a Shakespeare; a Rothschild and a Mendoza, yes—but never a Kean nor a Belcher.



Page 16

So the bruisers of England are come to be present at the grand fight speedily coming off; there they are met in the precincts of the old town, near the Field of the Chapel, planted with tender saplings at the restoration of sporting Charles, which are now become venerable elms, as high as many a steeple; there they are met at a fitting rendezvous, where a retired coachman, with one leg, keeps an hotel and a bowling-green. I think I now see them upon the bowling-green, the men of renown, amidst hundreds of people with no renown at all, who gaze upon them with timid wonder. Fame, after all, is a glorious thing, though it lasts only for a day. There's Cribb, the champion of England, and perhaps the best man in England; there he is, with his huge, massive figure, and face wonderfully like that of a lion. There is Belcher, the younger, not the mighty one, who is gone to his place, but the Teucer Belcher, the most scientific pugilist that ever entered a ring, only wanting strength to be, I won't say what. He appears to walk before me now, as he did that evening, with his white hat, white greatcoat, thin, genteel figure, springy step, and keen, determined eye. Crosses him—what a contrast!—grim, savage Shelton, who has a civil word for nobody, and a hard blow for anybody—hard! one blow, given with the proper play of his athletic arm, will unsense a giant. Yonder individual, who strolls about with his hands behind him, supporting his brown coat lappets, undersized, and who looks anything but what he is, is the king of the light weights, so called,—Randall! the terrible Randall, who has Irish blood in his veins; not the better for that, nor the worse; and not far from him is his last antagonist, Ned Turner, who, though beaten by him, still thinks himself as good a man, in which he is, perhaps, right, for it was a near thing; and 'a better shentleman,' in which he is quite right, for he is a Welshman. But how shall I name them all? they were there by dozens, and all tremendous in their way. There was Bulldog Hudson and fearless Scroggins, who beat the conqueror of Sam the Jew. There was Black Richmond—no, he was not there, but I knew him well; he was the most dangerous of blacks, even with a broken thigh. There was Purcell, who could never conquer till all seemed over with him. There was—what! shall I name thee last? ay, why not? I believe that thou art the last of all that strong family still above the sod, where mayst thou long continue—true piece of English stuff, Tom of Bedford—sharp as winter, kind as spring.

Hail to thee, Tom of Bedford, or by whatever name it may please thee to be called, Spring or Winter. Hail to thee, six-foot Englishman of the brown eye, worthy to have carried a six-foot bow at Flodden, where England's yeomen triumphed over Scotland's king, his clans and chivalry. Hail to thee, last of England's bruisers, after all the many victories which them hast achieved—true English victories, unbought by yellow gold; need I recount them? nay, nay! they are already well known to fame—sufficient to say that Bristol's Bull and Ireland's Champion were vanquished by thee, and one mightier still, gold itself, thou didst overcome; for gold itself strove in vain to deaden the power of thy arm; and thus thou didst proceed till men left off challenging thee, the unvanquishable, the incorruptible.



Page 17

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The writer now wishes to say something on the subject of canting nonsense, of which there is a great deal in England. There are various cants in England, amongst which is the religious cant. He is not going to discuss the subject of religious cant: lest, however, he should be misunderstood, he begs leave to repeat that he is a sincere member of the old-fashioned Church of England, in which he believes there is more religion, and consequently less cant, than in any other Church in the world; nor is he going to discuss many other cants; he shall content himself with saying something about two—the temperance cant and the unmanly cant. Temperance canters say that, 'it is unlawful to drink a glass of ale.' Unmanly canters say that 'it is unlawful to use one's fists.' The writer begs leave to tell both these species of canters that they do not speak the words of truth.

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'No,' said I, 'I do not mean to go to church.' 'May I ask thee wherefore?' said Peter. 'Because,' said I, 'I prefer remaining beneath the shade of these trees, listening to the sound of the leaves, and the tinkling of the waters.'

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Oh, genial and gladdening is the power of good ale, the true and proper drink of Englishmen. He is not deserving of the name of Englishman who speaketh against ale, that is good ale, like that which has just made merry the hearts of this poor family; and yet there are beings, calling themselves Englishmen, who say that it is a sin to drink a cup of ale, and who, on coming to this passage will be tempted to fling down the book and exclaim: 'The man is evidently a bad man, for behold, by his own confession, he is not only fond of ale himself, but is in the habit of tempting other people with it.' Alas! alas! what a number of silly individuals there are in this world; I wonder what they would have had me do in this instance—given the afflicted family a cup of cold water? go to! They could have found water in the road, for there was a pellucid spring only a few yards distant from the house, as they were well aware—but they wanted not water; what should I have given them? meat and bread? go to! They were not hungry; there was stifled sobbing in their bosoms, and the first mouthful of strong meat would have choked them. What should I have given them? Money! what right had I to insult them by offering them money? Advice! words, words, words; friends, there is a time for everything; there is a time for a cup of cold water; there is a time for strong meat and bread; there is a time for advice, and there is a time for ale; and I have generally found that the time for advice is after a cup of ale—I do not say many cups; the tongue then speaketh more smoothly, and the ear listeneth more benignantly; but why do I attempt to reason with you? do I not know you for conceited creatures, with one idea—and that a foolish one—a crotchet, for the sake of which ye would sacrifice anything, religion if required—country? There, fling down my book, I do not wish ye to walk any farther in



my company, unless you cast your nonsense away, which ye will never do, for it is the breath of your nostrils; fling down my book, it was not written to support a crotchet, for know one thing, my good people, I have invariably been an enemy to humbug.



Page 18

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On the whole, I journeyed along very pleasantly, certainly quite as pleasantly as I do at present, now that I am become a gentleman and weigh sixteen stone, though some people would say that my present manner of travelling is much the most preferable, riding as I now do, instead of leading my horse; receiving the homage of ostlers instead of their familiar nods; sitting down to dinner in the parlour of the best inn I can find, instead of passing the brightest part of the day in the kitchen of a village ale-house; carrying on my argument after dinner on the subject of the corn-laws, with the best commercial gentlemen on the road, instead of being glad, whilst sipping a pint of beer, to get into conversation with blind trampers, or maimed Abraham sailors, regaling themselves on half-pints at the said village hostelries. Many people will doubtless say that things have altered wonderfully with me for the better, and they would say right, provided I possessed now what I then carried about with me in my journeys—the spirit of youth. Youth is the only season for enjoyment, and the first twenty-five years of one's life are worth all the rest of the longest life of man, even though those five-and-twenty be spent in penury and contempt, and the rest in the possession of wealth, honours, respectability, ay, and many of them in strength and health, such as will enable one to ride forty miles before dinner, and over one's pint of port—for the best gentleman in the land should not drink a bottle—carry on one's argument, with gravity and decorum, with any commercial gentleman who, responsive to one's challenge, takes the part of humanity and common sense against 'protection' and the lord of the land.

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On the following day at four o'clock I dined with the landlord, in company with a commercial traveller. The dinner was good, though plain, consisting of boiled mackerel—rather a rarity in those parts at that time—with fennel sauce, a prime baron of roast beef after the mackerel, then a tart and noble Cheshire cheese; we had prime sherry at dinner, and whilst eating the cheese prime porter, that of Barclay, the only good porter in the world. After the cloth was removed we had a bottle of very good port; and whilst partaking of the port I had an argument with the commercial traveller on the subject of the corn-laws.

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The binding was of dingy calf-skin. I opened it, and as I did so another strange thrill of pleasure shot through my frame. The first object on which my eyes rested was a picture; it was exceedingly well executed, at least the scene which it represented made a vivid impression upon me, which would hardly have been the case had the artist not been faithful to nature. A wild scene it was—a heavy sea and rocky shore, with mountains in the background, above which the moon was peering. Not far from the shore, upon the water, was a boat with two figures



Page 19

in it, one of which stood at the bow, pointing with what I knew to be a gun at a dreadful shape in the water: fire was flashing from the muzzle of the gun, and the monster appeared to be transfixed. I almost thought I heard its cry. I remained motionless, gazing upon the picture, scarcely daring to draw my breath, lest the new and wondrous world should vanish of which I had now obtained a glimpse. 'Who are those people, and what could have brought them into that strange situation?' I asked of myself; and now the seed of curiosity, which had so long lain dormant, began to expand, and I vowed to myself to become speedily acquainted with the whole history of the people in the boat. After looking on the picture till every mark and line in it were familiar to me, I turned over various leaves till I came to another engraving; a new source of wonder—a low sandy beach on which the furious sea was breaking in mountain-like billows; cloud and rack deformed the firmament, which wore a dull and leaden-like hue; gulls and other aquatic fowls were toppling upon the blast, or skimming over the tops of the maddening waves—'Mercy upon him! he must be drowned!' I exclaimed, as my eyes fell upon a poor wretch who appeared to be striving to reach the shore; he was upon his legs but was evidently half-smothered with the brine; high above his head curled a horrible billow, as if to engulf him for ever. 'He must be drowned! he must be drowned!' I almost shrieked, and dropped the book. I soon snatched it up again, and now my eye lighted on a third picture: again a shore, but what a sweet and lovely one, and how I wished to be treading it; there were beautiful shells lying on the smooth white sand, some were empty like those I had occasionally seen on marble mantelpieces, but out of others peered the heads and bodies of wondrous crayfish; a wood of thick green trees skirted the beach and partly shaded it from the rays of the sun, which shone hot above, while blue waves slightly crested with foam were gently curling against it; there was a human figure upon the beach, wild and uncouth, clad in the skins of animals, with a huge cap on his head, a hatchet at his girdle, and in his hand a gun; his feet and legs were bare; he stood in an attitude of horror and surprise; his body was bent far back, and his eyes, which seemed starting out of his head, were fixed upon a mark on the sand—a large distinct mark—a human footprint! Reader, is it necessary to name the book which now stood open in my hand, and whose very prints, feeble expounders of its wondrous lines, had produced within me emotions strange and novel? Scarcely, for it was a book which has exerted over the minds of Englishmen an influence certainly greater than any other of modern times, which has been in most people's hands, and with the contents of which even those who cannot read are to a certain extent acquainted; a book from which the most luxuriant and fertile of our modern prose writers have drunk inspiration; a book, moreover, to which, from the hardy deeds which it narrates, and the spirit of strange and romantic enterprise which it tends to awaken, England owes many of her astonishing discoveries both by sea and land, and no inconsiderable part of her naval glory.



Page 20

Hail to thee, spirit of De Foe! What does not my own poor self owe to thee? England has better bards than either Greece or Rome, yet I could spare them easier far than De Foe, 'unabashed De Foe,' as the hunchbacked rhymer styled him.

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I commenced the Bible in Spain. At first I proceeded slowly—sickness was in the land, and the face of nature was overcast—heavy rainclouds swam in the heavens,—the blast howled amid the pines which nearly surround my lonely dwelling, and the waters of the lake which lies before it, so quiet in general and tranquil, were fearfully agitated. 'Bring lights hither, O Hayim Ben Attar, son of the miracle!' And the Jew of Fez brought in the lights, for though it was midday I could scarcely see in the little room where I was writing. . . .

A dreary summer and autumn passed by, and were succeeded by as gloomy a winter. I still proceeded with the Bible in Spain. The winter passed, and spring came with cold dry winds and occasional sunshine, whereupon I arose, shouted, and mounting my horse, even Sidi Habismilk, I scoured all the surrounding district, and thought but little of the Bible in Spain.

So I rode about the country, over the heaths, and through the green lanes of my native land, occasionally visiting friends at a distance, and sometimes, for variety's sake, I stayed at home and amused myself by catching huge pike, which lie perdue in certain deep ponds skirted with lofty reeds, upon my land, and to which there is a communication from the lagoon by a deep and narrow watercourse. I had almost forgotten the Bible in Spain.

Then came the summer with much heat and sunshine, and then I would lie for hours in the sun and recall the sunny days I had spent in Andalusia, and my thoughts were continually reverting to Spain, and at last I remembered that the Bible in Spain was still unfinished; whereupon I arose and said: 'This loitering profiteth nothing'—and I hastened to my summer-house by the side of the lake, and there I thought and wrote, and every day I repaired to the same place, and thought and wrote until I had finished the Bible in Spain.

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And, as I wandered along the green, I drew near to a place where several men, with a cask beside them, sat carousing in the neighbourhood of a small tent. 'Here he comes,' said one of them, as I advanced, and standing up he raised his voice and sang:—

'Here the Gypsy gemman see,
With his Roman jib and his rome and dree—



Rome and dree, rum and dry
Rally round the Rommany Rye.'

It was Mr. Petulengro, who was here diverting himself with several of his comrades; they all received me with considerable frankness. 'Sit down, brother,' said Mr. Petulengro, 'and take a cup of good ale.'

I sat down. 'Your health, gentlemen,' said I, as I took the cup which Mr. Petulengro handed to me.

'Aukko tu pios adrey Rommanis. Here is your health in Rommany, brother,' said Mr. Petulengro; who, having refilled the cup, now emptied it at a draught.



Page 21

'Your health in Rommany, brother,' said Tawno Chikno, to whom the cup came next.

'The Rommany Rye,' said a third.

'The Gypsy gentlemen,' exclaimed a fourth, drinking.

And then they all sang in chorus:—

'Here the Gypsy gemman see,
With his Roman jib and his rome and dree—
Rome and dree, rum and dry
Rally round the Rommany Rye.'

'And now, brother,' said Mr. Petulengro, 'seeing that you have drunk and been drunken, you will perhaps tell us where you have been, and what about?'

'I have been in the Big City,' said I, 'writing lils' [books].

'How much money have you got in your pocket, brother?' said Mr. Petulengro.

'Eighteen pence,' said I; 'all I have in the world.'

'I have been in the Big City, too,' said Mr. Petulengro; 'but I have not written lils—I have fought in the ring—I have fifty pounds in my pocket—I have much more in the world. Brother, there is considerable difference between us.'

'I would rather be the lil-writer, after all,' said the tall, handsome, black man; 'indeed, I would wish for nothing better.'

'Why so?' said Mr. Petulengro.

'Because they have so much to say for themselves,' said the black man, 'even when dead and gone. When they are laid in the churchyard, it is their own fault if people a'n't talking of them. Who will know, after I am dead, or bitchadey pawdel, that I was once the beauty of the world, or that you, Jasper, were—'

'The best man in England of my inches. That's true, Tawno—however, here's our brother will perhaps let the world know something about us.'

'Not he,' said the other, with a sigh; 'he'll have quite enough to do in writing his own lils, and telling the world how handsome and clever he was; and who can blame him? Not I. If I could write lils, every word should be about myself and my own tacho Rommanis—my own lawful wedded wife, which is the same thing. I tell you what, brother, I once heard a wise man say in Brummagem, that "there is nothing like blowing one's own horn," which I conceive to be much the same thing as writing one's own lil.'



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At length the moon shone out faintly, when suddenly by its beams I beheld a figure moving before me at a slight distance. I quickened the pace of the burra, and was soon close at its side. It went on, neither altering its pace nor looking round for a moment. It was the figure of a man, the tallest and bulkiest that I had hitherto seen in Spain, dressed in a manner strange and singular for the country. On his head was a hat with a low crown and broad brim, very much resembling that of an English waggoner; about his body was a long loose tunic or slop, seemingly of coarse ticken, open in front, so as to allow the interior garments to be occasionally seen. These appeared to consist of a jerkin and short velveteen pantaloons.



Page 22

I have said that the brim of the hat was broad, but broad as it was, it was insufficient to cover an immense bush of coal-black hair, which, thick and curly, projected on either side. Over the left shoulder was flung a kind of satchel, and in the right hand was held a long staff or pole.

There was something peculiarly strange about the figure; but what struck me the most was the tranquillity with which it moved along, taking no heed of me, though of course aware of my proximity, but looking straight forward along the road, save when it occasionally raised a huge face and large eyes towards the moon, which was now shining forth in the eastern quarter. . . .

'A cold night,' said I at last. 'Is this the way to Talavera?'

'It is the way to Talavera, and the night is cold.'

'I am going to Talavera,' said I, 'as I suppose you are yourself.'

'I am going thither, so are you, bueno.'

The tones of the voice which delivered these words were in their way quite as strange and singular as the figure to which the voice belonged. They were not exactly the tones of a Spanish voice, and yet there was something in them that could hardly be foreign; the pronunciation also was correct, and the language, though singular, faultless. But I was most struck with the manner in which the last word, bueno, was spoken. I had heard something like it before, but where or when I could by no means remember. A pause now ensued, the figure stalking on as before with the most perfect indifference, and seemingly with no disposition either to seek or avoid conversation.

'Are you not afraid,' said I at last, 'to travel these roads in the dark? It is said that there are robbers abroad.'

'Are you not rather afraid,' replied the figure, 'to travel these roads in the dark?—you who are ignorant of the country, who are a foreigner, an Englishman?'

'How is it that you know me to be an Englishman?' demanded I, much surprised.

'That is no difficult matter,' replied the figure; 'the sound of your voice was enough to tell me that.'

'You speak of voices,' said I; 'suppose the tone of your own voice were to tell me who you are?'

'That it will not do,' replied my companion; 'you know nothing about me—you can know nothing about me.'



'Be not sure of that, my friend; I am acquainted with many things of which you have little idea.'

'Por exemplo,' said the figure.

'For example,' said I, 'you speak two languages.'

The figure moved on, seemed to consider a moment and then said slowly, 'Bueno.'

'You have two names,' I continued; 'one for the house, and the other for the street; both are good, but the one by which you are called at home is the one which you like best.'

The man walked on about ten paces, in the same manner as he had previously done; all of a sudden he turned, and taking the bridle of the burra gently in his hand, stopped her. I had now a full view of his face and figure, and those huge features and Herculean form still occasionally revisit me in my dreams. I see him standing in the moonshine, staring me in the face with his deep calm eyes. At last he said—

Page 23

'Are you then *one of us*?'

* * * * *

Upon the shoulder of the goatherd was a beast, which he told me was a lontra, or otter, which he had lately caught in the neighbouring brook; it had a string round its neck, which was attached to his arm. At his left side was a bag, from the top of which peered the heads of two or three singular looking animals; and at his right was squatted the sullen cub of a wolf, which he was endeavouring to tame. His whole appearance was to the last degree savage and wild. After a little conversation, such as those who meet on the road frequently hold, I asked him if he could read, but he made me no answer. I then inquired if he knew anything of God or Jesus Christ; he looked me fixedly in the face for a moment, and then turned his countenance towards the sun, which was beginning to sink in the west, nodded to it, and then again looked fixedly upon me. I believe that I understood the mute reply, which probably was, that it was God who made that glorious light which illumines and gladdens all creation; and, gratified with that belief, I left him and hastened after my companions, who were by this time a considerable way in advance.

* * * * *

I have always found in the disposition of the children of the fields a more determined tendency to religion and piety than amongst the inhabitants of towns and cities, and the reason is obvious—they are less acquainted with the works of man's hands than with those of God; their occupations, too, which are simple, and requiring less of ingenuity and skill than those which engage the attention of the other portion of their fellow-creatures, are less favourable to the engendering of self-conceit and self-sufficiency, so utterly at variance with that lowliness of spirit which constitutes the best foundation of piety.

