

and villas, of which no trace is left, and from these one could take in at a single glance the city with its minarets, terraces, and mosques gleaming amid the palms and cypresses. Near here is still seen an Arabian gate, called the Elvira gate, formed by a great arch covered with battlements. Farther on are the ruins of the palaces of the Caliphs. Near the Alameda promenade is a square tower, containing a large room, ornamented with the usual Arabian inscriptions. Close by the convent of San Dominic are the remains of gardens and palaces, which were once joined to the Alhambra by means of a subterranean passage. Within the city is the Alcaiceria, an Arabian market almost intact, formed by several small, straight streets, as narrow as a corridor, and flanked by two rows of shops, one joining the other, that present the strange aspect of an Asiatic bazaar. Indeed one cannot take a step in Granada without meeting an arch, an arabesque, a column, and a pile of stones, that recall her fantastic past, when she was a Sultana.

How many turns and twists I made through those tortuous streets, in the warmest portion of the day, under a sun that was perfectly scorching, without meeting a living soul! At Granada, as is the case in all the other Andalusian cities, people do not show themselves until night; and at night they make up for their imprisonment during the day by gathering and crowding in the public promenades with the haste and bustle of a multitude, one half of which is looking for the other on account of urgent business. The thickest crowd is on the Alameda, and yet I passed my evenings there with Gongora who talked of

Arabian monuments, a journalist who discussed politics, and another young man who talked of women, not infrequently all three together, to my infinite pleasure, because that school-boy sort of meeting, at times, refreshes my soul, as does the summer shower (to steal a beautiful comparison) when it falls with quickened motion on the grass.

If I were obliged to say any thing about the people of Granada, I should really be quite embarrassed, because I did not see them. During the day, I never met any one in the street, and at night one could not see them. No theatres were open, and when I might have found some one in the city, I was wandering through the halls or avenues of the Alhambra. Then, too, I had so much to do to see every thing in the time I had allowed myself, that there were no odd moments when I could have begun a conversation, as I did in other cities, in the streets or cafés, with the common people upon whom I happened to stumble.

Judging from all that I heard of the Granada people from those who were able to give me reliable information concerning them, I should say that they do not enjoy an excellent reputation in Spain. They are said to be bad-tempered, violent, vindictive, and given to the use of the knife, which is not contradicted by the city chronicles in the papers, and it is well known, although not said, that popular education is less general here than in Seville, or even other small Spanish cities. Then, too, every thing which cannot be done by the sun and ground (which do so much), goes to the bad, either

through indolence, ignorance, or confusion. Granada is not connected by railway with any important city. She lives alone, in the midst of her gardens, within the circle of her mountains, rejoicing in the fruits which the earth produces under her hand, rocking herself softly in the vanity of her beauty and pride of her history, idling, dozing, dreaming, and contenting herself by replying with a yawn to any one who reproves her for her condition: "I gave to Spain the painter Alonzo Cano, the poet Luis di Leon, the historian Fernando di Castillo, the sacred orator Luis di Granada, and the minister Martinez de la Rosas; I have paid my debt; leave me in peace!"—a reply made by most of the southern cities of Spain, so much more beautiful than wise or industrious, alas! and so much prouder than civilized. Ah! no one who has seen them can refrain from exclaiming: "What a shame!"

"Now that you have seen all the marvels of Arabian art and tropical vegetation, you must see the suburb of the *Albaycin*, in order to say that you know Granada. Prepare your mind for a new world; put your hand on your pocket-book, and follow me."

So said Gongora, the last afternoon of my stay in Granada. We had with us a young journalist, Melchiorre Almagro by name, director of the *Idea*, a charming, agreeable fellow, who, in order to accompany us, sacrificed his dinner, and an editorial, which he had been thinking over since morning. We started out, and reached the square of the *Audiencia*. There Gongora pointed out a tortuous road which mounts a hill, and said to me:

“The Albaycin begins here”; and Melchiorre, touching a house with his stick, added:

“Here commences the territory of the republic.”

We passed through the narrow street, from this into another, then into a third, climbing all the time, without my seeing any thing extraordinary, although I was looking curiously about me on all sides. There were narrow streets, miserable houses, old women asleep on the doorsteps, mammas who were examining their children's heads, dogs which were yawning, cocks crowing, ragged boys running and screaming, and other things that are always seen in suburbs, but so far there was nothing else. Little by little, as we climbed, the aspect of the houses and people began changing: the roofs were lower, the windows fewer, the doors smaller, and the inhabitants more ragged. In the middle of every street ran a rivulet in a walled bed in the Arab style; here and there, above the doors, and around the windows, one could still see arabesques, and fragments of little columns; and in the corners of the squares were mountains and walls of the time of the Moorish dominion. At every hundred steps we seemed to be going back fifty years, toward the time of the Caliphs. My two companions touched my elbow from time to time, saying:

“Look at that old woman—that child—that man.”

And I looked, and asked:

“What kind of people are those?”

If I had found myself there suddenly, I should have fancied, in seeing those men and women, that I was in an African village, so different were the faces, manner of

dressing, moving, speaking, and looking (at such a short distance from the centre of Granada), from those of the people whom I had come in contact with up to that time. At each turn I stopped to look in the faces of my companions, who said to me :

“This is nothing ; we are still in the civilized portion of the Albaycin ; this is the *Parisian* quarter of the suburb. Let us go on !”

On we went : the streets looked like the bed of a stream, or paths dug out of the rock, were all elevations or ditches, mounds, and stones ; some of them so steep that a mule could not climb them ; others so narrow that a man could scarcely pass ; others, still, filled with women and children seated on the ground ; and again, they were moss-grown, deserted, and wearing a bleak, savage, strange aspect, of which our most miserable villages could furnish no idea, because this is the poverty that bears the imprint of another race and the colors of another continent. We wandered through a labyrinth of streets, passing, from time to time, under a great Arabian arch, or through a high square, from which we could take in at a glance the immense valleys, mountains covered with snow, and a portion of the city below, and, finally, reaching the end of a street, stonier and more narrow than any we had yet seen, we stopped to take breath.

