

VARIOUS

BLACKWOOD'S
EDINBURGH MAGAZINE,
VOLUME 62, NUMBER
361, NOVEMBER, 1845.

Various

**Blackwood's Edinburgh
Magazine, Volume 62,
Number 361, November, 1845.**

«Public Domain»

Various

Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, Volume 62, Number 361,
November, 1845. / Various — «Public Domain»,

Содержание

THE STUDENT OF SALAMANCA	5
HUMBOLDT	24
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	35

Various Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, Volume 62, Number 361, November, 1845

THE STUDENT OF SALAMANCA Part I

"España de la guerra
Tremola la pendon."

Cancion Patriotica.

It wanted about an hour of sunset on the last day of September 1833, when two young men, whose respective ages did not much exceed twenty years, emerged from a country lane upon the high-road from Tarazona to Tudela, in that small district of Navarre which lies south of the river Ebro.

The equipments of the travellers – for such the dusty state of their apparel, and the knapsacks upon their shoulders, indicated them to be – were exactly similar, and well calculated for a pedestrian journey across the steep sierras and neglected roads of Spain. They consisted, with little variation, of the national Spanish dress – short jackets of dark cloth, somewhat braided and embroidered, knee-breeches of the same material, and broad-brimmed hats, surrounded by velvet bands. Only, instead of the tight-fitting stockings and neat pumps, which should have completed the costume, long leathern gamashes extended from knee to ankle, and were met below the latter by stout high-quartered shoes. Each of the young men carried a stick in his hand, rather, as it appeared, from habit, or for purposes of defence, than as a support, and each of them had a cloak of coarse black serge folded and strapped upon his otter-skin knapsack. With their costume, however, the similarity in their appearance ceased; nothing could be more widely different than their style of person and countenance. The taller of the two, who was also apparently the elder, was of a slender, active figure, with well-moulded limbs, and a handsome, intelligent countenance, in which energy and decision of character were strongly marked. His complexion was dark olive; his eyes and short curling hair were of a coal black; what little beard he had was closely shaven, excepting upon the upper lip, which was fringed by a well-defined mustache, as gracefully curved and delicately penciled as any that Vandyke ever painted. At this time, however, there was a shade over his countenance other than that cast by the broad leaf of his sombrero; it was the look of mingled hope, anxiety, and suspense, sometimes worn by persons who are drawing near to a goal, their attainment of which is still doubtful, and at which, even when attained, it is not quite certain whether pleasure or pain awaits them.

No such thoughts or anxieties were to be read upon the joyous, careless countenance of the second traveller – a stout, square-built young man, whose ruddy complexion and light-brown hair contrasted as strongly with the dark locks and olive skin of his companion as they differed from the generally received notions of Spanish physiognomy. The face wore no particular expression, excepting that of good-humoured *insouciance*; his hazel eye had a merry twinkle, and a slight fulness of lip and chin seemed to denote a reasonable degree of addiction to the good things of this life. Altogether, and to judge them by their physiognomies only, one would have chosen the first for a friend, the latter for a pleasant and jovial boon-companion.

On leaving the cross-road, the two pedestrians took a northerly direction, in which they proceeded for nearly a quarter of an hour without exchanging a syllable, the one absorbed in meditations which the other was apparently unwilling to disturb. At the end of that time they paused,

as if by preconcerted arrangement, in front of a small *venta*, or country inn, less remarkable for the accommodation it afforded, than for its pleasant situation and aspect. It stood a little back from the road, in a nook formed by the recession of a line of wooded hills which there skirt the highway. The front of the house, composed of rough blocks of grey stone, was overgrown by the twisted branches of a venerable vine, the age of which did not prevent it from becoming covered each spring with leaves and tendrils, nor from yielding in the autumn an abundant supply of delicious gold-coloured grapes. At a short distance in front of the door, which opened into the stable, whence a wooden step-ladder led to the upper floor, there stood a huge oak, throwing its broad shadow over a table and some benches placed beneath it for the accommodation of guests. On one side of the *venta*, and detached from it, but in a right line with its front, was a massive fragment of wall, which had probably, at no very remote period, formed part of a chapel or convent. Its summit, which was broken and irregular, rose full thirty feet from the ground throughout more than double that length, and along the wall, at about two-thirds of a man's height, ran a horizontal black line, indicating, as did also the numerous marks and bruises upon the whitewashed surface, that this ancient piece of masonry enabled the frequenters of the *venta* to indulge in the favourite *juego de pelota*, or a game at ball, to which the Navarrese and the northern Spaniards generally are much addicted, and at which most of them excel.

On the arrival of our travellers, the benches in front of the *venta* had already two occupants, belonging to classes of men which may rank amongst the chief supporters of Spanish roadside inns. One of them was a corporal of dragoons, returning to his garrison at Tudela, whence he had probably been sent with a despatch, or on some similar mission. He was a strapping, powerful fellow, well set up, as the phrase goes, and whose broad shoulders and soldierly figure showed to advantage in his dark-green uniform. His horse – a high-crested, fine-legged Andalusian, whose jetty coat looked yet blacker by contrast with the white sheep-skin that covered the saddle, and the flakes of foam with which his impatient champings had covered his broad chest – was tied up near the stable door, the bridle removed, finishing out of a nose-bag a plentiful feed of maize. The dragoon's sabre and his brass and leopard-skin helmet were hanging at the saddle-bow, their owner having temporarily covered his head with a smart foraging-cap of green and scarlet cloth, which set off to great advantage his bearded and martial countenance. Having provided for his horse, the trooper was now attending to the calls of his own appetite, and doing immense execution on some goat's-milk cheese and excellent white bread, which he moistened by copious draughts of the thick black wine of Navarre.

Seated opposite to the soldier, and similarly employed, was a hardy-looking man, who had arrived in company with two mules, which were also tethered to a ring in the *venta* wall, but at a respectful distance from the dragoon's charger. A heap of chopped straw and Indian corn leaves was lying before them, at which they assiduously munched – not, however, without occasionally casting wistful glances at the more luxurious repast of their neighbour. The soldier and the muleteer had apparently met before; and when the new-comers approached them, they were discussing with great animation the merits of the various players in a ball-match which they had recently witnessed near Tudela. Thence they glided into a discussion concerning ball-players in general; the muleteer, who was a Navarrese, asserting the invincibility of his country at the game of *pelota*, whilst the corporal, who came from the neighbourhood of Oviedo, was equally confident of the superiority of the Asturians.

Whilst the younger of the travellers was ascertaining from the *patrona* the state of the larder, which, as is usual enough in Spanish inns, was but meagrely provided, his companion sought out the landlord of the *venta*, whom he found in the chimney-corner, enjoying a supplementary siesta amidst a cloud of wood smoke.

"The Conde de Villabuena," enquired the young man, when he had shaken the drowsy host out of his slumbers – "is he still at his house between this and Tudela?"

The *ventero*, a greasy, ill-conditioned Valencian, rubbed his eyes, muttered a coarse oath, and seemed half disposed, instead of replying, to pick a quarrel with his interrogator; but a glance at the

athletic figure and resolute countenance of the latter, dissipated the inclination, and he answered by a surly affirmative.

"And his daughter also?" continued the stranger in a lower tone.

"Doña Rita? To be sure she is, or was yesterday; for I saw her ride by with her father and some other cavaliers. What eyes the little beauty has; and what a foot! It was peeping from under her habit as she passed. Sant'Antonio, what a foot!"

And now thoroughly awakened, the ventero launched out into a panegyric on the lady's beauty, interlarded by appeals to various saints as to the justice of his praise, which was continued, in the manner of a soliloquy, for some time after the stranger had turned his back upon him and descended the stairs.

At the door of the venta the young man encountered his companion, who was issuing forth with a jug of wine in his hand.

"Well, Luis," said the latter, "have you ascertained it? Is she still here, or has our journey been in vain?"

"She is here," was the reply.

"Good. Then I hope you will put aside your melancholy, and eat and drink with better appetite than you have lately done. We have plenty of time; it will not be dark for the next two hours. So let us to supper, such as it is; ham as rancid as an old oil-cask, eggs that would have been chickens tomorrow, and wine – but the wine may atone for the rest – it is old Peralta, or the patrona is perjured. I have had the table spread under the tree, in hopes that fresh air may sweeten musty viands, and in order that we may see the ball-play of yonder soldier and muleteer."

The young man who had been addressed by the name of Luis, glanced in the direction of the ball-court, where the two men to whom his companion referred were preparing for a match. The discussion as to the superiority of Navarrese or Asturian ball-players had increased in warmth, until the disputants, each obstinate in his opinion, finding themselves, perhaps, at a loss for verbal arguments, had agreed to refer the matter to a trial of individual skill. The challenge came from the dragoon, who, as soon as he heard it accepted, proceeded to lighten himself for his task. With great alacrity he threw aside his foraging-cap, stripped off his pouch-belt and uniform coat, and unfastened his spurs. The preparations of the muleteer were even more rapidly completed. When he had thrown off his jacket – the back of which was adorned, according to the custom of his class, with flowers and various quaint devices, cut out in cloth of many colours, and sewn upon the brown material of which the garment was composed – he stood in his shirt and trousers of unbleached linen, with light sandals of plaited hemp upon his feet. In this latter respect he had the advantage of the soldier, who, not choosing to play barefooted, was obliged to retain his heavy boots. In apparent activity, too, the advantage was greatly on the side of the Navarrese, who was spare and sinewy, without an ounce of superfluous flesh about him, but with muscles like iron, and limbs as elastic and springy as whalebone. His very face partook of the hard, wiry character of his person; the cheekbones were slightly prominent, and, although he evidently wanted some years of thirty, two deep furrows or lines, such as are rarely seen on the countenance of so young a man, curved outwards from either nostril to considerably below the mouth, increasing in depth when he talked or smiled, and giving, in conjunction with a quick grey eye, considerable character to his frank, and by no means disagreeable countenance.

The game began with great spirit, and with much appearance of equality between the players, who would both have been deemed first-rate in any ball-court in Europe. The great strength of the dragoon seemed at first to give him the advantage; the tremendous blows he delivered sent the ball against the wall with as much seeming force as if it had been driven out of a cannon, and caused it to rebound to an immense distance, keeping the muleteer continually at the very top of his speed. The match was to be the best two out of three games. The first of the three was won by the muleteer, after the victory had been long and well contested.

"*Bien!*" said the dragoon, as he wiped the perspiration from his face, and took a deep draught out of a jug of wine which the ventero presented to him. "*Bien*— that is one for you; the next may go differently. I only missed the ball through my foot slipping. Curse boots for playing ball in, say I! *Hola, Valenciano!* have you never a pair of shoes or *espadrillas* to lend me?"

The landlord, who acted as umpire, and who, as well as his wife and two or three loitering peasants, was taking an intense interest in the game, ran into the house and brought out a pair of sandals. These the soldier tied upon his feet, in lieu of the boots to which he attributed his defeat. Then, with renewed confidence, he took his place opposite the wall, where the muleteer was waiting for him.

But if, as the dragoon said, an accident had lost him the first game, it soon became evident that the superior activity and endurance of his antagonist were equally certain to make him lose the second. The idleness of a garrison life, fat feeding, and soft lying, had disqualified the soldier to compete for any length of time with a man like the Navarrese, accustomed to the severest hardships, whose most luxurious meal was a handful of boiled beans, his softest couch a bundle of straw or the packsaddles of his mules. Constant exposure and unceasing toil had given the muleteer the same insensibility to fatigue attributed to certain savage tribes. Whilst his antagonist, with inflamed features and short-drawn breath, and reeking with perspiration, was toiling after the ball, the Navarrese went through the same, or a greater amount of exertion, without the least appearance of distress. Not a bead of moisture upon his face, nor a pant from his broad, well-opened chest, gave token of the slightest inconvenience from the violent exercise he was going through. On the contrary, as he went on and got warm in the harness, he seemed to play better, to run faster, to catch the ball with greater address, and strike it with more force. Sometimes he would be standing close to the wall, when a mighty blow from the strong arm of the dragoon sent the ball scores of yards in his rear. It seemed impossible that he should arrive soon enough to strike it. But before it had time to rebound, he was behind it, and by a blow of his horny palm, less forcible perhaps, but more dexterously applied than the one his opponent had given, he sent it careering back to the wall with greater swiftness than it had left it. He rarely struck the ball in the air, even when the opportunity offered, but allowed it to rebound — a less dashing, but a surer game than he would perhaps have played, had he not considered the honour of "*Navarra la bella*" to be at stake, represented in his person. Again, when the ball fell near the wall, he would sometimes swing his arm as though about to strike it a violent blow, and, whilst the dragoon was already beginning to retire in the direction he expected it to take, he would change his apparent intention, and drop it gently just above the line, so that his opponent, although rushing up in desperate haste, could scarcely arrive in time to avoid being put out. It was by a feint of this description that the second game was decided in favour of the Navarrese.