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'C'est moi, mon maitre,' cried a well-known voice, and presently in walked Antonio Buchini, dressed in the same style as when I first introduced him to the reader, namely, in a handsome but rather faded French surtout, vest, and pantaloons, with a diminutive hat in one hand, and holding in the other a long and slender cane.

'Bon jour, mon maitre,' said the Greek; then, glancing around the apartment, he continued, 'I am glad to find you so well lodged. If I remember right, mon maitre, we have slept in worse places during our wanderings in Galicia and Castile.'

'You are quite right, Antonio,' I replied; 'I am very comfortable. Well, this is kind of you to visit your ancient master, more especially now he is in the toils; I hope, however, that by



so doing you will not offend your present employer. His dinner hour must be at hand; why are you not in the kitchen?’

‘Of what employer are you speaking, mon maitre?’ demanded Antonio.

‘Of whom should I speak but Count —, to serve whom you abandoned me, being tempted by an offer of a monthly salary less by four dollars than that which I was giving you?’



Page 24

'Your worship brings an affair to my remembrance which I had long since forgotten. I have at present no other master than yourself, Monsieur Georges, for I shall always consider you as my master, though I may not enjoy the felicity of waiting upon you.'

'You have left the Count, then,' said I, 'after remaining three days in the house, according to your usual practice.'

'Not three hours, mon maitre,' replied Antonio; 'but I will tell you the circumstances. Soon after I left you I repaired to the house of Monsieur le Comte; I entered the kitchen, and looked about me. I cannot say that I had much reason to be dissatisfied with what I saw: the kitchen was large and commodious, and everything appeared neat and in its proper place, and the domestics civil and courteous; yet, I know not how it was, the idea at once rushed into my mind that the house was by no means suited to me, and that I was not destined to stay there long; so, hanging my haversack upon a nail, and sitting down on the dresser, I commenced singing a Greek song, as I am in the habit of doing when dissatisfied. The domestics came about me, asking questions. I made them no answer, however, and continued singing till the hour for preparing the dinner drew nigh, when I suddenly sprang on the floor, and was not long in thrusting them all out of the kitchen, telling them that they had no business there at such a season. I then at once entered upon my functions. I exerted myself, mon maitre—I exerted myself, and was preparing a repast which would have done me honour; there was, indeed, some company expected that day, and I therefore determined to show my employer that nothing was beyond the capacity of his Greek cook. Eh bien, mon maitre, all was going on remarkably well, and I felt almost reconciled to my new situation when who should rush into the kitchen but le fils de la maison, my young master, an ugly urchin of thirteen years, or thereabouts. He bore in his hand a manchet of bread, which, after prying about for a moment, he proceeded to dip in the pan where some delicate woodcocks were in the course of preparation. You know, mon maitre, how sensitive I am on certain points, for I am no Spaniard, but a Greek, and have principles of honour. Without a moment's hesitation I took my young master by the shoulders, and hurrying him to the door, dismissed him in the manner which he deserved. Squalling loudly, he hurried away to the upper part of the house. I continued my labours, but ere three minutes had elapsed, I heard a dreadful confusion above stairs, on faisoit une horrible tintamarre, and I could occasionally distinguish oaths and execrations. Presently doors were flung open, and there was an awful rushing downstairs, a gallopade. It was my lord the count, his lady, and my young master, followed by a regular bevy of women and filles de chambre. Far in advance of all, however, was my lord with a drawn sword in his hand, shouting, "Where is the wretch



Page 25

who has dishonoured my son, where is he? He shall die forthwith." I know not how it was, mon maitre, but I just then chanced to spill a large bowl of garbanzos, which were intended for the puchera of the following day. They were un-cooked, and were as hard as marbles; these I dashed upon the floor, and the greater part of them fell just about the doorway. Eh bien, mon maitre, in another moment in bounded the count, his eyes sparkling like coals, and, as I have already said, with a rapier in his hand. "Tenez, gueux enrage," he screamed, making a desperate lunge at me; but ere the words were out of his mouth, his foot slipping on the pease, he fell forward with great violence at his full length, and his weapon flew out of his hand, comme une fleche. You should have heard the outcry which ensued—there was a terrible confusion; the count lay upon the floor to all appearance stunned. I took no notice, however, continuing busily employed. They at last raised him up, and assisted him till he came to himself, though very pale and much shaken. He asked for his sword: all eyes were now turned upon me, and I saw that a general attack was meditated. Suddenly I took a large casserole from the fire in which various eggs were frying; this I held out at arm's length, peering at it along my arm as if I were curiously inspecting it, my right foot advanced and the other thrown back as far as possible. All stood still, imagining, doubtless, that I was about to perform some grand operation, and so I was: for suddenly the sinister leg advancing, with one rapid coup de pied, I sent the casserole and its contents flying over my head, so that they struck the wall far behind me. This was to let them know that I had broken my staff and had shaken the dust off my feet; so casting upon the count the peculiar glance of the Sceirote cooks when they feel themselves insulted, and extending my mouth on either side nearly as far as the ears, I took down my haversack and departed, singing as I went the song of the ancient Demos, who, when dying, asked for his supper, and water wherewith to lave his hands—

[Greek verse]

And in this manner, mon maitre, I left the house of the Count of ——'

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After travelling four days and nights, we arrived at Madrid without having experienced the slightest accident, though it is but just to observe, and always with gratitude to the Almighty, that the next mail was stopped. A singular incident befell me immediately after my arrival. On entering the arch of the posada called La Reyna, where I intended to put up, I found myself encircled in a person's arms, and on turning round in amazement beheld my Greek servant, Antonio. He was haggard and ill-dressed, and his eyes seemed starting from their sockets.



Page 26

As soon as we were alone he informed me that since my departure he had undergone great misery and destitution, having, during the whole period, been unable to find a master in need of his services, so that he was brought nearly to the verge of desperation; but that on the night immediately preceding my arrival he had a dream, in which he saw me, mounted on a black horse, ride up to the gate of the posada, and that on that account he had been waiting there during the greater part of the day. I do not pretend to offer an opinion concerning this narrative, which is beyond the reach of my philosophy, and shall content myself with observing, that only two individuals in Madrid were aware of my arrival in Spain. I was very glad to receive him again into my service, as, notwithstanding his faults, he had in many instances proved of no small assistance to me in my wanderings and Biblical labours.

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The posada where I had put up was a good specimen of the old Spanish inn, being much the same as those described in the time of Philip the Third or Fourth. The rooms were many and large, floored with either brick or stone, generally with an alcove at the end, in which stood a wretched flock bed. Behind the house was a court, and in the rear of this a stable, full of horses, ponies, mules, machos, and donkeys, for there was no lack of guests, who, however, for the most part slept in the stable with their caballerias, being either arrieros or small peddling merchants, who travelled the country with coarse cloth or linen. Opposite to my room in the corridor lodged a wounded officer, who had just arrived from San Sebastian on a galled broken-kneed pony: he was an Estrimenian, and was returning to his own village to be cured. He was attended by three broken soldiers, lame or maimed, and unfit for service: they told me that they were of the same village as his worship, and on that account he permitted them to travel with him. They slept amongst the litter, and throughout the day lounged about the house smoking paper cigars. I never saw them eating, though they frequently went to a dark cool corner, where stood a bota or kind of water pitcher, which they held about six inches from their black filmy lips, permitting the liquid to trickle down their throats. They said they had no pay and were quite destitute of money, that su merced the officer occasionally gave them a piece of bread, but that he himself was poor and had only a few dollars. Brave guests for an inn, thought I; yet, to the honour of Spain be it spoken, it is one of the few countries in Europe where poverty is never insulted nor looked upon with contempt. Even at an inn, the poor man is never spurned from the door, and if not harboured, is at least dismissed with fair words, and consigned to the mercies of God and his mother. This is as it should be. I laugh at the bigotry and prejudices of Spain, I abhor the cruelty and ferocity which have cast a stain

Page 27

of eternal infamy on her history, but I will say for the Spaniards that in their social intercourse no people in the world exhibit a juster feeling of what is due to the dignity of human nature, or better understand the behaviour which it behoves a man to adopt towards his fellow beings. I have said that it is one of the few countries in Europe where poverty is not treated with contempt, and I may add, where the wealthy are not blindly idolized. In Spain the very beggar does not feel himself a degraded being, for he kisses no one's feet, and knows not what it is to be cuffed or spit upon; and in Spain the duke or the marquis can scarcely entertain a very overweening opinion of his own consequence, as he finds no one, with perhaps the exception of his French valet, to fawn upon or flatter him.

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The landlord brought the ale, placed it on the table, and then stood as if waiting for something.

'I suppose you are waiting to be paid,' said I, 'what is your demand?'

'Sixpence for this jug, and sixpence for the other,' said the landlord.

I took out a shilling and said: 'It is but right that I should pay half of the reckoning, and as the whole affair is merely a shilling matter, I should feel obliged in being permitted to pay the whole, so, landlord, take the shilling, and remember you are paid.' I then delivered the shilling to the landlord, but had no sooner done so than the man in grey, starting up in violent agitation, wrested the money from the other, and flung it down on the table before me saying:—

'No, no, that will never do. I invited you in here to drink, and now you would pay for the liquor which I ordered. You English are free with your money, but you are sometimes free with it at the expense of people's feelings. I am a Welshman, and I know Englishmen consider all Welshmen hogs. But we are not hogs, mind you! for we have little feelings which hogs have not. Moreover, I would have you know that we have money, though perhaps not so much as the Saxon.' Then putting his hand into his pocket, he pulled out a shilling, and giving it to the landlord, said in Welsh: 'Now thou art paid and mayst go thy ways till thou art again called for. I do not know why thou didst stay after thou hadst put down the ale. Thou didst know enough of me to know that thou didst run no risk of not being paid.'

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'Young gentleman,' said the huge, fat landlord, 'you are come at the right time; dinner will be taken up in a few minutes, and such a dinner,' he continued, rubbing his hands, 'as you will not see every day in these times.'

'I am hot and dusty,' said I, 'and should wish to cool my hands and face.'

'Jenny!' said the huge landlord, with the utmost gravity, 'show the gentleman into number seven that he may wash his hands and face.'

'By no means,' said I, 'I am a person of primitive habits, and there is nothing like the pump in weather like this.'



Page 28

'Jenny!' said the landlord, with the same gravity as before, 'go with the young gentleman to the pump in the back kitchen, and take a clean towel along with you.'

Thereupon the rosy-faced clean-looking damsel went to a drawer, and producing a large, thick, but snowy-white towel, she nodded to me to follow her; whereupon I followed Jenny through a long passage into the back kitchen.

And at the end of the back kitchen there stood a pump; and going to it I placed my hands beneath the spout, and said, 'Pump, Jenny,' and Jenny incontinently, without laying down the towel, pumped with one hand, and I washed and cooled my heated hands.

And, when my hands were washed and cooled, I took off my neckcloth, and unbuttoning my shirt collar, I placed my head beneath the spout of the pump, and I said unto Jenny: 'Now, Jenny, lay down the towel, and pump for your life.'

Thereupon Jenny, placing the towel on a linen horse, took the handle of the pump with both hands and pumped over my head as handmaid had never pumped before; so that the water poured in torrents from my head, my face, and my hair down upon the brick floor.

And after the lapse of somewhat more than a minute, I called out with a half-strangled voice, 'Hold, Jenny!' and Jenny desisted. I stood for a few moments to recover my breath, then, taking the towel which Jenny proffered, I dried composedly my hands and head, my face and hair; then, returning the towel to Jenny, I gave a deep sigh and said: 'Surely this is one of the pleasant moments of life.'

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Becoming soon tired of walking about, without any particular aim, in so great a heat, I determined to return to the inn, call for ale, and deliberate on what I had best next do. So I returned and called for ale. The ale which was brought was not ale which I am particularly fond of. The ale which I am fond of is ale about nine or ten months old, somewhat hard, tasting well of malt and little of the hop—ale such as farmers, and noblemen too, of the good old time, when farmers' daughters did not play on pianos and noblemen did not sell their game, were in the habit of offering to both high and low, and drinking themselves. The ale which was brought to me was thin washy stuff, which though it did not taste much of hop, tasted still less of malt, made and sold by one Allsopp, who I am told calls himself a squire and a gentleman—as he certainly may with quite as much right as many a lord calls himself a nobleman and a gentleman; for surely it is not a fraction more trumpery to make and sell ale than to fatten and sell game. The ale of the Saxon squire, for Allsopp is decidedly an old Saxon name, however unakin to the practice of old Saxon squires the selling of ale may be, was drinkable, for it was fresh, and the day, as I have said before, exceedingly hot; so I took frequent draughts

out of the shining metal tankard in which it was brought, deliberating both whilst drinking, and in the intervals of drinking, on what I had next best do.



Page 29

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Late in the afternoon we reached Medina del Campo, formerly one of the principal cities of Spain, though at present an inconsiderable place. Immense ruins surround it in every direction, attesting the former grandeur of this 'city of the plain.' The great square or market place is a remarkable spot, surrounded by a heavy massive piazza, over which rise black buildings of great antiquity. We found the town crowded with people awaiting the fair, which was to be held in a day or two. We experienced some difficulty in obtaining admission into the posada, which was chiefly occupied by Catalans from Valladolid. These people not only brought with them their merchandise, but their wives and children. Some of them appeared to be people of the worst description: there was one in particular, a burly savage-looking fellow, of about forty, whose conduct was atrocious; he sat with his wife, or perhaps concubine, at the door of a room which opened upon the court: he was continually venting horrible and obscene oaths, both in Spanish and Catalan. The woman was remarkably handsome, but robust, and seemingly as savage as himself; her conversation likewise was as frightful as his own. Both seemed to be under the influence of an incomprehensible fury. At last, upon some observation from the woman, he started up, and drawing a long knife from his girdle, stabbed at her naked bosom; she, however, interposed the palm of her hand, which was much cut. He stood for a moment viewing the blood trickling upon the ground, whilst she held up her wounded hand; then, with an astounding oath, he hurried up the court to the Plaza. I went up to the woman and said, 'What is the cause of this? I hope the ruffian has not seriously injured you.' She turned her countenance upon me with the glance of a demon, and at last with a sneer of contempt exclaimed, 'Carals, que es eso? Cannot a Catalan gentleman be conversing with his lady upon their own private affairs without being interrupted by you?' She then bound up her hand with a handkerchief, and going into the room brought a small table to the door, on which she placed several things, as if for the evening's repast, and then sat down on a stool. Presently returned the Catalan, and without a word took his seat on the threshold; then, as if nothing had occurred, the extraordinary couple commenced eating and drinking, interlarding their meal with oaths and jests.

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I had till then considered him a plain, uninformed old man, almost simple, and as incapable of much emotion as a tortoise within its shell; but he had become at once inspired: his eyes were replete with a bright fire, and every muscle of his face was quivering. The little silk skull-cap which he wore, according to the custom of the Catholic clergy, moved up and down with his agitation; and I soon saw that I was in the presence of one of those remarkable men who so frequently spring up in the bosom of the Romish church, and who to a child-like simplicity unite immense energy and power of mind—equally adapted to guide a scanty flock of ignorant rustics in some obscure village in Italy or Spain, as to convert millions of heathens on the shores of Japan, China, and Paraguay.



Page 30

He was a thin spare man, of about sixty-five, and was dressed in a black cloak of very coarse materials; nor were his other garments of superior quality. This plainness, however, in the appearance of his outward man was by no means the result of poverty; quite the contrary. The benefice was a very plentiful one, and placed at his disposal annually a sum of at least eight hundred dollars, of which the eighth part was more than sufficient to defray the expenses of his house and himself; the rest was devoted entirely to the purest acts of charity. He fed the hungry wanderer, and despatched him singing on his way, with meat in his wallet and a peseta in his purse; and his parishioners, when in need of money, had only to repair to his study, and were sure of an immediate supply. He was, indeed, the banker of the village, and what he lent he neither expected nor wished to be returned. Though under the necessity of making frequent journeys to Salamanca, he kept no mule, but contented himself with an ass, borrowed from the neighbouring miller. 'I once kept a mule,' said he; 'but some years since it was removed without my permission by a traveller whom I had housed for the night: for in that alcove I keep two clean beds for the use of the wayfaring, and I shall be very much pleased if yourself and friend will occupy them, and tarry with me till the morning.'

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'What mountains are those?' I inquired of a barber-surgeon who, mounted like myself on a grey burra, joined me about noon, and proceeded in my company for several leagues. 'They have many names, Caballero,' replied the barber; 'according to the names of the neighbouring places, so they are called. Yon portion of them is styled the Serrania of Plasencia; and opposite to Madrid they are termed the Mountains of Guadarrama, from a river of that name, which descends from them. They run a vast way, Caballero, and separate the two kingdoms, for on the other side is Old Castile. They are mighty mountains, and, though they generate much cold, I take pleasure in looking at them, which is not to be wondered at, seeing that I was born amongst them, though at present, for my sins, I live in a village of the plain. Caballero, there is not another such range in Spain; they have their secrets, too—their mysteries. Strange tales are told of those hills, and of what they contain in their deep recesses, for they are a broad chain, and you may wander days and days amongst them without coming to any termino. Many have lost themselves on those hills, and have never again been heard of. Strange things are told of them: it is said that in certain places there are deep pools and lakes, in which dwell monsters, huge serpents as long as a pine tree, and horses of the flood, which sometimes come out and commit mighty damage. One thing is certain, that yonder, far away to the west, in the heart of those hills, there is a wonderful valley, so narrow that only at mid-day is the face of the



Page 31

sun to be descried from it. That valley lay undiscovered and unknown for thousands of years; no person dreamed of its existence. But at last, a long time ago, certain hunters entered it by chance, and then what do you think they found, Caballero? They found a small nation or tribe of unknown people, speaking an unknown language, who, perhaps, had lived there since the creation of the world, without intercourse with the rest of their fellow-creatures, and without knowing that other beings besides themselves existed! Caballero, did you never hear of the valley of the Batuecas? Many books have been written about that valley and those people. Caballero, I am proud of yonder hills; and were I independent, and without wife or children, I would purchase a burra like that of your own—which I see is an excellent one, and far superior to mine—and travel amongst them till I knew all their mysteries, and had seen all the wondrous things which they contain.'

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We had scarcely been five minutes at the window, when we suddenly heard the clattering of horses' feet hastening down the street called the Calle de Carretas. The house in which we had stationed ourselves was, as I have already observed, just opposite to the post-office, at the left of which this street debouches from the north into the Puerta del Sol: as the sounds became louder and louder, the cries of the crowd below diminished, and a species of panic seemed to have fallen upon all: once or twice, however, I could distinguish the words, 'Quesada! Quesada!' The foot soldiers stood calm and motionless, but I observed that the cavalry, with the young officer who commanded them, displayed both confusion and fear, exchanging with each other some hurried words. All of a sudden that part of the crowd which stood near the mouth of the Calle de Carretas fell back in great disorder, leaving a considerable space unoccupied, and the next moment Quesada, in complete general's uniform, and mounted on a bright bay thoroughbred English horse, with a drawn sword in his hand, dashed at full gallop into the area, in much the same manner as I have seen a Manchegan bull rush into the amphitheatre when the gates of his pen are suddenly flung open.