“Here,” said the young archeologist, “the real Albaycin begins. Look at that house !”

I obeyed ; it was a low, smoky, and half-ruined dwelling, with a door resembling a cellar window, before which we could see moving, under a mass of rags, a group, or

rather a heap, of old women and children, who, at our appearance, raised their sleepy eyes, and, with fleshless hands, removed from the sill some filth that impeded our progress.

“ Let us enter,” said my friend.

“ Enter ?” I asked.

If they had told me that beyond that wall there was a duplicate of the famous Court of Miracles described by Victor Hugo, I should not have hesitated to believe them. No door had ever said more imperatively to me : “ Keep back !” I can find no better comparison than that of the wide open mouth of a gigantic witch, which exhaled a breath full of pestilential miasmas. However, I took courage, and entered.

Oh, marvel of marvels ! It was the court of an Arabian house, surrounded by graceful little columns, surmounted by very light arches, with those indescribable traceries of the Alhambra around the small doors and mullion windows, the beams and partitions of the ceiling sculptured and colored, niches for vases of flowers and perfume urns, the bath in the centre, and, in fact, all the traces of the delicious life of an opulent family. That house was inhabited by poor people !

We came out, entered other houses, and found in all of them some fragments of Arabian sculpture and architecture. Gongora said to me, from time to time : “ Here there was a harem ; there the women’s bath ; up there the little room of a favorite.” And I fastened my hungry eyes on all those bits of arabesqued wall and the small columns of the windows, as if to ask them the revelation

of some secret, a name, or a magic word with which I could reconstruct in an instant the ruined edifices, and invoke the beautiful Arabian women who had lived there. But, alas ! amid the columns and under the arches of the windows nothing was to be seen but rags and wrinkled faces !

Among other houses, we entered one in which we found a group of girls sewing under the shade of a tree in the court, guarded by an old woman. They were all working upon a large piece of black and white striped cloth, which looked like a carpet or bed cover. I approached and asked one of the seamstresses :

“What is that ?”

They all raised their heads, and, with one accord, unfolded the cloth so that I could see their work well. As soon as I saw it I cried :

“I will buy it.”

They began laughing. It was the mantle of an Andalusian mountaineer, made to wear on horseback, in the shape of a right angle, with an aperture in the middle through which to pass the head, embroidered in bright-colored wools along the two shortest sides and around the opening. The design of the embroideries, representing fantastic birds and flowers, green, blue, white, red, and yellow, all in a mass, was rough as a child could make it ; but the beauty of the work lies in the perfect harmony of the colors. I cannot describe the feeling which the sight of that mantle produced, unless I say that it laughs and arouses gayety, and that it seems impossible to imagine any thing gayer, brighter, or more childishly

and gracefully capricious. It is a thing to look at when one wishes to get out of bad humor, to write a lovely strophe in a lady's album, or is expecting a person whom he desires to receive with a most pleasing smile.

"When will these embroideries be done?" I asked one of the girls.

"To-day," they all replied in chorus.

"What is this mantle worth?"

"Five * * *" stammered one of them.

The old woman shot a glance at her that was meant to say: "You goose!" and replied hastily:

"*Six duros.*"

Six duros are thirty lire; it did not seem much to me, and I put my hand on my pocket-book.

Gongora, giving me a glance that said: "You stupid!" and holding me back by the arm, said:

"Wait a moment; six *duros* are entirely too much!"

The old woman gave him a glance that meant "brigand!" and replied:

"I cannot give it for less."

Then Gongora looked at her, as much as to say: "What a fib!" and remarked:

"Come now, you can give it for four *duros*; you do not ask any more from the people of the country."

The old woman was persistent, and we continued for a time to exchange with the eyes such polite titles as stupid, swindler, spoil-trade, liar, miser, and spendthrift, until the mantle was sold me for five *duros*. I paid the sum, gave my address, and we left blessed and recommended to God by the old woman, and followed for a

good distance by the great black eyes of the embroiderers.

We continued walking from street to street, among more and more miserable houses, blacker and blacker faces, and more disgusting rags. We never seemed to reach the end, and I said to my companions :

“ Be kind enough to tell me whether Granada has any confines, and where they are. May one ask where we are going, and how we shall manage to get home again ? ”

But my friends only laughed and kept on.

“ Is there any thing stranger to be seen ? ” I asked, at a certain point.

“ Stranger ? ” they both replied. “ This second quarter of the borough which you have seen still belongs to civilization ; it is, if not the *Parisian*, at least the *Madrid* quarter of the Albaycin ; there is decidedly more to see, so let us go on.”

We passed through a very long street filled with half-clothed women, who looked at us as if we were people who had fallen from the moon ; crossed a small square full of children and pigs, quite amicably mixed ; went on through two or three wretched little alleys, now climbing, now descending, now among houses, now among ruins, now among trees, or now among rocks, and finally reached a solitary place on the slope of a hill, whence we saw opposite to us the Generalife, on the right the Alhambra, and below a deep valley covered with a thick grove.

It began to grow dark, no one was to be seen, and not a voice was heard.

“Does the borough end here?” I asked.

My two companions laughed, and replied :

“Look on that side.”

I turned, and saw a street which was lost in a distant thicket, and an endless row of houses—of houses? I should say caves dug in the earth, with a little wall in front, some holes for windows, and cracks for doors, and wild plants of every kind on all sides. They were the dens of beasts, in which, by the reflection of small lights, scarcely visible, we could see the *gitani* swarming by the hundred,—a people living in the sides of the mountains, poorer, blacker, and more savage than any yet seen. Another city, unknown to the majority of the Granadines, inaccessible to the agents of the police, shut to those who take the census, ignorant of every law or government, existing one knows not how, in untold numbers, strange to the city, Spain, and modern civilization, with a language and usages of their own, superstitious, false, thievish, mischievous, and ferocious.