"*Viva la Navarra!*" shouted the winner, bounding like a startled roebuck three or four feet from the ground, in front of the discomfited soldier.

"*Viva el demonio!*" growled the latter in reply. "Do you think that because you have beaten me to-day, thanks to your herring guts and dog's hide, that you could do the same if I were in training, or had a month's practice? You would find it very different, Master Paco."

"*Viva la Navarra!*" repeated Paco, chucking the small hard ball up into the air, to a height at which it appeared scarcely bigger than a bullet. Then replying to the words of the dragoon; "At your orders, Señor Velasquez," said he, "I shall pass through Tudela some time next month, and shall be ready to give you your revenge."

And catching the ball as it fell, the Navarrese, whom victory had put into extravagant spirits, began tossing it from one hand to the other, catching it behind his back, and performing various other small feats of address, looking the while at the corporal with a sort of jeering smile, which greatly aggravated the irritation of the latter.

"*Pues,*" said Velasquez at last, after gazing at Paco for the space of a minute with a stern look, which was insufficient, however, to make the other lower his eyes, or alter the expression of his

countenance; "Well, what do you stare at? Oh! I forgot – you may well stare. It is the first time that you have seen an Asturian caballero beaten at any thing by a cur of a Navarrese."

"Not at all," replied the muleteer coolly; "your Señoría is mistaken. It is only the first time that I have seen an Asturian *caballero* with a pipeclayed belt over his shoulder, and a corporal's bars upon his arm."

And he broke out into one of those wild shrill laughs of scorn and defiance with which the peasant soldiers of Navarre have so often, during recent Spanish wars, caused the rocks and ravines of their native province to ring again.

"*Hijo de zorra!*" muttered the soldier, enraged beyond endurance by this last taunt; and drawing back his right arm, he dealt so heavy and unexpected a blow upon the breast of the muleteer that the latter reeled a couple of paces backwards, and then fell headlong and with considerable violence to the ground. The dragoon gazed for an instant at the fallen man, as if expecting him to rise and attack him in turn; but, seeing that he did not do so, he turned round and walked slowly in the direction of his charger.

He had taken but a few steps when the Navarrese sprang to his feet, and thrust his hand into the red sash which girded his waist, as though seeking a weapon. He found none, and, instantly darting forward, he passed the soldier, and reached his mules a moment sooner than the former did his horse. The next instant a long brown barrel was projected across the packsaddles, and behind it was seen the blue cap and pale countenance of Paco, who, with glittering eye and face livid from fury, was taking a deadly aim at the soldier, now standing beside the shoulder of his charger. Without a moment's hesitation the Navarrese pulled the trigger. As he did so, the dragoon, suddenly aware of his danger, threw himself on one side, and at the same time his horse, either startled by the movement or tormented by a fly, tossed his head violently up and backwards. The muleteer's bullet, intended for the rider, entered the brain of the steed. There was a convulsive quivering of the animal's whole frame, and then, before the smoke cleared away, the horse fell over so heavily and suddenly that he bore down Velasquez under him. The soldier lay with the whole weight of the expiring animal resting upon his legs and thighs; and, before he could make an attempt to extricate himself, the Navarrese, with a large dagger-shaped knife gleaming in his hand, sprang across the space that separated him from his antagonist. The fate of the latter would speedily have been decided, had not the innkeeper, his wife, and the two young men, who had been observing with much interest these rapidly occurring incidents, thrown themselves between Paco and the object of his wrath.

"Out of the way!" roared the infuriated muleteer. "He has struck me, and by the Holy Trinity I will have his blood. He has struck *me*, a free Navarrese!" repeated he, striking his own breast with the points of his fingers, one of the expressive and customary gestures of his countrymen.

"Let him be, Señor Don Paco!" yelled the ventero and his wife, greatly alarmed at the prospect of a murder in broad daylight and at their very threshold. "You have done enough already to send you to the galleys. Get on your mules, and ride away before worse comes of it."

"*A los infiernos!*" shouted Paco. "As the horse now is, so shall be the rider." And he gave a long sweep of his arm, making the bright blade of his knife flash in the last red sun-rays like a curved line of burnished gold. The point of the weapon passed within an inch or two of the face of the innkeeper, who started back with a cry of alarm. At the same moment the wrist of the Navarrese was caught in a firm grasp by the elder of the two travellers, and the knife was wrested from his hand. The muleteer turned like a madman upon his new antagonist. The latter had laid aside the hat which shaded his face, and now fixed his eyes upon the angry countenance of the Navarrese.

"Do you not know me, Paco?" said he, repulsing the first furious onset of the muleteer.

Paco stared at him for a moment with a look of doubt and astonishment.

"Don Luis!" he at last exclaimed.

"The same," replied the stranger. "You have been too hasty, Paco, and we expose ourselves to blame by not detaining you to answer for your attempt on yonder soldier's life, and for the death of

his horse. But you had some provocation, and I, for one, am willing to take the risk. Begone, and that immediately."

"I shall do your bidding, Señorito," said Paco, "were it only for old acquaintance sake. But let that cowardly Asturian beware how he meets me in the mountains. I have missed him once, but will answer for not doing so again."

"And you," retorted the soldier, whom the innkeeper and a peasant had dragged from under the dead horse, and placed upon a bench, where he sat rubbing his legs, which were numbed and bruised by the weight that had fallen upon them – "and you, have a care how you show yourself in Tudela. If there is a stirrup-leather or sword-scabard in the garrison, I promise you as sound a beating as you ever yet received."

The Navarrese, who had returned to his mules and was busied reloading his gun, snapped his fingers scornfully at this menace. Don Luis walked up to him.

"Listen, Paco," said he, in a low voice, "take my advice, and avoid this neighbourhood for a while. Are you still in the service of Count Villabuena?"

"No, Señor," replied the man, "I have left his Señoría, and the mules are my own. I shall be passing near the count's house to-morrow, if you have any thing to send."

"I have nothing," answered Don Luis. "Should you by chance see any of the family, it is unnecessary to mention our meeting."

Paco nodded his head significantly, seated himself sideways on one of his mules, his gun across his knees, and, leading the other by the bridle, trotted off at a brisk pace down a mountain path nearly opposite to the venta. Ten minutes later the dragoon, having regained, in some degree, the use of his legs, resumed his boots, took his saddle and valise on his shoulders, and set out on foot for his garrison.

The sun had set, and the twilight passed away, the night was clear and starlight, but moonless, when Luis and his companion left the venta and resumed their progress northwards. After following the highway for a short league, they took a cross-road, on either side of which the richly cultivated plain was sprinkled with farmhouses, and with a few country villas. In spite of the darkness, which was increased by the overhanging foliage of the fruit-trees that on either hand bordered the road, Luis moved rapidly and confidently forward, in the manner of one perfectly acquainted with the ground; and presently, leaving the beaten track, he passed through a plantation of young trees, crossed a field, and arrived with his companion at a low hedge surrounding a spacious garden. Jumping over this boundary, the young men penetrated some distance into the enclosure, and soon found themselves within fifty yards of a house, of which the white walls were partially visible, rising out of a thick garland of trees and bushes in which the building was embowered. Several of the windows were lighted up, and the sound of music reached the ears of Luis and his companion.

"This is far enough, Mariano," said the former. "To the right, amongst the trees, you will find an old moss-grown bench, upon which I have often sat in happier days than these. There await my return."

"Let me accompany you further," replied Mariano. "There is no saying what reception the count may give you."

"I shall not see the count," answered Luis; "and if by chance I should, there is nothing to apprehend. But my plan, as I have already explained to you, is only to seek one moment's interview with Rita. I am well acquainted with the arrangements of the house, and you may depend that I shall be seen by no one whom I wish to avoid."

Mariano turned into the shrubbery, and Luis, with rapid but silent step, advanced towards the villa, favoured in his clandestine approach by the darkness of the night and the trees of the thickly-planted garden.

The house was a square edifice, without balconies, and the windows that were lighted up were those of the first floor. On the side on which Luis first approached the building, the windows were closed, but, upon moving noiselessly round to the front, he perceived one which the fineness of the

weather, still mild and genial although at the end of September, had induced the occupants of the room to leave open. The sound of laughter and merriment issued from it; but this was presently hushed, and two voices, accompanied by guitars, began to sing a lively *seguidilla*, of which, at the end of each piquant couplet, the listeners testified their approbation by a hum of mirthful applause. Before the song was over, Luis had sought and found a means of observing what was passing within doors. Grasping the lower branch of a tree which grew within a few feet of the corner of the house, he swung himself up amongst the foliage. A large bough extended horizontally below the open window, and by climbing along this, he was enabled to look completely into the apartment; whilst, owing to the thickness of the leafage and the dark colour of his dress, there was scarcely a possibility of his being discovered.

The room was occupied by about twenty persons, the majority of whom were visitors, inhabitants of Tudela or of neighbouring country-houses. With four or five exceptions, the party consisted of men, for the most part elderly or middle-aged. One of the ladies and a young officer of the royal guard were the singers, and their performance seemed partially to interrupt the conversation of a group of the seniors who were seated round a card-table at the further end of the apartment. The cards, however, if they had been used at all, had long been thrown aside, and replaced by a discussion carried on in low tones, and with an earnestness of countenance and gesture, which gave to those engaged in it the appearance rather of conspirators than of friends met together for the enjoyment of each other's society. The ladies, and a few of the younger men, did not appear disposed to let the gravity of their elders interfere with their own pleasures. The song and the dance, the pointed epigram and witty repartee, all the varied resources which Spaniards know so well how to bring into play, and which render a Spanish *tertulia* so agreeable, had been in turn resorted to. When the *seguidilla* – during the continuance of which Luis had gained his post of observation – was brought to a close, there seemed to ensue a sort of break in the amusements of the evening. The younger members of the company, whose conversation had previously been general, separated into groups of two or three persons; and in more than one of those composed of the former number, the flashing eye, coquettish smile, and rapidly significant motions of the fan, bespoke the existence of an animated flirtation.

Two ladies, neither of whom could have seen more than eighteen summers, now left the sofa upon which they had been sitting, and, with arms intertwined, approached the open window. Luis remained motionless as the leaves that surrounded him, and which were undisturbed by a breath of wind. The ladies leaned forward over the window-sill, enjoying the freshness of the night; and one of them, the lively brunette who had taken a part in the *seguidilla*, plucked some sprays of jasmine which reared their pointed leaves and white blossoms in front of the window, and began to entwine them in the hair of her companion – a pale and somewhat pensive beauty, in whose golden locks and blue eyes the Gothic blood of old Spain was yet to be traced. Presently she was interrupted in this fanciful occupation by a voice within the room calling upon her to sing. She obeyed the summons, and her friend remained alone at the window.

No sooner was this the case than a slight rustling occurred amongst the branches of the tree, and the name of "Rita" was uttered in a cautious whisper. The lady started, and but half suppressed a cry of terror. The next instant the leaves were put aside, and the light from the apartment fell upon the countenance of Luis, who, with uplifted finger, warned the agitated girl to restrain her emotion.

"Santa Virgen!" she exclaimed, leaning far out of the window, and speaking in a hurried whisper, "this is madness, Luis. My father is unchanged in his sentiments, and I dread his anger should he find you here."

"I will instantly depart," replied Luis, "if you promise me an interview. I am about to leave Spain – perhaps for ever; but I cannot go without bidding you farewell. You will not refuse me a meeting which may probably be our last."

"What mean you?" exclaimed the lady. "Why do you leave Spain, and when? But we shall be overheard. To-morrow my father goes to Tudela. Be here at mid-day. Brigida will admit you."