He was closely followed by two mounted officers, and at a short distance by as many dragoons. In almost less time than is sufficient to relate it, several individuals in the crowd were knocked down and lay sprawling upon the ground, beneath the horses of Quesada and his two friends, for as to the dragoons, they halted as soon as they had entered the Puerta del Sol. It was a fine sight to see three men, by dint of valour and good horsemanship, strike terror into at least as many thousands: I saw Quesada spur his horse repeatedly into the dense masses of the crowd, and then extricate himself in the most masterly manner. The rabble were completely awed, and gave way, retiring by the Calle del Comercio and the Calle del Alcala. All at once, Quesada



Page 32

singled out two nationals, who were attempting to escape, and setting spurs to his horse, turned them in a moment, and drove them in another direction, striking them in a contemptuous manner with the flat of his sabre. He was crying out, 'Long live the absolute queen!' when, just beneath me, amidst a portion of the crowd which had still maintained its ground, perhaps from not having the means of escaping, I saw a small gun glitter for a moment; then there was a sharp report, and a bullet had nearly sent Quesada to his long account, passing so near to the countenance of the general as to graze his hat. I had an indistinct view for a moment of a well-known foraging cap just about the spot from whence the gun had been discharged, then there was a rush of the crowd, and the shooter, whoever he was, escaped discovery amidst the confusion which arose.

As for Quesada, he seemed to treat the danger from which he had escaped with the utmost contempt. He glared about him fiercely for a moment, then leaving the two nationals, who sneaked away like whipped hounds, he went up to the young officer who commanded the cavalry, and who had been active in raising the cry of the constitution, and to him he addressed a few words with an air of stern menace; the youth evidently quailed before him, and, probably in obedience to his orders, resigned the command of the party, and rode away with a discomfited air; whereupon Quesada dismounted and walked slowly backwards and forwards before the Casa de Postas with a mien which seemed to bid defiance to mankind.

This was the glorious day of Quesada's existence, his glorious and last day. I call it the day of his glory, for he certainly never before appeared under such brilliant circumstances, and he never lived to see another sun set. No action of any conqueror or hero on record is to be compared with this closing scene of the life of Quesada, for who, by his single desperate courage and impetuosity, ever stopped a revolution in full course? Quesada did: he stopped the revolution at Madrid for one entire day, and brought back the uproarious and hostile mob of a huge city to perfect order and quiet. His burst into the Puerta del Sol was the most tremendous and successful piece of daring ever witnessed. I admired so much the spirit of the 'brute bull' that I frequently, during his wild onset, shouted, 'Viva Quesada!' for I wished him well.

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I have heard talk of the pleasures of idleness, yet it is my own firm belief that no one ever yet took pleasure in it. Mere idleness is the most disagreeable state of existence, and both mind and body are continually making efforts to escape from it. It has been said that idleness is the parent of mischief, which is very true; but mischief itself is merely an attempt to escape from the dreary vacuum of idleness. There are many tasks and occupations which a man is unwilling to perform, but let no one think that he



Page 33

is therefore in love with idleness; he turns to something which is more agreeable to his inclination, and doubtless more suited to his nature; but he is not in love with idleness. A boy may play the truant from school because he dislikes books and study; but, depend upon it, he intends doing something the while—to go fishing, or perhaps to take a walk; and who knows but that from such excursions both his mind and body may derive more benefit than from books and school? Many people go to sleep to escape from idleness; the Spaniards do; and, according to the French account, John Bull, the 'squire, hangs himself in the month of November; but the French, who are a very sensible people, attribute the action, 'a une grande envie de se desennuyer;' he wishes to be doing something say they, and having nothing better to do, he has recourse to the cord.

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'Well,' said the old man, 'I once saw the king of the vipers, and since then—' 'The king of the vipers!' said I, interrupting him; 'have the vipers a king?' 'As sure as we have,' said the old man, 'as sure as we have King George to rule over us, have these reptiles a king to rule over them.' 'And where did you see him?' said I. 'I will tell you,' said the old man, 'though I don't like talking about the matter. It may be about seven years ago that I happened to be far down yonder to the west, on the other side of England, nearly two hundred miles from here, following my business. It was a very sultry day, I remember, and I had been out several hours catching creatures. It might be about three o'clock in the afternoon, when I found myself on some heathy land near the sea, on the ridge of a hill, the side of which, nearly as far down as the sea, was heath; but on the top there was arable ground, which had been planted, and from which the harvest had been gathered—oats or barley, I know not which—but I remember that the ground was covered with stubble. Well, about three o'clock, as I told you before, what with the heat of the day and from having walked about for hours in a lazy way, I felt very tired; so I determined to have a sleep, and I laid myself down, my head just on the ridge of the hill, towards the field, and my body over the side down amongst the heath; my bag, which was nearly filled with creatures, lay at a little distance from my face; the creatures were struggling in it, I remember, and I thought to myself, how much more comfortably off I was than they; I was taking my ease on the nice open hill, cooled with the breezes, whilst they were in the nasty close bag, coiling about one another, and breaking their very hearts, all to no purpose; and I felt quite comfortable and happy in the thought, and little by little closed my eyes, and fell into the sweetest snooze that ever I was in in all my life; and there I lay over the hill's side, with my head half in the field, I don't know how long, all dead asleep. At last it seemed to me that I heard a noise in my sleep, something



Page 34

like a thing moving, very faint, however, far away; then it died, and then it came again upon my ear as I slept, and now it appeared almost as if I heard crackle, crackle; then it died again, or I became yet more dead asleep than before, I know not which, but I certainly lay some time without hearing it. All of a sudden I became awake, and there was I, on the ridge of the hill, with my cheek on the ground towards the stubble, with a noise in my ear like that of something moving towards me, amongst the stubble of the field; well, I lay a moment or two listening to the noise, and then I became frightened, for I did not like the noise at all, it sounded so odd; so I rolled myself on my belly, and looked towards the stubble. Mercy upon us! there was a huge snake, or rather a dreadful viper, for it was all yellow and gold, moving towards me, bearing its head about a foot and a half above the ground, the dry stubble crackling beneath its outrageous belly. It might be about five yards off when I first saw it, making straight towards me, child, as if it would devour me. I lay quite still, for I was stupefied with horror, whilst the creature came still nearer; and now it was nearly upon me, when it suddenly drew back a little, and then—what do you think?—it lifted its head and chest high in the air, and high over my face as I looked up, flickering at me with its tongue as if it would fly at my face. Child, what I felt at that moment I can scarcely say, but it was a sufficient punishment for all the sins I ever committed; and there we two were, I looking up at the viper, and the viper looking down upon me, flickering at me with its tongue. It was only the kindness of God that saved me: all at once there was a loud noise, the report of a gun, for a fowler was shooting at a covey of birds, a little way off in the stubble. Whereupon the viper sunk its head, and immediately made off over the ridge of the hill, down in the direction of the sea. As it passed by me, however—and it passed close by me—it hesitated a moment, as if it was doubtful whether it should not seize me; it did not, however, but made off down the hill. It has often struck me that he was angry with me, and came upon me unawares for presuming to meddle with his people, as I have always been in the habit of doing.'

'But,' said I, 'how do you know that it was the king of the vipers?'

'How do I know?' said the old man, 'who else should it be? There was as much difference between it and other reptiles as between King George and other people.'

'Is King George, then, different from other people?' I demanded.

'Of course,' said the old man; 'I have never seen him myself, but I have heard people say that he is a ten times greater man than other folks; indeed, it stands to reason that he must be different from the rest, else people would not be so eager to see him. Do you think, child, that people would be fools enough to run a matter of twenty or thirty miles to see the king, provided King George—'



Page 35

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I sat upon the bank, at the bottom of the hill which slopes down from 'the Earl's Home'; my float was on the waters, and my back was towards the old hall. I drew up many fish, small and great, which I took from off the hook mechanically and flung upon the bank, for I was almost unconscious of what I was about, for my mind was not with my fish. I was thinking of my earlier years—of the Scottish crags and the heaths of Ireland—and sometimes my mind would dwell on my studies—on the sonorous stanzas of Dante, rising and falling like the waves of the sea—or would strive to remember a couplet or two of poor Monsieur Boileau.

'Canst thou answer to thy conscience for pulling all those fish out of the water, and leaving them to gasp in the sun?' said a voice, clear and sonorous as a bell. I started, and looked round. Close behind me stood the tall figure of a man, dressed in raiment of quaint and singular fashion, but of goodly materials. He was in the prime and vigour of manhood; his features handsome and noble, but full of calmness and benevolence; at least, I thought so, though they were somewhat shaded by a hat of finest beaver, with broad drooping eaves.

'Surely that is a very cruel diversion in which thou indulgest, my young friend,' he continued.

'I am sorry for it, if it be, sir,' said I, rising; 'but I do not think it cruel to fish.'

'What are thy reasons for not thinking so?'

'Fishing is mentioned frequently in Scripture. Simon Peter was a fisherman.'

'True; and Andrew and his brother. But thou forgettest: they did not follow fishing as a diversion, as I fear thou doest. Thou readest the Scriptures?'

'Sometimes.'

'Sometimes? not daily? that is to be regretted. What profession dost thou make? I mean to what religious denomination dost thou belong, my young friend?'

'Church.'

'It is a very good profession—there is much of Scripture contained in its liturgy. Dost thou read aught besides the Scriptures?'

'Sometimes.'

'What dost thou read besides?'



'Greek, and Dante.'

'Indeed! then thou hast the advantage over myself; I can only read the former. Well, I am rejoiced to find that thou hast other pursuits besides thy fishing. Dost thou know Hebrew?'

'No.'

'Thou shouldst study it. Why dost thou not undertake the study?'

'I have no books.'

'I will lend thee books, if thou wish to undertake the study. I live yonder at the hall, as perhaps thou knowest. I have a library there, in which are many curious books, both in Greek and Hebrew, which I will show to thee, whenever thou mayest find it convenient to come and see me. Farewell! I am glad to find that thou hast pursuits more satisfactory than thy cruel fishing.'

And the man of peace departed, and left me on the bank of the stream. Whether from the effect of his words, or from want of inclination to the sport, I know not, but from that day I became less and less a practitioner of that 'cruel fishing.'



Page 36

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Ah, that Irish! How frequently do circumstances, at first sight the most trivial and unimportant, exercise a mighty and permanent influence on our habits and pursuits!—how frequently is a stream turned aside from its natural course by some little rock or knoll, causing it to make an abrupt turn! On a wild road in Ireland I had heard Irish spoken for the first time; and I was seized with a desire to learn Irish, the acquisition of which, in my case, became the stepping-stone to other languages. I had previously learnt Latin, or rather Lilly; but neither Latin nor Lilly made me a philologist. I had frequently heard French and other languages, but had felt little desire to become acquainted with them; and what, it may be asked, was there connected with the Irish calculated to recommend it to my attention?

First of all, and principally, I believe, the strangeness and singularity of its tones; then there was something mysterious and uncommon associated with its use. It was not a school language, to acquire which was considered an imperative duty; no, no; nor was it a drawing-room language, drawled out occasionally, in shreds and patches by the ladies of generals and other great dignitaries, to the ineffable dismay of poor officers' wives. Nothing of the kind; but a speech spoken in out-of-the-way desolate places, and in cut-throat kens, where thirty ruffians, at the sight of the king's minions, would spring up with brandished sticks and an 'ubbubboo, like the blowing up of a powder-magazine.' Such were the points connected with the Irish, which first awakened in my mind the desire of acquiring it; and by acquiring it I became, as I have already said, enamoured of languages. Having learnt one by choice, I speedily, as the reader will perceive, learnt others, some of which were widely different from Irish.

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I said: 'Now, Murtagh, tit for tat; ye will be telling me one of the old stories of Finn-ma-Coul.' 'Och, Shorsha! I haven't heart enough,' said Murtagh. 'Thank you for your tale, but it makes me weep; it brings to my mind Dungarvon times of old—I mean the times we were at school together.' 'Cheer up, man,' said I, 'and let's have the story, and let it be about Ma-Coul and the salmon and his thumb.' 'Well, you know Ma-Coul was an exposed child, and came floating over the salt sea in a chest which was cast ashore at Veintry Bay. In the corner of that bay was a castle, where dwelt a giant and his wife, very respectable and dacent people, and this giant, taking his morning walk along the bay, came to the place where the child had been cast ashore in his box. Well, the giant looked at the child, and being filled with compassion for his exposed state, took the child up in his box, and carried him home to his castle, where he and his wife, being dacent respectable people, as I telled ye before, fostered the child and took care of him, till he became old enough to go out to service and gain his livelihood, when they bound him out apprentice to another giant, who lived in a castle up the country, at some distance from the bay.



Page 37

'This giant, whose name was Darmod David Odeen, was not a respectable person at all, but a big ould wagabone. He was twice the size of the other giant, who, though bigger than any man, was not a big giant; for, as there are great and small men, so there are great and small giants—I mean some are small when compared with the others. Well, Finn served this giant a considerable time, doing all kinds of hard and unreasonable service for him, and receiving all kinds of hard words, and many a hard knock and kick to boot—sorrow befall the ould wagabone who could thus ill treat a helpless foundling. It chanced that one day the giant caught a salmon, near a salmon-leap upon his estate—for, though a big ould blackguard, he was a person of considerable landed property, and high sheriff for the county Cork. Well, the giant brings home the salmon by the gills, and delivers it to Finn, telling him to roast it for the giant's dinner; "but take care, ye young blackguard," he added, "that in roasting it—and I expect ye to roast it well—you do not let a blister come upon its nice satin skin, for if ye do, I will cut the head off your shoulders." "Well," thinks Finn, "this is a hard task; however, as I have done many hard tasks for him, I will try and do this too, though I was never set to do anything yet half so difficult." So he prepared his fire, and put his gridiron upon it, and lays the salmon fairly and softly upon the gridiron, and then he roasts it, turning it from one side to the other just in the nick of time, before the soft satin skin could be blistered. However, on turning it over the eleventh time—and twelve would have settled the business—he found he had delayed a little bit of time too long in turning it over, and there was a small, tiny blister on the soft outer skin. Well, Finn was in a mighty panic, remembering the threats of the ould giant; however, he did not lose heart, but clapped his thumb upon the blister in order to smooth it down. Now the salmon, Shorsha, was nearly done, and the flesh thoroughly hot, so Finn's thumb was scalt, and he, clapping it to his mouth, sucked it, in order to draw out the pain, and in a moment—hubbuboo!—became imbued with all the wisdom of the world.'

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Here I interrupted the jockey.

'How singular,' said I, 'is the fall and debasement of words; you talk of a gang, or set, of shorters; you are, perhaps, not aware that gang and set were, a thousand years ago, only connected with the great and Divine; they are ancient Norse words, which may be found in the heroic poems of the north, and in the Edda, a collection of mythologic and heroic songs. In these poems we read that such and such a king invaded Norway with a gang of heroes; or so and so, for example, Erik Bloodaxe, was admitted to the set of gods; but at present gang and set are merely applied to the vilest of the vile, and the lowest of the low,—we say a gang of thieves and shorters, or a set of authors. How touching is this debasement of words in the course of time; it puts me in mind of the decay of old houses and names. I have known a Mortimer who was a hedger and ditcher, a Berners who was born in a workhouse, and a descendant of the De Burghs, who bore the falcon, mending old kettles, and making horse and pony shoes in a dingle.'



Page 38

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'And who is Jerry Grant?'

Did you never hear of him? that's strange; the whole country is talking about him; he is a kind of outlaw, rebel, or robber, all three, I dare say; there's a hundred pounds offered for his head.'

'And where does he live?'

'His proper home, they say, is in the Queen's County, where he has a band; but he is a strange fellow, fond of wandering about by himself amidst the bogs and mountains, and living in the old castles; occasionally he quarters himself in the peasants' houses, who let him do just as he pleases; he is free of his money, and often does them good turns, and can be good-humoured enough, so they don't dislike him. Then he is what they call a fairy man, a person in league with fairies and spirits, and able to work much harm by supernatural means, on which account they hold him in great awe; he is, moreover, a mighty strong and tall fellow. Bagg has seen him.'

'Has he?'

'Yes! and felt him; he too is a strange one. A few days ago he was told that Grant had been seen hovering about an old castle some two miles off in the bog; so one afternoon what does he do but, without saying a word to me—for which, by-the-bye, I ought to put him under arrest, though what I should do without Bagg I have no idea whatever—what does he do but walk off to the castle, intending, as I suppose, to pay a visit to Jerry. He had some difficulty in getting there on account of the turf-holes in the bog, which he was not accustomed to; however, thither at last he got and went in. It was a strange lonesome place, he says, and he did not much like the look of it; however, in he went, and searched about from the bottom to the top and down again, but could find no one; he shouted and halloed, but nobody answered, save the rooks and choughs, which started up in great numbers. "I have lost my trouble," said Bagg, and left the castle. It was now late in the afternoon, near sunset, when about half way over the bog he met a man—'

'And that man was—'

'Jerry Grant! there's no doubt of it. Bagg says it was the most sudden thing in the world. He was moving along, making the best of his way, thinking of nothing at all save a public-house at Swanton Morley, which he intends to take when he gets home and the regiment is disbanded—though I hope that will not be for some time yet: he had just leaped a turf-hole, and was moving on, when, at the distance of about six yards before him, he saw a fellow coming straight towards him. Bagg says that he stopped short, as suddenly as if he had heard the word halt, when marching at double-quick time. It was



quite a surprise, he says, and he can't imagine how the fellow was so close upon him before he was aware. He was an immense tall fellow—Bagg thinks at least two inches taller than himself—very well dressed in a blue coat and buff breeches, for all the world like a squire when going out hunting. Bagg, however, saw at



Page 39

once that he had a roguish air, and he was on his guard in a moment. "Good evening to ye, sodger," says the fellow, stepping close up to Bagg, and staring him in the face. "Good evening to you, sir! I hope you are well," says Bagg. "You are looking after some one?" says the fellow. "Just so, sir," says Bagg, and forthwith seized him by the collar; the man laughed, Bagg says it was such a strange awkward laugh. "Do you know whom you have got hold of, sodger?" said he. "I believe I do, sir," said Bagg, "and in that belief will hold you fast in the name of King George, and the quarter sessions;" the next moment he was sprawling with his heels in the air. Bagg says there was nothing remarkable in that; he was only flung by a kind of wrestling trick, which he could easily have baffled, had he been aware of it. "You will not do that again, sir," said he, as he got up and put himself on his guard. The fellow laughed again more strangely and awkwardly than before; then, bending his body and moving his head from one side to the other, as a cat does before she springs, and crying out, "Here's for ye, sodger!" he made a dart at Bagg, rushing in with his head foremost. "That will do, sir," says Bagg, and drawing himself back he put in a left-handed blow with all the force of his body and arm, just over the fellow's right eye—Bagg is a left-handed hitter, you must know—and it was a blow of that kind which won him his famous battle at Edinburgh with the big Highland sergeant. Bagg says that he was quite satisfied with the blow, more especially when he saw the fellow reel, fling out his arms, and fall to the ground. "And now, sir," said he, "I'll make bold to hand you over to the quarter sessions, and, if there is a hundred pounds for taking you, who has more right to it than myself?" So he went forward, but ere he could lay hold of his man the other was again on his legs, and was prepared to renew the combat. They grappled each other—Bagg says he had not much fear of the result, as he now felt himself the best man, the other seeming half stunned with the blow—but just then there came on a blast, a horrible roaring wind bearing night upon its wings, snow, and sleet, and hail. Bagg says he had the fellow by the throat quite fast, as he thought, but suddenly he became bewildered, and knew not where he was; and the man seemed to melt away from his grasp, and the wind howled more and more, and the night poured down darker and darker, the snow and the sleet thicker and more blinding. "Lord have mercy upon us!" said Bagg.