“Button up your overcoat ; look out for your watch,” said Gongora ; “and let us move on.”

We had not taken a hundred steps, when a half-naked boy, black as the walls of his den, espied us, uttered a cry, and making some sign to the other boys to follow him, dashed toward us. Behind the boys came women ; behind the women, men ; then old men and women with children, and in less time than it takes to tell it, we were surrounded by a crowd. My two friends, recognized as Granadines, succeeded in making their escape, and I alone was caught. I seem to see yet those ugly faces, to hear those

voices, and feel all those hands upon me. Gesticulating, shouting, saying a thousand things I could not understand, dragging me by the coat-tails, waistcoat, and sleeves, they pressed on to me like a troop of famished people, breathed in my face, and took away my breath. The majority of them were semi-nude, thin, with shirts torn into fragments, dishevelled and dusty hair, and so horrible to look upon, that I felt as if I were Don Roderick in the midst of the crowd of the plague-stricken, in that famous dream of the August night.

“What do these people want?” I asked myself. “Where have I allowed myself to be brought? How shall I get out of this?” I really experienced almost a feeling of terror, and looked around uneasily. Little by little I began to understand something.

“I have a sore on my shoulder,” said one; “I cannot work; give me some money.”

“I have broken my leg,” said another.

“I have a paralyzed arm.”

“I have had a long illness.”

“*Un cuarto, señorito!*”

“*Un real, caballero!*”

“*Un peseta para todos!*”

This last suggestion was greeted with a shout of approval.

“*Un peseta para todos!*” (a lira for all of us).

I drew out my portemonnaie with a little trepidation; all got on tip-toe; the nearest poked their chins into it; those behind placed their chins on the heads of the first, and the most distant stretched out their arms.

“One moment,” I cried; “who has the most authority among you?”

All with one voice, pointing toward a single person, replied: “That one!”

She was a frightful old woman, all nose and chin, with a great bunch of white hair standing straight up on her head like a plume, a mouth that looked like a letter box, very little clothing on, black, shrivelled, and dried up. She approached me, bowing, smiling, and stretching out her hand to take mine.

“What do you wish?” I asked, stepping back.

“To tell your fortune,” they all shouted.

“Well, then, tell my fortune,” I replied, extending my hand.

The old woman took, in her ten, I cannot say fingers, but shapeless bones, my poor hand, placed her sharp nose upon it, raised her head, looked fixedly at me, pointed her finger at me; swaying herself, and stopping at every sentence, as if she were reciting verses, she said to me, in an inspired tone:

“You were born on an auspicious day.”

“The day you die will be a notable one.”

“You possess immense wealth.”

Here she muttered something about sweethearts, weddings, happiness, from which I gathered that she supposed me to be married, and then added:

“The day you married there was a great festival at your house; there was *giving and taking*.”

“Another woman wept.”

“And when you see her the wings of your heart open.”

On she went in this way, saying that I had sweethearts, friends, treasures, and jewels awaiting me each day in the year at every corner of the globe. While the old woman was speaking, all were silent, as if they believed she was prophesying truly. Finally she closed her prophecy with a formula of dismissal, and ended the formula by stretching out her arms and taking a leap in a dancing attitude. I gave the *peseta*, and the crowd broke out into a shout, applause, and songs, making a thousand strange gestures around me, saluting me with pokes and slaps on the shoulder, like old friends, until, by force of twisting and striking right and left, I succeeded in opening a passage and reaching my friends. Here, however, a new peril threatened us. The notice of the arrival of a stranger had spread abroad, the tribe was in motion, and the city of the gypsies was in an uproar. From the neighboring houses, distant dens, the top of the hills, and bottom of the valleys, flocked boys, women with children in their arms, old men with sticks, lame and sick impostors, and septuagenarian fortune-tellers wishing to tell fortunes; a crowd of beggars, in fact, who rushed upon us from all sides. It was night; there was no time for hesitation; we took to our heels, and ran like school-boys in the direction of the city. Then such a fiendish burst of shouts broke out, and the fleetest began following us. Thanks to heaven, after a short gallop we found ourselves out of danger, but tired, breathless, and covered with dust.

“We had to escape at any cost,” said Señor Melchiorre, laughingly, to me, “or else we should have returned home in a shirtless condition.”

“And remember,” added Gongora, “that we have only seen the gates of the gypsy quarter,—the civilized portion,—the Paris or Madrid, but not the Granada, of the Albaycin. If we had only been able to go on! If you could only have seen the rest!”

“How many thousands are there of these people?” I asked.

“No one knows.”

“How do they live?”

“We cannot understand that either.”

“What authority do they recognize?”

“Only one—the kings, heads of the families or houses, those who are oldest or have the most money. They never leave their quarter, know nothing, and live quite in the dark as far as any thing outside the circuit of their houses is concerned. Dynasties fall, governments change, armies fight, and it is a miracle if the news ever reaches their ears. Ask them whether Isabella is on the throne or not; they do not know. Ask them who Don Amadeus is; they have never heard his name. They are born and die like flies, and live as they did centuries ago, multiplying without leaving their own boundaries, ignorant and unknown, seeing nothing during all their life save the valleys lying at their feet and the Alhambra which towers above their heads.”

We returned by the streets through which we had come, now so dark and deserted that it seemed as if they were unending. We climbed, descended, twisted, and turned, and finally reached the square of the *Audiencia*, in the centre of Granada. We were once more in the



*Horris agillet pino
Alhambra Granada (##)*

*Mariano Principe de los Gitanos, que sirvió de
modelo á Mariano de Fortuny.*

Roman y





civilized world. At the sight of the cafés and lighted shops, I experienced the same feeling of pleasure that I would have done in returning to city life after a year's sojourn in an uninhabited country.