She held out her hand, which Luis pressed to his lips. At that moment the clatter of a horse's hoofs, rapidly approaching, was heard upon the hard ground of the avenue. The lady hastily withdrew her hand and left the window, whilst Luis again concealed himself behind the screen of foliage. Scarcely had he done so, when a horseman dashed up to the house, forced his steed up the three or four broad steps leading to the door, and, without dismounting or looking for a bell or other means of announcing his arrival, struck several blows upon the oaken panels with the butt of his heavy riding-whip. Whilst the party above-stairs hurried to the windows, and endeavoured to discern who it was that disturbed them in so unceremonious a manner, a servant opened the small grated wicket in the centre of the door, and enquired the stranger's pleasure.

"Is the Conde de Villabuena at home?" demanded the horseman. "I must see him instantly."

"The name of your Señoría," enquired the domestic.

"It is unnecessary. Say that I have a message to him from friends at Madrid."

The servant disappeared, and in another moment his place was occupied by a grave, stern-looking man, between fifty and sixty years of age.

"I am Count Villabuena," said he; "what is your business?"

The stranger bent forward over his horse's mane, so as to bring his face close to the wicket, and uttered three words in a tone audible only to the count, who replied to them by an exclamation of surprise. The door was immediately opened, and Villabuena stood beside the horseman.

"When?" said he.

"Yesterday. I have ridden night and day to bring you the intelligence, and shall now push on to the interior of Navarre. At the same time as myself, others of our friends started, north and south, east and west. Early this morning, Santos Ladron heard it at Valladolid, and Merino in Castile. To-day the news has reached Vittoria; this night they will be at Bilboa and Tolosa. It is from the northern provinces that most is expected; but 'El Rey y la Religion' is a rallying-cry that will rouse all Spaniards worthy of the name. You are prepared for the event, and know what to do. Farewell, and success attend us!"

The stranger set spurs to his horse, and galloped down the avenue at the same rapid pace at which he had arrived. The count re-entered the house; and, as soon as he had done so, Luis dropped from his tree, and hurried to rejoin Mariano. In another hour they had returned to the venta.

Luis Herrera was the son of a Castilian gentleman, who had suffered much, both in person and property, for his steady adherence to the constitutional cause in Spain. Severely wounded whilst fighting against the Royalists and their French allies in 1823, Don Manuel Herrera with difficulty escaped to England, taking with him his only son, then a boy of eleven years of age. In 1830 he changed his residence to the south of France, and thence, taking advantage of his proximity to the frontier, and wishing his son's education to be completed in Spain, he dispatched Luis to Madrid, with a recommendation to the Conde de Villabuena, who, notwithstanding that his political principles were diametrically opposed to those of Don Manuel, was one of the oldest friends of the latter. The count welcomed Luis kindly, and received him into his house, where for some months he prosecuted his studies in company with the young Villabuenas, and, at the end of that time, went with them to the university of Salamanca. The vacations were passed by the young men either at the count's house at Madrid, or at a country residence near Tudela, north of which, in the central valleys of his native province of Navarre, the Conde de Villabuena owned extensive estates. The count was a widower, and, besides his two sons, had an only daughter, who, at the time of Luis's arrival was in her sixteenth year, and who added to great personal attractions a share of accomplishment and instruction larger than is usually found even amongst the higher classes of Spanish women. During the first sojourn of Luis at the count's house, he was naturally thrown a great deal into Doña Rita's society, and a reciprocal attachment grew up between them, which, if it occasionally afforded the young Villabuenas a subject of good-humoured raillery, on the other hand was unobserved or uncared for by the count – a stern silent man, whose thoughts and time were engrossed by political intrigues. When Luis

went to Salamanca, his attachment to Rita, instead of becoming weakened or obliterated, appeared to acquire strength from absence; and she, on her part, as each vacation approached, unconsciously looked forward with far more eagerness to the return of Herrera than to that of her brothers.

The autumn of 1832 arrived, and the count and his family, including Luis, were assembled at the villa near Tudela. The attachment existing between Rita and Luis had become evident to all who knew them; and even the count himself seemed occasionally, by a quiet glance and grave smile, to recognise and sanction its existence. Nor was there any very obvious or strong reason for disapproval. The family of Herrera was ancient and honourable; and, although Don Manuel's estates had been confiscated when he fled the country, he had previously remitted to England a sum that secured him a moderate independence. The state of things in Spain was daily becoming more favourable to the hopes of political exiles. The declining health of Ferdinand had thrown the reins of government almost entirely into the hands of Queen Christina, who, in order to increase the number of her adherents, and ensure her daughter's succession to the throne, favoured the return to Spain of the Liberal party. Although Don Manuel, who was known to be obstinate and violent in his political views, had not yet been included in the amnesties published, it was thought that he speedily would be so; and then time and importunity, and an adherence to the established order of things, might perhaps procure him the restitution of some part of his confiscated property.

It chanced, that on the fourth day after the arrival of Luis and the Villabuenas from Salamanca, the two latter rode over to the Ebro, below Tudela, for the purpose of bathing. They were not good swimmers, and were moreover unaccustomed to bathe in so rapid and powerful a stream. A peasant, who observed two horses tied to a tree, and some clothes upon the grass by the river side, but who could see nothing of the owners, suspected an accident, and gave the alarm. A search was instituted, and the dead bodies of the unfortunate young men were found upon the sandy shore of an island some distance down the river.

This melancholy event was destined to have an important influence on the position of Luis Herrera in the family of Count Villabuena, and on his future fortunes. Mingled with the natural grief felt by the count at the untimely death of his children, were the pangs of disappointed pride and ambition. He had reckoned upon the gallant and promising young men, thus prematurely snatched away, for the continuance and aggrandizement of his ancient name. Upon his daughter he had hitherto scarcely bestowed a thought. She would marry – honourably of course, richly if possible; but even in this last respect he would not be inflexible, for where his pride of birth did not interfere, Villabuena was not an unkind father. But the death of his sons brought about great changes. The next heir to his title and estates was a distant and unmarried cousin, and to him the count determined to marry his daughter, whose beauty and large fortune in money and unentailed estates, rendered any objection to the match on the part of her kinsman a most improbable occurrence. As a first step towards the accomplishment of this scheme, the count resolved to put an end at once to what he considered the childish attachment existing between Rita and Luis. Within a week after the death of his sons, he had a conversation with young Herrera, in which he informed him of his intentions with regard to his daughter, and pointed out to him the necessity of forgetting her. In vain did Luis declare this to be impossible, and plead the strength which his attachment had acquired by his long permitted intercourse with Rita. The count cared little for such lover-like arguments; he assured Luis that he was mistaken, that time and absence brought oblivion in their train, and that after a few months, perhaps weeks, of separation, he would wonder at the change in his sentiments, and laugh at the importance he had attached to a mere boyish fancy. It so happened, that on the day preceding the one upon which this conversation took place, a letter had been received from Don Manuel Herrera, announcing his speedy return to Spain, the much-desired permission having at length been obtained. In order to give Luis an opportunity of speedily testing the effects of absence, the count proposed that he should at once set out for the French frontier to meet his father. Under the existing circumstances, he said,

it was undesirable that he should remain under the same roof with his daughter longer than could be avoided.

Although bitterly deploring the prospect of an immediate and lasting separation from Rita, Luis had no choice but to adopt the course proposed; nor would his pride have allowed him to remain in the count's house an instant longer than his presence there was acceptable. He feared that the count would prevent his having a last interview with Rita; but this Villabuena did not think it worth while to do, contenting himself with repeating to his daughter the communication he had already made to Luis. When the latter sought his mistress, he found her in tears and great affliction. The blow was so sudden and unexpected, that she could scarcely believe in its reality, and still less could she bring herself to think that the count would persist in his cruel resolution. "He will surely relent," she said, "when he sees how unhappy his decision makes me; but should he not do so, rest assured, Luis, that I will never be forced into this odious marriage. Sooner than submit to it, a convent shall receive me." And once more repeating the vows of constancy which they had so often interchanged, the lovers separated. At daybreak upon the following morning, Luis set out for Bayonne.

The joy experienced by Don Manuel Herrera upon once more treading his native soil, did not so engross him as to prevent his observing the melancholy of his son. In reply to his father's enquiries, Luis informed him of his attachment to Rita, and of the interdict which the count had put upon its continuance. Don Manuel was indignant at what he termed the selfish and unfeeling conduct of Villabuena, who would thus sacrifice his daughter's happiness to his own pride and ambition. He then endeavoured to rouse the pride of Luis, and to convert his regrets into indignation; but, finding himself unsuccessful, he resolved to try the effect of change of scene and constant occupation. He set out with his son for Old Castile, of which he was a native, and undertook various journeys through the province in search of a small estate, such as his means would permit him to purchase, and upon which he might in future reside. This he at last found, a few leagues to the south of Burgos. The purchase completed, there were still many arrangements to make before Don Manuel could settle down and enjoy the peaceful country life which he had planned for himself, and in making these arrangements he took care to find his son abundant and varied employment. But all his well-meant efforts were in vain. Luis could not detach his thoughts from one all-engrossing subject; and at last, although Count Villabuena had expressly forbidden any correspondence between his daughter and young Herrera, the latter, after some weeks' absence, unable to resist any longer his desire to hear from Rita, ventured to write to her. The letter was intercepted by the count, and returned unopened, with a few haughty lines expressive of his indignation at the ingratitude of Luis, who was requiting the kindness he had received at his hands by endeavouring to thwart his plans and seduce the affections of his daughter. The terms in which this letter was couched roused the ire of Don Manuel, who in his turn forbade his son to expose himself to a repetition of similar insults by any communication with the count or his daughter. Shortly afterwards Luis returned to Salamanca to complete his studies.

The profession of the law, to which young Herrera was destined, had never had any charms for him. His own inclinations pointed to a military career, which he had on various occasions urged his father to allow him to adopt; but Don Manuel had invariably refused his request, alleging the poor prospect of advancement in time of peace, and in a service in which nearly all promotion was gained by interest and court-favour. Nevertheless, from his earliest youth Luis had devoted his leisure hours to the attainment of accomplishments qualifying him for the trade of war. He was the boldest horseman, most skilful swordsman, and best shot in the University of Salamanca. His superiority in these respects, his decided character, and agreeable manners, had gained him considerable popularity amongst his fellow-students, who frequently expressed their surprise, that one whose vocation was evidently military should abide by the dusty folios and dry intricacies of the law.

More insupportable than ever did his studies now appear to Luis, who nevertheless persevered in them for several months after his father's return to Spain, endeavouring by strenuous application to divert his thoughts from his hopeless attachment. Weary at length of the effort, he determined

to abandon a pursuit so uncongenial to his tastes, and to seek a more active course of life, and one for which he felt he was better suited. His plan was to repair to Africa, and endeavour to obtain a commission in one of the foreign corps which the French were raising for their campaign against the Bedouins. Should he fail in this, he would serve as a volunteer, and trust to his courage and merits for procuring him advancement. Previously, however, to the execution of this scheme, he resolved to see Rita once more, ascertain from her own lips whether there was a chance of the count's relenting, and, should there be none, bid her a last farewell. He would then return to his father's house, and obtain Don Manuel's sanction to his project.

Since the unfortunate death of the young Villabuenas, Herrera's chief intimate at the University had been Mariano Torres, a hot-headed, warm-hearted Arragonese, entirely devoted to Luis, to whom he looked up as a model of perfection. To this young man Luis had confided his love for Rita, and her father's opposition, and to him he now communicated his new plans. To his infinite surprise, scarcely had he done so when Mariano, instead of expressing regret at his approaching departure, threw his three-cornered student's hat to the ceiling, tore off his gown, and declared his intention of accompanying his friend to Africa, or to any other part of the world to which he chose to betake himself. Luis tried to persuade him to abandon so mad a resolution; but Torres persisted in it, protesting that it would suit his taste much better to fight against Bedouins than to become a bachelor of arts, and that he had always intended to leave the University with his friend, and to accompany him wherever he might go. Trusting that, by the time they should reach Navarre, Mariano's enthusiasm would cool down, and his resolution change, Luis at length yielded, and the two friends left Salamanca together. Travelling by the public conveyances, they reached Valladolid, and subsequently the town of Soria, whence they had still nearly twenty leagues of high-road to Tudela. The path across the mountains being considerably shorter, and in order to diminish the risk of being seen by persons who might inform the count of his arrival, Luis resolved to complete the journey on foot; and after two short days' march, the young men reached the neighbourhood of Count Villabuena's residence.