Myself. A strange adventure that; it is well that Bagg got home alive.

John. He says that the fight was a fair fight, and that the fling he got was a fair fling, the result of a common enough wrestling trick. But with respect to the storm which rose up just in time to save the fellow, he is of opinion that it was not fair, but something Irish and supernatural.

Myself. I dare say he's right. I have read of witchcraft in the Bible.



Page 40

John. He wishes much to have one more encounter with the fellow; he says that on fair ground, and in fine weather, he has no doubt that he could master him, and hand him over to the quarter sessions. He says that a hundred pounds would be no bad thing to be disbanded upon; for he wishes to take an inn at Swanton Morley, keep a cock-pit, and live respectably.

Myself. He is quite right; and now kiss me, my darling brother, for I must go back through the bog to Templemore.

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'Is it a long time since you have seen any of these Gwyddeliaid [Irish]?'

'About two months, sir, and then a terrible fright they caused me.'

'How was that?'

'I will tell you, sir; I had been across the Berwyn to carry home a piece of weaving work to a person who employs me. It was night as I returned, and when I was about halfway down the hill, at a place which is called Allt Paddy, because the Gwyddelod are in the habit of taking up their quarters there, I came upon a gang of them, who had come there and camped and lighted their fire whilst I was on the other side of the hill. There were nearly twenty of them, men and women, and amongst the rest was a man standing naked in a tub of water with two women stroking him down with clouts. He was a large fierce-looking fellow and his body, on which the flame of the fire glittered, was nearly covered with red hair. I never saw such a sight. As I passed they glared at me and talked violently in their Paddy Gwyddel, but did not offer to molest me. I hastened down the hill, and right glad I was when I found myself safe and sound at my house in Llangollen, with my money in my pocket, for I had several shillings there, which the man across the hill had paid me for the work which I had done.'

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Now, a tinker is his own master, a scholar is not. Let us suppose the best of scholars, a schoolmaster, for example, for I suppose you will admit that no one can be higher in scholarship than a schoolmaster; do you call his a pleasant life? I don't; we should call him a school-slave, rather than a schoolmaster. Only conceive him in blessed weather like this, in his close school, teaching children to write in copy-books, 'Evil communication corrupts good manners.' . . . Only conceive him, I say, drudging in such guise from morning till night, without any rational enjoyment but to beat the children. Would you compare such a dog's life as that with your own—the happiest under heaven—true Eden life, as the Germans would say,—pitching your tent under the pleasant hedgerow, listening to the song of the feathered tribes, collecting all the leaky kettles in



the neighbourhood, soldering and joining, earning your honest bread by the wholesome sweat of your brow—making ten holes—hey, what's this? what's the man crying for?

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'Did you speak, Don Jorge?' demanded the archbishop.



Page 41

'That is a fine brilliant on your lordship's hand,' said I.

'You are fond of brilliants, Don Jorge,' said the archbishop, his features brightening up; 'vaya! so am I; they are pretty things. Do you understand them?'

'I do,' said I, 'and I never saw a finer brilliant than your own, one excepted; it belonged to an acquaintance of mine, a Tartar Khan. He did not bear it on his finger, however; it stood in the frontlet of his horse, where it shone like a star. He called it Daoud Scharr, which, being interpreted, meaneth light of war.'

'Vaya!' said the archbishop, 'how very extraordinary! I am glad you are fond of brilliants, Don Jorge. Speaking of horses, reminds me that I have frequently seen you on horseback. Vaya! how you ride! It is dangerous to be in your way.'

'Is your lordship fond of equestrian exercise?'

'By no means, Don Jorge; I do not like horses. It is not the practice of the Church to ride on horseback. We prefer mules; they are the quieter animals. I fear horses, they kick so violently.'

'The kick of a horse is death,' said I, 'if it touches a vital part. I am not, however, of your lordship's opinion with respect to mules: a good ginete may retain his seat on a horse however vicious, but a mule—vaya! when a false mule tira par detras, I do not believe that the Father of the Church himself could keep the saddle a moment, however sharp his bit.'

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Francis Ardry and myself dined together, and after dinner partook of a bottle of the best port which the inn afforded. After a few glasses, we had a great deal of conversation; I again brought the subject of marriage and love, divine love, upon the carpet, but Francis almost immediately begged me to drop it; and on my having the delicacy to comply, he reverted to dog-fighting, on which he talked well and learnedly; amongst other things, he said that it was a princely sport of great antiquity, and quoted from Quintus Curtius to prove that the princes of India must have been of the fancy, they having, according to that author, treated Alexander to a fight between certain dogs and a lion. Becoming, notwithstanding my friend's eloquence and learning, somewhat tired of the subject, I began to talk about Alexander. Francis Ardry said he was one of the two great men whom the world has produced, the other being Napoleon; I replied that I believed Tamerlane was a greater man than either; but Francis Ardry knew nothing of Tamerlane, save what he had gathered from the play of Timour the Tartar. 'No,' said he, 'Alexander and Napoleon are the great men of the world, their names are known everywhere. Alexander has been dead upwards of two thousand years, but the very English bumpkins sometimes christen their boys by the name of Alexander—can there be a



greater evidence of his greatness? As for Napoleon, there are some parts of India in which his bust is worshipped.' Wishing to make up a triumvirate, I mentioned the name of Wellington, to which Francis Ardry merely said, 'bah!' and resumed the subject of dog-fighting.



Page 42

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After a slight breakfast I mounted the horse, which, decked out in his borrowed finery, really looked better by a large sum of money than on any former occasion. Making my way out of the yard of the inn, I was instantly in the principal street of the town, up and down which an immense number of horses were being exhibited, some led, and others with riders. 'A wonderful small quantity of good horses in the fair this time!' I heard a stout, jockey-looking individual say, who was staring up the street with his side towards me. 'Halloo, young fellow!' said he, a few moments after I had passed, 'whose horse is that? Stop! I want to look at him!' Though confident that he was addressing himself to me, I took no notice, remembering the advice of the ostler, and proceeded up the street. My horse possessed a good walking step; but walking, as the reader knows, was not his best pace, which was the long trot, at which I could not well exercise him in the street, on account of the crowd of men and animals; however, as he walked along, I could easily perceive that he attracted no slight attention amongst those who, by their jockey dress and general appearance, I imagined to be connoisseurs; I heard various calls to stop, to none of which I paid the slightest attention. In a few minutes I found myself out of the town, when, turning round for the purpose of returning, I found I had been followed by several of the connoisseur-looking individuals, whom I had observed in the fair. 'Now would be the time for a display,' thought I; and looking around me I observed two five-barred gates, one on each side of the road, and fronting each other. Turning my horse's head to one, I pressed my heels to his sides, loosened the reins, and gave an encouraging cry, whereupon the animal cleared the gate in a twinkling. Before he had advanced ten yards in the field to which the gate opened, I had turned him round, and again giving him cry and rein, I caused him to leap back again into the road, and still allowing him head, I made him leap the other gate; and forthwith turning him round, I caused him to leap once more into the road, where he stood proudly tossing his head, as much as to say, 'What more?' 'A fine horse! a capital horse!' said several of the connoisseurs. 'What do you ask for him?' 'Too much for any of you to pay,' said I. 'A horse like this is intended for other kind of customers than any of you.' 'How do you know that?' said one; the very same person whom I had heard complaining in the street of the paucity of good horses in the fair. 'Come, let us know what you ask for him?' 'A hundred and fifty pounds,' said I; 'neither more nor less.' 'Do you call that a great price?' said the man. 'Why, I thought you would have asked double that amount! You do yourself injustice, young man.' 'Perhaps I do,' said I, 'but that's my affair; I do not choose to take more.' 'I wish you would let me get into the saddle,'



Page 43

said the man; 'the horse knows you, and therefore shows to more advantage; but I should like to see how he would move under me, who am a stranger. Will you let me get into the saddle, young man?' 'No,' said I; 'I will not let you get into the saddle.' 'Why not?' said the man. 'Lest you should be a Yorkshireman,' said I, 'and should run away with the horse.' 'Yorkshire?' said the man; 'I am from Suffolk, silly Suffolk, so you need not be afraid of my running away with the horse.' 'Oh! if that's the case,' said I, 'I should be afraid that the horse would run away with you; so I will by no means let you mount.' 'Will you let me look in his mouth?' said the man. 'If you please,' said I; 'but I tell you, he's apt to bite.' 'He can scarcely be a worse bite than his master,' said the man, looking into the horse's mouth; 'he's four off. I say, young man, will you warrant this horse?' 'No,' said I; 'I never warrant horses; the horses that I ride can always warrant themselves.' 'I wish you would let me speak a word to you,' said he. 'Just come aside. It's a nice horse,' said he in a half-whisper, after I had ridden a few paces aside with him. 'It's a nice horse,' said he, placing his hand upon the pommel of the saddle, and looking up in my face, 'and I think I can find you a customer. If you would take a hundred, I think my lord would purchase it, for he has sent me about the fair to look him up a horse, by which he could hope to make an honest penny.' 'Well,' said I, 'and could he not make an honest penny, and yet give me the price I ask?' 'Why,' said the go-between, 'a hundred and fifty pounds is as much as the animal is worth, or nearly so; and my lord, do you see—' 'I see no reason at all,' said I, 'why I should sell the animal for less than he is worth, in order that his lordship may be benefited by him; so that if his lordship wants to make an honest penny, he must find some person who would consider the disadvantage of selling him a horse for less than it is worth as counterbalanced by the honour of dealing with a lord, which I should never do; but I can't be wasting my time here. I am going back to the — , where, if you, or any person, are desirous of purchasing the horse, you must come within the next half-hour, or I shall probably not feel disposed to sell him at all.' 'Another word, young man,' said the jockey, but without staying to hear what he had to say, I put the horse to his best trot, and re-entering the town, and threading my way as well as I could through the press, I returned to the yard of the inn, where, dismounting, I stood still, holding the horse by the bridle.

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I did not like reviewing at all—it was not to my taste; it was not in my way; I liked it far less than translating the publisher's philosophy, for that was something in the line of one whom a competent judge had surnamed 'Lavengro.' I never could understand why reviews were instituted; works of merit do not require to be reviewed, they can speak for themselves, and require no praising; works of no merit at all will die of themselves, they require no killing.



Page 44

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A lad, who twenty tongues can talk,
And sixty miles a day can walk;
Drink at a draught a pint of rum,
And then be neither sick nor dumb;
Can tune a song, and make a verse,
And deeds of northern kings rehearse;
Who never will forsake his friend,
While he his bony fist can bend;
And, though averse to brawl and strife,
Will fight a Dutchman with a knife,
O that is just the lad for me,
And such is honest six-foot three.

A braver being ne'er had birth
Since God first kneaded man from earth;
O, I have come to know him well,
As Ferroe's blacken'd rocks can tell.
Who was it did, at Suderoe,
The deed no other dared to do?
Who was it, when the Boff had burst,
And whelm'd me in its womb accurst,
Who was it dashed amid the wave,
With frantic zeal, my life to save?
Who was it flung the rope to me?
O, who, but honest six-foot three!

Who was it taught my willing tongue,
The songs that Braga fram'd and sung?
Who was it op'd to me the store
Of dark unearthly Runic lore,
And taught me to beguile my time
With Denmark's aged and witching rhyme;
To rest in thought in Elvir shades,
And hear the song of fairy maids;
Or climb the top of Dovrefeld,
Where magic knights their muster held:
Who was it did all this for me?
O, who, but honest six-foot three!

Wherever fate shall bid me roam,
Far, far from social joy and home;
'Mid burning Afric's desert sands;



Or wild Kamschatka's frozen lands;
Bit by the poison-loaded breeze
Or blasts which clog with ice the seas;
In lowly cot or lordly hall,
In beggar's rags or robes of pall,
'Mong robber-bands or honest men,
In crowded town or forest den,
I never will unmindful be
Of what I owe to six-foot three.

That form which moves with giant grace—
That wild, tho' not unhandsome face;
That voice which sometimes in its tone
Is softer than the wood-dove's moan,
At others, louder than the storm
Which beats the side of old Cairn Gorm;
That hand, as white as falling snow,
Which yet can fell the stoutest foe;
And, last of all, that noble heart,
Which ne'er from honour's path would start
Shall never be forgot by me—
So farewell, honest six-foot three.

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'He is a great fool who is ever dishonest in England. Any person who has any natural gift, and everybody has some natural gift, is sure of finding encouragement in this noble country of ours, provided he will but exhibit it. I had not walked more than three miles before I came to a wonderfully high church steeple, which stood close by the road; I looked at the steeple, and going to a heap of smooth pebbles which lay by the roadside, I took up some, and then went into the churchyard, and placing myself just below the tower, my right foot resting on a ledge, about two feet from the ground, I, with my left hand—being



Page 45

a left-handed person, do you see—flung or chucked up a stone, which lighting on the top of the steeple, which was at least a hundred and fifty feet high, did there remain. After repeating this feat two or three times, I “hulled” up a stone, which went clean over the tower, and then one, my right foot still on the ledge, which rising at least five yards above the steeple, did fall down just at my feet. Without knowing it, I was showing off my gift to others besides myself, doing what, perhaps, not five men in England could do. Two men, who were passing by, stopped and looked at my proceedings, and when I had done flinging came into the churchyard, and, after paying me a compliment on what they had seen me do, proposed that I should join company with them; I asked them who they were, and they told me. The one was Hopping Ned, and the other Biting Giles. Both had their gifts, by which they got their livelihood; Ned could hop a hundred yards with any man in England, and Giles could lift up with his teeth any dresser or kitchen table in the country, and, standing erect, hold it dangling in his jaws. There’s many a big oak table and dresser in certain districts of England, which bear the marks of Giles’s teeth; and I make no doubt that, a hundred or two years hence, there’ll be strange stories about those marks, and that people will point them out as a proof that there were giants in bygone times, and that many a dentist will moralise on the decays which human teeth have undergone.

‘They wanted me to go about with them, and exhibit my gift occasionally as they did theirs, promising that the money that was got by the exhibitions should be honestly divided. I consented, and we set off together, and that evening coming to a village, and putting up at the alehouse, all the grand folks of the village being there smoking their pipes, we contrived to introduce the subject of hopping—the upshot being that Ned hopped against the schoolmaster for a pound, and beat him hollow; shortly after, Giles, for a wager, took up the kitchen table in his jaws, though he had to pay a shilling to the landlady for the marks he left, whose grandchildren will perhaps get money by exhibiting them. As for myself, I did nothing that day, but the next, on which my companions did nothing, I showed off at hulling stones against a cripple, the crack man for stone throwing, of a small town, a few miles farther on. Bets were made to the tune of some pounds, I contrived to beat the cripple, and just contrived; for to do him justice, I must acknowledge he was a first-rate hand at stones, though he had a game hip, and went sideways; his head, when he walked—if his movements could be called walking—not being above three feet above the ground. So we travelled, I and my companions, showing off our gifts, Giles and I occasionally for a gathering, but Ned never hopping unless against somebody for a wager. We lived honestly and comfortably, making no little money by our natural endowments, and were known over a great part of England as ‘Hopping Ned,’ ‘Biting Giles,’ and ‘Hull over the Head Jack,’ which was my name, it being the blackguard fashion of the English, do you see, to—’



Page 46

Here I interrupted the jockey. 'You may call it a blackguard fashion,' said I, 'and I dare say it is, or it would scarcely be English; but it is an immensely ancient one, and is handed down to us from our northern ancestry, especially the Danes, who were in the habit of giving people surnames, or rather nicknames, from some quality of body or mind, but generally from some disadvantageous peculiarity of feature; for there is no denying that the English, Norse, or whatever we may please to call them, are an envious, depreciatory set of people, who not only give their poor comrades contemptuous surnames, but their great people also. They didn't call you the matchless Hurler, because, by doing so, they would have paid you a compliment, but Hull over the Head Jack, as much as to say that after all you were a scrub: so, in ancient time, instead of calling Regner the great conqueror, the Nation Tamer, they surnamed him Lodbrog, which signifies Rough or Hairy Breeks—lod or loddin signifying rough or hairy; and instead of complimenting Halgerdr, the wife of Gunnar of Hlitharend, the great champion of Iceland, upon her majestic presence, by calling her Halgerdr, the stately or tall, what must they do but term her Ha-brokr, or High-breeks, it being the fashion in old times for Northern ladies to wear breeks, or breeches, which English ladies of the present day never think of doing; and just, as of old, they called Halgerdr Longbreeks, so this very day a fellow of Horncastle called, in my hearing, our noble-looking Hungarian friend here, Long-stockings. Oh, I could give you a hundred instances, both ancient and modern, of this unseemly propensity of our illustrious race, though I will only trouble you with a few more ancient ones; they not only nicknamed Regner, but his sons also, who were all kings, and distinguished men; one, whose name was Biorn, they nicknamed Ironsides; another, Sigurd, Snake in the Eye; another, White Sark, or White Shirt—I wonder they did not tall him Dirty Shirt; and Ivarr, another, who was king of Northumberland, they called Beinlausi, or the Legless, because he was spindle-shanked, had no sap in his bones, and consequently no children. He was a great king, it is true, and very wise, nevertheless his blackguard countrymen, always averse, as their descendants are, to give credit to anybody, for any valuable quality or possession, must needs lay hold, do you see—'

But before I could say any more, the jockey, having laid down his pipe, rose, and having taken off his coat, advanced towards me.