The following day I left for Valencia. I remember that a few moments before starting, while paying my hotel bill, I remarked to the landlord that one candle too much had been charged, and asked him, laughingly :

“ Will you take it off ? ”

He seized his pen, and subtracting twenty centimes from the total, replied in a voice intended to convey emotion :

“ Diavolo ! among Italians * * * ! ”





CHAPTER XIII.

VALENCIA.

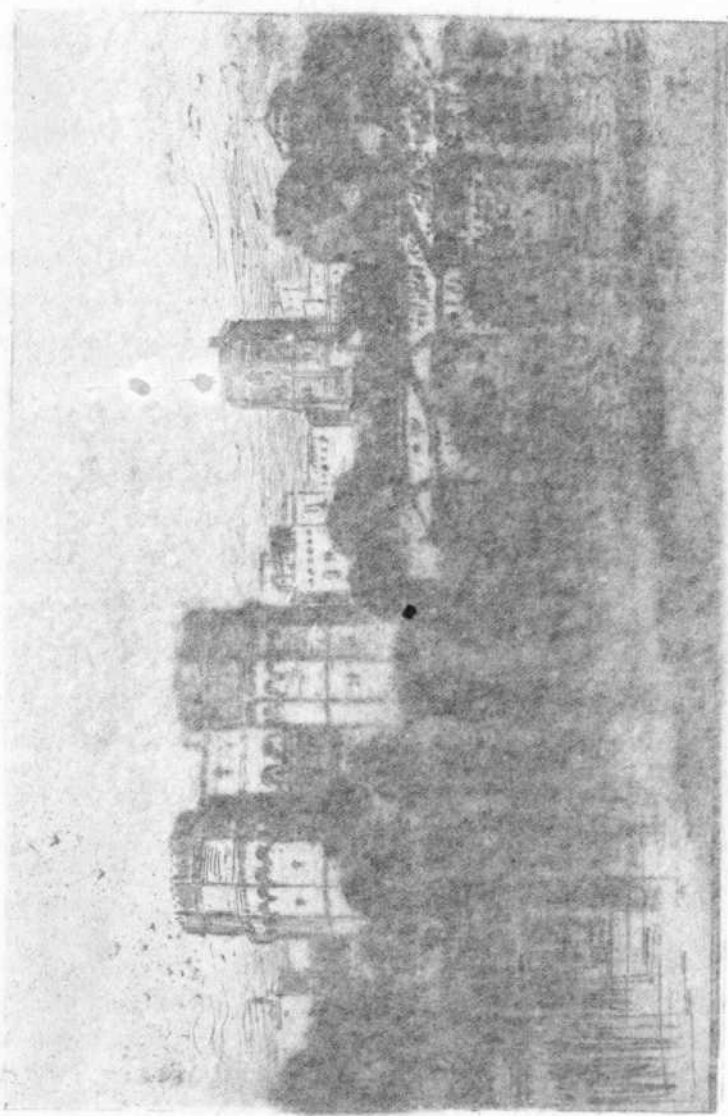


HE journey from Granada to Valencia, taken all *de un tiron*, as they say in Spain (or all in one breath), is an amusement in which a sensible man only indulges once during his life. From Granada to Menjibar, a village on the left bank of the Guadalquiver, between Jaen and Andujar, is a night's ride in a diligence. From Menjibar to the Alcazar of San Juan takes a half day on the railway, in a carriage without curtains, across a plain as bare as the palm of one's hand, and under a scorching sun. From Alcazar del San Juan to Valencia (counting an entire evening passed at the station of the Alcazar waiting for the train) is another night and morning before you reach the desired city at noonday, when nature, as Emile Praga would say, recoils at the horrible idea that there are still four months of summer.

Yet it must be confessed that the country one passes through from the beginning to the end of this journey is so beautiful, that if the traveller were capable of any sentiment when nearly dead with sleep and exhausted from the intense heat, he would be very enthusiastic about it. It is a journey of unexpected views, sudden changes, strange contrasts, spectacular effects of nature, if I may so express myself, and marvellous and fantastic transformations, which leave in the mind a vague illusion of having traversed not a portion of Spain, but the most varied countries of an entire meridian. From the *Vega* of Granada, which you cross in the moonlight, almost opening a road for yourself through the groves and gardens, in the midst of a luxuriant vegetation crowding around you, like an angry sea, to envelop and swallow you up in its breakers of verdure, you come out among bare and rocky mountains, where not a trace of human habitation is to be found, clear the edge of precipices, follow the banks of torrents, run along the bottom of chasms, and seem to be lost in a labyrinth of rocks. From here you emerge again among the green hills and flowery fields of upper Andalusia, and then suddenly the fields and hills disappear, and you find yourself in the midst of the stony mountains of the Sierra Morena, which hang over your head, and shut in the horizon on all sides, like the walls of an immense abyss. You leave the Sierra Morena, and the barren plains of the Mancha spread out before you. After crossing the Mancha, you pass through the flowery plains of Almansa, varied by every kind of cultivation, which presents the appearance of a chess-board, painted

with all the shades of green that can be found on the palette of a landscape painter. Finally, beyond the Almansa plain, there opens a delicious oasis, a land blessed by God, a veritable paradise, the kingdom of Valencia. From this point to the city you move on amid gardens, vineyards, thick groves of orange trees, white villas surmounted by terraces, gay villages, all painted in bright colors, in groups and rows; thickets of palms, pomegranates, aloes, and sugar-cane, endless hedges of Indian figs, long chains of hills, cone-shaped heights, converted into kitchen-, flower-gardens, and swards; all these divided minutely from top to bottom, and as variegated as bunches of grass and flowers. Everywhere, in fact, there is a luxurious vegetation, which covers every vacancy, overtops every height, clothes each projection, rises, waves, sweeps along, crowds together, interlaces, impedes the view, shuts in the road, dazzles you with green, wearies you with beauty, confuses you with its caprices and tricks, and produces the effect of a sudden upheaving of earth seized by a fever, from the fire of a secret volcano!