The church and convent clocks of the right Catholic city of Tudela had not yet chimed out the hour of noon, when Luis, impatient for the interview promised by Rita, entered the count's domain by the same path as on the previous evening. Before he came in sight of the house, he was met at an angle of the shrubbery by Rita herself.

"I was sure you would take this path," said she, with a smile in which melancholy was mingled with the pleasure she felt at seeing her lover; "it was your favourite in days gone by. Our interview must be very brief. My father was to have remained at Tudela till evening, but something has occurred to derange his plans. He sat up the whole night in close conference with some gentlemen. At daybreak two couriers were dispatched, and the count rode away with his friends without having been in bed. He may return at any moment."

Luis drew the arm of his mistress through his own, and they slowly walked down one of the alleys of the garden. Rita had little to tell him favourable to the hopes which he still, in spite of himself, continued to cherish. The appeals which she had ventured to make to her father's affection, and to his regard for her happiness, had been met by severe reproof. Her evident depression and melancholy remained unnoticed, or at least unadverted to, by the count. All that she said only confirmed Luis in his resolution of seeking high distinction or an honourable death in a foreign service. He was deliberating, with eyes fixed upon the ground, on the best manner of breaking his intentions to Rita, when an exclamation of alarm from her lips caused him to look up, and he saw Villabuena crossing on horseback the end of the walk along which they were advancing. The count's head was turned towards them, and he had without doubt seen and recognised them.

Herrera's resolution was instantly taken. He would seek the count's presence, take upon himself the whole blame of his clandestine meeting with Rita, and appease her father's anger by informing him of his proposed self-banishment. Before, however, he had succeeded in calming Rita's fears, he again perceived the count, who had left his horse, and was advancing slowly towards them, with a

grave, but not an angry countenance. On his near approach, Luis was about to address him; but by a wave of his hand Villabuena enjoined silence.

"Return to the house, Rita," said he in a calm voice: "and, you, Señor de Herrera, remain here; I would speak a few words with you."

Tremblingly, and with one last lingering look at Luis, Rita withdrew.

"We will walk, sir, if you please," said the count; and the two men walked for some distance side by side and in silence; Villabuena apparently plunged in reflection, Luis wondering at his forbearance, and impatient for its explanation.

"You are surprised," said the count at last, "after all that has passed, that I show so little resentment at your uninvited presence here, and at Rita's infringement of my positive commands."

Luis would have spoken, but Villabuena resumed.

"You will be still more astonished to learn, that there is a possibility of your attachment receiving my sanction."

Herrera started, and his face was lighted up with sudden rapture.

"You will of course have heard," continued the count, "of the important intelligence received here last night, and with which this morning all the country is ringing. I allude to the death of Ferdinand VII."

"I had not heard of it," replied Luis, much surprised; for, although the desperate state of the king's health was well known, his malady had lasted so long that men had almost left off expecting his death.

"I know I can depend upon your honour, Luis," said the count; "and I am therefore about to speak to you with a confidence which I should repose in few so young and inexperienced."

Luis bowed.

"Although," resumed Villabuena, "his Majesty Charles the Fifth is at this moment absent from Spain, his faithful subjects will not allow that absence to be prejudicial to him. They intend to vindicate his just rights, and to overturn the contemptible faction which, headed by an intriguing woman, supports the unfounded claims of a sickly infant. In anticipation of Ferdinand's death, all necessary measures have been taken; and, before three days elapse, you will see a flame lighted up through the land, which will speedily consume and destroy the enemies of Spain, and of her rightful monarch. Navarre and Biscay, Valentia and Arragon, Catalonia and Castile, will rise almost to a man in defence of their king; the other provinces must follow their example, or be compelled to submission. Although confident of success, it yet behoves us to neglect no means of securing it; nor are we so blinded as to think that the faction which at present holds the reins of government will resign them without a struggle. Avoiding overconfidence, therefore, which so often leads to failure, each man must put his shoulder to the wheel, and contribute his best efforts to the one great end, regardless of private sacrifices. What I have to propose to you is this. Time was when our universities were the strongholds of loyalty and religion; but that time is unfortunately past, and the baneful doctrines of republicanism and equality have found their way even into those nurseries of our priesthood and statesmen. We are well informed that at Salamanca especially, many of the students, even of the better class, incline to the self-styled Liberal party. You, Luis, are ready of speech, bold and prompt in action, and, moreover, you are known to have great influence amongst your fellow-students. Return, then, to Salamanca, and exert that influence to bring back into the right path those who have been led astray. Urge the just claims of Charles V., hold out the prospect of military glory and distinction, and of the gratitude of an admiring country. Let your efforts be chiefly directed to gain over young men of wealthy and influential families, and to induce them to take up arms for the king. Form them into a squadron, of which you shall have the command, and the private soldiers of which shall rank as officers in the army, and subsequently be transferred to other corps to act as such. Appoint a place of rendezvous; and, when your men are assembled there, march them to join the nearest division of the Royalist army. I guarantee to you a captain's commission; and as soon as the king, with whom I have

some influence, arrives in Spain, I will strongly recommend you to his favour. Our campaign, however brief, must afford opportunities of distinction to brave men who seek them. With your energy, and with the natural military talents which I am persuaded you possess, high rank, honours, and riches may speedily be yours. And when Charles V., firmly seated on the throne of Spain, points you out to me as one of those to whom he owes his crown, and as a man whom he delights to honour, I will no longer refuse to you my daughter's hand."

However distant the perspective of happiness thus offered to his view, and although the avenue leading to it was beset with dangers and uncertainties, it promised to realize the ardent hopes which Luis Herrera had once ventured to indulge. Sanguine and confident, he would at once have caught at the count's proposal, but for one consideration that flashed across his mind. He was himself wedded to no political creed, and had as yet scarcely bestowed a thought upon the different parties into which his countrymen were split. But his father, who had so strenuously adhered to the Liberal side, who had poured out his blood with Mina, fought side by side with Riego, sacrificed his property, and endured a long and wearisome exile for conscience and his opinions' sake – what would be his feelings if he saw his only son range himself beneath the banner of absolutism? The struggle in the mind of Luis, between love on the one hand and filial duty and affection on the other, was too severe and too equally balanced to be instantly decided. He remained silent, and the count, mistaking the cause of his hesitation, resumed.

"You are surprised," said he, "to find me so willing to abandon my dearest projects for the sake of a remote advantage to the king's cause. But remember that I promise nothing – all is contingent on your own conduct and success. And although you may have thought me unfeeling and severe, I shall gladly, if possible, indulge the inclinations of my only surviving child."

It required all Herrera's firmness and sense of duty to prevent him from yielding to the temptation held out, and pledging himself at once to the cause of Charles V.

"You will not expect me, Señor Conde," said he, "to give an immediate answer to a proposal of such importance. I feel sincerely grateful to you, but must crave a short delay for consideration."

"Let that delay be as brief as possible," said Villabuena. "In the present circumstances, the value of assistance will be doubled by its promptness. When love and loyalty are both in one scale," added he, with a slight smile, "methinks a decision were easy."

They had now approached the gate of the garden, and Luis, desirous of finding himself alone, to arrange his thoughts and reflect on his future conduct, took his leave. The count held out his hand with some of his former cordiality.

"You will write to me from Salamanca?" said he.

Herrera bowed his head, and then, fearful lest his assent should be misconstrued, he replied —

"From Salamanca, or from elsewhere, you shall certainly hear from me, Señor Conde, and that with all speed."

The count nodded and turned towards the house, whilst Luis retook the road to the venta.

He found Mariano impatiently waiting his return, and eager to learn the result of his interview with Rita. Upon being informed of the proposal that had been made to Luis, Torres, seeing in it only a means of happiness for his friend, strongly urged him to accept it. To this, however, Luis could not make up his mind; and finally, after some deliberation, he resolved to proceed to Old Castile, and endeavour to obtain his father's consent to his joining the party of Don Carlos. Should he succeed in this, of which he could not help entertaining a doubt, he would no longer hesitate, but at once inform the count of his decision, and hasten to Salamanca to put his instructions into execution. Without further delay the two friends set out for Tarazona, where they trusted to find some means of speedy conveyance to the residence of Don Manuel.

In the kingdom of Old Castile, and more especially in its mountainous portions and the districts adjacent to the Ebro, an extraordinary bustle and agitation were observable during the first days of October 1833. There was great furbishing of rusty muskets, an eager search for cartridges, much

dusting of old uniforms that had long served but as hiding-places for moths, and which were now donned by men, many of whom seemed but ill at ease in their military equipments. For ten years Spain had been tranquil, if not happy; but now, as if even this short period of repose were too long for the restless spirit of her sons, a new pretext for discord had been found, and an ominous stir, the forerunner of civil strife, was perceptible through the land. Whilst Santos Ladron, an officer of merit, who had served through the whole of the war against Napoleon, raised the standard of Charles V. in Navarre, various partisans did the same in the country south of the Ebro. In the northeastern corner of Castile, known as the Rioja, Basilio Garcia, agent for the Pope's bulls in the province of Soria – a man destitute of military knowledge, and remarkable only for his repulsive exterior and cold-blooded ferocity – collected and headed a small body of insurgents; whilst, in other districts of the same province, several battalions of the old Royalist volunteers – a loose, ill-disciplined militia, as motely and unsoldierlike in appearance as they were unsteady and inefficient in the field – ranged themselves under the orders of a general-officer named Cuevillas, and of the veteran Merino. To these soon joined themselves various individuals of the half-soldier half-bandit class, so numerous in Spain – men who had served in former wars, and asked no better than again to enact the scenes of bloodshed and pillage which were their element. The popularity and acknowledged skill of Merino as a guerilla-leader, secured to him the services of many of these daring and desperate ruffians, who flocked joyously to the banner of the soldier-priest, under whose orders some of them had already fought.

Through a tract of champaign country in the province of Burgos, a column of these newly-assembled troops was seen marching early upon the third morning after the interview between Luis Herrera and Count Villabuena. It consisted of a battalion of the Realista militia, for the most part middle-aged citizens, who, although they had felt themselves bound to obey the call to arms, seemed but indifferently pleased at having left their families and occupations. Their equipment was various: few had complete uniform, although most of them displayed some part of one; but all had belts and cartridge-box, musket and bayonet. Although they had as yet gone but a short distance, many of them appeared footsore and weary; and it was pretty evident that, in the event of a campaign, their ranks would be thinned nearly as much by the fatigues of the march as by the fire of the enemy. In front and rear of the battalion marched a squadron of cavalry, of a far more soldierly aspect than the foot-soldiers, although even amongst them but little uniformity of costume was found. The bronzed and bearded physiognomy, athletic form and upright carriage, which bespeak the veteran soldier, were not wanting in their ranks; their horses were active and hardy, their arms clean and serviceable.

At the head of the column, a few paces in advance, rode a small group of officers, the chief amongst whom was only to be distinguished by the deference shown to him by his companions. Insignia of rank he had none, nor any indications of his military profession, excepting the heavy sabre that dangled against the flank of his powerful black charger. His dress was entirely civilian, consisting of a long surtout something the worse for wear, and a round hat. Heavy spurs upon his heels, and an ample cloak, now strapped across his holsters, completed the equipment of the cura Merino, in whose hard and rigid features, and wiry person, scarcely a sign of decay or infirmity was visible after more than sixty years of life, a large portion of which had been passed amidst the fatigues and hardships of incessant campaigning.

As if infected by the sombre and taciturn character of their leader, the party of officers had been riding for some time in silence, when they came in sight of a house situated at a short distance from the road, and of a superior description to the *caserias* and peasants' cottages which they had hitherto passed. It was a building of moderate size, with an appearance of greater comfort and neatness about it than is usually found in Spanish houses. Stables adjoined it, and, at some distance in its rear, a range of barns and outhouses served to store the crops produced by the extensive tract of well-cultivated land in the centre of which the dwelling was situated. The front of the house was partially masked

from the road by an orchard, and behind it a similar growth of fruit trees seemed intended to intercept the keen blasts from a line of mountains which rose, grey and gloomy, at the distance of a few miles.

"Who lives yonder?" abruptly enquired Merino, pointing to the house, which he had been gazing at for some time from under his bushy eyebrows. The officer to whom the question was addressed referred to another of the party, a native of that part of the country.

"Señor de Herrera," was the answer. "We have been riding for some minutes through his property. He purchased the estate about a year ago, on his return from France."