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I informed the landlord that he was right in supposing that I came for the horse, but that, before I paid for him, I should wish to prove his capabilities. 'With all my heart,' said the landlord. 'You shall mount him this moment.' Then going into the stable, he saddled and bridled the horse, and presently brought him out before the door. I mounted him, Mr. Petulengro putting a heavy whip into my hand, and saying a few words to



Page 47

me in his own mysterious language. 'The horse wants no whip,' said the landlord. 'Hold your tongue, daddy,' said Mr. Petulengro, 'my pal knows quite well what to do with the whip, he's not going to beat the horse with it.' About four hundred yards from the house there was a hill, to the foot of which the road ran almost on a perfect level; towards the foot of this hill, I trotted the horse, who set off at a long, swift pace, seemingly at the rate of about sixteen miles an hour. On reaching the foot of the hill, I wheeled the animal round, and trotted him towards the house—the horse sped faster than before. Ere he had advanced a hundred yards, I took off my hat, in obedience to the advice which Mr. Petulengro had given me, in his own language, and holding it over the horse's head, commenced drumming on the crown with the knob of the whip; the horse gave a slight start, but instantly recovering himself, continued his trot till he arrived at the door of the public-house, amidst the acclamations of the company, who had all rushed out of the house to be spectators of what was going on. 'I see now what you wanted the whip for,' said the landlord, 'and sure enough, that drumming on your hat was no bad way of learning whether the horse was quiet or not. Well, did you ever see a more quiet horse, or a better trotter?' 'My cob shall trot against him,' said a fellow, dressed in velveteen, mounted on a low powerful-looking animal. 'My cob shall trot against him to the hill and back again—come on!' We both started; the cob kept up gallantly against the horse for about half the way to the hill, when he began to lose ground; at the foot of the hill he was about fifteen yards behind. Whereupon I turned slowly and waited for him. We then set off towards the house, but now the cob had no chance, being at least twenty yards behind when I reached the door. This running of horses, the wild uncouth forms around me, and the ale and beer which were being guzzled from pots and flagons, put me wonderfully in mind of the ancient horse-races of the heathen north. I almost imagined myself Gunnar of Hlitharend at the race of —.

'Are you satisfied?' said the landlord. 'Didn't you tell me that he could leap?' I demanded. 'I am told he can,' said the landlord; 'but I can't consent that he should be tried in that way, as he might be damaged.' 'That's right!' said Mr. Petulengro, 'don't trust my pal to leap that horse, he'll merely fling him down, and break his neck and his own. There's a better man than he close by; let him get on his back and leap him.' 'You mean yourself, I suppose,' said the landlord. 'Well, I call that talking modestly, and nothing becomes a young man more than modesty.' 'It a'n't I, daddy,' said Mr. Petulengro. 'Here's the man,' said he, pointing to Tawno. 'Here's the horse-leaper of the world!' 'You mean the horse-back breaker,' said the landlord. 'That big fellow would break down my cousin's horse.' 'Why, he weighs only sixteen



Page 48

stone,' said Mr. Petulengro. 'And his sixteen stone, with his way of handling a horse, does not press so much as any other one's thirteen. Only let him get on the horse's back, and you'll see what he can do!' 'No,' said the landlord, 'it won't do.' Whereupon Mr. Petulengro became very much excited, and pulling out a handful of money, said: 'I'll tell you what, I'll forfeit these guineas, if my black pal there does the horse any kind of damage; duck me in the horse-pond if I don't.' 'Well,' said the landlord, 'for the sport of the thing I consent, so let your white pal get down, and your black pal mount as soon as he pleases.' I felt rather mortified at Mr. Petulengro's interference, and showed no disposition to quit my seat; whereupon he came up to me and said: 'Now, brother, do get out of the saddle—you are no bad hand at trotting, I am willing to acknowledge that; but at leaping a horse there is no one like Tawno. Let every dog be praised for his own gift. You have been showing off in your line for the last half-hour; now do give Tawno a chance of exhibiting a little; poor fellow, he hasn't often a chance of exhibiting, as his wife keeps him so much in sight.' Not wishing to appear desirous of engrossing the public attention, and feeling rather desirous to see how Tawno, of whose exploits in leaping horses I had frequently heard, would acquit himself in the affair, I at length dismounted, and Tawno, at a bound, leaped into the saddle, where he really looked like Gunnar of Hlitharend, save and except the complexion of Gunnar was florid, whereas that of Tawno was of nearly Mulatto darkness; and that all Tawno's features were cast in the Grecian model, whereas Gunnar had a snub nose. 'There's a leaping-bar behind the house,' said the landlord. 'Leaping-bar!' said Mr. Petulengro scornfully. 'Do you think my black pal ever rides at a leaping-bar? No more than at a winkle-straw. Leap over that meadow wall, Tawno.' Just past the house, in the direction in which I had been trotting, was a wall about four feet high, beyond which was a small meadow. Tawno rode the horse gently up to the wall, permitted him to look over, then backed him for about ten yards, and pressing his calves against the horse's sides, he loosed the rein, and the horse launching forward, took the leap in gallant style. 'Well done, man and horse!' said Mr. Petulengro; 'now come back, Tawno.' The leap from the side of the meadow was, however, somewhat higher; and the horse, when pushed at it, at first turned away; whereupon Tawno backed him to a greater distance, pushed the horse to a full gallop, giving a wild cry; whereupon the horse again took the wall, slightly grazing one of his legs against it. 'A near thing,' said the landlord, 'but a good leap. Now, no more leaping, so long as I have control over the animal.' The horse was then led back to the stable; and the landlord, myself and companions going into the bar, I paid down the money for the horse.



Page 49

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'When you are a gentleman,' said he, after a pause, 'the first thing you must think about is to provide yourself with a good horse for your own particular riding; you will perhaps keep a coach and pair, but they will be less your own than your lady's, should you have one, and your young gentry, should you have any; or, if you have neither, for madam, your housekeeper, and the upper female servants, so you need trouble your head less about them, though, of course, you would not like to pay away your money for screws; but be sure you get a good horse for your own riding; and that you may have a good chance of having a good one, buy one that's young and has plenty of belly—a little more than the one has which you now have, though you are not yet a gentleman; you will, of course, look to his head, his withers, legs and other points, but never buy a horse at any price that has not plenty of belly; no horse that has not belly is ever a good feeder, and a horse that a'n't a good feeder, can't be a good horse; never buy a horse that is drawn up in the belly behind; a horse of that description can't feed, and can never carry sixteen stone.

'When you have got such a horse be proud of it—as I dare say you are of the one you have now—and wherever you go swear there a'n't another to match it in the country, and if anybody gives you the lie, take him by the nose and tweak it off, just as you would do if anybody were to speak ill of your lady, or, for want of her, of your housekeeper. Take care of your horse, as you would of the apple of your eye—I am sure I would if I were a gentleman, which I don't ever expect to be, and hardly wish, seeing as how I am sixty-nine, and am rather too old to ride—yes, cherish and take care of your horse as perhaps the best friend you have in the world; for, after all, who will carry you through thick and thin as your horse will? not your gentlemen friends, I warrant, nor your housekeeper, nor your upper servants, male or female; perhaps your lady would, that is, if she is a whopper, and one of the right sort; the others would be more likely to take up mud and pelt you with it, provided they saw you in trouble, than to help you. So take care of your horse, and feed him every day with your own hands; give him three-quarters of a peck of corn each day, mixed up with a little hay-chaff, and allow him besides one hundredweight of hay in the course of a week; some say that the hay should be hardland hay, because it is wholesomest, but I say, let it be clover hay, because the horse likes it best; give him through summer and winter, once a week, a pailful of bran mash, cold in summer and in winter hot; ride him gently about the neighbourhood every day, by which means you will give exercise to yourself and horse, and, moreover, have the satisfaction of exhibiting yourself and your horse to advantage, and hearing, perhaps, the men say what a fine horse, and the ladies saying what a fine man: never



Page 50

let your groom mount your horse, as it is ten to one, if you do, your groom will be wishing to show off before company, and will fling your horse down. I was groom to a gemman before I went to the inn at Hounslow, and flung him a horse down worth ninety guineas, by endeavouring to show off before some ladies that I met on the road. Turn your horse out to grass throughout May and the first part of June, for then the grass is sweetest, and the flies don't sting so bad as they do later in summer; afterwards merely turn him out occasionally in the swale of the morn and the evening; after September the grass is good for little, lash and sour at best; every horse should go out to grass, if not his blood becomes full of greasy humours, and his wind is apt to become affected, but he ought to be kept as much as possible from the heat and flies, always got up at night, and never turned out late in the year—Lord! if I had always such a nice attentive person to listen to me as you are, I could go on talking about 'orses to the end of time.'

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I was bidding him farewell, when he hemmed once or twice, and said, that as he did not live far off, he hoped that I would go with him and taste some of his mead. As I had never tasted mead, of which I had frequently read in the compositions of the Welsh bards, and, moreover, felt rather thirsty from the heat of the day, I told him that I should have great pleasure in attending him. Whereupon, turning off together, we proceeded about half a mile, sometimes between stone walls, and at other times hedges, till we reached a small hamlet, through which we passed, and presently came to a very pretty cottage, delightfully situated within a garden, surrounded by a hedge of woodbines. Opening a gate at one corner of the garden he led the way to a large shed, which stood partly behind the cottage, which he said was his stable; thereupon he dismounted and led his donkey into the shed, which was without stalls, but had a long rack and manger. On one side he tied his donkey, after taking off her caparisons, and I followed his example, tying my horse at the other side with a rope halter which he gave me; he then asked me to come in and taste his mead, but I told him that I must attend to the comfort of my horse first, and forthwith, taking a wisp of straw, rubbed him carefully down. Then taking a pailful of clear water which stood in the shed, I allowed the horse to drink about half a pint; and then turning to the old man, who all the time had stood by looking at my proceedings, I asked him whether he had any oats? 'I have all kinds of grain,' he replied; and, going out, he presently returned with two measures, one a large and the other a small one, both filled with oats, mixed with a few beans, and handing the large one to me for the horse, he emptied the other before the donkey, who, before she began to despatch it turned her nose to her master's face, and fairly kissed him. Having given my horse his portion, I told



Page 51

the old man that I was ready to taste his mead as soon as he pleased, whereupon he ushered me into his cottage, where, making me sit down by a deal table in a neatly sanded kitchen, he produced from an old-fashioned closet a bottle, holding about a quart, and a couple of cups, which might each contain about half a pint, then opening the bottle and filling the cups with a brown-coloured liquor, he handed one to me, and taking a seat opposite to me he lifted the other, nodded, and saying to me: 'Health and welcome,' placed it to his lips and drank.

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At the dead hour of night, it might be about two, I was awakened from sleep by a cry which sounded from the room immediately below that in which I slept. I knew the cry, it was the cry of my mother, and I also knew its import; yet I made no effort to rise, for I was for the moment paralysed. Again the cry sounded, yet still I lay motionless—the stupidity of horror was upon me. A third time, and it was then that, by a violent effort bursting the spell which appeared to bind me, I sprang from the bed and rushed downstairs. My mother was running wildly about the room; she had awoke and found my father senseless in the bed by her side. I essayed to raise him, and after a few efforts supported him in the bed in a sitting posture. My brother now rushed in, and snatching up a light that was burning, he held it to my father's face. 'The surgeon, the surgeon!' he cried; then dropping the light, he ran out of the room followed by my mother; I remained alone, supporting the senseless form of my father; the light had been extinguished by the fall, and an almost total darkness reigned in the room. The form pressed heavily against my bosom—at last methought it moved. Yes, I was light, there was a heaving of the breast, and then a gasping. Were those words which I heard? Yes, they were words, low and indistinct at first, and then audible. The mind of the dying man was reverting to former scenes. I heard him mention names which I had often heard him mention before. It was an awful moment; I felt stupefied, but I still contrived to support my dying father. There was a pause, again my father spoke: I heard him speak of Minden, and of Meredith, the old Minden sergeant, and then he uttered another name, which at one period of his life was much on his lips, the name of — but this is a solemn moment! There was a deep gasp: I shook, and thought all was over; but I was mistaken—my father moved and revived for a moment; he supported himself in bed without my assistance. I make no doubt that for a moment he was perfectly sensible, and it was then that, clasping his hands, he uttered another name clearly, distinctly—it was the name of Christ. With that name upon his lips, the brave old soldier sank back upon my bosom, and, with his hands still clasped yielded up his soul.

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Page 52

I should say that I scarcely walked less than thirty miles about the big city on the day of my first arrival. Night came on, but still I was walking about, my eyes wide open, and admiring everything that presented itself to them. Everything was new to me, for everything is different in London from what it is elsewhere—the people, their language, the horses, the tout ensemble—even the stones of London are different from others—at least it appeared to me that I had never walked with the same ease and facility on the flag stones of a country town as on those of London; so I continued roving about till night came on, and then the splendour of some of the shops particularly struck me. ‘A regular Arabian nights’ entertainment!’ said I, as I looked into one on Cornhill, gorgeous with precious merchandise, and lighted up with lustres, the rays of which were reflected from a hundred mirrors.

But, notwithstanding the excellence of the London pavement, I began about nine o’clock to feel myself thoroughly tired; painfully and slowly did I drag my feet along. I also felt very much in want of some refreshment, and I remembered that since breakfast I had taken nothing. I was now in the Strand, and, glancing about, I perceived that I was close by an hotel, which bore over the door the somewhat remarkable name of Holy Lands. Without a moment’s hesitation I entered a well-lighted passage, and turning to the left, I found myself in a well-lighted coffee-room, with a well-dressed and frizzled waiter before me. ‘Bring me some claret,’ said I, for I was rather faint than hungry, and I felt ashamed to give a humbler order to so well-dressed an individual. The waiter looked at me for a moment; then, making a low bow, he bustled off, and I sat myself down in the box nearest to the window. Presently the waiter returned, bearing beneath his left arm a long bottle, and between the fingers of his right hand two large purple glasses; placing the latter on the table, he produced a cork-screw, drew the cork in a twinkling, set the bottle down before me with a bang, and then, standing still, appeared to watch my movements. You think I don’t know how to drink a glass of claret, thought I to myself. I’ll soon show you how we drink claret where I come from; and filling one of the glasses to the brim, I flickered it for a moment between my eyes and the lustre, and then held it to my nose; having given that organ full time to test the bouquet of the wine, I applied the glass to my lips, taking a large mouthful of the wine, which I swallowed slowly and by degrees, that the palate might likewise have an opportunity of performing its functions. A second mouthful I disposed of more summarily; then, placing the empty glass upon the table, I fixed my eyes upon the bottle, and said—nothing; whereupon the waiter, who had been observing the whole process with considerable attention, made me a bow yet more low than before, and turning on his heel, retired with a smart chuck of his head, as much as to say, It is all right; the young man is used to claret.



Page 53

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To the generality of mankind there is no period like youth. The generality are far from fortunate; but the period of youth, even to the least so, offers moments of considerable happiness, for they are not only disposed, but able to enjoy most things within their reach. With what trifles at that period are we content; the things from which in after-life we should turn away in disdain please us then, for we are in the midst of a golden cloud, and everything seems decked with a golden hue. Never during any portion of my life did time flow on more speedily than during the two or three years immediately succeeding the period to which we arrived in the preceding chapter. Since then it has flagged often enough; sometimes it has seemed to stand entirely still; and the reader may easily judge how it fares at the present, from the circumstance of my taking pen in hand, and endeavouring to write down the passages of my life—a last resource with most people. But at the period to which I allude I was just, as I may say, entering upon life; I had adopted a profession, and—to keep up my character, simultaneously with that profession—the study of a new language; I speedily became a proficient in the one, but ever remained a novice in the other: a novice in the law, but a perfect master in the Welsh tongue.

Yes! very pleasant times were those, when within the womb of a lofty deal desk, behind which I sat for some eight hours every day, transcribing (when I imagined eyes were upon me) documents of every description in every possible hand, Blackstone kept company with Ab Gwilym—the polished English lawyer of the last century, who wrote long and prosy chapters on the rights of things—with a certain wild Welshman, who some four hundred years before that time indited immortal cwydds and odes to the wives of Cambrian chieftains—more particularly to one Morfydd, the wife of a certain hunchbacked dignitary called by the poet facetiously Bwa Bach—generally terminating with the modest request of a little private parlance beneath the green wood bough, with no other witness than the eos, or nightingale, a request which, if the poet himself may be believed—rather a doubtful point—was seldom, very seldom, denied.

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I cannot help thinking that it was fortunate for myself, who am, to a certain extent, a philologist, that with me the pursuit of languages has been always modified by the love of horses; for scarcely had I turned my mind to the former, when I also mounted the wild cob, and hurried forth in the direction of the Devil's Hill, scattering dust and flint-stones on every side; that ride, amongst other things, taught me that a lad with thews and sinews was intended by nature for something better than mere word-culling; and if I have accomplished anything in after life worthy of mentioning, I believe it may partly be attributed to the ideas which that ride, by setting my blood in a glow, infused into my



Page 54

brain. I might, otherwise, have become a mere philologist; one of those beings who toil night and day in culling useless words for some opus magnum which Murray will never publish, and nobody ever read—beings without enthusiasm, who, having never mounted a generous steed, cannot detect a good point in Pegasus himself; like a certain philologist, who, though acquainted with the exact value of every word in the Greek and Latin languages, could observe no particular beauty in one of the most glorious of Homer's rhapsodies. What knew he of Pegasus? he had never mounted a generous steed; the merest jockey, had the strain been interpreted to him, would have called it a brave song!—I return to the brave cob.

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'O Cheapside! Cheapside!' said I, as I advanced up that mighty thoroughfare, 'truly thou art a wonderful place for hurry, noise and riches! Men talk of the bazaars of the East—I have never seen them, but I dare say that, compared with thee, they are poor places, silent places, abounding with empty boxes. O thou pride of London's east!—mighty mart of old renown!—for thou art not a place of yesterday: long before the Roses red and white battled in fair England, thou didst exist—a place of throng and bustle—a place of gold and silver, perfumes and fine linen. Centuries ago thou couldst extort the praises even of the fiercest foes of England. Fierce bards of Wales, sworn foes of England, sang thy praises centuries ago; and even the fiercest of them all, Red Julius himself, wild Glendower's bard, had a word of praise for London's "Cheape," for so the bards of Wales styled thee in their flowing odes. Then, if those who were not English, and hated England, and all connected therewith, had yet much to say in thy praise, when thou wast far inferior to what thou art now, why should true-born Englishmen, or those who call themselves so, turn up their noses at thee, and scoff thee at the present day, as I believe they do? But, let others do as they will, I, at least, who am not only an Englishman, but an East Englishman, will not turn up my nose at thee, but will praise and extol thee, calling thee mart of the world—a place of wonder and astonishment!—and, were it right and fitting to wish that anything should endure for ever, I would say prosperity to Cheapside, throughout all ages—may it be the world's resort for merchandise, world without end.

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Oh, that ride! that first ride!—most truly it was an epoch in my existence; and I still look back to it with feelings of longing and regret. People may talk of first love—it is a very agreeable event, I dare say—but give me the flush, and triumph, and glorious sweat of a first ride, like mine on the mighty cob! My whole frame was shaken, it is true; and during one long week I could hardly move foot or hand; but what of that? By that one trial I had become free, as I may say, of the whole equine species. No more fatigue, no more stiffness of joints, after that first ride round the Devil's Hill on the cob.



Page 55

Oh, that cob! that Irish cob!—may the sod lie lightly over the bones of the strongest, speediest, and most gallant of its kind! Oh! the days when, issuing from the barrack-gate of Templemore, we commenced our hurry-scurry just as inclination led—now across the fields—direct over stone walls and running brooks—mere pastime for the cob!—sometimes along the road to Thurles and Holy Cross, even to distant Cahir!—what was distance to the cob?