The first building you see, upon entering Valencia, is an immense bull circus, situated on the right of the railway, formed by four rows of arches, one above the other, supported by large pilasters, built of brick, and resembling, in the distance, the Colosseum. It is the bull circus, where on the fourth of September, 1871, King Amadeus, in the presence of seventeen thousand people, shook hands with the celebrated *torero*, called Tato, who had but one leg,



Salomon to Salomon

with all the shades of green that can be found on the palette of a landscape painter. Finally, beyond the Almansa plain, there opens a delicious oasis, a land blessed by God, a veritable paradise, the kingdom of Valencia. From this point to the city you move on amid gardens, vineyards, thick groves of orange trees, white villas surmounted by terraces, gay villages, all painted in bright colors, in groups and rows; thickets of palms, pomegranates, aloes, and sugar-cane, endless hedges of Indian figs, long chains of hills, cone-shaped heights, converted into kitchen-, flower-gardens, and swards; all these divided minutely from top to bottom, and as variegated as bunches of grass and flowers. Everywhere, in fact, there is a luxurious vegetation, which covers every vacancy, overtops every height, clothes each projection, rises, waves, sweeps along, crowds together, interlaces, impedes the view, shuts in the road, dazzles you with green, wearies you with beauty, confuses you with its caprices and tricks, and produces the effect of a sudden upheaving of earth seized by a fever, from the fire of a secret volcano!

The first building you see, upon entering Valencia, is an immense bull circus, situated on the right of the railway, formed by four rows of arches, one above the other, supported by large pilasters, built of brick, and resembling, in the distance, the Colosseum. It is the bull circus, where on the fourth of September, 1871, King Amadeus, in the presence of seventeen thousand people, shook hands with the celebrated *torero*, called Tato, who had but one leg.



Entrance to Valencia

and who, being the director of the spectacle, had asked permission to present his homage in the royal box. Valencia is full of souvenirs of the Duke de Aosta. The sacristan of the cathedral possesses a gold chronometer, with his initials in diamonds, and a chain with pearls, given him by the duke when he went to pray in the chapel of *Nuestra Señora de los Desamparados* (Mother of the Forsaken or Desolate). In the asylum of this name the poor remember having once received their daily bread from him. In the mosaic manufactory of one Nolla are preserved two bricks, upon one of which he cut his own name, and on the other that of the queen. In the Plaza di Tetuan the people point out the house of Count di Cevellon, in which he was entertained, and which is the same house where Ferdinand VII., in 1824, signed the decrees annulling the Constitution, where Queen Christina abdicated in 1840, and where Queen Isabella passed several days in 1858. In fact, there is not a corner of the city in which one cannot say: "Here he pressed the hand of a common man; here he visited a hospital; and here he passed on foot, far away from his suite, and surrounded by a crowd, but trustful, calm, and smiling."

It was just at Valencia, since I am speaking of the Duke de Aosta, that a child of five, reciting some verses, touched on the terrible subject of a foreign king, with the noblest and most sensible words that have, perhaps, been uttered in Spain for many years; words which, if Spain had remembered and meditated upon, might perhaps have saved her from many of the calamities that have come, and may come to her; words that, perchance, some day,

and who, being the director of the spectacle, had asked permission to present his homage in the royal box. Valencia is full of souvenirs of the Duke de Aosta. The sacristan of the cathedral possesses a gold chronometer, with his initials in diamonds, and a chain with pearls, given him by the duke when he went to pray in the chapel of *Nuestra Señora de los Desamparados* (Mother of the Forsaken or Desolate). In the asylum of this name the poor remember having once received their daily bread from him. In the mosaic manufactory of one Nolla are preserved two bricks, upon one of which he cut his own name, and on the other that of the queen. In the Plaza di Tetuan the people point out the house of Count di Cevellon, in which he was entertained, and which is the same house where Ferdinand VII., in 1824, signed the decrees annulling the Constitution, where Queen Christina abdicated in 1840, and where Queen Isabella passed several days in 1858. In fact, there is not a corner of the city in which one cannot say: "Here he pressed the hand of a common man; here he visited a hospital; and here he passed on foot, far away from his suite, and surrounded by a crowd, but trustful, calm, and smiling."

It was just at Valencia, since I am speaking of the Duke de Aosta, that a child of five, reciting some verses, touched on the terrible subject of a foreign king, with the noblest and most sensible words that have, perhaps, been uttered in Spain for many years; words which, if Spain had remembered and meditated upon, might perhaps have saved her from many of the calamities that have come, and may come to her; words that, perchance, some day,

Spaniards will remember with a sigh, and which up to this time draw from events a marvellous light of truth and beauty. The poem is entitled *God and the King*, and runs thus :

" *Dios, en todo Soberano,*
Credè un dia á los mortales,
Y á todos nos hizo iguales
Con su poderosa mano.

" No reconoció naciones,
Ni colores, ni matices,
Y en ver los hombres felices
Cifró sus aspiraciones.

" El Rey, che su imágen es,
Su bondad debe imitar ;
Y el pueblo no ha de indagar
Si es aleman ó francés.

" ¿ Porqué con ceño iracundo
Recharzarle, siendo bueno ?
Un Rey de bondades lleno
Tiene por su patria el mundo.

" Vino de nacion estraña
Cárlos Quinto emperador,

Y conquistó su valor
Mil laureles para España.

" Y es un recuerdo glorioso
Aunque en guerra cimentado,
El venturoso reinado
De Felipe el Animoso.

" Hoy el tercero sois Vos
Nacido en estraño suelo
Que vieno á ver nuestro cielo
Puro destello de Dios.

" Al rayo de nuestro sol
Sed bueno, justo, y leal,
Que á un Rey bueno y liberal
Adora el pueblo español.

" Y á vuestra frente el trofeo
Ceñid de perpetua gloria,
Para que digna la historia
Fué grande el Rey Amadeo." *

Oh, poor little girl, how many wise things you said,
and how many insensate ones others did !