"What had he been doing in France?"

"Living there, which he could not have done here unless he had been bullet-proof, or had a neck harder than the iron collar of the garrote."

"Herrera!" repeated the cura musingly – "I know the name, but there are many who bear it. There was a Manuel Herrera who sat in the Cortes in the days of the constitutionalists, and afterwards commanded a battalion of their rabble. You do not mean him?"

"The same, general," replied the officer, addressing Merino by the rank which he held in the Spanish army since the war of Independence. A most unpriestly ejaculation escaped the lips of the cura.

"Manuel Herrera," he repeated; "the dog, the *negro*,¹ the friend of the scoundrel Riego! I will hang him up at his own door!"

All the old hatreds and bitter party animosities of Merino seemed wakened into new life by the name of one of his former opponents. His eyes flashed, his lips quivered with rage, and he half turned his horse, as if about to proceed to Herrera's house and put his threat into execution. The impulse, however, was checked almost as soon as felt.

"Another time will do," said he, with a grin smile. "Let us once get Charles V. at Madrid, and we will make short work of the Señor Herrera and of all who resemble him." And the cura continued his march, silent as before.

He had proceeded but a short half mile when the officer commanding the cavalry rode up beside him.

"We have no forage, general," said he – "not a blade of straw, or a grain in our corn-sacks. Shall I send on an orderly, that we may find it ready on reaching the halting-place?"

"No!" replied Merino. "Send a party to that house on the left of the road which we passed ten minutes ago. Let them press all the carts they find there, load them with corn, and bring them after us."

The officer fell back to his squadron, and the next minute a subaltern and twenty men detached themselves from the column, and, at a brisk trot, began retracing their steps along the road. Upon arriving in sight of the house to which they were proceeding, they leaped their horses over a narrow ditch dividing the road from the fields and struck across the latter in a straight line, compelled, however, by the heaviness of the ground to slacken their pace to a walk. They had not got over more than half the distance which they had to traverse, when they heard the clang of a bell, continuously rung; and this was followed by the appearance of two men, who issued from the stables and out-buildings, and hurried to the house. Scarcely had they entered when the shutters of the lower windows were pushed to, and the heavy door closed and barred. The soldiers were now within a hundred yards of the dwelling.

"Hallo!" cried the officer contemptuously, "they will not stand a siege, will they? The old don is a black-hearted rebel, I know; but he will hardly be fool enough to resist us."

The trooper was mistaken. The courage of Don Manuel Herrera was of that obstinate and uncalculating character which would have induced him to defend his house, single-handed, against a much larger force than that now brought against it. When he had learned, three days previously,

¹ *Negro*, or black, was the term commonly applied to the Liberals by their antagonists.

that risings were taking place in his own neighbourhood in the name of Charles V., he had attached very little importance to the intelligence. An old soldier himself, he entertained the most unmitigated contempt for the Realista volunteers, whom he looked upon as a set of tailors, whose muskets would rather encumber them than injure any body else; and who, on the first appearance of regular troops, would infallibly throw down their arms, and betake themselves to their homes. As to the parties of insurgent guerillas which he was informed were beginning to show themselves at various points of the vicinity, he considered them as mere bandits, availing themselves of the stir and excitement in the country to exercise their nefarious profession; and, should any such parties attempt to molest him, he was fully determined to resist their attacks. In this resolution he now persevered, although he rightly conjectured that the horsemen approaching his house were either the rearguard or a detachment of the disorderly-looking column of which he had a short time previously observed the passage.

"Hola! Don Manolo!" shouted the officer, as he halted his party in front of the house; "what scurvy hospitality is this? What are you fastening doors and ringing alarm-bells for, as if there were more thieves than honest men in the land? We come to pay you a friendly visit, and, instead of welcome and the wine-skin, you shut the door in our faces. Devilish unfriendly, that, Don Manolito!"

The speaker, who, like many of Merino's followers, was an inhabitant of the neighbouring country, knew Don Manuel well by name and reputation, and was also known to him as a deserter from the Constitutionalists in 1823, and as one of the most desperate smugglers and outlaws in the province.

"What do you want with me, Pedro Rufin?" demanded Don Manuel, who now showed himself at one of the upper windows; "and what is the meaning of this assemblage of armed men?"

"The meaning is," replied Rufin, "that I have been detached from the division of his Excellency General Merino, to demand from you a certain quantity of maize or barley, or both, for the service of his Majesty King Charles V."

"I know no such persons," retorted Don Manuel, "as General Merino or King Charles V. But I know you well, Rufin, and the advice I give you is to begone, yourself and your companions. We shall have troops here to-day or to-morrow, and you will find the country too hot to hold you."

The officer laughed.

"Troops are here already," he said; "you may have seen our column march by not half an hour ago. But we have no time to lose. Once more, Señor Herrera, open the door, and that quickly."

"My door does not open at your bidding," replied Don Manuel. "I give you two minutes to draw off your followers, and, if you are not gone by that time, you shall be fired upon."

"Morral," said the officer to one of his men, "your horse is a kicker, I believe. Try the strength of the door."

The soldier left the ranks, and turning his rawboned, vicious-looking chestnut horse with its tail to the house-door, he pressed his knuckles sharply upon the animal's loins, just behind the saddle. The horse lashed out furiously, each kick of his iron-shod heels making the door crack and rattle, and striking out white splinters from the dark surface of the oak of which it was composed. At the first kick Don Manuel left the window. The soldiers stood looking on, laughing till they rolled in their saddles at this novel species of sledge-hammer. Owing, however, to the great solidity of the door, and the numerous fastenings with which it was provided on the other side, the kicks of the horse, although several times repeated, failed to burst it open; and at last the animal, as if wearied by the resistance it met with, relaxed the vigour of its applications.

"Famous horse that of yours, Morral!" said the officer; "as good as a locksmith or a six-pounder. Try it again, my boy. You have made some ugly marks already. Another round of kicks, and the way is open."

"And if another blow is struck upon my door," said Don Manuel, suddenly reappearing at the window, to the soldier, "your horse will go home with an empty saddle."

"Silence! you old rebel," shouted Rufin, drawing a pistol from his holster. "And you, Morral, never fear. At it again, man."

The soldier again applied his knuckles to his horse's back, and the animal gave a tremendous kick. At the same instant a puff of smoke issued from the window at which Don Manuel had stationed himself, the report of a musket was heard, and the unlucky Morral, shot through the body, fell headlong to the ground.

"Damnation!" roared the officer, firing his pistol at the window whence the shot had proceeded; and immediately his men, without waiting for orders, commenced an irregular fire of carbines and pistols against the house. It was replied to with effect from three of the windows. A man fell mortally wounded, and two of the horses were hit. Rufin, alarmed at the loss the party had experienced, drew his men back under shelter of some trees, till he could decide on what was best to be done. It seemed at first by no means improbable that the Carlists would have to beat a retreat, or at any rate wait the arrival of infantry, which it was not improbable Merino might have sent to their assistance when the sound of the firing reached his ears. The lower windows of the house were protected by strong iron bars; and, although the defenders were so few in number, their muskets, and the shelter behind which they fought, gave them a great advantage over the assailants, whose carbines would not carry far, and who had no cover from the fire of their opponents. At last a plan was devised which offered some chance of success. The party dismounted; and whilst four men, making a circuit, and concealing themselves as much as possible behind trees and hedges, endeavoured to get in rear of the building, the others, with the exception of two or three who remained with the horses, advanced towards the front of the house, firing as rapidly as they could, in order, by the smoke and by attracting the attention of the besieged, to cover the manoeuvre of their comrades. The stratagem was completely successful. Whilst Don Manuel and his servants were answering the fire of their assailants with some effect, the four men got round the house, climbed over a wall, found a ladder in an out-building, and applied it to one of the back-windows, which they burst open. A shout of triumph, and the report of their pistols, informed their companions of their entrance, and the next moment one of them threw open the front door, and the guerillas rushed tumultuously into the house.

It was about two hours after these occurrences, that Luis Herrera and Mariano Torres arrived at Don Manuel's residence. They had been delayed upon the road by the disturbed state of the country, which rendered it difficult to procure conveyances, and had at last been compelled to hire a couple of indifferent horses, upon which, accompanied by a muleteer, they had made but slow progress across the mountainous district they had to traverse. The news of the Carlist insurrection had inspired Luis with some alarm on account of his father, whom he knew to be in the highest degree obnoxious to many of that party. At the same time he had not yet heard of the perpetration of any acts of violence, and was far from anticipating the spectacle which met his eyes when he at last came in view of the Casa Herrera. With an exclamation of horror he forced his horse, up a bank bordering the road, and, followed by Mariano, galloped towards the house.

Of the dwelling, so lately a model of rural ease and comfort, the four walls alone were now standing. The roof had fallen in, and the tongues of flame which licked and flickered round the apertures where windows had been, showed that the devouring element was busy completing its work. The adjoining stables, owing to their slighter construction, and to the combustibles they contained, had been still more rapidly consumed. Of them, a heap of smoking ashes and a few charred beams and blackened bricks were all that remained. The paling of the tastefully distributed garden was broken down in several places; the parterres and melon-beds were trampled and destroyed by the hoofs of the Carlist horses, which had seemingly been turned in there to feed, or perhaps been ridden through it in utter wantonness by their brutal owners. The ground in front of the house was strewn with broken furniture, and with articles of wearing apparel, the latter of which appeared to have belonged to the Carlists, and to have been exchanged by them for others of a better description found in the house. Empty bottles, fragments of food, and a couple of wine-skins, of which the greater part of

the contents had been poured out upon the ground, lay scattered about near the carcass of a horse and three human corpses, two of the latter being those of Carlists, and the third that of one of the defenders of the house. A few peasants stood by, looking on in open-mouthed stupefaction; and above the whole scene of desolation, a thick cloud of black smoke floated like a funereal pall.

In an agony of suspense Luis enquired for his father. The peasant to whom he addressed the question, pointed to the buildings in rear of the house, which the Carlists, weary perhaps of the work of destruction, had left uninjured.

"Don Manuel is there," said he, "if he still lives."

The latter part of the sentence was drowned in the noise of the horse's feet, as Luis spurred furiously towards the buildings indicated, which consisted of barns, and of a small dwelling-house inhabited by his father's steward. On entering the latter, his worst fears were realized.

Upon a bed in a room on the ground floor, Don Manuel Herrera was lying, apparently insensible. His face was overspread with an ashy paleness, his eyes were closed, his lips blue and pinched. He was partially undressed, and his linen, and the bed upon which he lay, were stained with blood. A priest stood beside him, a crucifix in one hand and a cordial in the other; whilst an elderly peasant woman held a linen cloth to a wound in the breast of the expiring man. In an adjacent room were heard the sobbings and lamentations of women and children. With a heart swollen almost to bursting, Luis approached the bed.

"Father!" he exclaimed as he took Don Manuel's hand, which hung powerless over the side of the couch – "Father, is it thus I find you!"

The voice of his son seemed to rouse the sufferer from the swoon or lethargy in which he lay. He opened his eyes, a faint smile of recognition and affection came over his features, and his feeble fingers strove to press those of Luis. The priest made a sign to the woman, and, whilst she gently raised Don Manuel's head, he held the cordial to his lips. The effect of the draught was instantaneous and reviving.

"This is a sad welcome for you, Luis," said Don Manuel. "Your home destroyed, and your father dying. God be thanked for sending you now, and no sooner! I can die happy since you are here to close my eyes."

He paused, exhausted by the exertion of speaking. A slight red foam stood upon his lips, which the priest wiped away, and another draught of the cordial enabled him to proceed.

"My son," said he, "my minutes are numbered. Mark my last words, and attend to them as you value my blessing, and your own repose. I foresee that this country is on the eve of a long and bloody struggle. How it may end, and whether it is to be the last that shall rend unhappy Spain, who can tell? But your course is plain before you. By the memory of your sainted mother, and the love you bear to me, be stanch to the cause I have ever defended. You are young, and strong, and brave; your arm and your heart's best blood are due to the cause of Spanish freedom. My son, swear that you will defend it!"

No selfish thought of his own happiness, which would be marred by the oath he was required to take, nor any but the one absorbing idea of smoothing his dying father's pillow by a prompt and willing compliance with his wishes, crossed the mind of Luis as he took the crucifix from the hand of the priest, and, kneeling by the bedside, swore on the sacred emblem to obey Don Manuel's injunctions both in letter and spirit, and to resist to his latest breath the traitors who would enslave his country. His father listened to the fervent vow with a well-pleased smile. By a last effort he raised himself in his bed, and laid his hand upon the head of his kneeling son.