It was thus that the passion for the equine race was first awakened within me—a passion which, up to the present time, has been rather on the increase than diminishing. It is no blind passion; the horse being a noble and generous creature, intended by the All-Wise to be the helper and friend of man, to whom he stands next in the order of creation. On many occasions of my life I have been much indebted to the horse, and have found in him a friend and coadjutor, when human help and sympathy were not to be obtained. It is therefore natural enough that I should love the horse; but the love which I entertain for him has always been blended with respect; for I soon perceived that, though disposed to be the friend and helper of man, he is by no means inclined to be his slave; in which respect he differs from the dog, who will crouch when beaten; whereas the horse spurns, for he is aware of his own worth, and that he carries death within the horn of his heel. If, therefore, I found it easy to love the horse, I found it equally natural to respect him.

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Of one thing I am certain, that the reader must be much delighted with the wholesome smell of the stable, with which many of these pages are redolent; what a contrast to the sickly odours exhaled from those of some of my contemporaries, especially of those who pretend to be of the highly fashionable class, and who treat of reception-rooms, well may they be styled so, in which dukes, duchesses, earls, countesses, archbishops, bishops, mayors, mayoresses—not forgetting the writers themselves, both male and female—congregate and press upon one another; how cheering, how refreshing, after having been nearly knocked down with such an atmosphere, to come in contact with genuine stable hartshorn.

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My curiosity had led me to a most extraordinary place, which quite beggars the scanty powers of description with which I am gifted. I stumbled on amongst ruined walls, and at one time found I was treading over vaults, as I suddenly started back from a yawning orifice, into which my next step as I strolled musing along, would have precipitated me. I proceeded for a considerable way by the eastern wall, till I heard a tremendous bark, and presently an immense dog, such as those which guard the flocks in the neighbourhood against the wolves, came bounding to attack me 'with eyes that glowed, and fangs that grinned.' Had I retreated, or had recourse to any other mode of defence than that which I invariably practise under such circumstances, he would probably have



worried me; but I stooped till my chin nearly touched my knee, and looked him full in the eyes, and, as John Leyden says, in the noblest ballad which the Land of Heather has produced:



Page 56

'The hound lie yowled, and back he fled,
As struck with fairy charm.'

It is a fact known to many people, and I believe it has been frequently stated, that no large and fierce dog or animal of any kind, with the exception of the bull, which shuts its eyes and rushes blindly forward, will venture to attack an individual who confronts it with a firm and motionless countenance. I say large and fierce, for it is much easier to repel a bloodhound or bear of Finland in this manner than a dung-hill cur or a terrier, against which a stick or a stone is a much more certain defence. This will astonish no one who considers that the calm reproving glance of reason, which allays the excesses of the mighty and courageous in our own species, has seldom any other effect than to add to the insolence of the feeble and foolish, who become placid as doves upon the infliction of chastisements which, if attempted to be applied to the former, would only serve to render them more terrible, and, like gunpowder cast on a flame, cause them, in mad desperation, to scatter destruction around them.

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The morning of the fifth of November looked rather threatening. As, however, it did not rain, I determined to set off for Plynlimmon, and, returning at night to the inn, resume my journey to the south on the following day. On looking into a pocket almanac I found it was Sunday. This very much disconcerted me, and I thought at first of giving up my expedition. Eventually, however, I determined to go, for I reflected that I should be doing no harm, and that I might acknowledge the sacredness of the day by attending morning service at the little Church of England chapel which lay in my way.

The mountain of Plynlimmon to which I was bound is the third in Wales for altitude, being only inferior to Snowdon and Cadair Idris. Its proper name is Pum, or Pump, Lumon, signifying the five points, because towards the upper part it is divided into five hills or points. Plynlimmon is a celebrated hill on many accounts. It has been the scene of many remarkable events. In the tenth century a dreadful battle was fought on one of its spurs between the Danes and the Welsh, in which the former sustained a bloody overthrow; and in 1401 a conflict took place in one of its valleys between the Welsh, under Glendower, and the Flemings, of Pembrokeshire, who, exasperated at having their homesteads plundered and burned by the chieftain who was the mortal enemy of their race, assembled in considerable numbers and drove Glendower and his forces before them to Plynlimmon, where, the Welshmen standing at bay, a contest ensued, in which, though eventually worsted, the Flemings were at one time all but victorious. What, however, has more than anything else contributed to the celebrity of the hill is the circumstance of its giving birth to three rivers, the first of which, the Severn, is the principal stream in Britain; the second, the Wye, the most lovely river, probably, which the world can boast of; and the third, the Rheidol, entitled to high honour from its boldness and impetuosity, and the remarkable banks between which it flows in its very

short course, for there are scarcely twenty miles between the ffynnon or source of the Rheidol and the aber or place where it disembogues itself into the sea.



Page 57

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'Good are the horses of the Moslems,' said my old friend; 'where will you find such? They will descend rocky mountains at full speed and neither trip nor fall; but you must be cautious with the horses of the Moslems, and treat them with kindness, for the horses of the Moslems are proud, and they like not being slaves. When they are young, and first mounted, jerk not their mouths with your bit, for be sure if you do they will kill you; sooner or later, you will perish beneath their feet. Good are our horses, and good our riders, yea, very good are the Moslems at mounting the horse; who are like them? I once saw a Frank rider compete with a Moslem on this beach, and at first the Frank rider had it all his own way, and he passed the Moslem, but the course was long, very long, and the horse of the Frank rider, which was a Frank also, panted; but the horse of the Moslem panted not, for he was a Moslem also, and the Moslem rider at last gave a cry and the horse sprang forward and he overtook the Frank horse, and then the Moslem rider stood up in his saddle. How did he stand? Truly he stood on his head, and these eyes saw him; he stood on his head in the saddle as he passed the Frank rider; and he cried ha! ha! as he passed the Frank rider; and the Moslem horse cried ha! ha! as he passed the Frank breed, and the Frank lost by a far distance. Good are the Franks; good their horses; but better are the Moslems, and better are the horses of the Moslems.'

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'The burra,' [donkey], I replied, 'appears both savage and vicious.'

'She is both, brother, and on that account I bought her; a savage and vicious beast has generally four excellent legs.'

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I was standing on the castle hill in the midst of a fair of horses.

I have already had occasion to mention this castle. It is the remains of what was once a Norman stronghold, and is perched upon a round mound or monticle, in the midst of the old city. Steep is this mound and scarp, evidently by the hand of man; a deep gorge, over which is flung a bridge, separates it, on the south, from a broad swell of open ground called 'the hill;' of old the scene of many a tournament and feat of Norman chivalry, but now much used as a show-place for cattle, where those who buy and sell beeves and other beasts resort at stated periods.

So it came to pass that I stood upon this hill, observing a fair of horses.

The reader is already aware that I had long since conceived a passion for the equine race, a passion in which circumstances had of late not permitted me to indulge. I had



no horses to ride, but I took pleasure in looking at them; and I had already attended more than one of these fairs: the present was lively enough, indeed, horse fairs are seldom dull. There was shouting and whooping, neighing and braying; there was galloping and trotting; fellows with highlows and white stockings, and with many a string dangling



Page 58

from the knees of their tight breeches, were running desperately, holding horses by the halter, and in some cases dragging them along; there were long-tailed steeds, and dock-tailed steeds of every degree and breed; there were droves of wild ponies, and long rows of sober cart horses; there were donkeys and even mules: the last rare things to be seen in damp, misty England, for the mule pines in mud and rain, and thrives best with a hot sun above and a burning sand below. There were—oh, the gallant creatures! I hear their neigh upon the wind; there were—goodliest sight of all—certain enormous quadrupeds only seen to perfection in our native isle, led about by dapper grooms, their manes ribanded and their tails curiously clubbed and balled. Ha! ha!—how distinctly do they say, ha! ha!

An old man draws nigh, he is mounted on a lean pony, and he leads by the bridle one of these animals; nothing very remarkable about that creature, unless in being smaller than the rest and gentle, which they are not; he is not of the sightliest look; he is almost dun, and over one eye a thick film has gathered. But stay! there is something remarkable about that horse, there is something in his action in which he differs from the rest. As he advances, the clamour is hushed! all eyes are turned upon him—what looks of interest—of respect—and, what is this? people are taking off their hats—surely not to that steed! Yes, verily! men, especially old men, are taking off their hats to that one-eyed steed, and I hear more than one deep-drawn ah!

'What horse is that?' said I to a very old fellow, the counterpart of the old man on the pony, save that the last wore a faded suit of velveteen, and this one was dressed in a white frock.

'The best in mother England,' said the very old man, taking a knobbed stick from his mouth, and looking me in the face, at first carelessly, but presently with something like interest; 'he is old, like myself, but can still trot his twenty miles an hour. You won't live long, my swain; tall and overgrown ones like thee never does; yet, if you should chance to reach my years, you may boast to thy great grand boys, thou hast seen Marshland Shales.'

Amain I did for the horse what I would neither do for earl or baron, doffed my hat; yes! I doffed my hat to the wondrous horse, the fast trotter, the best in mother England; and I, too, drew a deep ah! and repeated the words of the old fellows around. 'Such a horse as this we shall never see again; a pity that he is so old!'

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In Spain I passed five years, which, if not the most eventful, were, I have no hesitation in saying, the most happy years of my existence. Of Spain at the present time, now that the day-dream has vanished never, alas! to return, I entertain the warmest admiration:

she is the most magnificent country in the world, probably the most fertile, and certainly with the finest climate. Whether her children are worthy



Page 59

of their mother, is another question, which I shall not attempt to answer; but content myself with observing that, amongst much that is lamentable and reprehensible, I have found much that is noble and to be admired: much stern heroic virtue; much savage and horrible crime; of low vulgar vice very little, at least amongst the great body of the Spanish nation, with which my mission lay; for it will be as well here to observe that I advance no claim to an intimate acquaintance with the Spanish nobility, from whom I kept as remote as circumstances would permit me; en revanche, however, I have had the honour to live on familiar terms with the peasants, shepherds, and muleteers of Spain, whose bread and bacallao I have eaten; who always treated me with kindness and courtesy, and to whom I have not unfrequently been indebted for shelter and protection.

'The generous bearing of Francisco Gonzales, and the high deeds of Ruy Diaz the Cid, are still sung amongst the fastnesses of the Sierra Morena.'

I believe that no stronger argument can be brought forward in proof of the natural vigour and resources of Spain, and the sterling character of her population, than the fact that, at the present day, she is still a powerful and unexhausted country, and her children still, to a certain extent, a high-minded and great people. Yes, notwithstanding the misrule of the brutal and sensual Austrian, the doting Bourbon, and, above all, the spiritual tyranny of the court of Rome, Spain can still maintain her own, fight her own combat, and Spaniards are not yet fanatic slaves and crouching beggars. This is saying much, very much: she has undergone far more than Naples had ever to bear, and yet the fate of Naples has not been hers. There is still valour in Asturia, generosity in Aragon, probity in Old Castile, and the peasant women of La Mancha can still afford to place a silver fork and a showy napkin beside the plate of their guest. Yes, in spite of Austrian, Bourbon, and Rome, there is still a wide gulf between Spain and Naples.

Strange as it may sound, Spain is not a fanatic country. I know something about her, and declare that she is not, nor has ever been: Spain never changes. It is true that, for nearly two centuries, she was the she-butcher, La Verduga, of malignant Rome; the chosen instrument for carrying into effect the atrocious projects of that power; yet fanaticism was not the spring which impelled her to the work of butchery: another feeling, in her the predominant one, was worked upon—her fatal pride. It was by humouring her pride that she was induced to waste her precious blood and treasure in the Low Country wars, to launch the Armada, and to many other equally insane actions. Love of Rome had ever slight influence over her policy; but, flattered by the title of Gonfaloniera of the Vicar of Jesus, and eager to prove herself not unworthy of the same, she shut her eyes, and rushed upon her own destruction with the cry of 'Charge, Spain!'



Page 60

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On the afternoon of the 6th of December I set out for Evora, accompanied by my servant. I had been informed that the tide would serve for the regular passage-boats, or felouks, as they are called, at about four o'clock; but on reaching the side of the Tagus opposite to Aldea Gallega, between which place and Lisbon the boats ply, I found that the tide would not permit them to start before eight o'clock. Had I waited for them I should have probably landed at Aldea Gallega about midnight, and I felt little inclination to make my entree in the Alemtejo at that hour; therefore, as I saw small boats which can push off at any time lying near in abundance, I determined upon hiring one of them for the passage, though the expense would be thus considerably increased. I soon agreed with a wild-looking lad, who told me that he was in part owner of one of the boats, to take me over. I was not aware of the danger in crossing the Tagus at its broadest part, which is opposite Aldea Gallega, at any time, but especially at close of day in the winter season, or I should certainly not have ventured. The lad and his comrade, a miserable-looking object, whose only clothing, notwithstanding the season, was a tattered jerkin and trousers, rowed until we had advanced about half a mile from the land; they then set up a large sail, and the lad, who seemed to direct everything, and to be the principal, took the helm and steered. The evening was now setting in; the sun was not far from its bourne in the horizon; the air was very cold, the wind was rising, and the waves of the noble Tagus began to be crested with foam. I told the boy that it was scarcely possible for the boat to carry so much sail without upsetting, upon which he laughed, and began to gabble in a most incoherent manner. He had the most harsh and rapid articulation that has ever come under my observation in any human being; it was the scream of the hyena blended with the bark of the terrier, though it was by no means an index of his disposition, which I soon found to be light, merry, and anything but malevolent; for when I, in order to show him that I cared little about him, began to hum 'Eu que sou contrabandista,' {147a} he laughed heartily, and said, clapping me on the shoulder, that he would not drown us if he could help it. The other poor fellow seemed by no means averse to go to the bottom: he sat at the fore part of the boat, looking the image of famine, and only smiled when the waters broke over the weather side and soaked his scanty habiliments. In a little time I had made up my mind that our last hour was come; the wind was getting higher, the short dangerous waves were more foamy, the boat was frequently on its beam, and the water came over the lee side in torrents. But still the wild lad at the helm held on, laughing and chattering, and occasionally yelling out part of the Miguelite air, 'Quando el Rey chegou,' {147b} the singing of which in Lisbon is imprisonment.



Page 61

The stream was against us, but the wind was in our favour, and we sprang along at a wonderful rate, and I saw that our only chance of escape was in speedily passing the farther bank of the Tagus, where the bight or bay at the extremity of which stands Aldea Gallega commences, for we should not then have to battle with the waves of the stream, which the adverse wind lashed into fury. It was the will of the Almighty to permit us speedily to gain this shelter, but not before the boat was nearly filled with water, and we were all wet to the skin. At about seven o'clock in the evening we reached Aldea Gallega, shivering with cold and in a most deplorable plight.

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I know of few things in this life more delicious than a ride in the spring or summer season in the neighbourhood of Seville. My favourite one was in the direction of Xeres, over the wide Dehesa, as it is called, which extends from Seville to the gates of the former town, a distance of nearly fifty miles, with scarcely a town or village intervening. The ground is irregular and broken, and is for the most part covered with that species of brushwood called carrasco, amongst which winds a bridle-path, by no means well defined, chiefly trodden by the arrieros, with their long trains of mules and borricos. It is here that the balmy air of beautiful Andalusia is to be inhaled in full perfection. Aromatic herbs and flowers are growing in abundance, diffusing their perfume around. Here dark and gloomy cares are dispelled as if by magic from the bosom, as the eyes wander over the prospect, lighted by unequalled sunshine, in which gaily painted butterflies wanton, and green and golden salamanquesas lie extended, enjoying the luxurious warmth, and occasionally startling the traveller, by springing up and making off with portentous speed to the nearest coverts, whence they stare upon him with their sharp and lustrous eyes. I repeat, that it is impossible to continue melancholy in regions like these, and the ancient Greeks and Romans were right in making them the site of their Elysian fields. Most beautiful they are, even in their present desolation, for the hand of man has not cultivated them since the fatal era of the expulsion of the Moors, which drained Andalusia of at least two-thirds of its population.

Every evening it was my custom to ride along the Dehesa, until the topmost towers of Seville were no longer in sight. I then turned about, and pressing my knees against the sides of Sidi Habismilk, my Arabian, the fleet creature, to whom spur or lash had never been applied, would set off in the direction of the town with the speed of a whirlwind, seeming in his headlong course to devour the ground of the waste, until he had left it behind, then dashing through the elm-covered road of the Delicias, his thundering hoofs were soon heard beneath the vaulted archway of the Puerta de Xeres and in another moment he would stand stone-still before the door of my solitary house in the little silent square of the Pila Seca.



Page 62

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It was not without reason that the Latins gave the name of Finis terrae to this district. We had arrived exactly at such a place as in my boyhood I had pictured to myself as the termination of the world, beyond which there was a wild sea, or abyss, or chaos. I now saw far before me an immense ocean, and below me a long and irregular line of lofty and precipitous coast. Certainly in the whole world there is no bolder coast than the Gallegan shore, from the debouchment of the Minho to Cape Finisterre. It consists of a granite wall of savage mountains for the most part serrated at the top, and occasionally broken, where bays and firths like those of Vigo and Pontevedra intervene, running deep into the land. These bays and firths are invariably of an immense depth, and sufficiently capacious to shelter the navies of the proudest maritime nations.

There is an air of stern and savage grandeur in everything around, which strongly captivates the imagination. This savage coast is the first glimpse of Spain which the voyager from the north catches, or he who has ploughed his way across the wide Atlantic: and well does it seem to realize all his visions of this strange land. 'Yes,' he exclaims, 'this is indeed Spain—stern, flinty Spain—land emblematic of those spirits to which she has given birth. From what land but that before me could have proceeded those portentous beings who astounded the Old World and filled the New with horror and blood? Alva and Philip, Cortez and Pizzaro—stern colossal spectres looming through the gloom of bygone years, like yonder granite mountains through the haze, upon the eye of the mariner. Yes, yonder is indeed Spain, flinty, indomitable Spain, land emblematic of its sons!'

As for myself, when I viewed that wide ocean and its savage shore, I cried, 'Such is the grave, and such are its terrific sides, those moors and wilds, over which I have passed, are the rough and dreary journey of life. Cheered with hope, we struggle along through all the difficulties of moor, bog, and mountain, to arrive at—what? The grave and its dreary sides. Oh, may hope not desert us in the last hour—hope in the Redeemer and in God!'

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A propos of bull-fighters:—Shortly after my arrival, I one day entered a low tavern in a neighbourhood notorious for robbery and murder, and in which for the last two hours I had been wandering on a voyage of discovery. I was fatigued, and required refreshment. I found the place thronged with people, who had all the appearance of ruffians. I saluted them, upon which they made way for me to the bar, taking off their sombreros with great ceremony. I emptied a glass of val de penas, and was about to pay for it and depart, when a horrible-looking fellow, dressed in a buff jerkin, leather breeches, and jackboots, which came halfway up his thighs, and having on his head a white hat, the rims of which were at least a yard and a half in circumference, pushed through the crowd, and confronting me, roared:—



Page 63

'Otra copita! vamos Inglesito: Otra copita!'

'Thank you, my good sir, you are very kind. You appear to know me, but I have not the honour of knowing you.'

'Not know me!' replied the being. 'I am Sevilla, the torero. I know you well; you are the friend of Baltasarito, the national, who is a friend of mine, and a very good subject.'