* God, Sovereign over all,
One day created mortals,
And made us all equal
With his powerful hand.

He knew not nations,
Nor colors, nor mixtures [of colors],
And to see men happy
Limited his desires.

The king, who is his image,
Should imitate his goodness ;
And the people need not ask
Is he French or German.

Why with angry frown
Repel him, be he good ?
A king full of kind acts
Has the world for his country.

Came from a foreign nation
The Emperor Charles V.,
And his valor conquered
Thousands of laurels for Spain.

And it is of glorious memory,
Although founded in war,
The fortunate reign
Of Philip the Courageous.

The city of Valencia, if we enter it thinking over the ballads of the poets who sang of its marvels, does not seem to correspond with the beautiful idea formed of it; and yet, on the other hand, it has none of that gloomy appearance for which we prepare ourselves, when we think more of its just fame as a turbulent, warlike city, the fomentor of civil wars, one rather preferring the smell of powder to the fragrance of its orange groves. It is a city built on a vast and arid plain on the bank of the Guadalquivir, which separates it from its suburbs, a short distance from the bay, which serves as a harbor, all tortuous streets, flanked by high, ugly, and many-colored houses, and therefore less pleasing in appearance than the streets of most Andalusian cities, and entirely lacking in that lovely Oriental aspect so pleasing to the fancy. On the left bank of the river is an immense promenade formed by majestic avenues and beautiful gardens, which are reached by leaving the city through the gate of the Cid, flanked by two great embattled towers named after the hero because he passed through it in 1094 after having driven the Arabs from Valencia. The cathedral, erected on the spot once occupied by a temple of Diana in the time of the Romans, then by a church dedicated to St. Salvador in the time of the Goths, then by a mosque in the time of the Arabs, converted again into a church by the Cid, changed a second time into a mosque by the Arabs in 1101, and for a third time into a church by King Don Jayme after the definite expulsion of the invaders, is a large edifice, very rich in ornaments and treasures, but cannot in the least compare with the majority of Spanish

cathedrals. There are several palaces worth seeing, such as the palace of the *Audiencia*, a beautiful monument of the sixteenth century, in which the Cortes of the kingdom of Valencia were convened; the *Casa de Ayuntamiento*, built between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in which Don Jayme's sword is preserved, together with the keys of the city and the banner of the Moors; and, above all, the *Lonja*, or merchants' bourse, on account of its noted room, formed by three great naves, divided by twenty-four twisted columns, over which curve the light arches of the ceilings, producing a pleasant and harmonious effect upon the eye. Last of all is a picture-gallery, which is not one of the most insignificant ones of Spain.

To tell the truth, however, during the few days I remained at Valencia waiting for the ship, my head was more full of politics than art, and I experienced the truth of the words of an illustrious Italian, who is thoroughly at home in Spain: "The stranger," he says, "who lives only for a short time in Spain, becomes, little by little, without being aware of it, intensely interested in politics, as if Spain were his own country, or the fate of his own country depended upon that of Spain. The passions are so strong, the struggle so fierce, and the future welfare and life of the nation are so evidently at stake in this same struggle, that it is not possible for any one with Latin blood in his veins to remain an indifferent spectator. He must take part, talk at meetings, be affected by the elections, join the crowd which is making political demonstrations, break with a friend, join a set

of people who think as he does, and become a Spaniard up to the whites of his eyes. As he becomes Spanish he forgets Europe, as if it were at the antipodes, and ends by not seeing any thing but Spain, as if he were ruling it, and all its interests were in his hands." This is true, and was the case with me. During those few days the conservative ministry was shipwrecked, and the radicals had the wind in their sails; Spain was all in an uproar; governors, generals, and employés of all grades and administrations lost their places; a crowd of new people burst into the offices of the ministries, uttering cries of joy. Zorilla was to inaugurate a new era of prosperity and peace. Don Amadeus had had an inspiration from heaven; liberty had conquered, and Spain was saved. Even I, in hearing the band play in front of the new governor's house, on a starry night, among a crowd of gay people, had a ray of hope that the throne of Don Amadeus might extend its roots, and I repented having prophesied evil too soon. And that comedy played by Zorilla at his villa, when he would not accept the presidency of the ministry, sent back his friends and the deputations, and, finally, worn out with refusing, made the mistake of saying yes, gave me then another idea of the firmness of his character, and induced me to think well of the new government. I said to myself that it was a pity to leave Spain when the horizon was clearing, and the royal palace at Madrid was assuming a roseate hue, and, indeed, began to make plans for returning to Madrid, in order to enjoy the satisfaction of being able to send to Italy some consoling information, which would compen-

sate for my imprudence in not having told any stories about affairs up to that time. I repeated the lines of Prati :

“ Oh qual destin t' aspetta
Aquila giovinetta ! ”

(Oh, what a destiny awaits thee, young eagle !) which, with the exception of a little exaggeration in the appellatives, seemed to contain a prophecy, and I fancied seeing the poet in Piazza Colonna, at Rome, running to meet him, in order to offer him my congratulations, and pressing his hand.

The most beautiful thing to be seen at Valencia is the market. The Valencian peasants are more strangely and artistically dressed than any in Spain. If they wished to produce quite an effect among the maskers at our *veglione* (masked balls), they would only have to enter the theatre just in the dress they wear on fête and market days in the street of Valencia, and on the country roads. One is seized by a desire to laugh when he sees the first who are dressed in this way, and it is difficult to believe that they are really Spanish peasants. They have the air of Greeks, Bedouins, jugglers, rope-dancers, women half undressed, the silent characters in tragedies, or a fun-loving people, who wish to raise a laugh at their own expense. They wear a full white shirt in the place of a jacket, a variegated velvet waistcoat, open at the chest, a pair of trowsers like those of the zouaves, which only come to the knee, look like drawers, and stand out like the skirts of ballet-dancers ; a red or blue sash around the waist, a kind of white embroidered woollen leggings,