"May God and his saints prosper thee, Luis," said he, "as thou observest this oath!"

He sank back, his features convulsed by the pain which the movement occasioned him.

"Mother of God!" exclaimed the woman, who was still holding the bandage to the wound. The bleeding, which had nearly ceased, had recommenced with redoubled violence, and a crimson stream was flowing over the bed. The death-rattle was in Don Manuel's throat, but his eyes were still fixed

upon his son, and he seemed to make an effort to extend his arms towards him. With feelings of unutterable agony, Luis bent forward and kissed his father's cheek. It was that of a corpse.

For the space of a minute did the bereaved son gaze at the rigid features before him, as if unable to comprehend that one so dear was gone from him for ever. At last the sad truth forced itself upon his mind; he bowed his face upon the pillow of his murdered parent, and his overcharged feelings found relief in a passion of tears. The priest and the woman left the apartment. Mariano Torres remained standing behind his friend, and after a time made an effort to lead him from the room. But Luis motioned him away. His grief was of those that know not human consolation.

It was evening when Mariano, who had been watching near the chamber of death, without venturing to intrude upon his friend's sorrow, saw the door open and Luis come forth. Torres started at seeing him, so great was the change that had taken place in his aspect. His cheeks were pale and his eyes inflamed with weeping, but the expression of his countenance was no longer sorrowful; it was stern even to fierceness, and his look was that of an avenger rather than a mourner. Taking Mariano's arm, he led him out of the house, and, entering the stable, began to saddle his horse with his own hands. Torres followed his example in silence, and then both mounted and rode off in the direction of the high-road. Upon reaching it, Mariano first ventured to address a question to his friend.

"What are your plans, Luis?" said he. "Whither do we now proceed?"

"To provide for my father's funeral," was the reply.

"And afterwards?" said his friend, with some hesitation.

"To revenge his death!" hoarsely shouted Herrera, as he spurred his horse to its utmost speed along the rough road that led to the nearest village.

HUMBOLDT

We hear much, and much that is true, of the ephemeral character of a large part of our literature; but to no branch of it are the observations more truly applicable, than to the greater number of travels which now issue from the British press. It may safely be affirmed that our writers of travels, both male and female, have of late years arrived at a pitch of weakness, trifling, and emptiness, which is unparalleled in the previous history of literature in this or perhaps any other country. When we see two post octavos of travels newly done up by the binder, we are prepared for a series of useless remarks, weak attempts at jokes, disquisitions on dishes, complaints of inns, stale anecdotes and vain flourishes, which almost make us blush for our country, and the cause of intelligence over the world. The Russian Emperor, who unquestionably has the power of licensing or prohibiting any of his subjects to travel at his own pleasure, is said to concede the liberty only to the men of intelligence and ability in his dominions; the fools are all obliged to remain at home. Hence the high reputation which the Muscovites enjoy abroad and the frequent disappointment which is felt by travellers of other nations, when they visit their own country. It is evident, from the character of the books of travels which every spring issue from the London press, with a few honourable exceptions, that no such restraining power exists in the British dominions. We have no individuals or particular works in view in these observations. We speak of things in general. If any one doubts their truth, let him enquire how many of the numberless travels which annually issue from the British press are ever sought after, or heard of, five years after their publication.

Our annual supply of ephemeral travels is far inferior in point of merit to the annual supply of novels. This is the more remarkable, because travels, if written in the right spirit, and by persons of capacity and taste, are among the most delightful, and withal instructive, species of composition of which literature can boast. They are so, because by their very nature they take the reader, as well as the writer, out of the sphere of everyday observation and commonplace remark. This is an immense advantage: so great indeed, that, if made use of with tolerable capacity, it should give works of this sort a decided superiority in point of interest and utility over all others, excepting History and the higher species of Romance. Commonplace is the bane of literature, especially in an old and civilized state; monotony – the thing to be principally dreaded. The very air is filled with ordinary ideas. General education, universal reading, unhappily make matters worse; they tend only to multiply the echoes of the original report – a new one has scarce any chance of being heard amidst the ceaseless reverberation of the old. The more ancient a nation is, the more liable is it to be overwhelmed by this dreadful evil. The Byzantine empire, during a thousand years of civilisation and opulence, did not produce one work of original thought; five hundred years after the light of Athenian genius had been extinguished, the schools of Greece were still pursuing the beaten paths, and teaching the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle. It is the peculiar and prodigious advantage of travelling, that it counteracts this woful and degrading tendency, and by directing men's thoughts, as well as their steps, into foreign lands, has a tendency to induce into their ideas a portion of the variety and freshness which characterize the works of nature. Every person knows how great an advantage this proves in society. All must have felt what a relief it is to escape from the eternal round of local concerns or county politics, of parish grievances or neighbouring railroads, with which in every-day life we are beset, to the conversation of a person of intelligence who has visited foreign lands, and can give to the inquisitive at home a portion of the new ideas, images, and recollections with which his mind is stored. How, then, has it happened, that the same acquaintance with foreign and distant countries, which is universally felt to be such an advantage in conversation, is attended with such opposite effects in literature; and that, while our travellers are often the most agreeable men in company, they are beyond all question the dullest in composition?

Much of this extraordinary and woful deficiency, we are persuaded, is owing to the limited range of objects to which the education of the young of the higher classes is so exclusively directed in Oxford and Cambridge. Greek and Latin, Aristotle's logic and classical versification, quadratic equations, conic sections, the differential calculus, are very good things, and we are well aware that it is by excellence in them that the highest honours in these seminaries of learning can alone be attained. They are essential to the fame of a Parr or a Porson, a Herschel or a Whewell. But a very different species of mental training is required for advantageous travelling. Men will soon find that neither Greek prose nor Latin prose, Greek verse nor Latin verse, will avail them when they come to traverse the present states of the world. The most thorough master of the higher mathematics will find his knowledge of scarce any avail in Italy or Egypt, the Alps or the Andes. These acquisitions are doubtless among the greatest triumphs of the human understanding, and they are calculated to raise a few, perhaps one in a hundred, to distinction in classical or scientific pursuits; but upon the minds of the remaining ninety-nine, they produce no sort of impression. Nature simply rejects them; they are not the food which she requires. They do not do much mischief to such persons in themselves; but they are of incalculable detriment by the time and the industry which they absorb to no available purpose. Ten years of youth – the most valuable and important period of life – are wasted in studies which, to nineteen-twentieths of the persons engaged in them, are of no use whatever in future years. Thus our young men, of the highest rank and best connexions, are sent out into the world without any ideas or information which can enable them to visit foreign countries with advantage. Need we wonder that, when they come to write and publish their travels, they produce such a woful brood of ephemeral bantlings?²

The reaction against this enormous evil in a different class of society, has produced another set of errors in education – of an opposite description, but perhaps still more fatal to the formation of the mental character, which is essential to the useful or elevating observation of foreign countries. The commercial and middle classes of society, educated at the London university, or any of the numerous academies which have sprung up in all parts of the country, have gone into the other extreme. Struck with the uselessness, to the great bulk of students, of the classical minutiae required at one of the universities, and the mathematical depth deemed indispensable at the other, they have turned education into an entirely different channel. Nothing was deemed worthy of serious attention, except what led to some practical object in life. Education was considered by their founders as merely a step to making money. Science became a trade – a mere handmaid to art. Mammon was all in all. Their instruction was entirely utilitarian. Mechanics and Medicine, Hydraulics and Chemistry, Pneumatics and Hydrostatics, Anatomy and Physiology, constituted the grand staples of their education. What they taught was adapted only for professional students. One would suppose, from examining their course of study, that all men were to be either doctors or surgeons, apothecaries or druggists, mechanics, shipwrights, or civil-engineers. No doubt we must have such persons – no doubt it is indispensable that places of instruction should exist in which they can learn their various and highly important avocations; but is that the school in which the enlarged mind is to be formed, the varied information acquired, the appreciation of the grand and the beautiful imbibed, which are essential to an accomplished and really useful writer of travels? Sulphuric acid and Optics, Anatomy and Mechanics, will do many things; but they will never make an observer of Nature, a friend of Man, a fit commentator on the world of God.

Persons of really cultivated minds and enlarged views will probably find it difficult to determine which of these opposite systems of education is the best calculated to attain what seems the grand object of modern instruction, the cramping and limiting the human mind. But without entering upon this much-disputed point – upon which much is to be said on both sides, and in which each party

² We lately heard of a young man, who had gone through the examination at Cambridge with distinction, enquiring, "whether the Greek church *were Christians?*" What sort of a traveller would he make in the East or Russia?

will perhaps be found to be in the right when they assail their opponents, and in the wrong when they defend themselves – it is more material to our present purpose to observe, that both are equally fatal to the acquisition of the varied information, and the imbibing of the refined and elegant taste, which are essential to an accomplished writer of travels. Only think what mental qualifications are required to form such a character! An eye for the Sublime and the Beautiful, the power of graphically describing natural scenery, a vivid perception of the peculiarities of national manners, habits, and institutions, will at once be acknowledged to be the first requisites. But, in addition to this, how much is necessary to make a work which shall really stand the test of time, in the delineation of the present countries of the world, and the existing state of their inhabitants? How many branches of knowledge are called for, how many sources of information required, how many enthusiastic pursuits necessary, to enable the traveller worthily to discharge his mission? Eyes and no Eyes are nowhere more conspicuous in human affairs; and, unhappily, eyes are never given but to the mind which has already seen and learned much.

An acquaintance with the history of the country and the leading characters in its annals, is indispensable to enable the traveller to appreciate the historical associations connected with the scenes; a certain degree of familiarity with its principal authors, to render him alive to that noblest of interests – that arising from the recollection of Genius and intellectual Achievement. Without an acquaintance with political economy and the science of government, he will be unable to give any useful account of the social state of the country, or furnish the most valuable of all information – that relating to the institutions, the welfare, and the happiness of man. Statistics form almost an indispensable part of every book of travels which professes to communicate information; but mere statistics are little better than unmeaning figures, if the generalizing and philosophical mind is wanting, which, from previous acquaintance with the subjects on which they bear, and the conclusions which it is of importance to deduce from them, knows what is to be selected and what laid aside from the mass. Science, to the highest class of travellers, is an addition of the utmost moment; as it alone can render their observations of use to that most exalted of all objects, an extension of the boundaries of knowledge, and an enlarged acquaintance with the laws of nature. The soul of a poet is indispensable to form the most interesting species of travels – a mind, and still more a heart, capable of appreciating the grand and the beautiful in Art and in Nature. The eye of a painter and the hand of a draughtsman are equally important to enable him to observe with accuracy the really interesting features of external things, and convey, by faithful and graphic description, a correct impression of what he has seen, to the mind of the reader. Such are the qualifications necessary for a really great traveller. It may be too much to hope to find these ever united in one individual; but the combination of the majority of them is indispensable to distinction or lasting fame in this branch of literature.

Compare these necessary and indispensable qualifications for a great traveller, with those which really belong to our young men who are sent forth from our universities or academies into the world, and take upon themselves to communicate what they have seen to others. Does the youth come from Oxford? His head is full of Homer and Virgil, Horace and Æschylus: he could tell you all the amours of Mars and Venus, of Jupiter and Leda; he could rival, Orpheus or Pindar in the melody of his Greek verses, and Cicero or Livy in the correctness of his Latin prose; but as, unfortunately, he has to write neither about gods nor goddesses, but mere mortals, and neither in Greek verse nor Latin verse, but good English prose, he is utterly at a loss alike for thought and expression. He neither knows what to communicate, nor is he master of the language in which it is to be conveyed. Hence his recorded travels dwindle away into a mere scrap-book of classical quotations – a transcript of immaterial Latin inscriptions, destitute of either energy, information, or eloquence. Does he come from Cambridge? He could solve cubic equations as well as Cardan, is a more perfect master of logarithms than Napier, could explain the laws of physical astronomy better than Newton, and rival La Grange in the management of the differential calculus. But as, unluckily, the world which he visits, and in which we live, is neither a geometric world nor an algebraic world, a world of conic sections

or fluxions; but a world of plains and mountains, of lakes and rivers, of men and women, flesh and blood – he finds his knowledge of little or no avail. He takes scarce any interest in the sublunary or contemptible objects which engross the herd of ordinary mortals, associates only with the learned and the recluse in a few universities, and of course comes back without having a word to utter, or a sentence to write, which can interest the bulk of readers. Does he come from the London University, or any of the provincial academies? He is thinking only of railroads or mechanics, of chemistry or canals, of medicine or surgery. He could descant without end on sulphuric acid or decrepitating salts, on capacity for caloric or galvanic batteries, on steam-engines and hydraulic machines, on the discoveries of Davy or the conclusions of Berzelius, of the systems of Hutton or Werner, of Liebig or Cuvier. But although an acquaintance with these different branches of practical knowledge is an indispensable preliminary to a traveller in foreign countries making himself acquainted with the improvements they have respectively made in the useful or practical arts, they will never qualify for the composition of a great or lasting book of travels. They would make an admirable course of instruction for the overseer of a manufactory, of a canal or railway company, of an hospital or an infirmary, who was to visit foreign countries in order to pick up the latest improvements in practical mechanics, chemistry, or medicine; but have we really become a race of shopkeepers or doctors, and is Science sunk to be the mere handmaid of Art?