Then turning to the company, he said in a sonorous tone, laying a strong emphasis on the last syllable of every word, according to the custom of the gente rufianesca throughout Spain—

'Cavaliers, and strong men, this cavalier is the friend of a friend of mine. Es mucho hombre. There is none like him in Spain. He speaks the crabbed Gitano, though he is an Inglesito.'

'We do not believe it,' replied several grave voices. 'It is not possible.'

'It is not possible, say you? I tell you it is. Come forward, Balseiro, you who have been in prison all your life, and are always boasting that you can speak the crabbed Gitano, though I say you know nothing of it—come forward and speak to his worship in the crabbed Gitano.'

A low, slight, but active figure stepped forward. He was in his shirt-sleeves, and wore a montero cap; his features were handsome but they were those of a demon.

He spoke a few words in the broken gypsy slang of the prison, inquiring of me whether I had ever been in the condemned cell, and whether I knew what a Gitana was.

'Vamos Inglesito,' shouted Sevilla, in a voice of thunder; 'answer the monro in the crabbed Gitano.'

I answered the robber, for such he was, and one too whose name will live for many a year in the ruffian histories of Madrid; I answered him in a speech of some length, in the dialect of the Estremenian gypsies.

'I believe it is the crabbed Gitano,' muttered Balseiro. 'It is either that or English, for I understand not a word of it.'

'Did I not say to you,' cried the bullfighter, 'that you knew nothing of the crabbed Gitano? But this Ingleisto does. I understood all he said. Vaya, there is none like him for the crabbed Gitano. He is a good ginete, too; next to myself, there is none like him, only he rides with stirrup leathers too short. Inglesito, if you have need of money, I will lend you my purse. All I have is at your service, and that is not a little; I have just gained



four thousand chules by the lottery. Courage, Englishman! Another cup. I will pay all—
—I, Sevilla!

And he clapped his hand repeatedly on his breast, reiterating, 'I, Sevilla! I—

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'The waiter drew the cork, and filled the glasses with a pinky liquor, which bubbled, hissed and foamed. 'How do you like it?' said the jockey, after I had imitated the example of my companions, by despatching my portion at a draught.

'It is wonderful wine,' said I; 'I have never tasted champagne before, though I have frequently heard it praised; it more than answers my expectations; but, I confess, I should not wish to be obliged to drink it every day.'



Page 64

'Nor I,' said the jockey, 'for everyday drinking give me a glass of old port, or—'

'Of hard old ale,' I interposed, 'which, according to my mind, is better than all the wine in the world.'

'Well said, Romany Rye,' said the jockey, 'just my own opinion; now, William, make yourself scarce.'

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Leaving the bridge, I ascended a gentle acclivity, and presently reached what appeared to be a tract of moory undulating ground. It was now tolerably light, but there was a mist or haze abroad which prevented my seeing objects with much precision. I felt chill in the damp air of the early morn, and walked rapidly forward. In about half an hour I arrived where the road divided into two at an angle or tongue of dark green sward. 'To the right or the left?' said I, and forthwith took, without knowing why, the left-hand road, along which I proceeded about a hundred yards, when, in the midst of the tongue of sward formed by the two roads, collaterally with myself, I perceived what I at first conceived to be a small grove of blighted trunks of oaks, barked and grey. I stood still for a moment, and then, turning off the road, advanced slowly towards it over the sward; as I drew nearer, I perceived that the objects which had attracted my curiosity, and which formed a kind of circle, were not trees, but immense upright stones. A thrill pervaded my system; just before me were two, the mightiest of the whole, tall as the stems of proud oaks, supporting on their tops a huge transverse stone, and forming a wonderful doorway. I knew now where I was, and, laying down my stick and bundle, and taking off my hat, I advanced slowly, and cast myself—it was folly, perhaps, but I could not help what I did—cast myself, with my face on the dewy earth, in the middle of the portal of giants, beneath the transverse stone. The spirit of Stonehenge was strong upon me!

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I went to Belle's habitation, and informed her that Mr. and Mrs. Petulengro had paid us a visit of ceremony, and were awaiting her at the fire-place. 'Pray go and tell them that I am busy,' said Belle, who was engaged with her needle. 'I do not feel disposed to take part in any such nonsense.' 'I shall do no such thing,' said I; 'and I insist upon your coming forthwith, and showing proper courtesy to your visitors. If you do not, their feelings will be hurt, and you are aware that I cannot bear that people's feelings should be outraged. Come this moment, or—' 'Or what?' said Belle, half smiling. 'I was about to say something in Armenian,' said I. 'Well,' said Belle, laying down her work, 'I will come.' 'Stay,' said I, 'your hair is hanging about your ears, and your dress is in disorder; you had better stay a minute or two to prepare yourself to appear before your visitors, who have come in their very best attire.' 'No,' said Belle, 'I will make no alteration in my appearance; you told me to come this



Page 65

moment, and you shall be obeyed.' So Belle and I advanced towards our guests. As we drew nigh, Mr. Petulengro took off his hat and made a profound obeisance to Belle, whilst Mrs. Petulengro rose from the stool and made a profound courtesy. Belle, who had flung her hair back over her shoulders, returned their salutations by bending her head, and after slightly glancing at Mr. Petulengro, fixed her large blue eyes full upon his wife. Both these females were very handsome—but how unlike! Belle fair, with blue eyes and flaxen hair; Mrs. Petulengro with olive complexion, eyes black, and hair dark—as dark as could be. Belle, in demeanour calm and proud; the gypsy graceful, but full of movement and agitation. And then how different were those two in stature! The head of the Romany rawnie scarcely ascended to the breast of Isopel Berners. I could see that Mrs. Petulengro gazed on Belle with unmixed admiration; so did her husband. 'Well,' said the latter, 'one thing I will say, which is, that there is only one on earth worthy to stand up in front of this she and that is the beauty of the world, as far as man flesh is concerned, Tawno Chikno; what a pity he did not come down!'

'Tawno Chikno,' said Mrs. Petulengro, flaring up; 'a pretty fellow he to stand up in front of this gentlewoman, a pity he didn't come, quotha? not at all, the fellow is a sneak, afraid of his wife. He stand up against this rawnie! why, the look she has given me would knock the fellow down.'

'It is easier to knock him down with a look than with a fist,' said Mr. Petulengro; 'that is, if the look comes from a woman: not that I am disposed to doubt that this female gentlewoman is able to knock him down either one way or the other. I have heard of her often enough, and have seen her once or twice, though not so near as now. Well, ma'am, my wife and I are come to pay our respects to you; we are both glad to find that you have left off keeping company with Flaming Bosville, and have taken up with my pal; he is not very handsome, but a better—'

'I take up with your pal, as you call him! you had better mind what you say,' said Isopel Berners; 'I take up with nobody.'

'I merely mean taking up your quarters with him,' said Mr. Petulengro; 'and I was only about to say a better fellow-lodger you cannot have, or a more instructive, especially if you have a desire to be inoculated with tongues, as he calls them. I wonder whether you and he have had any tongue-work already.'

'Have you and your wife anything particular to say? If you have nothing but this kind of conversation I must leave you, as I am going to make a journey this afternoon, and should be getting ready.'

'You must excuse my husband, madam,' said Mrs. Petulengro; 'he is not overburdened with understanding, and has said but one word of sense since he has been here, which



was that we came to pay our respects to you. We have dressed ourselves in our best Roman way, in order to do honour to you; perhaps you do not like it; if so, I am sorry. I have no French clothes, madam; if I had any, madam, I would have come in them, in order to do you more honour.'



Page 66

'I like to see you much better as you are,' said Belle; 'people should keep to their own fashions, and yours is very pretty.'

'I am glad you are pleased to think it so, madam; it has been admired in the great city; it created what they call a sensation, and some of the great ladies, the court ladies, imitated it, else I should not appear in it so often as I am accustomed; for I am not very fond of what is Roman, having an imagination that what is Roman is ungentee!; in fact, I once heard the wife of a rich citizen say that gypsies were vulgar creatures. I should have taken her saying very much to heart, but for her improper pronunciation; she could not pronounce her words, madam, which we gypsies, as they call us, usually can, so I thought she was no very high purchase. You are very beautiful, madam, though you are not dressed as I could wish to see you, and your hair is hanging down in sad confusion; allow me to assist you in arranging your hair, madam; I will dress it for you in our fashion; I would fain see how your hair would look in our poor gypsy fashion; pray allow me, madam?' and she took Belle by the hand.

'I really can do no such thing,' said Belle, withdrawing her hand; 'I thank you for coming to see me, but—'

'Do allow me to officiate upon your hair, madam,' said Mrs. Petulengro. 'I should esteem your allowing me a great mark of condescension. You are very beautiful, madam, and I think you doubly so, because you are so fair; I have a great esteem for persons with fair complexions and hair; I have a less regard for people with dark hair and complexions, madam.'

'Then why did you turn off the lord, and take up with me?' said Mr. Petulengro; 'that same lord was fair enough all about him.'

'People do when they are young and silly what they sometimes repent of when they are of riper years and understandings. I sometimes think that had I not been something of a simpleton, I might at this time be a great court lady. Now, madam,' said she, again taking Belle by the hand, 'do oblige me by allowing me to plait your hair a little?'

'I have really a good mind to be angry with you,' said Belle, giving Mrs. Petulengro a peculiar glance.

'Do allow her to arrange your hair,' said I; 'she means no harm, and wishes to do you honour; do oblige her and me too, for I should like to see how your hair would look dressed in her fashion.'

'You hear what the young rye says?' said Mrs. Petulengro. 'I am sure you will oblige the young rye, if not myself. Many people would be willing to oblige the young rye, if he would but ask them; but he is not in the habit of asking favours. He has a nose of his own, which he keeps tolerably exalted; he does not think small beer of himself, madam;



and all the time I have been with him, I never heard him ask a favour before; therefore, madam, I am sure you will oblige him. My sister Ursula would be very willing to oblige him in many things, but he will not ask her for anything, except for such a favour as a word, which is a poor favour after all. I don't mean for her word; perhaps he will some day ask you for your word. If so—'



Page 67

'Why, here you are, after railing at me for catching at words, catching at a word yourself,' said Mr. Petulengro.

'Hold your tongue, sir,' said Mrs. Petulengro. 'Don't interrupt me in my discourse; if I caught at a word now, I am not in the habit of doing so. I am no conceited body; no newspaper Neddy; no pothouse witty person. I was about to say, madam, that if the young rye asks you at any time for your word, you will do as you deem convenient; but I am sure you will oblige him by allowing me to braid your hair.'

'I shall not do it to oblige him,' said Belle; 'the young rye, as you call him, is nothing to me.'

'Well, then, to oblige me,' said Mrs. Petulengro; 'do allow me to become your poor tire-woman.'

'It is great nonsense,' said Belle, reddening; 'however, as you came to see me, and ask the matter as a particular favour to yourself—'

'Thank you, madam,' said Mrs. Petulengro, leading Belle to the stool; 'please to sit down here. Thank you; your hair is very beautiful, madam,' she continued, as she proceeded to braid Belle's hair; 'so is your countenance. Should you ever go to the great city, among the grand folks, you would make a sensation, madam. I have made one myself, who am dark; the chi she is kauley, which last word signifies black, which I am not, though rather dark. There's no colour like white, madam; it's so lasting, so genteel. Gentility will carry the day, madam, even with the young rye. He will ask words of the black lass, but beg the word of the fair.'

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I found Belle seated by a fire, over which her kettle was suspended. During my absence she had prepared herself a kind of tent, consisting of large hoops covered over with tarpaulin, quite impenetrable to rain, however violent. 'I am glad you are returned,' said she, as soon as she perceived me; 'I began to be anxious about you. Did you take my advice?'

'Yes,' said I; 'I went to the public-house and drank ale as you advised me; it cheered, strengthened, and drove away the horror from my mind—I am much beholden to you.'

'I knew it would do you good,' said Belle; 'I remembered that when the poor women in the great house were afflicted with hysterics and fearful imaginings, the surgeon, who was a good, kind man, used to say: "Ale, give them ale, and let it be strong."'

'He was no advocate for tea, then?' said I.



'He had no objection to tea; but he used to say, "Everything in its season." Shall we take ours now—I have waited for you.'

'I have no objection,' said I; 'I feel rather heated, and at present should prefer tea to ale —"Everything in its season," as the surgeon said.'

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Page 68

I put some fresh wood on the fire, which was nearly out, and hung the kettle over it. I then issued forth from the dingle, and strolled round the wood that surrounded it; for a long time I was busied in meditation, looking at the ground, striking with my foot, half unconsciously, the tufts of grass and thistles that I met in my way. After some time, I lifted up my eyes to the sky, at first vacantly, and then with more attention, turning my head in all directions for a minute or two; after which I returned to the dingle. Isopel was seated near the fire, over which the kettle was now hung; she had changed her dress—no signs of the dust and fatigue of her late excursion remained; she had just added to the fire a small billet of wood, two or three of which I had left beside it; the fire cracked, and a sweet odour filled the dingle.

'I am fond of sitting by a wood fire,' said Belle, 'when abroad, whether it be hot or cold; I love to see the flames dart out of the wood; but what kind is this, and where did you get it?'

'It is ash,' said I, 'green ash. Somewhat less than a week ago, whilst I was wandering along the road by the side of a wood, I came to a place where some peasants were engaged in cutting up and clearing away a confused mass of fallen timber: a mighty-aged oak had given way the night before, and in its fall had shivered some smaller trees; the upper part of the oak, and the fragments of the rest, lay across the road. I purchased, for a trifle, a bundle or two, and the wood on the fire is part of it—ash, green ash.'

'That makes good the old rhyme,' said Belle, 'which I have heard sung by the old woman in the great house:—

"Ash, when green,
Is fire for a queen."

'And on fairer form of queen, ash fire never shone,' said I, 'than on thine, O beauteous queen of the dingle.'

'I am half disposed to be angry with you, young man,' said Belle.

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After ordering dinner I said that as I was thirsty I should like to have some ale forthwith.

'Ale you shall have, your honour,' said Tom, 'and some of the best ale that can be drunk. This house is famous for ale.'

'I suppose you get your ale from Llangollen,' said I, 'which is celebrated for its ale over Wales.'



'Get our ale from Llangollen?' said Tom, with a sneer of contempt, 'no, nor anything else. As for the ale it was brewed in this house by your honour's humble servant.'

'Oh,' said I, 'if you brewed it, it must of course be good. Pray bring me some immediately, for I am anxious to drink ale of your brewing.'

'Your honour shall be obeyed,' said Tom, and disappearing returned in a twinkling with a tray on which stood a jug filled with liquor and a glass. He forthwith filled the glass, and pointing to its contents said:

'There, your honour, did you ever see such ale? Observe its colour! Does it not look for all the world as pale and delicate as cowslip wine?'



Page 69

'I wish it may not taste like cowslip wine,' said I; 'to tell you the truth, I am no particular admirer of ale that looks pale and delicate; for I always think there is no strength in it.'

'Taste it, your honour,' said Tom, 'and tell me if you ever tasted such ale.'

I tasted it, and then took a copious draught. The ale was indeed admirable, equal to the best that I had ever before drunk—rich and mellow, with scarcely any smack of the hop in it, and though so pale and delicate to the eye nearly as strong as brandy. I commended it highly to the worthy Jenkins.

'That Llangollen ale indeed! no, no! ale like that, your honour, was never brewed in that trumpery hole Llangollen,'

'You seem to have a very low opinion of Llangollen?' said I.

'How can I have anything but a low opinion of it, your honour? A trumpery hole it is, and ever will remain so.'

'Many people of the first quality go to visit it,' said I.

'That is because it lies so handy for England, your honour. If it did not, nobody would go to see it. What is there to see in Llangollen?'

'There is not much to see in the town, I admit,' said I, 'but the scenery about it is beautiful: what mountains!'

'Mountains, your honour, mountains! well, we have mountains too, and as beautiful as those of Llangollen. Then we have our lake, our Llyn Tegid, the lake of beauty. Show me anything like that near Llangollen?'

'Then,' said I, 'there is your mound, your Tomen Bala. The Llangollen people can show nothing like that.'

Tom Jenkins looked at me for a moment with some surprise, and then said: 'I see you have been here before, sir.'

'No,' said I, 'never, but I have read about the Tomen Bala in books, both Welsh and English.'

'You have, sir,' said Tom. 'Well, I am rejoiced to see so book-learned a gentleman in our house. The Tomen Bala has puzzled many a head. What do the books which mention it say about it, your honour?'

'Very little,' said I, 'beyond mentioning it; what do the people here say of it?'



'All kinds of strange things, your honour.'

'Do they say who built it?'

'Some say the Tylwyth Teg built it, others that it was cast up over a dead king by his people. The truth is, nobody here knows who built it, or anything about it, save that it is a wonder. Ah, those people of Llangollen can show nothing like it.'

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The strength of the ox,
The wit of the fox,
And the leveret's speed
Full oft to oppose
To their numerous foes,
The Rommany need.

Our horses they take,
Our waggons they break,
And ourselves they seize,
In their prisons to coop,
Where we pine and droop,
For want of breeze.

When the dead swallow
The fly shall follow
O'er Burra-panee,
Then we will forget
The wrongs we have met
And forgiving be.



Page 70

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I began to think: 'What was likely to be the profit of my present way of life; the living in dingles, making pony and donkey shoes, conversing with gypsy-women under hedges, and extracting from them their odd secrets?' What was likely to be the profit of such a kind of life, even should it continue for a length of time?—a supposition not very probable, for I was earning nothing to support me, and the funds with which I had entered upon this life were gradually disappearing. I was living, it is true, not unpleasantly, enjoying the healthy air of heaven; but, upon the whole, was I not sadly misspending my time? Surely I was; and, as I looked back, it appeared to me that I had always been doing so. What had been the profit of the tongues which I had learnt? had they ever assisted me in the day of hunger? No, no! it appeared to me that I had always misspent my time, save in one instance, when by a desperate effort I had collected all the powers of my imagination, and written the Life of Joseph Sell; but even when I wrote the Life of Sell, was I not in a false position? Provided I had not misspent my time, would it have been necessary to make that effort, which, after all, had only enabled me to leave London, and wander about the country for a time? But could I, taking all circumstances into consideration, have done better than I had? With my peculiar temperament and ideas, could I have pursued with advantage the profession to which my respectable parents had endeavoured to bring me up? It appeared to me that I could not, and that the hand of necessity had guided me from my earliest years, until the present night, in which I found myself seated in the dingle, staring on the brands of the fire. But ceasing to think of the past which, as irrecoverably gone, it was useless to regret, even were there cause to regret it, what should I do in future? Should I write another book like the Life of Joseph Sell; take it to London, and offer it to a publisher? But when I reflected on the grisly sufferings which I had undergone whilst engaged in writing the Life of Sell, I shrank from the idea of a similar attempt; moreover, I doubted whether I possessed the power to write a similar work—whether the materials for the life of another Sell lurked within the recesses of my brain? Had I not better become in reality what I had hitherto been merely playing at—a tinker or a gypsy? But I soon saw that I was not fitted to become either in reality. It was much more agreeable to play the gypsy or the tinker than to become either in reality. I had seen enough of gypsying and tinkering to be convinced of that. All of a sudden the idea of tilling the soil came into my head; tilling the soil was a healthful and noble pursuit! but my idea of tilling the soil had no connection with Britain; for I could only expect to till the soil in Britain as a serf. I thought of tilling it in America, in which it was said there was plenty of wild, unclaimed land, of which any one,



Page 71

who chose to clear it of its trees, might take possession. I figured myself in America, in an immense forest, clearing the land destined, by my exertions, to become a fruitful and smiling plain. Methought I heard the crash of the huge trees as they fell beneath my axe; and then I bethought me that a man was intended to marry—I ought to marry; and if I married, where was I likely to be more happy as a husband and a father than in America, engaged in tilling the ground? I fancied myself in America, engaged in tilling the ground, assisted by an enormous progeny. Well, why not marry, and go and till the ground in America? I was young, and youth was the time to marry in, and to labour in. I had the use of all my faculties; my eyes, it is true, were rather dull from early study, and from writing the *Life of Joseph Sell*; but I could see tolerably well with them, and they were not bleared. I felt my arms, and thighs, and teeth—they were strong and sound enough; so now was the time to labour, to marry, eat strong flesh, and beget strong children—the power of doing all this would pass away with youth, which was terribly transitory. I bethought me that a time would come when my eyes would be bleared, and, perhaps, sightless; my arms and thighs strengthless and sapless; when my teeth would shake in my jaws, even supposing they did not drop out. No going a wooing then, no labouring, no eating strong flesh, and begetting lusty children then; and I bethought me how, when all this should be, I should bewail the days of my youth as misspent, provided I had not in them founded for myself a home, and begotten strong children to take care of me in the days when I could not take care of myself; and thinking of these things, I became sadder and sadder, and stared vacantly upon the fire till my eyes closed in a doze.