which display the bare knee, and a pair of rope sandals like the Catalan peasants. As a covering for the head (which is almost shaved like the Chinese), they wear a red, blue, yellow, or white handkerchief, twisted in the shape of a cartridge, and knotted on the temple or nape of the neck. Upon this they place a little velvet hat, shaped like those worn in the other Spanish provinces. When they go to town, they generally carry over their shoulders or arms, sometimes in the shape of a shawl, mantle, or scarf, a woollen *capa*, long and narrow, with bright-colored stripes (usually white and red), and ornamented with tufts of fringe and rosettes. The appearance of a square where hundreds of men dressed like this are gathered, is easily imagined. It is a carnival scene, a fête, a tumult of colors, inspiring gayety like a band of music ; a spectacle, in fact, which is, at the same time, charlatan-like, lovely, grand, or ridiculous, and to which the frowning faces and majestic attitudes, distinguishing the Valencian peasants, add a shading of gravity that increases its extraordinary beauty.

If there is a false and insolent proverb, it is the old Spanish one which declares that in Valencia the flesh is grass, the grass is water, the men are women, and the women nothing. Setting aside the part referring to the flesh and grass, which is a fable, the men, especially among the lower classes, are tall and robust, and as hardy in appearance as the Catalans and Arragonese, with a brighter and more vivacious expression of eye. The women are, by the universal consent of all Spaniards, and the strangers who have travelled in Spain, the most

classically beautiful of the country. The Valencians who know that the eastern coast of the peninsula was first occupied by the Greeks and Carthaginians say: "It is clear that the Greek type remained here." I do not dare give any opinion on the subject, because, defining the beauty of the women of a city in which one has passed only a few hours, would seem like the license taken by the compiler of a guide-book. However, it is easy to see the difference between the beauty of the Andalusian and Valencian women. The latter are taller, stouter, lighter, have more regular features, softer eyes, and more matronly gait and pose. They are not as spicy as the Andalusians, who make one feel like biting his finger to calm the sudden insurrection of capricious desires the sight of them arouses; but they are women upon whom one looks with a more quiet admiration, and while looking says, as La Harpe did of the Apollo Belvedere: *Notre tête se relève, notre maintien s'ennoblit*; so that instead of dreaming of a little Andalusian house in which to hide them from the eyes of the world, he desires a marble palace in which to receive the ladies and cavaliers who might come to render them homage.

According to the other Spaniards, the Valencian people are ferocious and cruel beyond imagination. If any one wishes to rid himself of an enemy, he can find a serviceable man who, for a few crowns, will accept the commission with as much indifference as he would that of carrying a letter to the post. A Valencian peasant who happens to have a gun in his hand when some

stranger is passing by, will say to his companion : *Voy à ver si acierto* (let us see how well I can aim), takes aim, and fires. This is recounted as an absolute fact, which took place not many years since. In the cities and villages of Spain the boys and young men of the people are in the habit of playing at bull-fighting. One is the bull, and does the butting ; another, with a stick fastened securely under the shoulder-blade, like a lance, and carried on the back of a third, who represents the horse, repulses the attacks of the first. Once a band of young Valencians thought that they would add a novelty to this play which would make it resemble the bull-fights more closely, and afford more amusement to the artists and spectators. The novelty consisted in substituting for the stick a long, sharp knife, one of those formidable *navajas* which we saw at Seville, and in giving to the man who played the part of the bull two shorter ones, which, firmly fastened in either side of the head, would take the place of horns. This seems incredible, but is true ! They played the game, shed seas of blood, several were killed, some mortally wounded, others maimed, without the affair changing into a strife, the rules of the art being once violated, or any voice being raised to put an end to the massacre !

Relata refero, and I am very far from believing all that is said of the Valencians, but certain it is that, at Valencia, public safety, if not a myth, as our newspapers poetically say when speaking of Romagna and Sicily, is assuredly not the first blessing enjoyed after that of life. I convinced myself of this fact the first evening of my

stay in the city. I did not know how to reach the harbor, and thinking it might be near, I asked my way of a shop-woman, who uttered an exclamation of surprise.

“ You want to go to the harbor, *caballero* ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ Holy Virgin, to the harbor at this hour ? ”

Then she turned to a number of women who were standing near the door, and said in Valencian dialect :

“ Women, answer this gentleman for me ; he wishes to know how to get to the harbor ! ”

The women all replied in one voice :

“ God preserve him ! ”

“ From what ? ”

“ Don't trust yourself ! ”

“ But for what reason ? ”

“ For a thousand reasons.”

“ Give me one ? ”

“ You might be assassinated.”

This one reason sufficed, as any one can understand, and I did not attempt to go any farther.

However, at Valencia, as was the case elsewhere, in my slight dealings with the people, I never met with any thing but courtesy as a stranger, and, as an Italian, received a friendly welcome, even from those who wished to hear nothing of foreign kings in general, and princes of the house of Savoy in particular, and who, although in the majority, were polite enough to say to me in the first place : “ Don't let us touch on that subject.” To the stranger who, when asked where he is from, replies : “ I am a Frenchman,” they give a civil smile, as much as to

say: "We know each other." To those who answer: "I am German or English," they make a slight inclination of the head, which means: "I bow to you"; but to those who respond: "I am an Italian!" they extend their hands quickly, as if to say: "We are friends," look at them with an air of curiosity, as we do for the first time at a person whom we have been told resembles us, and smile complacently at hearing the Italian language spoken, as we do when we hear some one who, without wishing to make fun of us, imitates our voice and accent. In no country of the world does an Italian feel less far from home than in Spain. The sky, language, faces, and costumes remind him of it; besides, the veneration with which they utter the names of our great poets and painters, that vague and pleasant feeling of curiosity with which they speak of our cities, the enthusiasm with which they listen to our music, the demonstrations of affection, the fervor of the language, rhythm of the poetry, eyes of the women, and the air and sun! Oh! An Italian must indeed be lacking in love for his own country if he does not feel drawn toward this one, is not inclined to pardon its errors, sincerely deplore its misfortunes, and wish it good luck. Beautiful hills of Valencia, smiling banks of the Guadalquivir, enchanted gardens of Granada, little white houses of Seville, superb towers of Toledo, noisy streets of Madrid, venerable walls of Saragossa, and you, kind hosts and courteous travelling companions, who talked to me of Italy as of a second country, thus dissipating with your gayety my fits of melancholy, I shall always retain for you, in the depths of my heart, a feeling of

gratitude and affection, shall keep your image in my memory as one of the most precious recollections of my youth, and shall ever think of you as one of the beautiful dreams of my life!