We despair therefore, as long as the present system of education prevails in England, (and Scotland of course follows in the wake of its great neighbour,) of seeing any traveller arise of lasting celebrity, or book of travels written which shall attain to durable fame. The native vigour and courage, indeed, of the Anglo-Saxon race, is perpetually impelling numbers of energetic young men into the most distant parts of the earth, and immense is the addition which they are annually making to the sum-total of *geographical* knowledge. We have only to look at one of our recent maps, as compared to those which were published fifty years ago, to see how much we owe to the courage and enterprise of Parry and Franklin, Park and Horneman, of Burckhardt and Lander. But giving all due credit – and none give it more sincerely than we do – to the vigour and courage of these very eminent men, it is impossible not to feel that, however well fitted they were to explore unknown and desert regions, and carry the torch of civilization into the wilderness of nature, they had not the mental training, or varied information, or powers of composition, necessary to form a great *writer of travels*. Clarke and Bishop Heber are most favourable specimens of English travellers, and do honour to the great universities of which they were such distinguished ornaments; but they did not possess the varied accomplishments and information of the continental travellers. Their education, and very eminence in their peculiar and exclusive lines, precluded it. What is wanting in that character above every thing, is an acquaintance with, and interest in, a *great many and different branches of knowledge*, joined to considerable power of composition, and unconquerable energy of mind; and that is precisely what our present system of education in England renders it almost impossible for any one to acquire. The system pursued in the Scottish universities, undoubtedly, is more likely to form men capable of rising to eminence in this department; and the names of Park and Bruce show what travellers they are capable of sending forth. But the attractions of rank, connexion, and fashion, joined to the advantage of speaking correct English, are fast drawing a greater proportion of the youth of the higher ranks in Scotland to the English universities; and the education pursued at home, therefore, is daily running more and more into merely utilitarian and professional channels. That system is by no means the one calculated to form an accomplished and interesting writer of travels.

In this deficiency of materials for the formation of a great body of male travellers, the ladies have kindly stepped in to supply the deficiency; and numerous works have issued from the press, from the pens of the most accomplished and distinguished of our aristocratic beauties. But alas! there is no royal road to literature, any more than geometry. Almack's and the exclusives, the opera and ducal houses, the lordlings and the guards, form an admirable school for manners, and are an indispensable preliminary to success at courts and coronations, in ball-rooms and palaces. But the world is not made

up of courts or palaces, of kings or princes, of dukes or marquesses. Men have something more to think of than the reception which the great world of one country gives to the great world of another – of the balls to which they are invited, or the fêtes which they grace by their charms – or the privations to which elegant females, nursed in the lap of luxury, are exposed in roughing it amidst the snows of the North or the deserts of the South. We are grateful to the lady travellers for the brilliant and interesting pictures they have given us of capitals and manners,³ of costume and dress, and of many eminent men and women, whom their rank and sex gave them peculiar opportunities of portraying. But we can scarcely congratulate the country upon having found in them a substitute for learned and accomplished travellers of the other sex; or formed a set-off on the part of Great Britain, to the Humboldts, the Chateaubriands, and Lamartines of continental Europe.

It is impossible to contemplate the works of these great men without arriving at the conclusion, that it is in the varied and discursive education of the Continent, that a foundation has been laid for the extraordinary eminence which its travellers have attained. It is the vast number of subjects with which the young men are in some degree made acquainted at the German universities, which has rendered them so capable in after life of travelling with advantage in any quarter of the globe, and writing their travels with effect. This advantage is in a peculiar manner conspicuous in Humboldt, whose mind, naturally ardent and capacious, had been surprisingly enlarged and extended by early and various study in the most celebrated German universities. He acquired, in consequence, so extraordinary a command of almost every department of physical and political science, that there is hardly any branch of it in which facts of importance may not be found in his travels. He combined, in a degree perhaps never before equalled in one individual, the most opposite and generally deemed irreconcilable mental qualities. To an ardent poetical temperament, and an eye alive to the most vivid impressions of external things, he united a power of eloquence rarely given to the most gifted orators, and the habit of close and accurate reasoning which belongs to the intellectual powers adapted for the highest branches of the exact sciences. An able mathematician, a profound natural philosopher, an exact observer of nature, he was at the same time a learned statistician, an indefatigable social observer, an unwearied philanthropist, and the most powerful describer of nature that perhaps ever undertook to portray her great and glorious features. It is this extraordinary combination of qualities that render his works so surprising and valuable. The intellectual and imaginative powers rarely coexist in remarkable vigour in the same individual; but when they do, they produce the utmost triumphs of the human mind. Leonardo da Vinci, Johnson, Burke, and Humboldt, do not resemble single men, how great soever, but rather clusters of separate persons, each supremely eminent in his peculiar sphere.

Frederick Henry Alexander, Baron of Humboldt, brother of the celebrated Prussian statesman of the same name, was born at Berlin on the 14th September 1769, the same year with Napoleon, Wellington, Goethe, Marshal Ney, and many other illustrious men. He received an excellent and extensive education at the university of Gottingen, and at an academy at Frankfort on the Oder. His first step into the business of life was as a clerk in the mercantile house of Buch, at Hamburg, where he soon made himself master of accounts and bookkeeping, and acquired that perfect command of arithmetic, and habit of bringing every thing, where it is possible, to the test of figures, by which his political and scientific writings are so pre-eminently distinguished. But his disposition was too strongly bent on scientific and physical pursuits, to admit of his remaining long in the comparatively obscure and uninviting paths of commerce. His thirst for travelling was from his earliest years unbounded, and it ere long received ample gratification. His first considerable journey was with two naturalists of distinction, Messrs Fontu and Genns, with whom he travelled in Germany, Holland, and England, in the course of which his attention was chiefly directed to mineralogical pursuits. The fruit of his observations appeared in a work, the first he ever published, which was printed at Brunswick in 1790, when he was only twenty-one years of age, entitled *Observations sur les Basaltes du Rhin*.

³ Lady Londonderry's description of Moscow is the best in the English language.

To extend his information, already very considerable, on mineralogical science, Humboldt in 1791 repaired to Freyburg, to profit by the instructions of the celebrated Werner; and, when there, he devoted himself, with the characteristic ardour of his disposition, to make himself master of geology and botany, and prosecuted in an especial manner the study of the fossil remains of plants in the rocks around that place. In 1792, he published at Berlin a learned treatise, entitled *Specimen Floræ, Friebergensis Subterraniæ*; which procured for him such celebrity, that he was soon after appointed director-general of the mines in the principalities of Anspach and Bayreuth, in Franconia. His ardent and philanthropic disposition there exerted itself for several years in promoting, to the utmost of his power, various establishments of public utility; among others, the public school of Streben, from which has already issued many distinguished scholars. Charmed by the recent and brilliant discoveries of M. Galvani in electricity, he next entered with ardour into that new branch of science; and, not content with studying it in the abstract, he made a great variety of curious experiments on the effects of galvanism on his own person, and published the result in two octavos, at Berlin, in 1796, enriched by the notes of the celebrated naturalist Blumenbach. This work was translated into French by J. F. Jadelot, and published at Paris in 1799. Meanwhile Humboldt, consumed with an insatiable desire for travelling, resumed his wanderings, and roamed over Switzerland and Italy, after which he returned to Paris in 1797, and formed an intimacy with a congenial spirit, M. Aimé Bonpland; who afterwards became the companion of his South American travels. At this time he formed the design of joining the expedition of Captain Baudin, who was destined to circumnavigate the globe; but the continuance of hostilities prevented him from carrying that design into effect. Baffled in that project, upon which his heart was much set, Humboldt went to Marseilles with the intention of embarking on board a Swedish frigate for Algiers, from whence he hoped to join Napoleon's expedition to Egypt, and cross from the banks of the Nile to the Persian Gulf and the vast regions of the East. This was the turning point of his destiny. The Swedish frigate never arrived; the English cruisers rendered it impossible to cross the Mediterranean, except in a neutral vessel; and after waiting with impatience for about two months, he set out for Madrid, in the hope of finding means in the Peninsula of passing into Africa from the opposite shores of Andalusia.

Upon his arrival in the Spanish capital, the German philosopher was received with all the distinction which his scientific reputation deserved; and he obtained from the government the extraordinary and unlooked-for boon of a formal leave to travel over the whole South American colonies of the monarchy. This immediately determined Humboldt. He entered with ardour into the new prospects thus opened to him; wrote to his friend Aimé Bonpland to propose that he should join him in the contemplated expedition – an offer which was gladly accepted; and soon the visions of Arabia and the Himalaya were supplanted by those of the Pampas of Buenos Ayres and the Cordilleras of Peru. The two friends embarked at Corunna on board a Spanish vessel, and after a prosperous voyage, reached Cumana, in the New World, in July 1799. From that city they made their first expedition in Spanish America, during which they travelled over Spanish Guiana, New Andalusia, and the Missions of the Caribbees, from whence they returned to Cumana in 1800. There they embarked for the Havannah; and the whole of the summer of that year was spent in traversing that great and interesting island, on which he collected much important and valuable information. In September 1801, he set out for Quito, where he arrived in January of the succeeding year, and was received with the most flattering distinction. Having reposed for some months from their fatigues, Humboldt and Bonpland proceeded, in the first instance, to survey the country which had been devastated in 1797 by the dreadful earthquake, so frequent in those regions, and which swallowed up in a minute forty thousand persons. Then he set out, in June 1802, to visit the volcano of Tungaragno and the summit of Chimborazo. They ascended to the height of 19,500 feet on the latter mountain; but were prevented from reaching the top by impassable ravines. Perched on one of the summits, however, of this giant of mountains, amidst ice and snow, far above the abode of any living creature except the condor, they made a great variety of most interesting observations, which have proved of essential

service to the cause of science. They were 3485 feet above the most elevated point which the learned Condamine, who had hitherto ascended highest, reached in 1745, but were still 2140 feet below the loftiest summit of the mountain. They determined, by a series of strict trigonometrical observations, the height of the chief peaks of that celebrated ridge —

"Where Andes, giant of the western star,
Looks from his throne of clouds o'er half the world."

Having returned, after this fatiguing and dangerous mountain expedition, to Lima, Humboldt remained several months enjoying the hospitality of its kind-hearted inhabitants, whose warm feelings and excellent qualities excited in him the warmest admiration. In the neighbouring harbour of Callao, he was fortunate enough to see the passage of the planet Mercury over the disk of the sun, of which transit he made very important observations; and from thence passed into the province of New Spain, where he remained an entire year, sedulously engaged in agricultural, political, and statistical, as well as physical enquiries, the fruits of which added much to the value of his published travels. In April 1803, he proceeded to Mexico, where he was so fortunate as to discover the only specimen known to exist of the tree called *Cheirostomon Platanoides*, of the highest antiquity and gigantic dimensions. During the remainder of that year, he made several excursions over the mountains and valleys of Mexico, inferior to none in the world in interest and beauty; and in autumn 1804, embarked for the Havannah, from whence he passed into Philadelphia, and traversed a considerable part of the United States. At length, in 1805, he returned to Europe, and arrived safe at Paris in November of that year, bringing with him, in addition to the observations he had made, and recollections with which his mind was fraught, the most extensive and varied collection of specimens of plants and minerals that ever was brought from the New World. His herbarium consisted of four thousand different plants, many of them of extreme rarity even in South America, and great part of which were previously unknown in Europe. His mineralogical collection was of equal extent and value. But by far the most important additions he has made to the cause of science, consist in the vast series of observations he has made in the New World, which have set at rest a great many disputed points in geography, mineralogy, and zoology, concerning that interesting and, in a great degree, unknown part of the world, and extended in a proportional degree the boundaries of knowledge regarding it. Nor have his labours been less important in collecting the most valuable statistical information regarding the Spanish provinces of those vast regions, especially the condition of the Indian, negro, and mulatto race which exist within them, and the amount of the precious metals annually raised from their mines; subjects of vast importance to Great Britain, and especially its colonial and commercial interests, but which have hitherto been in an unaccountable manner neglected, even by those whose interests and fortunes were entirely wound up in the changes connected with these vital subjects.