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On I went in my journey, traversing England from west to east, ascending and descending hills, crossing rivers by bridge and ferry, and passing over extensive plains. What a beautiful country is England! People run abroad to see beautiful countries, and leave their own behind unknown, unnoticed—their own the most beautiful! And then, again, what a country for adventures! especially to those who travel it on foot, or on horseback. People run abroad in quest of adventures, and traverse Spain or Portugal on mule or on horseback; whereas there are ten times more adventures to be met with in England than in Spain, Portugal, or stupid Germany to boot. Witness the number of adventures narrated in the present book—a book entirely devoted to England. Why, there is not a chapter in the present book which is not full of adventures, with the exception of the present one, and this is not yet terminated.

After traversing two or three counties, I reached the confines of Lincolnshire. During one particularly hot day I put up at a public-house, to which, in the evening, came a party of harvesters to make merry, who, finding me wandering about the house a stranger, invited me to partake of their ale; so I drank with the harvesters, who sang me songs about rural life, such as:—



Page 72

Sitting in the swale; and listening to the swindle of the flail, as it sounds dub-a-dub on the corn, from the neighbouring barn.

In requital for which I treated them with a song, not of Romanvile, but the song of 'Sivord and the horse Grayman.' I remained with them till it was dark, having, after sunset, entered into deep discourse with a celebrated ratcatcher, who communicated to me the secrets of his trade, saying, amongst other things: 'When you see the rats pouring out of their holes, and running up my hands and arms, it's not after me they comes, but after the oils I carries about me they comes'; and who subsequently spoke in the most enthusiastic manner of his trade, saying that it was the best trade in the world, and most diverting, and that it was likely to last for ever; for whereas all other kinds of vermin were fast disappearing from England, rats were every day becoming more abundant. I had quitted this good company, and having mounted my horse, was making my way towards a town at about six miles distance, at a swinging trot, my thoughts deeply engaged on what I had gathered from the ratcatcher, when all on a sudden a light glared upon the horse's face, who purled round in great terror, and flung me out of the saddle, as from a sling, or with as much violence as the horse Grayman, in the ballad, flings Sivord the Snareswayne. I fell upon the ground—felt a kind of crashing about my neck—and forthwith became senseless.

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As I was gazing on the prospect an old man driving a peat cart came from the direction in which I was going. I asked him the name of the ravine and he told me it was Ceunant Coomb or hollow-dingle coomb. I asked the name of the brook, and he told me that it was called the brook of the hollow-dingle coomb, adding that it ran under Pont Newydd, though where that was I knew not. Whilst he was talking with me he stood uncovered. Yes, the old peat driver stood with his hat in his hand whilst answering the questions of the poor, dusty foot-traveller. What a fine thing to be an Englishman in Wales!

In about an hour I came to a wild moor; the moor extended for miles and miles. It was bounded on the east and south by immense hills and moels. On I walked at a round pace, the sun scorching me sore, along a dusty, hilly road, now up, now down. Nothing could be conceived more cheerless than the scenery around. The ground on each side of the road was mossy and rushy—no houses—instead of them were peat stacks, here and there, standing in their blackness. Nothing living to be seen except a few miserable sheep picking the wretched herbage, or lying panting on the shady side of the peat clumps. At length I saw something which appeared to be a sheet of water at the bottom of a low ground on my right. It looked far off—'Shall I go and see what it is?' thought I to myself. 'No,' thought I. 'It is too far off'—so on I walked till I lost sight of it, when I repented and thought I would go and see what it was. So I dashed down the moory slope on my right, and presently saw the object again—and now I saw that it was water. I sped towards it through gorse and heather, occasionally leaping a deep drain. At last I

reached it. It was a small lake. Wearied and panting I flung myself on its bank and gazed upon it.



Page 73

There lay the lake in the low bottom, surrounded by the heathery hillocks; there it lay quite still, the hot sun reflected upon its surface, which shone like a polished blue shield. Near the shore it was shallow, at least near that shore upon which I lay. But farther on, my eye, practised in deciding upon the depths of waters, saw reason to suppose that its depth was very great. As I gazed upon it my mind indulged in strange musings. I thought of the afanc, a creature which some have supposed to be the harmless and industrious beaver, others the frightful and destructive crocodile. I wondered whether the afanc was the crocodile or the beaver, and speedily had no doubt that the name was originally applied to the crocodile.

'Oh, who can doubt,' thought I, 'that the word was originally intended for something monstrous and horrible? Is there not something horrible in the look and sound of the word afanc, something connected with the opening and shutting of immense jaws, and the swallowing of writhing prey? Is not the word a fitting brother of the Arabic timsah, denoting the dread horny lizard of the waters? Moreover, have we not the voice of tradition that the afanc was something monstrous? Does it not say that Hu the Mighty, the inventor of husbandry, who brought the Cumry from the summer-country, drew the old afanc out of the lake of lakes with his four gigantic oxen? Would he have had recourse to them to draw out the little harmless beaver? Oh, surely not. Yet have I no doubt that when the crocodile had disappeared from the lands, where the Cumric language was spoken, the name afanc was applied to the beaver, probably his successor in the pool, the beaver now called in Cumric Llostlydan, or the broad-tailed, for tradition's voice is strong that the beaver has at one time been called the afanc.' Then I wondered whether the pool before me had been the haunt of the afanc, considered both as crocodile and beaver. I saw no reason to suppose that it had not. 'If crocodiles,' thought I, 'ever existed in Britain, and who shall say that they have not, seeing that their remains have been discovered, why should they not have haunted this pool? If beavers ever existed in Britain, and do not tradition and Giraldus say that they have, why should they not have existed in this pool?

'At a time almost inconceivably remote, when the hills around were covered with woods, through which the elk and the bison and the wild cow strolled, when men were rare throughout the lands and unlike in most things to the present race—at such a period—and such a period there has been—I can easily conceive that the afanc-crocodile haunted this pool, and that when the elk or bison or wild cow came to drink of its waters the grim beast would occasionally rush forth, and seizing his bellowing victim, would return with it to the deeps before me to luxuriate at his ease upon its flesh. And at a time less remote, when the crocodile was no more,



Page 74

and though the woods still covered the hills, and wild cattle strolled about, men were more numerous than before, and less unlike the present race, I can easily conceive this lake to have been the haunt of the afanc-beaver, that he here built cunningly his house of trees and clay, and that to this lake the native would come with his net and his spear to hunt the animal for his precious fur. Probably if the depths of that pool were searched relics of the crocodile and the beaver might be found, along with other strange things connected with the periods in which they respectively lived. Happy were I if for a brief space I could become a Cingalese that I might swim out far into that pool, dive down into its deepest part and endeavour to discover any strange things which beneath its surface may lie.' Much in this guise rolled my thoughts as I lay stretched on the margin of the lake.

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'Pray, gentleman, walk in!' said the miller; 'we are going to have our afternoon's meal, and shall be rejoiced if you will join us.'

'Yes, do, gentleman,' said the miller's wife, for such the good woman was; 'and many a welcome shall you have.'

I hesitated, and was about to excuse myself.

'Don't refuse, gentleman!' said both, 'surely you are not too proud to sit down with us?'

'I am afraid I shall only cause you trouble,' said I.

'Dim blinder, no trouble,' exclaimed both at once; 'pray do walk in!'

I entered the house, and the kitchen, parlour, or whatever it was, a nice little room with a slate floor. They made me sit down at a table by the window, which was already laid for a meal. There was a clean cloth upon it, a tea-pot, cups and saucers, a large plate of bread-and-butter, and a plate, on which were a few very thin slices of brown, watery cheese.

My good friends took their seats, the wife poured out tea for the stranger and her husband, helped us both to bread-and-butter and the watery cheese, then took care of herself. Before, however, I could taste the tea, the wife, seeming to recollect herself, started up, and hurrying to a cupboard, produced a basin full of snow-white lump sugar, and taking the spoon out of my hand, placed two of the largest lumps in my cup, though she helped neither her husband nor herself; the sugar-basin being probably only kept for grand occasions.



My eyes filled with tears; for in the whole course of my life I had never experienced so much genuine hospitality. Honour to the miller of Mona and his wife; and honour to the kind hospitable Celts in general! How different is the reception of this despised race of the wandering stranger from that of —. However, I am a Saxon myself, and the Saxons have no doubt their virtues; a pity that they should be all uncouth and ungracious ones!

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Page 75

Now real Republicanism is certainly a very fine thing, a much finer thing than Toryism, a system of common robbery, which is nevertheless far better than Whiggism—a compound of petty larceny, popular instruction, and receiving of stolen goods. Yes, real Republicanism is certainly a very fine thing, and your real Radicals and Republicans are certainly very fine fellows, or rather were fine fellows, for the Lord only knows where to find them at the present day—the writer does not. If he did, he would at any time go five miles to invite one of them to dinner, even supposing that he had to go to a workhouse in order to find the person he wished to invite. Amongst the real Radicals of England, those who flourished from the year '16 to '20, there were certainly extraordinary characters, men partially insane, perhaps, but honest and brave—they did not make a market of the principles which they professed, and never intended to do so; they believed in them, and were willing to risk their lives in endeavouring to carry them out. The writer wishes to speak in particular of two of these men, both of whom perished on the scaffold—their names were Thistlewood and Ings. Thistlewood, the best known of them, was a brave soldier and had served with distinction as an officer in the French service; he was one of the excellent swordsmen of Europe; had fought several duels in France, where it is no child's play to fight a duel; but had never unsheathed his sword for single combat, but in defence of the feeble and insulted—he was kind and open-hearted but of too great simplicity; he had once ten thousand pounds left him, all of which he lent to a friend, who disappeared and never returned him a penny. Ings was an uneducated man, of very low stature, but amazing strength and resolution; he was a kind husband and father, and though a humble butcher, the name he bore was one of the royal names of the heathen Anglo-Saxons. These two men, along with five others, were executed, and their heads hacked off, for levying war against George the Fourth; the whole seven dying in a manner which extorted cheers from the populace, the most of them uttering philosophical or patriotic sayings. Thistlewood, who was, perhaps, the most calm and collected of all, just before he was turned off, said, 'We are now going to discover the great secret.' Ings, the moment before he was choked, was singing 'Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled.' Now there was no humbug about those men, nor about many more of the same time and of the same principles. They might be deluded about Republicanism, as Algernon Sidney was, and as Brutus was, but they were as honest and brave as either Brutus or Sidney, and as willing to die for their principles. But the Radicals who succeeded them were beings of a very different description; they jobbed and traded in Republicanism, and either parted with it, or at the present day are eager to part with it, for a consideration.

* * * * *



Page 76

'Does your honour remember anything about Durham city?'

'Oh yes! I remember a good deal about it.'

'Then, your honour, pray tell us what you remember about it—pray do! perhaps it will do me good.'

'Well then, I remember that it was a fine old city standing on a hill with a river running under it, and that it had a fine old church, one of the finest in the whole of Britain; likewise a fine old castle; and last, not least, a capital old inn, where I got a capital dinner off roast Durham beef, and a capital glass of ale, which I believe was the cause of my being ever after fond of ale.'

* * * * *

I was the last of the file, but I now rushed past John Jones, who was before me, and next to the old lady, and sure enough there was the chair, in the wall, of him who was called in his day, and still is called by the mountaineers of Wales, though his body has been below the earth in the quiet churchyard one hundred and forty years, Eos Ceiriog, the Nightingale of Ceiriog, the sweet caroller Huw Morus, the enthusiastic partizan of Charles and the Church of England, and the never-tiring lampooner of Oliver and the Independents. There it was, a kind of hollow in the stone wall, in the hen ffordd, fronting to the west, just above the gorge at the bottom of which murmurs the brook Ceiriog, there it was, something like a half barrel chair in a garden, a mouldering stone slab forming the seat, and a large slate stone, the back, on which were cut these letters—

H. M. B.

signifying Huw Morus Bard.

'Sit down in the chair, Gwr Boneddig,' said John Jones, 'you have taken trouble enough to get to it.'

'Do, gentleman,' said the old lady; 'but first let me wipe it with my apron, for it is very wet and dirty.'

'Let it be,' said I; then taking off my hat I stood uncovered before the chair, and said in the best Welsh I could command, 'Shade of Huw Morus, supposing your shade haunts the place which you loved so well when alive—a Saxon, one of the seed of the Coiling Serpent, has come to this place to pay that respect to true genius, the Dawn Duw, which he is ever ready to pay. He read the songs of the Nightingale of Ceiriog in the most distant part of Lloegr, when he was a brown-haired boy, and now that he is a grey-haired man he is come to say in this place that they frequently made his eyes overflow with tears of rapture.'



I then sat down in the chair, and commenced repeating verses of Huw Morus. All which I did in the presence of the stout old lady, the short, buxom and bare-armed damsel, and of John Jones the Calvinistic weaver of Llangollen, all of whom listened patiently and approvingly, though the rain was pouring down upon them, and the branches of the trees and the tops of the tall nettles, agitated by the gusts from the mountain hollows, were beating in their faces, for enthusiasm is never scoffed at by the noble simple-minded, genuine Welsh, whatever treatment it may receive from the coarse-hearted, sensual, selfish Saxon.



Page 77

* * * * *

For dinner we had salmon and leg of mutton; the salmon from the Dee, the leg from the neighbouring Berwyn. The salmon was good enough, but I had eaten better; and here it will not be amiss to say, that the best salmon in the world is caught in the Suir, a river that flows past the beautiful town of Clonmel in Ireland. As for the leg of mutton it was truly wonderful; nothing so good had I ever tasted in the shape of a leg of mutton. The leg of mutton of Wales beats the leg of mutton of any other country, and I had never tasted a Welsh leg of mutton before. Certainly I shall never forget that first Welsh leg of mutton which I tasted, rich but delicate, replete with juices derived from the aromatic herbs of the noble Berwyn, cooked to a turn, and weighing just four pounds.

* * * * *

Came to Tregeiriog, a small village, which takes its name from the brook; Tregeiriog signifying the hamlet or village on the Ceiriog. Seeing a bridge which crossed the rivulet at a slight distance from the road, a little beyond the village, I turned aside to look at it. The proper course of the Ceiriog is from south to north; where it is crossed by the bridge, however, it runs from west to east, returning to its usual course, a little way below the bridge. The bridge was small and presented nothing remarkable in itself: I obtained, however, as I looked over its parapet towards the west a view of a scene, not of wild grandeur, but of something which I like better, which richly compensated me for the slight trouble I had taken in stepping aside to visit the little bridge. About a hundred yards distant was a small water mill, built over the rivulet, the wheel going slowly, slowly round; large quantities of pigs, the generality of them brindled, were either browsing on the banks or lying close to the sides half immersed in the water; one immense white hog, the monarch seemingly of the herd, was standing in the middle of the current. Such was the scene which I saw from the bridge, a scene of quiet rural life well suited to the brushes of two or three of the old Dutch painters, or to those of men scarcely inferior to them in their own style, Gainsborough, Morland, and Crome.

* * * * *

The name 'Pump Saint' signifies 'Five Saints.' Why the place is called so I know not. Perhaps the name originally belonged to some chapel which stood either where the village now stands or in the neighbourhood. The inn is a good specimen of an ancient Welsh hostelry. Its gable is to the road and its front to a little space on one side of the way. At a little distance up the road is a blacksmith's shop. The country around is interesting: on the north-west is a fine wooded hill—to the south a valley through which flows the Cothi, a fair river, the one whose murmur had come so pleasingly upon my ear in the depth of night.

Page 78

After breakfast I departed for Llandovery. Presently I came to a lodge on the left-hand beside an ornamental gate at the bottom of an avenue leading seemingly to a gentleman's seat. On inquiring of a woman, who sat at the door of the lodge, to whom the grounds belonged, she said to Mr. Johnes, and that if I pleased I was welcome to see them. I went in and advanced along the avenue, which consisted of very noble oaks; on the right was a vale in which a beautiful brook was running north and south. Beyond the vale to the east were fine wooded hills. I thought I had never seen a more pleasing locality, though I saw it to great disadvantage, the day being dull, and the season the latter fall. Presently, on the avenue making a slight turn, I saw the house, a plain but comfortable gentleman's seat with wings. It looked to the south down the dale. 'With what satisfaction I could live in that house,' said I to myself, 'if backed by a couple of thousands a year. With what gravity could I sign a warrant in its library, and with what dreamy comfort translate an ode of Lewis Glyn Cothi, my tankard of rich ale beside me. I wonder whether the proprietor is fond of the old bard and keeps good ale. Were I an Irishman instead of a Norfolk man I would go in and ask him.'

* * * * *

After the days of the great persecution in England against the Gypsies, there can be little doubt that they lived a right merry and tranquil life, wandering about and pitching their tents wherever inclination led them: indeed, I can scarcely conceive any human condition more enviable than Gypsy life must have been in England during the latter part of the seventeenth, and the whole of the eighteenth century, which were likewise the happy days for Englishmen in general; there was peace and plenty in the land, a contented population, and everything went well. Yes, those were brave times for the Rommany chals, to which the old people often revert with a sigh: the poor Gypsies, say they, were then allowed to sove abri (sleep abroad) where they listed, to heat their kettles at the foot of the oaks, and no people grudged the poor persons one night's use of a meadow to feed their cattle in.

Footnotes:

{147a} 'I, who am a smuggler.' The Spanish version, 'Yo que soy,' etc., is more familiar, and more harmonious.

{147b} 'When the king arrived.'

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