I said these words to myself, at midnight looking at Valencia still illuminated, as I leaned over the railing of the ship *Genil*, which was on the point of leaving. Several young Spaniards, who were going to Marseilles, to sail from thence to the Antilles, where they were to remain for several years, had embarked with me. One of them was weeping by himself. Suddenly he rose, looked toward the shore, between the ships that were lying at anchor, and exclaimed in a tone of despair: "Oh, my God! I hoped she would not come!"

A few moments later a boat approached the steamer; a little white figure, followed by a man enveloped in a mantle, hastily climbed the gangway, and, giving a great sob, threw herself into the arms of the young man, who had rushed forward to meet her.

At that point the boatswain cried: "Gentlemen, we are going to start!"

Then we witnessed a most heart-rending scene; they were obliged to separate the young people by force, and carry the girl, almost fainting, to the boat, which moved off a little and stopped.

The ship started.

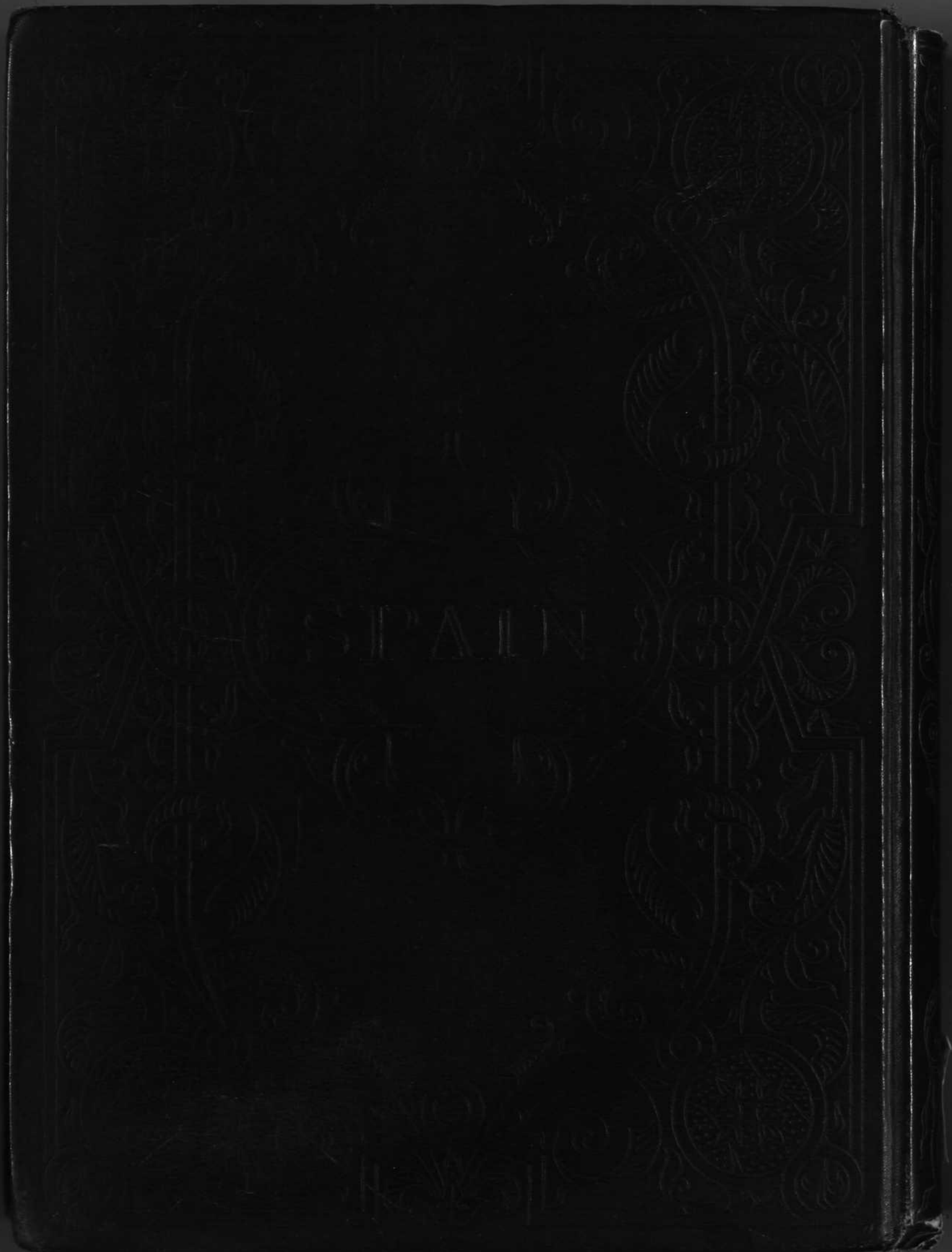
At this moment the young man dashed like one desperate to the railing, and cried, sobbing in a voice that went to one's heart: "Adieu, darling! Adieu! adieu!"

The little white figure stretched out its arms, and perhaps replied ; but the voice was not heard. The boat moved off and disappeared.

One of the young fellows whispered in my ear :
“ They are betrothed.”

It was a beautiful night, but a sad one. Valencia was quickly lost to sight, and I, too, wept, thinking that I should perhaps never see Spain again.

THE END.



SPAIN

SPAIN

AMICIS

G-E 641