The remainder of Baron Humboldt's life has been chiefly devoted to the various and important publications, in which he has embodied the fruit of his vast and extensive researches in the New World. In many of these he has been assisted by M. Aimé Bonpland, who, his companion in literary labour as in the danger and fatigues of travelling, has, with the generosity of a really great mind, been content to diminish, perhaps destroy, his prospect of individual celebrity, by associating himself with the labours of his illustrious friend. Pursued even in mature years by the desire of fame, the thirst for still greater achievements, which belongs to minds of the heroic cast, whether in war or science, he conceived, at a subsequent period, the design of visiting the upper provinces of India and the Himalaya range. After having ascended higher than man had yet done on the elevated ridges of the New World, he was consumed with a thirst to surmount the still more lofty summits of the Old, which have remained in solitary and unapproachable grandeur since the waves of the Deluge first receded from their sides. But the East India Company, within whose dominions, or at least beneath whose influence, the highest ridges of the Himalaya are situated, gave no countenance to the design, and

even, it is said, refused liberty to the immortal Naturalist to visit their extensive territories. Whatever opinion we may form on the liberality or wisdom of this resolution, considered with reference to the interests, physical, moral, and political, of British India, it is not to be regretted, for the cause of science and literature over the world, that the great traveller has been prevented from setting out late in life to a fresh region of discovery. It has left the remainder of his life, and his yet undiminished powers, to illustrate and explain what he has already seen. To do that, was enough for the ordinary span of human life.

Humboldt's works relating to the New World are very numerous. I. He first published, in 1805, at Paris, in four volumes quarto, the *Personal Narrative* of his travels from 1799 to 1804. Of this splendid and interesting work, several editions have since been published in French, in twelve volumes octavo. It is upon it that his fame with the generality of readers mainly rests. II. *Vues des Cordilleras et Monumens des Peuples Indigènes de l'Amérique*—two volumes folio: Paris, 1811. This magnificent work, the cost of which is now £130, contains by far the finest views of the Andes in existence. Its great price renders it very scarce, and not more than a few copies are to be met with in Great Britain; but a cheap edition, without the great plates, was published at Paris in 1817. III. *Recueil d'Observations Astronomiques, et de Mésures exécutées dans le Nouveau Continent*: two volumes quarto. This learned work contains the result of Humboldt's astronomical and trigonometrical observations on the lunar distances, the eclipses of the satellites of Jupiter, the transit of Mercury, and upwards of five hundred elevated points in the New World, taken from barometrical observations, with all the requisite allowances and calculations carefully made. IV. *Essai sur la Géographie des Plantes, ou Tableau Physique des Régions Equinoxiales*: in quarto, with a great map. V. *Plantes Equinoxiales recueillies au Mexique, dans l'Ile de Cuba, dans les Provinces de Caraccas, &c.*: two volumes folio. A splendid and very costly work. VI. *Monographie des Mélastomes*: two volumes folio. A most curious and interesting work on a most interesting subject. VII. *Nova Genera et Species Plantarum*: three volumes folio. Containing an account of the botanical treasures collected by him in the New World, and brought home in his magnificent herbarium. VIII. *Recueil des Observations de Zoologie et d'Anatomie comparée faites dans un Voyage aux Tropiques*: two volumes quarto. IX. *Essai Politique sur la Nouvelle Espagne*. 1811: two volumes quarto. Of this admirable work a subsequent edition has been published in 1822, in four volumes octavo. It contains an astonishing collection of important statistical facts, arranged and digested with the utmost ability, and interspersed with political and philosophical reflections on the state of the human race, and the relation of society in the New World. X. *Ansichten der Natur*. Tübingen, 1808: in octavo. It is remarkable that this is the only one of the learned author's works on Spanish America which originally appeared in his own language; but it was soon translated into French under the title of *Tableaux de la Nature*. Paris: 1808. It contains a series of descriptions of the different styles of scenery and remarkable objects in the vast regions he had visited, portrayed with all the vigour and accuracy for which the author is distinguished. XI. *De Distributione Geographicâ Plantarum secundum Cœig;li Temperiem et Altitudinem Montium, Prolegomena*. In octavo. Paris: 1817. The title of this work explains its object and its importance, in describing a portion of the globe consisting of such lofty and successive ridges and table-lands as rise from the level of the sea to the summits of the Cordilleras of Mexico and Peru. XII. *Sur l'Elevation des Montagnes de l'Inde*. Octavo. Paris: 1818. A work prepared when the author was contemplating a journey to the Himalaya and mountains of Thibet. XIII. *Carte du Fleuve Orenoque*. Presented to the Academy of Sciences in 1817. M. Humboldt has there demonstrated the singular fact of the junction of the great rivers Orinoco and of the Amazon by the intermediate waters of the Rio Negro; a fact which the sagacity of D'Anville had long ago led him to suspect, but which the travels of the indefatigable German has established beyond a doubt. XIV. *Examen Critique de l'Histoire de la Géographie du Nouveau Continent, et du Progrès de l'Astronomie Nautique aux 15me et 16me siècles*. Paris: 1837. XV. "Cosmos:" in German – a "Scheme of a Physical Description of the Universe." This

last work embraces a much wider sphere of learning and speculation than any of the preceding, and is more characteristic of the vast erudition and ardent genius of the author.

From the brief account which has now been given of the published works of this indefatigable traveller and author, the reader will be able to appreciate the extent and variety of his scientific and political attainments. We shall now present him under a different aspect, as an eloquent and almost unrivalled describer of nature. It need hardly be said that it is on these splendid pictures, more even than the numerous and valuable additions he has made to the treasures of science, that his reputation with the world in general is founded.

The rapids of the Orinoco – one of the most striking scenes in America – are thus described by our author:⁴—

"When we arrived at the top of the Cliff of Marimi, the first object which caught our eye was a sheet of foam, above a mile in length and half a mile in breadth. Enormous masses of black rock, of an iron hue, started up here and there out of its snowy surface. Some resembled huge basaltic cliffs resting on each other; many, castles in ruins, with detached towers and fortalices, guarding their approach from a distance. Their sombre colour formed a contrast with the dazzling whiteness of the foam. Every rock, every island, was covered with flourishing trees, the foliage of which is often united above the foaming gulf by creepers hanging in festoons from their opposite branches. The base of the rocks and islands, as far as the eye can reach, is lost in the volumes of white smoke, which boil above the surface of the river; but above these snowy clouds, noble palms, from eighty to an hundred feet high, rise aloft, stretching their summits of dazzling green towards the clear azure of heaven. With the changes of the day these rocks and palm-trees are alternately illuminated by the brightest sunshine, or projected in deep shadow on the surrounding surge. Never does a breath of wind agitate the foliage, never a cloud obscure the vault of heaven. A dazzling light is ever shed through the air, over the earth enameled with the loveliest flowers, over the foaming stream stretching as far as the eye can reach; the spray, glittering in the sunbeams, forms a thousand rainbows, ever changing, yet ever bright, beneath whose arches, islands of flowers, rivalling the very hues of heaven, flourish in perpetual bloom. There is nothing austere or sombre, as in northern climates, even in this scene of elemental strife; tranquillity and repose seem to sleep on the very edge of the abyss of waters. Neither time, nor the sight of the Cordilleras, nor a long abode in the charming valleys of Mexico, have been able to efface from my recollection the impression made by these cataracts. When I read the description of similar scenes in the East, my mind sees again in clear vision the sea of foam, the islands of flowers, the palm-trees surmounting the snowy vapours. Such recollections, like the memory of the sublimest works of poetry and the arts, leave an impression which is never to be effaced, and which, through the whole of life, is associated with every sentiment of the grand and the beautiful." – (Vol. vii. 171-172.)

Such is a specimen of the descriptive powers of the great German natural philosopher, geographer, botanist, and traveller. When our senior wranglers from Cambridge, our high-honoured men from Oxford, or lady travellers from London, produce a parallel to it, we shall hope that England is about to compete with the continental nations in the race of illustrious travellers – but not till then.

⁴ We have translated all the passages ourselves. A very good translation of Humboldt's *Personal Narrative* was published many years ago, by Miss H. Williams; but we could not resist the pleasure of trying to transfer to English such noble specimens of descriptive eloquence.

As a contrast to this, we cannot resist the pleasure of laying before our readers the following striking description of night on the Orinoco, in the placid part of its course, amidst the vast forests of the tropical regions: —

"The night was calm and serene, and a beautiful moon shed a radiance over the scene. The crocodiles lay extended on the sand; placed in such a manner that they could watch our fire, from which they never turned aside their eyes. Its dazzling evidently attracted them, as it does fish, crabs, and the other inhabitants of the waters. The Indians pointed out to us in the sand the recent marks of the feet of three tigers, a mother and two young, which had crossed the open space between the forest and the water. Finding no tree upon the shore, we sank the end of our oars into the sand, in order to form poles for our tents. Every thing remained quiet till eleven at night, when suddenly there arose, in the neighbouring forest, a noise so frightful that it became impossible to shut our eyes. Amidst the voice of so many savage animals, which all roared or cried at once, our Indians could only distinguish the howling of the jaguar, the yell of the tiger, the roar of the cougar, or American lion, and the screams of some birds of prey. When the jaguars approached near to the edge of the forest, our dogs, which to that moment had never ceased to bark, suddenly housed; and, crouching, sought refuge under the shelter of our hammocks. Sometimes, after an interval of silence, the growl of the tiger was heard from the top of the trees, followed immediately by the cries of the monkey tenants of their branches, which fled the danger by which they were menaced.

"I have painted, feature by feature, these nocturnal scenes on the Orinoco, because, having but lately embarked on it, we were as yet unaccustomed to their wildness. They were repeated for months together, every night that the forest approached the edge of the river. Despite the evident danger by which one is surrounded, the security which the Indian feels comes to communicate itself to your mind; you become persuaded with him, that all the tigers fear the light of fire, and will not attack a man when lying in his hammock. In truth, the instances of attacks on persons in hammocks are extremely rare; and during a long residence in South America, I can only call to mind one instance of a Llanero, who was found torn in pieces in his hammock opposite the island of Uhagua.

"When one asks the Indians what is the cause of this tremendous noise, which at a certain hour of the night the animals of the forest make, they answer gaily, 'They are saluting the full moon.' I suspect the cause in general is some quarrel or combat which has arisen in the interior of the forest. The jaguars, for example, pursue the pecaris and tapirs, which, having no means of defence but their numbers, fly in dense bodies, and press, in all the agony of terror, through the thickets which lie in their way. Terrified at this strife, and the crashing of boughs or rustling of thickets which they hear beneath them, the monkeys on the highest branches set up discordant cries of terror on every side. The din soon wakens the parrots and other birds which fill the woods, they instantly scream in the most violent way, and ere long the whole forest is in an uproar. We soon found that it is not so much during a full moon, as on the approach of a whirlwind or a storm, that this frightful concert arises among the wild beasts. 'May heaven give us a peaceable night and rest, like other mortals!' was the exclamation of the monk who had accompanied us from the Rio Negro, as he lay down to repose in our bivouac. It is a singular circumstance to be reduced to such a petition in the midst of the solitude of the woods. In the hotels of Spain, the traveller fears the sound of the guitar from the neighbouring apartment: in the bivouacs of the Orinoco, which are spread on the open sand, or under the shade

of a single tree, what you have to dread is, the infernal cries which issue from the adjoining forest." – (Vol. vi., 222-3.)

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.